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## **A history of the French newspapers and nineteenth century English newspapers of Guernsey**

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A history of the French newspapers and  
nineteenth century English newspapers  
of Guernsey

by

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A Master's Dissertation, submitted in partial  
fulfilment of the requirements for the award of  
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## ABSTRACT

This report is in two parts; the first looking at the development of the French language newspapers of Guernsey from 1791 to 1936 and the second looking at the corresponding development of the English language newspapers up to 1900. The source materials for the report are mainly the newspapers themselves supplemented by general newspaper history and local history sources.

The newspapers are discussed in chronological order and details given about their size, price, content and political bias. Biographical information about the proprietors, printers and editors is also given. The newspapers are compared and contrasted and discussed within the cultural and historical context of nineteenth century Guernsey. The general trend towards anglicisation is discussed where relevant.

In conclusion, the development of Guernsey newspapers is discussed and compared with general trends in the history of the British provincial press. The importance of the co-existence of French and English newspapers is highlighted.

A full bibliographic list of newspapers held in the Priaulx Library, Guernsey and the British Library Newspaper Library, Colindale is given in the appendix.

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## INTRODUCTION

In any examination of provincial newspapers, no two geographical locations are ever alike; a newspaper develops as part of a complex social, cultural and political environment and if it is to survive, must be relevant to its intended readership. In general terms however, the provincial newspapers of Britain developed along broadly similar lines in the nineteenth century; the imposition and abolition of stamp duties and 'taxes on knowledge', improvements in printing technology, steam and electric power, improved communication through rail networks and telegraphy - all had an important and measurable effect on the development of the newspaper industry.

Guernsey was not always directly affected by these changing circumstances, moreover, the society of the island in the nineteenth century was radically different from that of most English provincial towns, not only in terms of history and politics, but in the more fundamental cultural ones such as identity and language. If any criteria can be said to exist for the study of the British provincial press, they may be useful, but not necessarily directly applicable to a study of Guernsey newspapers.

In simpler terms, an understanding of Guernsey society, and newspapers, in the nineteenth century, lies in recognising that the island was essentially bi-lingual, in language and in culture yet with a strong and independent government. The Channel Islands had become part of Normandy in 933 A.D. and therefore part of the English Crown after 1154 when Henry I became both Duke of Normandy and King of England.<sup>1</sup> The islanders retained their political and administrative independence from England, which they still possess to this day, and despite being

nominally part of the British Crown, retained a French identity, speaking both French and Guernsey-French (a Norman-French dialect).

It was not until the Napoleonic Wars that things began to change; the islands had experienced a period of great prosperity, due in part to their expertise in shipbuilding and privateering, and this encouraged the immigration of settlers from England attracted by a slightly warmer climate, blossoming mercantile opportunities, "and almost complete immunity from taxation."<sup>2</sup> From this small start, a process of anglicisation would begin.

As English influence grew, so did the strength of the island's French culture and identity declined. This phenomenon is mirrored in the island newspapers; the first three newspapers before 1813 were French and more were to follow. By 1875, this had declines to one, although there were five English newspapers. Nor did the phenomenon go unnoticed; the French newspapers pressed for popularity on the basis of their use of the Mother Tongue, the English newspapers claimed that they were the voice of progress. Yet, all newspapers pledged their determination to protect the island's ancient privileges. Nineteenth century Guernsey society was full of tensions and contradictions, but at heart untied. Victor Hugo, a long time resident of Guernsey, understood the islands rather well,

The Channel Islands are bits of France which fell into the sea and were picked up by England. Hence a complex nationality. The Jersaiiais and the Guernesais are certainly not English, without wishing to be, but they are French without knowing it. If they do know it, they are determined to forget it.<sup>3</sup>

This introduction is intended as an attempt create a picture of

the sort of backdrop against which the island's French and English newspapers developed. There was a slow beginning; printing developed rather late, probably because there was not a great market for books, and those which were required would have been imported. The first known printer in Guernsey was T. Rognon as late as 1777 and it is thought that he specialised in handbills.<sup>4</sup> When newspapers began to emerge, from 1791 onwards, they contained very little local news, the islanders no doubt relying upon the premise that, "any exciting tit-bit of news would be spread by gossip long before a newspaper could be put into print."<sup>5</sup> As with the English provincial press, Guernsey newspapers relied on advances in technology, notably, the introduction of steamships in 1823<sup>6</sup> and the electric telegraph service in 1858<sup>7</sup>, although this was not used to great effect until the 1880s. However, with a small population limiting growth, such innovations as the steam press were too expensive to install until the 1870s and '80s.<sup>8</sup>

As Guernsey had its own government, the States of Deliberation, the reporting of news from England was on the whole politically neutral. Guernsey politics were still based around a feudal system of government which was slowly growing more democratic, but was generally rather conservative. Also, since there were no political parties in the States, reporting of local news also often seemed politically neutral; surprising at a time when English provincial newspapers were becoming increasingly politicised and radical.<sup>9</sup>

Guernsey makes an interesting case study because of the social and cultural changes which were taking place. The history of Guernsey newspapers has never been fully researched and there is a need for this to be done since newspapers are a rich source of information about the island's social and political development. The only published paper which has attempted to give a broad



overview of newspaper history was published by the *Société Guernesiais* in 1955 and taken from a speech given by Lieutenant-Colonel Marshall-Fraser on December 8th, 1950. Marshall-Fraser discusses only three newspapers in detail but he provides a bibliographic listing which, whilst not complete nor fully accurate, has proved invaluable in researching this report. There is a need to bring his work up to date and discuss newspaper development from a more modern perspective.

The main reference source has been of course the newspapers themselves. Information about size and print quality, price and circulation is easily obtainable and helps to place the newspaper in context. First and final issues and anniversary editions of newspapers often include information about political ethos, financial background and biographical information about publishers, printers and proprietors. The amount of biographical material available varies a great deal and many of the men and women involved in the newspaper industry may not receive the coverage that they warrant. Secondary sources include biographies, catalogues and local histories.

The history of newspaper publishing in Guernsey is complex and varied and for the purposes of this report, only newspapers exclusive to Guernsey, and printed there, will be discussed. References to newspapers from other islands in the Bailiwick (*viz.* Alderney, Sark and Herm) and from Jersey are omitted except where necessary.

This report is in two halves; French newspapers between 1791 and 1936 and English newspapers in the nineteenth century. Each part is divided into two chapters. The newspapers will be discussed chronologically from the date of establishment to their demise. All English newspapers which began before 1900 will be discussed with the exception of the *Guernsey Evening Press* which, although it began in 1897, is more relevant to a

discussion of twentieth century newspapers since it is still in existence. An appendix is also given which provides a list of all Guernsey newspapers held at the Priaulx Library, Guernsey and the British Library Newspaper Library in Colindale.

## INTRODUCTION

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## PART ONE - FRENCH NEWSPAPERS

### CHAPTER ONE

#### La Gazette de Guernesey.

By 1814, an influx of English settlers to Guernsey had pushed the population to 20,000.<sup>1</sup> With the wars in France creating unrest and turmoil and with the population becoming increasingly cosmopolitan, the need for a regular and reliable news service became evident. Jersey was the first of the Channel Islands to produce a newspaper; the *Gazette de l'île de Jersey* which first appeared in 1789<sup>2</sup>.

Guernsey was to follow suit in 1791 with the similarly titled *Gazette de l'île de Guernesey*. However, there is a slight controversy regarding this date of 1791. Although there is no doubt that vol.1, no.1 is dated January 8th 1791, several sources suggest that a newspaper of the same title, and with (possibly) the same proprietors, appeared before this and very quickly folded. John Jacobs' history of Guernsey gives 1789 as the date of the first newspaper<sup>3</sup>, as does L. James Marr in his authoritative 1982 history of the island.<sup>4</sup> An even earlier date is given by B. T. Rowswell in 1935. He states,

In 1785, the first newspaper, Gazette, was published.  
It ceased after a few weeks, to re-appear in 1791.<sup>5</sup>

More puzzling still, perhaps is the evidence presented by the *Gazette* itself. On January 1st 1868, the newspaper celebrated its 80th birthday, a legend below the title reading, "établi en 1788". There is no indication of where this date appeared from, since the volume number clearly indicates that the newspaper had

been in existence for only 77 consecutive years. By January 1882, somebody must have counted back since the date of 1791 now appears. The 1891 100th anniversary edition provides further confusion by stating that the *Gazette* first appeared in 1785 and lasted only 15 to 20 numbers before collapsing. This was blamed on the subscribers, the readers and the advertisers.<sup>6</sup>

It is impossible to provide verification for any of these dates since there are no surviving copies of the hypothetical *Gazette*. It is tempting to accept the premise that there was an abortive attempt to produce a newspaper before 1791 however and Marshall-Fraser seems to prefer the date of 1789 as being most likely. Whatever the truth, and it is unlikely that this will ever be uncovered, for the purpose of this history and to avoid confusion, the paper will be stated as having begun in 1791. This argument does have an interesting by-line however. Marshall-Fraser is the only historian to have suggested a reason for this proliferation of dates. He rejects 1785 and 1788 as an attempt by historians and newspapermen to pre-date the *Gazette de l'île de Jersey*, "the islands being intensely competitive in all things."<sup>7</sup> This inter-island rivalry began during the English Civil War and has continued unabated to the present day, so this explanation is not, perhaps, as far-fetched as it sounds.

The first *Gazette* was a weekly, appearing on Saturdays and was a small size with four pages, measuring only 23cm by 15cm when folded. There were two columns to each page. The price was set at 5 shillings for a years subscription and 2 sous for a single issue. The combining of French and English currency was a characteristic of the island throughout the nineteenth century and two sous were equivalent to one penny. The price is significant when compared to English newspapers of the same period. Jacobs states categorically that Guernsey had,

no stamps and no duties upon any of the articles made or manufactured in the island.<sup>8</sup>

This also covered newspapers and the relative cheapness of the *Gazette* no doubt contributed to its initial success. The cost of a weekly provincial newspaper in England would have been considerably more, such as the *Brighton Herald* of 1806 which was priced at 6d.<sup>9</sup>

The proprietors and printers of the newspaper, Pierre de Carteret and Robert McLeran (Whom Marshall-Fraser and Jacobs refer to as M'Laurien), were fully aware of the uniqueness of their service. In the prospectus which appeared as a handbill one or two days before the first issue, they stated,

Le public de cette isle nous ayant rémoigné le desir d'avoir un papier-nouvelle. Nous nous empressons de lui annoncer que nous allons en imprimer un sous le titre de Gazette de Guernesey.<sup>10</sup>

They had decided to go ahead with the project since they had gained as many as 300 subscribers. They were also aiming at a specific audience; namely merchants and traders who could advertise their wares, and the ship-owners needing freight to carry to England and the continent. That the newspaper takes a specific interest in trade is a symptom of the growing mercantile importance of the islands at this time, due in part to the lack of stamps and duties mentioned above. Prosperous industries growing up at this time were shipbuilding and the export of cattle and granite.<sup>11</sup>

De Carteret and McLeran printed from their shop in Rue de la Fontaine (Fountain Street), a road which was to become known as, "the Fleet Street of Guernsey"<sup>12</sup> since throughout the nineteenth century, it came to house the offices of the majority of the

island newspapers. The first edition of the *Gazette* consisted mainly of news from the continental newspapers; from Vienna, Berlin, Madrid and Paris. There was no news from London, although this was probably due to poor weather since the infrequent sailing packets could take anything between one and three weeks to reach the island.<sup>13</sup> There was no local news although a number of advertisements for renting and selling property were printed, the islanders taking immediate advantage of the new medium. According to the criteria set by Anthony Smith, the *Gazette* had all the attributes of a modern newspaper, except for the slight oddity that the pages were numbered consecutively from week to week, a characteristic of the seventeenth century news-sheets.<sup>14</sup>

Throughout its first year, the *Gazette* concentrated mainly on news from France; approximately 25% of the paper was taken up by news of the Assemblée Nationale. Politically, the newspaper was a supporter of the revolution, as indicated in the June 2nd edition in which there is a lively two and a half page account of the flight and capture of "le traître, Louis XVI".<sup>15</sup> The next week's edition also indicates that this support was shared by the islanders when a public notice appears advertising that celebrations for the second anniversary of the revolution are to be held at the Crown and Anchor tavern.<sup>16</sup> It may seem strange that the politics of the inhabitants of British islands were so involved in France, but it must be remembered that before the advent of steam, England was rather more remote, and spoke a different language. It was not until ten or fifteen years, when France was nominally the enemy, that English influence began to take a foothold in the islands.

Very little is known about de Carteret and McLeran. One can infer that their partnership was not a great success from events in the autumn of 1792. It is possible that their partnership was dissolved on or around October 13th since only Pierre de

Carteret's name appears as printer. However, on October 27th, de Carteret's name disappears to be replaced by McLeran who announces that he has bought a printing works in order to provide the Guernsey people with reliable news.<sup>17</sup> Ten issues later, McLeran's name also disappears, the paper now being produced by, 'l'imprimerie de Guernesey'. That McLeran remains proprietor is uncertain but probable. On September 24th 1794, the *Gazette* changed hands altogether; now owned and printed by Joseph Chevalier from his office in Fountain Street.

Chevalier was a Frenchman from Avignon in Provence who came to the island some time in the 1780s and who describes himself in letters as a good patriot,<sup>18</sup> although whether he refers to France or Guernsey is uncertain. He sold paper and inks from his shop and also printed an almanack. As proprietor of the only Guernsey newspaper and with a well established business, he became the first Guernsey printer to receive the royal seal, on June 27th, 1795.<sup>19</sup>

The *Gazette* changed very little under Chevalier's proprietorship, retaining its small size until May 3rd 1806 when it doubled in size and expanded to three columns, increasing the space available by up to 70%. The same month, the title also underwent a change, becoming *Gazette de Guernesey : ou journal de la semaine*. By the first week in June, Chevalier had gone into partnership with another local printer Nicholas Mauger, his apprentice since 1800.<sup>20</sup>

The larger size of the *Gazette* generated more advertisements, particularly from retailers, and one or two items of local news started to appear. These were mainly of an official nature; proceedings of the Royal Court, church notices and shipping details. At least a quarter of the classified advertisements were now in English, and these were usually concerned with the sale of property and the sale of such items as wines and



spirits. This is a reflection of the fact that English was fast becoming a fashionable language, particularly amongst the rich families of St. Peter Port. By 1812, the subscription rate had been increased to 6 shillings a year and 3 sous (1½d) for a single issue. This increased cost was due to the expense of buying and importing paper from England, since Guernsey had no paper manufacturing industry of its own, than the result of any direct taxation. It is a reflection of the changing times that the *Gazette* had agents in London and Edinburgh, but none in Paris.

The format of the paper was firmly settled; the front page taken up with excerpts from the London papers and an editorial on the second, usually a discussion of the Peninsular Wars. There were one or two snippets of local news and public announcements. 30-35% of the newspaper was given over to advertising. More foreign news and a poetry section filled up the back page. With only 12 columns of print available, there was a limit to how much could be included and Chevalier and Mauger quite frequently produced a one or two page supplement. It is likely that these supplements would have been commissioned, although the cost of such a proceeding is unknown. Supplements included; a transcript of a meeting to set up the *Auxiliary Bible Association*<sup>21</sup> and a list of subscribers to the *Guernsey Society for the Education of Youth in the principles of the Established Church*.<sup>22</sup> The church was a particularly influential force on the island.

The partnership between Chevalier and Mauger was dissolved on December 25th, 1820 when Chevalier decided to retire. The business devolved on Mauger alone. They apparently parted on very good terms, each writing in mutually laudatory terms about the other when the news was announced. Mauger in particular seems to have regarded Chevalier very highly,

From the year 1800, I have travelled by the side of my friend who after a long, active and well-spent life, is retiring to enjoy a peaceful, and, I ardently hope, a long remainder of days.<sup>23</sup>

A Guernseyman, Mauger was born in 1785<sup>24</sup> and had been involved in printing since the age of 15. During his partnership with Chevalier, the *Gazette* flourished and was well on the way to becoming a bastion of the establishment. In his first year of sole proprietorship, the price of subscription was reduced to 4 shillings, its lowest yet, but the price of a single issue remained at 1½d. From this date, the *Gazette* was no longer priced in sous. By 1824, there were 1,000 subscribers, about 5% of the population.<sup>25</sup>

Although the proprietor of a well established and respected newspaper, Mauger did not manage to avoid trouble. On April 19th 1823, he was tried by the Royal Court for libel when he criticised the Court for rejecting a petition from the Merchants and Shopkeepers of the island. The petition concerned an ancient law, instituted in 1660 which prohibited, "Foreigners and Strangers from selling by retail any goods, wares or merchandise within the said island."<sup>26</sup> The Merchants and Shopkeepers wanted the law to be put into full force in order to protect their businesses from *colporteurs*, or hawkers. The Royal Court rejected their petition on the grounds that the high prices charged by traders discriminated against the poorer classes who could at least afford the prices charged by hawkers. Mauger, incensed by what he perceived to be a slight to his fellow islanders, proceeded to call the officers of the Court, "égoïstes" and declared, "Dieu veuille avoir pitié de nous!!"<sup>27</sup> This last statement was clearly a mistake, it is interesting that the Court easily dismissed the insult to itself, but could not forgive the insult to God. Advocate Jeremie declared,

En vérité Le Sieur Mauger est impardonnable! Non-content de réclamer la protection du Conseil, il ôse invoquer la pitié de Dieu, - qu'elle horreur ... ce libelle est atroce.<sup>28</sup>

Mauger was found guilty and fined 300 livres tournois (£12 6s).

1823 was not a good year for Mauger, whilst he continued to own and print the *Gazette*, the content became influenced by two new editors, Bullard and Langlois, two radical Frenchmen who were highly critical of the Bourbon monarchy in France.<sup>29</sup> From November 1st, the *Gazette* became, *Gazette de Guernesey: journal politique et littéraire* and gained an additional title, stamped above the main one, of *Le Fanal* (the lantern). A new prospectus also appeared in which the editors put forth their determination to take advantage of the relative freedom of speech in the islands compared to the restrictive regime on the continent. In terms of politics they describe themselves as, "amis sincère de la liberté" and are determined to reintroduce French literature into the island, which had been neglected during the Napoleonic Wars,

Les nouveaux intéressant; les poëms de la Martine, de Casmir de la Vigne ... le traité de la religion par Benjamin Constant.

They are also critical of the reporting by other newspapers of the proceedings of the Royal Court, which they claim have not been accurate. It is difficult to say what Langlois and Bullard hoped to achieve. Their pro-radical anti-Bourbon sentiments may have touched a chord in the late eighteenth century, but by 1823, with the Napoleonic Wars behind them, the islanders may have found such politics irrelevant. They would have had no impact in France since the first issue reveals that the *Gazette* was banned from entering that country.

Their editorship did not last long, but there is a great deal of interest in their editorials which are often lengthy but lively and critical. *Le Fanal* also contains a great deal more local news that is usual in newspapers at that time, but by the end of the year, they had begun to attack local institutions such as Elizabeth College, which they refer to as decadent.<sup>30</sup> After December 1823, Mauger took his name off the paper altogether.

One year later, on December 25th 1824, *Le Fanal* quietly disappeared, Mauger's name returned and the *Gazette* continued on its way as though nothing had happened. The 14 months of *Le Fanal*'s existence must have been expensive ones; the lengthy editorials and extracts from French literature that Bullard and Langlois inserted meant that there was often no room left for advertisements, so that they were forced to produce a supplement to accommodate them. This must have added to the cost of producing the newspaper considerably.

Back under Mauger's full management, the *Gazette* again became establishment. In 1831, the size was increased and a further four columns added. By 1835, the subscription rate was increased to 5 shillings, although the cost a single issue remained at 1½d. The amount of coverage of local news also increased. The *Gazette* began to feature extracts from the *Chronique de Jersey*, and proceedings from the Royal Court and ordinances of the States became regular features. Reports from the horticultural society appeared occasionally.

On October 8th 1842, the *Gazette* achieved something of a coup when the Royal Court decided to bestow upon it the title of "Gazette officielle Française". There were a number of other French newspapers in existence at that time, but none were as well established or as respected. The *Gazette* was chosen by the Court as its official organ for the insertion of proceedings of the Court and the States as well as public and parish notices.

The Court, realising the necessity of having but one Gazette for the insertion of judicial proceedings ... has authorised Mr. Nicholas Mauger, proprietor of the French Gazette, known as *Gazette de Guernesey*, to entitle part of the said Gazette as *Partie Officielle*.<sup>31</sup>

Since French was the official language of the island, the Gazette was perhaps the obvious choice as 'Journal officiel'. There were however cries of dismay from the established English language papers in the island. The *Star*, which had been in existence since 1813, will be discussed in a later chapter, but it is useful here to its reaction to the Gazette's rise in status,

at the very moment when our judicial forms are lauded as possessing the rare quality of directly compassing their object, advertisements in the French language in a French paper circulating for the most part in the rural parishes, are declared to be the fittest mode of communicating judicial information to English traders in town and out of the island!<sup>32</sup>

The editor of the *Star*, although noticeably chagrined, does highlight an important phenomenon; French (and Guernsey French) was spoken on a day to day basis in the rural parishes, but in the main town of St. Peter Port, English was beginning to predominate. The *Star* suggests that Court and States proceedings may have reached more of their intended audience by appearing in English. This may have been true, but there is another aspect to the case that the *Guernsey Advertiser*, writing from a 1934 perspective, puts forth,

The Gazette became Guernsey's official newspaper and ... assisted in no small measure in maintaining and prolonging, by publishing the official notices in the French language,

the now fast diminishing use of that tongue in the island.<sup>33</sup>

It is a sad truth that the use of the French tongue gradually diminished throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and it is more a matter of pride, if not practicality, that the *Gazette* would remain as 'Journal officiel' for another 94 years.

Throughout the 1840s and 1850s, there was no significant change to the newspaper's format, although the proportion of local news to foreign continued to rise. By the mid 1850s, the local content stood at around 40%. By the end of 1854, Mauger, now in his late sixties, was ailing and he was assisted in an editorial capacity by Henri E. Marquand.<sup>34</sup> Marquand seems to have been highly regarded by the *Gazette* staff and the 1891 anniversary edition lauds him for writing articles of substance, as befitting the island's only official newspaper. Marquand took over completely at the beginning of 1855. Mauger died on March 8th at the age of 70.

The *Gazette* passed to his daughter, Mrs Bichard, but was printed under the name of her husband Thomas P. Bichard. Bichard refers to himself in advertisements as a "Printer, Librarian and Stationer" and he sold stationary and books from the *Gazette* office in Fountain street. In 1859, the *Gazette* was again increased in size to five columns per page, although the subscription rate remained at 5 shillings. The editorials, written by Marquand and his successor, Theinlot, were lively and original. Theinlot in particular seems to have been highly critical of the British government, particularly in regards to its economic policy.<sup>35</sup>

Thomas Bichard retired as manager of the *Gazette* in 1860 and full ownership passed to his son Thomas Mauger Bichard, maternal grandson of Nicholas Mauger, on July 7th 1860. As regards the 'Journal officiel', it was not until 1867 that the Royal Court

issued an ordinance substituting the name of Nicholas Mauger for that of T. M. Bichard.<sup>36</sup> To celebrate, Bichard changed the name of the newspaper on January 19th 1867 to, *Gazette de Guernesey: journal officiel, politique et litteraire*. Bichard made a more radical change later the same year by introducing a second edition every Wednesday. From February 13th 1867, the *Gazette* became a bi-weekly. Bichard's intention was that the Wednesday edition should be delivered to all the rural parishes, and he listed agents in those parishes from whom the newspaper could be collected. Bichard was at least acknowledging the fact that the inhabitants of the country parishes would not always have had the time, money or transport to go to town on a regular basis despite the small scale of the island. The Wednesday edition was very similar to the Saturday one except in the exclusion of the 'Partie Officielle'. The subscription rate was adjusted accordingly; 5 shillings for one edition a year and 8s. 4d. for both. The cost of a single issue remained at 1½d.

The history of the Wednesday edition is interesting. In 1862, T. M. Bichard attempted to expand his activities by starting up a new newspaper: *Chronique de Guernesey: journal politique, commercial et litteraire*. It first appeared on Wednesday, April 2nd, 1862 priced at 1d. and 2s. 1d. for six months subscription. It has the shortest run of any Guernsey newspaper, surviving for only a single issue. From the editorial, it is evident that Bichard wanted to concentrate his efforts upon local issues in an attempt to cater for the mainly French speaking homes of the country parishes. It was an abortive attempt, possibly because Bichard was in effect going into competition with himself. His desire to produce a Wednesday 'country' newspaper would however find fruition with the *Gazette* in 1867.

From 1870 onwards, the quality of the print and typeface improved dramatically and the proportion of local news continued to rise. At sometime between the years 1873 and 1881, the

Wednesday edition of the *Gazette* ceased. At the very least, it had lasted for six years which is quite a long time considering that it is unlikely that the demand for a second edition would have been high enough to justify the expense of producing one.

The 100th anniversary edition of 1891 gives names to the various editors who worked on the *Gazettes* following Marquand and Theinlot. Unfortunately, no dates are given and the newspapers themselves provide no clues as to who was currently editing them. The editors included, advocate Le Beir, P. Roussel, G. N. Romeril and Henri de Monteyremar. It was reported that the *Gazette* had at least 2,000 subscribers.

As the *Gazette* approached the twentieth century, it was to go into a period of gradual decline which mirrored the decline of the French language in the island. As a newspaper, it had become extremely conservative; its function became solely as a noticeboard for state announcements. Bichard himself was ailing and his firm became a *Bichard's newspaper printing and publishing company* in December 1896. Whereas the other island newspapers, most of them in English, were investing in new technology for the collection of foreign news, the *Gazette* began to concentrate on local affairs to the exclusion of all else. It also began a period of nostalgia with regular features such as 'fragments historiques'<sup>37</sup> and 'au temps passé'<sup>38</sup> which related events from Guernsey history as described by past *Gazettes*.

In April 1913, the *Gazette* was sold to *The Star newspaper printing and publishing company* (1912); the newspaper which had reacted with outrage that the *Gazette* had become the 'Journal officiel' in 1842, had now come to own it. The *Gazette* continued to be printed under Bichard's name and it pledged that it would not change in politics or intent, but remain committed to Guernsey's institutions and laws.<sup>39</sup> In 1919, both *Bichard's newspaper printing and publishing company* and the company which



owned it were wound up and amalgamated, becoming *The Guernsey 'Star' and 'Gazette' Co. Ltd.* under the chairmanship of Victor G. Carey.<sup>40</sup>

There is no doubt that the *Gazette* survived as long as it did because of its status as the official island newspaper. Yet, what it gained in terms of longevity, was possibly at the expense of individuality. By no stretch of the imagination could the *Gazette* have been considered radical after 1842, in fact it was often at pains to maintain a neutral status. Its final name change in January 1929 under the editorship of Albert Santangelo only emphasises this further. It became, *Gazette de Guernesey: journal officiel hebdomadaire*. In effect, the *Gazette* was the voice of the state, and that voice was French in an increasingly English speaking island. What perhaps is most remarkable about the *Gazette* in terms of its relationship with Guernsey society, is the fact that the island government had no qualms about trusting an independently owned newspaper to take responsibility for its public voice. This serves to underline firstly the absence of party politics on the island, and secondly the remarkable unity of purpose and intent in the community.

The beginning of the end for the *Gazette* came on May 26th 1934 under the editorship of Wilfred H. Sarre when it became a one page free weekly supplement to the *Star*. It continued for almost two years in this state but finally disappeared altogether on March 28th 1936. Henry Marquand, a former editor of the *Star* and son of a former *Gazette* editor, writing in 1934, had no hesitation in attributing the demise of the *Gazette* to the growth of the English language.<sup>41</sup> The responsibility for carrying official state notices was shared by the *Star* and its younger rival the *Guernsey Evening Press* and this time the notices appeared in English, despite the fact that French was to remain the official island language until 1956.<sup>42</sup> The *Gazette*

was the first and the last of the island's French newspapers and at 145 years old, the longest running French newspaper outside France.<sup>43</sup>

## CHAPTER ONE - La Gazette de Guernesey

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## CHAPTER TWO

1806-1902

### Le Mercure, Le Publiciste and Le Miroir Politique.

Guernsey produced many and varied French newspapers but none of them achieved either the longevity or the stability of the *Gazette*, although they are all interesting both politically and socially. Guernsey's second newspaper was, *Le Mercure de Guernesey: ou courier de Saint Pierre-Port* which first appeared in May 1806. (Unfortunately, the first issue is no longer in existence so the date is an estimate based upon the first surviving copy of 1810 numbered 215 in the series.) It was a similar size to the *Gazette* at this time, four pages and priced at 6 shillings for a years subscription and 3 sous (1½d) per copy. It was a weekly, published every Saturday by C. G. Hamilton and Le Lacheur<sup>1</sup> from their offices at 339 au bas du Bordage in the upper part of Fountain Street.

The *Mercure* was French, but as was common with the French newspapers of this time, it carried advertisements and the occasional article in English. The *Mercure* seemed to carry more English than its rivals, sometimes up to 40% of the content, and should more accurately be called a bi-lingual newspaper. It also carried more local news than the *Gazette* and would seem to have been very popular due to the respectable number of classified advertisements. Four more newspapers appeared between 1812 and 1820 and although the *Mercure* was several years older than these, unlike the *Gazette*, it was not above indulging in rivalry with them. The rivalry reached its peak in 1813 when what can only be described as verbal warfare broke out. The *Mercure's* part in this will be discussed later in the chapter in reference to *Le Miroir Politique*.

From February 6th, 1813, a Guernseyman by the name of Henry

Brouard replaced Le Lacheur in partnership with Hamilton. The newspaper which had previously only been available from the *Mercure* offices could now be obtained from Thomas Greenslade's shop in le Pollet. Greenslade, a local entrepreneur, was himself the owner of a rival newspaper. Later the same year, Hamilton and Brouard started Guernsey's first English Newspaper, the *Star*, from the same offices in Le Bordage in order to cater for the growing number of English inhabitants.<sup>2</sup> However, whereas the *Star* was to flourish and grow, surviving for well over a century and a half, the *Mercure* changed very little in its relatively short life. It was extremely consistent in terms of format and content, and unlike the *Star* and the *Gazette*, had no pretensions towards being a 'quality' newspaper; the editorials were mainly concerned with local news and the typeface and print was generally of a fairly poor quality. In December 1818, the subscription price was lowered to four shillings a year putting it in the middle range in terms of price. The *Gazette* was then at five shillings and the only other French newspaper, *L'Independance*, the cheapest at three and a half.

In June 1832, Hamilton retired, severing his partnership with Brouard who was left in sole proprietorship of both the *Mercure* and the *Star*.<sup>3</sup> On June 23rd, Brouard decided to concentrate his efforts on the *Star* alone and informed the public that he had sold the *Mercure* to the proprietor of the *Independance*;

after which, Le *Mercure* will be ... united with  
L'*independance* which will be published every Saturday at  
the *Independance* offices in Mont-Gibel, and at the bureau  
of the *Star* and the *Mercure* in the Bordage.<sup>4</sup>

Whether or not this purchase ever took place is unknown; the *Independance* makes no mention of any change in status, nor does the format of the newspaper change significantly. The *Mercure*

disappeared and was not referred to again after its final issue.

Guernsey's third newspaper, *Le Publiciste: ou journal politique at litteraire* was first published in September 1812 by Thomas Greenslade in association with his young editor, Thomas De La Rue. There is a great deal of biographical information available about the two men due to the fact that De La Rue was to go on to make his fortune in England becoming, "the Bailiwick's undoubted greatest entrepreneur."<sup>5</sup> In 1812, De La Rue was a mere 19 years old and it was Greenslade who was the better known of the two men.

Born in Bishop's Nympton in Devon in 1779<sup>6</sup>, Greenslade came to Guernsey as a young man to take advantage of the mercantile opportunities in the island in the latter part of the Napoleonic Wars. He appears to have found his feet fairly quickly; he owned a general store in le Pollet and was involved in a number of money making enterprises,

he was adventurous, enthusiastic, willing to try any project including running the Guernsey Lottery, which, by a questionable coincidence, he succeeded in winning himself.<sup>7</sup>

John Jacobs, in describing a scenic walk around St. Peter Port in the 1820s, directs tired visitors towards Greenslade's hot and cold sea-water baths, which "excellent accommodations" are situated in Pollet Street.<sup>8</sup>

In 1811, it was his intention to start a third newspaper and he hired the 18 year old De La Rue to be his prospective editor and to collect subscribers.<sup>9</sup> Despite his young age, De La Rue had been involved in printing for a number of years. He was born on March 24th 1793 to Eleazard De La Rue, of Huguenot descent, and Rachel Allez in the parish of the Forest.<sup>10</sup> His family was a



large one and it was incumbent on him to earn his own living. On March 1st 1803 shortly before his 10th birthday, he was apprenticed to Joseph Antoine Chevalier, the proprietor of the *Gazette*.<sup>11</sup> He had already worked out his seven year contract when he joined forces with Greenslade in 1811.

In order to drum up support for the new newspaper, De La Rue had to appeal to the most influential families in society. Guernsey was well known for having a very rigid social hierarchy which was known as the "Soixante-Quarante" society<sup>12</sup> - that is, the top sixty families and the lesser, but still influential forty families. Greenslade as an Englishman was not part of this select group, nor was De La Rue, but he apparently had a number of connections through his mother's Allez relations which he no doubt took advantage of. He had succeeded well enough for the newspaper to go ahead on Saturday, September 26th, 1812.

The *Publiciste* was a four page weekly priced at six shillings per year and three sous per issue. The introductory editorial opens with a bold and distinctly immodest statement, surprising from a young man who is not yet twenty,

De toutes les tâches, il n'en est peut-être pas de plus difficile, de plus délicate et quelquefois de plus pénible à remplir que celle de Rédacteur.<sup>13</sup>

De La Rue goes on to say that the difficulty of the job lies not in compiling the content, but in the use of tact and discretion to produce a perfect impartiality. He maintains that the role of the editor is to disentangle the political chaos of the day, and present it to the reader, "les plus fraîche". De La Rue does not seem to have a specific political agenda, but he is determined to introduce new French literature to the islanders. In this vein, the first issue begins a serialisation of the adventures of a secret agent in Europe.

The news, taken from the London papers, is concerned with the Peninsular Wars. There is very little local content, except for a respectable number of classified advertisements, including one from Eleazard De La Rue advertising the sale of his house in Fountain Street, which he apparently never succeeded in selling despite years of trying.<sup>14</sup> As was usual in the French newspapers, there were a number of English items, particularly advertisements and the *Publiciste* took the novel step of segregating them into "Partie Française" and "Partie Angloise".

The first issue was so successful that it completely sold out. Greenslade and De La Rue attribute this success to the plain and simple nature of their newspaper and the fact that they take their jobs very seriously.<sup>15</sup>

After only three months the promising partnership between De La Rue and Greenslade completely broke down. At some time between the 19th and 21st of December 1812, they quarrelled bitterly and De La Rue walked out. On the 22nd, he produced a handbill in French and English which pre-empted the next edition of the *Publiciste*. He wrote, rather incoherently,

Reasons as powerful - is impertinent to the Reader, force me to discontinue partnership with Mr. Greenslade. All common interest ceases between us from this date.<sup>16</sup>

He goes on to say that he is determined that the public should not suffer from this disagreement ("which Mr. Greenslade himself provoked") and that he has hired a press and is going to England to purchase new type and paper. His new newspaper will be available from February 6th 1813. In other words, De La Rue gave himself a little over one month to produce a newspaper from scratch.

The next edition of the *Publiciste* on December 26th gave

Greenslade on opportunity to respond. He reveals that De La Rue had signed a contract in which he agreed to edit the paper for five years, receiving half of the profits and the help of one of the apprentices. De La Rue told him that unless he received more help, he could not continue further than Christmas, to which Greenslade replied that he had already given more help than was originally agreed on;

the consequence was, that without any further remarks, he abruptly quitted my office, although he charges me with having provoked his determination.<sup>17</sup>

Greenslade lost no time in appointing a Mr. Mausabré to be his new editor.

True to his word, De La Rue left for England and nothing more on the matter was heard until the New Year. On February 6th 1813, De La Rue's newspaper, *Le Miroir Politique: journal hebdomadaire* made its first appearance. How De La Rue achieved this feat in such a short space of time is largely unknown. Lorna Houseman, De La Rue's biographer, suggests that he would not have promised to produce a newspaper in the first place had he not been certain of financial backing since his resources were not extensive. Houseman seems to think that he persuaded his brother-in-law John Champion to back him.<sup>18</sup> Champion was a man who was growing in stature and prosperity and whose first appearance in the story took place in 1803 when he witnessed De La Rue's apprentice contract.<sup>19</sup>

De La Rue re-opened hostilities with Greenslade in his first editorial and also took the opportunity to criticise the other French newspapers with his opening and oft-quoted words,

Quatre journaux françois! C'est assez: c'est beaucoup;

c'est trop peut-être pour cette île.<sup>20</sup>

He admits that there is perhaps room for the *Gazette* and the *Mercure* but calls the *Publiciste*, "Un Publiciste travesti" and wishes to never again have any communication with Greenslade. Greenslade meanwhile had allied himself with Hamilton and his new partner Brouard by agreeing to sell the *Mercure* from his shop. The response to De La Rue's first editorial comes not from the *Publiciste* but from the *Mercure*. Hamilton apologises for having lowered himself to reply, but promises that it will be for the last time. His response is in verse,

Nous admirons sincèrement  
De ce Miroir l'élégant stile,  
Mais nous disons également  
Sa glace est fausse, et bien fragile.<sup>21</sup>

He suggests to De La Rue that if he continues to attack others in such an intemperate style, he would be advised to change the name of his newspaper to "libelle hebdomadaire".

De La Rue of course cannot let this pass and in the next edition of the *Miroir*, declares with outrage and a touch of disingenuity, that Hamilton is mistaken in addressing his remarks to the editor of the *Miroir* since the blameless Daniel de Moulpied is now editor and has been for two weeks. De La Rue on the other hand is merely a humble printer,

The knowledge of printing, and what may be attached to that art, is the extent of my claim - it shall never be said that I have arrogated any other pretensions.<sup>22</sup>

With that, the brief public war was allowed to rest, although what went on behind the scenes is perhaps more intriguing yet. There is a tantalising advertisement in the February 20th

edition of the *Miroir* in which De La Rue offers an £8 reward for information regarding the "evil disposed persons" who threw stones at his office window in le Pollet, breaking a pane of glass. Unfortunately, the identity of the stone throwers has not been discovered.

De La Rue was indeed skilled at printing; the paper and the print of the *Miroir* were of a much higher quality than any of the other newspapers, including the *Gazette*. There was very little local news but it had a high French content, possibly due to the fact that at this stage of his life, De La Rue did not speak English.<sup>23</sup> The subscription price was very similar to its rivals, being 6 shillings a year and 3 sous for a single issue.

After the events of 1813, De La Rue did not address the public again, preferring the art of printing to that of journalism. His brush with Greenslade was not yet entirely over however; in a rather bizarre footnote, in 1814, he married an English woman called Jane Warren from Bishop's Nympton in Devon who had visited Guernsey on the instigation of her maternal cousin, Thomas Greenslade.<sup>24</sup> Greenslade's reaction to the match was unrecorded.

In 1816, De La Rue put Guernsey behind him and sailed for England, having sold the *Miroir* to his successful brother-in-law John Champion.<sup>25</sup> He would go on to build the house of De La Rue and sons, printing amongst other things, a British fourpenny stamp and currency notes for the Mauritius. By 1851, he was the deputy chairman to the Paper, Printing and Bookbinding class at the Great Exhibition and in 1855, was awarded the French Légion d'Honneur.<sup>26</sup>

John Champion's first edition as proprietor was March 23rd, 1816 and he took on the role with enthusiasm. It was published from

the *Miroir* offices in le Pollet and from his house in Market Street. Champion seems to have stirred up even more trouble than his brother-in-law. In April 1817, he acknowledges that he has fallen under the displeasure of both the Lieutenant-Governor's office and the Dean of Guernsey but expresses his pleasure at having met such distinguished people, despite the circumstances. With almost arrogant indifference, he shrugs off claims of political bias by declaring, "the only 'barometer' is the public at large."<sup>27</sup> Champion's 'political bias' verged on the republican; he refers to himself as "we", adding in a footnote, "Kings and Editors always speak in the plural number."

Despite Champion's evident glee for his new role, the newspaper was shortlived. The *Publiciste* had ended abruptly in 1816<sup>28</sup> and the *Miroir* was shortly to follow suit. On June 28th, 1817, Champion announces bluntly that the paper has been discontinued, but offers no explanation for its sudden demise. It is likely that as an inexperienced newcomer, he found the pressure rather too much and one of the more exuberent chapters in Guernsey newspaper publishing drew to a close.

L'Independance, Le Bavard, Le Pilote, Le Guernesiais (1848 and 1870)

With the explosion of French newspapers in the first two decades of the nineteenth century, only the *Gazette*, the *Mercure* and the *Independance* survived longer than fifteen years. The *Independance* was smaller, cheaper and altogether less pretentious than its rivals; the prospectus of the first edition of February 1st, 1817 made much of the fact that the newspaper did not claim to be either literary, economic, political or mercantile in its bias, but would concentrate on news items alone. The proprietors' rationale for writing in French was the patriotic one of it being the traditional language of the island, and for the practical one that, although English was widely spoken, French was known by more people than English. This would have the added advantage of increasing their circulation figures.

The *Independance* was a weekly appearing on Saturdays and was very similar to its rivals in terms of format being four pages and 12 columns, although it was the cheapest at 3½ shillings per year subscription. The proprietors were two Guernseymen, Thomas Dumaresq and Thomas James Mauger (no relation to Nicholas Mauger) who produced the newspaper from their printing office in the Grand Rue in the centre of town. Their determination to concentrate solely on immediate and important news whilst avoiding pointless discussion does give the newspaper a rather conservative feel since events are rarely questioned. However, local news does get a far more extensive coverage than was common at the time; cases tried at the Royal Court often made front page news, such as the trial of Margueritte Mackenzie in 1818, a Scottish woman living on the island who was accused of infanticide.<sup>1</sup> In the *Mercure* and the *Gazette*, the story was found in the inner pages.

The *Independance* also contains one of the first instances of on-

the-spot reporting of a local event. In May 1817, the foundation stone for the church of St. James-the-less was laid. It was to be an English Episcopal church and the first island church in which the services would be held entirely in English.<sup>2</sup> A member of the *Independance* staff, possibly even Dumaresq or Mauger, was present at the ceremony and reported events for the newspaper, thus obtaining an 'exclusive'. The event was covered by other newspapers, but only in the *Independance* does a first hand account appear; and written in a lively, subjective style,

The stone was then lowered down ... a most fervent ejaculatory prayer (which evidently came from the heart), was uttered by the pious and worthy Patrons of the undertaking.<sup>3</sup>

The erection of St. James-the-less was part of the ongoing resuscitation of the Anglican Church in the islands which had been predominantly Calvinist and non-conformist since the Civil War.<sup>4</sup> Anglicanism grew in strength throughout the nineteenth century, but Guernsey retained an acceptance and respect for many non-conformist sects, particularly Methodist, Wesleyan and Baptist. Thomas Dumaresq was himself a fervent Anglican but shared this respect for non-conformity which is mirrored in the pages of the *Independance* in which full coverage of all religious events is given. Dumaresq and Mauger also produced a quarterly magazine, *Magasin de l'Eglise Anglicane* which went on sale from January 2nd 1819 priced at 3d.<sup>5</sup> It was later taken over by Henry Brouard, proprietor of the *Mercure* and the *Star*.<sup>6</sup>

This devotion to religious matters was partnered with a devotion and loyalty to the English crown, which while shared to some extent by the other French newspapers was given a fuller voice in the *Independance*. The proprietor stated in 1818 that they would not admit political views which did not,



Breathe a perfect devotion to our well-beloved sovereign.<sup>7</sup>

This is demonstrated with the death of George III in 1820; the newspaper went into mourning and produced a lengthy and reverent description of the King's last hours.<sup>8</sup> A similar, if shorter coverage was given by the *Gazette* and the *Mercure*. Surprisingly, the only jarring note amongst the eulogies came from the English *Star* newspaper, which commented,

The inhabitants of this island are no less enthusiastic in their attachment to the illustrious house of Brunswick than were their ancestors although they had many Royal Charters and privileges granted to them, as incentives to their loyalty, of which we are now deprived.<sup>9</sup>

This paragraph says a lot about the pragmatism of the Guernsey people; an attitude in which loyalty is not necessarily a deterrent to self-interest.

The *Independance* printing office moved from the Grand Rue to Proche l'église, near the Town Church, in 1818<sup>10</sup> where it remained until 1825. On January 3rd 1824, the newspaper acquired the subtitle of *Journal hebdomadaire* and in October 1825, it made its final move to the Escalier du Mont-Gibel (Constitution Steps). By June 1st, 1829, the printing works had expanded and Dumaresq and Mauger were able to print the English newspaper, the *Comet*, for its proprietor William Maillard.<sup>11</sup>

Dumaresq's religious affiliation made certain that full coverage was given to the visit of the Bishop of Winchester in September 1829. It was the first time that an Anglican Bishop had visited the island, despite the fact that Guernsey had been part of the See of Winchester since 1569.<sup>12</sup> Descriptions are given of the Bishop's itinerary; performing baptisms and confirmations in each parish and even giving a sermon in the completed church of

St. James-the-less.<sup>13</sup>

The partnership between Dumaresq and Mauger was dissolved by mutual consent on December 31st, 1829 and Mauger continued with the business alone.<sup>14</sup> It is probable that Dumaresq was due to retire since he also began advertising the contents of his book and stationary shop, "at much under the usual prices."<sup>15</sup>

The *Independance* continued much the same under Mauger's sole proprietorship, although the subscription rate was put up to 4 shillings a year in 1833. With the demise of the *Mercure* in 1832, only the *Independance* and the *Gazette* remained of the French newspapers, whilst the number of English newspapers was increasing. The *Independance* was shortly to become a victim of the downward trend of the French language. In August 1835, Mauger put the offices up for sale, including all types, presses and rights to the newspaper.<sup>16</sup> The advert was inserted weekly until August 29th after which the newspaper abruptly ceased. A possible explanation is that the offices were sold sometime after that date and the new owners decided not to continue with the newspaper. There would be no new French newspaper until 1840.

A very short-lived newspaper, the *Bavard*, was produced from the Mont-Gibel printing office around the end of 1840. It is possible that it was printed by the buyers of the *Independance* newspaper, but there is no proof for this. Only a single copy of the newspaper exists and very little is known about it in general including the names of the proprietors. The existing copy is dated October 9th, 1841 and numbered 57 and it is probable that the newspaper did not last into 1842. The editorial is lively and highly critical of the English Government. A probably even shorter-lived newspaper was the *Pilote* which first appeared in 1844. It was priced at 1d per issue and was a weekly appearing on Saturdays. It was printed

from offices in the High Street. Again, the proprietors are unknown, although it was published and sold from the shops of William Giffard in Mont Durand and Smith Street.<sup>17</sup>

The *Guernesiais* appeared on Saturday May 13th, 1848. The paper's subtitle sums up its ambitious scope; it was, *Journal politique, litteraire, commercial et agricole des iles Anglo-Normandes*. The proprietors were Mauger and Linfitt. Mauger's initials have not been discovered so whether he was in some way connected with Nicholas Mauger or Thomas James Mauger is a matter of conjecture. The *Guernesiais* was a weekly appearing on Saturdays and priced at 1d. per issue and 1s. 1d. per quarter subscription. It was printed by the printer and bookseller Etienne Barbet from his shop in New Street.

The prospectus declares that the newspaper is committed to truth and devoted to Guernsey independance; "notre pays, notre langue, nos institutions, nos lois." Yet, despite this apparently fervent nationalism, there was actually very little local news in the *Guernesiais* when compared to its rivals, except for the usual proceedings of the Royal Court and shipping news. The newspaper was also biased towards French news, which took precedence over English news in the majority of issues. The style of journalism was rather serious-minded and highly political; Mauger and Linfitt were supporters of Louis Napoleon in France, harking back to the days of Bonaparte and the Empire. Perhaps because of the radical politics, which would not have found a very wide audience, the newspaper never succeeded in attracting much advertising. There were a number of small and classified advertisements, but the lucrative patronage of large retailers seemed to be beyond their reach.

The relationship between the proprietors and the printer did not appear to be very good. In November 1848, Barbet parted company from the newspaper and Mauger and Linfitt took over the printing

themselves from their office in Fountain Street. Barbet's parting address was rather abrupt and a little unfriendly,

...from the end of the day, he ceases to have any interest, either directly, or indirectly, in the publication of this paper.<sup>18</sup>

In the next edition, the proprietors again addressed the public to assure them that the newspaper was successful. They claim to have a wide readership, not only in Guernsey, but in Jersey, France, Alderney and England. They provide no circulation figures but feel they can afford to increase the size of the paper from 16 columns to 20, making it the largest French newspaper in the islands.<sup>19</sup> The enlargement came into effect on December 23rd, 1848 and the price was also increased to 1½d. per issue and 1s. 3d. a quarter.

From January 12th 1849, the newspaper began to appear on Fridays evenings, possibly in an attempt to pre-empt the glut of Saturday newspapers. The newspaper did not change significantly throughout the year, but the December 28th edition of that year reveals that the proprietors were excited at the success of their newspaper. They had been told that it would not last longer than three months, and they are now about to embark on their third year and have become firmly established in Guernsey society.

This editorial seems to indicate that the newspaper had no financial difficulties, however, as this is the last surviving copy, and no reference is made to the *Guernesiais* after Christmas 1849, it must be assumed that the newspaper was discontinued.

The title *Guernesiais* was not, however, defunct since a newspaper of the same name appeared in 1870. It was even

shorter lived and did not survive its first year.<sup>20</sup> The proprietor was an Alderney man, M. Le Comte de Fahy, who also owned and published the Alderney newspaper, *l'Auregniais*.<sup>21</sup> His *Guernesiais* was a weekly, priced at 1d. and printed by Mackenzie fils. and Le Patourel of Fountain Street and Rue Lefebvre.<sup>22</sup> According to the 1913 anniversary edition of the *Star*, some of the articles caused quite a sensation because of their radical politics. When it was discontinued in late 1870, Le Comte de Fahy returned to Alderney.

Le Bailliage, La Feuille.

The last quarter of the nineteenth century saw a resurgence of interest in Guernsey culture and history. Guernsey French began to be written down when it was realised that the language was dying out; it had not been taught in schools since at least the 1860s, even though it was spoken in almost all homes outside St. Peter Port.<sup>1</sup> Thus, when the *Journal de Bailliage de Guernesey: politique, litteraire, commercial, agricole* first appeared in 1882, it was in French, not for practical purposes but for cultural and patriotic ones:

C'est dans cette langue qu'ils parlent, c'est la langue de la chaire et du barreau - en un mot, c'est la langue officielle du pays.<sup>2</sup>

The proprietor of the new newspaper was Advocate Theophilus de Mouilpied who was also the honorary secretary of the Agricultural and Horticultural Society.<sup>3</sup> He was therefore much involved with local matters, particularly the rural concerns of the country parishes. The first edition was dated October 21st, 1882. It was a weekly, appearing on Saturdays and priced at 1d with eight pages. The printer was Frederick Clarke of the States Arcade who owned and printed his own English newspaper, *Clarke's Guernsey News*. The first editorial reveals that De Mouilpied was convinced that a second French language newspaper would only serve to strengthen ties with the island's past and provide a vehicle for issues not covered by the *Gazette*,

Pour fournir à nos campagnes une lecture en rapport avec leurs besoins et leurs goûts.<sup>4</sup>

The *Bailliage* was also named as the official organ of the Agricultural and Horticultural Society; the second issue contained extracts from the *Herd Book* and articles about gardening and the Guernsey Cow.

The first edition contains a letter from a W. P. Cohu who expresses his pleasure at the appearance of the newspaper, suggesting that the *Bailliage* was providing a much needed service. Cohu is in favour of Home Rule and of severing ties with England. His letter would seem to indicate an upsurge of Guernsey nationalism and self-identity at this time,

C'est un fait patent que notre pays souffre, que nos vraies patriotes disparaissent, que nos institutions sont en danger et s'en vont peu à peu ne plus revénir.

De Mouilpied was determined to reach the country parishes and he set up depots in the parishes of St. Martin's, St. Sampson's, St. Andrew's, Câtel and Vale from which the newspaper could be collected so that a journey into town would not be necessary. He also took the unprecedented step of writing a few articles in Guernsey French. The *Bailliage* was successful in building a considerable readership in the rural parts of the island.<sup>5</sup>

The content was wide and varied; biased towards horticultural matters but with some international, political news and several lighter items. An advertisement in the *Gazette* a week before the first edition of the *Bailliage* gave a full list of intended coverage: Foreign politics, judgements of the Royal Court, table of religious services, Stock-breeding, *Herd Book* extracts, the garden and the greenhouse.<sup>6</sup>

From January 1883, "Guernesey" was dropped from the title and the page size was considerably enlarged. The available space remained the same however since the number of pages was lowered to four. Frederick Clarke discontinued his association with the *Bailliage* and the printing was taken over by Thomas Grigg of 25, Grand Rue. There was still a large percentage of local news, both official and unofficial, although English news dominated the front pages. The advertising reflected the newspaper's

agricultural bias, as did the small and classified adverts. There was very little advertising from cloth merchants, food retailers or manufacturers of patent medicine who all advertised extensively in the *Star* and the *Gazette*.

Grigg did not print the newspaper for very long. On February 3rd, 1883, the operation was taken over by Frédérick Blondel Guérin. he worked from the same premises so it seems likely that he purchased the concern from Grigg. The *Bailliage* celebrated its first anniversary on October 20th and the editor reveals that there were initial worries that the newspaper would not succeed largely because of the decline in the French language. They cite the downfall of the Wednesday edition of the *Gazette* as an example. De Mouilpied would have liked to have produced a bi-weekly newspaper himself, but the present circulation would not have warranted a second edition.<sup>7</sup> The readership was increasing however and the newspapers agricultural and horticultural links would have contributed to making it indispensable.

Despite the determination to promote the French language, the *Bailliage* did contain a number of English sections and these increased as time went by. In 1890, it was describing itself as a French-English newspaper and was determined to continue with its two regular English columns.<sup>8</sup> It was extremely proud of the fact that it was the only newspaper to print a list of the Sunday services offered by *all* the island churches without religious bias. This list was quite extensive due to the popularity of the non-conformist churches on the island, and included; Methodist, Baptist, Evangelical, Church of Scotland and Catholic. At the beginning of 1890, Frédérick Guérin left the *Bailliage*, which he had also edited, to start a new English newspaper, the *Sun* where he became managing editor. The printing operation was taken over by A. Henry from his office in Manor Place.



The editorials and leading articles continued to be dominated by horticultural matters. The newspaper must have been most useful as a source of information about local shows and competitions which were important cultural and social events in the island's calender, for farmers and the general public alike. The articles for the most part were serious and intelligent although a number of poems and stories in Guernsey French added a measure of humour. The Guernsey French section was entitled 'Causeries' (consequences) and often featured amusing dialogues between country parishioners.

Henry's printing firm was taken over later the same year by Henri Le Roy who continued to print the newspaper from the same premises.<sup>9</sup> The editor at the time was Count A. G. de la Hulinière who later joined the staff of the *Gazette*.<sup>10</sup>

The *Bailliage* survived in all for 20 years and was representative of a time when Guernsey was finding its feet as a major agricultural producer. The tomato industry which dominated Guernsey commerce until the last quarter of the twentieth century, had taken off in 1865 and had grown to massive proportions in the 1870s and 80s.<sup>11</sup> Fruit growing and flowers were also important island produce, although only the flower industry is of any importance today.

The last full edition of the *Bailliage* appeared on June 28th, 1902. On July 5th, a handbill only was produced to announce the demise of the newspaper. No particular reason was given, although the proprietor declared himself proud of the achievements of the *Bailliage*; having fought to uphold Guernsey rights and privileges and defended the rights of industry and commerce.

Later the same year, a brief explosion of Guernsey nationalism found its voice in the short-lived newspaper, *La Feuille*:

*journal Français-Anglais hebdomadaire*. It was intended as a Saturday weekly, priced at 1 sou ( $\frac{1}{2}$ d.) and appeared on November 22nd, 1902. Four pages and 16 columns, it was printed on steam machines by A. W. Bartlett of Manor Place printing works. Unfortunately, the names of the proprietors have not been discovered. The leading article of the first issue declares, "Guernesey Aux Guernesiais!", and is a passionate appeal to the Guernsey people to fight the encroachment of English customs and language. The editors make the interesting and surprisingly perspicacious point that anglicization would never occur if the Guernsey people did not want it. Only in actively inviting it in will they allow their heritage to slip away. The newspaper had been produced for one reason only; to reawaken patriotism and incite readers to fight for the survival of their culture.

The contents were predominantly political, but lively if somewhat irreverent. "La Journâie du Mardi" in Guernsey French describes the proceedings of the States of Deliberation on the preceding Tuesday, led by the Bailiff, Giffard K. C.. The editor expresses himself as being puzzled as to why these letters appear after Giffard's name, since everybody knows who he is. Since this piece is followed in the second edition by an article, in English, on socialism in the island, there is no doubt left as to the political bias of the newspaper.

The *Feuille* was extremely critical in relating events in the British parliament and the actions of Joseph Chamberlain. There was a high percentage of local news, but the balance of articles was uncertain; either political invective or a report on Guernsey cattle around the world. It also contained very little advertising.

The *Feuille* survived for two issues only. It is likely that the reasons for its demise were exactly those it was attempting to

revolt against. It is a sad truth that this attempt to return to the days when Guernsey was culturally, if not nominally, French, came too late. the Guernsey people had allowed anglicization to continue unchecked and would have to adjust to a new way of life and a new century.

## CHAPTER TWO - 1806-1902

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## PART TWO - NINETEENTH CENTURY ENGLISH NEWSPAPERS

### CHAPTER THREE

1813-1838

#### The Star

Hamilton and Brouard, proprietors of the *Mercure*, produced Guernsey's first English language newspaper on Tuesday June 29th, 1813. It was the *Star: or Guernsey Weekly Advertiser*; four pages, 12 columns and priced rather expensively at 2½d. per issue and 2s. 3d. a quarter subscription. It was at first a weekly, appearing mid-week unlike the French weeklies which at the time all appeared on a Saturday. Hamilton and Brouard were very clear as to the reasons for starting the newspaper;

From the frequent intercourse of strangers, as well as the vast number of English inhabitants at present in the island, they are induced to conceive that such a paper will be found a very great *desideratum*.<sup>1</sup>

They professed to have no party politics but both men were religious and they sought to promote the Church of England by providing space for Church articles and announcements.<sup>2</sup> Above all, the *Star* was fervently anglophile; as the 100th anniversary edition in 1913 made clear, it considered itself from the beginning as part of the tradition of mainland English newspapers. Very often in the editorials, the terms Englishman and Guernseyman were synonyms in terms of political ideology, despite the assurance that the paper would attempt to uphold Channel Island autonomy and preserve ancient rights and privileges. At the height of the Peninsular War, patriotism was the key note of the newspaper; "wherever our Readers turn their eyes, they will meet with some splendid monument of the grandeur of their country."<sup>3</sup> (meaning England).

The contents of the *Star* were rather similar to its French rivals; news from England and abroad, very little local content, a small literary section and a large number of small advertisements. The editors also explained their method of data collection; news from the Sunday morning mail boat would be published on Tuesday, except where the packet was delayed and they would attempt to include news items taken from any newspapers which arrived on the Monday evening sailing from Weymouth.<sup>4</sup> However, before steam, the sailing packets could rarely be depended on and the quality and currency of news in the *Star* varied a great deal. Writing from a 1913 perspective, the *Star* editor commented,

it [the *Star*] contained practically no local news for several years and devoted itself mainly to reports, culled from English newspapers which arrived irregularly by the sailing packets of those days.<sup>5</sup>

Hamilton severed his partnership with Brouard in November, 1813 and the printing firm became *Brouard and Co.* on November 2nd. Brouard was able to increase the size of the newspaper in April 1814, the pages were lengthened and an additional four columns added, bringing the total to 16. This increase in size brought it in line with the format of the *Mercure* and the *Publiciste* and also, "nearly on the plan of the papers published in England".<sup>6</sup> The cover price was increased to 3d. and the subscription to 3s. 3d. a quarter and the *Star* remained the most expensive newspaper in the island. The high cost of the newspaper may have been due to the expense of producing two newspapers in different languages from the same printing works, one of which had not yet generated a large amount of advertising. It is possible that Brouard was also taking advantage of the higher purchasing power of the English speaking population who were for the most part, wealthy immigrants or of the *Soixante-Quarante*.

The *Star* quickly established itself and the nature of its advertisements began to reflect the affluent readership; cosmetics, musical instruments, jewelry and other luxury items were frequently advertised. Although there was inevitably a duplication of adverts among the island newspapers, many of those appearing in the *Star*, never found their way onto the pages of the *Mercure* or the *Independance*. On September 13th, 1825, Brouard was able to reduce the cover price to 2d.

One of the most significant single events to affect newspapers in the early nineteenth century was the arrival of steam ships in 1823. On June 10th of that year, the *Medina* arrived from Southampton after a journey of 15 hours. It had been privately chartered by Colonel Fitzgerald but regular commercial steam packets were quickly set up from Southampton and Weymouth; the time taken to travel from Guernsey to London was reduced to a mere 24 hours.<sup>7</sup> The *Star* gives extensive coverage to the arrival of the *Medina* and of its short trip to Jersey; the editors were quick to recognise the potential of the 'Bateau à vapeur' in terms of dissemination of news. There is no doubt that the faster arrival of news from England enabled the *Star* to become a bi-weekly from May 7th, 1830, appearing every Friday and Monday morning. It also changed its subtitle, becoming, *Guernsey commercial and general advertiser*.

At around the same time, the editorship was taken up by Jonathan Duncan, Brouard preferring to concentrate on the printing and publishing of his newspaper.<sup>8</sup> The size was again increased on August 6th, 1832 to 20 columns. Since the *Mercure* had been sold (although not continued) in June of the same year, it is likely that Brouard found himself with greater resources, at least for a few months. Duncan was not particularly controversial as an editor and the *Star*, despite brief moments of outspokenness, was generally more politically conservative than its French rivals. It is evident however that from an historical perspective, the

style of journalism at the beginning of the nineteenth century was considerably freer, more subjective and arguably less responsible than that found at the beginning of the twentieth century. Bernard Beilby, the editor of the *Star* in 1913 commented,

The fearless manner in which the Editor of that day expressed himself concerning the Court, local affairs, etc., is a revelation, and certainly an Editor of the present time, unless he wished to reap of a peck of troubles, would not dare to publish his opinions so freely.<sup>9</sup>

This free expression of opinion was not so much due to bravado as to a determination to maintain a strictly independent and unbiased viewpoint; or as Duncan alliteratively put it in 1846,

The *Star* has never been identified with the authorities of Guernsey or with those who may have been systematically opposed to them. It has never courted the patronage of power, nor pandered to popular prejudice.<sup>10</sup>

One of the few times that the *Star* openly and defiantly took sides was in 1844 when the Lieutenant-Governor, General Napier, the Queen's representative on the island, took it upon himself to over-rule the Royal Court by obtaining a pardon for a soldier who had been imprisoned for theft, despite the fact that the soldier, Fossey, had openly declared his own guilt. This constituted, "a deliberate defiance of Guernsey law."<sup>11</sup> In reality, the post of Lieutenant-Governor held, and still holds, no power, being purely diplomatic and ceremonial. The *Star* was severely critical of Napier's behaviour and called for his resignation whilst also contributing to the upsurge of public indignation,

We believe that there is not a single Guernseyman who does

not feel that he has been insulted by the Lieut.-Governor.<sup>12</sup>

Although the *Star* was most strident in its defence of Guernsey autonomy, the other newspapers were similarly critical, the only exception being the *Gazette* which as 'Journal officiel', maintained a determinedly neutral status, professing to know little of the matter.<sup>13</sup> Such outrage erupted from the island, encouraged by the newspapers, that a number of public disturbances took place. Napier, convinced that the Guernsey Militia was conspiring against his life, attempted to quell the insurrection by placing the island under marshall law. Only the intervention of Queen Victoria prevented such an intemperate measure from taking place.<sup>14</sup>

The *Star* revealed that it could profess itself an anglophile, but be a fierce Guernsey national when provoked. In the event however, journalistic outrage had little effect; Napier served out his term of office and eventually left the island in 1848.

Throughout the 1830s and 40s, the *Star* underwent considerable expansion. The Friday edition was changed to a Thursday from 1835 and the circulation figures must have been quite high since advertising took up a maximum of 30% of the content, sometimes less. A 50:50 ratio between news and advertising was more common for a well established provincial newspaper at this time.<sup>15</sup> For a ten year period between May 7th, 1835 and August 4th, 1845, The *Star* was given the lengthy subtitle of, *Political, naval, military and commercial intelligencer, and general advertiser*. After 1845, the subtitle was dropped altogether.

The success of the *Star* was evident from March 25th, 1846, when it began to appear three times a week; every Monday, Wednesday and Friday and at no increase in cover price. The explanation behind the step was that the demand for frequent and early news

had grown as the communication between England and Guernsey had improved, "and to which the bi-weekly publication of the *Star* has been inadequate."<sup>16</sup> The subscription rate was raised to 6 shillings per quarter for three editions, 4s. for two and 2s. for one. An additional payment of 6d. per quarter ensured that the newspaper was delivered to England. The importance of the steam packets was demonstrated in 1848 when the *Star* was forced to change its days of publication to Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday because of altered times of arrival of the mail boats from Southampton. This was evidently of extreme annoyance to the *Star's* editor since he complains that the news would be several hours older than had previously been the case.<sup>17</sup>

The number of subscribers to the *Star* had risen from just under 600 in 1825 to well over 1,000 in 1845<sup>18</sup> and the newspaper would continue to grow in strength over the succeeding years. the expansion of the *Star* from a weekly to a thrice-weekly was attributed almost entirely to improvements in the postal communication.<sup>19</sup> The dissemination of news through improved transport worked both ways; many *Stars* found their way out of Guernsey, helped in part by relatively inexpensive postal charges, and the editors were able to boast of subscribers in Liverpool, Malta, the West Indies, Australia, New Zealand and the United States.<sup>20</sup>

Henry Brouard, proprietor of the *Star* for 45 years, died on April 27th, 1858 after a long illness. He was 66 years old.<sup>21</sup> The *Star's* new proprietor was Brouard's nephew Frederick Le Lievre who owned and ran a circulating library and reading room at 25, Commercial Arcade.<sup>22</sup> Later the same year, John Talbot, a long-time associate of the paper, was appointed editor. Talbot was an Englishman by birth but, "a Guernseyman by choice"<sup>23</sup> and was well known in the island's intellectual circles. He numbered amongst his friends, Ferdinand Brock Tupper, an eminent historian, and Guernsey's national poet,

Georges Métevier.<sup>24</sup> He was best remembered for his rhetorical ability and passion for justice and was a co-author of the February 1844 edition of the *Star* which attacked General Napier with uncharacteristic vigour.

The *Star* had always been the most expensive newspaper until in March 1862, price was lowered to 1½d. per issue. The subscription rates were brought down accordingly. Talbot celebrated this reduction whilst simultaneously managing to defend the previous high cost, and all at the expense of its rivals,

As the *Star* in its present form contains about one-third more material than any other of the local papers, the reduction now announced places it on a level with them in regard to price.<sup>25</sup>

Le Lievre unfortunately suffered from poor health and after a long illness, died at his home in the Bordage on August 16th, 1867, at the young age of 45.<sup>26</sup> The ownership of the newspaper and printing works as well as the business in Commercial Arcade passed entirely to his widow, Ellen Le Lievre. She became Guernsey's second woman proprietor, Elizabeth Maillard having succeeded to the rights of the *Star*'s closest rival the *Comet* on the death of her husband in 1863.<sup>27</sup>

Ellen Le Lievre promised to continue the entire business as before, but she was reticent about being known as the proprietor and her name did not appear on the newspaper in that role until 1881. However, according to the 1913 anniversary edition, she ran the business almost single-handedly - and extremely successfully.<sup>28</sup>

In February 1874, John Talbot died suddenly and was replaced by James W. Ozanne, an eminent local journalist with many years

experience. He left the *Star* in 1878 to join the *Daily Telegraph* in London where he became their second correspondent in Paris and later promoted to chief correspondent.<sup>29</sup>

Between the early 1840s and 1888, all the printing of the *Star* was done on a Napier cylinder printing machine. Although by island standards the newspaper was successful, the limited circulation did not warrant investment into powering the machine by steam. Thus, for over 40 years, it was turned by hand, either by one man or by two boy apprentices.<sup>30</sup> In 1880, Le Lievre purchased a modern cylinder printing press which was powered by a gas-engine. This considerably improved efficiency and helped the newspaper in its continued expansion until an electric Rotary press could be installed in 1912.<sup>31</sup>

Ozanne's successor as editor was James Sneath who died suddenly in 1888 and was replaced by Louis Bardasano<sup>32</sup>. During Bardasano's editorship, Le Lievre, who had no-one to succeed her, sold the *Star* to a small group of *Star* employees and ex-employees. They were James Ozanne, the former editor who had returned to the island, H. E. Marquand, the son of a former editor of the *Gazette* and himself an accomplished writer, and Bowen, manager of the *Star* since 1872.<sup>33</sup> The first edition under the new ownership was dated March 31st, 1890. Le Lievre expressed her pleasure that she could pass the *Star* to familiar hands and Ozanne, Marquand and Bowen pledged to continue the *Star* along the same lines. A Miss Caroline White was employed to work in the Stationary and Fancy department. The political outlook of the *Star* was again firmly stated,

We are conservative in the best sense of the word, attached to our institutions and to the consolidation and development of the British Empire.



Bardasano spent six years as editor and was replaced in may 1892 by J. A. Kemmis who stayed for only 18 months before gaining a post with the *Egyptian Gazette* in Cairo.<sup>34</sup> H. E. Marquand took over as editor in November, 1893, a post he held for almost 20 years. Bowen retired from the firm in 1893 and the company was reorganised. It became known as *Marquand and Co.* and several new directors were appointed; Sir H. Austin Lee, his brother the Rev. George E. Lee and Jurat Charles Ozanne.<sup>35</sup> As with many other privately owned newspapers at the time, the company was consolidated into a limited liability company in 1900, becoming the *Guernsey Star Publishing and Printing Co. Ltd.*<sup>36</sup>

The *Star* continued to flourish in the twentieth century; it became a daily in 1912 and entered into full competition with the island's only other daily, the *Guernsey Evening Press*. These two newspapers dominated the market until the 1960s. In 1913, the *Star* company purchased the *Gazette* and the *Guernsey Advertiser*, the latter newspaper becoming the *Weekly Star*. It remained a strong competitor to the *Guernsey Evening Press*, even through the privations of the German Occupation of 1940-1945 but it was financial difficulty and the rising cost of newsprint which finally brought it to its knees.<sup>37</sup> The *Star* was rescued briefly in 1950 when it was purchased by the *Guernsey Herald Co.*, and sold again on July 16th, 1951 to the *Guernsey Evening Press*. It continued to be printed as a seperate newspaper until 1965, when the two newspapers were amalgamated becoming the *Guernsey Evening Press and Star*.<sup>38</sup>

The Globe, The Guernsey Telegraph, The Comet, Chit-Chat, The Guernsey Diary and The Torch.

The *Star* dominated in the field of English language newspapers throughout the nineteenth century. In effect, it had no significant competition until the *Comet* was founded in 1828. The first mention of a second English newspaper was made by Jacobs in 1830 when he referred to a newspaper called the *Globe* which made a brief appearance in 1823, changed its name to the *British Press*, and very soon afterwards disappeared.<sup>1</sup> The next newspaper, which also survived a relatively short time was the *Guernsey Telegraph* which first came out on Monday June 12th, 1826. It had the distinction of being the first island bi-weekly, appearing every Monday and Friday. Its sub-title was, *General advertiser for the Channel Islands* and printed under the catchphrase, "open to all, influenced by none".

It was a small size, being four pages and 16 columns, priced at 2d. per issue and 2 shillings per quarter subscription. The printer and proprietor was Stephen Barbet who had a well established print shop at the bottom of Smith Street. He started in publishing in 1817 when he began the *Magazine Methodiste* in collaboration with Henry Brouard, a weekly journal which ran until 1847.<sup>2</sup> Barbet appointed another Methodist, William Maillard, to be his editor. Maillard was later to start his own newspaper, the *Comet*, and his first editorial for the *Guernsey Telegraph* indicates that he was greatly influenced by the ideology of the Free Press,

This mighty engine, when properly directed, has been and still continues to be, of incalculable benefit to the community at large.<sup>3</sup>

Yet, even this desire for free exchange was somewhat qualified; opinion would be guided by "right principles" and a "just discrimination" would be used in the selection of articles.

Whether this interpretation of free speech was perceived as a little daunting, or the *Guernsey Telegraph* never achieved popularity, but in the two years of its existence, it received very little correspondance from readers.

The majority of the newspaper's content was British and foreign news, for the most part culled from London newspapers. The third page contained editor's comments and small items of local news. The first editorial was a commentary on the evils of contracting out building work to non-local builders, a problem which still exists in the twentieth century. The *Guernsey Telegraph* was more biased towards naval matters than the other newspapers, due no doubt to the fact that Maillard was an ex-seaman.<sup>4</sup>

Despite Barbet's claim that the first edition sold out completely necessitating a reprint<sup>5</sup>, the *Guernsey Telegraph* never really took off; the small adverts were few and it never attracted the custom of the larger retailers who advertised in the *Star* and the *Gazette*. It may have gained strength over time had not Maillard left in March 1828 to found his own newspaper, the *Comet*. The *Guernsey Telegraph* limped on for a further two months without an editor before folding on May 30th, 1828. Barbet continued in printing for many years and as well as his Methodist magazine, produced the *Anglican Church of England magazine for the Channel Islands* in 1841.<sup>6</sup>

The *Comet* first appeared on Monday evening, March 31st, 1828 priced at 2d. and subtitled, *General advertiser for the islands of Guernsey, Jersey etc.* In order to raise the necessary finance to start the newspaper, Maillard went into partnership with two men, G. Cochrane and Jason Maurant, although the partnership had been dissolved by the end of the year, leaving Maillard as sole proprietor.<sup>7</sup> The newspaper was printed by Nicholas Mauger, proprietor of the *Gazette*, from the *Gazette* offices in Fountain

Street. Mauger also sold the *Comet* from his shop, which suggests that there was less rivalry between the French and English newspapers than between those of the same language. Maillard does declare however that he is determined not to, "abuse or interfere with other newspapers"<sup>8</sup> and apart from a degree of friendly rivalry with the *Star*, he adhered to his promise.

Maillard was born in 1789 and went to sea at quite a young age. it is unknown what type of service he entered but it is likely that he served on a privateering ship, the Channel Islands being renowned for their expertise in that activity. During the Peninsular Wars, the Channel Islands became known as, "one of the naval powers of the world", and the prize money brought into the islands was in the millions.<sup>9</sup> Maillard left the navy sometime in the 1810s and set up as an ironmonger, opening a new shop in Market Street in 1819.<sup>10</sup> He was something of an authority on nautical matters and according to Marshall-Fraser, was also brightly tattooed.<sup>11</sup> He was a non-conformist, and a member of the island's sturdy Methodist congregation.

The prospectus of the *Comet* is similar in many respects to that of the *Guernsey Telegraph* in that it extols the virtues of the Free Press and rejects party politics. There is however a strong moralistic theme running through Maillard's editorial,

Nor will our friends be in danger of receiving through the pages of the *Comet*, anything bordering on topics ... flagrant and demoralizing.<sup>12</sup>

Maillard evidently took this statement seriously; in only the third edition of the newspaper, a letter from a reader calling himself "scrutator" is refused admission into the *Comet* on the grounds that the editor did not think that the content, "in its present garb could answer any valuable purpose."<sup>13</sup>

As for the content of the *Comet*, it tended to have more local news than the other newspapers and the proceedings of the States and the Royal Court were discussed in an intelligent and critical way. The content was also strongly anglophile; the second edition featured a serialisation of the "Constitution of Great Britain" in weekly parts and there was much talk of "Johnny Frenchman" and how much he'd like to get his hands on the Channel Islands.<sup>14</sup>

Nicholas Mauger stopped printing the *Comet* on June 1st, 1829 although he continued to publish and sell it. The printing operation was taken over by Thomas Dumaresq and T. J. Mauger, proprietors of the *Independance*, from their offices in Mont-Gibel. When the partnership between Dumaresq and Mauger was dissolved in December 1829, Mauger continued to print the *Comet* as well as his own newspaper.<sup>15</sup>

The *Comet* quickly became established and began to grow in prosperity. On July 12th, 1830, it was expanded from 16 to 20 columns and almost exactly a year later, Maillard purchased the Albion Press in Mansell Street and began to print the newspaper himself.<sup>16</sup> From April 1st, 1833, the newspaper became a bi-weekly, appearing every Monday and Friday at a reduced price of 1½d. At this point in its history, it not only appeared on the same days as the *Star* but was actually cheaper, the *Star* still priced at 2d. The subtitle was changed slightly to *Commercial and general advertiser for the Channel Islands*. Maillard unfortunately could not sustain the low price of his bi-weekly and was forced to return the cost to 2d. on March 28th, 1836. The Friday edition was changed to a Thursday on the same date.

The *Comet* contained a great deal of information about local church life; reports on church meetings and lists of Sunday services were regular items. A great deal of coverage was given to the Methodists and Wesleyans, although Mailliard was quick to

point out that the newspaper was, "not an organ for that body"<sup>17</sup> The *Comet* may not have been an official organ, but it is fair to say that coverage was often biased towards the non-conformist churches.

The *Comet* underwent two more slight title changes. On March 22nd, 1841, the subtitle became *General intelligencer and chronicle of news*. Since the *Comet* contained a great deal of advertising, this title change was perhaps an attempt to downplay its commercial role. The news items were reorganised into a more formal arrangement; news appeared either under the heading of "Foreign news" or "Home news" (meaning Britain). There was no section entitled 'local news'. The final sub-title change on March 20th, 1843 was rather cumbersome but managed to combine the concepts of a paper as a news-sheet and as a vehicle for advertising. It became, *Political, literary, commercial, military, naval and domestic register, and general advertiser for the Channel Islands*.

Maillard became something of a *cause célèbre* in the 1840s due to his criticism of the infamous Lieutenant-Governor, General Napier. The events of 1844 as described earlier in the chapter were covered critically by the *Comet*, but not with the same outrage that the editor of the *Star* expressed. Maillard continued to be critical of Napier's term of office, but he became truly outraged and outspoken over events which occurred in 1846. In March of that year, Napier purchased new colours for the Guernsey Militia on the occasion of the visit of Queen Victoria to the island. Maillard claimed that the 'gift' was merely a sop to the militia to calm the tension which still existed over Napier's accusations of a military conspiracy in 1844. Moreover, Maillard declared that only the States of Guernsey had the right and privilege to purchase colours for the island's only armed force.<sup>18</sup>

Maillard continued the debate in the next issue of the *Comet*, reiterating the events of 1844 and writing of Napier,

The disturbed and muddled imagination of the greatest libeller that ever undertook to malign the characters of the most loyal people under heaven.<sup>19</sup>

This was too strong for Napier who accused Maillard of libel and demanded an immediate trial. Maillard went before the Royal Court on March 21st, 1846 and pleaded not guilty. The proceedings were relatively short; the Jurats could not at first agree on a verdict but eventually decided that Maillard's comments had been merely an expression of personal opinion, which he was entitled to, and not likely to be damaging to General Napier's standing in the community. Maillard was acquitted.<sup>20</sup>

The *Comet* continued to expand and threaten the *Star*'s supreme position. In 1852, a further four columns were added bringing the total to 24 and in 1862, at the same time that the *Star* reduced its cover price to 1½d., the *Comet* retaliated by reducing its price to a mere 1d., or 4 shillings for six months subscription.<sup>21</sup> Due to changes in the sailing packets, the days of publication were changed to Wednesday and Saturday. The printing works in Mansell Street acquired the Myer's patent Caxton machine on April 30th, 1862, although the printing process was still powered by hand.

William Maillard died on October 30th, 1863 at the age of 75.<sup>22</sup> The entire business was left to his widow, Elizabeth Gallant Maillard who became Guernsey's first woman newspaper proprietor. She was determined to continue the newspaper along the same lines, with the help of her sons Henry and Charles Maillard, the latter being an expert in the printing department. Her slogan was "Patriotism, Protestantism and Progress".<sup>23</sup>

Under Elizabeth Maillard's proprietorship, the *Comet* maintained its high standard of thoughtful, informative editorials, but its value as an advertising medium also increased dramatically over the next 30 years. By the time of her death in 1866<sup>24</sup>, the number of adverts had steadily grown and under the proprietorship of Henry Maillard, the volume of advertising had reached a massive 70% of the total content by the late 1880s. It is likely that this high proportion contributed to downgrading the *Comet*'s reputation relative to the *Star*; the latter newspaper by declining to recognise the *Comet*'s existence for at least 20 years, implied that it was no longer considered a serious rival. The *Star* was busy contending with the high quality *Mail and Telegraph*. In general terms, a newspaper with too much advertising was viewed as a "not wholly serious newspaper"<sup>25</sup>. Throughout the 1890s, the *Comet* advertised a large number of branded goods, particularly foodstuffs and patent medicines, often with large illustrations which, whilst not necessarily contiguous with the concept of a quality newspaper<sup>26</sup>, were at least lucrative and implied a large circulation.

The last issue of the *Comet* appeared on Christmas Eve, 1897, although it was dated December 25th. Henry Maillard indicates that the newspaper had no financial difficulties, ascribing its demise entirely to his "advanced age, increasing physical feebleness and infirmities"<sup>27</sup>. Although he had heirs, notably his nephew A. P. Maillard editor of the *Guernsey Advertiser*<sup>28</sup>, they obviously had no interest in continuing the newspaper. The *Comet* offices in New Street were retained for general printing purposes.

Guernsey's first 'society' paper was the *Chit-Chat*, described as "a new and fashionable weekly journal of literature, fine arts, satire and local facetiae."<sup>29</sup> Appearing on Saturdays, it first came out on October 7th, 1837 priced at 1d. for four small pages, owned by John de Carteret, a retailer from the High



Street. It was printed by T. J. Mauger, ex-proprietor of the *Independance*. The proprietor wished *Chit-Chat* to be modelled upon certain fashionable London journals such as the *Idler* and *Figaro in London*. However, since the latter journal specialised in political satire and caricature<sup>30</sup>, and the *Chit-Chat* quickly became little more than a petty gossip sheet, the comparisons are rather slight. In fact, de Carteret wished to avoid "grave" matters such as politics altogether, as his prospectus reveals,

The form and feature of this Publication, will be to serve up our literary viands in as digestible a form as possible ... selections of light reading ... anecdotes, Bon-mots, local facetiae etc.

The first few editions did have a fairly wide variety of items; horticultural notes, an article on the Guernsey French language and proceedings of the Royal Court. Its gossip section was entitled "Notes of the week", and invited contributions from readers on various topics of interest, as well as editorial comment. As several items came from Jersey and Alderney, it is likely that *Chit-Chat* had a wide circulation in the Channel Islands. "Notes of the week" was at first small, being only one or two columns, but by 1838, it took up approximately 60% of the paper's content. The small articles were rather racy at times, and always critical, whether directed at individuals, or at general behaviour,

We would advise fashionables who consider it etiquette by coming late to keep better hours - or they may perchance be a day after the fair.<sup>31</sup>

Bernard Beilby, editor of the *Star* in 1913, reveals that de Carteret's predilection for gossip caused a great deal of annoyance amongst the fashionable Town society, "Who took umbrage at some of his not too veiled remarks on their doings in

private life."<sup>32</sup>

*Chit-Chat* contained very little advertising except for the occasional personal item. Too much advertising may have been considered vulgar, but with a cheap cover price and with a circulation limited to middle and upper class English speaking families, it could not have been very profitable. It survived for four years, the last edition appearing on October 2nd, 1841.

A second society paper was the *Guernsey Diary* which made its first appearance on Thursday August 9th, 1838. Only one copy of this weekly journal survives, and it is unlikely that it survived long. The proprietor was Mr. Payne of the High Street and it was printed by E. A. Le Sauteur of the Pollet and sold from the shop of Redstone in the Commercial Arcade. It had a larger proportion of news items than *Chit-Chat* and although it had extensive coverage of social events and gossip, it also covered military and naval news, shipping news and passenger lists.

The *Torch* which first appeared on December 16th, 1838 was more of a social and literary journal than a newspaper containing poetry, natural history, book reviews and other miscellanea priced at 1d. Again only a single issue survives (February 8th, 1839), printed by Stephen Barbet and sold by Redstone of the Commercial Arcade.

### CHAPTER THREE - 1813-1838

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## CHAPTER FOUR

1860-1900

The Mail and Telegraph, The Guernsey Advertiser, Clarke's Guernsey News and The Guernsey Herald.

First published in January 1860, the *Mail and Telegraph* was the first English language newspaper to be priced at 1d.<sup>1</sup> Appearing three times a week, every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, it was initially a threat to the *Comet* and *Star*, but despite a high quality of journalism, never achieved the same popularity. It was owned and printed by James Mackenzie and Son and Mesurier Le Patourel of Lefebvre Street who were a well established business and official printers for the States of Guernsey, Government House and Elizabeth College.<sup>2</sup>

As was usual at the time, the *Mail and Telegraph* did not contain a great deal of local news and those items which did appear, never reached the front page. However, events of importance were given coverage when required. Every Saturday there was a round-up of local news entitled "local incidents of the week" which may have been intended for those who could only afford to purchase a single edition every week. The popularity of the Saturday weeklies or 'Sundays' as they were often called, was a phenomenon of the mid-Victorian age<sup>3</sup>; with a relatively small island population, there were no specifically 'working-class' newspapers and those with limited funds would have depended on the popular weekly newspapers or the Saturday editions of other newspapers for their news.

The *Mail and Telegraph* also employed a Jersey correspondent and extensive coverage was given to the execution of Philip Le Brun in 1875, the first execution in that island for nine years.<sup>4</sup> In

general, the quality of news reporting was high; each edition featured a column called "Spirit of the age" which was news taken directly from the London newspapers, but the editor discussed and compared the presentation of news from paper to paper judging political and social bias so that a fuller and more balanced picture of the news emerged.

Advertising, which took up approximately 40% of the available space, was similar to the *Comet* at that time; patent medicines, food merchants and jewelry. In 1870, Mackenzie and Le Patourel also began to print the *Guernesiais* for Le Comte de Fahy. Both newspapers were printed on Myer's patent Caxton machine.<sup>5</sup>

The quantity of local news rose gradually in the 1880s and the editorials often discussed important local issues. On the three hundredth anniversary of Elizabeth College in 1882, the editor took the opportunity to discuss the quality of education on the island, his conclusion being that Elizabeth College was largely traditional, but able to keep up with expanding knowledge.<sup>6</sup>

In the 1880s, James Mackenzie was succeeded in the business by his son Stephen<sup>7</sup> and the newspaper continued in a similar vein. Stephen, unfortunately was not proprietor for very long, dying in April 1897.<sup>8</sup> In June 1898, Le Patourel, now sole proprietor, sold the *Mail and Telegraph* to Theophilus De Moulpiéd, proprietor of the French newspaper, *Bailliage*. A Mr. Landsdowne was appointed editor and the official law court correspondent was Mr. Hamilton.<sup>9</sup> It was printed by H. Le Roy at his steam printing works in Manor Place.

De Moulpiéd subtitled the newspaper, *Political, literary and athletic times* and as the name suggests, extensive coverage was given to sporting events and results, an area which was very rarely covered by the *Bailliage*. De Moulpiéd injected a degree of humour into the content; narrative poetry was featured often

and he had a column entitled "Wit and humour", containing witty short stories and epigrams. As in the *Bailliage*, he was much concerned with local events and politics, commenting often on the policies of the States. The Lieutenant-Governor in 1899, General Stevenson, had been much criticised for his seeming indifference to local affairs. De Mouilpied pointed out that this was not necessarily a bad thing, referring back to the unfortunate behaviour of a previous Lieutenant-Governor,

His Excellency has mixed as little as possible in local questions. And it may be asked, why should he? General Napier did, and did to his cost.<sup>10</sup>

Unfortunately, it appears that De Mouilpied did not receive the financial support he had anticipated when he took over the newspaper. A tri-weekly newspaper would have been much more expensive to run than a weekly<sup>11</sup> and De Mouilpied quickly found himself in financial difficulty. He reveals himself to be more of an idealist than a businessman, being more concerned that his initial vision had failed,

A Guernsey lad who, knowing, feeling and being in sympathy with Guernsey interests, would try and enhance insular prospects.<sup>12</sup>

The final edition of the *Mail and Telegraph* appeared on June 24th, 1899.

Another proprietor of a French newspaper who would come to own an English one, was Thomas Mauger Bichard, proprietor of the *Gazette* from 1860 to 1913. According to Marshall-Fraser, his reason for starting a new English weekly was to produce a newspaper similar to the *Gazette* for those who did not speak French.<sup>13</sup> Entitled the, *Guernsey Advertiser: and weekly chronicle*, it first appeared in February 1870, priced at ½d. and

printed and published every Saturday at the *Gazette* offices in Fountain Street. Bichard was one of the first Guernsey printers to own and operate a steam printing press and his operation was highly successful. In 1868, he won first prize in the first Guernsey Industrial Exhibition, achieving the same honour in the Jersey Exhibition of 1871.<sup>14</sup>

The *Advertiser* was similar in many ways to the *Gazette*, although the editorials were somewhat livelier and as the title of 'journal officiel' did not extend to the *Advertiser*, the local content was less and lighter in tone. One or two items were occasionally translated directly from the *Gazette*, although to Bichard's credit, this did not occur very often.

As the *Advertiser* became established, it also became one of the islands most popular weekly, or 'Sunday' newspapers; it was cheap, informative and with varied and easily digestible articles. It is one of the few newspapers for which circulation figures can be found, Bichard being fond of advertising his success. In 1882, the circulation for the year stood at 167,325. This had risen to 191,595 in 1887 and reached 231,605 in 1893. In short, over a ten year period, the *Advertiser* had sold almost two and a half million copies.<sup>15</sup> Translated into weekly terms, the circulation rose from 3,000 to 4,500 copies - almost a match for the tri-weekly *Star*. On special occasions, the circulation rocketed (although this was true for most island newspapers); on the occasion of the marriage of the Duke of York in July 1893, the *Advertiser* sold 5,000 copies of a single edition.<sup>16</sup>

The *Advertiser*, as the name suggests, gained a great deal of its profits from advertising, which often took up as much as 60% of the available space. However, although the news items were rather lightweight, they were not lacking in quality, especially when discussing local matters. Bichard was concerned that

advertising would eventually encroach on what he called, "reading matter"<sup>11</sup> so the newspaper underwent a series of enlargements which kept the volume of advertising to a manageable proportion. Four columns were added in 1891, bringing the total to 34 and the 1893, the length was increased, effectively increasing the size by a further five columns.<sup>18</sup> The *Advertiser* made use of the telegraphic service throughout the 1890s and the news was kept relatively up to date. The *Star* newspaper called it, "an excellent recorder in brief of the island's news"<sup>19</sup>

The *Advertiser* continued much the same into the twentieth century, and its history after 1900 is worth mentioning because it changed its character unexpectedly. On January 11th, 1913, it was acquired by the *Star* newspaper, along with the *Gazette* and transformed into the *Weekly Star and Advertiser* (afterwards the *Guernsey Advertiser and Weekly Star*), being a conglomeration of the more interesting news items which appeared in the *Star* during the week. The *Star* was by this time a daily. The *Advertiser* continued in this state until its demise in 1937.

The largest weekly newspaper in the island, although not with the highest circulation, was *Clarke's Guernsey News* which first appeared on Saturday october 4th, 1873 priced at 1d. The proprietor was Frederick Clarke, a local businessman and printer with offices in the States Arcade and Market Place.<sup>20</sup> He was also the proprietor and printer of the long-running *Guernsey Magazine*, a monthly journal which looked back at aspects of Guernsey history and people.<sup>21</sup> *Clarke's* was a very large newspaper by the standards of the day, with eight pages, and a total number of 40 columns. Its content was wide and varied, as the lengthy subtitle suggests; *British and foreign review; political and social; commercial and agricultural; literary and miscellaneous*. The first few editions attempted to live up to this title with such items as poems, articles on wheat-sowing

and gardening and a gossip column entitled "continental on-dits". Local, British and foreign news dominated however and by the beginning of 1874, all but *British and foreign review* had been dropped from the subtitle<sup>22</sup>, which more accurately reflected the content.

Clarke was interested in local matters and although only about 20% of the total content was local, it appeared on the front page, and many of the editorials were locally orientated. He also produced a ½d. evening edition of the newspaper which contained, "local intelligence only" and amalgamated all the local news from the main edition into a two page format. Clarke claimed that a ½d. edition would be produced at any time during the week, "as occasion may require"<sup>23</sup>, although there is no evidence to show that this ever occurred. Subscribers to the newspaper who lived in the Town would have the newspaper delivered to their homes at no extra cost. The advertising agent was W. C. Nichols of Port Renier.<sup>24</sup>

The major component of the main Saturday edition was news from Britain and abroad, gleaned for the most part from the London newspapers and the telegraph service. The newspaper employed a London correspondent with a regular column who commented on political events but for the most part the news was copied from secondary sources. The "epitome of news", a full two page section, consisted of numerous small news items, densely packed, which were mainly about the British provinces.

*Clarke's* was generally quite conservative; Clarke was an evangelical churchman<sup>25</sup> and if his editorials are to be believed, a fervent anglophile. He was also slightly obsessive; no fewer than six of his first ten editorials were concerned with the state of Guernsey currency which was complex and confusing, French, British, Guernsey and Jersey coinage all used interchangeably. Clarke called for a complete assimilation with

United Kingdom currency.<sup>26</sup> Most surprising of all about the newspaper was the relative scarcity of advertising; at no time did the volume of advertising exceed 15%, yet Clarke managed to sustain an eight page format, with good quality newsprint, for well over thirty years without, apparently, suffering financial difficulties.

*Clarke's* was also the official organ of the Established Church<sup>27</sup> and gave extensive coverage to church news. From the 1880s, details of Sunday services began to appear on the front page, secular local news relegated to the inner pages. The content also began to vary a little more; Jersey and Alderney news were given more coverage than formerly, sports results were given, short stories serialised and a "ladies' column", which was usually concerned with dress and fashion. From 1885, *Clarke's* began to be published on a Friday.<sup>28</sup>

From November 15th, 1895, the ½d. edition ceased and was replaced by a free supplement called the *Alderney Gazette*, a two page newspaper of Alderney news and church news. The *Alderney Gazette* at first appeared irregularly, but eventually came out weekly. *Clarke's* was reduced to six pages to accommodate the new supplement. Because of the new change, *Clarke's* apparently achieved a high circulation in Alderney.<sup>29</sup> Clarke also took the unusual step of illustrating his news items with small, lively line drawings, which sometimes gave the newspaper the appearance of a story book.

Although *Clarke's* became a relatively popular and established weekly newspaper, it was never highly regarded by other journalists - possibly because in his later years, Clarke seemed to concentrate exclusively on the Alderney market. The local historian, C. P. Le Huray writing for the *Star* in 1949, seems to have found *Clarke's* rather distasteful. He wrote,

'Clarke's weekly' appealed to the sentimental Guernseyman who could weep over the gradual ousting of his chère langue françains [sic] and the disappearance of his native customs before a gathering flood of English influences.<sup>30</sup>

*Clarke's* could certainly be sentimental at times but Le Huray's criticism was rather inaccurate. Clarke demonstrated that he had a nostalgic love for ancient customs, especially in his *Guernsey Magazine*, but his weekly newspaper did not so much lament English influence as actively invite it in. Whatever the verdict, *Clarke's* certainly represented the thoughts and influences of one man and it died with him in 1908.<sup>31</sup>

Guernsey's first daily newspaper was the short-lived *Morning Herald* which first appeared on August 13th, 1874 priced at 1d. The proprietor and editor was William Hillary Moullin of the Bordage, an advocate and former pupil of Elizabeth College.<sup>32</sup> It was printed by J. Orange from Moullin's office and published every morning at seven o'clock. Unfortunately, only the first edition survives but its content was of a high quality and quite varied. The front page was taken over entirely with advertising and the inner pages local items and British news taken from the telegraph and the London papers. The percentage of local news was quite high, although whether this persisted is unknown. The circulation was initially healthy<sup>33</sup> but the *Herald* was forced to close before it was a year old, probably due to the fact that daily newspapers required a very large outlay of money to get started and this was not easy to recover.<sup>34</sup> The last edition appeared on June 11th, 1875.<sup>35</sup>



### The Sun, The Moon and The Times

In January 1890, Frederick Blondel Guérin, who had printed and edited the *Bailliage* for seven years, left that newspaper to start his own weekly. Called the *Sun*, it described itself as, "A French and English family newspaper. The Guernsey fruit growers and exporters gazette."<sup>1</sup> This quote reveals Guérin's interest in reaching a wide and varied audience and the *Sun* was one of the first newspapers to acknowledge different sub-sections of the reading population; it not only marketed itself to a specific industry, but provided pages for women and children. It first appeared on the morning of Saturday January 4th, four pages long and priced at 1d. Guérin's attempt to appeal to the fruit growers was a shrewd one; the industry was still in its infancy but growing rapidly. By giving market reports in French and English, he also hoped to gain readers from the rural parishes where, of course, most of the growing was done. Guérin had much experience in this area and in 1899, he would print the *Guernsey Grower's Gazette* on behalf of the *Guernsey Grower's Society*, a short-lived, 16 page journal, free to members of the G.G.S..<sup>2</sup> The *Sun* also had a correspondent in Covent garden who sent weekly reports on market prices.

Guérin wanted to attract female readers, particularly wives and mothers, by providing, "various items of household interest", for the children, their column was named, "Sunbeam corner". The journalistic style of the whole was rather engaging in its avoidance of serious or political issues. News was taken from the London newspapers and from the telegraph system and local items appeared in French but the content was mainly made up of short, trivial items about unusual or amusing incidents. This was exactly as the proprietor intended,

Interesting and chatty articles dealing with the history, the biography, the legends, superstitions, folklore and

romance the island, and comprising numerous facts and incidents.<sup>3</sup>

The *Sun* represented a new approach to the news. From the outset, it was never intended to be discursive or political but rather as an easy, informative read. In that respect, it bears comparison with George Newnes' *Tit-bits*, a famous London penny weekly which was a pioneer in the field of journalism as light reading; "a pre-digested literary breakfast food for the family."<sup>4</sup>

This type of content in the *Sun* combined rather awkwardly with information about the growing trade; indeed, it seems rather unlikely that local growers would have considered the *Sun* as a serious source of information. On April 5th, 1890, the French content was dropped altogether, due to public pressure, which suggests that the majority of readers were English speaking Town-dwellers. Over the next few years, information about growing was gradually phased out until only the weekly market reports from Covent Garden remained as a regular feature.

On November 21st, 1891, Guérin reported the John Linwood Pitts, a member of the Institute of Journalists, had become his partner and would edit the paper and direct the literary department. Pitts was the curator and Chief Librarian of the Guille-Allès Library and Museum<sup>5</sup> and the *Sun* was therefore made the official organ of that establishment, "for the periodical publication of detailed lists of the new books."<sup>6</sup> Guérin was to head the advertising department and would be known as the publisher and business manager.

The *Sun* was considerably enlarged and re-designed on June 2nd, 1892; the number of columns was increased from 24 to 28 and a number of new items added such as a series of articles on local history and information for tourists. The *Sun* also encouraged

advertising from hotels and as it attempted to capture the small but growing tourist market, so agricultural information was squeezed out. Despite its insubstantial content, the *Sun* did at least have a largely local orientation.

The *Sun* remained relatively unchanged for several years, but by 1897, the proprietors were feeling the strain. Their compositor, Frederick Lowe had died suddenly on August 3rd from consumption and had been difficult to replace.<sup>7</sup> Pitts, who had continued to work full-time for the Guille-Alles Library and Museum, found his work-load increasing and faced with a choice, decided to give up the *Sun* altogether.<sup>8</sup> This news was not really a disappointment to Guérin whose printing business was overworked, "resulting in vexatious delays in the execution of orders and inevitable disappointments."<sup>9</sup> The final edition of the *Sun* appeared on Christmas Eve, 1897, dated December 25th, the same day that the *Comet* also ceased.

A newspaper which was primarily geared towards the tourist market was the *Guernsey Moon: and visitors list*, a ½d. weekly owned by E. F. Tozer and printed by F. J. Hillier of Commercial Printeries. The first edition came out on September 11th, 1894 and it certainly had the most interesting front cover of the island newspapers, sporting an art nouveau title transposed over a stylised picture of the new St. Peter Port harbour. The content was mainly local; reports on sporting events, descriptions of scenic cliff walks and the all-important visitors list. The advertising was mainly from hotels. Subsequent editions of the *Moon* reprinted a lot of the subject matter of the first, particularly the descriptions of local scenery, for the benefit of tourists.

Ernest Frederick Tozer was something of an entrepreneur, and an aggressive self-publicist. He lived at 17, Pollet Street<sup>10</sup> where he owned a general store, selling, amongst other things,

flowers, fruit and stationary. He was also the agent for the London newspapers and for the Globe Parcel Express.<sup>11</sup> Advertisements for his shop and the other services he provided appeared in every issue of the *Moon*; the edition of June 22nd, 1895 appeared with six pages rather than the usual four seemingly for the express purpose of allowing Tozer to take up the entire back page with an advertisement for his store. Tozer was also given to publicity stunts. In June 1887, he formed a partnership with a Jerseyman, George Reynolds<sup>12</sup> with a view to producing a ½d. daily newspaper. Their plans coincided with the procession celebrating Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee so they joined the cavalcade with a horse-drawn trolley, upon which was mounted a printer's treadle wheel. As they moved through the High Street, Tozer printed out a stream of hand bills announcing "Guernsey's first daily newspaper"<sup>13</sup> (although 'Guernsey's second daily newspaper' would have been more accurate).

Small news items began to appear gradually in the *Moon* over the first year, all received by telegram from London. There was however a rather careless presentation of this news. On December 22nd, 1894, a report appeared headlined, "Death of Lord Randolph Churchill" when in fact Lord Churchill would not die until January 24th, 1895.<sup>14</sup> The mistake was realised only after the edition had gone to print so the word "Health" was stamped by hand over the word "Death" with a rubber stamp, unfortunately in purple ink. Also in December 1884, a new column entitled "It is whispered" was introduced which, as the name suggests, was a gossip column.

The *Moon* seems to have done well in terms of circulation. On October 5th, 1895, it was reported that the *Moon* had sold 104,293 copies in a year. This puts the weekly circulation at around 2,010, a respectable figure considering that the most popular island newspaper, the *Star* sold around 4,000 copies of each edition.<sup>15</sup> The gossip column may have contributed to this

success since it depended on items being sent in by readers and the sheer volume of these enabled Tozer to charge a 5d. fee for each item printed.<sup>16</sup>

The gossip column continued to grow, but so also did the volume of local and international news. The style of journalism however left much to be desired, being sensationalist, gossipy and frequently malicious. A good example of this was the reporting of the resignation, due to old age, of the Bailiff Sir Edgar MacCulloch in 1895. The *Sun* expressed sorrow at the departure of the man, "who has won the highest respect of his fellow-countrymen"<sup>17</sup>. The *Comet* was similarly laudatory, "he has nobly, ungrudgingly, faithfully rendered an account of service to his native isle."<sup>18</sup> The *Moon* however produced a lengthy and bitter invective which was in such contrast to the tone of the other island newspapers that it is tempting to suspect that Tozer had an old score to pay off,

The resignation has come as a most acceptable New Year's gift to the islanders, and they cease not to congratulate them-selves on the removal of the incubus which has weighed so heavily upon them for the last 3 years or more ... let us dismiss him and forget him."<sup>19</sup>

Tozer acquired the Commercial Printeries from Hilliard in March 1896<sup>20</sup> and began to print the *Moon* himself, although it remained largely unchanged. It ceased abruptly on October 23rd, 1897, obviously disposed of by Tozer in favour of his new daily newspaper, the *Guernsey Evening Press* which had begun on July 31st of that year. The *Star* newspaper in 1949 however, preferred to blame the demise of the *MOON* on very different reasons,

'The Moon' was a scandal sheet which bore within itself, from the start, the seeds of its own rapid extinction.<sup>21</sup>

The *Guernsey Times*, which began on Saturday January 5th, 1895, was an English weekly which despite a serious and political approach to news, never really got off the ground. This may have been due in part to a series of rapid changes in ownership during its first year. The first proprietor was Walter Hamilton of Mill Street who also printed it from the same premises. It was at first unremarkable; four pages priced at  $\frac{1}{2}$ d. and the content mainly British and international news taken from the telegraph and London newspapers. It contained a small amount of local news, mainly proceedings of the Royal Court, and employed a Jersey correspondent. An interesting regular item was entitled "The Temperance world" and featured news from the Temperance Society, prompting the suggestion that Hamilton was a member. Being a weekly, it would not have been considered as competition to the *Star* or the *Comet* and the *Guernsey Advertiser* and *Clarke's Weekly News* were too well established to be threatened.

On February 25th, 1895, the *Time* was taken over by John C. Renouf and Co., consisting of Renouf, W. M. Robin and O. J. Payne.<sup>22</sup> The format remained similar, although "The Temperance world" disappeared and an advertisement from the proprietors requesting information about concerts, exhibitions and other local events suggests that they were trying to broaden the newspaper's appeal. However, when Payne was bought out by Renouf and Robin in July 1895, the *Times* suddenly became highly political; Renouf and Robin stated that they would be pushing for considerable constitutional reform.<sup>23</sup>

In the first edition of 1896, the proprietors set forth their proposals for reform in a lengthy editorial. The proposals were many and included; absolute equality of French and English languages, equality of all religious bodies, the abolition of conscription into the Militia and a secret ballot adopted for electing members of the States of Deliberation.<sup>24</sup> Renouf and

Robin were obviously deeply involved in island politics, but their ultimate intent seemed to be to push Guernsey closer to the English constitution. They also suggested that the English civil and criminal code be entirely adopted.

Renouf and Robin were doomed to disappointment; in January 1897, they were forced to concede that their campaign had no hope of success, "we were but the voice of one crying in the wilderness"<sup>25</sup>. They blamed their lack of success on the complacency of the Guernsey people who not only accepted the absurdities of their own constitution, but expressed their disapproval by refusing to but the *Times*,

The course of action has, however, failed to prove remunerative, or in plain English, does not pay.

The *Times* ceased abruptly from January 16th of that year.

## CHAPTER FOUR - 1860-1900

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9. *Mail and Telegraph* June 24th, 1899 p.2
10. *Mail and Telegraph* January 3rd, 1899 p.2
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16. Ibid.
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19. *Star* June 28th, 1913
20. *Clarke's Guernsey News* October 11th, 1873 p.8
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23. *Clarke's Guernsey News* ( $\frac{1}{2}$ d. edition) October 11th, 1873 p.1
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25. *Clarke's Guernsey News* February 28th, 1874 p.2
26. *Clarke's Guernsey News* October 11th, 1873 p.2

27. *Star* June 28th, 1913
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29. Marshall-Fraser ref.7 p.70
30. *Star* December 31st, 1949 p.3
31. Marshall-Fraser ref.7 p.70
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8. *Sun* December 18th, 1897 p.3
9. Ibid.
10. *Guernsey Evening Press* July 31st, 1957 p.1
11. *Moon* October 6th, 1894 p.2
12. *Guernsey Evening Press* July 31st, 1922 p.2
13. *Guernsey Evening Press* July 31st, 1972 p.7
14. *Moon* January 26th, 1895 p.1
15. *Star* July 22nd, 1919 p.1
16. *Moon* July 27th, 1895 p.3

17. *Sun* January 12th, 1895 p.2
18. *Comet* January 9th, 1895 p.2
19. *Moon* January 19th, 1895 p.1
20. *Moon* March 14th, 1896 p.4
21. *Star* December 31st, 1949 p.3
22. *Times* March 2nd, 1895 p.4
23. *Times* July 13th, 1895 p.2
24. *Times* January 4th, 1896 pp.2-3
25. *Times* January 16th, 1897 p.4

## CONCLUSION

The nineteenth century in Guernsey was a time of great change and growth; the newspaper industry both contributed to and was representative of that growth. In 1815, four French weeklies and one English catered for a population of 20,000<sup>1</sup>. By 1871, the population had reached 30,677<sup>2</sup> and the English newspapers had taken over, many having expanded to bi- and tri-weeklies and the first daily newspaper was to appear in 1874.

Although there was something of an explosion of newspapers after 1870, what is perhaps surprising, considering that Guernsey newspaper proprietors escaped the taxes and duties of their English counterparts, is that the newspapers did not expand more quickly than they did in the early years of the nineteenth century. Alan Lee points out that most proprietors could afford to invest in new technology to expand their circulation only after the repeal of taxation in the 1860s<sup>3</sup>. Yet although the 'cheap press' already existed in Guernsey in the first half of the nineteenth century, the growth of the industry was initially slow; even as late as the 1870s, despite a greater number of newspapers, new technology was slow to be adopted. The *Star* newspaper for example, although prosperous in local terms, could not afford a steam powered press until 1888, or a linotype machine until 1912.<sup>4</sup> The reasons for this lie partly in the geography of the island; the population had increased but as well as being a mere 25 square miles in area, Guernsey was still relatively isolated and this limited newspaper circulation. Limited circulation meant limited growth.

In simpler terms, the press in Guernsey could grow so much but no further. What *did* occur was a 'sideways' growth into increasing diversification and specialisation. As the tourist

industry and the growing trade expanded, so did newspapers appear specifically targeted towards those markets; the *Moon* and the *Sun* being prime examples. Also with the growing industry and with a renaissance of interest in local history towards the end of the century came a desire to capture the readership of the rural parishes; a small resurgence in French newspapers occurred between 1882 and 1902 in belated recognition that French was still spoken outside St. Peter Port.

As the nineteenth century progressed, so the volume of local news increased. In general the quality of journalism also improved, in that the practice of lifting news items straight out of the London newspapers steadily became obsolete, although not as quickly as in England. This was due in part to improved communication. The use of steamships, although significantly faster than sailing ships, still meant that news from London was at least 24 hours old, and it was the electric telegraph which had the most telling effect on newspaper content, although in many cases this simply meant that British and international news items became shorter to keep down the cost. Despite these improvements, communication across the English Channel was never easy, even into the twentieth century. Guernsey did not have its telephone link with England installed until 1934.<sup>5</sup>

As for the proprietors, printers and publishers, the pattern of ownership and control was similar to that of the English provincial press. The family business as the "characteristic form of proprietorship"<sup>6</sup> in the nineteenth century was generally true for Guernsey. Newspapers which changed hands before they were well established had little chance of survival, as evinced by the *Miroir Politique* and the *Times*. The major Guernsey newspapers either appeared and died with one proprietor such as the *Bailliage* and *Clarke's Guernsey News*, or were passed down through families, such as the Brouard/Le Lievre families of the

*Star* and the Mauger/Bichard line of the *Gazette*. Above all, family ownership promised stability and continuity. At the turn of the century, both the *Gazette* and the *Star* took the further security of the limited liability company.

In the early days of newspapers, the proprietor was very often the printer and publisher, even occasionally the editor. As newspapers expanded, the roles became more defined but the tradition of the printer/proprietor still survived in a few of the newspapers, most notably with Thomas Mauger Bichard of the *Gazette* and the *Advertiser*. The printing firms were also often businesses passed down through families, such as Mackenzie and Le Patourel and Maillard's printing firm at the *Comet* offices.

The proprietors tended to be men of substance; printers, retailers and advocates and politically, were rarely radical. They claimed to be both British patriots and Guernsey patriots, except when the two concepts failed to correspond, as demonstrated by the reaction to the behaviour of General Napier in the 1840s. In the first half of the nineteenth century, it is fair to say that the French newspapers were more radical than the English ones. This may have been due to the proximity of the French Revolution and Napoleonic Wars, when France and French were associated with instability and even anarchy. By the second half of the nineteenth century, the reverse was generally true; the *Gazette* had become a bastion of the establishment, conservative and unchanging and for the other French newspapers, the *Bailliage* and the *Feuille*, their cry to keep the French language and culture alive had come to seem no longer radical but nostalgic.

It is these tensions and complexities in society which makes a study of Guernsey newspapers so interesting, few places can boast of having both French and English newspapers co-existing

for such a long period of time, namely between 1813 and 1936. It is unfortunate and sad that so little was done to prevent the decline of publishing in French but it is a mistake to assume that the newspapers can be neatly subdivided into those expressing French sentiments and those expressing English ones. Whatever the language, Guernsey newspapers were always, politically and culturally, Guernsey.



## CONCLUSION

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## APPENDIX

A list of Guernsey newspaper holdings at the Priaulx Library, Guernsey and the British Library Newspaper Library, Colindale.

### KEY

PL : Priaulx Library, Guernsey

BL : British Library Newspaper Library, Colindale

() : Indicates incomplete year

### Gazette de l'île de Guernesey 1791-1936

PL : vol.1, no.1 - vol.5, no.52; vol.16, no.1 - vol.16, no.20  
continued as *Gazette de Guernesey*, vol.16, no.21 - vol.82,  
no.52; vol.92, no.1 - vol.147, no.9223  
8 January, 1791 - 28 December, (1795); 4 January, 1806 -  
17 May, 1806; 24 May, 1806 - 31 December, 1872; 7 January  
1882 - 28 March, 1936

BL : vol.49, no.41; vol.51, no.16; vol.103, no.7138 - vol. 147,  
no.9223  
14 October, 1837; 20 April, 1839; 6 January, 1894 - 28  
March, 1936

Discontinued.

### La Mercure de Guernesey 1806 - 1832

PL : vol.5, no.215 - no.1362

14 July, 1810 - 23 June, 1832. Discontinued

BL : No holdings

### La Publiciste 1812 - 1816

PL : vol.1, no.1 - vol.1, no.15

26 September, 1812 - 2 January, 1813

BL : No holdings

Le Miroir Politique 1813 - 1817

PL : 1 - 224

6 February, 1813 - 28 June, 1817 Discontinued

BL : No holdings

The Star 1813 - 1965

PL : 1 - 41; vol.8, no.5 - vol.140, no.4293

29 June, 1813 - 5 April, 1814; 1 February, (1820) - 30  
October, 1965

BL : vol.57, no.9 - vol.140, no.4293

17 July, 1869 - 30 October, 1965

Then amalgamated with *Guernsey Evening Press*

No newspapers were published between 12 September, 1944  
and 10 January, 1945

L'Independance 1817 - 1835

PL : vol.1, no.1 - vol.35, no.19

1 February, 1817 - 29 August, 1835 Discontinued

BL : No holdings

The Guernsey Telegraph 1826 - 1828

PL : vol.1, no.1 - vol.1, no.50

12 June, 1826 - 1 December, 1826

BL : No holdings

The Comet 1828 - 1897

PL : vol.1, no.1 - vol.70, no.90

31 March, 1828 - 25 December, 1897

BL : vol.11, no.85; vol.42, no.30 - vol.70, no.90

14 January, 1839; 14 July, 1869 - 25 December, 1897

Discontinued

Chit-Chat 1837 - 1841

PL : 1 - 208

7 October, 1837 - 2 October, 1841 Discontinued

BL : no.103

21 September, 1839

Guernsey Diary 1838

PL : no.3

23 August, 1838

BL : No holdings

The Torch 1839

PL : no.8

6 February, 1839

BL : No holdings

Le Bavard 1840 - 1841

PL : no.57

9 October, 1841

BL : No holdings

Le Pilote 1844

PL : 20 - 45

19 June, 1844 - 18 December, 1844

BL : No holdings

Le Guernesiais 1848 - 1849

PL : 1 - 85

13 May, 1848 - 28 December, 1849 Discontinued

BL : No holdings

The Guernsey Mail and Telegraph 1860 - 1899

PL : vol.23, no.87

25 July, 1882

BL : vol.10, no.83 etc.

13 July, 1869 - 30 December, 1871; 11 April - 31 December,  
1872; 25 March, 1873 - 25 July, 1891; 5 July, 1898 - 24  
June, 1899

Discontinued

La Chronique de Guernesey 1862

PL : vol.1, no.1

2 April, 1892 Discontinued

BL : No holdings

The Guernsey Advertiser 1870 - 1937

PL : as *Guernsey Advertiser and Weekly Star*, vol.44, no.21 -  
vol.67, no.35  
24 May, 1913 - 28 August, 1937

BL : vol.3, no.5 - vol.9, no.17; vol.25, no.1 - vol.44, no.15  
9 March, 1872 - 29 May, 1880; 6 January, 1894 - 12 April,  
1913

Continued as *Weekly Star and Advertiser*, vol.44, no.16-20  
19 April - 17 May, 1913

Continued as *Guernsey Advertiser and Weekly Star*, vol.44,  
no.21 - vol.67, no.35  
24 May, 1913 - 28 August, 1937

Discontinued

Clarke's Guernsey News 1873 - 1908

PL : vol.29, no.1496  
14 February, 1902

BL : vol.1, no.2 - vol.33, no.12  
11 October, 1873 - 26 December, 1905

The Guernsey Herald 1874 - 1875

PL : no.1  
13 August, 1874

BL : No holdings

Le Bailliage 1882 - 1902

PL : vol.1, no.1 - vol.22, no.26  
21 October, 1882 - 28 June, 1902

BL : vol.8, no.1 - vol.22, no.26  
5 January, 1889 - 28 June, 1902  
Discontinued

The Sun

PL : vol.1, no.1 - vol.8, no.52  
4 January, 1890 - 25 December, 1897 Discontinued

BL : vol.1, no.1 - vol.6, no.52; vol.8, no.17-51  
4 January, 1890 - 28 December, 1895; 24 April - 18 December  
1897

The Guernsey Moon and Visitors' List 1894 - 1897

PL : 1 - 157  
11 September, 1894 - 28 August, 1897

BL : 1 - 162  
11 September, 1894 - 23 October, 1897

Discontinued

The Guernsey Times 1895 - 1897

PL : vol.1, no.3 - vol.3, no.2  
19 January, 1895 - 16 January, 1897 Discontinued

BL : vol.1, no.49; vol.2, no.2-35  
28 December, 1895; 11 January - 5 September, 1896

La Feuille 1902

PL : 1-2

22-29 November, 1902 Discontinued

BL : No holdings

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