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Politics and the Mass Press in Long Edwardian Britain

1896-1914

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Contents

Abstract:

This thesis explores the political significance of the *Daily Mail, Daily Express* and the *Daily Mirror*[1] during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries[2]. On the one hand, the thesis explores and analyses the three newspapers' political contents published during the four general elections of the period: 1900, 1906, and January and December of 1910. On the other hand, the thesis investigates how these three newspapers – all of which launched during the period under investigation – were understood throughout the Long Edwardian era by people across three British political parties: the Liberals, the Conservatives/Unionists[3], and Labour.

It is contended that the rise and consolidation of this new daily mass press represented an important period not just in histories of the British press, but in histories of the British political system. The ways in which these new newspapers reported on political affairs made them a significant part of the political culture of pre-Great War Britain, as they helped disseminate political discourse to larger numbers of politically-engaged citizens than any previous iteration of mass British media. They achieved this through election-time political coverage which drew on much of the emotive sensationalism of their human-interest content, as well as the wider mass entertainment and consumer culture of Long Edwardian Britain. This array of written and visual content across all three newspapers helped to represent elections to their readers as events that were entertaining, accessible, and where the archetypal 'man in the street' held considerable political power. Moreover, their potential as a

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[1] Hereafter, the three newspapers investigated in this thesis will be frequently referred to collectively as the 'New Dailies'.

[2] Hereafter, the period of investigation as defined by this study is defined as the 'Long Edwardian' period.

[3] Hereafter, the words 'Conservative/s' and 'Unionist/s' will be used interchangeably to refer to the same political party.

medium for mass political communication resonated at the time, as people from Britain's major political parties reacted to and understood the political significance of these new, hugely-popular newspapers in different ways.

This thesis will contribute to a number of academic fields. Firstly, it challenges existing chronologies of the history of the modern popular press. Rather than representing a decline from past iterations of popular political presses, or signalling an inevitable progression towards the popular press of the later twentieth century, the new dailies were an important conduit for mass public participation in politics through their shared voice that articulated political content in ways that appeared to reflect and connect with the lives and interests of large sections of British society. Moreover, they were a key component of the masculine mass election culture which has been noted by recent scholarship on the politics of Long Edwardian Britain.

Secondly, it highlights the importance, and often-overlooked potential, of early popular media as a historical news source. Traditionally overlooked, the content of emergent popular newspapers is used to provide important insight into how traditionally elite areas of public life – such as politics – were represented, and connected to, the lives of mass audiences. Thirdly, this thesis contributes to histories of both pre-Great War British political parties and wider political culture, by exploring the differing extents to which different political groups understood, and reacted to, the communicative potential of the popular press, and how these reactions add to or challenge existing conclusions about the relationships between those parties, the press and the wider electorate.

Latterly, UCFB have not only given a fortunate young scholar a dream first academic post, but they have provided an academic and personal environment in which I have never been happier or more valued. To my academic colleagues, especially Greg, Colm, Helen, and Stacy: yes, I *have* finished it now. To Jane, Mark, Jon, Laura, Suzanne, and Alexa: thank you for making me feel so welcome. As this slides further into gushing sincerity, a special thanks also to Stephanie Leckie and Nick Minns, who nurtured my love of history throughout school. I did say I was a fan of the 'Liberal landslide' lesson…

The biggest debts of thanks are owed to those closest to me, as they have had to spend more of their lives suffering me than anybody else. To Andrew, thanks for always showing interest even when mine was waning, and for being a daily reminder that anything is achievable. To Stephen, you showed me the way throughout. Not content with copying your choices for much of my childhood, I also went all the way and did a PhD, though you'll say Chemistry is 'better'. Agree to disagree. To my parents, thank you for a lifetime of interest, support and love. You are the reason I am able to have become what I am. No, however, I won't be getting a haircut or a 'proper job' any time soon…

Most of all, to my amazing wife Dr Stevie Shoop-Worrall. For (briefly) feigning interest whenever I ramble on about my research; for humbling me daily with your academic excellence, your intelligence, and your loveable cheekiness; for cheering my successes and consoling my failings; for your incredible raspberry cappuccino cakes; for welcoming me into your amazing family; for being the kind of person I can only dream of being …thank you so, so much. Finally, we can be Dr and Dr Shoop-Worrall – always knew however you would beat me to it.

The question remains however…who *is* 'Fishy Bob'?

Chapter One:

Introduction

'(I am) *generally <u>not</u> a politician… a teetotaller, anti-vaccinationist, or a vegetarian, or any sort of crank… industrious… casual and intermittent interest in football matches and race meetings… I like the theatre and the music hall – the latter, perhaps the more… sympathetic, but not sentimental… England for the English, a happy England populated by prosperous Englishman…*

I am the Man in the Street.'[4]

Published on the first day of the 1906 general election campaign, a news article from page four of the *Daily Express* claimed to be written from the perspective of the 'man in the street'. This individual claimed to be 'the Man who can Control our Destinies'. He was the person from whom all political parties would be seeking a vote. This same man in the street was the individual, according to the dismissive comments of the then-Prime Minister and Conservative leader Lord Salisbury, who ran and read the *Daily Mail* from its inception in May 1896: 'a newspaper produced by office boys for office boys'.[5] Salisbury's negativity ignored the importance of who the *Mail,* by his own admission, was particularly appealing to. All three of the new dailies – the *Express, Mail* and the *Mirror* – built their successes throughout the Long Edwardian period upon their shared ability to speak to the office-

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[4] 'I am the Man in the Street', *Daily Express* 12 January 1906, p. 4.

[5] A. N. Wilson, *The Victorians* (New York, 2003), p. 590.

working man in the street, and millions of other lower-middle- and upper-working-class[6] British citizens whose lives resonated with the *Express's* short biography.[7]

This thesis identifies the significance of the Long Edwardian period within histories of both the British press and the British political system through a parallel analysis. Firstly, it explores the political content of the new dailies during the four general elections of the period: 1900, 1906, and the two elections in January and December of 1910. The ways in which all three newspapers represented British election-time politics marked a fascinating swinging door moment in histories of British mass democracy. A hugely-successful daily newspaper press was representing political news in ways which made the subject matter engaging, accessible and relevant to the lives of millions of British citizens. Election processes were presented as both exciting and engaging, whilst also being events at the centre of which was the ordinary British man in the street. This simultaneous dramatization and democratisation of election news made the new dailies a significant form of mass political communication that engaged larger numbers of potential voters than any prior newspaper press that had come before it.

Secondly, this thesis investigates the ways in which three political parties of the period – the Conservatives, the Liberals, and Labour – responded to the rise of this hugely-popular new political press. The new dailies emerged during a period of political history in which British politicians had increasingly sought the votes of members of the electorate who

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[6] The majority of readers of the new dailies are broadly identified by this thesis as lower-middle and affluent-working class citizens discussed by Chris Waters in *British Socialists and the Politics of Popular Culture, 1884-1914* (Manchester, 1990) who were primarily urban 'skilled artisans' with growing disposable income. See specifically pp. 1-15.

[7] Indeed, the *Mirror* only corrected the commercial failure of its initial launch in 1903 by focusing away from being a 'woman's paper' and aligning more with the man-in-the-street focus of the *Express* and the *Mail.*

resonated with the *Express's* 'man in the street'. Considering how both the new dailies and the three political parties were seeking to simultaneously communicate with the same mass audiences, the ways in which politicians across the Long Edwardian establishment responded to this new press represents a fascinating insight into a variety of aspects pre-Great War British politics. The differences between each of the three political parties in their reactions spoke of the differing extents to which these new mass-selling newspapers were valued as a form of political communication. These differences between and within the three parties spoke considerably of broader attitudes within Long Edwardian Britain regarding what, in the minds of certain politicians, constituted a viable political press; the extent to which popular newspapers were worthy of effort and attention; and the real value of trying to communicate with the man in the street who, as the *Express* astutely noted, had never held such political power.

The intersection between the new dailies and the Long Edwardian political establishment that this thesis explores did not exist within a vacuum, however. Rather, the significance that the man in the street possessed both in the political content of the new dailies and within the minds of politicians within three British political parties built considerably on the back of several decades of cultural, political and economic developments which had elevated the man in the street to an unprecedented position of societal significance. Understanding this broader historical context, and the ways in which it influenced both the developments of the new dailies and the evolution of the British political system, is therefore vital.

Long Edwardian Culture

Underpinning much of the new dailies' development within wider Long Edwardian culture was the legacy of the 1870 Education Act. While mass illiteracy had been steadily (if

unevenly) in decline since at least the early Victorian period[8], the 1870 Act's establishment of a framework for universal elementary school education in England and Wales still left a significant legacy. Newspapers had been a primary reading material of the British working classes since the mid-nineteenth century[9]. The 1870 Act, therefore, helped to swell the size of the literate, newspaper-buying mass audiences to whom the new dailies would then sell so successfully.

More specifically, the extent of the 1870 Act's benefits helped to create mass audiences of news readers to whom the majority of traditional British newspapers, 'with their long articles, long paragraphs' and more-intellectually demanding news content, had traditionally poorly catered.[10] These audiences demanded newspaper content that was as entertaining as it was illuminating, and that drew on aspects of daily life which resonated with their own experiences. These audiences were steadily catered to in the decades before the Long Edwardian period, as the idea of newspapers being 'representative' of the opinions and tastes of readers gathered credence.[11] Various weekly newspapers in the mid-nineteenth century, most notably the Sunday press, all became hugely popular through news content which combined radical politics with prominent reporting of everyday sensation and

[8] Richard Altick, *The English Common Reader: a social history of the mass reading public, 1800-1900* 2nd edition (Columbus: OH, 1998), pp. 11-12; Alan J. Lee, *The Origins of the Popular Press 1855-1914* (London, 1976), p. 33; Michael Sanderson, "Literacy and Social Mobility in the Industrial Revolution in England." *Past & Present* 56 (1972), pp. 75-104; Laurence Stone, "Literacy and Education in England 1640-1900." *Past & Present* 42 (1969), pp. 118-120; Robert K. Webb, 'Working class readers in early Victorian England', *English Historical Review* 65.256 (1950), pp. 333-351.

[9] Lee, *Origins,* p. 28;

[10] Robert Ensor, *The Oxford History of England: Volume XIV: 1870-1914* (Oxford, 1968), p. 311.

[11] Mark Hampton, '"Understanding Media": theories of the press in Britain, 1850-1914', *Media, Culture and Society* 23.2 (2001), p. 214.

particularly crime through stories and images.[12] These popular Sunday newspapers, and early

popular daily newspapers such as the *Daily Telegraph,* also benefited from the increasing

affordability of newspapers. Growing mass literacy occurred alongside the gradual erosion of

the 'taxes on knowledge'[13], which created the conditions for publications to price themselves

as affordable options to an increasingly-literate mass public. These developments earlier in

the nineteenth century were significant, but it was during the late-Victorian period that the

mass potential of affordable and sensationalised everyday news content exploded.

The end of the nineteenth century witnessed the rampant success of a strand of the

British newspaper press which prioritised the kind of content that saw the contemporary critic

Matthew Arnold famously denounce this 'New Journalism' as 'feather-brained'[14], due its

perceived negative impact on the quality and value of British culture.[15] His critique, however,

did little to stem the success of a media revolution which took inspiration from the early

Sunday press and maximised its commercial potential, and served as a template for the new

dailies which would come to define the twentieth century.[16] The New Journalism was

particularly defined by a selection of both weekly and daily-evening newspapers that reaped

huge reward through their focus on 'brighter, more accessible' news content which

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[12] Rob Breton, 'Crime Reporting in Chartist Newspapers', *Media History* 19 (2013), pp. 245-246; Edward

Jacobs, 'Edward Lloyd's Sunday Newspapers and the Cultural Politics of Crime News, c. 1840–43', *Victorian Periodicals Review* 50.3 (2017), p. 620; Judith Knelman, 'Subtly Sensational: a study of early Victorian crime

reporting', *Journal of Newspaper and Periodical History* 8.1 (1992), pp. 34-41; Lee, *Origins,* p. 71.

[13] See Chapter Two, pp. 37-39.

[14] Matthew Arnold, 'Up to Easter', *Nineteenth Century* CXXIII (May, 1887) pp. 638-639.

[15] Kevin Williams, *Read All About It! A History of the British Newspaper* (London, 2010), p. 120.

[16] Adrian Bingham and Martin Conboy, *Tabloid Century: the popular press in Britain, 1896 to the present* (Oxford, 2015), pp. 3-6

simultaneously 'revived' past traditions of entertaining content and marked a 'historic shift' in the history of the British press[17]. Among their most-successful titles were newly-found 'snippet' publications such as *Tit-Bits* (launched in 1881 by George Newnes) and *Answers*, the million-selling weekly founded by the *Daily Mail*'s founder Alfred Harmsworth.[18]

The most significant of these titles, however, was the evening daily *Pall Mall Gazette* under the editorship of W. T. Stead: the individual about whom Arnold was writing. His 1886 four-part investigative piece into child prostitution – 'The Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon' – marked a landmark moment both for the *Gazette* (*PMG*) and British journalism in general.[19] Its graphic descriptions of sexual assault, abduction and police corruption made the most of the news-reading public's appetite for true crime; it salaciously warned readers of the article's content and drew eager crowds to the paper's office in anticipation of the next instalment.[20]

The *PMG* was not alone; the New Journalism as a whole found success through selling crime stories; the genre and its specific interest in the grotesque and the outrageous

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[17] See Bingham and Conboy, *Tabloid Century,* p. 6; G. Cranfield, *The Press and Society* (Harlow, 1978), p. 221; Joel Wiener (ed.), *Papers for the Millions: The New Journalism in Britain 1850-1914* (New York, 1988), p. xii.

[18] Bingham and Conboy, *Tabloid Century,* pp. 5-6.

[19] Ann Robson, "The Significance of 'The Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon'," *Victorian Periodicals Newsletter* 11.2 (1978), pp. 50-57; Kate Campbell, "W. E. Gladstone, W. T. Stead, Matthew Arnold and a New Journalism: Cultural Politics in the 1880s," *Victorian Periodicals Review* 36.1 (Spring 2003), pp. 20-40.

[20] See Deborah Gorham, "The Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon Re-Examined: Child Prostitution and the Idea of Childhood in Late-Victorian England," *Victorian Studies* 21.3 (1978), pp. 353-354; James Mussell, '"Characters of Blood and Flame": Stead and the Tabloid Campaign' in Brake *et al* (eds.), *W. T. Stead: Newspaper Revolutionary* (London, 2012), p. 25; Greta Wendelin, "A Rhetoric of Pornography: Private Style and Public Policy in 'The Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon,'" *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 42.4 (July 2012), pp. 375–376.

proved hugely popular with large audiences of Victorian readers.[21] Crime however formed

part of a wider array of news content which the new dailies sold so successfully. This content

tapped into newly-emergent aspects of late-Victorian and Edwardian culture which resonated

with the interests and tastes of the mass British public, especially on an emotional level.[22] In

particular, the late-Victorian period, especially after the Bank Holiday Act of 1871, saw the

gradual blossoming of a commercialised leisure industry which, by the beginning of the Long

Edwardian period, specifically catered to upper-working- and lower-middle class audiences.[23]

Sports such as football and horse racing, for example, grew into mass spectator events

which popular newspapers increasingly covered due to their resonance with lower-middle

and working-class audiences.[24] Similarly, the growth of the popular music hall – estimated at

its peak to have drawn over one-million attendees a week in London alone – was part of a

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[21] See Richard Altick, *Victorian Studies in Scarlet: Murders and Manners in the Age of Victoria* (New York,

1970), p. 9; Megar Anwer, "Murder in Black and White: Victorian Crime Scenes and the Ripper

Photographs." *Victorian Studies* 56. 3 (Spring, 2014), pp. 438-439; Christopher Casy, 'Common

Misperceptions: The Press and Victorian Views of Crime', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 41.3 (2010) pp:

368, 376; Lewis Curtis, *Jack the Ripper and the London Press* (New Haven, 2001), pp. 83-108; Judith

Knelman, *Twisting in the Wind: The Murderess and the English Press* (Toronto, 1998), pp. 20-44.

[22] See Shu-chuan Yan, 'Emotions, Sensations, and Victorian Working-Class Readers', *The Journal of Popular

Culture* 50.2 (2017), p. 318.

[23] Andrew Horrall, *Popular Culture in London c.1890-1918: The Transformation of Entertainment* (Manchester,

2001), pp. 1-6; Chris Waters, *British Socialists and the Politics of Popular Culture, 1884-1914* (Manchester,

1990), p. 20.

[24] Raymond Boyle, *Power Play: Sport, the Media and Popular Culture* (Edinburgh, 2009), pp. 19-42;

Lucy Brown, *Victorian news and newspapers* (Oxford, 1985), p. 271-272, quoted in Steve Tate, 'James Catton,

'Tityrus' of The Athletic News (1860 to 1936): A Biographical Study', *Sport in History*, 25.1 (2005), pp. 98-

111; Richard Holt, *Sport and the British* (Oxford, 1992), pp. 306-307; Tony Mason, *Association Football and

English Society 1863-1915* (Brighton, 1980), pp. 175-206

swelling of popular demand for theatrics, assisted by new technologies and innovations such as light spectacles and sound.[25] The success of these and other late-Victorian pastimes, notably the seaside holiday[26], represented the growth of working- and lower-middle class leisure time, as more of British culture identified the potential to successfully cater to people who had both increased free time outside of work and more disposable income. [27]

Moreover, these increasingly affordable aspects of public life and the ability of the new dailies to successfully cover them were increasingly convenient thanks to the broader 'massification' of Britain in the proceeding decades to the Long Edwardian era.[28] Earlier technological breakthroughs such as the rotary printing press and the electric telegraph helped revolutionize the ease and speed at which information could be sent, received and distributed throughout Britain.[29] Similarly, the rapid development of affordable railway links between towns and cities connected more people to a greater number of these leisure opportunities, and also assisted the newspapers that reported on those opportunities in reaching a greater

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[25] Richard Altick, *The Shows of London* (Cambridge; Mass, 1978), p. 509; S. Barnett, 'The recreation of the people' *Living Age* 254 (1907), p. 273; Ray Johnson, 'Tricks, Traps and Transformations', *Early Popular Visual Culture* 5:2 (2007), pp. 151-165; Bernard Lightman (2012) 'Victorian science and popular visual culture', *Early Popular Visual Culture* 10:1 (2012), pp. 1-5; Chris Otter, *The Victorian eye: A political history of light and vision in Britain, 1800–1910* (Chicago, 2008), p. 92.

[26] See John K. Walton, *The British Seaside: Holidays and Resorts in the Twentieth Century* (Manchester, 2000), pp. 27-52

[27] The significance of the 1847 Ten Hour's Act in the growth of mass leisure is highlighted by Ross McKibbin 'Why there was no Marxism in Great Britain?', *English Historical Review* 49 (1984), p. 307. See also C. Shoop-Worrall, 'Left Wing', *The Blizzard* 25 (2017), pp. 100-101.

[28] Martin Conboy, *The Press and Popular Culture* (London, 2002), p. 95.

[29] Joel Wiener, *The Americanization of the British Press, 1830s-1914* (Basingstoke, 2011), p. 56, 65; Williams, *Read All About It!*, p. xii

number of readers in a shorter space of time.[30] Moreover, these events, spectacles, modes of transport and the newspapers which reported and relied upon them took place within mass urbanisation, which acted as both a creator and a consequence of this growing culture of mass newspapers, entertainment and travel.[31]

It was into this population of increasingly leisure-rich, increasingly urban and increasingly literate British citizens that the new dailies so successfully integrated. They were a hugely-successful and significant new addition to a wider popular culture that they simultaneously profited from and continued to maintain. Moreover, despite Salisbury's dismissal of 'office-boys', this same mass, primarily-urban popular culture that existed at the dawn of the Long Edwardian period was also one of growing interest to the political parties of the period. Like the new dailies, the political establishment helped to promote the societal significance of the British man in the street, whilst simultaneously seeking to benefit from their growing importance.

Long Edwardian Politics

Underpinning much of the growing political power of the British man in the street were the series of electoral Reform Acts between 1883 and 1885. Building on the earlier reforms of 1832 and 1867, the late-Victorian amendments to constituency boundaries, electoral expense and voting qualification had a profound impact on the size and composition

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[30] Mark Casson, *The World's First Railway System: Enterprise, Competition, and Regulation on the Railway Network in Victorian Britain* (Oxford, 2009), p. 36; Conboy, *Press and Popular,* p. 107; Lee, *Origins,* p. 21.

[31] See Michael J. Freeman, *Railways and the Victorian Imagination* (Yale, 1999), pp. 121-148; David Paul Nord, 'The Victorian City and the Urban Newspaper' in John and Silberstein-Loeb (eds.), *Making News: The Political Economy of Journalism in Britain and America from the Glorious Revolution to the Internet* (Oxford, 2015), pp. 73-106.

of the British electorate.[32] The Acts of the 1880s were not without their limitations, as aspects of the reforms' practicalities mirrored past reforms by continuing to limit access to full democratic representation based on geography and gender.[33] However, the consequence of those reforms was an undeniable expansion of voting rights to greater numbers of citizens than any prior period in British history. The total number of eligible voters nearly doubled to almost five million people, and the majority of these new additions were poorer citizens.[34]

More than being just an expansion of the franchise, the political reforms of the mid-1880s furthered the transition of British politics into one dominated by urban centres, as the same towns and cities where the new dailies would sell so successfully during the Long Edwardian period also became the regions where the majority of voters resided, and where the most significant election campaigning took place.[35] Moreover, this transition to a

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[32] See Luke Blaxill, 'Joseph Chamberlain and the Third Reform Act: A Reassessment of the "Unauthorized Programme" of 1885', *Journal of British Studies* 54.1 (2015), pp. 88-89; Luke Blaxill 'Electioneering, the Third Reform Act, and Political Change in the 1880s', *Parliamentary History* 30.3 (2011), pp. 366-367; C. Matthew, 'Rhetoric and Politics in Great Britain 1860-1950' in Waller (ed.), *Politics and Social Change in Modern Britain* (Brighton, 1987), p. 36; Kathyrn Rix, "The Elimination of Corrupt Practices in British Elections? Reassessing the Impact of the 1883 Corrupt Practices Act," *English Historical Review* 123.500 (2008), pp. 65–97; Richard Shannon, *The Age of Salisbury 1881-1902: Unionism and Empire* (London, 1996), p. 76.

[33] See Matthew Roberts, 'Resisting "Arithmocracy": Parliament, Community, and the Third Reform Act', *The Journal of British Studies* 50.2 (2011), pp. 381-409; Matthew Roberts, *Political Movements in Urban England, 1832-1914* (Basingstoke, 2009), p. 16

[34] Robert Blackburn, *The Electoral System in Britain* (Basingstoke, 1995), pp. 74-5; Neil Johnston, 'The History of the Parliamentary Franchise', House of Commons Library research paper (March, 2013), pp 35-36. See also Donald Read, *The Age of Urban Democracy: England 1868–1914* revised edition (London, 1994), pp. 441-447.

[35] See Marc Brodie, 'Voting in the Victorian and Edwardian East End of London', *Parliamentary History* 23.2 (2004), pp. 225-248; John Davis, 'The Enfranchisement of the Urban Poor in Late-Victorian Britain' in Ghosh, Goldman and Matthew (eds.), *Politics and Culture in Victorian Britain: Essays in Memory of Colin Matthew*

democracy increasingly defined by urban voters was reflected within the behaviour of late-Victorian and Edwardian political parties, as political campaigns on both a national and local level increasingly articulated electoral positions which primarily sought mass, urban, lower-middle and working-class support.[36] Indeed, the Long Edwardian period witnessed the rise of a new political party – the Labour Representation Committee[37] - which specifically sought to represent the interests of British workers in Parliament.

Furthermore, the wider mass culture of Long Edwardian Britain, including newspapers, also played a significant part of the late-Victorian shift towards political parties seeking to communicate with the never-more-important man in the street. Historically, newspapers had always been a vital part of political communication in Britain, as politicians saw the communicative potential of publications which educated potential voters.[38] Indeed, politicians throughout the Victorian period directly patronised or part-owned print

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(Oxford, 2006), pp. 95-117; Derek Fraser *Urban Politics in Victorian England: Structures of Politics in Victorian Cities* (Leicester, 1976), pp. 284-285; T. A. Jenkins. 'Political Life in Late Victorian Britain: The Conservatives in Thornbury', *History of Parliament* 23.2 (2004), p. 198.

[36] See Jon Lawrence, *Electing our Masters: The Hustings in British Politics from Hogarth to Blair* (Oxford, 2009), p. 70; Jon Lawrence, *Speaking for the people: party, language and popular politics in England, 1867-1914* (Cambridge, 1998), pp. 99-127; Susan Stoddart, *Pressing or Reform: The New Liberalism and Emotion in Edwardian Liberal Newspapers,* PhD thesis, Royal Holloway University of London, (2014), p. 113; James Thompson, *British Political Culture and the Idea of 'Public Opinion', 1867-1914* (Cambridge, 2013), p. 245; Alex Windscheffel, *Popular Conservatism in Imperial London, 1868-1906* (Woodbridge, 2007), chapters 2, 3, & 7.

[37] Though originally founded as the LRC in 1900, hereafter the party shall be referred to as 'Labour' for sake (its name from 1906 onwards) for clarity and consistency across the period as a whole.

[38] Mark Hampton, 'Liberalism, the Press, and the Construction of the Public Sphere: Theories of the Press in Britain, 1830-1914', *Victorian Periodicals Review* 37.1 (2004), p. 75.

publications, in significant part to make sure that beneficial messages either about themselves of their party were reaching large numbers of people.[39] This would continue into the Long Edwardian era. A significant portion of politicians who sat in the 1906 Parliament also owned newspapers, and newspapers contributed significantly to successful local and national election campaigns throughout the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries.[40] Newspapers, however, were just one part of an Edwardian evolution in political communication. This is because of recent scholarship which has shown how the same mass culture which the new dailies integrated with, especially spectacle and light innovations, were in turn used by political campaigners, who saw their communicative potential with voters.[41]

The Long Edwardian period, therefore, marked a vital crossroads period between the British press, British politics, and the British lower-middle class public. Firstly, after decades of gradual evolutions in technology, ideology, form and purpose, a new mass daily press launched that by the outbreak of World War One was selling millions of copies every single day.[42] This press sold particularly well to a mass audience of urban, lower-middle readers whose interests, needs and pastimes were increasingly better-catered by the wider culture

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[39] See Aled Jones, Powers of the Press: *Newspapers, Power and the Public in Nineteenth-Century* (Aldershot, 1996), p. 175-177; Stephen Koss, *The Rise and Fall of the Political Press in Britain* (London, 1984), p. 216; Thompson, *Public Opinion,* p. 63

[40] Lawrence, *Speaking for the people,* p. J. A. Thomas, *The House of Commons 1906-1911* (Cardiff, 1958), p. 14; James Thompson, '"Pictorial Lies"? Posters and Politics in Britain c .1880-1914', *Past and Present*, 197.1 (2007), pp. 202-203.; Windscheffel, *Popular Conservatism,* pp. 54-83

[41] James Thompson, '"The Lights of the Electric Octopus Have Been Switched Off": Visual and Political Culture in Edwardian London', *Twentieth Century British History* 29.1 (2018), pp. 331-356.

[42] By 1910, conservative estimates have the *Mail's* circulation as 900,000, the *Mirror* as 630,000 and the *Express* as 400,000. This numbers exclude the multiple readers per copy extremely likely for each copy sold. See David Butler and Gareth Butler, *British Political Facts* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), p. 573.

surrounding them. Their content successfully resonated with their mass readerships' emotions and aspects of their day-to-day lives, such as sport and consumer pleasures, and helped propel into becoming the most successfully and widely-read newspaper press in British history up to that point.

Their success at communicating with their millions of primarily lower-middle and upper-working class readers occurred during the same period when the British political establishment was equally enthusiastic about speaking to and with the archetypal man in the street. The consequence of gradual expansions and geographic redistributions to the franchise throughout the nineteenth century was that by the beginning of the Long Edwardian period all three political parties under investigation in this thesis were increasingly wishing to speak to a mass electorate. Crucially, the same potential voters that they were so keen to communicate with were the same urban people who were so readily buying and reading the new dailies. Politicians across the Long Edwardian spectrum were even seeking votes through similar pleas to voters' emotions and livelihoods that were propelling the popularity of the *Mail, Express* and the *Mirror*.

What this thesis will explore, therefore, is a pivotal period in British political and press history. It will examine the ways in which the new dailies represented a hugely significant form of mass political communication at a time when the kinds of people who they were regularly selling to had never possessed more political capital. Their election-time content represented political news in a variety of ways which, similar to their better-known sensationalist content, connected the lives of their millions of readers to the political process, and the political process to the wider mass culture from which many of their readers drew regular enjoyment. The summative significance of the three newspapers' content was to represent general elections as events where the man in the street – the archetypal new daily voter so succinctly captured by the *Express* in 1906 – could engage in ways which were

enjoyable, accessible, and connected to parts of their daily existence. This democratisation of political news broke with traditions of British parliamentary reporting and framed Edwardian elections in ways which included their millions of readers as vital and welcome components of the political system of the period.

The new dailies' shared ability to so successfully represent political news as both accessible and entertaining represented a powerful potential space which the political parties of the period could have utilised for their own benefits. This secondary question explores the extent to which this potentially rich new form of mass communication was understood by the politicians of the period. The Long Edwardian period was defined by elections which, as existing scholarship as explored in detail, particularly articulated party-political positions which sought mass voting support. The interest in communicating with the kinds of people reading the new dailies, therefore, was an unquestionable priority of the three parties under investigation in this thesis. The extent to which each of the three did, and not did, see the political potential of the new dailies will add vital new dimensions to existing historical understanding of pre-Great War political culture in Britain, and the true extent to which politicians and parties were willing to communicate political messages through a press that was, and continues to be, better defined by its sensational, human-interest content.

Chapter Two:

Histories of Press and Politics in Edwardian Britain

Introduction

'A clever and energetic man has lately invented a new journalism, full of ability, novelty, sensation, sympathy, generous instincts; its one great fault is that it is feather-brained.'[43]

Rarely has the study of a historical subject been so comprehensively overshadowed by the words of the contemporary credited with coining its name. The above statement, delivered by cultural critic Matthew Arnold in May 1887, is most commonly understood to be the first reference to the British New Journalism, and gave the phenomenon considerably more than a title. On the one hand, this coining of the 'new journalism' touched upon key elements of its innovations to newspaper content, style and format that would generate huge success throughout the late-nineteenth and twentieth centuries. On the other hand, the origin of the 'new journalism' from which the new daily press of the early twentieth century would later develop highlighted a 'fault' that, to the present date, continues to be thrown at popular news media: a lack of substance.

As was outlined in the previous chapter, this thesis seeks to explore the political significance of the Long Edwardian new dailies, and, in particular, emphasise how aspects of their content made them a welcome addition to the political culture of pre-Great War Britain. In order to achieve this, this section will situate the new dailies within broader histories of the New Journalism, the popular press and their place within British politics and culture. These strands of existing literature have been categorised according to their resonance with

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[43] Matthew Arnold, 'Up to Easter', *Nineteenth Century* CXXIII (May, 1887) pp. 629-643.

elements of Arnold's early critique through the use of thematic subheadings. Firstly, there will be discussion of literature which defines the popular press through individual pioneers. Secondly, there will discussion of the legacy left on the wider literature by Arnold's 'feather-brained' critique. Thirdly, there will be a reappraisal of scholarship concerning the intersections between British culture and the popular press. Fourthly, histories of Edwardian politics will be discussed, particularly with regards to their inclusion of newspaper sources.

Clever and Energetic Men

One of the ways that the British New Journalism, and later the British new dailies, has been approached and understood by historians is through the pioneering individuals who launched or revolutionised particular publications. As the introduction noted, certain editors and owners played a significant role in helping foster the mass, everyman culture into which the Edwardian new dailies emerged. Their place within the wider literature of the British press, therefore, is one of considerable importance to this thesis.

The earliest of these pioneers was William Thomas (W. T.) Stead, who was the 'clever and energetic man' about whom Arnold was writing. Traditional understanding of Stead's founding of the British New Journalism centres on his time working for (and later editing) the *Pall Mall Gazette (PMG),* a London-based daily newspaper that later morphed into the *London Evening Standard.* In particular, his controversial four-part investigative piece 'The Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon' noted is seen as a landmark moment in journalism which lay the foundations for the popular newspaper press of the late-nineteenth and twentieth centuries.[44]

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[44] Anne Robson, "The Significance of 'The Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon'," *Victorian Periodicals Newsletter* 11.2 (1978), pp. 50-57; K. Campbell, "W. E. Gladstone, W. T. Stead, Matthew Arnold and a New Journalism: Cultural Politics in the 1880s," *Victorian Periodicals Review* 36.1 (Spring 2003), pp. 20-40.

As was touched on in Chapter One, its sensational and evocative depictions of child prostitution in late-Victorian London, which included Stead scandalously procuring a thirteen-year-old girl for five pounds, were an enormous popular sensation. After the first article in the series, huge crowds gathered outside the office of the *PMG* desperate to purchase copies of the next instalment, and the paper's circulation rose in response to this increased demand.[45] Key to this high demand was the deliberately shocking nature of Stead's writing, which included graphic accounts of rape, police corruption and violent abductions and was forewarned to readers (and in so doing advertised juicily to readers) in a preceding issue.[46] 'Maiden Tribute', therefore, was a pioneering example of some of the journalistic features that would, and continue to, define popular or tabloid journalism. These included deliberately controversial news content and lurid descriptions of taboo subject matter such as sex, sexual assault and violence, as well as investigative journalism that blurred (and in Stead's case crossed[47]) the boundaries of legality.[48] These features all centred around generating shocked excitement and macabre interest from potential readers. To a modern reader, 'Maiden Tribute' has many of the features associated with a present-day tabloid scoop, where the reader's 'human interests' are sated through sensation, titillation and outrage.

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[45] James Mussell, '"Characters of Blood and Flame": Stead and the Tabloid Campaign', in *W. T. Stead: Newspaper Revolutionary*, ed. Laurel Brake et al. (London: British Library, 2012), 25.

[46] G. Wendelin, "A Rhetoric of Pornography: Private Style and Public Policy in 'The Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon,'" Rhetoric Society Quarterly 42.4 (July 2012), pp. 375–96.

[47] For the hiring of the child prostitute, Stead and two associates were arrested, tried and found guilty of abduction, for which all three served three-month prison sentences.

[48] Margaret Beetham, *A Magazine of Her Own? : Domesticity and Desire in the Woman's Magazine, 1800-1914* (Routledge, 1996), chaps 9 & 10.

Secondly, Stead's outrageous accounts were part of a deliberate attempt to influence the minds of readers, particularly those in positions of power.[49] Published in July 1885, 'Maiden Tribute', and specifically the controversy it created, played a significant role in the passing of the Criminal Law Amendment Bill through Parliament the following month, which raised the age of sexual consent from thirteen to sixteen. Though contested by politicians at the time, the impact of Stead's writing on British society was significant, as well as part of a broader commitment to what he would later describe as 'Government by Journalism'. [50] Written during his time in prison for his 'Maiden' exploits[51], he argued for the use of sensational reporting and eye-catching content to attract readers and rouse them concerning a particular issue written 'in characters of blood and flame' and printed in 'great capitals'.[52]

This crusader approach to journalism, where content had a desired societal impact, was seen in other high-profile examples of Stead's work at the *PMG*, such as his reports of General Gordon's struggles in Khartoum two years earlier[53], his desperate cries for increased funding for the Royal Navy in the wake of increased imperial expansion from various

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[49] R. L. Schults, *Crusader in Babylon: W. T. Stead and the Pall Mall Gazette* (Lincoln, 1972), pp.137-151.

[50] William Thomas Stead, 'Government by Journalism', *Contemporary Review* 49 (May 1886), pp. 653-674.

[51] Martin Conboy and John Steel, 'FROM "WE" TO "ME"', *Journalism Studies* 11, no. 4 (August 2010): 502, https://doi.org/10.1080/14616701003638368; Harold Herd, *The March of Journalism : The Story of the British Press from 1622 to the Present Day.* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1952), 230.

[52] Geoffrey Cranfield, *The Press and Society: From Caxton to Northcliffe* (London: Longman, 1978), 217; Raymond L. Schultz, *Crusader in Babylon : W.T. Stead and the Pall Mall Gazette* (University of Nebraska Press, 1972), 161; Frederic Whyte, *The Life of W.T. Stead.* (London: Butler and Tanner, 1925), 166–73.

[53] J. O. Baylen, "Politics and the 'New Journalism': Lord Esher's Use of the 'Pall Mall Gazette'.," Victorian Periodicals Review 20.4 (1987), pp. 126–141.

European powers, and his attacks on the personal misconduct of several MPs[54]. The popularly-received sensationalist reporting, therefore, served a dual purpose of engaging large audiences whilst also furthering the beliefs and wants of the individual or individuals responsible for the content.

Stead and 'his' *PMG* exist within some historical narratives as the forefather of powerful individuals who dominated the development of the British popular press. This included Stead's contemporary George Newnes, with whom Stead launched the influential monthly *Review of Reviews,* and his creation of *Tit-Bits*. *Tit-Bits* was a publication which collected together snippets of news that catered directly to perceived audience interests, such as sport, everyday oddities, jokes, crime, and divorce court proceedings. As well producing hugely-successful content in similarly salacious, and entertaining ways to the *PMG,* the popularity of *Tit-Bits* was credited to the skills and innovation of a key individual, in this case Newnes, and the intimate connection he forged between his readers and his content.[55] This is also the case in other studies of early manifestations of the British New Journalism, such as work into the short-lived radical daily paper *The Star* and the central role of T. P. O'Connor as both the newspaper's creator and later controller.[56]

The prominent roles of individuals in certain histories of the nineteenth- and twentieth-century British popular press also recognises the interconnectivity of some of these individuals. The activities and achievements of Stead's 'Maiden Tribute' and his and

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[54] For one example, see R. Jenkins, *Sir Charles Dilke: A Victorian Tragedy* (London, 1958).

[55] Kate Jackson, *George Newnes and the New Journalism in Britain, 1880-1910 : Culture and Profit* (Ashgate, 2001), 13; Richard Menke, 'Touchstones and Tit-Bits: Extracting Culture in the 1880s', *Victorian Periodicals Review* 47, no. 4 (2014): 559–76, https://doi.org/10.1353/vpr.2014.0041.

[56] J. Goodbody, "'The Star': Its Role in the New Journalism," Victorian Periodicals Review 20.4 (1987), pp. 141-150.

Newnes's *Review of Reviews* are credited with sparking the rise of the next great individual, thus continuing a cycle of newspaper history as a history of individual men achieving greatness before inspiring the next individual man to achieve the same or more. This lineage of the individual is especially prominent as the chronology of the British New Journalism progresses to the rise of the new dailies, and a new individual takes centre stage: Alfred Harmsworth, the founder and proprietor of the *Daily Mail* and the *Daily Mirror*.

Harmsworth, more commonly referred to by his later title Lord Northcliffe, becomes the next protagonist within this strand of personal-narrative histories of the British popular press.[57] His experience working for *Tit-Bits* significantly contributed to his decision to launch the similarly-styled *Answers,* thus continuing the lineage of 'great newspaper men'. Indeed, this lineage also includes Arthur Pearson, who created the *Daily Express* in 1900. Not only was his first job in journalism at Newnes' *Tit-Bits,* but the *Express* was inspired by, and launched as a direct competitor to, Harmsworth's *Daily Mail*.[58]

The greater emphasis usually given to *Answers* within histories of Harmsworth's life and career, rather than the other smaller-titles he founded, or his takeover of the established London newspaper *The Evening News,* further reinforces this idea of successive 'clever and energetic men' defining the popular press, and Harmsworth's personal role within his narrative grows further with the launch of the *Daily Mail*. More than that, this strand of accounts of Harmsworth's/Northcliffe's[59] primary journalistic achievement represents the

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[57] J. Lee Thompson, "Fleet Street Colossus: The Rise and Fall of Northcliffe, 1896-1922," Parliamentary History 25.1 (March 2008), pp. 115–38, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1750-0206.2006.tb00624.x.

[58] Martin Conboy, *The Press and Popular Culture* (London: SAGE, 2002), 158.

[59] To avoid potential confusion, any use of 'Harmsworth' or 'Northcliffe' throughout this thesis refers to the same man: Alfred Harmsworth.

Mail, similarly to Stead's *PMG*, as a newspaper defined by its 'creator' and the societal change he wished from its rise to prominence.[60]

The success of the *Daily Mail,* from its first day of publication, was unprecedented in British newspaper history. It was the first daily newspaper in country's history to hit daily sales of one-million copies, which it managed just six years after its first edition in May 1896.[61] It also became arguably Britain's first truly 'national' newspaper, after establishing a second printing house in Manchester to partner its London site, in 1901.[62] This success, however, rarely features within narratives of 'Northcliffe's *Daily Mail*'. The paper's creation and its almost-instant rise to mass success, beginning with the first edition selling more than three-times its expected figure, are interpreted as the result of Northcliffe's particular genius and his skill and awareness of reader interests that he had possessed since his early days launching *Answers*.[63] The *Mail,* after fleeting acceptance of its popular appeal, is then discussed as the mouthpiece of Northcliffe's ambitions: a medium, like the *PMG*, through which an individual could press personal ambitions onto political and public life.

The earliest example of Northcliffe's 'use' of the *Mail* focuses on the Second Boer War (1899-1902), during which it was a hugely significant contributor to a wider press

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[60] S. J. Taylor, *The Great Outsiders: Northcliffe, Rothermere and the Daily Mail* (London, 1996); P. Brendon, *The Life and Death of the Press Barons* (London, 1982).

[61] Dennis Griffiths, *Fleet Street: Five Hundred Years of the Press* (London 2006), pp. 132–3.

[62] Adrian Bingham and Martin Conboy, *Tabloid Century : The Popular Press in Britain, 1896 to the Present* (Oxford, 2015).

[63] Jean Chalaby, "'Smiling Pictures Make People Smile': Northcliffe's Journalism," Media History 6, no. 1 (June 18, 2000), pp. 33–44.

culture that stoked passionate, jingoistic support for the war in the Transvaal[64] (modern-day

South Africa) and called out opponents to the conflict, both in Parliament and in the press, as

enemies of nation and Empire.[65] Northcliffe's passionate personal beliefs in British military

and imperial superiority has therefore been argued to be significant in the *Mail's* coverage of

the war, and even more so in its coverage of Germany in the years prior to World War One.

Indeed, the manner and extent of the *Mail's* anti-German sentiment in the first decade of the

twentieth century was seen by some as a significant factor for growing British public support

for the war to come.[66] Northcliffe's assumed personal involvement in the pre-war anti-

German content of both the *Mail* and his other newspapers – particularly *The Times,* which he

had bought in 1908 – are regularly summarised by historians through the contemporary claim

by *The Star* that;

> *'Next to the Kaiser, Lord Northcliffe has done more than any living man to bring*
> *about the war.'[67]*

As well as bringing about war, Northcliffe and his newspapers during the war are fed

further into narratives of the popular press existing as mouthpieces for their proprietor's

desires. Most notably, the collapse of the Asquith government in late 1915, and the resultant

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[64] Simon Potter, "Jingoism, Public Opinion, And The New Imperialism," Media History 20, no. 1 (January 2, 2014), pp. 34–50.

[65] Gavin Wilkinson, '"The Blessings of War": The Depiction of Military Force in Edwardian Newspapers', *Journal of Contemporary History* 33.1 (1998), pp. 97-115.

[66] J. Lee Thompson, Politicians, the Press & Propaganda : Lord Northcliffe & the Great War, 1914-1919 (Kent State University Press, 1999); M. Ceadel, "Serving Northcliffe, Inventing International Polity: July 1904–July 1914," in Living the Great Illusion (Oxford, 2009), 87–142; W. White, "Lord Northcliffe and World War I," Journalism Quarterly 34.2 (1957), pp. 208–16.

[67] Adrian Bingham, "Monitoring the popular press: an historical perspective". *History & Policy* (May 2005).

rise of David Lloyd-George as the new prime minister, has been framed as partly due to Northcliffe's involvement.[68] Specifically, the *Mail* owner's personal problems with Lord Kitchener, whom would be regularly attacked across his newspapers, motivated his personal desire to see a change of political leadership. The press, therefore, becomes a tool in histories of Northcliffe as a kingmaker: ousting one premier, before first supporting and then clashing with the next. By extension, the rise of the popular press as a whole became defined by their ownership.[69] These popular press owners were commonly a 'Northoleon' figure who micro-managed and dominated the output of their newspapers, whose primary purpose for their hugely-successful newspapers was personal gain in the highest corridors of British power, and who would boast about how his thoughts could be typed up in his newspapers to be consumed and often believed by millions the following day.[70]

The idea of the all-powerful newspaper man controlling the content of a hugely-popular daily newspaper for personal gain remains a powerful and tempting perspective through which to analyse the popular press. Indeed, it is an idea which has permeated across histories of the twentieth-century popular press. Northcliffe, and in particular his actions during World War One, represents the first prominent example of histories where popular newspapers are represented as tools (or weapons) of newspaper 'press barons'. The barons in these accounts, while varied in personality and political cause, share a common identity of political puppet-master. For example, press histories of the inter-war years (specifically after the passing of both Northcliffe and Pearson by 1922) are dominated by histories of Lords Beaverbrook (owner of the *Daily Express*) and Rothermere (Northcliffe's younger brother

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[68] J. M. McEwen, "Northcliffe and Lloyd George at War, 1914–1918," The Historical Journal 24.3 (1981): p. 651.

[69] Alan J. Lee, *The Origins of the Popular Press in England, 1855-1914* (Croom Helm, 1976).

[70] P. Brendon, *The Life and Death of the Press Barons* (London, 1982), p. 116.

Harold, who had owned the *Mirror* the year before he took over the *Mail* after his brother's death) as political orchestrators.[71] These same perceptions of the British popular press as tools of powerful individuals run right into the author's present, with the likes of Rupert Murdoch continuing a legacy of 'tabloid' barons that has its roots in how the New Journalism was defined from its inception.[72]

Within histories of the popular press that focus on, or prioritise, the actions and personalities of powerful owners and creators, there is some undeniable merit. Men such as Stead, Newnes and Northcliffe, for example, were undeniably significant individuals in both the political and popular culture of Long Edwardian Britain. For example, such was the perceived power of Northcliffe's newspapers during World War One that his countryside house near the coast of Kent was shelled by a German warship, as part of an attempted assassination attempt. Moreover, evidence of newspaper owners' relationships with powerful politicians was one part of their wider engagement with British high society, and their numerous personal achievements (including peerages, and Stead's several nominations for the Nobel Peace Prize) speaks considerably of their substantial presence within the era in which

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[71] Kevin Williams, *Read All About It!* (Routledge, 2009), 152; A. J. P. Taylor, *Beaverbrook* (London: Penguin, 1974); A. Chislom and M. Davie, *Beaverbrook: A Life* (London: Hutchinson, 1992); Jerry M. Calton, 'Beaverbrook's Split Imperial Personality: Canada, Britain, and the Empire Free Trade Movement of 1929-1931', *The Historian* 37, no. 1 (November 1974): 26–45, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6563.1974.tb00013.x; Kingsley Martin, 'Public Opinion: Fascism and the Daily Mail', *The Political Quarterly* 5, no. 2 (April 1934): 273–76, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-923X.1934.tb01438.x; Martin. Pugh, *Hurrah for the Blackshirts! : Facists and Fascism in Britain between the Wars* (Pimlico, 2006), chap. 8.

[72] Nick Davies, *Hack Attack : How the Truth Caught up with Rupert Murdoch*, n.d.; Peter. Jukes, *The Fall of the House of Murdoch : Fourteen Days That Ended a Media Dynasty* (Unbound, 2012); Tom Watson and Martin. Hickman, *Dial M for Murdoch : News Corporation and the Corruption of Britain* (Allen Lane, 2012); Owen (Owen Peter) Jones, *The Establishment and How They Get Away with It* (London: Allen Lane, 2014).

they lived, and goes some way to explaining their centrality in some historical narratives of 'their' newspapers. Furthermore, their individual talents and personalities undoubtedly played an important role in the development and continual success of these newspapers, specifically in relation to their understanding and awareness of the wants and interests of an under-tapped mass news-reading British public. Therefore, to try and argue that the place of certain powerful individuals within histories of the popular press is completely undeserved is not warranted, nor the purpose of this thesis.

There is also the fact that many of the 'clever and energetic men' had personal connections, which further elevates the temptation to define a broader history of popular newspapers around these interconnected owners and editors. For example, Rupert's Murdoch's father, Keith, was a powerful figure within the Australian newspaper industry up to his death in 1952, and was an undoubted influence on the later career of his son. Keith's first journalistic experiences occurred while working in London from 1908. Years later, his wartime correspondence from the disastrous Dardanelles (Gallipoli) campaign won him some powerful admirers. One of these admirers would then write to him during his early tenure editing the *Melbourne Herald* post-war, suggesting ways that he could create his newspaper to make it more popular with readers. The admirer, writing to him from back in London, was Lord Northcliffe.[73]

However, what is problematic about this still-pervasive strand of the history of the popular press is that the newspapers, the very entities which provided them with their fame, wealth and cultural significance, and aspects of their content fall into the narrative background. This thesis argues, rather, that the successes of the popular press in Britain cannot equate to news media that primarily spoke only for, and with the voice of, its

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[73] S. J. Taylor, *The Great Outsiders: Northcliffe, Rothermere and the Daily Mail* (London, 1996), pp. 204-205.

proprietors. Moreover, critical approaches to popular newspapers which overly focus on ownership, whether praising or critical, fall into the traditional trap of representing history as a narrative dominated by a few powerful individuals.

New and Feather-brained

Along with encouraging the mythology of owners, the most enduring legacy of Arnold's coining of the New Journalism was his dismissal of its great 'feather-brained' flaw. This critique concerned a perceived lack of intellectual value in this new journalism, and how its dedication to sensationalist, populist news content represented a broader threat to the quality and value of British culture.[74] His concerns were echoed by other leading figures within the Long Edwardian period. For example, notable figures such as *Manchester Guardian* editor C. P. Scott were particularly dismissive of the *Daily Mail* in the wake of its fervent support of the Boer War because of its perceived creation of irrational jingoism amongst its readers.[75] Much like Arnold's identification of clever and energetic men, these initial reactions to the New Journalism's 'feather-brained' content have cast a considerable shadow over much of the literature concerning the popular press. To understand these lingering negative perceptions, therefore, it is important to contextualise the new dailies and British popular newspapers within the broader history of the British press.

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[74] J. O. Baylen, ''The Press and Public Opinion: W.T. Stead and "The New Journalism"', *Journalism Studies Review* 4 (1979): 367; Williams, *Read All About It!*, 120.

[75] Mark Hampton, 'The Press, Patriotism, and Public Discussion: C. P. Scott, the Manchester Guardian, and the Boer War, 1899-1902', *The Historical Journal* 44, no. 1 (2001): 156; Robert Skidelsky, *John Maynard Keynes: Hopes Betrayed 1883-1920* (London: Penguin Group, 1994), 91; Julia Stapleton, 'Citizenship Versus Patriotism in Twentieth-Century England', *The Historical Journal* 48, no. 1 (March 2005): 156, https://doi.org/10.1017/S0018246X0400425X.

Firstly, despite Arnold's claims, much of content and stylistic innovations upon which the New Journalism and later the new dailies built their success were not especially 'new'. Stead's work at the *PMG* was striking, but in reality his 'New Journalism' borrowed considerably from earlier innovations of the content, language and layout of newspapers. While 'Maiden Tribute' would become a landmark piece of journalism, its sensationalist reporting of crime had been a staple of Britain's Sunday newspaper press since at least the mid-Victorian era. Hugely-successful Victorian papers such as *Reynold's Weekly News,* which became the first British newspaper to sell one million copies a day,[76] prioritised much of the 'human interest' content that would define the daily popular press that emerged later in the nineteenth century.[77] These same newspapers, along with many provincial newspapers of the mid-Victorian period[78], were also among the first to implement and experiment with the stylistic innovations more commonly associated with the daily 'tabloids' of the twentieth century. These include the use of bold headlines, sub-headed news items, and news (including illustrations) on the front page. The new daily press of the late-nineteenth century, therefore, presented and articulated news content in ways similar to newspapers from decades

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[76] Williams, *Read All About It,* pp. 118-119.

[77] Edward Jacobs, 'Edward Lloyd's Sunday Newspapers and the Cultural Politics of Crime News, c. 1840–43', *Victorian Periodicals Review* 50, no. 3 (2017): 619–49; Megha Anwer, 'Murder in Black and White: Victorian Crime Scenes and the Ripper Photographs', *Victorian Studies* 56, no. 3 (2014): 433, https://doi.org/10.2979/victorianstudies.56.3.433; Christopher A. Casey, 'Common Misperceptions: The Press and Victorian Views of Crime', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 41, no. 3 (December 2010): 367–91, https://doi.org/10.1162/JINH_a_00106; L. Perry Curtis, *Jack the Ripper and the London Press* (Yale University Press, 2001).

[78] See Rachel Matthews, *The History of the Provincial Press in England* (London: Bloomsbury Acaemic, 2017), chaps 7 & 8; Andrew Hobbs, *A Fleet Street in Every Town: The Provincial Press in England, 1855-1900* (Cambridge: Open Book Publishers, 2018).

earlier, and the arrival of the new dailies has rightly been understood in the context of this longer history of gradual change.[79]

Secondly, the methods and innovations of the New Journalism's early pioneers were also influenced by the earlier development of the 'penny press' in the United States during the 1830s.[80] The influence of the American popular press of the early-to-mid nineteenth century, such as changes to formatting and subheading to increase content readability, was part of a broader journalistic and cultural exchange between the two countries[81], where the press served as an important medium for ideas, interests and popular sensations, ranging from illustrative humour to music hall entertainment.[82] The New Journalism pioneers Stead and Northcliffe were themselves directly influenced by past and ongoing journalistic practice on the other side of the Atlantic.[83] The former travelled to America both before and after the success of 'Maiden Tribute', and would himself serve as a significant influence for two pioneering examples of late-Victorian daily popular journalism in America: William

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[79] L. Brake in J. Wiener (ed.), *Papers for the Millions : The New Journalism in Britain, 1850s to 1914* (Westport CT, 1988), p. 22.

[80] J. Wiener, *The Americanisation of the British Press, 1830s-1914* (Basingstoke, 2011), pp. 28-53, 183-210.

[81] For discussions on journalistic exchanges, see Wiener and Hampton (eds.), *Anglo-American Media Interactions, 1850-1900* (Basingstoke, 2007); Jean Chalaby, "Journalism as an Anglo-American Invention: A Comparison of the Development of French and Anglo-American Journalism, 1830s-1920s", *European Journal of Communication* 11.3 (1996), pp. 303-326.

[82] Bob Nicholson, "'You Kick the Bucket; We Do the Rest!': Jokes and the Culture of Reprinting in the Transatlantic Press," *Journal of Victorian Culture* 17.3 (2012), pp. 273–86; B. Nicholson, "JONATHAN'S JOKES," *Media History* 18.1 (February 2012), pp. 33–49.

[83] J. Shattock, *Journalism and the Periodical Press in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Cambridge, 2017), Chapter 15.

Randolph Hearst's *The New York Journal,* and Joseph Pulitzer's *New York World*.[84] The latter meanwhile was adamant and proud of the influence of American journalism and wider American culture on his newspapers, and was a regular visitor to the States.[85] The overt American influence on British popular journalism throughout the later decades of the nineteenth century was also as clear to its critics as it was to its supporters, who echoed similar sentiments aimed at the 'yellow' press of Hearst and Pulitzer. Many of the negative responses to the early British popular press, as noted by Wiener, directly expressed anti-American sentiment, which drew a clear connection between Victorian and Edwardian British popular journalism and the American popular presses of the early nineteenth century.[86]

The broader context of the new dailies having emerged from decades of Anglo-American innovations to popular journalism is vital to understanding the continuing significance of Arnold's 'feather-brained' critique. The journalistic traditions out of which the new dailies emerged sits somewhat uncomfortably alongside another strand of history of 'popular' journalism in Britain which draws on a very different understanding of popular journalism's broader purpose and worth within culture. The existence of this separate history of popular journalism history lingers across histories of the press in general, as newspapers like the new dailies are interpreted especially negatively in the context of this other journalistic tradition.

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[84] Laurel Brake et al., *W.T. Stead : Newspaper Revolutionary* (London: British Library, 2012), Chapter 6.

[85] J. Lee Thompson, "'To Tell the People of America the Truth': Lord Northcliffe in the USA, Unofficial British Propaganda, June-November 1917," Journal of Contemporary History 34.2 (1999), pp. 243-262.

[86] Wiener, *Americanisation,* pp. 10-27.

More so than the new dailies' Victorian ancestry, this secondary strand of popular journalism history in Britain is also connected to histories of British radical politics. In particular, this alternative journalistic tradition connects popular newspapers with the struggle to repeal the collective 'taxes on knowledge', which were a variety of financial levies aimed principally at restricting the production and distribution of politically-radical print material.[87] While state controls on printable material had long preceded these taxes, their initial introduction was part of a broader government reaction to political radicalism, specifically in the aftermath of the Peterloo Massacre in 1819.[88]

In initial response to the taxes on knowledge, an extensive array of illegal newspapers was founded to continue and further the spread and availability of news material that sought to speak to, and for, the interests of lower-class British citizens. The earliest iteration of these illegal newspapers was the 'unstamped' press.[89] These cheap newspapers were often created by political radicals to continue the spread of information to readers unable or unwilling to afford the legal, 'stamped' press.[90] Many of these newspapers, such as Henry Hetherington's *The Poor Man's Guardian,* were very successful, selling tens of thousands of copies and

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[87] N. Stephen Bauer, 'Romantic Poetry and the Unstamped Political Press, 1830-1836', *Studies in Romanticism* 14, no. 4 (1975): 411, https://doi.org/10.2307/25599986; Edward Jacobs, 'John Cleave's Weekly Police Gazette (1834–6), Francis Place, and the Pragmatics of the Unstamped Press', *The Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 104, no. 1 (March 2010): 53–75, https://doi.org/10.1086/680914; Fiona Montgomery, 'The Unstamped Press: The Contribution of Glasgow 1831-1836', *The Scottish Historical Review* 59, no. 168 (1980): 154–70.

[88] See Donald Read, *Peterloo : The 'massacre' and Its Background* (Manchester: MUP, 1958).

[89] J. Holland Rose, 'The Unstamped Press, 1815-1836', *The English Historical Review* 12, no. 48 (1897): 711–29.

[90] J. Wiener, The War of the Unstamped : The Movement to Repeal the British Newspaper Tax, 1830-1836 (Cornell University Press, 1969).

operating as part of large networks or printers and distributors. These newspapers – and the people behind them - were part of a broader network of political reformers, including parliamentarians, artisans, writers and provincial activists, campaigning against the 'taxes on knowledge' and pushing for a variety of political reforms in favour of enhanced mass engagement in the political system.[91] Amendments to some of the taxes, such as the reduction to newspaper duty from 4d to 1d in 1836, were primarily a state response to the popular success of unstamped newspapers, and represented a triumph of radical politics through newspapers aimed at lower-class readers.

The success of radical, cheap popular newspapers in opposition to the 'taxes on knowledge' continued throughout the early decades of the nineteenth century. The earlier 'war of the unstamped' led to some government reductions on newspaper taxes, but the overall restrictions on newspaper content and availability remained throughout the early-to-mid nineteenth century. The continuing high prices of legal newspapers, and the heavy financial and penal punishments facing those behind unstamped publications, resulted in a continuing tradition of cheap, radical papers pushing for political reform. Specifically, it was a major factor behind the development and success of the Chartist presses of the late 1830s and 1840s, including the particularly influential *Northern Star* and its proprietor Feargus O'Connor.[92] Chartist newspapers such as the *Star* were ways for political radicals to disseminate their messages to large audiences of people, similar to the ways that radical

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[91] Patricia Hollis, The Pauper Press : A Study in Working-Class Radicalism of the 1830s (Oxford, 1970).

[92] Joan Allen and Owen R. Ashton, *Papers for the People : A Study of the Chartist Press* (Merlin Press, 2005); J. A. Epstein, 'Feargus O'Connor and the Northern Star', *International Review of Social History* 21, no. 01 (18 April 1976): 51, https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020859000005137; James. Epstein, *The Lion of Freedom : Feargus O'Connor and the Chartist Movement, 1832-1842* (Croom Helm, 1982); Paul A. Pickering, *Feargus O'Connor : A Political Life* (Merlin Press, 2008).

proprietors used the unstamped papers of the previous decade, and strived to educate readers.[93] The popularity of these 'papers for the people' - by the end of 1839, the *Northern Star* had the second-highest newspaper circulation in the country[94] - had undeniable influence on the gradual removals of the taxes of knowledge, concluding with the repeal of the paper duty – the last of the taxes - in 1861.

Summarised, this second tradition of British popular newspapers as one which struggled against taxes and restrictions on press freedom is profoundly different from the tradition of popular news represented by the Long Edwardian new dailies. The unstamped presses of the early-to-mid nineteenth century were part of wider social and political movements that were fighting for the betterment of the politically-underrepresented British public.[95] These newspapers were designed primarily as means to inform and educate readers as to the injustices that they faced in everyday life, as well as the solutions that would address existing cultural and political inequality. This interpretation of 'popular' news was one that strove to provide information that the public ought to know about, in contrast to news that would primarily entertain or distract them.[96]

In this way, the politically-radical popular newspapers of the mid-nineteenth century drew on longer journalistic traditions in Britain where journalism and journalists acted as a

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[93] J. Samples, *Working-Class Prose: The "Northern Star" and Radical Discourse during the First-Wave of the Chartist Movement,* unpublished PhD Thesis (2013).

[94] G. Boyce, J. Curran, and P. Wingate, *Newspaper History from the Seventeenth Century to the Present Day* (London, 1978) p. 62.

[95] See Martin Hewitt, *The Dawn of the Cheap Press in Victorian Britain: The End of the 'Taxes on Knowledge', 1849–1869* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014).

[96] For reference to these diverging 'popular' presses, see Raymond Williams, *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society* (London, 1976), pp. 198-199.

'fourth-estate' check on governmental power and an essential educator to a rational and well-informed public.[97] By attempting to bring this level of informed journalistic discourse to larger numbers of primarily working- and lower-middle class people, the radical presses stand as superior within this strand of journalism history when compared to the sensationalist New Journalism and the new dailies which emerged from it. Their content was similarly argued to be the product of powerful individuals who expressed their own opinions through their newspapers, and did so in order to attempt to influence British society.[98]

It is this similarity, however, that has driven the historical divide separating the new dailies and the popular journalism of the Long Edwardian period from the popular journalism analysed by the likes of Hollis, Allen and Weiner. Many of the 'clever and energetic men' behind the unstamped and radical presses wished to politically educate and empower their readerships, and were thus interpreted in marked contrast to the New Journalism's leading figures, who instead sought primarily to entertain.[99] This strand of journalism history correlates with Vernon's work on the political culture of the same period, which he contended was a period with a 'genuine' and inclusive popular political culture, and one

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[97] A. (Arthur) Aspinall, *Politics and the Press, c. 1780-1850,* (Harvester Press, 1973); Hannah Barker, *Newspapers, Politics, and Public Opinion in Late Eighteenth-Century England* (Clarendon Press, 1998); Hannah Barker, *Newspapers, Politics and English Society, 1695-1855* (Longman, 2000); Jürgen Habermas, Thomas Burger, and Frederick Lawrence, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere : An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (Polity Press, 1992), chap. 8.

[98] T. M. Kemnitz, "Chartist Newspaper Editors," Victorian Periodicals Newsletter 18.5 no. 4 (December 1972), pp. 1-11.

[99] Boyce, Curran, and Wingate, *Newspaper History from the Seventeenth Century to the Present Day*, 29.

which was closed off or 'eroded' by the end of the nineteenth century and the rise of, among other things, the mass consumer culture outlined in Chapter One.[100]

This difference in ideological purposes between two different variations of a British popular press has been reflected in how many scholars have summarised the content of the new dailies' tradition of British popular press. Principally, the New Journalism has been interpreted as a negative influence on political discourse in the press, due to the news genre's perceived lack of commercial opportunity.[101] Indeed, it has been further argued that the repeal of the taxes on knowledge, and the supposed triumph of the liberal 'fourth-estate' narrative,[102] helped create a market-driven newspaper industry where individual publications increasingly relied on advertising revenue to remain financially viable, thus continuing the censorious culture that had preceded the tax repeals.[103] Through the repeals, the radical presses were thrown into direct competition with the rest of the press industry, which were now priced far lower than during the era of the taxes on knowledge.[104]

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[100] James Vernon, *Politics and the People: a study in English political culture, c.1815-1867* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 248-249, 339.

[101] Conboy and Steel, 'FROM "WE" TO "ME"', 501; Mark Hampton, '`Understanding Media': Theories of the Press in Britain, 1850-1914', *Media, Culture & Society* 23, no. 2 (30 March 2001): 227, https://doi.org/10.1177/016344301023002004; Richard Salmon, '"A Simulacrum of Power": Intimacy and Abstraction in the Rhetoric of the New Journalism', in *Nineteenth-Century Media and the Construction of Identities*, ed. L. Brake, B. Bell, and D Finkelstein (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2000), 29.

[102] Michael Bailey, *Narrating Media History* (Routledge, 2009), 22–45.

[103] J. Curran, "The press as an agency of social control: an historical perspective" in Boyce, Curran and Wingate (eds.), *Newspaper History,* p. 61.

[104] Jean K. Chalaby, *The Invention of Journalism* (Macmillan Press, 1998), 76–113.

This open competition and the increased financial importance of advertisers pushed more and more publications to pursue news agenda that was friendly to advertisers.[105] Espousing radical politics, particularly, was seen as unfavourable to a newspaper's chances of garnering advertising support. Indeed, the success of the Sunday press has been noted by Negrine to have featured a decline in the kind of political content which defined the traditional fourth-estate press.[106] Moreover, the loss of advertisers has been argued as a key reason behind the collapse of several prominent left-wing popular newspapers as they faced little option but to politically compromise or cease publication.[107] Curran has written particularly convincingly on the measurable impact that advertisers were having on the content produced across some of Britain's most popular newspapers throughout the twentieth century.[108] The increased influence of advertiser messages on newspaper editorials formed part of a wider perception of the popular press as a 'fourth-rate estate': newspapers that prioritised interests not of real concern of or significance in relation to the everyday lives of their readers, and thus betrayed the purpose and value of their existence.[109]

The 'fourth-rate estate' critique runs deep across histories of the popular press, and it is interesting to note how the same concerns found across the Victorian press have permeated into the present.[110] This critique is rooted in the ways which historians have perceived the

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[105] See James Curran and Jane Seaton, *Power without Responsibility: The press, broadcasting and new media in Britain* 6th edition (London, 2003), chapter 4.

[106] Ralph Negrine, *Politics and the Mass Media in Britain* (Abingdon: Routledge, 1994), 39.

[107] James Curran, "Capitalism and control of the press, 1800-1975" in J. Curran, M. Gurevitch and J. Woollacott (eds.), *Mass Communication and Society* (London, 1977), p. 221.

[108] Ibid.

[109] Tom Baistow, *Fourth-Rate Estate : An Anatomy of Fleet Street* (Comedia, 1985).

[110] Negrine, *Politics and the Mass Media in Britain*, 45.

popular press as undermining the role of a 'traditional' British newspaper as an entity that educates, and betters, its readership. An educating press, such as the radical presses of the early- and mid-nineteenth centuries, provided readers with the information they needed to better themselves. They rallied for political and social change that would improve the lives of those reading their papers, such as expansions to the electoral franchise, action to decrease economic inequality between society's richest and poorest, and information on ways that ordinary people could better engage with the wider British political process through rallies, meetings and petition signings. To use a modern term, an educationalist fourth-estate press contained 'hard' news: serious, weighty news content that desired to improve the intelligence and awareness of its readers.[111]

The popular press and its focus on 'human interest' news content, therefore, was not the journalism that its readers deserved. For every story that popular newspapers dedicated to scandal or entertainment – divorce court proceedings, speculation on horse races, events of high society fashion – they were avoiding providing the serious, educational content readers needed for self-betterment.[112] The overall result has been both a historiography and lingering public perceptions that has ignored or misinterpreted the political significance of the daily popular press in Britain, both past and present. The overlooking of these newspapers, this thesis argues, comes from traditional historical understanding that has not seen value in analysing these kinds of newspapers, unless from within negative ideas of ownership, commercialisation and a broader negative impact on culture. The quality press, particularly

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[111] Hampton, 'Liberalism, the Press, and the Construction of the Public Sphere: Theories of the Press in Britain, 1830-1914'.

[112] Peter Mountjoy, "The working-class press and working-class conservatism" in Boyce, Curran, and Wingate, *Newspaper History,* p. 227.

certain newspapers such as *The Times*[113], have been overused by historians of the British press, and it is to the field's loss that so little is understood or appreciated about the political content of the formative popular press. Thankfully, recent scholarship has begun to explore the ways in which popular newspapers, far from being 'feather-brained', is worthy of historical scholarship.

Far from Feather-Brained

Much of the negative scholarship surrounding the new dailies' tradition of the popular press, as has been outlined above, stemmed from understandings of the British press as a 'fourth estate'. The power that this idea held, and still holds, over many interpretations of the popular press is a romantic ideal, but one with fundamental flaws that misunderstand the value and importance of the popular press and in trying to understand the significance of its political content.

Primarily, the dual ideas of the fourth estate and the critical public sphere have a very restricted view of the 'publics' that they wish to see served by a 'quality' newspaper press. Both theories construct 'publics' that exclude the vast majority of people, particularly those whose lives resonated with the content of the new dailies and the wider culture that developed throughout the nineteenth century. Habermas, for example, was writing of a coffee-house culture of the upper and middle classes that 'dominated' any lower-class equivalent[114], and the 'fourth estate' is a concept again rooted in a public largely comprised of educated and privileged professional classes. A similarly restrictive definition of the public is used in Vernon's work on the popular culture of the mid-nineteenth century, where its

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[113] Andrew Hobbs, "The Deleterious Dominance of The Times in Nineteenth-Century Scholarship," Journal of Victorian Culture 18.4 (2013), pp. 472–97.

[114] Habermas, p. 430.

'genuine' nature came at the cost of including only a small number of Britain's general public. Moreover, the majority of the New Journalism's contemporaries who still defended a traditional fourth estate were, themselves, people rather much of an elite section of British society.[115] The underlying issue is that the informed publics these contemporaries eulogised, and who later historians bemoan the popular press for harming, do not include the vast majority of the public. Applying the above-discussed ideas to the popular press, therefore, is to apply theory to both a press and to readerships that were never considered as worthy parts of a rational public sphere.

Furthermore, the fixation by some historians on the merits of fourth-estate journalism overlook significant contemporary debate during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries that was challenging this traditional interpretation of the role of journalism. While the idea of a journalistic fourth-estate remained a powerful idea across late-Victorian British society, there was growing understanding that the press could not solely exist as a dictator of information to the public.[116] Instead of creating public opinion, there was growing understanding of the press as a reflection of public opinion: a mirror to society that spoke with, as much as to, its readers.[117] It has been argued that by the end of the nineteenth century this theory of the press's role in wider society was beginning to dominate, or at least contest, ideas that

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[115] Hampton, '`Understanding Media': Theories of the Press in Britain, 1850-1914'; Mark Hampton, 'The Press, Patriotism, and Public Discussion: C. P. Scott, The Manchester Guardian, and The Boer War, 1899-1902', *The Historical Journal* 44, no. 01 (25 March 2001): 177–97, https://doi.org/10.1017/S0018246X01001479.

[116] Graham Law and Matthew Sterenberg, 'Old v. New Journalism and the Public Sphere; or, Habermas Encounters Dallas and Stead', *19: Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century* 0, no. 16 (22 March 2013), https://doi.org/10.16995/ntn.657.

[117] M. Hampton, *Visions of the Press in Britain, 1850-1950* (Illinois, 2004), pp. 106-129.

journalism could serve only as a fourth estate.[118] Therefore, to continually see the popular

press through the prism of fourth-estate ideals overlooks how, at the time, the fourth estate

was not the sole theory of the role and purpose of newspapers and their relationship with their

readers.[119]

Indeed, continuing fixations on the value of the journalistic fourth estate, particularly

in criticisms of the popular press, overlooks some glaring hypocrisies within the 'quality'

presses against which popular newspapers are frequently negatively compared. For example,

the issue of popular newspaper ownership is one that could just as easily be applied to the

British newspaper press in general. British newspapers have long relied on the wealth and

influence of powerful owners to exist, and so the popular press cannot be held up as a

uniquely negative example of newspaper ownership within this broader context. Moreover,

considering the political influence of owners, many newspapers existed thanks to direct

patronage from politicians or political parties, and expressly supporting the party from which

it was receiving a financial lifeline was often a newspaper's only hope of financial

solvency.[120] The nineteenth-century political press was dominated by publications supported

or directly owned by either Liberal or Conservative politicians[121]. Moreover, the House of

Commons of the early twentieth-century included dozens of newspaper owners[122]. Indeed, the

wartime Prime Minister bought a controlling stake in a newspaper after the end of World War

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[118] L. Brake, M. Demoor, and British Library., *Dictionary of Nineteenth-Century Journalism in Great Britain and Ireland* (Academia Press, 2009)., pp. 499-500.

[119] Hampton, '`Understanding Media': Theories of the Press in Britain, 1850-1914', 178–80.

[120] M. Hewitt, *The Dawn of the Cheap Press in Victorian Britain: The End of the 'Taxes on Knowledge' 1849-1869* (London, 2014), p. 117.

[121] S. Koss, *The Rise and Fall of the Political Press in Britain* (London, 1984), vol 1.

[122] As detailed in J. A. Thomas, *The House of Commons 1906-1911* (Cardiff, 1958).

One.[123] Even the radical presses of the earlier nineteenth century, the newspapers against which the new daily popular press have been negatively compared, have been primarily historicised as vehicles for their owner's particular politics. To bemoan popular newspaper owners for using their newspapers for political purposes, therefore, is to again ignore broader traditions of British newspaper history that dispel romantic ideas that a press should, or at any stage really behaved, as a fully independent check on governmental power that fought primarily for their reader's interests.

The birth of the daily popular press, and particularly the rise of the new dailies at the beginning of the twentieth century, has received overdue scholarship which appreciated the complexity and importance of its appeal to large audiences of lower-middle and upper-working class readers. Firstly, the ways which these newspapers presented their news, including innovative usage of subheading, illustration and simplified language, made a wide variety of news content more accessible and easier to read for large audiences of people.[124] These mass audiences were among the first generations to grow up and benefit from the 1870 Education Act and were underserviced by the dense, complicated language and presentation of the traditional British press. Secondly, the dedication to a large variety of human-interest news was not a decline in journalistic quality, but a long-overdue appreciation of the kinds of

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[123] J. M. McEwen, "Lloyd George's Acquisition of the Daily Chronicle in 1918," Journal of British Studies 22.1 (1982), p. 127.

[124] Laurel Brake, "'The Old Journalism and the New: Forms of Cultural Production in London in the 1880s'", in *Papers for the Millions: The New Journalism in Britain 1850– 1914*, ed. Joel H. Wiener (London: Greenwood Press, 1988), 19; Martin. Conboy, *Journalism : A Critical History* (Sage Publications, 2004), 157; Joel H Wiener, *Papers for the Millions : The New Journalism in Britain, 1850s to 1914* (Greenwood Press, 1988), 56.

news stories that a large daily-reading mass public primarily wanted to read.[125] The huge success of these newspapers, and the failure of others, has to be understood through their particular success at articulating to the lived experiences and day-to-day interests of readers ignored or underserviced by previous centuries of newspapers, popular or otherwise. [126]

Moreover, far from being simplistic, studies of aspects of the content of the popular press have argued convincingly as to the complexity with which such publications could represent and depict important parts of readers' interests and collective identities. For example, work into tabloid depictions of sex, sexuality and gender has demonstrated how popular newspapers could present complex yet accessible discussions of key components of their readers' lived experiences, and served as key components of wider cultural debates on those subject matters.[127] The ability of popular newspapers to effectively and succinctly present a variety of news genres to readers in nuanced ways that resonated with their everyday interests and experiences is the core reason why the twentieth century can be seen as a 'tabloid century', during which popular newspapers became a dominant part of British culture and were key sources of interest, information and entertainment during millions of peoples' daily routines.[128] This success throughout the twentieth century was rooted in their

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[125] Chalaby, '"Smiling Pictures Make People Smile": Northcliffe's Journalism'; Conboy, *The Press and Popular Culture*, 87–112.

[126] Peter Catterall et al., *Northcliffe's Legacy : Aspects of the British Popular Press, 1896-1996* (St. Martin's Press, 2000), viii. See also Dan L. LeMathieu, *A Culture for Democracy : mass communication and the cultivated mind in Britain between the wars* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), p. 99.

[127] See Adrian Bingham, *Gender, Modernity, and the Popular Press in Inter-War Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); Adrian. Bingham, *Family Newspapers? : Sex, Private Life, and the British Popular Press 1918-1978* (Oxford University Press, 2009).

[128] Bingham and Conboy, *Tabloid Century : The Popular Press in Britain, 1896 to the Present*.

foundation, and their consistent ability to represent news using a voice that convincingly resonated with large audiences of people.

The popular press, therefore, deserves to be considered as something more than 'feather-brained'. It was a press, for its flaws, that was an enormous success largely because of its ability to successfully speak to and with large audiences of primarily lower-middle class British people. Recent scholarship has increasingly shed light on the merits of popular newspapers as a historical source through studies that demonstrate their ability to articulate varied and complex information in accessible ways that spoke successfully to reader interests and levels of intelligence.

What this thesis will do is go further than this recent field of study by exploring how the emergent popular press used that same journalistic voice which resonated so successfully with large readerships to represent political events in an engaging, entertaining and emotional manner. Currently, the only work which explores the mass participatory significance of the daily popular press focuses on their post-war content.[129] Moreover, Bingham and Conboy's chapter on the politics of the 'Tabloid Century' features very little on the pre-1914 period. This absence in such recent scholarship into the new dailies, and the traditional hesitance to analyse the political content of popular media in general[130], further underlines the current lack of work which this thesis seeks to address.

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[129] Adrian Bingham, '"AN ORGAN OF UPLIFT?"', *Journalism Studies* 14, no. 5 (October 2013): 651–62, https://doi.org/10.1080/1461670X.2013.810901; Martin Conboy, 'How the War Made the Mirror', *Media History* 23, no. 3–4 (2 October 2017): 451–68, https://doi.org/10.1080/13688804.2017.1318051.

[130] See Chandrika Kaul, 'The Press', in *The Contemporary History Handbook*, ed. Brian Brivati, Julia Buxton, and Anthony Seldon (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996), 300.

As well as adding to studies of the British press, it will also provide a valuable addition to histories of pre-Great War British politics which, similarly to histories of the press, have traditionally overlooked the value or significance of popular media as a source of information. As the following section will explore, more recent scholarship has situated pre-1914 British politics within the mass, urban culture discussed in Chapter One, and explored ways in which political messages permeated to large audiences through a variety of methods of communication. What this thesis as a whole will address however, is the still-underexplored place of the new dailies within the vibrant political culture of Edwardian Britain that modern scholarship has properly identified.

Politics and Press in Edwardian Britain

The political significance of the popular press of the Long Edwardian era, as detailed above, deserves scholarly attention in order to further the field of journalism history. It is also needed to expand upon histories of Late-Victorian and Edwardian politics, and will build upon recent work that has touched on the ways that newspapers can represent complex political identities through their coverage, and were part of a broader and increasingly mass political culture in pre-1914 Britain. It is hoped that this thesis will demonstrate how popular newspapers were a valuable source of political information for large audiences of people at a time in British political history where the political interests of the 'everyman' had never been more central, and when a wider mass culture, detailed in Chapter One, was increasingly tailored to his wants and interests.

Traditional histories of Long Edwardian politics were defined by narratives of high-party rises and declines. Of particular interest were the fortunes of the Liberal party, and the era of 'New Liberalism' marked by landmark welfare legislation such the introduction of old-age pensions and unemployment pay and the 'People's Budget' of 1909, which began a

steady process that led to the Parliament Act of 1911, which significantly curbed the powers

of the unelected House of Lords.[131] The fact that this period was the last time a peacetime

Liberal party in Britain would either win a general election or run a government further adds

to the historical interest in the Liberals of the Long Edwardian era, both in terms of the

period's place in the party's later decline and of the legacy left by its governmental and social

welfare reforms.

These histories of the Liberal party fixate particularly on the ways that the Long

Edwardian era fits into the party's later fall into the political abyss. Various theories are

offered explaining the collapse of the historic Liberal party.[132] These include the economic

and philosophical challenges of total war on classical liberalism, rising tensions in Ireland

and the Liberal's support of Irish Home Rule, the rise of the Labour party as a more natural

representative of left-of-centre working-class political interests, or the wartime split within

the coalition government between Asquith and Lloyd-George, which definitively split the

Liberal party into two irreparable camps from which they never electorally recover.[133]

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[131] John Grigg, *Lloyd George. [2], The People's Champion, 1902-1911* (Penguin, 2002), chap. 6; Roy.

Hattersley, *David Lloyd George : The Great Outsider* (Little, Brown, 2010), 239–58; Bruce K. Murray, *The*

People's Budget 1909/10 : Lloyd George and Liberal Politics (Clarendon Press, 1980); A. K. (Alan Keith)

Russell, *Liberal Landslide; the General Election of 1906* (David & Charles, 1973).

[132] Ian Packer, *Liberal Government and Politics, 1905–15* (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2006),

https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230625440; G. R. (Geoffrey Russell) Searle, *The Liberal Party : Triumph and*

Disintegration, 1886-1929 (Macmillan, 1992), 165–75.

[133] George Lurcy Bernstein, *Liberalism and Liberal Politics in Edwardian England* (Allen & Unwin, 1986),

chaps 6 & 7; C Cross, *The Liberals in Power (1905-1914)* (London, 1963); Stephen E. Koss, 'The Destruction

of Britain's Last Liberal Government', *The Journal of Modern History* 40, no. 2 (21 June 1968): 257–77,

https://doi.org/10.1086/240192; Alan Sykes, *The Rise and Fall of British Liberalism, 1776-1988* (Longman,

1997), chap. 5.

Similarly, certain histories of Edwardian C/conservatism[134] have traditionally focused on the fortunes of the party's parliamentary fortunes during a so-called 'crisis' period of the early twentieth century. The primary focuses were clashes between leading party figures, particularly Joseph Chamberlain's campaign outside the party on the issue of tariff reform, and how these personal duals impacted on the party's electoral fortunes.[135] Their period in opposition was similarly discussed in the context of elite behaviours, as a divided party strived to reunite in attempts to resist proposed reforms of land taxes and the House of Lords.[136] More recent scholarship challenged the extent to which the period of Edwardian C/conservatism constituted a 'crisis' by contextualising the scale of their election defeats, as well as the detailing the extent of the party's recovery – including a growth in membership - in the years building up to World War One.[137]

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[134] The use of this word here and throughout, and its implied combination of 'big C' Conservatism as a political party and 'small c' ideological conservatism, borrows from Emily Jones's recent work *Edmund Burke and the Invention of Modern Conservatism, 1830-1914: An Intellectual History* (Oxford: OUP, 2017), pp. 1-15.

[135] N. J. Crowson, *The Longman Companion to The Conservative Party since 1830* (Edinburgh, 2001), pp. 82-84; D. Dutton, *His Majesty's Loyal Opposition: The Unionist Party in Opposition, 1905-1915* (Liverpool, 1992).

[136] J. Charmley, *A History of Conservative Politics since 1830* (Basingstoke, 2008); Coetzee, F., 'Faction and Failure: 1905-1910' in Ball, S. and Seldon, A. (eds.), *Recovering Power: The Conservatives in Opposition Since 1867* (Basingstoke, 2005), pp. 92-112; J, F. Harris and C. Hazlehurst, 'Campbell-Bannerman as Prime Minister', *History* 55.185 (1970), pp. 360-383.

[137] Stuart Ball, *The Conservative Party and British Politics, 1902-1951* (London, 1995), p. 44; Ewen Henry Harvey (E. H. H.) Green, *The Crisis of Conservatism: The Politics, Economics and Ideology of the Conservative Party 1880-1914* (London: Routledge, 1995), p. 246; David Thackeray, 'Rethinking the Edwardian Crisis of Conservatism', *The Historical Journal* 54.1 (2011), pp. 191-213.

Labour, too, has been traditionally understood through the actions and behaviours of leading party individuals or powerful allied groups –such as the Fabians or working-class worker unions – and particularly their connections with the Liberals. Initially seen as a 'pressure wing' of the governing Liberals, the Edwardian Labour party was gradually seen as a significant (if initially minor) addition to British political culture.[138] Over time the significance of their emergence was elaborated, with various different works arguing their rise as a significant factor in the decline of Liberal dominance, the ideological evolution of the Conservative party away from traditional fixations on property-owning democracy, and the general competence and rationality of the voting public.[139]

What these traditional histories of Edwardian politics shared was a somewhat detached view of the significance of the electorate. The more traditional narratives of Liberal success, Tory infighting or Labour emergence largely overlooked how party machinations

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[138] Eugenio F. Biagini and Alastair J. Reid, *Currents of Radicalism : Popular Radicalism, Organised Labour and Party Politics in Britain, 1850-1914* (Cambridge University Press, 1991); David Powell, 'The New Liberalism and the Rise of Labour, 1886-1906', *The Historical Journal* (Cambridge University Press), accessed 24 November 2017, https://doi.org/10.2307/2639067; Duncan Tanner, 'Elections, Statistics, and the Rise of the Labour Party, 1906–1931', *The Historical Journal* 34, no. 4 (1991): 893–908, https://doi.org/10.1017/S0018246X00017349.

[139] Henry Pelling, *The Origins of the Labour Party, 1880-1900* (New York, 1954); A. M. McBriar, *Fabian Socialism and English Politics, 1884-1918* (Cambridge, 1962); R. Dowse, *Left in the Centre: The Independent Labour Party 1893-1940* (London, 1966); D. Howell, *British Workers and the Independent Labour Party 1888-1906* (Manchester, 1983); E. F. Biagini and A. J. Reid (eds.), *Currents of Radicalism: Popular Radicalism, Organized Labour and Party Politics in Britain, 1850-1914* (Cambridge, 1991); Jon Lawrence. 'Popular radicalism and the socialist revival in Britain', *Journal of British Studies* 31 (1992), pp. 163-186; F. Bealey and H. Pelling, *Labour and Politics, 1900-1906* (London, 1958); P. Poirier, *The Advent of the British Labour Party* (New York, 1958).

resonated with the wider public. Whenever voters are mentioned, they are primarily as passive participants in party drama. Their support of a given party, policy or individual either rose or fell, without real analysis or consideration of how the voting public either engaged with or rejected the political issue under discussion. The passive nature of economically-poorer British people is particularly noted in Stedman Jones's influential study of 'Outcast London', who contends that the 'rootless volatility' of the working classes in the East End defined any shifts in broader political allegiances.[140] The political culture of the Long Edwardian period was admittedly far from a full democracy, as it would take until 1928 for both men and women of the same age to have the same voting rights.[141] It was still however, as the introduction outlined, a mass-democracy where millions of lower-middle and working-class people had the right to vote. It was this mass public that decided who won or lost elections.

Moreover, as Marc Brodie has particularly asserted, the voting behaviour of the British working classes, especially those with greater financial security, during the decades before World War One was far from rootless. Rather, people's voting decisions rested on a variety of motivating factors, encompassing both party-political or policy attractiveness and ideas of individual respectability and the morality of those seeking their vote.[142] Understanding the ways in which this mass public received political information, therefore, is vital to further understanding the reality of political culture during the Long Edwardian era.

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[140] Gareth Stedman Jones, *Outcast London: A Study in the Relationship Between Classes in Victorian Society* (Oxford: OUP, 1971), p. 343.

[141] M. Takayanagi, "Women and the Vote: The Parliamentary Path to Equal Franchise, 1918-28", *Parliamentary History* 37.1 (2018), p. 184.

[142] Marc Brodie, *The Politics of the Poor: The East End of London 1885-1914* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2004), pp. 199-205.

This political culture has been explored in some recent work that investigates the different ways that politics existed outside the narratives of parties and powerful individuals. For example, Duncan Tanner's work into both liberalism and labourism during the early twentieth century portrayed the commonalities between the two political movements through analysis of the ways that Liberal and Labour sought to speak to working-class supporters in similar ways.[143] Moreover, Alex Windscheffel's recent study of C/conservatism in Victorian London has outlined how the party communicated different identities to different groups of potential voters, and how that communication created a party's identity considerably more complex than previous histories of tariff-obsessed Toryism implied.[144]

He particularly explored the party's deliberate appeals to working-class support, which was tailored around direct appeal to working-class pastimes such as frequenting public houses. This and other works have provided much-needed work into how political parties of the late-nineteenth and twentieth centuries actively sought the support of lower-middle and working-class support, due the increasing influence of such people at the polls. The Conservatives, in particular, belied their poor electoral showings during the 'crisis' of 1906 due to their significant efforts to engage a primarily working-class electorate around key social issues that resonated with their lived experiences.[145]

The importance of the working-class vote was of pressing concern to politicians of the Long Edwardian era, and the ways that actors across the political spectrum attempted to

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[143] Duncan Tanner, *Political Change and the Labour Party, 1900-1918* (Cambridge, 1990).

[144] A. Windscheffel, *Popular Conservatism in Imperial London* (Woodbridge, 2007); M. Baer, 'Reviewed Work: "Popular Conservatism in Imperial London" by Alex Windscheffel', *Journal of British Studies* 48.1 (Jan, 2009), pp. 255-257.

[145] See David Thackeray, 'Rethinking the Edwardian Crisis of Conservatism', *The Historical Journal* 54.1 (2011), pp. 191-213.

speak to mass audiences have been explored particularly well in the works of Jon Lawrence, who argued how political rallies (hustings) and newspapers increasingly became ways through which political movements attempted to communicate messages to large audiences of people, particularly those from lower-middle and working-class backgrounds.[146] These attempted communications, as Windscheffel noted, articulated diverse and complex messages that varied depending on the intended audience, and addressed a variety of potential political and social concerns. This understanding of the complex and often-contrasting wants and needs of working-class voters also draws significantly from the work of Patrick Joyce and Ross McKibbin, who have spoken convincingly of the large variety of ways that working-class citizens perceived their place in Victorian and Edwardian society.[147] Not only were working-class votes being increasingly sought by political parties, but the diversity of ways through which politics was communicated to mass audiences spoke of groups of people who engaged with politics in a variety of ways.[148]

Moreover, the interests and demands of lower-middle and working-class political audiences formed a vital part of changing and frequently contested ideas of 'public opinion' at the end of the nineteenth century. In contrast to past ideas of 'the people' as a restricted coffee-house class, the Long Edwardian era hosted a political culture that actively engaged

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[146] Jon Lawrence. 'Popular radicalism and the socialist revival in Britain', *Journal of British Studies* 31 (1992), pp. 163-186. See also Jon Lawrence, *Electing Our Masters: The Hustings in British Politics from Hogarth to Blair* (Oxford, 2009).

[147] Patrick Joyce, *Visions of the People: Industrial England and the Question of Class, c. 1848-1914* (Cambridge, 1993), Ross McKibbin, *The Ideologies of Class: Social Relations in Britain, 1880-1950* (Oxford, 1990).

[148] Laura Beers, *Your Britain : Media and the Making of the Labour Party* (Harvard University Press, 2010), chap. 2.

across traditional class boundaries.[149] Through various means, including pictorial posters, public debates and political news content, the political culture of the Long Edwardian period was comprised significantly of lower-middle and upper-working class citizens receiving political information from a variety of sources which intersected with elements of the mass culture of the period. These sources of political information, of which the press was a significant one, represented politics in diverse and engaging ways that spoke accessibly to groups of people who were likely excluded by more traditional forms of political communication[150], and offer a crucial historical insight into how political messages manifested themselves in the day-to-day lives of British people.[151]

These recent works into the political culture of pre-1914 Britain and the ways that ideas and policies were communicated to members of the voting public within it heavily inform this thesis. Firstly, they collectively help to illustrate the increasingly mass political culture identified in Chapter One and its proximity to the parallel growth of a mass consumer culture. Secondly, the work of Thompson and others has pointed to the increasing references to and significance of the 'man in the street' within early twentieth-century political discourse concerning 'the public', and how the language surrounding political culture throughout the

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[149] James Thompson, *British Political Culture and the Idea of 'Public Opinion', 1867-1914* (Cambridge, 2013), p. 245.

[150] While James Vernon in *Politics and the People* stresses the existence of diverse methods of political communication throughout the mid-nineteenth century (p. 330), his broader argument of an 'eroded' popular politics by the Long Edwardian period overlooks the vibrancy of the post-1880s political culture noted by the likes of Thompson, Lawrence, Windscheffel and Brodie.

[151] Thompson, '"Pictorial Lies"? - Posters and Politics in Britain c .1880-1914'; Thompson, '"The Lights of the Electric Octopus Have Been Switched Off": Visual and Political Culture in Edwardian London'. See also Frank Trentmann, *Free Trade Nation* (Oxford: OUP, 2008), pp. 122-133.

mid-to-late nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries was, despite the development of female

political participation through groups such as the Primrose League, dominantly masculine.[152]

Importantly, this Long Edwardian 'man in the street' was less comfortably middle-

class than the pervasive idea of 'the man in the train, or the omnibus, or in the restaurant'

who Stead identified as representative of the 'public' in the 1880s.[153] This development

pointed to the existence of a more-inclusive political culture by the beginning of the Long

Edwardian period into which the new dailies were able to successfully integrate. Moreover,

the prominence of the 'man in the street' within Long Edwardian political culture also

emerged at a time when, as both Trentmann and Thompson have argued, the idea of the

British public as a body of 'citizen consumers' gained significant traction within political and

cultural discourse.[154] The new dailies, as Chapter One detailed, developed within the context

of broader political and cultural developments which saw the power of the 'man in the street'

grow as both a consumer and as a potential voter. This recent scholarship into the political

culture of the Long Edwardian period, therefore, appreciates this intersection of political and

consumer culture into which the new dailies integrated so successfully.

Interestingly however, this recent scholarship into Long Edwardian politics manages

to identify aspects of a complex political and consumer culture, of which newspapers were

important components, without ever properly situating the new dailies within it. Newspapers

form key parts of the primary material of this recent work, but the new dailies are notably

lacking. The *Daily Express,* for example, is never cited in the work of Brodie, Thompson, or

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[152] See Thompson, *Public Opinion,* p. 241; Vernon, *Politics and the People,* p. 208; Windscheffel, *Popular Conservatism,* p. 29.

[153] Stead, 'Government by Journalism', p. 662. See also Thompson, '*Public Opinion'*, pp. 35-41.

[154] Thompson, *Public Opinion,* pp. 81-83; Trentmann, *Free Trade Nation,* p.

Trentmann, and is cited once by Windscheffel. Moreover, the occasions when any of three new dailies are mentioned within these studies of the political culture of the Long Edwardian period are fleeting. For example, Windscheffel's work on C/conservatism in London makes some use of material from the *Daily Mail,* particularly in his chapter on the 1900 election, and in a single mention with regards the paper's tariff reform position in 1910.[155]

Trentmann's discussion of the visual and print politics of the Edwardian free-trade campaigns is extensive, but never includes material from three newspapers that by the time of the elections discussed had combined readerships of millions of people. Also, Thompson briefly refers to both the *Mail* and the *Mirror* in his chapter on locating 'the public' in a political culture that did not have opinion polling.[156] In the case of the latter however, the newspapers themselves are not used. Instead, their brief inclusion is in relation to conversations contemporary to the birth of the new dailies which regarded their negative impact on whatever constituted the political 'public' of the period.[157] These works all appreciate the vibrant and multi-faceted nature of the Long Edwardian political sphere, the presence of print material within it, and the intersections between the political and the consumer aspects of the increasingly-mass culture of the period. Despite this, the place of the three new dailies is an absence that this thesis particularly wishes to address.

This thesis, therefore, seeks to contribute further to a body of literature concerning the increasingly-mass political culture of the Long Edwardian period by exploring one of the most prominent and regular sources through which millions of British received political information as part of their day-to-day involvement in political culture. As other works have

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[155] Windscheffel, *Popular Conservatism,* chapter 7, p. 203.

[156] Thompson, *Public Opinion,* pp. 109, 112-114.

[157] Ibid.

explored, the interests and demands of working- and lower-middle class people had never been more important in British political life, and parties from across the spectrum were increasingly concentrated on efforts to communicate to and with these audiences. This shift in party-political thinking occurred within a wider political culture which increasingly intersected with the wider mass culture that rose at the end of the nineteenth century in Britain, of which the new dailies were a particularly successful component. In contrast to past fears of the mass public as radical outsiders, the increasingly lower-middle-class voting public of the Long Edwardian era was a dominant and respectable force that the political establishment was interested in communicating to and with. The new dailies were communicating politics to the same masses of people who had never been of such interest to the British political establishment. Understanding the ways in which Long Edwardian political parties reacted to the rise of the new dailies, therefore, would provide a vital addition to these histories of pre-Great War British politics. Through exploring these reactions, along with aspects of the three new dailies' election-time political content, this thesis will also argue for the rightful place of the new dailies within the political culture of the Long Edwardian period identified by the likes of Lawrence, Thompson, Trentmann and Windscheffel.

Chapter Three:

Method

As the literature review asserted, this thesis will address two interconnected questions. Firstly, it will explore the ways in which the new three dailies represented election news content throughout the general elections of the Long Edwardian period. Secondly, it will analyse how the Conservative, Liberal and Labour parties reacted to the rise of this new political mass press. In its efforts to address these two questions, therefore, this thesis will deal with two batches of primary material. On the one hand, there will be the election-time political content of the three new dailies – the *Daily Express,* the *Daily Mail* and the *Daily Mirror.* On the other hand, there will be the archived reactions from within the three chosen political parties to the rise of the new dailies.

The following chapter will explore the methods taken in this thesis to answer its two central research questions using the two types of historical material. Firstly, the thesis's research questions will be better defined through discussion of the extent, and limitations, of the thesis's scope. This section will rationalise the inclusions and exclusions of what the thesis defines as the Long Edwardian British political 'establishment', will outline the definitions and limitations of the 'reactions' found in the archives of members and parties from that political establishment, and will explain the specific time parameters which make up the thesis's 'Long Edwardian' focus.

Secondly, the particular methods used to interrogate both the newspaper and political archive materials will be outlined and rationalised. At its core, this thesis is a piece of historical research, and one that therefore draws primarily from an academic tradition and an existing literature where methodological decisions are rarely rationalised or theorised. Much of this section, therefore, will take influence from the 'Part I' of Seldon's edited work on the

practice and method of modern history by describing and justifying procedural steps through the physical archive material.[158] However, this thesis has also embraced elements of relevant social-science methodologies, such as discourse and framing analyses, and ways that these non-historical methods informed this thesis's analyse will be elaborated upon. There will also be discussion of the thesis's place within the field of digital humanities, particularly with regards to its use (and not use) of the methodological opportunities on offer to those using digital newspaper archives. Additionally, these methods will be contextualised within a broader research which emphasises the inevitable yet positive role played by a particular researcher, in this instance the author, and the specific pathways that they tread through their chosen historical material.

1) Scope and Limitations:

Definition of 'Establishment'

As one of its central lines of inquiry, this thesis will explore private reactions from within the political establishment of the Long Edwardian period to the rise of the new and unprecedentedly 'new daily' popular press. The 'establishment' chosen in this thesis consists of the three major British political parties from my time period as defined by the researcher: the Liberals, the Conservatives, and Labour. This initial clarification of the 'establishment' investigated as part of this thesis made the decision to exclude reactions from the Irish Parliamentary Party (IPP). This is despite their larger number of MPs during this time period than Labour.

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[158] Anthony Seldon, *Contemporary History : Practice and Method*, ed. Anthony. Seldon (Oxford: B. Blackwell, 1988), 1–116.

The reasoning behind this decision was several fold. Firstly, the newspapers under investigation did not have as significant a presence in Ireland as they did on the British mainland during the chosen period of study. For example, it was not until 2006 that the *Daily Mail* launched an Irish edition.[159] What's more, while copies of all three new dailies likely circulated in Ireland, Ireland was undergoing its own distinct media developments that connected to its own histories of society, politics and popular culture.[160] To place the new dailies within this different national history, therefore, would represent an awkward and unsatisfactory addition to this different strand of academic literature.

Secondly, the IPP only stood candidates in Ireland, and so were detached from the other major political parties as they never stood candidates in mainland Britain. Moreover, their number of MPs during this time period did not correlate with their popular voting support. This was due to the nature of Britain's first-past-the-post electoral system, which was the method by which all but a very small number of university seats had been decided in Britain since 1885.[161] While they could continue to win more seats in Parliament than Labour would throughout this time period, they did so without ever winning more of the popular vote. By the end of 1910, Labour was winning between three-hundred and four-hundred

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[159] Jane Sweetman, 'Tickle the Republic — the Success of Irish Versions of UK Tabloids: A Case Study of the Irish Daily Mail', *Media, Culture & Society* 30, no. 4 (July 2008): 573, https://doi.org/10.1177/0163443708091183.

[160] Mark O'Brien, *The Fourth Estate : Journalism in Twentieth-Century Ireland* (Manchester University Press, 2017), 4–22.

[161] See André Blais, *To Keep or to Change First Past the Post? : The Politics of Electoral Reform* (Oxford University Press, 2008), sec. 2.2.

thousand votes, while the IPP never won more than ninety-one thousand across the entire period.[162]

Therefore, while this thesis appreciates the parliamentary significance of the IPP in terms of MP numbers, their lack of presence across the British mainland, and their comparative lack of popular support compared to the other three parties, means this thesis has excluded them as one of the 'major' British political parties that it wishes to investigate.

Definition of 'Reactions'

The political 'reactions' that this thesis investigates comprised of written and typed records from across the three political parties which they explicitly discussed issues surrounding the emergence of the popular press, and in particular those that made specific reference to the new dailies. The aim of studying these 'fascinating fragments'[163] being to better understand how politicians from across the political spectrum were responding to the rise of this new press, which was being purchased and read by unprecedented numbers of people and articulating political news in unprecedented ways in terms of mass accessibility.

The nature of the political reactions that were investigated can be divided into two thematic categories. The first of these were noted as 'inner-party' reactions and took a took a variety of forms. These included written correspondence such as letters, telegrams, or postcards, that were intended for consumption by private individuals within a particular political party; minutes from internal political meetings or debates; and internal literature circulated among the agents of a particular political party. These 'inner-party' reactions include a wide range of responses from across each political party, in order to enhance

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[162] David Butler and Gareth Butler, *British Political Facts* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 264–65.

[163] See Angela Raspin, 'Private Papers' in Seldon (ed.) *Contemporary History,* p. 90.

understanding of how whole political parties, as opposed to only certain individuals, were responding to these new political media.

The second thematic category of archived political reactions were defined as 'outer-party' reactions. These reactions were drawn from archived writings which spoke to wider audiences than the private correspondence. Examples of these used in this thesis included segments from significantly-distributed party pamphlets, specifically the Conservative monthly *Gleanings,* and party-aligned newspapers such as the Labour-launched *Daily Citizen* and the Liberal-supporting *Daily News*. By adding these to the internal reactions of political parties, this thesis was able to better understand the wider political response to the rise of the early popular press. In particular, it will further broaden the scope of the political reactions beyond the words of select politicians by understanding the significance of the emergent new dailies within these wider political organisations with large numbers of agents and supporters. As the literature review discussed, the late-Victorian period had seen a considerable growth in party-political memberships and organisations. The inclusion of these 'outer-party' reactions was an appreciation of the large-scale nature of the three major political parties included in this study, and the need to draw on material outside of the limited material from a few selected 'internal' individuals.

As well as specifying the type of material being used in this thesis's definition of 'political reaction', it is important to outline what is meant throughout this project by a 'reaction'. Whether it appeared in a private letter between MPs, or as part of a written editorial in a publication loyal or connected to the party, the 'reactions' defined by this thesis's archival work were ones that related to political anxieties, curiosities and optimism caused by the inception and growth of these new popular media. How were politicians expressing their feeling about this new popular press? Did the success and influence of these new daily newspapers interest them? Was their potential political impact envisaged? If so,

was this seen as a good thing, or a bad thing? Did one newspaper garner different political responses from the others, and if so why? Did different politicians and different political parties respond to the new popular press differently? How did this difference manifest itself in these reactions? In summary, the reactions sought were ones at both an institutional and personal level that offered insight into how politicians and political parties were feeling and thinking about these new popular newspapers. Moreover, how did those feelings manifest themselves in their private, public and cross-party communications?

Research Parameters

In order to ensure that this thesis remained a focused and manageable project, certain parameters were put in place regarding the research's scope, content and length of chosen time period. Firstly, the thesis was bookended by two years – 1896 and 1914 – for important thematic reasons. The former date refers to the founding year of the *Daily Mail,* the most-read and influential title of the early, daily popular press. To begin here provides an obvious starting point, as it was this newspaper that played a major role in reshaping the wider newspaper industry in Britain. As was outlined more specifically in the literature review, the launch of the *Mail* built upon a previous decade of newspaper development – changes to style, language and editorial focus – known as the New Journalism. While popular newspapers had existed before the launch of the *Mail,* its launch marks the symbolic beginning of Bingham and Conboy's 'Tabloid Century'[164], when popular newspapers emerged as powerful contributors to mass British culture. Therefore, while other popular mass newspapers predated the *Mail,* it was the *Mail* that first took the components of the New Journalism and made it into a lasting, hugely-popular publication.

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[164] Bingham and Conboy, *Tabloid Century : The Popular Press in Britain, 1896 to the Present*, p. 2.

The *Daily Mail's* unprecedented readership figures and commercial success, as was also discussed in the literature review, had a profound impact on the British newspaper industry. Firstly, it provided a template for other national daily newspapers to launch and attempt to appeal to similar lower-to-middle class demographics. On the one hand, the *Daily Mirror,* while initially styled as a newspaper for female readers, soon relaunched as a daily similar in content (though distant in its heavy use of images) to the *Mail.* On the other, Arthur Pearson's launch of the *Daily Express* in 1900 was styled as a direct competitor to the *Mail* from the start, with similar political leanings, pricing and editorial emphases.

Secondly, the majority of other British newspapers began, at differing speeds, incorporating the stylistic innovations that the *Mail* had shown to be part of their huge success, such as succinct news reports, clear headlines, and the clean breaks between different stories. Innovations such as these would become the template for the majority of the British press, and marked the beginning of the above-mentioned 'Tabloid Century' in terms of popular newspaper formatting.

To begin here, therefore, is to begin with the founding of one of the thesis's key source materials, as well as the defining publication of this early age of the popular British press. The latter date meanwhile refers more specifically to the beginning of the First World War. As this is a project interested in the political content of the popular press, the outbreak of war serves as timely cut-off point for the thesis, as the editorial priorities of almost every title in the British newspaper industry would have moved onto the dominant topic of Britain declaring war, and away from domestic politics. Moreover, to extend beyond 1914 to the next general election in 1918 would by-necessity force an appreciation of mass political and

societal change – including a large expansion of the franchise[165] and the mass election of Sinn Fein[166] – that had occurred in the eight years (including four years of total war) that separated 1918 and the last Long Edwardian election in December 1910. The outbreak of war, therefore, serves as an ideal thematic cut-off that separates the political and media developments of the Long Edwardian era from the ramifications of World War One.

On top of this broad time period, this thesis chose to focus on specific time-period case studies, particularly in regards to its investigation and obtaining of the newspaper data. Specifically, the newspaper research focused around the political coverage during the general elections within my time period: 1900; 1906; as well as January and December 1910. Altogether, this comprised approximately sixteen weeks' worth of daily political coverage. The rationale behind focusing on elections is twofold. Firstly, practical concerns mean that studying political coverage in newspapers across the entirety of eighteen-year time period would have proven both difficult and unmanageable. Either, the project would have significantly overrun the length of a thesis due to trying to discuss too much primary data, or it would have resulted in selective analyses of one small aspect of newspaper coverage (such as leading political headlines) which from the researcher's perspective would have provided too little detail into the political significance of the new dailies' content. Therefore, by choosing the general elections as periods to investigate, it became possible to explore in detail the wider political content of the three new dailies, rather than skimming their content

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[165] See Robert Blackburn, "Laying the Foundations of the Modern Voting System: The Representation of the People Act 1918." *Parliamentary History* 30 (1), pp. 33–52.

[166] Michael Laffan, *The Resurrection of Ireland: The Sinn Fein Party, 1916-1923* (Cambridge, 1999), pp. 122-168.

for certain, eye-grabbing singularities which would have struggled to make the same argument.

What is more, focusing on general election coverage allowed this thesis to better answer its research questions thanks to concentrated and highly relevant batches of primary material. For one thing, elections were the time when newspapers would contain the highest concentrations of political coverage, and so studying these periods meant more information could be obtained than from a similar time-specific study during the same period. Therefore, while this thesis cannot, and will not, claim that election coverage is identical to everyday political coverage, it will argue that election coverage did not exist in vacuum, and indeed acted as a significant indicator of the broader methods through which the new daily newspapers presented political news to their readers across the entirety of the Long Edwardian period. In this sense, the thesis defined the election periods as case studies: they are specific events which are open to focused and detailed investigation around key themes, that are also able to provide 'representative' insights beyond the restrictions of the cases' specific time-periods and events.[167] Moreover, there is considerable precedent within the existing literature on nineteenth- and twentieth-century political history for using election-specific investigations to draw out broader arguments.[168]

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[167] See N. Gilbert (ed.), *Researching Social Life* (London, 2008), p. 36; R. Kumar, *Research Methodology* (London, 2014), p. 155; R. B. Burns, *Introduction to Research Methods* (Melbourne, 1997), p. 364.

[168] See Luke Blaxill, 'The Language of Imperialism in British Electoral Politics, 1880–1910', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 45, no. 3 (4 May 2017): 416–48; Paul Readman, 'The Conservative Party, Patriotism and British Politics: The Case of the General Election of 1900', Journal of British Studies 40.1 (2001), pp. 107-145; Ibid, "The 1895 General Election and Political Change in Late Victorian Britain", The Historical Journal 42.2 (1999), pp. 467-493; David Redvaldsen, '"Today is the Dawn": The Labour Party and the 1929 General Election', *Parliamentary History* 29.3 (2010), pp. 395-415; Iain Sharpe, 'Empire, Patriotism

As previously outlined, this thesis will focus on the election-time content from three specific newspapers: the *Daily Mail,* the *Daily Express* and the *Daily Mirror.* These particular newspapers were chosen for a variety of reasons. Firstly, they were three of the most-read and commercially successful urban newspapers of the period, with the *Daily Mail* established quickly as the most-read newspaper in the world. Their combined readerships went into the millions as was noted in Chapter One, and therefore the three made for an especially interesting investigation of political coverage, as they were the daily newspapers that were speaking to unprecedentedly large numbers of people. Their distinctly urban nature was an important factor too. Historians such Lawrence, Windscheffel and Thompson (as was discussed in the literature review) have highlighted that urban centres were the political hubs of Britain by the end of the nineteenth century. Therefore, the fact these newspapers sold primarily in cities and towns only highlights the importance of investigating the nature of their political content. Furthermore, these newspapers were all dailies, and so generated a more regular stream of widely-read political content.

Moreover, all of these newspapers were founded during the thesis's selected time period: the *Mail* in 1896; the *Express* in 1900; and the *Mirror* in 1903. This meant that there was not the need for the thesis to contextualise their past political coverage prior to the Long Edwardian period. To have also included other large-circulation or prominent daily titles of the period, such as *The Times* or *The Daily Telegraph,* would have required extensive work into the sometimes century-spanning history of that particular newspaper's political coverage that would have far exceeded the scope of this project. Moreover, including an established newspaper alongside or in place of one of three newly-launched national 'New Journalism'

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and the Working-Class Electorate: The 1900 General Election in the Battersea Constituency', *Parliamentary History* 28.3 (2009), pp. 392–412; Thompson, 'The Lights of the Electric Octopus'; Windscheffel, *Popular Consveratism,* chapter 7.

dailies would have opened up comparisons between the 'new' and the 'old' British press. Not only would such a comparison be outside this thesis's scope, but it would have required a level of selectivity likely to ask more questions than it would answer. For instance, quite which newspaper or newspapers would have been chosen if wanting to draw links to the 'traditional' British press, and what other newspapers would such a selection exclude? What's more, the popular appeal of this thesis's three chosen newspapers differed from the other, above-mentioned successful titles of the period. These newspapers were appealing to different audiences in different ways, and so trying to compare such different newspapers, especially if only choosing one specific example of a non-New Journalism title, would not fit into this projects scope. This is because this thesis wishes to focus specifically on the political coverage of, and political reaction to, the new mass daily newspapers of this period, and therefore no other title has been included as part of the analyses of election-time content featured in Chapters Four and Five.

The investigations of political reactions, meanwhile, prioritised details from the centralised archives of each of the Labour, Conservative and Liberal party, located in Greater Manchester, Oxford and Bristol respectively. To supplement these three primary sites, material was also obtained from other relevant physical archives. These included the papers of David Lloyd George, Andrew Bonar Law, Lord Northcliffe, Ralph David Blumenfeld, and Lord Beaverbrook from the Parliamentary Archives at Westminster; material concerning the early Labour party stored at the Bishopsgate Institute in London; newspaper material accessed through the British Library; and the additional Liberal collections at the London School of Economics (LSE). This project wanted as much as possible to focus on the reactions archived in the main archives of each party, so as to best utilise time and resources to gather sufficient information and evidence. The material obtained from these additional archives came from the recommendations of the central party archivists, who pointed me

towards relevant material related to their respective political party that was not held within their particular collections.

It could be argued that this thesis's approach ignores voices from significant other localities, especially considering the particular attention paid to regions like London and Lancashire by existing works on early twentieth-century British politics.[169] This thesis argues however that the archives accessed by the researcher obtained sufficient material to cover political reactions from sources across each of the three political parties. The material found at the additional sites complemented the content from the central party archives, rather than providing unconnected material specific to a particular local region. Due to this thesis's wish to focus on broader national political reactions, any inclusion of a particular locality (such as local Labour party archives in Liverpool or Newcastle) opened the thesis up to viable questions about scope, and why one region's local reactions were selected over another. Therefore, due to a wish to avoid questionable local comparisons, this thesis focused as much as possible on the central party archives, as well as the records found in archives suggested and directed to the researcher by the central party archivists.

2) Historical Methods
Approaching the Political Archives

The first part of this thesis's research, in terms of the physical research, was to explore the reactions of politicians to the emerging popular daily press, before moving onto research into the newspapers. As was outlined above, the political reactions in question comprised of material related to the Liberal, Labour and Conservative parties. These political materials were all stored at physical archives, and have yet to be transferred into digital catalogues. The fact that these materials are only available onsite, combined with the

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[169] Most notably Clarke, *Lancashire and the New Liberalism* and Windscheffel, *Popular Conservatism*

disparate locations of the respective archives, was the reason that they were the first materials to be accessed. Moreover, the newspaper data was accessed online through various digital archives, and so were accessible at any time and with relative practical ease. By accessing the physical archives first, the researcher also allowed themselves the time to revisit the same archives at a later date, should one or more have proven particularly fruitful and worthy of a research stay beyond an initial journey.

Regarding the investigating of political material, this thesis used material that was published during the four general election time periods (1900, 1906, and January and December 1910) as starting points. While these periods may not be the times when political attention on the popular press is necessarily at its highest, they served as good entry-points into the archive, as it is from these initial batches of material that more specific inquiries can be made. This methodological approach of beginning with the elections was applied in each of the party archives, but not in the Parliamentary archives. This was because, with Parliament having been dissolved for the election campaigns, it would likely lead to limited material being found, as the relevant political actors would be away from Parliament and out on the election campaign trail. For the research of Parliamentary archives, and for research which complemented the initial date-specific inquiries into the party records, the starting points were thematic key terms rather than chronological, as any choice of specific starting date for exploring these collections would be entirely random, and therefore lacking any kind of rationale. Unlike the time-specific newspaper searches, any similar time-sensitive search of the Parliamentary records would have been unconnected to a key event (coverage of a general election), and therefore lacked the same initial research rationale.

Starting with the material from the election weeks, the aim was to discover materials expressing reactions to the press. Therefore, the archival search methods in the party archives was particularly driven by searches of existing record collections defined by the presence of

key words or topics in the written correspondence or minutes. The key words used within the investigation of the political archives were: "the press", "newspapers", the names of the three selected daily newspapers ("*Daily Mail*", "*Daily Express*", and "*Daily Mirror*"), and the names of the new dailies' proprietors "Harmsworth", "Northcliffe", and "Pearson". These searches were the technique most likely to provide relevant material, as documents containing and subsequently catalogued under these key terms were the resources most likely to contain information relevant to my thesis. In the case of the Labour archives, initial exploration confirmed that there are sections of material catalogued under similar headings: "Labour, Newspaper" and "Matters of the Press" being two examples. These key word searches were also the central part of the research into the Parliamentary archives, due to the presence of existing keyword categorisations within the archive's online search engine related to the subject of this thesis, such as 'Northcliffe' and 'Daily Mail'. Moreover, these collections do not have the same date-specific entry point offered by the party records, and so keyword entry into the collections was the most practical archival method.

While these cataloguing techniques would prove beneficial to this research as they provided excellent starting points into the material, this thesis also cross-referenced those keyword topics with archive material from across my time period, as opposed to just what has been officially catalogued in these specific collections. This was achieved through searching for the same words in the broader catalogues to be explored year by year. Not only was it the case that different archives used different methods of indexing their material, but to simply rely on the cataloguing and advice of the on-site archivists would overlook the responsibilities of a historian to personally explore the wider archive collections for relevant material that the archivists may have missed.[170] While the input of the local archivists at each

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[170] For more on this issue, see Nicholas Cox, 'Public Records' in Seldon (ed.) *Contemporary History,* p. 74.

site was, and should always, be hugely appreciated, any pre-existing topic-specific collections were supplemented with broader searches of material from across the time period explored within this thesis.

These broader searches were divided into looking into year-on-year documents, starting with the earliest and concluding with the latest, so as to give the process some chronological structure. When exploring the party archives, particular attention was paid to the materials archived from the papers of each party's prominent secretaries. Examples of relevant individuals include Labour's Ramsey MacDonald, and John Satterfield Sanders, the long-time secretary for Conservative leader A. J. Balfour. These individuals were central to their party's internal and external communications, and so it was very likely that it was in their papers that relevant material will be found. A similar rationale informed the supplementary searches through the parliamentary papers of Lloyd George and Bonar Law which contained material from within the time parameters of the thesis, as both were prominent members of Parliament throughout the Long Edwardian period. Again however, these specific searches of individuals did not ignore the wider material, and were targeted, supplemental searches to provide a wider exploration of available material related to each political party and any surviving reactions to the rise of the new dailies.

Underpinning this thesis's archival approach is recent work which has tried to situate historical 'archival' methodologies more critically than the discipline's nineteenth-century traditions of self-assumed empirical truth.[171] Key to this thesis's identification and analyses of the various political 'reactions' was understanding the influence of the historian on their

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[171] Jorma Kalela, *Making History : The Historian and Uses of the Past* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 25; Donald M. MacRaild and Avram Taylor, *Social Theory and Social History* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 154, 159.

particular use of 'gains from the past'.[172] Any findings that were obtained from physical

archives are undeniably informed by the particular research focus, personal politics, and

individual interpretations of the researcher who has accessed said archive.[173] The decision,

therefore, to explain the practical steps taken throughout the archival work is to, as best as

possible, highlight the particular route taken towards my research findings.[174] Rather than

being a drawback however, this thesis embraces this reality, similar to Johannesson, as an

opportunity. This thesis's exploration of the archival content does not profess to explore

every possible conclusion from the available material, nor a concrete, singular truth. What it

will do, however, is provide a theoretically-grounded underpinning for the archival work that

suitably underlines the inherent, and not unwelcome, subjectivity that comes from historical

archival analysis of the 'fragments' that this thesis found within the physical archives.

Collecting Political Archive Data

In all of the political archives, a mixture of physical archival methods were used to

collect the data. First and foremost, all relevant materials found were documented with hand-

written notes. These notes detailed what the document was, who wrote it and to whom it was

addressed, the time it was written, the relevance of the document to my research, as well as

some initial interpretative remarks. These notes were then collected together upon my return

from that particular archive and physically archived. They were then transferred into

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[172] Alun Munslow, *Narrative and History* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 10–11.

[173] Douglas. Booth, *The Field : Truth and Fiction in Sport History* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2005), 211; Pascal

Delheye, *Making Sport History : Disciplines, Identities and the Historiography of Sport* (Abingdon: Routledge,

2014), chap. 10; Kalela, *Making History : The Historian and Uses of the Past*, 12; Beverley C. Southgate,

History, What and Why? : Ancient, Modern, and Postmodern Perspectives (Routledge, 1996), 2–3.

[174] I. A. Johannesson, "The Politics of Historical Discourse Analysis: A qualitative research method?",

Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education 31:2 (2010), pp. 251-264.

electronic form, both as a digital transcript (using the programme MS Word) and as a digital photograph album, to be stored on two different cloud storage systems: Microsoft OneDrive, and Google Drive. The reasoning behind both the digitisation of the field notes, and their dual back-ups, is to ensure durability of the results and to avoid data loss. Such steps reduced the chance of having to return to the field to retrieve the same information, as well as the possibility of losing work saved to only one device or storage system.

Further to the use of digital methods in the data collection, the political research in the archives themselves also utilised digital photography to capture relevant materials. The political archives that were explored permitted the use of photography for private research purposes, and therefore relevant records were captured using either a digital camera or the camera on the researcher's smartphone. Upon returning from the archives, these images were sorted into folders categorised by time, date and location, before being stored alongside the field notes in similarly double-stored online storage systems. By doing this, this thesis tapped into the new opportunities available to historians of taking the archive with you, even after you have left.

By storing the relevant materials digitally and in online storage systems available from anywhere with my login and password, the researcher could effectively revisit the same materials without the need of the cost and time of travelling back to the local site. This way, they could continue to re-examine the sources remotely, similar to the accessibility of the digitally-archived newspapers. This additional convenience did however raise issues, as the following section will discuss in more detail, as to the merits and demerits of navigating and analysing historical material that is stored and accessible through digital means.

Approaching the Newspaper Archives: Digital Humanities

While the political archives that were used for this thesis are physical, the three newspapers that were researched are all available online. What is more, they were all available through the Sheffield university library, and were accessible through logging into the university library system at any computer with an internet connection. This ease of accessibility was ideal, as it allowed this research to be conducted at any time and virtually any place, and meant that the newspaper archives could be revisited repeatedly and in their entirety (as opposed to the photographed/noted examples from the physical archives) and without any travel or financial restrictions. However, the fact that all of the newspaper resources used in this thesis were stored and accessed online did pose challenges to extents that the political records do not, and placed this aspect of the thesis's research tentatively in the field of 'digital humanities'.

An initial concern regarding the newspaper research revolved around long-term access. While currently available for free through the university, the newspapers under investigation are part of commercial archives, which charge substantial access fees for those not covered by an institutional subscription. Such restrictive access and the problem of academic material in 'market' hands, highlighted as a key challenge facing digital humanities by Clare Horrocks,[175] could have posed problems for this research should my institution have ceased subscribing to one or both of the necessary online archives: Cengage for the *Daily Mail*; and UK Press Online for the *Express* and the *Mirror*. To counteract this potential future problem, the decision was made to download and store all of the editions under investigation (the election-times of 1900, 1906 and 1910) onto my dual storage systems, OneDrive and Google Drive. By storing them away from the archives and on multiple personal accounts,

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[175] Clare Horrocks, "Nineteenth-Century Journalism Online: The Market versus Academia?", *Media History* 20:1 (2014), pp. 21-33.

they became accessible even if direct online access to the original archive was to be lost thanks to a cancellation of the university's subscription.

Ideally however, any historian using digital archives would continue to want access to the online collections due to the archive's inbuilt search engines. The ability to search across entire runs of publications stored in online archives is, as Bob Nicholson notes, one of the 'core features' of digital newspapers archives, and is likely to continue as one regardless of future technological advancements.[176] Indeed, it is through using the search engines (specifically by date) in both of the online archives that the initial collection of editions were made. By searching for results within the date ranges of each of my chosen elections, the appropriate editions for each newspaper were swiftly obtained and downloaded for future storage and access.

The other primary approach to the newspapers that can be achieved through using the archives' in-built search engines, would be to focus on key words. These keywords would consist of deliberately broad concepts related to my research - "politics"; "election"; or the name of a particular political party such as "Labour" – so as to generate the largest potential pool of initial results. By cross-referencing these keyword searches across the election time periods, these keyword searches would be used to provide initial, bird's-eye insight into the positioning and pattern of political coverage across each of the newspapers. For example, did news about the "election" frequently occur on the same page, and in the same place on that page? Did news concerning certain political parties or key election issues gain more prominence than news about others? Did certain topics occur frequently in one newspaper, but not in another? On the whole, the keyword searches used during this research provided interesting early insight into the pattern and placing of political news in these three

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[176] Bob Nicholson, "The Digital Turn", *Media History* 19:1 (2013), p. 62.

newspapers. Specifically, it helped to quickly establish useful commonalities of across multiple editions, such as the fact that page four of the *Daily Mail* was the page primarily dedicated to election news.

Moreover, as is evidenced in both Chapters Four and Five, the keyword searchability of the three digitised newspapers allowed for a degree of quantitative work that supplemented the primarily qualitative historical analyses undertaken through this thesis. The purpose of this was to underline the representative nature of the specific examples of news content discussed in these two chapters, to help dispel notions that the samples explored in Chapters Four and Five were not reflective of broader patterns of coverage across all three new dailies. In particular, Chapter Four's discussion of the use of war metaphors, the language of violence, and the use of racing barometers within election coverage focuses on particular examples, but is supported by findings from keyword searching of the archives, in order to argue that the particular examples were not isolated and were part of broader patterns of coverage across all three newspapers.

The keyword possibilities of digital newspaper archives have been used in this thesis to help underline the representative nature of the specific newspaper coverage discussed throughout Chapters Four and Five, by providing evidence of wider patterns within particular aspects of the new dailies' coverage of general elections. However, this thesis did not end up relying solely or even primarily on these keyword interrogations for its primary investigations, for a number of reasons. Firstly, there was the issue of an overreliance on keyword searches ignoring the wider context of the newspaper, as has been highlighted by Adrian Bingham.[177] To solely rely on searching digital newspaper collections for specific

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[177] A. Bingham, "The Digitization of Newspaper Archives: Opportunities and Challenges for Historians", *Twentieth Century British History* 21:2 (2010), pp. 225-231.

words not only runs the risk of missing related results – a search for "politics" may not deliver every piece of political material – but would ignore the place of that specific search result within the wider publication. As such, this project avoided sole reliance on keyword searches so as to avoid missing potential items of significance likely to not come up through searching a specific word. In particular, keyword reliance runs the risk of overlooking any related visual or illustrative elements that the archive's in-built optical character recognition (OCR) software might not detect. Considering the significance of certain aspects of the new dailies' visual coverage, particularly the election barometers explored in Chapter Four, this non-reliance on keyword-sourced material was a welcome methodological decision.

Therefore, any initial keyword search that was used became primarily an entry point to a broader reading of the entire publication, both to ensure no related material is missed, and to situate any key specific search results within their wider publication. That said, this thesis still decided to incorporate some keyword-sourced results, specifically in the sections which discussed the prominence of war and violence metaphors and binary opposing identities in Chapter Four. This decision, as outlined above, was to provide a better justification for the decision to focus on selected aspects of the three papers' content, as the samples discussed in more detail were, thanks to the use of keyword-obtained tallies, demonstrably part of a broader batch of similar news content. The tallies also took heed from the work of Day and Vamplew, and wanted to avoid an utter dismissal of using more quantitative historical findings for the sake of choosing one side of a historical methodological divide.[178]

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[178] Dave Day and Wray Vamplew, 'Sports History Methodology: Old and New', *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 32, no. 15 (13 October 2015): 1716, https://doi.org/10.1080/09523367.2015.1132203.

There were however issues with relying primarily on results from the newspapers' search engines. The issue of understanding of understanding the content of any specifically-searched online results, and thus the avoidance of material sourced only from keyword searches, taps into broader issues discussed by James Mussell, who has noted how it is important to understand that the online result from an archived newspaper is wholly different from its print origins.[179] In what he has labelled Digital History 2.0, it is important to understand that what is up on the screen is essentially a reimagining of what began as a printed page, and that the former is an interpretation, rather than a simple replication, of the latter. In the content of this thesis, this is especially true when considering the potential use of keyword searches. By searching primarily or only in such ways, the original newspaper loses its original structure and form, and is redesigned as a series of results on a web page.

As this thesis was interested in the structure and visualisation of political news within the new dailies, as well as the language used, then only analysing the webpage results could lead to misleading results. Therefore, the decision to download all the required editions as PDFs was a welcome methodological decision too. While they and the photographs from the archives were still understood as a 'reimagining' of the original print source, by reading entire editions page-by-page in this format, this thesis will combine the digital advantages of readily-available, convenient results-gathering with the traditional merits of reading publications as a page-by-page entirety to ensure a reduced possibility of missed results and a consideration of both the formatting and positioning of political news found in the printed original. This insures, moreover, that the important context of the targeted news data (identified by Bingham) are not forgotten in the process of data collection.

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[179] J. Mussell, "Doing and Making: History as Digital Practice" in T. Weller (ed.), *History in the Digital Age* (Oxford, 2013), pp. 79-94.

The third concern this thesis faced regarding its digital newspaper sources was the usability of the online archives themselves. On the one hand, the Cengage site (which holds the archives of the *Daily Mail*) is a decently-formatted portal. It allows both for concise, entire-edition collection (to be downloaded as PDFs) and relatively accurate keyword searches that present results from across the paper (visual sources included) and highlights where that particular word appears in the given result. In contrast, UK Press Online (the holders of the *Express* and the *Mirror*) is, in the admittedly hyperbolic words of Bob Nicholson, a "near-unusable mess".[180] The reality behind this conclusion relates to how these archives have very limited search capabilities and online readability. While the search parameters per date are available, thus meaning they allow the same initial access for the relevant editions; the keyword capabilities of this archive are far less advanced than those available for the *Daily Mail*. For example, keywords you have searched for do not appear highlighted in the results, meaning that the specificity of the search is greatly reduced. The use of the keyword-sourced tallies in Chapters Four, therefore, had to come from manually searching the results from the *Express* and *Mirror,* as the lack of text highlights left the results of the searches, and the purpose of them for this thesis, initially worthless. This significant drawback with one of the two major digital newspaper archives' keyword usability was the primary reason behind the lack of tallied results used elsewhere in the thesis.

Moreover, the results for a keyword or term search are automatically organised by "relevance", rather than by date of appearance. This in principle leads to two significant problems. Firstly, the practical issue of having to find the sub-menu to re-organize the results into chronological order. Secondly, and perhaps more worryingly, is the fact that the engine

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[180] Nicholson, "The Digital Turn", pp. 60.

automatically decides what is 'relevant', without ever specifying what goes into its equation for defining relevance. A search engine within a newspaper archive that decides the relevance of its results leads to troubling questions about what the search brings up and, perhaps more importantly, what it might have left out. Moreover, the *Mail's* archive, whilst superior in searchability and accuracy, also presented problems due to its categorisation of searched results into defined types of news content: 'news', 'features', 'advertising', and 'editorial'. Upon closer inspection, these categories were inconsistent and often missed off content that would fit into one of these categories. Specifically, the *Mail's* election-time editorials on page four, headlined 'The Outlook', were categorised by the archive as 'news' rather than as 'editorial'. The unreliability of these existing archive tags, therefore, presented additional reservations about relying solely on material sourced from keyword searches.

Further to the search issues with UK Press Online is the fact that it does not deliver newspapers edition-by-edition, instead delivering them one page at a time. As well as having to compile editions page-by-page from the PDF downloads, it also produced further problems when trying to browse single editions online, as it occasionally does not sort them in page order, even if just one edition is requested in a particular search. The significant keyword issues presented by the digital archives, and the unreliability of UK Press Online in particular, was a principle reason why their inclusion within the thesis was, justifiably, limited.

These technical issues with one of the archives, coupled with the previously-discussed considerations of excessive digital 'reimagining' regarding digital humanities more broadly, further informed the decision taken with this thesis to conduct primary work with the downloaded PDF editions of the election-time newspapers. What this thesis will not be doing however, having taken in the concerns of James Mussell from a published roundtable debate in 2008, is wholly remaining with methodologies grounded "with certain forms of dusty

objects in certain dusty rooms".[181] For the purpose of this thesis, traditional historical methodologies still form the spine of the investigation due to both the nature of the available resources, and the types of research questions that need to be answered. The decision to focus on the intensive reading of downloaded PDFs was an undeniable attempt by the researcher to try and bridge between the old and the new, as it is trying to take the 'reimagined' online newspaper and constructing it and consuming it in ways that resemble the printed original as closely as the technology permits. However, as will be highlighted in more detail in the next section, this was not at the expense of the new. Rather, the decision to use traditional historical methodologies will be supplemented with new, innovative ones grounded in the digital that will provide a fascinating additional angle to this thesis.

Collecting the Newspaper Data

As was discussed in the previous section, the principle aim of the newspaper investigation was to study the language of political news in these three newspapers, as well as any significant aspects regarding the formatting, visualisation and placing on the page of that news. With regard to these various points of interest, this thesis drew influence from a variety of methodological approaches that informed more traditional 'archival' approaches to the historical material with elements of social science practice. That said, these same methods were incorporated critically into the researcher's 'archival' approach to the material, as flaws in each were part of the decision to avoid subscribing strictly to one particular methodological school of thought. The following section details the extents to which particular methods were incorporated into the reading of the newspaper material, and the reasons why limits were imposed on each.

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[181] J. Mussell, "Ownership, Institutions, and Methodology", *Journal of Victorian Culture* 13:1 (2008), p. 94.

Quantitative Approaches

Considering the extent to which this thesis draws on digital material, there would have been the potential scope to further apply a variety of quantitative research methods onto the data obtained from the newspaper archives, beyond the keyword-sourced tallies included within the discussions of Chapters Four and Five. Indeed, the increasing use of digital and digitised sources in academic historical research is continuing to lead to exciting, interdisciplinary work that brings computational analytical approaches to traditional subjects such as historical literature and early modern print culture. This kind of research, frequently published in digital-specific journals such as *Historical Pragmatics* and *Digital Scholarship in the Humanities,* has also been successful in its attempts to publish to non-academic audiences.

A prominent example of this is the work of Susan Fitzmaurice and her ongoing collaborative project Linguistic DNA*,* which explores 'distance reading' corpus analyses of large data sets of text, in order to trace broader chronological developments in the use of language and certain words across large collections of digitised print material.[182] A key part of this continuing growth in digital histories and digital humanities (or 'DH') is increased interdisciplinary work. To focus just on the researcher's own institution, there are several past and ongoing projects which use digital research methods to explore traditional humanities using cutting edge interdisciplinary approaches. These include Robert Shoemaker's large project regarding the digitisation of millions of Old Bailey records, which resulted in a free-to-access database through which both academics and members of the public can explore and

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[182] 'Linguistic DNA, https://www.linguisticdna.org/ [accessed 01 October 2017].

investigate details of thousands of criminal trials spanning centuries of British history[183]; ongoing study of medical histories in early-modern Europe[184] – again a fine example of the potential of large-scale computational linguistic analysis - and work as part of a pan-European archaeological collaboration exploring and visually recreating historical mountainous landscapes across the Mediterranean.[185]

More specifically with regards to digital newspapers, the last twenty years has seen some important work which not only utilised digital newspaper archives, but that explored important issues and challenges that face those wishing to research digitised news. The Transatlantic Digitised Newspapers Symposium, hosted at the British Library in late-April 2017, was among the recent example of the diverse range of institutions and scholars currently working with digital newspaper archives. These largely quantitative projects listed above used/use digital methodologies that could well have been applied to the digital newspaper archives used in this thesis.

One such approach would incorporate aspects of Fitzmaurice's corpus linguistics work. For example, the original PDFs of the newspapers could have been saved in duplicate and run through a piece of software called Finereader. This software converts the PDFs into unformatted text documents, and can be used as raw data for some additional studies into the linguistic prevalence of particular words, topics and parties. For example, the converted documents of the *Daily Mirror's* coverage of the 1906 election could be scanned for the number of times a certain word or phrase is used. In this hypothetical, it could be to see how

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[183] 'The Proceedings of the Old Bailey, 1674-1913', https://www.oldbaileyonline.org/ [accessed 01 October 2017].

[184] 'Intoxicants & Early Modernity', https://www.intoxicantsproject.org/ [accessed 01 October 2017].

[185] 'MEMOLA – Mediterranean Mountainous Landscapes', http://memolaproject.eu/ [accessed 01 October 2017].

often the issue of "free trade", agreed by existing scholarship to be the key campaign issue during that election, came up in its newspaper coverage during the election. Upon receiving that numerical result, the test could be replicated on the other two papers, to see which newspaper quantifiably mentioned that key topic more than the others.

There are potential merits to such quantitative approaches, but this thesis firmly decided to avoid such methods on a variety of grounds. Firstly, drawing again from the arguments of Bingham and Mussell about the potential data lost through certain digital approaches, the researcher decided that text-mining the primary material risked detaching the results too much from both the contexts of the page in which they originally appeared and the wider context of the historical period in which the material was originally produced. Moreover, the types of 'DH' quantitative methodologies that could have been applied to this project highlighted deeper limitations in the applicability of such research approaches to the broader humanities.

For example, as Cordell has noted[186], one of the biggest challenges facing 'DH' as a whole is breaking down its perceived inaccessibility, and allowing a reduced gap between 'popular' and 'academic' history (as envisaged by Sandle[187]) and thus increasing access to the opportunities of digital histories. This difficulty of access can be further elaborated into two separate categories. The first of these, well addressed by Charlotte Riley, focuses on the inequality of access to digital learning technology based on social class and upbringing.[188] A

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[186] 'Ryan Cordell, 'How not to teach digital humanities', http://ryancordell.org/teaching/how-not-to-teach-digital-humanities/ [accessed 20 October 2017].

[187] M. Sandle, 'Studying the past in the digital age: from tourist to explorer' in T. Weller (ed.), *History in the Digital Age* (London, 2013), pp. 129-148 (especially p. 145).

[188] C. Riley, 'Beyond ctrl-c, ctrl-v: teaching and learning history in the digital age' in T. Weller (ed.), *History in the Digital Age* (London, 2013), pp. 149-170 (especially pp. 150-151).

common assumption of young students and researchers is of their natural comfort with digital technologies and by extension digital learning: an assumption based in-part on the 'digital native' theory espoused by Palfrey and Gasser.[189] In reality, the 'nativity' of a student (or in this case the doctoral researcher) is heavily dictated by the quality of their formal education as well as the ready access to digital material in everyday life; factors clearly influenced by social and economic class. The risk regarding DH quantitative approaches, therefore, can be to assume a level of researcher comfort with computational methods that belie their educational and experiential backgrounds and, in reality, rule them out as a viable research method. Moreover, the above-stated computational humanities projects draw from research teams far exceeding a single doctoral thesis, and (most crucially) draw on additional expert staff, such as statisticians and physicists, to code and execute the quantitative interrogations of originally-physical historical sources.

As was discussed in the previous section, some quantitative work has been used to provide important context to the samples of newspaper material discussed throughout Chapters Four and Five, in order to argue the representative nature of the material that both chapters explore. However, due to limitations of technological expertise, natural restrictions of project and research-team size, practical issues with the new dailies' digital archives, and ideological questions over the potentially excessive reimaging of historical material that comes from quantitative 'DH' methods, this thesis is therefore primarily interested in the qualitative work. The specifics of this thesis's qualitative historical analysis is outlined in more detail below.

Qualitative Approach

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[189] J. Palfrey and U. Gasser, *Born Digital: Understanding the First Generation of Digital Natives* (New York, 2008), pp.2-4.

As was noted above, this thesis is primarily interested in a qualitative approach to its newspaper and political material. The specific materials to be studied have been outlined, as well as how that data will be collected and recorded from either their digital or physical repositories. What will be outlined here are some of the specifics that have defined this research's theoretical approach to qualitative work.

A key part of this thesis's approach to its primary data, drawn from the definition of Richardson, would be 'lexical analysis': the choice and meaning of words[190]. For example, the thesis investigated the use of certain words and sentences, and the implications of the particular wording on key topics by particular newspapers. This approach particularly informed sections of Chapter Four, where examples of militarised language in political reporting were argued to have been a deliberate and consistent pattern across the three newspapers to associate election news with the hugely-popular war correspondence that contributed significantly to the new dailies' earlier popular success, particularly parallel to the coverage of the Boer War during 1900.

This section of the thesis, and others such as the section of Chapter Five which discusses election advertisements, also draw on the use of metaphor in media discourse. Metaphors have long been a significant part of journalism in Britain, with a significant number of publications naming themselves in ways rich in 'metaphorical assertion'[191], and

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[190] J. E. Richardson, Analysing Newspapers: An Approach from Critical Discourse Analysis (Basingstoke, 2007), p. 47.

[191] Martin Conboy & Minyao Tang "Core Blighty? How Journalists Define Themselves Through Metaphor", *Journalism Studies* 17.7 (2016), p. 882. See also their reference to Aled Jones, *Powers of the Press: Newspapers, Power and the Public in Nineteenth Century England* (Aldershot, 1996), pp. 28-46.

journalists using metaphor to define their own output, behaviour and wider societal roles.[192]

In this research, the use of metaphor in news language is significant. An analysis of metaphors can offer insight into how metaphorical media content (both written and illustrated) intersected with the knowledge and interests of the people reading it, due to a metaphor's ability to blend meanings between both the source of the metaphor and its target.[193] This is apparent in Chapter Four's discussion of the new dailies' use of 'race' barometers, and these metaphorical visualisations of daily election results tapped into the popularity of horse racing and motor cars within the consumer culture of Long Edwardian Britain. Considering this thesis's argument that the new dailies articulated politics to a key, underrepresented section of the British public, understanding how its content connected with that readership through metaphor is of considerable interest. Moreover, the particular cultural power of war metaphors, noted by Lakoff and Johnson[194], makes an analysis of the new dailies' war metaphors in its election coverage even more appropriate.

Additionally, this project is influenced in-part by one of the central definitions of 'Critical Discourse Analysis' (CDA) as proposed by John Richardson: it is a qualitative research method which "offers interpretations" of meanings that can be drawn from language.[195] While CDA is a method that applies more specifically to language, this

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[192] D. H. Weaver, and G. C. Wilhoit, *The American Journalist in the 1960s. US News People at the End of an Era* (Mahwah: NJ, 1996) and C. G. Christians, T. Glasser, D. McQuail, K. Nordenstreng, and R. A. White, *Normative Theories of the Media: Journalism in Democratic Societies* (Urbana: IL, 2009). Quoted in Conboy and Tang, "Core Blighty?", p. 883.

[193] G. Fauconnier and M. Turner, *The Way We Think* (New York, 2002), p. 45. Quoted in Conboy and Tang "Core Blighty?", p. 884.

[194] George. Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Illinois: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 3–6.

[195] Richardson, *Analysing Newspapers*, p. 15.

definition significantly underpins this research's broader approach to qualitative research, as noted in the previous section on the inherent subjectivity of historical analyses.

The rationale for this approach to the source material is driven on the one hand by the thesis's understanding of the audiences of its source materials, especially in the context of the three newspapers. In particular, the section which discusses the identification of the political 'everyman' by the new dailies in Chapter Five draws from ideas that media discourse can in-part connect to a collection of different people or peoples that can draw different meanings from the same piece of text. As Deborah Cameron argues, language and text are not consumed by readers in the same way; a reader or group of readers will impose motivations and narrative onto what they read or hear based on their existing assumptions and personal interests.[196]

Moreover, Wodak contends that a relationship exists between texts, their readers and their surrounding social conditions[197]. Richardson also argues this by saying that the meaning from a text is "constructed" through an interaction between producer, text and consumer.[198] This relationship between media content and consumer is especially significant when considering that newspapers identify their intended audience partially through the choices of language.[199] This thesis especially appreciates the complex reality of this reader-content relationship in Chapter Five by focusing on how the new dailies' imagining of the Long Edwardian 'everyman' created a variety of inclusion and exclusion criteria that correlated closely with the three papers' wider readerships, as well as the 'man in the street' identified

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[196] Deborah Cameron, *Working with Spoken Discourse* (London, 2001), 7-18.

[197] Ruth Wodak, *Disorders of Discourse* (London, 1996), p. 20.

[198] Richardson, *Analysing Newspapers,* p. 75.

[199] Norman Fairclough, *Media Discourse* (London, 1995), p. 40.

both in Chapter One and by the body of recent scholarship critiqued at the end of Chapter Two as an increasingly-key component within the political and consumer culture of Long Edwardian Britain.

An additional reason why this thesis wishes to explore the complex ideas communicated within the three new dailies' political content is due to the understanding of said language as 'discourse'. One reason for this approach is because this thesis wishes to avoid interpretations that rely on ideas of hegemony within its sources, such as newspaper content only existing because of the personal whim of a powerful owner.[200] Instead, this thesis subscribes to the theories of Fairclough and Wodak who see discourse as dialectical; a two-way relationship between reader and material.[201] Firstly, imagining this era of newspaper content as a dialogue correlates with recent historical work, particularly that of Hampton, which identifies how the newspapers during this period were beginning to see themselves as partners to, rather than determiners of, public opinion. Secondly, this approach takes into consideration the diverse audiences that read those texts. By appreciating the content's complexities, this thesis will take into account how texts such as these encouraged varied types of discursive engagement with its readers, rather than a single one consumed by all. Moreover, this approach further appreciates what is argued throughout the thesis. Chiefly, that the new dailies' key political significance was their ability to articulate election news in accessible and diverse ways to large numbers of people.

Crucially, this thesis does not claim to offer every possible interpretation of a piece of archive material. Principally, this is driven through an understanding of the importance of

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[200] See Chapter Two: 'Clever and Energetic Men'

[201] Norman Fairclough and Ruth Wodak, "Critical Discourse Analysis: An Overview", in T. A. van Dijk (ed.), *Discourse Studies: A Multidisciplinary Introduction, Vol. 2* (London, 1997), pp. 67-97.

context in relation to a newspaper's content. As Conboy states, to properly analyse the discourse in newspapers means to "situate contents within contexts", meaning that any conclusion of meaning must be grounded in the circumstances that any given newspaper was produced, distributed and consumed.[202] This attention to the contexts of historical language is also at the heart of the *Journal of Historical Pragmatics,* which sees a text's socio-political context as part of a 'broad agenda' that any historian should consider when studying historical media and language change.[203] In this thesis, the key historical contexts which inform the later discussions in Chapters Four and Five comes from ideas outlined previously in the literature review.

Firstly, the newspaper content was filtered by the researcher through the context of the new dailies' particular popular appeal, thanks to 'human interest' content. An effort was made, therefore, to look out for ways that the three newspapers represented political news in ways that mirrored current knowledge of the three papers' human interest news content. This features throughout the discussions in Chapters Four and Five, as various elements of all three newspapers' content emulated notable 'human interest' content identified as the key staple of Edwardian 'New Journalism', particularly through allusions to horse racing, serialised fiction, and war correspondence. These sections in particular also combine analysis of the language used with the visuals that came with them. This appreciation of the newspaper's broader form, 'encompassing words as well as images', further emphasises the complexity of the ideas that can be drawn from print sources, due to a newspaper's form itself being reflective of its societal and political context.[204] These sections additionally drew

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[202] M. Conboy, *The Language of Newspapers: Socio-Historical Perspectives* (London, 2010), p. 9.

[203] S. C. Herring, "Media and Language Change: Introduction", *Journal of Historical Pragmatics* 4.1 (2003), p. 13.

[204] Kevin G. Barnhurst and John C. Nerone, *The Form of News : A History* (Guilford Press, 2001), 3–4.

on the new dailies' overtly commercial approach to mass journalism, which was another vital historical context. Specifically, Chapter Five looks at how advertisers used politically-themed adverts to try and sell their products during the elections of the Long Edwardian period, and thus how the political and commercial elements of the new dailies directly intertwined.

The second historical context that this thesis identifies as key to its discussion of the new dailies' election news content was the increasingly visual political and popular culture of pre-Great War Britain, which was noted in the literature review.[205] The context of technological innovations in sound, lighting, and public spectacles informed the sections of Chapters Four and Five which detail the new dailies and their election 'light shows', as well as the wider use of political images by all three newspapers to communicate politics effectively and entertainingly to their mass readerships.

3) Summary:

The purpose of this section was to outline the practical and methodological decisions undertaken by the researcher throughout the research and data collection processes of this project. In the first instance, effort was made to explain and rationalise the deliberate limitations of the study, through explanation of what defined the thesis's political establishment, the 'reactions' sought from the physical archive, as well as the decision to focus on the four general election periods as representative case studies.

Secondly, the historical methods applied to both the physical political archives and the digitised newspaper archives were explained and justified. In the case of the latter, Chapters Four and Five analyse and discuss key components across all three newspapers in

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[205] Thompson, '"The Lights of the Electric Octopus Have Been Switched Off": Visual and Political Culture in Edwardian London'.

ways which focus on how their content, both written and visual, communicated election news in ways that reflected the new dailies' wider, human-interest-driven mass-market appeal. The ways in which this occurred included through use of sensational metaphorical allusions to war, as well as visual representations of elections as visual spectacles and races. Moreover, all three newspapers also represented elections as events in which an imagined everyman, an individual representative of much of their shared core readerships, held considerable political power. As Chapter Five details, news which promoted the actions of everyday citizens, gently mocked the established political elite, and situated elections as an exciting and accessible part of the wider popular culture which the 'everyman' was used to enjoying collectively portrayed the Long Edwardian political process as an entertaining and valuable part of everyday public life. These conclusions from the newspaper content are drawn out of analyses of the content that, while very much a historical piece of study, drew necessary and welcome influence from areas of qualitative social science methodologies related to language, metaphor, and the form of news.

In the case of the former, as Chapter Six explores, material from the archives of Labour, the Liberals and the Conservatives was explored with a particularly emphasis on inner- and outer-party 'reactions' to the rise of the new daily press. These reactions, deliberately broad in definition, were designed to maximise the chance of finding relevant documents from within the various archives accessed by the researcher. Once found, these reactions were analysed for specific and implicit references to the three new dailies and the mass press of which they were the flagship. These reactions were interpreted as either broadly positive or negative, and were contextualised within other relevant materials from the archives and the existing literature on each of the three parties. The result, as discussed in Chapter Six, was a trove of data which spoke of varied, complex, and fascinating reactions from across the Long Edwardian political establishment as to the communicative potential

and value of the new daily press. The nature of these reactions, and how each of the three parties differed in their collective reactions, spoke significantly of each party's broader understanding of the value of mass media as a form of political communication, and the differing extents to which politicians saw the potential use of a medium that spoke primarily to people traditionally excluded from the British political process.

Before exploring the reactions, however, this thesis will first explore the content of the newspaper data. Specifically, the next chapter will detail how, through the use of metaphor, language, and entertaining visuals, the new dailies collectively represented elections as dramatic and exciting news content, in ways similar to their reporting of their most-successful 'human-interest' news content.

Chapter Four

Election as Spectacle: Narratives of New Daily Politics

On Wednesday 26th September 1900, page five of that day's *Daily Mail* featured two columns of news situated side by side that used very similar language. Both stories were headlined using the word 'fighting'. Both stories spoke of 'contests' between rival factions fighting for an overall 'victory'. Key individual figures involved in both stories were presented as directly commanding, or being at the head of, great forces; thousands were moving with them or travelling considerable distance to offer their support to them. These groups engaged in 'heavy fighting' that was represented as being as much about entertainment as violent gravity. Their engagements were described as 'lively', which lent them a sense of excitement; their decisions to 'make a stand' lent a sense of drama to the news, similar to how popular fiction would describe heroic actors in conflict. Moreover, both columns also represented their stories with elements of narrative progression. There were initial sentences that evocatively set their respective scenes: rumours of fighting north of a river; specially-timetabled trains running more and more people to a scene that was reaching 'fever-heat'.

Both columns made their news enticing, exciting, and driven by language of violence and confrontation. Their grand arenas of conflict, with their vocal leaders and passionate supporters, were represented to the readers of that day's *Mail* as notably similar in terms of their language used to depict its events, its protagonists and its overall atmosphere. The two columns however were covering two different kinds of news. The column on the right side of the page was dedicated to stories coming out of the Transvaal[206], as British troops continued the 'khaki' war against largely-guerrilla battalions of Boer soldiers. The column on the left

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[206] 'Frontier Fighting', *Daily Mail* 26 September 1900, p. 5.

side of the page, with its equally war-like and dramatized, language, was reporting on the first day of the 1900 general election.[207]

This similarity between election coverage and war coverage was not an isolated occurrence, particularly during 1900. The front page of that same day's *Daily Express,* for instance, represented news from elections and from the Boer War in equally similar ways. A column which reported on speeches by Joseph Chamberlain and William Harcourt said that each leader was 'Hit Hard' by criticisms from the crowd, and was indicative of the 'growing fierceness' of the election campaign in general.[208] Parallel to this article, on the opposite side of the page, there was a headline which spoke of an 'Engagement on the Frontier' where, just as the political fight was reported to be intensifying, the Boers were gathering their strength to 'Wait' the oncoming British advance.[209] The opening day was not exceptional; it was reflective of other coverage across the entire election where political news and war news were worded and represented through headlines in very similar ways. The following week – the first full week of the election – saw both the *Express* and the *Mail* again represent election news as akin to war news. On the one hand, the *Express* portrayed political actions similarly to military manoeuvres, with a report on Liberal MP John Burns's 'hard fight' to hold onto his Battersea constituency which described his retort to a rival speaker as the beginning of his 'counter-attack'.[210] On the other hand, the same day's *Mail* featured news from both theatres of conflict which were headlined and sub-headed in almost-interchangeable ways;

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[207] 'Fighting for the Flag', *Daily Mail* 26 September 1900, p. 5.

[208] 'Rival Leaders Hit Hard', *Daily Express* 26 September 1900, p. 1.

[209] 'More Fighting', *Daily Express* 26 September 1900, p. 1.

[210] 'Burns and Battersea', *Daily Express* 2 October 1900, p. 5.

'AT THE POLLS… The First Fights for Membership… Serious Election Fights'[211]

'BRITISH SUCCESSES… Rundles Force Clearing the Orange Colony… Further Captures'.[212]

The closeness between representations of election politics and the Boer War continued throughout the entirety of the campaign. In the *Express,* for example, all twenty-three editions published throughout the campaign featured front-page news items that discussed both the election and the war. Furthermore, using a similar initial keyword search of the digital archive, the *Mail* featured fifty-seven individual items which featured both the words 'war' and 'election' within either their headlines or their body content [Table 1]. Both papers, moreover, reported on the election using articles that made reference to the contests as 'fights' or involving 'fighting'. The *Mail* featured one-hundred and four articles which did this; the *Express* featured the combination of 'election' and 'fight' or 'fighting' one-hundred and two times [Table 2]. These similarities in language between the coverage of war and coverage of the election of 1900 were far, therefore, from exceptions.

The particular prominence of war-like electoral coverage in both the *Mail* and the *Express* was driven by the centrality of the Boer War both to the political and press cultures of the period. Firstly, the war in the Transvaal was the single most important political issue of the 1900 election.[213] Even as the election was still underway, the Conservatives' large

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[211] 'At the Polls', *Daily Mail* 2 October 1900, p. 5.

[212] 'British Successes', *Daily Mail* 2 October 1900, p. 5.

[213] Paul Readman, 'The Conservative Party, Patriotism and British Politics: The Case of the General Election of 1900', *Journal of British Studies* 40.1 (2001), p. 109; Ian Sharpe, 'Empire, Patriotism and the Working-Class Electorate: The 1900 General Election in the Battersea Constituency', *Parliamentary History* 28.3 (2009), p. 411; Windscheffel, *Popular Conservatism,* chapter 7.

parliamentary majority was credited primarily to their open support for the war, and helped create a legacy for 1900 as a 'khaki' election where popular support for the war was whipped up into a pro-Unionist frenzy.[214] Their pro-war position was strengthened by the electoral position of the Liberals, who were successfully attacked by the Conservatives as 'pro-Boers' and 'Little Englanders' lacking in national loyalty.[215] The new dailies' emphasis on military metaphors in their election coverage, therefore, reflected, in part, the prominence of the conflict in the addresses and campaign material of both major parties.

Secondly, the public appetite for news from the Boer War had a profound impact on the British press. For example, the manner in which the *Daily Mail* covered the war was a decisive factor behind its growth in circulation at the turn of the twentieth century. The overtly patriotic nature of its coverage, informed by excellently-placed reporters filing news regularly from the front lines, was a huge success, with its readerships more than doubling from the outbreak of the war to its height of over one million daily copies into 1900. The *Mail* was also far from the exception; the majority of British newspapers pursued pro-war editorial stances across much of the Long Edwardian period, and helped to create and reflect a broader public appetite for supportive coverage of British military action.[216] Moreover, those few papers which did oppose the war – such as the Liberal-backing *Daily News*[217] – suffered sharp declines in circulation at the same time as the *Mail* was becoming the first daily to sell over one million copies. It is perhaps unsurprising therefore that the new dailies

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[214] J. A. Hobson, *The Psychology of Jingoism* (London, 1901), p. 107.

[215] J. Schneer, *London 1900: The Imperial Metropolis* (New Haven CT, 2001), pp. 229-260.

[216] See Simon J. Potter, 'Jingoism, Public Opinion, And The New Imperialism', *Media History* 20. 1 (2014), pp. 34–50; Gavin Wilkinson, '"The Blessings of War": The Depiction of Military Force in Edwardian Newspapers', *Journal of Contemporary History* 33.1 (1998), pp. 97-115.

[217] Bingham and Conboy, *Tabloid Century,* p. 28.

articulated news from the election with particular reference to the ongoing war against the Boers. They were newspapers that were keenly aware and able to articulate content that resonated with large numbers of British people. The similarities between their election coverage and their war coverage was therefore reflective of this broader ability to make their content resonate with popular reader interests.

Interestingly, however, comparisons between election campaigns and military campaigns in the new dailies were not restricted to 1900, which was an election explicitly fought on military policy. Perhaps unsurprisingly however, the coverage during 1900 featured the highest concentration of direct connections between elections and war and conflict, in comparison to the other elections of the Long Edwardian period. For example, direct inferences of elections as 'war' noticeably declined between the election of 1900 and the later elections of the period both in the *Express* and the *Mail,* with the highest number of occurrences post-1900 less than half of that noted during the election coverage parallel to the Boer War [Table 1].

Even with this numerical disparity across the period, each of the other three general elections during the Long Edwardian period were still represented in the new dailies in ways reminiscent of war correspondence. While considerably less frequently, articles which represented election news with reference to 'war', or with reference to a 'fight' or 'fighting', still appeared across all three new dailies throughout 1906 and 1910 [Table 2]. The first days of the 1906 campaign, for example, were featured in the *Daily Mirror* as battlegrounds. A page-four report on a constituency contest in Portsmouth was headlined as a 'Novel Election Fight' underneath a broader heading of the 'Present Electoral Battle'. The double emphasis of election contests – whether local or national – as battles was compounded by the article's opening content, which gave prominence to members of the local public being on alert for a potential 'threat';

'*Everybody in Portsmouth is watching the grey motor car…it flits through the town like a battleship'.*[218]

The representation of a vehicle carrying around a candidate on the election's opening day as a military vessel was not an isolated news item. The *Mirror* represented election news from various local constituencies throughout the 1906 campaign in ways similar to coverage of war. For example, debates between rival candidates in Manchester on 13th January were described as 'Two Crucial Duels to be Fought To-day'. Along with personal 'duels', where election confrontations were compared to dramatic pistol shoot-outs, regions in the middle of hustings were referred to as scenes of 'The Great Fight'[219], or locations where 'the Electoral Battle Rages'[220]. These metaphorical battlegrounds were also the scenes of election casualties. The 'Great Fight' on 17th January 1906 for example was reported by the *Mirror* to have claimed the life of Alfred Lyttelton, the former Colonial Secretary 'Killed by Chinese Labour Cry'[221]. The loss of his seat in Parliament, motivated significantly by his role in implementing the 'Chinese slavery' labour policy in South Africa which the Liberals would continually attack in their ultimately landslide victory, was not just a defeat: it was a casualty of a war.

The elections of 1910 would be similarly reported, further reinforcing the representation of elections as battlefields. The *Mirror* again represented general elections in clear military-like terms, reporting on the first day's campaigning in December 1910 both as

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[218] 'A Novel Election Fight', *Daily Mirror* 12 January 1906, p. 4.

[219] 'The Great Fight at Birmingham Today – What Will Happen?', *Daily Mirror* 17 January 1906, p.1.

[220] 'How the Electoral Battle Rages', *Daily Mirror* 13 January 1906, p. 4.

[221] 'The Great Fight', *Mirror* 17 January 1906.

the beginning of 'the battle of the polls'[222] and 'The Great Fight for Votes'[223] in their opening

day's election content. The *Mail* reported similarly as it commenced its coverage of the first

of the two elections that year with the dramatic declaration 'we enter the struggle': a line that

conjured the image of the pending election as a battle charge from a trench, or a call to stand

strong against the violent tide.[224] Battlefield metaphors again featured within a new daily's

election coverage. News of Unionist political successes were represented the party having

'gained ground', akin to a battalion fighting for territory.[225] These same victors had 'seen

victories in every direction', even after receiving some 'heavy blows' in their efforts to win

election.[226] Meanwhile, news from the December election of other, less-successful political

candidates were overtly militaristic in their depictions in the *Mail*. Headlines declared news

of 'More Deserters from the Party' as Liberal politicians lost their seats.[227] Others meanwhile

were reported as being subjected to 'close and stubborn fighting (who) gave and received

hard blows'.[228]

Alongside these further representations of battleground elections, with candidates

duelling each other and engaging in metaphorical combat to win victory on the field, there

were representations of election casualties. In contrast to the 1906 election, where a politician

was metaphorically killed, the *Express* in January 1910 reported on actual fatalities that

resulted from the election 'battlefields'. Two individuals were reported killed in the process

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[222] *Daily Mirror* 3 December 1910, p. 3.

[223] 'The Great Fight for Votes', *Daily Mirror* 3 December 1910, p. 10.

[224] 'The Election', *Daily Mail* 15 January 1910, p.6.

[225] Still Leading', *Daily Mail* 18 January 1910, p. 6.

[226] Ibid.

[227] 'Liberal Seceders', *Daily Mail* 6 December 1910, p.8.

[228] 'The Outlook', *Daily Mail* 6 December 1910, p.6.

of travelling to vote, with one 'retired colliery official (found dead) at Newsham polling station' and another 'Mr Ernest Turner (who) fell dead… on his way to the poll'.[229] The two others whom the *Express* represented as election fatalities were even more dramatically detailed. One of the pair, 'Mr W. M. Coxten Keen, an artist… was stated at a Hampstead inquest on Saturday to have died from the effect of shouting at an election meeting'.[230] The other casualty (a Mr. 'Percy Boosey') had 'entered into a political argument which ended in blows'; the other participant in this argument – William James England – faced a charge of manslaughter for his involvement.[231] Very much like a real battlefield, election politics was an arena in which human life was reported to be lost.

Across all four elections of the Long Edwardian period, the new dailies consistently referred to elections through metaphorical depictions of war. The election of 1900 was a noticeable high-point of this kind of coverage, with more than double the amount of news items that referred to elections and 'war' than any subsequent Long Edwardian election. However, the continuing references to elections through language of war and fighting still persisted to a significant, if reduced, degree throughout the period. These elections were arenas where combatants fought and were wounded and sometimes died in the effort to win victory at the polls. These persistent representations of election proceedings as violent was not an isolated phenomenon. Rather, it was indicative of broader patterns across the period where news articles which concerned general election politics made hustings, rallies and the process of casting a vote into an exciting and dramatic genre of news content. As well as the metaphorical references to elections as battlefields, coverage across all three newspapers

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[229] 'Election Fatalities', *Daily Express* 17 January 1910, p. 5.

[230] Ibid.

[231] Ibid.

highlighted the drama within the elections. Of particular note was the coverage of election results, which heightened the narrative twists and turns of the overall contests through inventive visual metaphors of election 'races' with rivalling characters battling to the finish line of parliamentary victory. Moreover, these newspapers helped to create the announcement of election results into huge public events, broadcasting constituency results through the use of public demonstrations in parks and music halls. The way that these newspaper-supported live announcements were then covered in the new dailies further represented election politics as a form of mass spectator event; something that demanded, and received, huge amounts of public interest and excitement.

As the next section of this chapter will discuss, this 'sensationalising' of election news, which used linguistic and stylistic innovations similar to the new dailies' better-remembered 'human interest' content, made election politics, and by extension politics in general, into a news genre that was intended to incite greater interest and excitement from the new dailies' readerships. More so than any past iteration of a mass British press, the new dailies made politics engaging, accessible and entertaining for people historically excluded from the traditional approaches which the British newspaper industry took towards the reporting of political news. Election politics, similar to a football match or a night at the theatre, was a spectacle to which the new dailies' large readerships flocked.

Days at the Races[232]

As was discussed in the previous section, the language of violence – hustings as battles, or debates as wars of words – was a significant feature across the election coverage of the new dailies. The result was political coverage heavily defined by drama and action, lending the stories similar qualities to some of the new dailies more obviously 'human-interest' content which defined their popular appeal. Another key feature of these consistent adversarial representations was the creation of opposing characters. Political parties frequently were represented as binary entities - Empire versus 'Pro-Boer' in 1900, Free Trade versus Tariff Reform in 1906 – that clarified the wider election into clear, easily-identifiable sides. In 1900, for example the *Daily Mail* used the terms "Pro Boer" or "Pro Boers" to describe the Liberals on forty-three occasions throughout their election-time news coverage, and the *Express* nineteen times. These binary metaphorical depictions of Long-Edwardian politics manifested across the new dailies' election coverage most notably in the form of visual results barometers. These cartoons complemented the papers' broader coverage and offered the most striking examples of the ways in which political news was given narrative, drama and a sense of excitement.

The barometers were large-scale illustrations which tracked the daily state of the overall House of Commons. On the surface, these barometers performed a similar task as other, less extravagant daily summaries of election proceedings, such as tally charts. They summarised constituency results into quickly-consumable aspects of the papers' wider

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[232] The following sub-section includes published material, see Christopher Shoop-Worrall, 'Scouse Sensation: Liverpool and the Edwardian New Journalism', *Media History* (9 August, 2019), DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/13688804.2019.1652583

coverage, so that a reader could quickly decipher an overall view of the election. However, in contrast to a table of numbers, these visual barometers displayed more than ongoing tallies. Rather, these metaphorical visual depictions of political parties and their parliamentary successes used various dramatic embellishments, such as beads of sweat or the smoke from an engine, embellished these progress trackers with wit, humour and relatable commentary on the fortunes of particular parties. These subtle visual representations of party-political election progress showcased an intelligence to the new dailies' electoral commentary that far belief their 'feather-brained' historical legacy, as well as their successful ability to articulate political news in similar ways to the 'human interest' content for which they were particularly popular.

These visual barometers most commonly represented election politics, either directly or implicitly, as a race to the 'finish line' of electoral victory. The decision to represent elections as races spoke of two distinct ways in which the new dailies' political content emulated elements of the 'human interest' news that would come to define their legacies. On the one hand, the emphasis on elections as races gave the day-to-day news from the polls a narrative; one that could potentially twist and turn with each new constituency return. This serialisation of political news – the creation of drama which encouraged readers to continue to keep up with the story – tapped into longer traditions of popular publications serialising content. Among the most noteworthy examples of this broader press tradition were the serialisation of works by authors such as Charles Dickens and Arthur Conan Doyle. The former's serialised publication of *The Pickwick Papers* was credited as setting a template for the popular potential of dramatized, day-to-day content.[233] The new dailies' decision to draw

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[233] J. H. Grossman, *Charles Dickens's Networks: Public Transport and the Novel* (Oxford, 2012), p. 54; D. Lodge, *Consciousness and the Novel: Connected Essays* (Harvard, 2002), p. 118.

influence from these traditions of serialised popular fiction spoke of their ability and desire to represent politics as an exciting news genre from which readers should draw interest and intrigue.

On the other hand, the emphasis on elections as a race, as opposed to another hypothetical battle for victory (such as a tug-of-war or a wrestling match), highlighted the awareness of the new dailies as to the popular appeal of racing news to its intended readership. Racing, and horse racing in particular, was a hugely successful staple of British popular journalism.[234] The mid-to-late-nineteenth century saw increasing numbers of newspapers including racing coverage, as it was increasingly felt that any paper which neglected the races would fail to attract a large readership.[235] The races, whether attending one in person or betting on a winner closer to home, were a significant part of the lower-middle-class popular culture which the new dailies both catered to and drew influence from.[236] Much like the decision to serialise, the decision to create elections into races showcased a new daily newspaper tapping into its successful brand of human-interest journalism when reporting political news.

The first iterations of the new daily visual barometer [see Figure 1] featured in the *Daily Express* during the 1900 election and focused solely on the two leading parties and used drawings of each party's leader – Henry Campbell-Bannerman and Lord Salisbury respectively – to represent the whole parties. Each of the leaders and by extension each party

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[234] See M. McIntire, "Odds, Intelligence and Prophecies: Racing News in the Penny Press, 1855-1914", *Victorian Periodical Review* 41.4 (2008), p. 352.

[235] Tony Mason, "Sporting News, 1860-1914" in M. Harris and A. Lee (eds.), *The Press in English Society from the Seventeenth to the Nineteenth Centuries* (Rutherford NJ, 1986), p. 174.

[236] Wray Vamplew, *Pay Up and Play the Game: Professional Sport in Britain, 1875-1914* (Cambridge, 1988), pp. 50-54.

were shown to be climbing one of two slippery poles, and would be lined up parallel to each other with the leading party positioned higher on the page than the other.[237] Moreover, they took up a significant part of a whole page of that day's edition and were frequently the only illustrations on the page. Visually, the two greased climbers were the most striking aspects of the page.

Beyond their size, the competing climbers were significant for their simplification and clarification of the election into a battle between just two individuals. On the one hand, the race only featured the Liberals and the Conservatives; neither the LRC or the Irish Nationalists warranted their own pole climber in the 1900 barometers. To the readers of the *Express,* that election was a two-horse race. On one level, this simplification of the election could be criticised as a 'feather-brained' interpretation of elections; its complexities were overly-condensed and thus eroded at the broader reality of the election. While these metaphorical climbers did remove the broader nuances of the election by focusing only on a two-person race, its 'feather-brained' content was less certain. Firstly, considering the limited circulation of the new dailies in Ireland throughout this period, the focus on just Liberals and the Conservatives spoke of the largely non-Irish readership of these papers; for most potential voters reading the *Express,* voting Irish Nationalist was simply not an option. Indeed, the LRC was equally restricted in its national appeal in 1900, considering they only stood fifteen candidates across the entire country and returned two MPs by the election's end.[238] While the focus on just two climbers was undoubtedly simplistic, it also reflected the election realities of the majority of the paper's readers, for whom it was a simple contest between two parties both in terms of a local candidate and their potential place in a future government.

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[237] 'Climbing the Election Greasy Pole', *Daily Express* 2 October 1900, p. 1.

[238] Thorpe, *A History of the British Labour Party 3rd edition* (Basingstoke, 2008), p. 17.

Furthermore, the metaphorical representation of a political party as one leading individual could be similarly dismissed as an oversimplification of the election's reality. More specifically, complex political parties with thousands of local activists, grassroots networks and potential points of electoral appeal were reduced to their leader. Evidence such as this has been used in debates concerning a supposed growth in 'personality politics' during the late-twentieth century, and how its rise is argued to have weakened the veracity and detail of public-political discourse.[239] In this context however, the depictions of the two parties as individuals further helped to dramatize the election for the *Express's* readers by projecting human qualities onto the political parties featured in the cartoons. As opposed to names on a page, the two parties were given emotional and physical characteristics which fleshed them out in similar ways to characters in a comic strip. More than just giving politics a face, these barometers used emotional expressions on the faces of the two characters to metaphorically comment on the state of each party as the results continued to come in.

Most notably, as the election continued and the scale of Conservative victory becoming increasingly apparent, the visual barometers demonstrated the stark difference in seats between the two parties through additional characteristics that were added to each climber that reflected the contrasting success of the two parties. During the first few days of the campaign, the two climbers are initially shown to be equally exerted, and only distinguishable from each other due to their likeness to either Salisbury or Campbell-Bannerman. However, in order to reflect the growing number of Conservative constituency victories over the Liberals, cartoons printed later in the election expressed the contrasting fortunes of the two climbers. Firstly, having initially appeared directly side by side, the two

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[239] Bob Franklin, *Packaging Politics: Political Communications in Britain's Media Democracy* (London, 1994), p. 23.

climbers were soon represented in later election editions of the *Express* at opposite ends of the page.[240] This distance between the two characters – the Conservative climber near the top of the page, and the Liberal climber very near the bottom – also changed over time to reflect the growing Conservative majority; their climber rose up each new day's front page, while the Liberal climber would continue to sit close to the bottom of the page.[241]

Moreover, the Liberal climber was depicted as under considerably more strain the further the election continued. He was drawn with sweat on his brow, and the number of beads would increase as the national Liberal performance became less successful by the day.[242] Nearer the end of the election, moreover, the figure was depicted no longer climbing is greased pole, but instead wrapping his legs and arms around it in a manner which expressed clinging on for safety [Figure 2]. The futile exhaustion of trying to keep up the successful Conservative climber lead to him stranded low down both his pole and the page of that day's edition.[243] As the results were finalised, one of the final barometer cartoons showed the Liberal climber looking through a telescope up to the Conservative: a simultaneously humorous and perceptive representation of the gulf between the two parties as the final totals of the future Parliament became clearer.[244] All the while, Lord Salisbury's Conservative climber was represented as increasingly at ease in their ascent to eventual victory. In place of the Liberal's exertion, the Conservative character was shown climbing with little visible effort being put in, and dabbing his brow after reaching the summit.[245] Moreover, his

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[240] 'Surprise from the Polls', *Daily Express* 3 October 1900, p. 1.

[241] 'Climbing the Election Greasy Pole', *Daily Express* 6 October 1900, p. 1.

[242] Ibid.

[243] 'Climbing the Election Greasy Pole', *Daily Express* 13 October 1900, p. 1.

[244] 'Polls Nearing a Finish', *Daily Express* 10 October 1900, p. 1.

[245] 'Climbing the Election Greasy Pole' *Daily Express* 15 October 1900, p. 1.

character is shown to have prompted the telescopic actions of the Liberal climber by using a telescope of his own to look down at his rival.[246] This connection between two day's cartoons reinforced the personality and humour that was placed on these metaphorical representations of the election race.

As the election progressed, and the overall result became increasingly certain, the cartoons stopped appearing. Previously used to visually represent a close contest, the two climbers lost their drama and importance as the difference between the parties only grew in Commons seats. Having appeared on every front page since they debuted on 2nd October 1900, the greased-pole barometers were included for the last time a fortnight later, with Lord Salisbury the climber sat just enough the masthead with one-hundred and forty more MPs than the desperately-clinging Campbell-Bannerman climber positioned lower and to the right.[247] This decline in the use of daily barometers as the 1900 election's overall victory became more certain was reflected in other parts of the *Express*'s coverage, most notably when, with still over a week of the election to go, the paper felt confident enough to declare to readers in its daily 'Table Talk' column that the election 'for all practical purposes, (was) now over'.[248]

These first uses of a visual barometer by one of the new dailies showcased many of the qualities that later versions across all three papers would also boast. On the one hand, the election contest is visually constructed as a physical contest between rival contestants, with individuals used to represent the party as a whole. Placement on the page was used both to show how the race was going and how close (or not) the 'race' to election victory was. Page

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[246] 'Polls Slowly Rising', *Daily Express* 9 October 1900, p. 1.

[247] Climbing the Election Greasy Pole' *Daily Express* 15 October 1900, p. 1.

[248] 'Election Table Talk', *Daily Express* 12 October 1900, p.4.

placement was also supplemented by changes to the illustrated image to convey the difficulty or ease with which a particular party was progressing in the election. Most strikingly however, the visual races would disappear from the newspaper once the election's overall result became clear. The inclusion of visual barometers, while a striking example of the New Journalism's ability to combine factual clarity with dramatic flair, were seemingly dependant on the narrative of the election they covered; once the ending became obvious, the need to tell the story seemingly became less important.

All of these qualities were further showcased by the visual barometers featured in the *Express* and the *Mirror* (a paper that was reporting on its first every general election) during the next general election in 1906. Both newspapers chose very similar ways to visually represent the race to parliamentary victory. Where 1900 conveyed the race as two rival acrobats climbing slippery poles, 1906 was represented as a literal race: both the Express and Mirror chose to illustrate the election as a battle to a racing finish line between the rival competitors. In the case of the latter, the race was one on foot [Figure 3], with the two leading parties represented by their party leaders as runners, both dressed in sporting attire of vests, shorts and running shoes.[249] Similar to the Express in 1900, the race is shown to be swift and one-sided in favour of the election's obvious early winner; in this instance, the Liberal party. The triumphant Campbell-Bannerman is shown to be confidently bounding towards the finishing line of the Houses of Parliament, with A. J. Balfour (Conservative leader since 1901) behind in a distant second place.[250] Again, much as was the case in the Express in 1900, the cartoons were relatively short-lived[251]. The winner, just as had been the case during

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[249] 'Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman easily beats Mr. Balfour in the race of the elections to Westminster', *Daily Mirror* 17 January 1906, p. 3.

[250] 'Liberal Seats Recaptured', *Daily Mirror* 22 January 1906, p. 3.

[251] The cartoons ceased being included from the 23rd January 1906.

the previous election, was clear enough in the early days of the campaign to reduce the want or need for a day-by-day dramatization.

The Express meanwhile represented the 'race' of 1906 using illustrated motor cars [Figure 4]. The choice of motor cars as the racers in 1906 reflected the prominent place that cars inhabited in broader Edwardian culture: Ford's first European plant, for example, was set up in Manchester.[252] Indeed, the previous Conservative government had launched a Royal Commission on motoring in 1905, such was the level of public debate regarding these vehicle's presence in urban public life.[253] Though it was initially featured in a similar size to the greased poles of 1900[254], these car races became more visually prominent than either the paper's own in 1900 or the Mirror in 1906. At the height of its run, race cars formed a page-wide banner under the front page title.[255] These illustrations also expanded upon the two-party focus of the others; both Labour and the Irish Nationalists became a part of the race. Changed too was the emphasis on the leaders representing their respective parties. In its place, each motor car had a letter or abbreviated word to indicate which party was where in the broader race to the final election result.[256] Again however, likely due to the fact that the Liberals quickly looked likely to establish a large Commons majority, the cartoons did not last the whole way through the election. Having first featured on page one of the edition published on 15th January, the motor car races featured for a fortnight – the same length of time as the barometers used in 1900 – before stopping on the 30th January. Similar to the Mirror

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[252] Jon Stevenson, *British Social History 1914–45* (Harmondsworth, 1984), p. 27.

[253] Will Plowden, *The Motor Car and Politics in Britain* (Harmondsworth, 1973), p. 58.

[254] 'Election Race by Motor-Car', *Daily Express* 15 January 1906, p. 1.

[255] 'More Sweeping Victories for Liberalism and Labour', *Daily Express* 17 January 1906, p. 1.

[256] 'Many Ex-Ministers Defeated. Liberal Tide Flows on', *Daily Express* 19 January 1906, p. 1.

barometer cartoons, the 1906 election race lost its place in the *Daily Express* once it was clear the race was already won.

Throughout the 1906 election, the visual representations of day-to-day election summaries featured in the new dailies had evolved beyond the early images of two men climbing greased poles. These illustrated summaries of the electoral successes of political parties combined a concise, clear representation of the political fact with stylistic flourishes that spoke of the interest in drama and narrative so at the heart of the British New Journalism. The figures of returned MPs were recreated as races to a finish line, with participants shown to be either struggling or flourishing in tandem with the wider fortunes of the party they represented. They also spoke of the broader nature of the elections they covered, as well as the other political interests contained in the papers alongside the visuals. Moreover, the appearance and then withdrawal of these cartoons during the span of the election spoke of the one-sided nature of the 'races' to Parliament, with both 1900 and 1906 turning out to be landslide victories for one party only a few days into the weeks-long campaigns. Visually, elections were made to be events of drama and excitement, but only for as long as the winner was not obvious to all.

As well as emphasising drama, these barometers also took forms which fed back into the militarised language used to report on much of the day-to-day polling events. For instance, the *Mail's* coverage of the January election in 1910 featured a half-page visual which represented the British Isles as a colour-coded map [Figure 5], similar to a map of a military battlefield with clear sides and patterns of advancement and retreat. The map, blazoned with the title 'The Progress of Tariff Reform' displayed all of the country's parliamentary constituencies and, through use of different party-specific shading, which party controlled which constituency up to that date of publication. The constituencies, their individually-numbered majorities and the visualised 'progress' of the different parties on a

national scale were contrasted with the results of the previous election in 1906. The emphasised comparison between the past election and the present campaign helped to further emphasise the extent to which the governing Liberals had 'lost ground' to the advancing Conservatives. While not as obvious a 'race' as the barometers featured in 1900 or 1906, the *Mail's* battlefield map still emphasised ideas of competition and a fight to a finish line. In this instance, the battle for control of the map also reinforced the connection between election news and war news, and how the former was as dramatic and consequential as the latter.

Overall, the use of visual summative cartoons by the new dailies marked a significant part of their broader representations of election politics. The emphases on entertainment within these illustrations varied from election to election, ranging from motor races to depictions of election battlefields, similar to the militaristic metaphors found in election language. At the heart of all these illustrated barometers was the idea that elections were events defined by their dramatic significance. Whether jovial, amusing or attempting the profound, these visual trackers represented general elections as stories of great significance to their readers, and condensed the numbers and figures of the campaigns into striking, easy-to-read images that dramatically summarised who was best placed to hold power in Westminster.

Seen from the Skies

Through their shared emphases on violent language and metaphorical barometers depicting elections as races, the new dailies represented political news in ways which emphasised, and at times depended on, drama and narrative. The coverage gave each elections their own storylines, whether in their coverage of speeches from the campaign trails or in the reporting of daily returns from across the country. The daily returns were paid particular attention across all three papers, in terms of both the page placement and space

allocated to the visual 'races', greased poles and battlefield maps. The prominence granted a particular race when the victor was still to be decided, and the speed with which they stopped being published once the overall result was confirmed, further helped to define the new dailies' political coverage around narratives of winners and losers as much as by the action and energy of the warlike language.

Interestingly, the excitable emphasis given to election results was not solely in the form of cartoon races. One of the other most eye-catching elements of the new dailies' election coverage were features dedicated to the public announcement of election results. These articles represented the unveiling of constituency results as eagerly-consumed forms of popular entertainment. Results were announced on large, specially-erected screens in large public spaces, where crowds were shown to gather in excited anticipation. They were incorporated into evening music-hall productions, becoming highlights of one of Long Edwardian England's most successful forms of popular entertainment. They also incorporated lavish technological flourishes to make them even more of a public spectacle: flashlights lit up the sky to announce a given winner, or pyrotechnics exploded in different colours to denote a particular party.

Fascinatingly, the new dailies did not just report these spectacular public demonstrations; they were involved in producing them. They were often the sponsors of the music-hall acts; they paid for the erections of the open-air screens; and they set up special cabling services to alert theatres of results, to ensure speed of delivery to the audiences awaiting the news. Not only did they represent election news as showcase spectator events – events as popular and lavish as anything else to be found in mass, Edwardian consumer culture – but they actively helped make them happen. Their dual roles as producers and disseminators of these extravagant and hugely-popular events underlined their broader emphasis on the excitement of election politics. Such was their dedication to representing

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elections in as exciting ways as possible, they were sometimes prepared to underwrite the

excitement's cost.

The high-point of election spectacle took place during 1906, when all three papers

vied during in the early days of the election to give results announcements the grandest of

public platforms. The *Mail* dedicated much of page seven and page nine of its thirteenth of

January edition to a feature on the 'monster searchlights' [Figure 6] that would illuminate the

skies of London with incoming results.[257] These lights, to which a page-wide illustration was

dedicated, would use Morse code to announce names and parties of constituency victors.[258]

Readers were even provided with a breakdown of basic Morse code, so as to avoid missing

the electoral significance of the public lightshows. Alongside the spectacle, the *Mail* ensured

that its dramatic coverage of election news could be easily understand by those it encouraged

to take interest in it. Furthermore, in another example of the new dailies' comparisons

between elections and battlefields, the *Mail* stressed how similar lights to those used for the

election spectacles were used to communicate British messages 'during the South African

War'.[259] The various aspects of the light shows – their skyline-defining size, their ease of

visibility, and their heavy military overtones – that the *Mail* represented to its readers

reinforced the election results as grand events that should not, and possibly could not, be

missed. Indeed, their public popularity was sometimes made explicit in the *Mail's* own

coverage; people were reported to have 'poured out of doors in countless thousands' in order

to see the pyrotechnic results.[260]

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[257] 'To-Night's Results', *Daily Mail* 13 January 1906, p. 7

[258] 'How the "Daily Mail" Announces Election Results', *Daily Mail* 13 January 1906, p. 9

[259] Ibid.

[260] 'Street Scenes', *Daily Mail* 18 January 1910, p. 8.

The size and spectacle of these light shows was reinforced in the same day's *Mirror,* which also of the 'Results by Signal' lightshows that were going to dominate the London skyline during the campaign.[261] It directly echoed the *Mail's* coverage by describing the demonstrations as dependent on 'monster searchlights', thus again emphasising the large (and by implication impressive) equipment being used to project breaking election results across the city.[262] As well as stressing size, the *Mirror* emphasised aspects of the public demonstrations with overtly militaristic elements. In particular, they reported of red and blue 'rockets' that would accompany the lighting codes to denote a Liberal gain in the case of the former, and a Conservative gain in the case of the latter.[263] The choice by the *Mirror* to emphasise the role of explosive pyrotechnics in the announcement of results added further violence and visual spectacle to the election process, and also further situated their readers at the heart of the election's violence and drama; the explosions happened right in front of their eyes. Moreover, the paper's insistence on the meaning of a rocket's colour – similar to the *Mail's* breakdown of Morse code – ensured that the spectacle of election results was represented in as inclusive ways as possible.

Not to be outdone, the *Express* also produced their own public demonstrations of polling results during the first days of the 1906 election. Like the *Mail,* they too had paid for the use of searchlights to light up the London skyline. Theirs was positioned to light up the sky over the Thames between Waterloo Bridge and Blackfriars Bridge.[264] The *Express* also ensured that readers would 'remember' the meaning of their light shows; the news about the light show included a table of which colour searchlights meant gains for each of the Liberals,

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[261] 'Election Battle Rages', *Daily Mirror* 13 January 1906, p. 4.

[262] Ibid.

[263] Ibid.

[264] 'Where to See Election Results', *Daily Express* 15 January 1906, p. 5.

Conservatives, Labour and Irish Nationalist.[265] In contrast to the other two papers, however, the *Express* went further than the public light shows. As was outlined on their front page on the thirteenth of January 1906, these sky demonstrations were part of a broader network of public announcements where incoming results would be made 'widely known without delay' in a variety of ways.[266] Chief among these methods of election broadcasting were arrangements by the *Express* with a host of music-hall venues and theatres across London – including the Empire theatres in 'Hackney, Holloway, New Cross, Stratford, and Shepard's Bush' – to incorporate breaking news announcements into nightly performances.[267] The show finales at the London Hippodrome, for instance, would feature the 'highly ingenious' use of on-stage motor cars blazoned with the tallied results of the night's returns, so that the thousands leaving the theatre that night would be fully aware of the overall election picture.[268] Another of the associated theatres – the Coliseum – went further and incorporated election news as a nightly performance highlight. They were reported to have cast one of the acting company as a 'messenger boy (who) shall come upon the stage at the Coliseum immediately after any result arrives, stop the performance, and shout out the figures'.[269] For those unable to attend a performance, the *Express* had also taken steps to get the results known as widely as possible; they had negotiated with a selection of hotels and restaurants so that news would announced to both guests, through spoken announcements, and passers-by in the street through the use of window signage displaying the daily tallies.[270]

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[265] Ibid.

[266] 'How to See the Returns', *Daily Express* 13 January 1906, p. 1.

[267] Ibid.

[268] 'By Motor Car', *Daily Express* 13 January 1906, p. 1.

[269] 'Novel Plans', *Daily Express* 13 January 1906, p. 1.

[270] Ibid.

The importance of these public news demonstrations, whether in the form of light shows or as part of an evening of popular theatre, is how the dailies demonstrably represented, and even actually helped to stage, election news announcements as exciting news that demanded a popular audience. Firstly, the two primary methods of public dissemination – in the theatre or in the night sky – were forms of visual communication that invited the largest possible audiences to attend. They were large-scale productions which deliberately tried to the entice the greatest numbers of people. Secondly, they were forms of communication that tapped into distinctive and dominant aspects of late-Victorian popular culture. The use of light shows, much like the visual barometers, drew on the prominence of visual entertainment in Britain since the mid-Victorian period, and the decades of gradual inclusion of lighting and visual innovations which were shaping and impacting significant parts of public and domestic life.[271] Of particular interest to this study was its varied uses in popular culture. For example, illuminations, projections and pyrotechnics were credited as having helped revitalise popular theatre by the mid-nineteenth century through its ability to 'trick' audiences and provide artists with new ways of staging and producing shows.[272] Furthermore, the London spectacles formed part of a long and rich history of performance culture in the capital, where visuals were the great crowd-attracters for a wide variety of public shows and demonstrations.[273] Similarly, as was discussed in the literature review, music hall performances, which were the locations of the *Express's* show interruptions and motor car finales, were an ingrained part of the popular 'everyman' culture from which the

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[271] See B. Lightman (2012) 'Victorian science and popular visual culture', *Early Popular Visual Culture* 10:1 (2012), pp. 1-5; C. Otter, *The Victorian eye: A political history of light and vision in Britain, 1800–1910* (Chicago, 2008).

[272] R. Johnson, 'Tricks, Traps and Transformations', *Early Popular Visual Culture* 5:2 (2007), pp. 151-165.

[273] See R. Altick, *The Shows of London* (Cambridge; Mass, 1978).

new dailies collectively contributed to and primarily drew their large readerships. These election shows, therefore, demonstrated the new dailies' emphasis on elections as entertainment through their deliberate connections to parts of Long Edwardian popular entertainment culture.

For all their drama and their links to the dominant popular trends of the period, there was no denying that these public news spectacles were somewhat restrictive. While their coverage across all three new dailies emphasised their excitement, these were events only physically accessible to those living or working in London at the time. There were, however, additional ways in which the new dailies brought drama to their announcements of election results to both readers and the wider public outside of the capital. The staging and accompanying coverage of mass-attended pyrotechnic displays were complemented by efforts by all three of the new dailies which ensured that readers outside of the capital also received, and were reported as having received, election news in exciting and spectacular ways. One part of the new dailies' broader dissemination of election news drama was the running of special election-time trains which carried the same news broadcast during the public entertainment shows to towns and cities across the country as swiftly as possible. The *Mail* was particularly involved in the running of these trains; they and the *Weekly Dispatch* (a newspaper that was also owned by Harmsworth) were the newspapers which paid for the trains, which ran from both Manchester and London. They were reported in the *Mail* alongside the news of the public lightshows, with timetables which outlined their arrival times along various routes which covered much of the Midlands, the South-West, the Lake District and the North-East.[274]

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[274] '"Daily Mail" Special Trains From London', *Daily Mail* January 13 1906, p. 7.

While not on the scale of the London popular spectacles, the running and reporting of the election trains represented the new dailies' efforts to ensure that the excitement that they represented in election news was as widely accessible as possible. These efforts further than the greater accessibility of geography provided by the trains. Rather, the emphases on the trains as 'Special' mirrored the language used to report on the public shows: the specially-set-up telephone lines to theatres; the time and expense put into erecting the one-off lighting apparatus. Moreover, you were not excluded should you be unavailable to attend an event or even make the arrival of one of the trains; news was posted prominently so passers by – the literal 'man in the street' – had to opportunity to be a part of the national spectacle. Regardless of how a new daily reader received the election news, it was represented as a spectacle defined by one-off extravagant efforts which were in their different forms reached millions of people across the country and which all three new dailies had helped to create; they were active participants in news that was not only exciting, but 'special' in ways that allowed huge numbers of people feel part of the occasion.

On Every Wall

For the readers of the new dailies, as this chapter has outlined, news from general elections across the Long Edwardian period was represented across much of the three paper's most eye-catching coverage as exciting and dramatic content. From the first days of publication in 1900, elections were reported with warlike language which inflected all areas of coverage – from candidate's speeches to scenes of both metaphorical and literal polling-station casualties – with a sense of drama and significance that represented elections as arenas that could, and should, be of interest to anyone reading. These war-like reports were complemented by visualised barometers of an election's progress. Sometimes, as was particularly the case in 1910, these barometers heightened the drama and militarised excitement inflected within the dailies' broader coverage; showing election as a battlefield

map with opposing sides gaining or losing ground. More generally however, the barometers represented election news as races. These daily-updated, page-dominating illustrations featured political parties as human characters which, whether climbing a greased pole, racing their car or bounding towards Westminster, expressed personalities and sense of humour. Their individual actions, such as wiping sweat off of their brow or peering at their opponent through a telescope, provided a nuanced and amusing commentary on the election's broader progress. They reinterpreted daily summaries of news into eye-catching and accessible pieces of entertainment that still spoke convincingly of their broader issues affecting the fortunes of the parties at that given time.

Alongside the accessible commentary and emotional relatability which they gave to the data of daily returns, these 'races' gave elections serialised storylines. The creation of these narratives, as well as being an echo other aspects of popular journalism's most successful content, made elections into a running story with possible twists with which readers needed to keep up to date. More than that however, it was news that, for all its dramatic significance and daily excitement, was engaging and easy to understand. It was also news that the new dailies helped to create, particularly in the staging of public demonstrations of election results. These shows, whether in the open-air or in a multitude of theatres, complemented the barometers by truly making election news a running spectacle that, by tapping into existing popular trends, enticed huge crowds and popular theatre companies to become a part of them. For those who could not attend the shows, the excitement was directly brought to them at the new dailies' expense in the form of window displays and, most notably, daily trains ferrying news to towns and cities across the country. Regardless of where and how you received the news, the emphasis was consistently on the drama and immediacy of election news; it was news which was so 'special' that it deserved and demanded expensive productions and transportation networks to keep readers up to speed.

The significance of all these different elements of the new dailies' approach to Long Edwardian election politics was that it made elections into uniquely must-read news: it was content that demanded particular attention, both as a piece of entertainment and a consequential part of the lives of the people who comprised the majority of the paper's readerships. This latter aspect of the new dailies' dramatization of election news – the emphasis on inclusivity of political news – was most spectacularly manifested in a feature which the *Daily Mail* published during both the 1906 and 1910 elections. It was a feature that the paper regularly advertised throughout its election coverage, most notably in 1906 when over a week's worth of election-time editions advertised its availability for 'One Shilling at all Booksellers'[275].   It was a publication in 'Great Demand' which promised to represent an accessible, 'at a glance' summary of the overall state of the election 'in such a way… that they (the purchaser or owner) will have a permanent record of comparison between the old and new Parliaments'.[276]

These two nearly-identical documents, published and sold throughout the 1906 [Figure 7] and 1910 [Figure 8] elections, were colour-coded wall charts.[277] Measuring thirty-nine inches by twenty-four inches, these charts were primarily a map of the country broken up by parliamentary constituency, onto which the owner could themselves track the progress of the national state of the election.[278] This was possible thanks to a set of colour-coded cards that were sold with the chart which were coded similarly to the lights of the light shows: blue

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[275] '"Daily Mail" Election Chart', *Daily Mail* 16 January 1906, p. 1.

[276] 'The "Daily Mail" Election Chart', *Daily Mail* 15 January 1906, p. 7.

[277] The British Library (BL): 8139.e.23, *Parties at the Dissolution, January, 1906. Election Results Chart. Based on the "Simplex" Chart designed by Lieut.-Col. Sir J. F. G. Ross-of-Bladensburg* (London: George Philip & Son, 1906).

[278] *Daily Mail Election Results Chart* (London: G. Philip & Son, 1909).

for Unionist; red for Liberal; yellow for Labour, and Green for Irish 'Nationalist'. These different-coloured cards were to be placed by the owner of the chart onto whichever constituencies were won by a given party, culminating in a final colour-coded map of the country showing where the four parties had won their seats in parliament. The coloured card squares were also 'gummed at the back so as to be easily attached'. The charts, printed by the same company four years apart, also featured pre-coded maps of the country before the election, so that a user could, as the advert cited above claimed, compare the colours of their ongoing creation with the map of the existing state of affairs. They also detailed which people were currently in government, minister by minister; explained the differences between different kinds of constituency and how those differences were visually expressed in the shape of the constituency boxes[279], as well as how to properly apply the correctly-coloured squares onto the chart.[280]

Similar to the light shows and the daily barometer cartoons, the *Mail's* election charts visualised politics in an accessible and entertaining manner. They provided plentiful detail about the election to which it was dedicated, such as who was in the sitting government and where the major parties each stood in terms of seats in the House of Commons. These data, however, were a part of a brightly-coloured illustration which was almost twice the size of the newspaper which had created it. It represented elections as comparative maps – not dissimilar in design from the battlefield maps used in the main paper - which allowed readers, at a glance, to easily see how the ongoing election was affecting the existing composition of the House of Commons. It was the boldest microcosm of the broader ability of the new

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[279] Ibid, 'Our Election Chart: What It Is and How to Use It'.

[280] Ibid, 'Key to Colours'.

dailies to represent election news in a variety of visually and linguistically striking ways that emphasised both excitement and an ease of access.

Fascinatingly, moreover, these election charts also featured one of the other defining features of the new dailies' representations of election politics: the active participation of its 'everyman' readers in the political process. In this instance, the wall charts went beyond making political information accessible to read. Instead, it offered opportunities for readers to actively engage in the political news they were consuming. Firstly, there was the fact that the charts included the coloured cards for readers to themselves place on the map to follow along with the news of daily returns. This portrayed the election news as an interactive exercise, as opposed to an act of passively receiving information. By encouraging this regular reader engagement with the daily news, the wall charts did not only increase the accessibility and entertainment of the election news. It also placed the elections as part of the lives of their readers; it made political participation into a fun daily activity which was both simple and to be encouraged.

It was the placement of election politics within the context of their reader's everyday lives by the new dailies that Chapter Five will further explore. This will be argued to have manifested in two particular ways across all three newspapers. One of these was how coverage highlighted the prominence of everyman citizens within the Long Edwardian election process: at the polls, travelling with co-workers and family to show political support to a candidate, and as the people whom politicians rightly depending on for their chances of victory. This championing of 'man in the street' political engagement came with limitations, both in terms of the kinds of people and behaviour that was represented as part of emancipated political sphere. However, the collective significance of this coverage was that it represented lower-middle class British citizens across various age groups as vital and active components of the British political system. They were people – representative of much of the

three paper's large readerships - that the new dailies' coverage represented as being in possession of real political power.

The other of these forms represented this power – this significant role within the election process – as being an enjoyable and engaging part of day-to-day life. Elections were exceptional periods of political significance, but they did not interrupt normality. Rather, they were shown to form part of the lived experiences of the new dailies' readers; events to engage with in ways similarly to other aspects of the new dailies' popular content. This normalisation of election politics, twinned with the emphasis on the everyman's political significance, helped to create what the next chapter will expand on as 'everyday elections': periods of political engagement defined both their importance and their compatibility with the everyday lives and habits of many of the new dailies' readers. One of the ways in which the new dailies most notably helped make election news 'everyday' was also a part of the *Mail's* election wall charts. As well as making elections into entertainment, they encouraged readers to put their money where their mouths were.

Everyday Elections: People, Produce and Politics

As well as advertising their price and their significant public demand, the *Daily Mail's* promotion of their 1906 and 1910 election wall charts also featured a public invitation. On the eighteenth of January 1906, for example, the *Mail's* back page announced that readers had just two days left to post in their entries for 'A Prize of £50' which would be awarded 'for the best forecast of the results of the General Election'.[282] The prize was similarly advertised in the *Daily Mirror*, which pronounced that there was 'no time to lose' for those wishing to compete for a prize which was only on offer 'for buyers of the "Daily Mail" Election Chart'.[283] This was also not the first time that the *Mail* had run an election-themed competition. On the twenty-ninth of September 1900, for example, the paper featured an advert in the centre of page seven in which readers, via postal ballots, were invited to test their political knowledge for the chance of a potential prize;

> '*All coupons* (posted in from readers) *will be carefully locked up until the election is over, when the sender of the figures most closely agreeing with the result will be awarded a complete set of the "Encyclopaedia Britannia" by way of recognition of his or her skill'.*[284]

These election prizes, much like the public results shows discussed in Chapter Four, demonstrated the ways in which the new dailies' political content drew influence from both

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[281] Sections of this chapter have been provisionally accepted for publication. See Christopher Shoop-Worrall, 'Leaps and Light Shows: Visual Politics in the Long Edwardian Mass Press, 1900-1914', *Parliamentary History,* forthcoming.

[282] 'Saturday is the Last Day', *Daily Mail* 18 January 1906, p. 10.

[283] 'Another £50 Prize', *Daily Mirror* 17 January 1906, p. 5.

[284] 'Readers of the "Daily Mail" Invited to Forecast the Results', *Daily Mail* 29 September 1900, p. 7.

their own 'human interest' content and wider popular trends in Long Edwardian Britain. Reader competitions had been a hugely-successful staple of the New Journalism since its inception, both as items of entertainment and as forums for readers to both literally and metaphorically 'interact' with publications.[285] For example, both *Tit-Bits* and *Answers* had run reader competitions in the 1880s for a house and a pound a week for life respectively, which managed to attract hundreds of thousands of entries.[286] Moreover, the *Mail* itself offered prizes during the Long Edwardian period. By happenstance, one of their most extravagant competitions was a ten-thousand pound reward for the first successfully-completed manned London-to-Manchester flight within a twenty-four-hour period was announced in 1906.[287] The reward was eventually claimed by Louis Paulhan in 1910[288].

Though the prize on offer was less spectacular, the *Daily Mail* still incorporated this long-standing staple of British popular journalism into its election coverage. Moreover, elements of the 1900 competition echoed the dramatized elements seen in their warlike coverage or election barometers. In particular, the emphasis that entries were 'carefully locked up' lent an air of suspense and importance to this draw, as well as a level of due process and sound prize planning notably lacking from some other popular prize draws, where poorly-stated rules led to a near-ruin of the successful popular author Edgar Wallace who promoted a competition in the *Mail* in 1906.[289] Most significantly, however, was how the

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[285] S. Rains, 'Going in for Competitions', *Media History* 21.2 (2015), p. 139.

[286] G. Law & M. Sterenberg. 'Old v. New Journalism and the Public Sphere; or, Habermas Encounters Dallas and Stead', *Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century* 16 (2013), p. 10; Williams, *Read All About It!*, p. 127.

[287] '£10,000 Flight', *Daily Mail* 17 November 1906, p. 5.

[288] 'How I Flew to Manchester', *Daily Mail* 29 April 1910, p. 8.

[289] Rains, 'Going in', p. 140.

election competitions contributed to a broader pattern of 'everyday election' news coverage, where politics was closely related to the lives and everyday interests of the man in the street who symbolised the majority of the new dailies' readerships.

The collective significance of the everyday election content, this chapter argues, is how it blurred the restrictive historical line between press coverage of the British political sphere and the everyday lives of the British lower-middle classes who comprised much of the new dailies' audiences. Firstly, election news was represented in ways which intersected with elements of day-to-day British life, in particular through its use in product advertisements[290]. These adverts, which told election news through humorous connections to the products being displayed on the page, directly related politics to elements of everyday life such as food, drink, accessories, and furniture, in ways that made elections into an integrated part of a reader's daily news consumption. This wider distribution, and the links to everyday products and parts of a reader's typical lived experience, represented politics as an everyday part of life: a significant step away from the restricted world represented through historical political newspaper content which largely defined political news as primarily concerning verbatim speeches from Parliament.

Secondly, the new dailies' representations of 'everyday' political news emphasised the prominent role played by their readers in the election processes of the period. Collectively, the three papers articulated an image of a political everyman: the ordinary member of the public upon whom British politics depended. This everyman ideal had its democratising limits. Certain kinds of people and certain kinds of public behaviour were deliberately excluded, which drew a clear line between what and who was allowed to be seen

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[290] Throughout this chapter, the words 'advertisements' and 'adverts' will be used interchangeably to refer to the same items of newspaper content.

as part of the politically-powerful everyman identity. These limitations were undeniable, but the summative result was still an image of election politics where the British mass public – symbolised by the recurring motif of an 'everyman' – had never had a greater stake in political life. The everyman was very similar to the 'man in the street' whom, as scholarship discussed in Chapter Two identified, politicians across the Long Edwardian spectrum sought support from on the campaign trail. The everyman was shown to be enjoying their significant place in the political system as they travelled to cast their votes, or showing their support on the streets with work colleagues and family members. This everyman was also a widely applicable identity which encompassed various age-groups, professions or geographical locations. The consequence was a collection of election content which, similarly to the dramatized coverage, made election politics into an exciting and easy-to-access aspect of everyday life. More specifically however, it created a strong positive connection between electoral engagement and the everyday lives of the new dailies' readers, who were collectively represented through the idealised everyman.

Political Product Placements

On the ninth of December 1910, page eleven of the *Daily Mirror* featured a page-dominating item which declared 'A Popular Victory' in which the victor in question had won a 'Sweeping Majority' against their inferior competition. This 'Special Election Result' was not however related to election news, but instead to a company which was advertising its 'Ironclad Gas Mantles' where its 'British Made' products had defeated the 'All Other Gas Mantles' which were its competition.[291] The direct connections made by this advertisement to the ongoing election of the time were stark. The language used in this advertisement, most notably the advert's headline pronouncing a 'Special Election Result' was nearly identical to

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[291] 'Special Election Result', *Daily Mirror* 9 December 1910, p. 11.

language used in the same newspaper to report on and headline election news. Indeed, particularly through the use of the word 'sweeping', it even conveyed the same sense of the dramatic as the daily news discussed in Chapter Four. Moreover, the advert itself [Figure 9] was formatted to look like a ballot paper, with the two options – the advertised product and its competitors – presented similarly to the cards which electors would fill out at a polling station, complete with empty boxes into which a mark could be placed against one of the two choices.[292]

This fireplace advert was not an isolated occurrence. All three new dailies featured advertisements which directly referenced Edwardian election news as part of their efforts to sell products to the three newspapers' readers. These electoral references, which ranged from targeted comments on a given day's big election news to visual formats which evoked campaign posters and ballot papers, spoke considerably the prominence of the elections in the minds of the new dailies' readerships. The fact that certain advertisers deliberately represented their products through electoral references represented how the elections were a likely topic of daily conversation of the millions reading these newspapers every day. Moreover, the often-humorous ways in which the election was used in these attempts to sell a variety of household products further represented election politics in the new dailies as an accessible and enjoyable genre of news content, which helped stimulate the popular appeal of election news which they simultaneously trying to tap into to sell their goods.

For instance, some of these politically-themed advertisements referenced election news in general terms which were not specific to either a particular election or an item of news. For example, other companies besides the fireplace advert featured in the *Mirror* referenced some of the print material that featured during elections. An advert for the hot

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[292] Ibid.

drink Bovril [Figure 10], printed in the *Daily Mail* in early January 1906, gave the reader two

choices to vote for: 'BOVRIL or INFLUENZA'.[293] Another company, a clothing company

which advertised on page two of the *Mirror* during the January election of 1910, featured a

table with a cross of approval next their project, in order to emphasis its supposed victory

over the competition.[294] Others, also featured in that January's editions of the *Mirror*,

resembled the placards and posters carried by party agents or members of the public which

pronounced support for a particular party or politician. Two such-styled adverts featured in

the twentieth of January's issue, one which campaigned for a 'Vote for Oxo'[295] and another,

also for a meat-based hot drink, which appealed for 'The Candidate for Health'.[296] Like the

allusions to polling cards, these placard-like adverts made a direct link between physical

aspects of Edwardian election culture and the everyday products they were attempting to sell.

The references by these advertisers to physical election practice - whether the casting of a

vote or the showing of political support – spoke of the significance they placed on election

references as a potential selling tool. In turn, this spoke of the broader everyday popularity of

election news which the new dailies had both helped to foster and tapped into through their

popularised news content.

The imagined popularity of election news in the lives and minds of the new dailies'

readers, which certain advertisers both keenly sensed and helped to maintain, was reflected

by other adverts which made generalised references to elections and popular engagement

with politics in their attempts to market their products. A consistent theme across these

election-themed adverts for a variety of household products was an emphasis on an appeal to

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[293] 'Political Notes: Which will you Vote for?', *Daily Mail* 12 January 1906, p. 8.

[294] 'Always in Power: No Election Necessary', *Daily Mirror* 17 January 1910, p. 2.

[295] *Daily Mirror* 20 January 1910, p. 10.

[296] *Ibid*, p. 13.

the public, as if a particular product was a politician seeking the public's support. Across a single week in late January during the 1906 election, for instance, the *Daily Express* featured adverts which metaphorically represented their products as election candidates who were in the process of obtaining, or that had already obtained, the necessary popular support to 'win'. There was the 'Popular Candidate' who was standing for Cadbury's Cocoa[297]; the question put to the nation was claimed to have led to the people electing Bovril[298]; a government guarantee that Cope's 'Bond of Union' will be the popular choice of cigar[299]. There was also a humorous advert which proclaimed the 'major success' of a different kind of MP: Maypole Tea, the other kind of 'victory in this January poll'.[300] During the same election, similar adverts which featured products as campaigners who were either seeking or basking in popular support appeared in the *Mail* and the *Mirror*. Interestingly, the same companies featured across more than one of the new dailies: Maypole Tea urged readers of the *Mail* to 'Poll Early and Often' in its support of their 'universally popular' product the week before they announced their 'MP' in the *Express*.[301] Another business, the Midland Furnishing Company, advertised in both the *Mail* and the *Express* two days apart using similar items: their products were 'unanimously elected' in the former due to their quality and fair price.[302]

Another furnishing company, based north London, used similar calls for electoral support in simultaneous adverts in both the *Express* and *Mail* published on the seventeenth of January 1906 [Figure 11]. The advert used in both papers called for readers to 'VOTE!

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[297] *Daily Express* 26 January 1906, p. 3

[298] Ibid, p. 6.

[299] *Daily Express* 27 January 1906, p. 3.

[300] *Daily Express* 22 January 1906, p. 7.

[301] *Daily Mail* 15 January 1906, p. 8.

[302] *Daily Mail* 18 January 1906, p. 4.

VOTE!! VOTE!!!'[303] for their products, which mirrored the other election-time adverts in the way it made a broad link between the product being advertised and general elections. In contrast to the Midland furnishers, whose advert appeared in the *Mail* the following day, the Hackney company made a direct reference to one of the key electoral issues of that election as part of their pitch. Firstly, they promised prices that represented 'Fair Trade, Free Trade, Honest Trade'.[304] The second of their three promises directly echoed one of the Liberal's key electoral pledges during 1906 of economic free trade, which was part of a big-load versus little-loaf electioneering strategy aimed primarily at prospective lower-middle and working-class voters. Secondly, the final line of the advert stated 'You Want Protection', which similarly echoed one of the leading Conservative policy promises: a reform on import tariffs to preferentially benefit British and imperial suppliers.[305]

The significance of this issue-specific election-themed advertisement was that it was more detailed and nuanced than the more generalized references that were made by other adverts which mentioned candidates or electoral victories. Its use of election-specific details in its product pitch mirrored elements of the election barometers; they added to the new dailies' wider inclusion of nuanced political news and commentary as part of the human-interest election content. The references to specific detail in these clear yet tongue-in-cheek electoral references also lend greater credence to the argument that, far from feather-brained, these light-hearted election items required and encouraged a reader to engage with the serious matter at the heart of the humour.

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[303] 'Vote! Vote!! Vote!!!', *Daily Mail* 17 January 1906, p. 10.

[304] Ibid

[305] Ibid

The Hackney advert was also not an exceptional example. They were one of several companies whose advertisements across the Long Edwardian period featured election references that were specific and knowing of particular pieces of news from the election in which they featured. One of those other businesses, interestingly, was the Midland Furnishing Company; they promised 'Fair Trade and Protection to Customers' to the readers of the *Express* on the previous day to the Hackney advert.[306] Another company, Wright's, advertised their coal tar soap on the same day as the Hackney advert using similar references to the key debate of the election. As well as declaring that their soap 'has held the seat for 40 years' and 'is unopposed in every Nursery Constituency', the advert labelled the product as 'The Protection Candidate': a direct reference to Conservative candidates who were campaigning throughout that election on a tariff reform platform.[307]

The tariff-free trade debate was not the only election-tailored references featured in advertisements across the new dailies in 1906. One advert featured in both the *Mail* and the *Express* humorously framed their product around the issue of Irish Home Rule. It was a cartoon which depicted Campbell-Bannerman and Balfour in rare agreement over 'The Real Home Rule Question': the superior quality and prices of the furniture that they were both inspecting.[308] Another advert featured a crude phonetically-written endorsement for a product from a Chinese 'slave': a direct reference to one of the most controversial aspects of the campaign which rivalled free trade as one of the leading Liberal lines of electoral argument.[309]

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[306] 'Fair Trade and Protection to Customers', *Daily Express* 16 January 1906, p. 6.

[307] 'The Protection Candidate', *Daily Mail* 17 January 1906, p. 4.

[308] 'The Real Home Rule Question', *Daily Mail* 23 January 1906, p. 10.

[309] 'Cope's Bond of Union: Chinese 'slave' endorsement', *Daily Express* 31 January 1906, p. 2.

Adverts during the 1910 elections also made specific references to issues and debates specific to the period, in particular the constitutional 'Peers versus the People' divide between the Liberals and the Conservatives. Maypole Tea, for instance, proclaimed that their product was 'The Voice of the People'[310], while a Grimsby-based supply company claimed that their offerings of 'fresh fish, cleaned ready for cooking' were deserving of the attention of both 'Peers and People'.[311] Flor de Dindigul, meanwhile, declared their product as 'The Peer of Cigars at the Common Price': the words 'peer' and 'common' were both underlined, as if to avoid any doubt in a reader's mind as why those particular words may have been used.[312] The constitutional debate was also not the only election issue included in advertisements throughout 1910. Most notably, a Unionist pledge during the December election for a public referendum on tariff reform was referenced by adverts for multiple companies. Dunlop, most notably, underlined the word 'Referendum' in their claim that a public poll of British motorists would 'invariably result' in a favourable opinion on their products.[313] Once again, election politics – and issues specific to that particular election – were represented as a key selling points of a product, which emphasised the success of new daily content in situating political news within the everyday life of the 'man in the street'.

Alongside specific election references, one particular company also utilised running election commentary in their adverts; messages which humorously related their product to daily news from the campaign. The company in question – Bovril – featured adverts throughout the 1906 election which commented on the ongoing troubles of the Conservative party, as they slipped from early election optimism to a swift realisation of parliamentary

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[310] 'The Voice of the People', *Daily Mail* 20 January 1910, p. 8.

[311] *Daily Mirror* 2 February 1910, p. 11.

[312] *Daily Mail* 6 December 1910, p. 9.

[313] *Daily Mail* 9 December 1910, p. 7.

defeat. Before the scale of the Conservative defeat became apparent, an advert on the sixteenth of January used the words of a pre-election speech by Joseph Chamberlain – "give me my chance and let me see what I can do" – alongside an identical pledge from the Bovril candidate.[314] This representation by Bovril of the early Tory optimism was swiftly followed by adverts in both the *Mail* and the *Express* which directly referenced and mocked the decline in Tory fortunes as part of their product's pitch. In the *Express* from the twenty-third of January, Bovril offered 'Advice to Unionists! Nevermind! Take Bovril'.[315] The previous day's *Mail* featured a similarly-joking 'Message from Birmingham' from Bovril which offered encouragement to Unionist voters disappointed by the results;

> *'Are you down-hearted? Take Bovril…*
>
> *at any rate, ONE PROTECTION CANDIDATE* (Bovril) *holds his seat'.*[316]

As was particularly prominent in Bovril's running commentary of Tory electoral failure, advertisements featured in the new dailies' Long Edwardian election coverage incorporated election details in amusing and knowing ways. These joking references to either winning the people's vote or consoling the losing party represented election politics as more than entertainment. The presence of election items within advertisements situated election politics as an enjoyable part of everyday life through its enjoyable connections to food, drink and household items. They also emphasised the accessibility of the new dailies' election content; they placed items of election news – contained within the humorous adverts – outside the election articles themselves. Readers who purchased and consumed any of the election-edition new dailies would find election news – presented in similarly easy-to-

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[314] 'Political Notes', *Daily Mail* 16 January 1906, p. 4.

[315] *Daily Express* 23 January 1906, p. 3.

[316] 'A Message from Birmingham', *Daily Mail* 22 January 1906, p. 4.

understand and entertaining ways – across the entirety of the paper next to content usually disconnected from political news. The adverts cited in this chapter appeared both on pages of each of the new dailies without any other election news items, as well as on pages where election news was featured. Elections, therefore, were not a subject matter restricted to certain pages; it was news that could be picked up across virtually any page of a new daily.

The additional significance of the election-themed advertisements, besides the greater ubiquity of political content across the new dailies, was the way that it represented politics as connected to the lives of the women reading their papers, as well as the men. Much of Long Edwardian Britain consumer culture, of which advertisements were a significant part, was directed primarily at a female audience. Methods of engagement with consumer culture, and in particular the act of shopping, had been keenly associated with women and femininity since at least the mid-Victorian period.[317] The advertisers who were marketing lower-price domestic products such as Bovril (which featured the most election references in the new dailies), drew particularly on ideas of gendered domesticity in their targeting of women.[318] Therefore, it is important to understand that the new daily readers to whom these everyday election references were being pitched to were not exclusively male.

Moreover, certain adverts which featured election references promoted products exclusively were women. The *Mirror* for example, which had originally launched as a women's paper before a radical overall due to disappointing sales, featured adverts during both the January and December elections of 1910 which pitched election content squarely at female readers. The former election carried an advert for W. B. Corsets styled as a ballot

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[317] E. D. Rappaport, *Shopping for Pleasure: Women in the Making of London's West End* (Princeton, 2001), p. 143.

[318] P. Gurney, *The Making of Consumer Culture in Modern Britain* (London, 2017). p. 75.

paper, which proclaimed that there was in-fact 'no election necessary' to determine their product's market superiority.[319] The latter election featured a 'Referendum' for two fragrances - 'Courvoiser's two choicest perfumes'[320] – and a 'vote for Camp Coffee' which featured a female cartoon character on the campaign trail on behalf of the product.[321] While the latter product was not as exclusively tailored to female consumers, its use of a female activist further placed election content within newspaper content which was principally aimed at female readers.

The election adverts explored in this chapter, whether directly or indirectly, articulated political news in ways which did undoubtedly place election politics within the context of certain lived experiences of Edwardian women. However, while there was an undeniable connection made by the new dailies between Edwardian elections and their female readers, it was not representative of the papers' broader inclusion of women in their election content. The new dailies' representations of election news, such as was included humorously within adverts for an array of cheap household products, were undoubtedly accessible and positively placed politics within reach of the everyday lives of millions of primarily lower-middle class Britons. However, this political inclusivity came with some strict limitations. Specifically, there were limitations of gender and forms of acceptable electoral behaviour that placed parameters on who or what was permissible within the papers' shared representations of mass 'everyman' political culture. These limitations also spoke of the predominantly masculine election culture of the period, as was noted in Chapter Two.

Men in the Street

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[319] 'Always in Power', *Daily Mirror* 17 January 1910, p. 2.

[320] 'Referendum', *Daily Mirror* 8 December 1910, p. 13.

[321] 'Vote for Camp Coffee', *Daily Mirror* 9 December 1910, p. 2.

Page four of the *Daily Express,* published on the seventeenth of January 1906, featured a feature on the 'Two Types of Successful Lady Politicians' which claimed the election had 'brought no revelation more startling than the influence of women in the great battle of the polls'.[322] Their 'arrival' onto the electoral scene was reported as comparable to the decisive Prussian intervention at the Battle of Waterloo; another example of the new dailies' dramatization of election news through military references explored in Chapter Four. Despite these declarations however, the influence with which women were credited spoke more of their electoral exclusion in the new dailies than their 'startling' political impact. Their significance was represented as being similar to polling sirens: their 'personal charms' are enough to encourage men to vote. They 'commanded' men and so, as one interviewee was reported to have said, there was no point in women themselves having the vote. The other type of 'lady politician', incidentally, dedicated none of their time to active campaigning. Instead, they accompanied their husbands who were the actual candidates and the party agents, and met with 'small gatherings of wives and mothers'.[323] The *Mirror* meanwhile represented women in one instance as cheerleaders to the election action who showed their political engagement through a similar dedication to appearance and 'charms'. As Balfour continued his re-election campaign around Manchester, for example;

'several young women waited (at the door of the meeting space) *with the avowed intention of kissing the ex-Premier, an embarrassing compliment* (which he) *laughingly succeeded in avoiding'.*[324]

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[322] 'The Women Behind the Vote', *Daily Express* 17 January 1906, p. 4.

[323] Ibid.

[324] *Daily Mirror* 13 January 1906, p. 3.

The same paper's description of women during the same election as 'servant girls'[325] accurately summarised their collective role in the new dailies' representation of elections. Female contributions were depicted, in the very few instances where women were represented as part of any of the four general elections of the period, as minimal and background. The roles of electioneering women were defined by their ability to console, charm or flatter. The absurdity which the new dailies placed on the idea of women playing an active role in Long Edwardian politics outside of gendered feminine roles of comfort and flirtation was compounded by the *Mirror's* profile, covered on two separate pages, of the 'First Lady Voter': the only such explicit mention by any of the three new dailies of a woman actively participating in the electoral process.

The individual in question - 'Miss Alvin Bussey', an operatic teacher – was reported as 'the one women who has voted in the parliamentary election'. This reality came about, the article reported, because of political papers being posted to her address by happenstance. The fact that this event was a mistake was heightened by the article due to references in the article to the shock of those she encountered on her way to vote: the 'embarrassed election officer' unsure of what to do; the policeman who 'laughed' at Miss Bussey when she arrived to cast her vote.[326] The isolated instance where a Long Edwardian woman engaged in election politics, beyond using their 'charms', was represented in the new dailies as a joke, such was its absurdity and lack of place within their 'everyman' interpretation of accessible election politics.

It was not only women who the new dailies represented as outsiders to their interpretation of inclusive mass politics. There were also multiple references to 'rowdyism':

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[325] Ibid, p. 4.

[326] 'First Lady Voter', *Daily Mirror* 17 January 1906, p. 5

violent and disorderly behaviour which was reported as disgraceful and unbecoming components of the election process. There were clear distinctions between the positivity of the entertainment-inflected references to election 'fights' and the negative references to violent voters. For instance, the sensationalism of a *Mirror* article which celebrated a contest as an 'Electoral Battle' also referenced 'hooligans' who were threatening the Conservative candidate.[327] The same day's paper also reported on 'wild scenes' from the East London constituency of Limehouse where 'fierce free fights' had resulted in several people receiving 'serious injuries'.[328] Similarly, 'flour bags and more dangerous missiles' had been 'flung about' in chaotic scenes which had left a successful Liberal candidate 'suffering severely from a heavy blow'.[329]

These critical representations of election violence were noticeably different from the dramatized battlegrounds of election entertainment from Chapter Four through the emphasis on disorder. The dramatic violence explored in Chapter Four which injected election news with sensation and everyday interest was frequently described in energetic and kinetic ways, but was never described as 'wild' or with anything involved being 'flung'. Moreover, public contributions to political meetings were not completely dismissed. For example, heckling speakers or the 'battle between the heckler and the candidate…a tussle for the cheers' was reported by the *Mail* in 1900 as a 'joy' and a welcome part of the platform.[330] Mass political participation was therefore represented as permissible, but only to those who could engage in a suitably respectable manner. The dismissals of rowdy electors, and specifically those who engaged in physical intimidation and violence, echoed ideas about extensions to the British

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[327] *Daily Mirror* 13 January 1906, p. 4.

[328] Ibid, p. 3.

[329] *Daily Mirror* 23 January 1906, p. 3.

[330] 'The Gentle Art of Heckling', *Daily Mail* 11 October 1900, p. 4.

franchise since the mid-Victorian period. Within this context, democratic participation was a reward for 'respectable' citizens from lower-middle or upper-working class backgrounds who conducted themselves in a suitably non-aggressive manner.[331]

This neo-Victorian emphasis on respectability and an aversion to physical violence was an undeniable part of the 'everyman' culture which the new dailies represented. It stood alongside the papers' dismissals and exclusions of female political participation as a significant limitation on the accessibility of the political content. The chaos within the reporting of negative violence set it, and the people who participated in it, apart from the acceptable forms of political engagement which formed part of the new dailies' everyman mass culture. For all the attention to accessible drama, sensation and humour, there were certain populations of people who were excluded from the political content of all three papers across the whole of the Long Edwardian period. The kind of person whom all three papers did include in their election content was summarised by an article in the *Express,* published on the first day of the 1906 campaign, which claimed to contain the opinions of 'the Man who can Control our Destinies'. This individual, mentioned briefly at the beginning of Chapter One, was given a clear set of features and opinions that spoke of who, specifically, was at the heart of the new dailies' everyday election content. After each declaration, the voice repeated their identity; 'I am the Man in the Street';

'(I am) *generally <u>not</u> a politician… a teetotaller, anti-vaccinationist, or a vegetarian, or any sort of crank… industrious… casual and intermittent interest in football matches and race meetings… I like the theatre and the music hall – the latter, perhaps the more…*

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[331] Gurney, *Consumer Culture,* p. 63; T. Tholfsen, 'The Transition to Democracy in Victorian England', *International Review of Social History* 6.2 (1961), pp. 226-228.

sympathetic, but not sentimental… England for the English, a happy England populated by prosperous Englishman.'[332]

This 'man in the street' given voice in the *Express* was the everyman who resonated across all three new dailies' election content. His interest in sport, the music hall, and visual spectacles could be seen in the use of the election barometers and results announcements, as well as the broader references to elections as battlegrounds and action arenas, discussed in Chapter Four. It was his life to which the vast majority of advertisers discussed earlier in this chapter were pitching their election-themed products such as hot drinks, tobacco, and affordable furniture. Moreover, while he may not have been a politician himself, he was at the heart of the process; his letterbox was 'crammed' with election leaflets and candidate after candidate tried to shake his hand in hope of support.[333]

Indeed, all three newspapers made politics an important and entertaining part of his day-to-day life. Articles focused on citizens who were engaging in elections in a variety of ways, ranging from the casting of votes to sharing laughs with those they wished to elect. By doing this, political news was represented to be both fun and flattering for the everyman reader. On the one hand, election politics was shown to be an enjoyable and amusing field of daily life. On the other hand, it was a process where they – millions of urban, lower-middle class British male citizens – had as much power and influence as the politicians and parties they supported. Moreover, whilst still considering the significant limits on gender and respectability imposed upon the new dailies' idealised political everyman, electoral engagement was represented in ways which included virtually any age of Edwardian everyman.

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[332] 'I am the Man in the Street', *Daily Express* 12 January 1906, p. 4.

[333] Ibid

Schools and Surgeries

On the fifth of December 1910, there was more than one election being held in Britain. The smaller of these, reported on pages three and ten of that day's *Daily Mirror*, was held at a school in Kent where schoolboys were 'holding a general election of their own'. Besides the more apparent aspects of any election such as 'taking sides, designing posters, election agents, arranging meetings' the article noted that it was illegal for a boy to treat another of the boys with food in order to win his vote.[334] Though the results were never followed up on, the two-page profile of a school election showcased how the enjoyable privilege of election engagement was open to everyman from a very early age. Moreover, the engagement went beyond the surface of making posters; there was the code of ethical behaviour (no treats from the tuck shop in exchange for votes) which mirrored the 'real' elections which were occurring at the same time. The fact that the schoolboys faced the same strict rules of voter engagement as 'real' candidates – an issue which was discussed in the same paper two days before[335] - made the report more than a simple piece of enjoyment. Rather, it showed that it was never too young to learn and engage with the realities of electoral life, provided again that you were a boy.

Likewise, it was never too old for an everyman to engage with the politics reported in the new dailies. The *Mail* reported of a voter who 'if all goes well' would have been aged one hundred and two by the time the election came to an end. This 'veteran' with a 'total family of 182', similar to the school election reported by the *Mirror,* represented the extent to which everymen of all ages could and should participate in elections.[336] Both the children and the

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[334] 'Humours of a School Election', *Daily Mirror* 5 December 1910, p. 3.

[335] 'Election Pitfalls', *Daily Mirror* 3 December 1910, p. 3.

[336] *Daily Mail* 17 October 1900, p. 5.

centenarian were held up as examples for readers through the positivity given their political enthusiasm. Their identity as extremes at either ends of their life, with schoolboys on the one hand and a centurion on the other, suggested that any everyman in the middle was equally able to engage in the elections. These age-dependant individuals were not isolated figures. Members of the public were represented as active parts of the election whose various methods of engagement were reported to suggest that such behaviour was to be celebrated and emulated.

The most concise occurrence of various kinds of everyday election role models featured in a double-page spread at the centre of the *Mirror* on the seventeenth of January 1910 [Figure 12]. Featured as part of a summary of campaigning that was occurring across 'sixty-six' constituencies, the paper featured a collage of photographs of voters from across the country who were casting their votes. Three of the five photographs featured various motor vehicles: a motorbike carrying personalised campaign slogans (as well as an elderly passenger) around the town, and two trucks carrying citizens to where they needed to vote. One of these latter two, depicted ferrying a group of voters to their polling station, was a fire engine, where the crew appeared to have volunteered their time to drive around Fulham. Where these three images showed good citizens using their free time to engage themselves and others with the ongoing election, the other two featured individuals who were overcoming significant personal strife in order to vote. The two men in question – the top left and bottom right images – were both in wheelchairs as they travelled to or from the polling station. The former 'invalid' was photographed having cast his vote, being supported by electioneerers, fellow voters and two police officers. The latter, who was pictured being

helped into a taxi by two other men, was leaving his hospital bed at St. Thomas's Hospital in order to vote in his Brixton constituency station.[337]

As well as successful voting stories, there was a story published by the *Mail* during October 1900 of an aspiring voter who was only denied by the people at the polling station. The man in question, having been handed a voting paper, was unable or unwilling to cast his vote by the clerk, after he both 'shouted instructions at him' and then wrote them down, was met with the forlorn response that 'I can't hear and I can't read'.[338] Even in his failure to vote, the report represented an ordinary citizen engaging in election politics despite significant personal issues. His effort, despite eventually being unable to successfully cast his vote, was another example presented to readers of a citizen who, through the efforts taken to try and engage in politics, was worthy of attention and praise.

Other's electoral efforts were similarly celebrated. A front page of the *Mirror* in late-January 1906, for example, was dedicated to a resident of Ipswich who was credited as 'the first voter at the first polling of the elections', and whose arrival at the polling office was 'specially' recorded by the newspaper.[339] Other Edwardian citizens were reported to be actively volunteering their services for the wider election cause, with mixed results. For instance, the *Daily Express* in 1906 featured election 'Humours and Misadventures' which highlighted some of the ways in which ordinary people were contributing to the ongoing campaign. One individual attempted to offer lifts to voting strangers caught in the rain, but was ultimately 'unable' due to the limits imposed by the election's bribery laws. Another had far less innocent intentions. He, who the article described as the 'wily one', was reported to

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[337] *Daily Mirror* 17 January 1910, p. 9.

[338] 'Election Items', *Daily Mail* 9 October 1900, p. 5.

[339] *Daily Mirror* 13 January 1906, p. 1.

have met a fellow elector at a train station and delayed him in friendly conversation long enough for the polls to close and thus not allow the arriving individual to vote for his, rival, candidate.[340] The stranger's victorious declaration 'next election, I think' was less earnest than the unlucky car driver or the early voter mentioned elsewhere, but all three people were equally highlighted by the *Express* as 'humorous' examples of ordinary citizens who were taking the time to engage in the election.

There were also individuals who engaged in even more unusual election behaviour. An 'election anecdote' published in the *Mirror* in January 1906 told of a butcher in an anonymous village who was 'a strong Tory'. Upon serving a Liberal-supporting women who had entered his shop asking for a sheep's head, he told her the best way ensure the sheep's head she purchased was Liberal; 'just take the brains out… needless to say (claimed the writer) he has lost a customer'.[341] While there were no other articles that featured quite the same level of election eccentricity, the story of the political butcher mirrored much of the same emphases seen in the profiles of ordinary and extraordinary everyman involvement in elections. It showcased how politics was not detached from everyman life. Rather, it was something with which ordinary people could engage in a variety of ways that were both serious and humorous. In either case, whether helping others to the polling station or joking at another party's expense, it was behaviour which the new dailies represented as an acceptable and noteworthy part of election practice. Even the saboteur at the train station was not criticised. Rather, he was 'wily', as opposed to unruly like those who attacked property and people at election meetings. The significance of this was to further situate election

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[340] 'Some Election News Stories', *Daily Express* 13 January 1906, p. 4.

[341] 'An Election Anecdote', *Daily Mirror* 16 January 1906, p. 7.

politics as represented in the new dailies as enjoyable events where people could engage in disruptive behaviour alongside actions of support and enthusiasm.

Seen together, these new daily profiles of the political actions of citizens – ranging across all four elections and including behaviour such as good-hearted support, singular determination when voting, and humorous acts of sabotage – showcased the various ways in which the imagined everyman could engage with general elections throughout the Edwardian period. These methods of engagement included 'everymen' across a wide variety of age groups, as well as people who were shown getting out of hospital beds in order to cast their votes. Through this inclusion of differently-aged citizens and within the limits of the broader everyman identity, the political arena was shown to be welcoming to large numbers of the British public. This was especially the case due to the emphasis on both the very young and the very old; virtually any age was permitted within the everyman election culture which the new dailies conveyed through their coverage.

Moreover, the inclusion of disabled voters shown to be struggling from beds or wheelchairs to cast their votes was a further emphasis on the inclusiveness of elections. If these individuals could vote, then almost any other everyman could as well. Interestingly, those visual profiles also featured the voters receiving help from a variety of other citizens: police-officers, fellow voters, charitable passers-by. Rather than demeaning the physically disabled electors, however, these images represented the voting process as one defined by communal support; voters receiving support and encouragement from their fellow everyman. The representations of supportive voters went beyond the assistance to those in wheelchairs. Groups of people were shown giving (or at least trying to give) lifts in their motor vehicles to fellow voters to ensure they got swiftly and safely to their polling stations. These good Samaritans were not exceptions. Instead, their friendly actions and approachable demeanours helped to further suggest just how open and inclusive the act of voting was for the archetypal

'everyman' who was reading one of the three election-time new dailies. Regardless of age or distance from a polling station, the new dailies reported on an election environment where most people who were eligible to vote supported each other in the process of exercising their democratic rights.

The key underlying principle behind this broader representation of voting citizens was that voting was an attainable right, but this did not belittle the act of voting itself. The implicit importance of the vote was woven into the reports of the schoolchildren creating their own hustings and the patient discharged patient struggling into the taxi to head to vote; the extent of the inclusivity stressed the importance of casting one's vote. It cannot be ignored, however, that this power could not be used by everyone in British society. The *Mirror* included an article in mid-January 1906 which quoted a 'specialist' – a Dr Forbes Wilmslow – warning of the high risk of 'injurious and pernicious effect of the excitement of politics upon a woman's brain'. The other words used to simultaneously define and discourage women who were participating in the hustings – 'lose her reason… wreck her life… hysterical' – were a stark reminder to readers, and to the later historian, that there were those not included within the new dailies' inclusive representations of everyman election politics.[342] For these limitations however, the new dailies still articulated a version of election politics within which millions of British citizens had a powerful and easy-to-access role within political culture. The 'Power of the Vote' which the everyman possessed was explicitly outlined by the *Mirror* in the same edition which featured the warning of female election behaviourlunacy on the previous page; 'the vote is a thing of such great and splendid power… vote early and vote often'.[343]

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[342] *Daily Mirror* 15 January 1906, p. 5.

[343] Ibid, p. 6.

The same day as the *Mirror* proclaimed the voting power with which Edwardian everymen should engage as early and frequently as possible, the *Express* featured an article which represented one of many 'Typical Constituencies' and the ways that, as this chapter has discussed, elections were represented as part of the day-to-day lives of their readers;

'Pasted on the plate-glass windows of a public house in High Street, Deptford, are two startling placards. One of them… exhorts the local elector to vote for Vivian, the Liberal candidate. The other sets out in attractive fashion the programme of a forthcoming series of prize-fights'.[344]

Much like that London establishment's window, the new dailies featured content in which the elections of the Long Edwardian period were portrayed as a noteworthy and entertaining part of their reader's day-to-day lives. Politics became part of the paper's broader human-interest content and, in the process, further highlighted how readily their readers could and should engage with politics as part of their daily lives. Thanks particularly to amusing connections made by various companies between election news and their products, politics and elections in particular became something which was situated within lived experiences of lower-middle class daily life, such as shopping, eating and drinking. Rather than specialist news content, elections could be understood and enjoyed by an everyman reader reading almost any page of an election-edition new daily. It was connected to people and products which resonated with the lived experiences of their millions of everyman readers. It was this open access of political information that contributed to the election competitions, which encouraged the readers whom were included and amused by the references to an everyday, everyman political culture of which they were a part to put their skills to the test. Similar to how the public house window in Deptford situated the 1906 election alongside prize fights,

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[344] 'Some Typical Constituencies', *Daily Express* 15 January 1906, p. 4.

the new dailies situated elections as being as entertaining and open to audience opinion as popular sport or a prize draw.

The collective significance of the above-discussed examples of the new dailies' everyday election coverage, and their promotion of the political everyman, was the extent to which they connected election proceedings to the kinds of people who made up most of their readerships. There was a repeated emphasis on the significance of the imagined 'everyman' within Edwardian political culture, and just how readily and enjoyably an everyman could flex their political muscle. Ultimately, it was the public from whom the prospective candidates needed support in order to win. This power was represented to readers of all three new dailies. The *Mirror* featured a particularly prominent display of the political power of the public in a double-page photographic feature which highlighted the range of people from whom politicians were speaking to guarantee their success at the polls: crowds of workers in Matlock; farmhands gathering to ask questions of their local candidate; children eager to learn more.[345]

These ordinary people – symbolic of the imagined everyman - were represented as the holders of political power and, as the next chapter will discuss, the ways in which the new dailies represented politicians further emphasised how much the political establishment were connected to the lives and habits of the 'everyman' who were, according to the new dailies, vital parts of the political process. Through their representations of a variety of political agents – from cabinet members to local activists – the new dailies reported on an everyday elite: a political class whose personalities, and comically-depicted failings, made them not too dissimilar from the everymen who was voting them in, or out, of office.

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[345] *Daily Mirror* 3 December 1910, p. 10-11.

An Everyday Elite

Thanks to a series of 'surprising and dramatic incidents', so the *Daily Express* reported in early December 1910, three people were unable to make the deadline in order to officially register as prospective political candidates. Having fought in vain through the streets in order to reach the deadline in time – an effort which the same day's *Daily Mirror* described as an 'election comedy of errors' which left one of the group 'like he was on the point of collapse'[346] – the three potential parliamentarians' eventual disappointment was reported with the same sense of drama and attention to excitement which defined much of their broader election-time political coverage;

'*"Boom" went the town hall clock, and the Lord Mayor, watch in hand, said gravely "The door must be closed". The door was shut, and there ended the Unionist chances of winning South Manchester'.*[347]

This dramatic mishap, and particularly its framing in two newspapers as both a muddle and a comedy of errors, was reflective of other election-time content discussed below that appeared across all three new dailies. The political class of the Long Edwardian period – including those who, through bad timing, missed out on the chance of standing – were represented in a variety of ways which when seen together defined them as an 'everyday elite'. This everyday elite which the new dailies represented was never overly criticised or challenged. Candidates were given personal profiles within which their professional backgrounds and political pedigrees were reported with respect, with notable achievements being lauded as examples of good public service. At the same time, their privileged backgrounds were presented as unquestioned positives: further signs of their personal and

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[346] 'Election Comedy of Errors', *Daily Mirror* 3 December 1910, p. 4.

[347] 'Manchester Muddle: Three Candidates Arrive too Late', *Daily Express* 3 December 1910, p. 1.

professional qualities. Other politicians meanwhile were represented almost as celebrities: popular sensations treated with collective delight by the large crowds (including the kissing 'girls' mentioned earlier in this chapter) they gathered to their public appearances. Besides being another example of how new-daily politics was reported in ways which emphasised their mass participation, these celebrity and non-celebrity profiles always represented the political establishment as a respectable and deserving group of people. For their attention on the political interests of the everyman, there was never a hint that the people they were voting for were deserving of criticism or a radical overhaul.

What was also made clear by all three new dailies, however, was that these political actors, for all their respectable backgrounds, or their revered and sometimes celebrated place within election campaigns, were not wholly different from the everymen who comprised both their imagined political reader and much of the Edwardian electorate. On the one hand, they were just as often defined by personal eccentricities as by their professional and educational privileges. These ways in which politicians were reported on humanised their campaign efforts: they were given sense of humour, individual oddities or supportive family networks that presented them as people as much as it did candidates defined by particular policies. Their jokes, dress senses and good-humoured handling of crowds reduced the potential gap between the politicians and the everyman readers casting their votes.

Moreover, the new dailies did find space to represent members of the political class as fallible individuals whose actions could be mocked and made fun of. The 'comedy of errors' cited at the beginning of the chapter was just one example of a number of articles from across the period which made politicians open to jokes which reminded readers (and possibly politicians themselves) of their all-too human flaws. The addressing of these flaws, ranging from overconfident predictions of victory to mishaps on the campaign trail, helped to narrow any perceived gap between a politician and a new daily reader by highlighting how the

former had the same eccentricities and comical failings as people who may well have identified as the latter. It was through this combination of respect and ridicule that the political establishment of the Long Edwardian period was represented within the new dailies as an 'everyday elite'. Their prominent status was never questioned, but neither was their place as parts of a political culture where the everyman was just as powerful and important as they were.

For example, in a piece called 'The Lighter Side of the Election', the *Mirror* in December 1910 amusingly commented on some of the negative stereotypes directed at different kinds of politician through a cartoon by William Haselden. Above an image of politicians 'as they really are' with their near-uniform appearance sporting dark long coats were a gallery of archetypal political figures defined by their distinctive dress [Figure 13]. The sartorial differences between each character deliberately exaggerated their political extremes: a 'Conservative' in a top hat and coat tails; a plump, cigar-smoking 'Capitalist' sat on a bag of money; a bearded 'Labour member' wearing heavy boots and shaking his clenched fist.[348] Through this cartoon, the *Mirror* mocked the idea that Edwardian politicians from different parties were unlikable, radical stereotypes. Instead, they represented them as a near-uniform class of respectable people. This, when seen in the context of the wider reporting of politicians during the period, was not just in reference to their appearance. Rather, it mirrored how all three new dailies positively conveyed the near-identical educational and professional backgrounds of the majority of people who contested for Parliament across the Long Edwardian period.

These positive portrayals of elite personal backgrounds were most explicitly displayed in individual political profiles. Profiles had an increasingly significant staple of political

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[348] 'The Lighter Side of the Election', *Daily Mirror* 5 December 1910, p. 7.

journalism in Britain since the mid-Victorian period[349] and gave brief descriptions of parliamentary candidates and, increasingly into the later elections, were accompanied with photographs. The prominence afforded within these individual profiles to the school and university experiences of politicians was pronounced. For example, one edition of the *Daily Mail* featured ten political profiles which defined politicians primarily by their past educations. The references to particular prestigious institutions were the principle identities of the politicians who were profiled, as they always occurred as the leading descriptor in the first sentences of each of these profiles, immediately after their name and party affiliation;

> *'...East Deptford Grammar School*
>
> *York Grammar School and London University (B.A.)*
>
> *Educated at Harrow and New College, Oxford*
>
> *Educated at Marlborough and Oxford*
>
> *Mill Hill School and Heidelberg* (Germany's most historic university)
>
> *Eton and Oriel College, Oxford*
>
> *one of the old Harrorvians in the House*
>
> *Eastbourne and Cambridge*
>
> *From Eton and Sandhurst*
>
> *Charterhouse and Cambridge...'*.[350]

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[349] Henry Miller, *Politics Personified : Portraiture, Caricature and Visual Culture in Britain, c.1830-80.* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2015), 140–66.

[350] 'Full Results', *Daily Mail* 7 December 1910, p. 7.

The regularity with which politicians were defined by educational privilege was not limited that particular edition of the *Mail*. A front page of the *Express* in January 1906, for example, dedicated to profiles of the previous day's victors defined politicians primarily by their prestigious schooling: 'Durham School and Oxford', 'Eton… and New College, Oxford' and 'Cambridge' were among the institutions which defined new Edwardian parliamentarians.[351] Another elected candidate was profiled in the *Mail* exclusively around his extraordinary academic background and career;

'Educated at Oxford, he is now lecturer at the LSE… and professor of public administration at the Bristol University. One of the founders of Ruskin College, Mr Smith is also a lecturer on political science at the University of London'.[352]

While Smith may have been a particularly exceptional individual, his profile in one of the new dailies was part of a wider pattern that represented the elite schooling of much of the Edwardian political establishment as a respectable and newsworthy part of their political identity. Indeed, their privileges were sometimes reported as personal success stories. The *Express's* profile of the newly-elected Labour MP J. T. Macphearson in 1906 celebrated his journey from humble origins having 'served as a boy at sea' to Oxford-educated politician as a 'romance'.[353] This 'romance', which connected a privileged education with a successful transition into the political establishment, was reiterated by the same newspaper a few days later through the succinct sub-headline 'At twelve, cabin boy… At thirty-two, Oxford Graduate and MP'.[354]

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[351] 'The Pollings', *Daily Express* 22 January 1906, p. 1.

[352] 'The Results', *Daily Mail* 9 December 1910, p. 5.

[353] 'Romance of Labour', *Daily Express* 20 January 1906, p. 1.

[354] 'Labour MP's Romance', *Daily Express* 23 January 1906, p. 5.

Alongside these broader representations of respectable and well-educated politicians, the new dailies also profiled certain politicians in ways not dissimilar from human-interest reporting of popular entertainers. The 'celebrity' coverage of politicians – particularly female politicians - by popular newspapers in Britain had become particularly notable in the interwar wars, but had its roots earlier in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century. Individuals such as Lord Kitchener and Winston Churchill received significant press coverage in the early years of the twentieth century which, while limited in terms of its 'celebrity' profiling, helped to make them media personalities through attention to aspects of their private lives.[355] The way that the new dailies reported on particular politicians during Long Edwardian elections mirrored this broader coverage. They highlighted certain politicians as popular sensations who demanded substantial public affection.

Only a small number of high-profile Edwardian politicians were given 'celebrity' coverage by the new dailies, and the ways these few were represented in the coverage spoke of their particular significance during a given election campaign. For example, Churchill was afforded a lavish profile in the *Mail* early in the 1900 election campaign which tapped into his sensational connection to the ongoing Boer War; his escape from a prisoner-of-war camp the following year made him a newspaper and popular sensation.[356] Much about his ultimately-successful campaign for Parliament in 1900 was represented by the *Mail* as being around his personality more than his politics. He was 'young, impetuous, with the glory of heroic deeds in the East and South behind him': the latter 'deeds' referenced his involvement in military action in Sudan under the command of, appropriately the later Lord Kitchener. His very presence fighting in a Lancashire constituency was enough to lend 'a piquancy to the

[355] See Laura Beers, 'Model MP?', *Cultural and Social History* 10:2 (2013), pp. 232-233.

[356] Roy Jenkins, *Churchill* (London, 2001), p. 61.

situation', and his eyes would 'flash fire' when he passionately delivered campaign speeches. He, more so than the election contest, was reported as the special event, with his walking 'among the factory girls' a scene of hugely enthusiastic popular attraction.[357] Churchill, in essence, was reported as being just as much of a popular sensation as the pyrotechnic shows that lit up London's skyline in 1906.

Indeed, as those lightshows were occurring during the following election, the new dailies profiled the other 'celebrity' politician of the Long Edwardian period: Joseph Chamberlain. As has been noted by some of the scholarship explored in Chapter Two, Chamberlain was a politician who was keenly aware of the power of newspaper coverage, and his prominent position within Edwardian political culture was helped by his ability to foster good relationships with newspaper editors. Moreover, he had become, arguably, the most notable politician of the period leading up to the 1906 election due to his decision to campaign for imperially-preferential tariffs separate to the main party.

It was little surprise, therefore, that the new dailies saw him (similarly to how they saw Churchill in 1900) as the dominant political personality of the period. For example, he was headline news in the *Daily Mail* on thirty-three occasions during their coverage of the 1906 election, and featured on the front page of the *Daily Express* on thirteen different editions. Moreover, again like Churchill, Chamberlain was represented as a popular sensation. For example, the *Mail* reported that his successful campaigning in Birmingham had 'seemed to exhilarate the people (and) the streets were thronged with gaily laughing crowds' basking in Chamberlain's triumph.[358] His popular appeal was echoed in the same day's *Express,* who commented on 'rivers of men and boys, like human gulf streams in a

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[357] 'Electioneering with Winston Churchill', *Daily Mail* 27 September 1900, p. 4.

[358] 'Mr Chamberlain's Triumph, *Daily Mail* 18 January 1906, p. 7.

human ocean' who 'packed' around Birmingham Town Hall to await Chamberlain's return. When his victory was announced, 'thousands upon thousands' started 'cheering and shouting "Joe, Joe, Joe" until half-past ten'.[359] The *Mirror*, meanwhile, also emphasised the popular appeal of Chamberlain; their front page noted the 'wild scenes of enthusiasm' which greeted his travels around Birmingham in the build-up to his eventual victory.[360] While not necessarily reported as 'celebrity politicians' in ways noted by Laura Beers of post-war politicians, both Chamberlain and Churchill's coverage in the new dailies reinforced the idea of election politics – and leading figures within them - as popular sensations which drew large, excited attention from the mass public.

Being popular sensations, however, did not mean they were untouchable. Page seven of the same day's *Mirror* which profiled Chamberlain's public adoration, for example, represented 1906's leading political figure in a less-flattering light. Depicted in a cartoon atop a wooden pole, as his Unionist colleagues below were slowly being drowned by a rising Liberal tide, he naively encouraged them to 'hang on chaps, the ride must turn'.[361] This humorous critique appeared in the *Mirror* at the same as the Bovril adverts discussed earlier in the chapter which brought up Chamberlain's pre-election promises in the face of their landslide parliamentary defeat. Due to the attention to his mass popularity, and the wider respect shown in content within all three new dailies to the backgrounds and professions of the Long Edwardian political establishment, this new press still represented 1906's leading politician as somebody open to humorous criticism.

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[359] 'Birmingham's Reply', *Daily Express* 18 January 1906, p. 1.

[360] 'Mr Chamberlain Electioneering in Birmingham Yesterday', *Daily Mirror* 18 January 1906, p. 1.

[361] 'Mr Chamberlain's Words of Comfort on Tuesday', *Daily Mirror* 18 January 1906, p. 7.

This mockery was part of a broader aspect of the new dailies' election coverage. The respect for the political establishment was balanced with news content which explored both the eccentricities and fallibilities of various politicians. The political profiles, the same spaces in which individual's educational and professional privileges were reported with unquestioning respect, also featured examples where a politician's personal oddities defined them as much as their political pedigree. A double-page feature in the *Mirror* published in late-January 1906 featured three parliamentarian's profiles, each of whom were defined by various personal traits: a 'best-dressed MP', an 'athletic MP' who had handled a heckler out his meeting room, and a particular individual whose defining feature was his 'notable beard' which was the 'most beautiful' in the entirety of the Commons.[362] Several days before, another politician was profiled in the *Mirror* with a focus on his curious election assistant: a 'Conservative Irish terrier begging for votes' for his master.[363] Another, Sir Lindsay Hogg of Hailsham in Sussex, made news in the following day's edition through his use of sparrows in his election campaign, each one adorned with a 'little label' encouraging those underneath to give him support.[364]

Accompanying the humorous, oddity-based political profiles were news items which, similar to the Chamberlain cartoon, undercut the political establishment with humorous critiques of their election-time behaviour. For example, the December election of 1910 featured a series of illustrations in the *Mirror* which mocked various aspects of the election process. On the same day as the Haseldon cartoon on political dress sense (mentioned above), an illustration carried a variety of election scenarios 'real, imaginary and prophetic'. Among

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[362] 'The News Illustrated', *Daily Mirror* 26 January 1906, pp. 8-9.

[363] 'Walworth and Newington Fight', *Daily Mirror* 15 January 1906, p. 8.

[364] 'Election Items', *Daily Mirror* 16 January 1906, p. 4.

the scenarios was an image of rival politicians celebrating the same result (one for victory, one for the smaller-than-expected defeat); a bed-ridden elector wearily asking for more warning in a scenario where elections were 'a daily occurrence'; and a politician having a ball placed into his mouth in order to stop him talking on the podium.[365] The collective impression of these images was one of weariness, as the election process was mocked for its regularity (the December election being the second general election that year) and the insincerity and persistence of those seeking the public's vote. An editorial published by the same paper during the previous election suggested this was not a singular event; the Edwardian political establishment 'think they are people of great importance… whereas the great majority of people, even in their own district, are unaware of their existence'.[366]

Surmised in that one editorial, the new dailies' more critical coverage of the Edwardian political establishment was always represented through humour rather than targeted aggression. The greater emphasis was on observations of personal eccentricities, such as a candidate's profile in the *Express* in 1900 which focused on his 'dark, homely tweeds and a billy-rock hat' or their 'tall, slender' demeanour that helps them 'court politics like a mistress'.[367] There were news items which did mock politicians more directly, such as the 'Manchester muddle' or the cartoons which joked about political insincerity from politicians both high and low. The collective significance of this content, though, was not its critiques of politicians. Its greater significance, however, was how it helped to create the 'everyday elite' by bringing the political establishment closer to the lives and the

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[365] 'Election Episodes – Real, Imaginary and Prophetic', *Daily Mirror* 5 December 1910, p. 9.

[366] 'Election-Mad', *Daily Mirror* 16 January 1906, p. 7.

[367] 'Surprises from the Polls', *Daily Express* 3 October 1900, p. 1.

personalities of the everymen who comprised large numbers of both the new dailies' readerships and the British electorate.

The new dailies represented political agents as people from respectable privilege, and on occasion as people whose very presence in the political culture of the period drew huge public adoration. However, they were also represented as people with oddities in physical appearance and public behaviour. They canvassed for votes with a desperation and sense of importance that was challenged; they utilised pet or companion animals on the campaign trail; they were prone to making mistakes. Far from being an untouchable political class, there were a collection of people whose personalities and fallibilities made them relatable to the people who, as the earlier section of this chapter argued, held the power over their success or failure at the polls. They were to be respected, but the new dailies emphasised that their respectability did not dispel their reliance on, and connections with, the everyman mass public who voted them in and out of political office.

Interestingly, the everyday elites whom the new dailies represented through their coverage were reported to accept their place within Long-Edwardian electoral culture with good humour. The *Mail* in 1906, for instance, detailed an incident where, in the midst of a stiflingly hot meeting room, a window was opened at the behest of the speaking candidate. In the efforts to open it, the window smashed and caused 'great laughter' from the crowd. In response to the mishap, the speaker joked 'Never mind, it will do good to the glass industry'.[368] This single story neatly encapsulated both sides of the new dailies' coverage of the Long Edwardian everyday elites. Politicians were represented as flawed, but ultimately, respectable and, if found in error, were shown to embrace their failings in good spirit. What

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[368] 'Good for Trade', *Daily Mail* 13 January 1906, p. 4.

was less consistent, as the next chapter will discuss, was the ways in which the political

establishment responded to the new dailies.

<u>**Chapter Six**</u>

<u>**'Their Views and Ours': Politicians and the New Dailies**</u>

As Chapters Four and Five have explored, the new dailies of the Long Edwardian period represented an important and innovative form of mass political communication by representing election politics in more accessible and engaging ways than any prior iteration of mass-consumed daily newspaper press. The ways that all three newspapers used sensationalism and personalisation within their reporting of political events broke with long-established traditions of British political newspaper reporting, and increasingly portrayed the political process as an exciting, dramatic and accessible part of the lives of their large and primarily lower-middle class readerships. Moreover, they represented the Edwardian political establishment in ways that, while respectful of the positions and backgrounds of individuals, emphasised the power of the everyman, as much as the power of the politician, in the British political process. Their potential to communicate politics to unprecedented numbers of people and place those same people at the heart of the political process, meant that the new dailies marked a hugely significant development in the history of British politics, the British political press, and British democracy.

This chapter explores the varied ways in which Edwardian Britain's three major political parties, faced with this new potential form of mass political communication, responded to its potential. The differences in reactions across each party, drawn what has remained within both the central party archives and other related collections outlined in Chapter Three, spoke of broader attitudes within each party to the potential, or worthiness, of using popular newspapers for the purposes of political communication. This chapter breaks down these reactions into each of the three principle parties in Britain, looking at how (in respective order) Labour, Conservative and Liberal politicians discussed and debated the new

dailies and their potential impact on the political status quo. How members of each party reacted, so this chapter argues, sheds significant light on the histories of each party by seeing their responses to the new dailies as representative of broader political attitudes towards both popular culture and the wants of amass electorate that, outwardly at least, seemed increasingly central to the ideology and proposed policy of all three parties.

Labour[369]:

Yellow Dailies

The rise and rapid consolidation of the new dailies ran near-parallel to the rise of the British Labour Party[370]. From an electorally-unassuming inception in 1900, Labour concluded the Long Edwardian period as a major force in British politics. By the end of the period they had supplanted the Irish Nationalists as Britain's third-largest party in terms of votes received. They had also served as a significant voice in Parliament by supporting the governing Liberals, whose earlier pact with the party in 1906 contributed to influencing policy decisions that explicitly addressed concerns that were raised by Labour MPs. Moreover, their political emphasis was (perhaps unsurprisingly) on trying to better represent the interests of Britain's poorer classes; populations that were similar to the primary readers, and ready consumers, of the new dailies. This broad correlation between the intended audiences of both the new dailies and Labour was prevalent across Labour reactions to the new dailies and was a likely contributor to the fact that Labour, more than the other parties,

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[369] Aspects of the following two thesis sub-chapters have been accepted for publication. See Christopher Shoop-Worrall, 'The *Daily Citizen:* Class v Consumerism in the Early Labour Press' in Betts, Harrison and Price (eds.), *The Routledge History of the Working Class in the West,* forthcoming.

[370] While initially called the 'Labour Representation Committee' from their first election in 1900, this chapter will always refer to the party as 'Labour' for the sake of continuity across the thesis's entire period of study.

reacted strongly to the rise of a newspaper press which sold particularly well to the man in the street. These reactions can be retrospectively divided into two distinct groups and expose Labour's complicated relationship with popular media as a political medium prior to their growing acceptance of its potential after the end of the First World War, as noted by Laura Beers.

The emergence of the new dailies was met with a considerable amount of hostility from voices across the Labour party, including those at both a higher institutional level and among the party's grassroots supporters. Initially, it is easy to understand the place of those reactions take in existing narratives concerning the British left's long-running issues with popular media. However, what is striking to see is the specific nature of the hostility shown toward these newspapers in particular, both within private written correspondence between party agents and political writings and editorials in left-wing periodicals of the period.

The hostility shown by Labour activists and supporters towards the new dailies across this period can be collected into two broad categories. The first of these thematic bands of criticism related to the overly commercial approach to journalism that these new daily newspapers were taking. Their cheap price (the *Daily Mail* was, for instance, sold at one-sixth the price of *The Times*) and prominent featuring of flashy advertisements for consumer goods were very likely principal factors in the word 'capitalist' being used as shorthand in much of the discussion about these new newspapers.

To a degree, the use of the 'capitalist' euphemism tied these new papers into the broader history of the anti-socialist British press discussed in Chapter Two. However, closer inspection shows that while, admittedly, part of broader socialist misgivings, the reactions to these new papers as 'capitalist' had a uniqueness specific to the nature of these specific paper's content. For example, surviving letters that were sent to the Labour party secretary

Ramsey Macdonald highlight how the rise of these new, cheap mass newspapers had struck a distinct chord of discomfort among elements of the party's support base. Most notably, a private contributor named Gilmour Stephenson wrote several times to the party, stressing how the unique cheapness of these new 'capitalist' newspapers posed a profound threat to the Labour cause. By further labelling these papers as 'halfpenny' publications, the problem they caused was specific to their affordability and, thus, how easily available these publications were to the mass, lower-earning public.[371] Moreover, he noted that these papers, being defined by their attention to advertising interests and low prices, failed to carry positive messages about Labour, in contrast to positive reports on both the Liberals and the Conservatives. Mr Stephenson echoed some months later by another private citizen writing to MacDonald from Nottingham.[372] Attached to this letters were cuttings from popular 'halfpenny' newspapers explicitly praising the other two parties, so included as to highlight the relative absence of positive coverage of Labour within this new newspaper market.[373]

This concern over the cheapness and overt 'capital' presence on the pages of these newspapers was also reflected in Labour Party reactions published in the socialist press. For example, the *Labour Leader* mentioned the new daily popular press on multiple occasions and always with the same criticisms and reservations about its commercial nature. Much like the private concerns sent to the party, public criticisms of this new press rarely referred to their titles but instead labelled them 'capitalist'. These same papers were accused of writing

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[371] Letters from G. Stephenson to R. J. MacDonald, 15th Feb – March 20th 1904, sourced at People's History Museum, Manchester. Accessed April 2016.

[372] Regrettably, the author's name is unclear from his signature or return postal address. Closest reading suggested it may have been 'Frank Kennedy'.

[373] Letters to R. J. Macdonald, 29th January 1906, sourced at People's History Museum, Manchester. Accessed April 2016.

'insidious attacks'[374] on the Labour party and movement. On the occasions when either of the two new dailies are specifically named, it is in relation to a particular disservice that publication had done to either the *Leader* or the labour movement as a whole.

For example, the naming of the *Daily Mail* related to a supposed scandal relating to their coverage of certain motor cars. Accused of including advertising 'puffs' from salespeople for certain cars and then pocketing profit from future sales, the critique of the *Mail* was intrinsically linked to its identity as a commercial or 'capitalist' publication, as it was embroiled in dodgy dealings with business and advertising interests.[375] This theme of the blurring of business and journalistic professions was picked up by other left-wing titles such as the *Cooperative News.* The paper published an editorial two months prior to the *Leader's* 'dodge' article that attacked 'advertisements' and 'vested interests' as being the sole concerns of new generations of popular newspapers.[376] Both in public and in private, therefore, sections of Labour were reacting to the new popular daily press as an entity defined by its attention to advertising and its perceived cheap, commercial approach to journalism.

Twinned with this focus on 'capital' was a concern over this new press's moral worth, and particularly its perceived attention to truthfulness. Alongside references to the 'capitalist' press, there are references to this new press as being 'yellow'. This term, a reference both to the sensational penny papers of mid-Victorian America[377] and a derogatory comment on the quality of paper used to print cheap dailies, becomes interchangeable shorthand along with 'capitalist' to refer to the same sorts of newspapers. Its frequent use underlined how the

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[374] "The Need of a Daily", *Labour Leader,* 27th September 1907.

[375] "The Daily Mail Dodge", *Labour Leader,* 1st March 1907.

[376] 'The Modern Daily Press', *The Cooperative News,* 5th January 1907.

[377] See Wiener, *Americanization* (2011).

surviving Labour reactions to the new dailies were not only concerned with the paper's attention to capital and commercial interests; they were convinced it was actively dishonest.

The nature of this 'dishonesty' had two distinct levels. On one level, the new dailies were accused of lying in the form of their attention to personal scandal and outrageous, arguably libellous claims of personal or institutional wrongdoing. One particular dismissive article in the *Leader* detailing the 'yellow' press's unimpeded printing of "baseless" charges and rumours ended with a statement that gets to the heart of many of Labour's reactions to the new dailies:

"The publishing of scandalous reports as statements of fact is at all times an abominable practice, and ought to be put a stop to; but if the yellow press in this country (Britain) *were punished every time it published scurrilous unverified rumours, well, where would it be?"*[378]

Besides the obvious, sarcastic dismissal of the new dailies as reliant on these 'scurrilous' types of articles, this reaction goes deeper than a hatred of lies and indicates quite why so much of Labour and the wider left were so hostile towards this new press. Going back to the traditions of the unstamped and radical press of the early and pre-Victorian periods, noted in Chapter Two, the British left had long imagined an ideal press as being an educator through which workers and the wider working- and lower-middle classes could gain knowledge and attain self-betterment. This educationalist understanding of the role of the press in Britain lay at the heart of Labour's negative reactions to the new dailies.

Firstly, the new dailies' cheap prices and significant presence of 'capitalist' advertising for everyday products meant that they were attempting to, and succeeding in,

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[378] 'The Indian Press', *Labour Leader,* 22nd February 1907.

appealing to mass, lower-middle and working-class, urban sections of the British public. It was these same broad demographics that the emerging Labour party also wished to communicate with. As Labour imagined both itself and the press as educational entities, these new dailies were essentially lecturing to similar types of people to whom they also wished to lecture. These evil 'halfpenny' papers were a direct rival in Labour's mission to educate the wider British public.

Secondly, as well as trying to speak to the same groups of people, the new dailies were speaking to them about topics that were thoroughly at odds with early Labour's understanding of both the role of the press and the needs and wants of working-class people. Some of the core aspects of the New Journalism and the new popular dailies were particularly at odds with some of the central tenets of early British socialism. On the one hand, the coverage of fanciful scandals and dealings in the divorce courts was opposed to the sort of news that Labour thought people should be reading; this kind of journalism served to entertain, not to educate or reform. On the other hand, the prominence of sports coverage in the new dailies troubled the early left due to many sports' close ties to the socialist vices of alcohol consumption and gambling. Long editorials in leftist publications such as one entitled 'Should Football be Stopped?'[379] underlined the broader negativity many in Labour held towards the content so readily discussed by the new popular dailies. Whenever these core features of the new dailies were discussed in left-wing publications of the period, from football to the consumption of beer[380], the same animosity was present.

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[379] "Should Football be Stopped?: Its Effect upon the Public Mind and the Country's Crisis", *The Cooperative News,* 21/11/1914.

[380] "Drink and Legislation" and "Drinking Clubs", *Labour Leader,* 6th March 1908.

In summary, the reactions of Labour to these new dailies were consistently hostile. On the rare occasions that one of the papers was cited by name, it was in relation to an error they had committed, whether dubious financial links to advertisers or, as seen in a brief exchange between the *Daily Express* and the *Leader's* editor John Bruce Glasier, their general mistreatment of socialism on their pages.[381] The other times that they merited reactions categorised them as a 'yellow' and 'capitalist' enemy. By speaking to lower-middle and working-class audiences through their cheap pricing and by prioritising stories around crime, sensation and sport, they were the antithesis of what Labour expected and desired from a newspaper. They were something to judge, ridicule, and oppose.

Yet, bizarrely, at the same time as being an enemy to Labour, the new dailies were seen as something to copy and repurpose for the benefit of the movement. They were the enemy, but one from whom lessons needed to be learned. As was highlighted above, the rise of the new popular daily press generated very troubled responses from across both the Labour party and the wider Labour movement. It was seen largely as a hostile force against their cause, particularly as it was appealing to similar groups of people that Labour wished to reach. Within this hostile reaction, however, was a parallel desire to repurpose the new dailies for the benefit of Labour. As hostile as Labour was, there was also a strong sense of appreciation for the potential political power of such a press if it were in the hands of socialists.

For example, the same letters written that were bemoaning the dangers of the halfpenny daily press also implored the party to take steps to create a halfpenny daily newspaper of their own. To refer back to Gilmour Stephenson for example, his written

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[381] "A Challenge for Socialism: The Express Man Spoiling for a Fight", *Labour Leader,* 10th Jan. 1908; "The Challenge for Socialism: The Express's Frigid Reply", *Labour Leader,* 17th Jan. 1908.

concerns of the halfpenny press also came with a cry that it was 'necessary' that Labour set up its own paper that was sold as regularly and cheaply as the halfpenny press; the party needed a direct competitor to the new dailies to counter their negative impact on their mass audiences of working-class readers.[382] Furthermore, the steady growth of Labour victories during the 1906 general election saw Ramsey Macdonald receive multiple letters from various party agents and supporters stating the urgent need for a daily Labour publication, in order to build on the electoral success .[383]

This same sentiment was echoed across the same left-wing press that were so vehemently opposed to the new dailies' content and journalistic approach. The *Leader,* for example, ran multiple articles calling for a socialist daily newspaper that appealed to the 'man on the street' who so regularly consumed the new dailies.[384] These articles would also cite the success of other left-wing daily newspapers in both Europe and the United States, so as to highlight the existing lack of an equivalent in Britain, as well as the popular success that such a title would likely achieve if ever brought into being.[385]

These reactions from across the party calling for a socialist popular daily were also of keen interest to both the party elites and leading figures in allied movements, particularly the Trade Union Congress. As was noted in Brown's chapter on early Labour and the press, Labour and its allies strived for years to create a national newspaper operating in the interest of Labour, including attempts to purchase the existing *Daily News* and the disastrous, one-

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[382] Letters from G. Stephenson to R. J. MacDonald, 15th Feb – March 20th 1904, sourced at People's History Museum, Manchester. Accessed April 2016.

[383] Letters to R. J. Macdonald, 21st Jan – 29th Jan 1906, sourced at People's History Museum, Manchester. Accessed April 2016.

[384] "The Need of a Daily", *Labour Leader,* 27th September 1907.

[385] "A New Socialist Daily", *Labour Leader,* 20th September 1907.

week existence of a paper entitled *The Majority*.[386] While Brown notes the party's eventual emphasis on a national daily newspaper, it was not always the case. Initially, it had been the Parliamentary Committee of the TUC which proposed a daily Labour paper in 1903[387], and it was only after the 1906 general election that the central party moved away from its initial preference of a cheaper, easier to maintain weekly publication.[388] Ramsey Macdonald, who later would be among the leading party figures pushing for the creation of a daily, initially replied to the TUC's 1903 resolution by stating that "daily papers must be local" due to the "impossibility" of getting a daily from one end of the country to the other.[389]

This steady development in Labour's more positive reactions to the new dailies and their potential political usefulness indicates how the hostility towards the newspapers' content and purpose was gradually joined by an appreciation of the unique power that a cheap, daily newspaper would have with regards to furthering the national Labour mission. The concerns over the practicality of daily distribution and the cost and manner of setting one up gradually receded as a daily's potential worth grew in the minds of the party elite. However, while misplaced individual concerns that 'dailies had to be local' soon subsided, a profound ideological confusion continued to define Labour's understandings of the new dailies throughout the Long Edwardian period: even after they attempted to create a new daily of their own.

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[386] Brown, *First Labour Party*, pp. 113-124

[387] Resolution No. XXXIII 'Plea for a Labour Paper', *The Trades Union Congress Parliamentary Committee*, October 1903.

[388] In response to the TUC, the party initially issued a newsletter to 'the Trade Unions of the United Kingdom' with side-by-side lists of the issues and merits of a daily versus a weekly paper, with the weekly coming out as clear winner (7th May, 1904).

[389] R. J. MacDonald, *Memorandum RE Labour Newspaper,* 10th December 1903.

A Red Daily

In October 1912, a new newspaper was launched in Britain. This newspaper, to be printed and sold daily at halfpenny an issue and eight pages in length, was specifically created to appeal to the sorts of news-reading audiences that had been buying the new dailies. Its pricing, visual layout and editorial emphasis on human interest sensation made it a direct competitor to the new dailies. This particular newspaper, however, was unique. This new newspaper was called the *Daily Citizen* and was created, financed, and ran by the recently-founded Labour Party. Labour launched the *Citizen* to try and communicate with the mass audiences that were regularly buying the new popular press: a direct attempt to try and capture the success of the new dailies and their potential to communicate to large readerships. Ultimately, the *Daily Citizen* survived for a little over two years, during which time it hit a peak daily circulation of approximately a quarter-of-a-million copies. Its brief existence has been previously discussed by historians in very brief detail[390] and in reference to a small part of its content[391], and the paper's eventual demise has long been dismissed as a simple lack of revenue and the crippling costs of the daily newspaper business.[392]

While it failed in its intended mission, its existence offers a unique insight into the early Labour movement and its complex relationship with both the popular newspaper industry and the mass, working-class public that it claimed to naturally represent. Across the pages of the *Citizen* can be seen an ideological struggle at the heart of the early British left.

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[390] D. Hopkins, "The socialist press in Britain, 1890-1910" in J. Curran, G. Boyce and P. Wingate (eds.), *Newspaper History from the seventeenth century to the present day* (London, 1978), pp. 265-280.

[391] C. Malone, "Campaigning Journalism: The Clarion, the Daily Citizen, and the Protection of Women Workers, 1898-1912", *Labour History Review* 67.3 (December, 2002), pp. 281-297.

[392] S. Harrison, *Poor Men's Guardians: A Survey of the Struggles for a Democratic Newspaper Press, 1763-1973* (London, 1974).

By trying to speak to the readers of the new dailies, Labour found itself at odds with much of the traditional British left's understanding of the nature of journalism, the purpose of the party, and the lives of the workers they wanted to politically represent. Far from being a forgotten, fleeting experiment, the *Daily Citizen* can and should be seen as a key case study of the British left and its long-standing and often problematic relationships with popular media and the mainstream public.

Due to its desire to speak to the 'man on the street', much of its content mirrored that seen in the popular new dailies of the same period. This attention to the 'human interest' and the news genres explored so effectively by early New Journalism innovators such as George Newnes and Alfred Harmsworth resulted in the *Daily Citizen* behaving across significant sections of each edition as a 'yellow' daily that prioritized sensation, scandal and entertainment in its coverage of news.

One of the most prominent ways in which the *Citizen* seemed to attempt behaviour of a popular, 'yellow' daily was how it reported on crime and in particular violent crimes, as well as summaries from trial proceedings. Salacious coverage of violent or shocking crime was one of the bedrocks of the British New Journalism, most notoriously seen in Stead's 'The Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon' discussed in Chapters One and Two. While nothing on the pages of the *Citizen* reached those levels of controversy, they were similar in their evocative and dramatically headlined reports of horrible crimes.

One crime topic that the *Citizen* showed particular interest in was the issue of 'white slavery': British citizens, often women, who were running the risk of being coerced or forced into a life of morally repugnant servitude. This topic was explored in several different ways, but with a consistent emphasis on the unsavoury intentions of those working in the slave trade. One such article, dated from 1st January 1913, focused on the danger faced by two

young girls leaving their homes in Salford to live alone in London. Headlined '*Young Girls in Peril: Narrow Escape from White Slavery'*, it explored the risks of running away from home due to the 'dangers of the streets' that faced innocent youths on the streets of the capital. Specifically, it told of a network of people, including a woman offering free taxi rides and 'two foreigners' who tried to ensnare the two girls before the arrival of police, and how astute interventions from alert, caring members of the public, scared them into running away.[393] The decision to describe two of the involved by their non-British identity is particularly noteworthy as an additional link between the *Daily Citizen* and the new dailies, whose jingoistic attitudes to nation and the Empire had become one of their defining features in the aftermath of their reporting on the Second Boer War, as discussed in Chapter Four.[394]

Another white slavery article, published in the same week, outlined guidelines for other young girls who the newspaper saw as running the risk of falling for the '*White Slave Traps*' that had been attempted on the girls from Salford. Readers, and specifically young girls, were warned that they;

> '*should never speak to strangers… should never ask the way of any but officials on duty, such as policemen… should never loiter or stand about alone in the street… should never stay to help a woman who apparently faints at their feet in the street, and should immediately call a policeman to her aid'*.[395]

Later that same month, another white slavery article was published in the *Citizen*, this time detailing the '*Attempted Drugging of a Girl*'. The 'traffickers… these pests to society'

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[393] 'Young Girls in Peril', *Daily Citizen,* 1 January 1913, p. 3.

[394] See also G. Wilkinson, '"The Blessings of War": The Depiction of Military Force in Edwardian Newspaper, *Journal of Contemporary History 33.1* (1998), pp. 97-115.

[395] 'White Slave Traps', *Daily Citizen* 4 January 1913, p. 8

tried to drug and kidnap a woman 'employed at a well-known Oxford Street drapery establishment' before escaping the attentions of nearby police. This account was made especially shocking both due to the nature of the intended victim – a woman of established society, not a young runaway – and its reporting as 'a bare-faced attempt to drug her in the street (using) an open jar, from which pungent and acrid fumes arose'.[396] This time, the threat was not the shady backstreets, but broad daylight on one of London's most historic and prestigious streets. These dramatic reconstructions of 'white slavery crimes' are a particularly strong case study of the *Citizen's* attempted emulation of new daily crime reporting. Not only was it reported on similarly salacious crimes, but it was evoking the same kinds of emotional emphases: helpless young white women, predatory non-British agents and frightful warnings of the risks and ruin facing the unprepared on an everyday street. Such evocative representations of crime were a key part of the *Citizen,* and of the popular press that then, as it does today, featured it as a staple genre of content.

The *Daily Citizen's* sensationalized representations of crime were part of a wider focus on 'human interest' news content: stories that focused on emotive language of matters relating to events and situations that everyday readers of popular papers could better relate to. These human interests were varied in topic, but shared a sensationalist approach to the headlining and construction of the story, where the primary intention of the article was to provoke an instant, emotional response. One such manifestation of human-interest sensation was reporting of high-society scandal. One such example reported on a road accident involving the wife of Winston Churchill, which was described as a 'motor smash' that injured her with 'broken glass'.[397] The fact that the report under this dramatic headline stated her

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[396] 'White Slavers at Work', *Daily Citizen* 18 January 1913, p. 1

[397] 'Mrs Churchill in Motor Smash', *Daily Citizen* 20 January 1913, p. 3.

wounds were very minor (a 'slight cut') further underlines how the principle aim of the piece, considering the initial conclusions that are implied from its outlandish headline, was to generate an instinctive, rather than a considered, reader response. In another, a front-page piece from June 1913 concerning the fate of Captain Scott and his Antarctic exploration team refers to the 'Tent of Death' as the scene of their deaths, and advertises how the tent will be on show at an exhibition in Earl's Court later that year.[398] Again, the coverage of high society drama is constructed in very dramatic terms, with headlines that seem to deliberately invite shocked, emotional reactions.

Coverage of high society drama was complemented with reports of drama of the 'everyday' stories more closely connected to the lives of the people that Labour wanted to be reading their popular daily newspaper. One of the most striking examples of this everyday drama was reports of sudden deaths. Much as with its coverage of high society scandal, the *Citizen's* handling of domestic, everyday tragedies was primarily framed around scenarios designed to provoke primarily emotional responses. The types of intended emotional responses to these stories could vary considerably.

On the one hand, stories such as one concerning a housewife 'worked to death' seemed principally to wish to provoke heartbreak. Such stories detailed the good nature of the victim, such as this particular woman's 'devoted and cheerful' attitude to her 'exceptionally hard life', which comprised having to run a house of four young children and care for, as well as work in the place of, her consumption-afflicted husband. This idealistic vision of caring, traditional household woman is then dramatically contrasted with the events that caused death:

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[398] *Daily Citizen* 27 June 1913, p. 1

'*Up to Saturday last she had attended to her frames in the cotton factory with unwavering and unfailing regularity from six o'clock in the morning until 5.30 in the evening… Returning, she put her children to bed and soon afterwards her husband had a sudden seizure.*

She was hurrying to the bedroom when she was heard to exclaim, "Oh, my head". Collapsing entirely, she fell across her husband on the bed and passed away'.[399]

This extract, indicative of similar reports throughout other editions of the *Citizen,* constructs the everyday tragedy of a woman who died due to 'heart failure brought on by overwork' into a short story. By focusing on the emotive qualities of the deceased and then depicting her death as a dramatic climax (complete with last words), the news report takes on qualities that could easily be attributed to a piece of literary or theatrical fiction. The focus was deliberately and overwhelmingly on the emotive elements of the story – its empathy and its shock reveal – and articulated news less as a recounting of facts, and more as a theatrical reconstruction.

This emphasis on the dramatization of everyday news was also used to explore or heighten the less serious or even openly comedic aspects of domestic tragedy. One such example, headlined 'Death Bed Mishap' and concerning a dying widow in Florence, stated:

'The woman was dying, and a priest was administering the last sacrament to her in the presence of about 80 relatives and friends, as is the custom in the district. The bedroom, which was on the first floor of the house, was packed to overflowing.

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[399] 'Woman Worked to Death', *Daily Citizen* 1 January 1913, p. 1

While those assembled were praying the floor gave way, and all the people, including the dying woman, were precipitated to the floor below'. [400]

Again, a story of household death is constructed in the *Citizen* as a dramatic story. In his case however, as in others, the story is made to be light-hearted, from the 'mishap' headline to the suddenness of the collapse. The relative absence of detail post-collapse, such as details of specific numbers killed or injured, further emphasizes how everyday tragedy in the *Daily Citizen* served a primary role of entertaining, as much as informing, the reader.

This interest in reader entertainment is also very apparent in one of the *Daily Citizen*'s most deliberate attempts to capture a new daily readership; its sports coverage. Coverage of sports, in particular football, had become a defining aspect of the new dailies and the New Journalism as a whole by the beginning of the twentieth century.[401] The particular dedication to football across large sections of the British press spoke considerably of the sport's increasingly prominent place in British mass culture during the by the early twentieth century.[402] Particular newspapers, specifically elements of the daily evening press, prioritised football and sports coverage more generally as a key selling point to large audiences of lower-middle and upper-working class readers.[403] Even traditional newspapers such as *The Times,* albeit with a degree of hesitancy, had begun to include sports coverage by the beginning of the long-Edwardian era due to its undeniable mass popularity.[404] The *Citizen*

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[400] *Daily Citizen* 23 May 1913, p. 1

[401] Boyle, *Power Play: Sport, the Media and Popular Culture* (Edinburgh, 2009), pp. 19-42.

[402] Holt, *Sport and the British* (Oxford, 1992), pp. 306-307.

[403] Brown, *Victorian news and newspapers* (Oxford, 1985), p. 271-272, quoted in S. Tate, 'James Catton, 'Tityrus' of The Athletic News (1860 to 1936): A Biographical Study', *Sport In History*, 25.1 (2005), pp. 98-11.

[404] Chovanec, '''…but there were no broken legs": The emerging genre of football match reports in *The Times* in the 1860's', *Journal of Historical Pragmatics 15.2* (2014), pp. 228-254.

seemed to fully appreciate the mass appeal of sports reports, and dedicated significant sections of every pre-war addition, often on its own page entitled 'Special Page of Sporting News' to cover news from cricket, horse racing, rugby and, most of all, football.

The most common sports articles in the *Citizen* were football match reports, which detailed the events of matches from across the country. It would often introduce its sports pages published during the football season was a 'League Review' or 'Football in Review', which would provide brief round-ups of games across the top two divisions. Headlines and sub-headings in the football reports seemed to pay particular attention to certain teams such as the London clubs Arsenal and Chelsea, the two Manchester clubs and other successful teams of the era such as Newcastle, Sunderland and Everton. The emphasis of reports on the time's most successful and highest-profile football clubs strongly suggests the paper's eagerness to speak to the largest football-loving audience, by focusing its coverage on the teams that were likely to be the best-supported and most-discussed.

This attention by the *Citizen* on football's most popular elements was especially apparent in how it covered the Football Association (FA) Cup. The tournament, especially its latter stages, made news around the world, and both its prestige and mass appeal resulted in the *Citizen* giving the cup additional coverage outside of its sports section. While the early rounds of the cup would occasionally receive special attention, such as one sports page being retitled entirely to focus on 'Today's Cup Ties', the 1913 FA Cup Final was a standout example of the *Citizen's* attention to popular sports coverage.

The game, played between the First Division's top two teams Aston Villa and Sunderland, received multiple pages of dedicated coverage on both the day of, and the days after, the game. Full page profiles were provided of both teams, with photographs and illustrations of every member of the two squads with a brief description of their position on

the field and their personal beginnings.[405] The game itself received a two-page spread in the first edition after the final was played, complete with a full-page cartoon which depicted the events of the game and accompanying speech bubbles speculating on what players and fans were saying at key points during the match.[406] In keeping with the *Citizen's* broader interest in the everyman, there was also attention paid to those who went to watch the game at London's Crystal Palace. Of particular prominence was a photograph taken of people sat watching the final in a tree overlooking the ground, the headline of which approved their 'Tree Top Enthusiasm'.[407]

The coverage of the 1913 FA Cup Final, with its attention to dramatic reconstruction, eye-grabbing headlines and visuals, and the everyman presence in the story, acts as an excellent microcosm of the broader ways in which the *Daily Citizen* strove to be a popular halfpenny daily. It presented news in ways as entertaining as they were informative, using language and visual elements that highlighted the dramatic and narrative elements of the news being presented. It was a concise and content-diverse newspaper that encapsulated many of the popular New Journalism innovations that had helped publications such as the *Mail* become such huge successes.

The problem that faced the *Citizen*, and a hugely significant reason why this Labour daily failed, was that this populist, 'yellow' journalism was not its whole identity. While the dailies it was clearly trying to emulate were consistent in their popular, New Journalism approach, the *Citizen* was not just a popular 'yellow' daily. It was also a 'red' daily: a socialist newspaper that, consistent with other left-wing publications of the period, was

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[405] *Daily Citizen,* 19 April 1913.

[406] 'A Thrilling Cup Final', *Daily Citizen* 21 April 1913, p. 8.

[407] Ibid, p. 3.

opposed to the very kind of press that it was so clearly trying to imitate. With the banner under every front page reading 'Owned and Controlled by the Labour Movement', it was a daily reminder to readers that this was, above all else, a party-political newspaper. For all the attention to diverse New Journalism content, this was principally a political organ for the party to talk to a larger audience, and had been founded with this as its sole objective. In this context, the 'yellow' content sits uncomfortably alongside the more traditional socialist newspaper content that was also published in the *Daily Citizen*.

Understandably for a Labour newspaper, considerable space was set aside for matters concerning Labour politics. Page three of most pre-war editions of the citizen was set aside for 'Labour' news, with large sections entitled 'Labour at Home', 'Labour's Vision' and 'Labour Abroad'. These sections were comprised of articles, sometimes written by prominent member or associates of the party such as MPs and trade union leaders, detailing a proposed new Labour policy, or the party's stance on a new piece of government legislation. They would also provide sympathetic summaries of labourer disputes, outlining the reasons for the industrial action and providing readers with updates on ongoing struggles. One high-profile example of these kinds of reports was the paper's running coverage of striking London taxi drivers. The latter struggles of the 'taxi-cab war' received particular attention, and it, and other notable strikes, would occasionally make the front page[408]. Such occasions included a large miners' strike in early May 1913[409], and a mass walkout in Belgium which was the first item of front-page news on the same day as the before-mentioned 1913 FA Cup Final[410]. The latter front-page story, coupled with the regular inclusion of the news section 'Labour

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[408] *Daily Citizen* 2 January 1913.

[409] Ibid, 3 May 1913.

[410] Ibid, 19 April 1913.

Abroad' showed that the *Citizen* intended readers to have a global understanding of labour struggles, rather than just matters close to home. There was an assumption, or expectation, that its readers would want, or should want, to know about socialism as part of an internationalist understanding of working-class struggle, in addition to the messages included in the paper from domestic leaders of the labour movement.

This content differed considerably from much of the 'yellow' news contained in the *Citizen* as it was considerably more fact-driven, and less dependent on emotive language. For example, the large miner's strike on the front page of May 3rd 1913 is reported as matter-of-fact, focusing on the numbers gathering to protest against non-unionist employees;

'In the Rhondda Valley…the strikers number over 11,000. This total includes nearly 7,000 men at the Tylerstown and Ferndale pits. There are nearly 12,000 men on strike in the Aberdale Valley, and of these 5,000 are at the Powell Duffryn and 5,000 at Nixon's Navigation'.[411]

The story's more traditional and educationalist approach to journalism – a provision of factual details – is a sharp contrast to the popular content that is explored elsewhere in the paper. The different tone of this and other similarly 'red' articles is often made even more striking by being placed alongside sensationalist 'yellow' news. In the case of the mining strike, the story directly next to it showcases the other side to the *Citizen's* content;

'REVOLVER DUEL IN TRAIN

Bandit's Encounter with Millionaire

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[411] *Daily Citizen* 3 May 1913.

A telegram from Kansas City gives particulars of one of the most daring and

melodramatic hold-ups in American railway history'.[412]

The most significant aspect of the *Citizen's* inclusion of both sensationalist and educationalist news material was not the diversity of subject matter, as one of the most successful aspects of popular newspapers was the breadth of content that they provided to readers.[413] Rather, it was that the two types of news were approached and represented in fundamentally different ways, using language and sometimes even formatting that spoke of two different newspaper traditions: that of a popular newspaper, and that of a traditional socialist newspaper.

This contrast of newspaper styles and approaches was thrown into even sharper contrast when different articles were discussing the same subject matter. This most noticeably occurred in the *Citizen*'s reporting on sports. Interspersed between the match reports, the photographs and the cartoons, articles would appear that offered an often self-labelled 'socialist' angle into the sport under discussion, most usually football. These included reports on the work of the London Playing Fields Society, who worked to provide sports pitches for Londoners[414], as well as pieces educating readers on the 'joy of exercise' and why they (workers) should be trying to play more sport in their free time due to sport's real 'significance'[415]. One article also attacks the 'sordid commercialism' that it sees as part of the

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[412] Ibid.

[413] Bingham and Conboy, *Tabloid Century,* p. 6.

[414] *Daily Citizen,* 10 January 1913, p. 6.

[415] Ibid, 21 January 1913, p. 6.

modern game, in response to a player moving to Blackburn Rovers for a transfer fee of £2,000, bemoaning how no man's skill at football should command such an investment.[416]

These types of articles sat uncomfortably next to the newspaper's more sensationalist sports coverage because they spoke of the *Daily Citizen's* ideological similarity with the more traditional left-wing publications of its time. These titles, such as the *Labour Leader*, gave little-to-no attention to sport in their weekly content, and any inclusion of sport would focus on a negative aspect of that particular sport. Football was spoken of particularly negatively, due to its (according to one long read in an edition of the *Cooperative News*) negative influence on the moral character of the masses who watched it, as well as the sport's close ties to both gambling and the consumption of alcohol.[417] Therefore, throughout the multitudes of enthusiastic reports into popular sports, the *Daily Citizen* espoused a traditional, left-wing scepticism of popular sport, questioning the real moral and political value of one of its most discussed and, if wanting to be a popular daily, essential genres of news content.

This uncomfortable combination of populist enthusiasm and traditionalist scepticism was present in other sections of most editions of the *Daily Citizen*. For instance, attempts to mirror the women's sections of newspapers such as the *Daily Mail* contained long, moralising articles on certain aspects of popular culture. Most notably, a full-page spread was dedicated to the question 'Is Modern Dancing Decadent?' and strongly argued for;

'a revival of the good, old-fashioned British dances…

(and) I have no hesitation in denouncing in no uncertain terms the freak dances of to-day. Such dances as the Chicken Crawl and the Liverpool Lurch ought not to be tolerated

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[416] Ibid, 7 January 1913, p. 4.

[417] 'Should Football be Stopped?', *Cooperative News* 21 November 1914.

anywhere. The danger is that once made popular in our music halls they find their way to the

dancing hall'.[418]

Articles such as these, seen within both the context of the newspaper's broader duality of content and the attitudes espoused by its similarly left-wing contemporaries, indicate a broader ideological problem that hampered the *Daily Citizen* throughout much of its time in circulation. On the one hand, it included popular content on sensation and sport to try to behave like a popular daily, thus attracting similar numbers of readers as other popular new dailies. However, it never truly became a popular daily due to its persistent inclusion of traditional socialist understandings of what news content should be. The paper's backers seemed to understand that topics like sport, serialised crime and popular culture were genres of news that mass audiences wanted to read. However, it never seemed comfortable just speaking to these readers on their terms. To the leaders of the early Labour movement, a newspaper passed on appropriate knowledge; its job was to inform, not to entertain. It appreciated certain news genres were popular, which is why they were included. However, as was showcased in the criticisms of sport, the sudden switches between types of news language and the above-cited derision of popular sensations such as music-hall dances, it did not understand or appreciate their value to the people reading them.

The *Daily Citizen,* therefore, had a profound problem of identity. It struggled between trying to be a light-hearted daily, and wanting to be a serious, educationalist Labour paper. Its inclusion of popular content showcased many of the linguistic, narrative and visual innovations popularised so successfully by the new dailies, and demonstrated the party's determination to want to make a newspaper that spoke to a large audience of readers comprised primarily of Britain's lower-middle and working classes. However, it could not

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[418] *Daily Citizen* 20 January 1913, p. 7.

fully embrace this 'yellow' identity, thanks to deeply-held beliefs across much of the early Labour movement concerning the journalistic merit of the types of news content and popular topics that were so regularly discussed in other popular dailies. This problematic duality in the *Citizen's* content and purpose was further compounded by how the paper represented the other popular newspapers that it was trying to emulate. The attitudes towards the press printed in the *Citizen* suggested that the problems that faced Labour's daily newspaper were also ones facing the movement as a whole. Principally, how to understand and appreciate the wants and interests of the mass, working public.

Embracing an Enemy

The rise of a daily national popular press in Britain at the end of the nineteenth century had sparked two simultaneous responses across much of the emerging British left. On the one hand, there was an appreciation of its potential use as a political tool. It was this thinking that had driven the party's near decade-long efforts to launch their own newspapers prior to the *Citizen,* and it was one publicly espoused by newspapers affiliated to the Labour party. The *Labour Leader,* for instance, noted how successful socialist dailies in countries like Germany were evidence enough that a similar enterprise should be launched in Britain, specifically because of such a paper's ability to speak to the 'man in the street'. For all the potential political worth of a daily however, this same article showcased the other side to the early left's response to the new popular press;

> *'There is no Socialist paper to appeal every morning to the man in the street, and to counteract daily the insidious attacks of the capitalist Press'.*[419]

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[419] 'The Need of a Daily', *Labour Leader* 27 September 1907.

The 'capitalist' press was a term used in writings across the early left to refer to the new popular press, in particular the *Daily Mail* and the *Daily Express.* Occasionally, these two newspapers would be referred to by name when being criticised, such as in an article accusing the former of printing advertisements for car companies disguised as news content.[420] More usually however, these newspapers were referred to using one of three common derogatory terms: 'capitalist' (as shown above), 'halfpenny' and 'yellow'. While the first of these terms, through its reference to traditional socialist sentiments of 'capital' versus 'labour', had the potential to be used on any newspaper that Labour saw as resistant to their cause, the latter two had a particular resonance when used against the popular press.

Firstly, by specifically criticising newspapers that were 'halfpenny', the early labour movement demonstrated a particular problem with newspapers that were cheap to purchase. These newspapers were of specific concern to the movement because of their affordability; these were the newspapers that were readily affordable for lower-middle and working-class members of British society. This concern is also apparent in the derogatory term 'yellow': a reference to a newspaper's cheap nature, both in terms of its choice of print paper and its content, which had also been used against the output of Pulitzer and Hearst. Again, key to this labour critique of the popular press is its inexpensive nature, and by extension its potential appeals to the British working classes. More than that, however, the use of the term 'yellow' gets to the heart of the discord that existed between Labour, the popular dailies and the mass working public. By labelling them 'yellow', the popular press was represented as dishonest; a press that relief on lies for much of its content.

This understanding of the popular press as dishonest, coupled with the understanding of its capitalist and cheap nature, is what made newspapers like the *Daily Mail* such an

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[420] 'Daily Mail Dodge', *Labour Leader*

enemy to many in the early Labour movement. Not only were these newspapers seen to be naturally pro-capital, and were specifically priced for the attention of the everyman, but they were feeding the everyman news that Labour saw as dishonest. Labour understood the role of a newspaper as something that informed a reader of what they needed, or should, know. In the case of the newspaper aiming for a working-class audience, this meant news content detailing labour struggles both home and abroad. It meant providing educationalist approaches to popular topics, so that a reader would know the 'true', socialist worth of a given popular craze. It also meant raising the worker's awareness of what the movement saw as enemies of their quest for self-betterment. The popular press, with its attention to scandalous stories, sensationalist language and entertainment-focused reporting of sports and other parts of mass popular culture, was one of these perceived enemies. More than that, these newspapers were direct rivals to the movement's attempts to educate the kinds of people regularly purchasing and reading these 'enemy' newspapers.

This powerful anti-daily sentiment, the belief in the popular press as an enemy of the labour struggle, was not only present across the traditional Labour press. It was also consistently present in the pages of the daily-imitating *Daily Citizen*. It would run critical articles of the same popular dailies which were named and criticised in papers like the *Labour Leader*. For example, an article would criticise the 'illusion' that the daily press was representative of public opinion, instead claiming they were 'reflections of the personal idiosyncrasies and political associations of a man (the newspaper's proprietor) who may or may not have sagacity'[421]. Another would champion the *Citizen* at the expensive of its 'capitalist' rivals, saying 'how could they expect papers depending largely on railway

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[421] 'The Day's Illusion', *Daily Citizen* 11 January 1913, p. 2.

advertisements' to support workers, and that the *Citizen* was 'one of the most important educational influences in the land'[422].

The *Daily Citizen* did not just publish occasional anti-press articles, however. Instead, it would dedicate a section at the bottom of page two of every pre-war edition to a section titled 'Their Views and Ours'. This section would be comprised of snippets taken from other newspapers, including frequent reference to the *Mail* and the *Express*, accompanied by a response from the *Citizen* mocking that paper's content;

> '"*It is still possible to be a worker and a lady", says the Daily Sketch. Perish this foolish delusion!*'[423]

> '"*Take the Tube home", says the Daily Mail. To use as a garden hose, or what?*'[424]

> '"*Have you ever felt a desperate longing to get away from everything?", asks the Daily Mail. Often, but the ubiquity of our contemporary makes the longing futile.*[425]

> '"*In politics we have working-class measures", says Reynold's. The Liberal imagination running riot'.*[426]

These critiques, aimed at popular national publications of both Liberal and Conservative allegiance, served as a daily reminder of the Labour movement's low opinion of the popular press. It was a reminder that the movement as a whole understood popular newspapers as dishonest, poor-quality publications that fed workers the wrong kind of

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[422] Ibid, 20 June 1913.

[423] 'Their Views and Ours', *Daily Citizen* 9 June 1913, p. 2.

[424] Ibid, 27 June 1913.

[425] Ibid, 1 July 1913.

[426] Ibid, 3 May 1913.

journalistic diet. It was also a daily statement of the party's perceived superiority over the popular press, as they knew what workers really needed to read about in their daily newspaper. Workers should not be reading unintelligent newspapers such as the *Daily Mail* or *Reynold's*; they should be reading the higher-quality, informed *Daily Citizen*.

This daily stance taken in the *Citizen* exposed two fundamental flaws in the mind-set of the early labour movement. Firstly, these regular reminders of the supposed unscrupulous or unintelligent nature of popular newspapers were being printed in their own take on a popular newspaper. By regularly mocking the entity they were demonstrably using as the *Citizen's* influence, they further enhanced the uncomfortable duality of the Labour daily's content, which was equally enthusiastic about, and entirely dismissive of, popular news content.

More than that, however, 'Their Views and Ours' spoke considerably of Labour's attitude towards the British mass public with whom they wished to engage. By launching a cheap, eight-page daily, and including sensationalist and popular news content, they showed an awareness of popular news' appeal to the masses, and wished, to some extent, to give the people what they wanted. However, this provision of content never matured into an understanding of exactly why mass audiences particularly engaged with popular forms of journalism. Labour's expectations of working-class lives – and their needs and demands – fundamentally clashed with the lived realities of working-class experience in long Edwardian Britain. The result was a 'red' and 'yellow' daily: a popular newspaper that consistently showed disdain towards popular journalism; an everyman's daily that struggled to understand the everyman; a Labour party struggling to appreciate the real lives of the workers they assumed to naturally represent.

For Labour, therefore, the rise of the new popular press evoked the most powerful and complex set of reactions. On the one hand, the new dailies represented the antithesis of how many socialists envisioned the press. Far from being a watchdog or part of the fourth estate, the new dailies sold news on scandal, sensation and sport on pages surrounded by dominant voices from advertising and business interests. Not only did these key features of the papers appal traditional socialist attitudes towards journalistic responsibility and the influence of capital, but they were (more so than any prior generation of newspaper) a direct threat to the socialist cause. Their cheap prices and focus on 'soft' news made them a direct rival as educator of the mass, lower-paid and lower-educated British public. Labour understood both themselves and the newspaper press as educators of the people, and by teaching them the wrong kinds of lessons, the new dailies were a menace that opposed much of what the party and movement believed most strongly.

However, this burning mistrust and borderline hatred existed alongside a belief that these newspapers offered Labour unprecedented access to the mass audiences of 'men in the street' to whom they longed to spread their own political messages. However, rather than communicating with these newspapers, Labour decided to launch a popular daily of their own. The resulting publication – the *Daily Citizen* – was an uncomfortable union of traditional mistrust and newfound opportunity. Its pages would simultaneously try to emulate the new daily formula, while preaching the traditional educationalist sermons (and attacking the very press they were demonstrably copying) at the same time. This clash became so fraught that one column devoted to New Journalism human interest would be alongside articles mocking the content of other New Journalism-inspired popular dailies.

This short-lived experiment combining media populism with political purpose was how Labour saw out the Long Edwardian period. As Beers has noted, it would take until almost a decade after the Armistices before Labour began substantially exploring popular

media to further its political success.[427] However, Labour was reacting to the popular press's political worth as that press itself was first emerging. During this first cycle however, Labour's appreciation of the opportunity could not overcome long-standing and bitter misgivings over the perceived immorality, virtue and purpose that this new popular press. It was Labour, more so than any other Edwardian political party, that saw the new dailies as a political opportunity; they were just unable to equate their qualities with their own understanding of what a 'political newspaper' should be.

Liberals:

Laissez-Faire

Just as Labour were receiving initial contact from supporters pleading the case for a socialist daily newspaper, the party was establishing itself as a significant parliamentary force thanks in some degree to a pact made in 1903 between Ramsey MacDonald and Herbert Gladstone, the youngest son of four-time Liberal Prime Minister William Gladstone. This agreement ensured that twenty-four ultimately-successful Labour candidates would campaign against Conservatives in the general election three years later without a third candidate splitting the anti-Tory vote.[428] Labour returned the favour to Gladstone's party by also refusing to stand candidates in election constituencies where their presence may have helped a Conservative win by splitting the vote. In this regard, the two parties shared a similar understanding of the political arena in which they both competed. In matters of the new dailies however, the two parties could hardly have been further apart.

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[427] Beers, *Your Britain*

[428] M. Pugh, *The Making of Modern British Politics, 1867-1945* (London, 2002), p. 117.

After winning victory in a historic parliamentary landslide, the long Edwardian period was primarily defined, politically at least, by a succession of Liberal governments. Not only would this be the final time that a British Liberal party would hold a popular or parliamentary majority, but it was a period of political history later defined by key pieces of legislation that sought to benefit Britain's poorer citizens. The governments of Henry Campbell-Bannerman and Herbert Asquith – collectively called hereafter the 'New Liberal' governments – are historically remembered for implementing social and economic reforms that lay the foundations of the welfare state later created by the post-1945 Labour governments under Clement Attlee.

These policies, which included old-age pensions, unemployment support and that were paid for in-part by increased taxations on inherited and landed wealth, were representative of a broader ideological shift within British Liberalism. This shift, perhaps most notably defined by then-Chancellor of the Exchequer David Lloyd George defining the general elections of 1910 as a battle between 'peers' (and their Conservative Unionist allies) and the 'people', overtly placed lower-middle and working-class interests at the heart of Liberal political policy. Moreover, the landslide victory of 1906 was fought primarily around issues of Chinese Labour, the threat this posed to British workers, and the potential cost of Conservative tariff reforms on the average, poorer-paid British citizen. The clarification of the latter issue by some Liberal election propaganda as a choice between a Liberal 'big loaf' and a tariff-caused 'little loaf' further clarified the perception of the Liberal party as, more so than ever before, a party fighting to represent and appeal to the British working- and lower-middle classes.

Considering this unprecedented policy emphasis on the interests of the man in the street, it is tempting as a historian to have expected the New Liberalism to have positively engaged in some way or another with a newly-emerged mass press that catered so

successfully to large readerships. The reality however, from what remains at those archives visited for this thesis, was a near-complete absence of surviving reactions to the new dailies from within the Liberal ranks, both before and after their spells in government. Despite reaching millions of primarily lower-middle and working-class people every day, at a time when the voices of the kinds of people regularly purchasing the new dailies had never held more political weight then they did during the Long Edwardian era, the Liberal party, on the face value of the records investigated in this thesis, were largely disinterested in the rise of the new dailies.

It would be tempting, considering the lack of archived Liberal reactions to the new dailies, to reach far-reaching conclusions about attitudes within Edwardian L/liberalism and their relationship with the British electorate. Considering the dramatic collapse of the party after World War One, where the party's share of the national vote slumped from the mid-forties pre-war to less than eighteen percent in 1924, the party's seeming unwillingness to engage with or react to the political potential of the new dailies does carry some significance. The party's seeming collective failure to acknowledge the rise of this new mass press and its communicative possibilities is a tempting new addition to histories of the Liberal party's post-war decline. It adds to traditional histories of decline primarily concerned with schisms at the party's highest levels both personally (the wartime split between Asquith and Lloyd-George) and ideologically by offering a tantalising glimpse of broader party attitudes through the pre-war period towards popular media and popular political communication. Through their lack of reactions, the Liberal party collectively overlooked new opportunities to try and communicate political messages through these new, hugely-successful national newspapers.

Such party attitudes towards popular newspapers were evident, and have previously been chronicled, within the party's elite. Henry Campbell-Bannerman, similarly to his predecessor as party leader Lord Roseberry, was unwilling and uncomfortable engaging with

popular newspapers for political purposes. Both leaders rarely engaged with newspaper owners or tried to cultivate constructive links to new publications, restricting their rare engagements with the press to close friends or long-standing party or personal allies. Asquith, one of the forefathers of the 'New Liberalism', was similarly disinterested in engaging with popular newspapers, preferring 'quality journalism to quantity' in both his personal and political dealings, which was behaviour later linked to a personal snobbery borne out of his elite university education.[429]

Furthermore, the efforts made by David Lloyd George to build relationships with Lord Northcliffe were primarily motivated by, and started after, the latter's acquisition of *The Times* in 1908. The former's interest in the political influence of newspapers, therefore, was targeted more at Northcliffe's traditional newspapers, rather than the popular newspapers that would come to define his legacy. Lloyd George would gradually come to see the benefits of a popular daily newspaper as a medium for supportive political communication; his successful efforts to purchase the *Daily Chronicle* were motivated by his desire to have a friendly organ in the popular press. This recognition of the political potential of the popular press only occurred after World War One. The preceding two decades of popular newspaper success had seemingly passed him, and other members of the Liberal party elite, by.

However, as glaring as the absence of archived Liberal reactions is, this thesis does not want to overextend the conclusions that can be drawn from this lack of evidence. As was noted in Chapter Three, the very nature of physical archives leaves the researcher accessing only fragments of what may have occurred at the time. A lack of archived reactions from within the party's elite, as well as the lack of surviving internal communication specific to the new dailies, does not necessarily mean that reactions did not occur at the time. This thesis

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[429] McEwen, 'Lloyd George's Acquisition of the Daily Chronicle in 1918'.

therefore qualifies the extent to which its findings from the Liberal archives can substantially contribute to histories of the party as a whole, and particularly its post-war decline.

The fragments that did exist within the archives accessed for this thesis were all contained with the papers of David Lloyd George at London's Parliamentary Archives, and comprised of three documents which related to the new dailies pre-World War One. The first was among Lloyd George's newspaper collection, which featured cuttings from articles in which he was the story. Among these was a single article from a new daily: an article in the *Mirror* published in March 1904 about his meeting with King Edward VII. This profile reported on Lloyd George as a 'most interesting figure' and 'one of the most genial and popular of men', who had 'made his Majesty very desirous of meeting him'.[430] This single cutting, however, was the only occasion when one of the new dailies featured in his personal archive of press reports.

The second document was a correspondence written one decade after the *Mirror* cutting, between the Liberal M.P. Neil Primrose and Lord Northcliffe, writing from his offices at *The Times*. The latter's simple declaration to Primrose, himself the son of former Liberal leader Lord Roseberry, that he liked 'both Winston (Churchill) and Lloyd George very much'[431], points toward the constructive relationship that Lloyd George and Northcliffe possessed, particularly into the outbreak of war. The third document – a letter from Northcliffe to Lloyd George – best encapsulated the archival issues encountered in this thesis's investigation of Liberal party reactions to the new dailies. Its content, in which

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[430] 'Mr Lloyd George Meets His Majesty', *Daily Mirror* 12 March 1904, Lloyd George papers, Parliamentary Archives [LG/A/12/1/29].

[431] Letter from Lord Northcliffe to Neil Primrose M.P. 17 March 1914, Lloyd George papers, Parliamentary Archives [LG/C/11/1/1].

Northcliffe suggests that Lloyd George starts to share policy announcements with 'one or two' trusted people within the 'Unionist Press', offers an example of the new dailies' most prominent proprietor sharing a trusting relationship with a prominent Edwardian politician. However, the document does not carry a date. It was written on October 31st, and must have been written sometime after Northcliffe's acquisition of *The Times* in 1908, as it is written from their offices.[432] However, its lack of specificity, compounded by the tenuous nature of its example of a political 'reaction' as defined in Chapter Three, underlines the broader problems encountered by this thesis in its investigation of the Liberal party's internal reactions to the rise of the new dailies.

Interestingly, this lack of elite reaction to the new dailies was not entirely reflective of what could be termed broader 'L/liberal' political culture during the Long Edwardian period. Their rise and development may not have sparked very much from party leaders which has survived in the archives, but their existence did gradually filter, for example, into the lexicon of newspapers that were supportive of the Liberal party. The most significant reactions to the new dailies materialised in the *Daily News*. The *News* was the Cadbury-owned popular daily which Labour had tried to purchase in their early attempts to create a supportive popular newspaper. The *News's* first mention of the *Mail* occurred just over a year after the latter's launch, with the former remarking positively on how it had discovered a 'comic' story out of the thirty-day Greco-Turkish war over Ottoman-occupied Crete, which detailed how an unnamed woman, exasperated with the competence of a local battalion, had enlisted herself to 'come to the rescue'.

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[432] Letter from Lord Northcliffe to David Lloyd George, October 31st (post-1908), Lloyd George papers, Parliamentary Archives [LG/C/6/8/1].

This first reaction by a prominent Liberal newspaper to the new dailies formed part of a broader pattern across the Long Edwardian period, which represented the new dailies and the *Daily Mail* in particular as an unassuming but not welcome addition to the British newspaper industry. For instance, much of their place within the content of the *Daily News* was in the form of adverts or recommendations for upcoming editions of, or stories from, the *Mail*. The most striking of these was a full front-page of the *News* in March 1906 advertising 'The Invasion of 1910': a speculative historical fiction exploring a future invasion of the British Isles featuring a map charting the routes through the which an unnamed invading force had infiltrated Britain.[433] This striking full-page advert for the *Mail*'s 'intensely interesting narrative', seen particularly within the broader context of article recommendations, clearly identified new daily newspapers as publications of interest to readers of this prominent Liberal daily.

The nature of this interest, however, was particular. The occasions when newspapers such as the *Daily News* would refer to one of the three new dailies – of the three it was the *Mail* that was referred to most frequently – in a positive way was in reference to distinctly 'human interest' pieces of content. 'The Invasion of 1910', for example, was an advert for a high-profile piece of fiction, which tapped into a broader cultural fixation on 'invasion narratives' that existed in Britain in the years that would ultimately precede the outbreak of World War One.[434] The place of new dailies within Liberal newspaper discourse, when

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[433] 'The Invasion of 1910', *Daily News* 13 March 1906, p. 1.

[434] See C. Eby, *The Road to Armageddon, The Martial Spirit in English Popular Literature, 1870–1914*. (Durham NC, 1987); M. Hughes & H. Wood, "Crimson Nightmares: Tales of Invasion and Fears of Revolution in Early Twentieth-Century Britain", *Contemporary British History 28.3* (2014), pp. 294-317.

positive, concerned their ability to entertain, humour or titillate. In contrast to Labour dismissals of this 'feather-brained' content, the Liberal press found positives in the new dailies' more light-hearted approach to daily journalism.

However, when referencing their political content, specifically their election-time political content, the Liberal press's reactions towards the new dailies turned distinctly negative. While recommended for their more 'soft' content, the new dailies political value was harshly criticised or openly mocked, and particularly targeted their apparently loose use of supportive evidence. The difference in tone between the endorsements and the criticisms was striking, particularly considering how close together in time these wildly different representations of the new dailies were printed. For example, less than two months before publishing the full-page advert for 'Invasion', the *Daily News* headlined a piece detailing an example of the *Daily Mail's* election coverage as 'A Disgrace to Journalism'. This 'abuse' of reporting standards concerned a quote the *Mail* misattributed to Henry Campbell-Bannerman concerning the issue of 'Chinese slavery': the controversial election issue which had particularly sparked debates over 'pictorial lies' in politics discussed in Chapters Two and Three. Their coverage was accused of being a 'disgraceful invention' and the type of behaviour which 'degrades an honourable profession'. The piece concluded with a reminder that the man behind this coverage – Lord Northcliffe – had been given an honour by the previous Conservative government, and it strongly suggested this 'disgrace' was an example of political *quid pro quo*;

> *'Perhaps such services* (the article which attributed false words to the Liberal leader)
>
> *deserve such rewards'.*[435]

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[435] 'A Disgrace to Journalism', *Daily News* 11 January 1906, p.6.

While the *Mail* was not covered again, either positively or negatively, by the *News* during the 1906 election, this standalone article was hugely significant. It marked a distinct difference in Liberal reaction to the new daily press when considering them as a source of political news, rather than as a medium of entertainment. Where humour and fiction were praised or publicised, election content was viciously and exclusively identified as negative. They were accused of being dishonest in their coverage of the party; their respect for their broader profession brought into question; and their content connected to potential ideological collusion between the paper's owner and their Unionist foe. The Lib-Lab agreement in 1906, it would seem, also appeared to share the same negative opinions of the political new dailies. In contrast to Labour, however, the Liberal party saw only the negative, rather than any communicative positive.

This Liberal hostility towards the politics of the new dailies persisted into the elections of 1910, as the same Liberal-allied newspapers, especially the popular *News* which had hounded the *Mails* 'disgrace' to the profession continued to represent them as wholly negative publications. This negativity had changed from the righteous fury directed at the paper's politics in 1906. In place of fury, the L/Liberal daily press mocked the new dailies, with the *Daily Mail* once again being the primary target of negative coverage. Key to this mockery were persistent references made across several articles to the *Mail* and the factual consistency of its coverage.

One way in which the *Mail* was represented as a comically untrustworthy publication came through the selective printing of political speeches from the election campaign which mentioned the newspaper by name. For example, a section from a David Lloyd-George speech (printed on the 10th January 1910) concludes with a slight at the *Mail's* value. After a remark to the crowd asking whether German citizens would be happy eating bad food if good

food was available, which was part of a broader argument against proposed Unionist tariffs reforms, he cries;

> *"Oh yes, they would. (Laughter). The 'Daily Mail', says they* (German citizens) *like it.*
> *(Loud laughter). The 'Daily Mail' says it is wholesome, and the 'Daily Mail' always tells the*
> *truth. (Renewed laughter)."*[436]

To Lloyd-George and to the crowd, the *Mail* was a punchline. More interestingly, it was a newspaper with a negative identity distinct enough, at least within Liberal political culture of the election, to make the joke both obvious and, considering the included crowd response, well-received. Indeed, it was a joke echoed across other parts of the *News's* election coverage. The paper's daily *Table Talk* column began one day's summaries with an almost-identical comment on the *Mail's* untruthful reputation, summarising its leading articles during the December election of 1910 as entities that "can usually be depended upon, in any crisis, for the best display of earnest fatuity"[437]. Moreover, these jokes were attacks against the *Mail* as a whole, rather than specifically its political coverage. While its politics was still targeted by the *News* as it had been in 1906, this broader mockery of the *Mail's* value as a newspaper represented a hardening of L/Liberal towards its broader journalistic value. It was a publication to laugh at; defined by its empty-headed thoughts and lack of basic, competent accuracy. The inclusion of full-page adverts for the *Mail*'s content were now distinctly part of the L/Liberal press's past.

Another speech, delivered by MP Walter Runciman and selected for print in the *Daily News,* attacked the *Mail's* place in British culture, promising that a Liberal government (if returned) would not consider the comment of the *Mail* in its formation of policy, and that "the

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[436] 'The Speech', *Daily News* 10 January 1910, p.6.

[437] 'Table Talk', *Daily News* 14 December 1910, p.6.

value of the *Daily Mail* articles might be judged by the proved inaccuracy of the only figures they contained"[438]. The latter point carried similar sentiments to the Lloyd-George joke, by critically summarising the real-world value of the *Mail* by its supposed habit of inaccurate news reporting. It was however, tinged with less joviality than the crowd-loved gag of days before. In this case, it reads more as a bitter quip; a joke that mocks, but with a resentful appreciation of the significance of that which it mocks. In this case, the 'inaccuracy'-laced *Mail* was a newspaper which, up to that point, held sway in British culture. Runciman accused the paper and some of its writers of holding undue and considerable influence over current policy. Similar to the 1906 tirade against the paper's conduct, this L/Liberal representation of the new dailies echoed sentiments within Labour. However, while sharing an appreciation of the power that such a press's political significance had, L/Liberalism again stopped short of Labour's reactions; they saw the significance, but not what they could do to potentially incorporate it into their own political strategies.

The earlier ignorance of the Liberal party elite, therefore, was not entirely indicative of a broader party ignorance of popular newspapers and their potential political and cultural significance. First enthusiastically and later begrudgingly, voices within the Liberal-supportive press indicated an appreciation of the significant place which the new dailies and the *Daily Mail* in particular held in the wider culture of Long Edwardian Britain. Their human-interest content was referenced with encouragement to readers of L/Liberal newspapers throughout the first portion of the period; it was news that was thought to be of interest to readers who, come an election, were likelier than not to vote for a Liberal candidate. Even when representing newspapers such as the *Mail* in a negative manner, as became more pronounced during and after the landslide election victory of 1906, there was

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[438] 'Mr Runciman, M.P.', *Daily News* 20 January 1910, p. 4.

the idea that these new popular newspapers had a wider significance. While politically unpalatable to Liberal politicians and commentators, the new dailies were a phenomena worthy of consideration.

Much of this consideration, however, was negative, and the ways in which British L/liberalism either ignored or mocked the political potential of the new dailies was distinct and ubiquitous. While kinder words were found for elements of their non-political coverage, the new dailies' contribution to British political culture was never positive from a L/liberal perspective. The negativity expressed towards them was characterised mainly as mockery: comic disdain that echoed the 'feather-brained' origins of the new dailies' forebears. This mockery however, coupled with more isolated barbed attacks against the integrity and the supposed influence of the *Mail* on Unionist policy, was suggestive of a broader appreciation within Long Edwardian L/liberalism of the political power, however objectionable, of the new dailies by the end of the period. The mockery was not of a press without influence; the jokes against its character, and jokes that were not levelled against other pro-Unionist newspapers during either 1906 or 1910, spoke of its particular place within L/Liberal election-time press discourse. This appreciation was gradual in growth and not reflected by the party elite, but it did exist.

This broader L/liberal press discourse concerning the politics of the new dailies did, however, contain further evidence that spoke of the broader ignorance or disdain towards the new dailies from the party's elite, from what has remained within the selected archives. The speeches printed that mocked the *Mail* were from significant party figures, including the then-Chancellor and future party leader Lloyd-George. Their possible private disinterest in the new dailies was supported by public-facing disinterest in the form of quoted mockery. Rather than being a closed secret, powerful voices within the Liberal elite were comfortable expressing their disinterest in engaging with the new dailies on the campaign trail. This was

in interesting contrast to Labour, where broader hostility to the new dailies in public was contrasted by intense inner-party plans to try and use them as inspiration for their own political purposes. The Long Edwardian Liberals, in this sense, went further in their critical dismissal of the new dailies than the more publicly hostile Labour movement.

One of the reasons behind both the initial ignorance and the later, more-complete new daily hostility from the Liberals, in comparison to Labour, likely lay in the fact that British L/Liberalism already had a significant daily newspaper presence in the form of the dailies *News* and *Chronicle*. On the one hand, the emergence and consolidation of popular papers like the *Mail* at the beginning of the period struck less of a chord with the Liberals than with Labour as they already had pro-party support in the form of two established nationally-distributed daily newspapers. The new dailies, therefore, posed less of either a potential political challenge to the Liberals or a political opportunity, as they were comfortable with the supportive press they already had. This same reality – of a pro-party daily press – also contextualised the new daily disdain shown by voices such as those quoted in the *Daily News*. As newspapers such as the *Mail* continued to grow in cultural significance – comfortably becoming Britain's highest-circulated daily newspaper by the mid-Edwardian period – and its pro-Unionist politics became more widely read, the L/Liberal press – and select voices in the party elite – attacked it as a rival to 'their' dailies *News* and *Chronicle*. While Labour saw new daily success as a lesson to translate to their own ends, the Liberals understood only a political and journalistic competitor. They were a rival voice within the British newspaper industry that was to be belittled and criticised in public, while continuously dismissed in private. Even as their growing presence in British culture became more significant, there was never internal conversation; only public-facing dismissals. They, as a party, already had their press. The new dailies were not a political or journalistic inspiration; they were a political and journalistic irritant unworthy of more than mocking resentment.

This resentment however also spoke of an undeniable ignorance or unwillingness within the party and its press allies to draw inspiration from its unprecedented success. Labour were just as hostile, if not more so, to the new dailies' supposed impact on political and press culture, but also saw, however crudely, how their particular approach to journalism could be appropriated for their own political ends. The Liberals, by contrast, never reacted to the new dailies with any real serious consideration of their possible merits. This was not entirely explained by the prior existence of a pro-Liberal press. Labour too, had multiple, if admittedly less prominent, supportive publications that did not hinder the party's ability to appreciate the communicative potential of this new daily popular press. Instead, this Liberal ignorance tied back to the unwillingness of the party's elite to engage with this new press through anything more than occasionally-quoted jokes. Their comfort with the supportive press they had was in stark contrast to Labour's mind-set, and spoke of a broader inability to see the new dailies as anything but either a 'human interest' daily or a pro-Unionist organ, thus an entity unworthy of serious consideration.

While just as much an 'enemy' to their politics as they were to Labour, the Liberals' limited reactions to the new dailies, from their private silence to their public quips, do suggest a difference between the two parties understanding of the popular press and its potential for speaking to a mass public. The Long Edwardian Liberals were content with the press support they already had, and were disinterested in the potential of the new dailies as they failed to see it beyond simple partisan lines. The sparse nature of archived reactions, however, does temper the extent of the conclusions that this thesis can draw regarding broader Liberal attitudes to the rise of the new dailies during the Long Edwardian period.

Conservatives:

Office Boys

While they differed fundamentally in their appreciation of the potential of the new dailies' political content, the Liberals and Labour shared one core belief about this emergent press: that it was antagonistic to their respective political ideologies, particularly during general elections. There was little doubt that all three of the new dailies were broadly supportive of the Conservative Unionists throughout all four general elections of the Long Edwardian period. The regularity with which both Liberal and Labour commentators lamented or mocked the pro-Unionist politics of these new newspapers would suggest, to the modern historian, that the party and this new press were actively cooperating in some form or another. Indeed, as the previous section discussed, accusations of collusion between the new dailies and governing Unionists were sometimes made explicit. The level of 'collusion', in reality, was far less than those occasional conspiratorial voices implied. Indeed, for much of the Long Edwardian period, the political significance new dailies were of as little consequence to Unionist party as they were for the Liberals. There were, however, noticeable exceptions to this ignorance.

At the beginning of this period, the Conservatives were the newly dominant party in British politics. Under Lord Salisbury, the Conservatives (and their Liberal Unionist allies)[439] had won a huge majority at the general election of 1895, returning 234 more MPs than Lord

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[439] For much of this period, the Conservatives were named the 'Unionists' to account for the combining of the original party and the Liberal defectors. Throughout this study, the two names for the party will be used interchangeably to refer to the same, broader collective.

Rosebery's defeated Liberals.[440] They would hold office until the landslide defeat of 1906 and would win another huge parliamentary majority in the 'khaki' general election of 1900. As such, they governed during the period between 1896 and 1903 during which all three of the new daily popular newspapers launched.

Current historical knowledge into the Conservative's reactions to the new popular press is framed around interactions between leading party members and the editors and proprietors of newspapers. While such approaches are not what this thesis wishes to repeat, they will serve as an entry point into the wider party reactions sought herein, as well as a convenient beginning for this chapter's framework. These existing understandings of individual Conservative politician's relationships with the new popular dailies will be re-examined by drawing out these examples of interpersonal relationships as evidence of underlying attitudes to the new popular press as a whole. After re-exploring these relationships, material from both personal and party-wide archives will further explore the broader reactions of agents across the party towards the emerging popular daily press.

Stephen Koss's chapter looking into the relationships between prominent Unionist MP Joseph Chamberlain and the proprietors of the three new dailies broadly structures their discourse as a long-running series of calculated power plays between the three individuals. Chamberlain is cast in the role of press orchestrator, while the two proprietors are portrayed as powerful, competing personalities from whom Chamberlain sought both public political backing and personal rivalry for his attention.[441]

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[440] P. A. Readman, "The 1895 General Election and Political Change in Late Victorian Britain", *The Historical Journal 42.2* (1999), pp. 467-493.

[441] S. Koss, *The Rise and Fall of the Political Press in Britain, Volume II* (London, 1984), pp. 15-53.

This interpretation of their interactions places the single politician at its heart, with the two proprietors being just part of a wider 'crowd' reacting and responding to the whims and actions of this lead actor and his supporters, who themselves are mere extensions of the lead personality through their title of 'Chamberlainites'.[442] These same interactions provide initial insight into the wider reactions across the Conservative party to the rise of the new daily popular press. This is because, rather than being standalone interactions, Chamberlain's dialogues infer attitudes towards the new dailies that were shared by many across his party. His access to their proprietors was relatively unique, but his underlying attitude towards their newspapers was not.

Joseph Chamberlain's encounters with the proprietors of the *Mail, Express* and *Mirror,* as previously identified by Koss, show a proactive move by the politician to use these newspapers to disseminate and even actively support his primary policy objectives. Chamberlain wanted to use these popular newspapers to publicize his push for Imperial protection: a tariff on internationally-imported goods which benefitted domestic and dominion traders by raising the price of materials brought in from outside British-controlled territories. This single proposed piece of legislation became Chamberlain's primary, all-consuming political objective, to such an extent that he was campaigning separately both from the staunchly free-trade Liberals and the leader of his own party, A. J. Balfour from 1903 until the calamitous general election defeat in 1906. [443]

According to Koss's analysis, Chamberlains 'use' of the *Mail* and the *Express* was part of a broader history of political actors in Britain liaising with the press to further their own political aims. In one sense this is correct; the rise of the new dailies did not provoke an

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[442] Ibid, p. 36.

[443] See. P. Marsh, *Joseph Chamberlain: Entrepreneur in Politics* (New Haven, 1994), pp. 581-631.

original response from leading Conservative politicians as to how to communicate with them. The ways in which Chamberlain liaised with this new press did not deviate significantly from how past generations of leading Conservatives had reacted to a press. The new dailies, to some extent, added to a longer tradition of newspapers that could be spoken with in order to communicate Conservative messages to wider audiences.

What was relatively unique about elite Conservative reactions to these new popular daily newspapers was the rationale behind their interest in these particular titles. To refer again to Chamberlain, his particularly keen interest in developing relationships with Harmsworth and Pearson was motivated by the uniquely popular appeal of their new newspapers. For example, his initial scepticism in building bridges with Pearson because of the latter's assumed attitude towards imperial protection was overridden specifically because of the large readerships that the *Express* had been able to rapidly gain since its launch.[444] Similarly with Harmsworth, concerns about personal differences were inferior to the mass appeal of their newspapers, and the large reach that their titles had in terms of mass popular readerships was the fundamental motivation behind Chamberlain's targeting of their favour and interest.

This marks out the new dailies as distinct from their contemporaries, as their uniquely large readerships were the principal factor motivating the nature of Chamberlain's reactions to them. Whereas the longer history of Conservative elites saw them court relationships with a host of editors and proprietors, Chamberlain deliberately focused attention primarily on the owners of the *Daily Mail* and the *Daily Express.* The reaction to this new press was directly informed by their singular popular appeal and large daily readerships. By principally focusing on just these two proprietors during his years of attempting to further his campaign for

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[444] Ibid.

imperial protection, Chamberlain's reactions to the new dailies spoke of the unique opportunity these newspapers provided for speaking to mass audiences of people; audiences that previous generations of politicians would have needed the assistance of dozens of newspapers to potentially communicate with.

This type of reaction which saw the new popular press as an unprecedented tool for the mass dissemination of political information was limited across the rest of the Long Edwardian Conservative party. Chamberlain stood mostly alone in seeing the new dailies as an exciting new opportunity, and his tariff-campaigning enthusiasm for their communicative potential stood out as an exception. The popular press, and the new dailies in particular, did feature across broader C/conservative thinking during the Long Edwardian period in differing ways, but it was only Chamberlain who responded to this new press by seeing its far-reaching political possibilities.

Where Chamberlain saw potential, the rest of the Edwardian Conservative elite saw little in the new dailies to challenge or expand upon their understandings of what sort of newspapers constituted the political press in Britain. Lord Salisbury for example, with his 'for office boys' dismissal of the *Daily Mail*, responded to the rise of the new dailies during his premiership similarly to his fellow peer and party leader Lord Roseberry had done: with ignorance. That ignorance was most likely driven by traditional understandings of what could and could not be defined as a newspaper worthy of political consideration. A newspaper made by and for office workers, with its attention to human interest and sensation, did not fit within that definition.

As ignored as the new dailies were by most of the Edwardian Tory elite, there were instances where popular newspapers and Conservative elites did intersect during this period.

These limited interactions, found in the archived letters of A. J. Balfour[445] and his private secretary John Satterfield Sandars, compounded wider Tory elite dismissal of the new dailies and popular political journalism in general. They showcased how little they thought of popular journalism's place within wider political culture. This even manifested when a leading figure within British popular journalism attempted to directly contribute on behalf of the Conservative party to their appearance in the public sphere.

Writing between July and November 1896, Balfour (through Sandars) was in infrequent contact with William Thomas Stead whilst the latter was presiding over his[446] successful monthly *Review of Reviews*. The correspondence had been initiated by Stead, and featured a fascinating case study of how the broader Conservative elite of the Long Edwardian period responded to the political potential of the rising popular press. The letters, sent between the pair approximately every month, concerned the possibility of a parliamentary inquiry into Cecil Rhodes, the leading late-Victorian imperialist, business magnate and founder of Rhodesia. Rhodes's imperial political career, having served as Prime Minister of the Cape Colony[447] since 1890, had slumped into scandal. His name had become connected with the botched Jameson Raid at the beginning of 1896. The raid was an attempt to encourage a British settler revolt within the Transvaal with a view to later imperial occupation. In the wake of its failure, Rhodes had resigned his office due to his perceived closeness to the plan. With the Raid's leading conspirators either in British prisons or having narrowly avoided hanging on charges of high treason by the summer of 1896, the possibility

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[445] For more on Balfour, see S. H. Zebel, *Balfour: A political biography* (London, 1973).

[446] Having originally founded *Review of Reviews* with George Newnes in 1890, Stead was the magazines sole owner (and principle contributor) during this period of correspondence with Balfour.

[447] Cape Colony was an administrative region of the British Empire comprised of large sections of modern-day South Africa.

of an investigation into the full extent of Rhodes's involvement in the scheme seemed plausible.

The possibility of Rhodes being brought before an inquiry was the reason for Stead's initial correspondence. Rhodes and Stead were acquaintances who had significantly influenced each other, especially through their initial agreements over the potentials of expanding British imperialism. Writing first to Balfour in early July, Stead stressed his personal connection to Rhodes as part of a plea to keep a 'suicidal investigation from happening, as;

> *'if it* (details of Rhodes' involvement) *were to get in the press, it would not help anyone'.*[448]

Having (according to the archives) not received a reply, Stead wrote again to Balfour in mid-September, initially showing resignation that his pleas had not kept Rhodes out of the critical spotlight, admitting that 'all the facts will come out' regarding his role in the raid. Following this, however, he pledges to Balfour that he will put aside part of the Christmas edition of *Review of Reviews* in which he will write a piece on the matter that will 'minimise the bad effect' of the raid.[449] Crucially, this referred not just to the potential harm on Rhodes's reputation, but the potential negativity that could be placed on the current Conservative government, under whose auspices the raid's conspirators had been able to act without challenge or calls not to follow through on their plan.

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[448] Letter from W. T. Stead to A. J. Balfour, 7 July 1896 in *Catalogue of the papers of John Satterfield Sandars,* Oxford, Bodleian Library [MSS. Eng. hist. a. 21, c. 729].

[449] Letter from W. T. Stead to A. J. Balfour, 15 September 1896 in *Catalogue of the papers of John Satterfield Sandars,* Oxford, Bodleian Library [MSS. Eng. hist. a. 21, c. 729].

Plainly, this was an attempt by Stead, while motivated largely by a personal connection to the potential scandal, to advertise the political significance of his popular print publication. Having failed to intervene pre-emptively on behalf of a friend, he instead offered to use his publication to argue the story in the best interests of both his acquaintance and the current government. Here, presented practically gift-wrapped, was an opportunity for a popular publication to serve a useful political purpose for a Conservative administration.

Balfour's reply was delivered a week after Stead's second letter and his only contribution to the months-long dialogue. He ignored or refused this potential avenue of popular political communication. On the one hand, he personally assured Stead that Rhodes would be unlikely to face a parliamentary inquiry, and made clear that the Jameson Raid was not approved by the Colonial Office, thus negating one of the key investigative angles of a potential investigation. On the other hand, he offers no elaboration on, or enthusiasm for, the existence of a pro-party piece in Stead's publication, stating that he should only 'be careful' in what he writes, and to keep to the facts of the situation.[450] Stead, replying in November, concludes the matter by expressing relief at the ultimate lack of an inquiry, and does much to inflate his own role, specifically his 'setting forth (of) the facts in their proper perspective'[451], in insuring that raid in the Transvaal had not grown into a domestic political scandal to the detriment of a personal friend and (according to one of his earlier letters)[452] his preferred choice of party in political office.

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[450] Letter from A. J. Balfour to W. T. Stead, 22 September 1896 in *Catalogue of the papers of John Satterfield Sandars,* Oxford, Bodleian Library [MSS. Eng. hist. a. 21, c. 729].

[451] Letter from W. T. Stead to A. J. Balfour, November 1896 in *Catalogue of the papers of John Satterfield Sandars,* Oxford, Bodleian Library [MSS. Eng. hist. a. 21, c. 729].

[452] Letter from W. T. Stead to A. J. Balfour, 6 January 1896 in *Catalogue of the papers of John Satterfield Sandars,* Oxford, Bodleian Library [MSS. Eng. hist. a. 21, c. 729].

While the advice to be 'careful' is an interesting insight into Balfour's blunt handling of powerful individuals in the British press, it is more significant within its context as part of a refusal to engage with a potential political ally in the popular press. While partially a reflection of Stead's own sense of significance, the fact that he identified the potential influence of his words, and Balfour did not, spoke considerably of the value that Balfour, like most other Conservative elites, placed on the new popular press as a potential medium for political communication. Even when presented with a possibility of good party publicity in relation to a potentially delicate imperial matter, a leading party figure and a future Prime Minister swiftly dismissed the possibility of a popular news publication disseminating political information.

His successor as party leader, Andrew Bonar Law, appeared similarly dismissive in one of the two surviving pieces of correspondence between himself and Ralph David Blumenfeld: editor of the *Daily Express* between 1902 and 1932, and previously a news editor at the *Daily Mail* from 1900. Writing in 1910 in response to a request from Blumenfeld for information for a forthcoming article, Bonar Law stated simply that he 'really cannot possibly find time to do what you suggest'.[453] As with the Liberal archives, potentially useful information was not a part of these 'fragments'. For example, the exact nature of Blumenfeld's request has not survived, and so Bonar Law's refusal loses some of the context that came with Balfour's rejection of Stead over a decade earlier.

Broader *Gleanings*

When looking at surviving reactions from within the upper echelons of the Conservative Party, the new daily popular press barely registered as a phenomenon worthy of

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[453] Letter from Andrew Bonar Law to Ralph Blumenfeld, 16 November 1910, Blumenfeld papers, Parliamentary Archives [BLU/1/13/LAW.1].

debate. Notable exceptions saw the potential of this new press, and how their rapid rise represented an enhanced, unprecedented opportunity for the messages and interests of those elites to be communicated to a considerably larger and distinctly 'mass' audiences than past generations of newspapers allowed. Mostly, however the new dailies fed into wider attitudes within elite Conservatism that refused to associate popular newspapers with a platform for potential political communication. Regardless of the potential messages themselves - from personal political agendas to protecting reputations - there was consistency in how the new popular press was understood and reacted to. It was a new medium with new audiences, but one that was approached in similar ways to past generations of newspapers, whether positively (by Chamberlain) or negatively.

When broadening out to consider the place of the new dailies in the eyes and minds of less elite party activists however, the popular press's significance in Edwardian C/conservative political life is more nuanced. In contrast to leading political figures, there lacks sufficient private records of more junior party activists to allow for an accurate insight into wider reactions. However, the early Conservative party archives do contain a set of records that allows historians a degree of access into how the new popular press was understood and reacted to by the rank and file members of the Conservative party: *National Union Gleanings.*[454]

Beginning in 1893, *National Union Gleanings* (and its successor from 1912 onwards, *Gleanings and Memoranda*) was a monthly journal of record, created and published by the Conservative Party. It was created for, and circulated to, agents at all levels of the

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[454] All references to *National Union Gleanings* come from research at the Bodleian Library. Special thanks is owed to Jeremy McIlwaine, Conservative Party Archivist at Oxford's Weston Library for highlighting to this material.

Conservative Party: MPs, agents and speakers. Its primary intention was as a notebook for Conservative activists, providing basic information on a variety of political subjects from a wide array of source materials. These source materials included minutes from internal meetings, reports from rallies of both Conservative and opposition MPs, memos and notes passed around Parliament and (most importantly for this thesis) extracts from a wide selection of newspapers. The inclusion of the new dailies in these monthly party notebooks sheds considerable insight into not only how the new dailies were being seen across virtually all levels of the party, but how these newspapers were understood by party elites who ran and distributed *Gleanings* to party members.

Since *Gleanings* began publication, newspaper cuttings were used to give readers details of political events both at home and abroad. These cuttings commonly came with an attached recommendation to read the longer article from which the included section was repurposed. At the time that the first of the dailies emerged, the most prominent newspapers cited by *Gleanings* were *The Times,* the *Daily News* and the *Daily Chronicle.* The latter two were included primarily when giving the Liberal view of an event, as both newspapers had strong ties to the Liberal party and were the most prominent non-Conservative newspapers in late-Victorian Britain. *The Times* meanwhile, consistently the most cited individual newspaper in each monthly edition of *Gleanings,* was a frequent reference point for Conservative news, usually incorporating much of the same kinds of material sought from the *News* and the *Chronicle*, with the addition of a frequent inclusion of letters to the editor. While certainly the most prominent individual newspaper sources, the journal also include cuttings from publications across the country, ranging from magazines such as the prominent *Fortnightly Review* to local newspapers such as the *Western Morning News*.[455]

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[455] *National Union Gleanings,* January 1901, Index

It was into this *Gleanings* tradition of newspaper cuttings that the *Daily Mail* and later *Daily Express* slowly established themselves.[456] Even though the *Daily Mail* launched to almost instant popular success[457] it did not become part *Gleaning's* repertoire of newspaper sources until the March issue of 1897. This first utterance of the *Daily Mail* was because of an article it published which contained a declaration by a 'high ranking' native official in the Transvaal (a neighbouring state to British-controlled South Africa) regarding the strong and insurmountable 'race hatred' between the occupying British and the Boers.[458] In the same issue of *Gleanings,* the *Mail* is included again for its coverage of issues in the Transvaal. In this instance, it references an article which offers a step-by-step breakdown of a phrase used by President Kruger (then president of the South African Republic) to describe Queen Victoria. The words used – 'een kwaje vrouw' – are broken down to explore their insulting meaning to readers, through reference to English equivalents; 'kwaje' is linked to the British word 'queer' (meaning odd), although it is stressed that the Boer's version of the word is far greater in "wickedness".[459]

The ways in which the *Daily Mail* is first used in *National Union Gleanings* were broadly twofold. On the one hand, its inclusion is for its coverage of imperial matters, and specifically for its coverage of anti-British controversies. On the other, the specific nature of the articles chosen for inclusion within *Gleanings* constructed the *Mail* as a newspaper to provide summaries of a complex topic. In the first article, the paper's emphasis on dramatic race-specific language creates the tensions surrounding the Transvaal as ones of binary racial divides: Boer versus Brit. In the second, its inclusion is for the purposes of topic

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[456] The *Daily Mirror* does not feature in *Gleanings*.

[457] D. Griffiths, *Fleet Street: Five Hundred Years of the Press* (London, 2006), pp. 132-133.

[458] "Daily Mail, Feb. 4th 1897", *National Union Gleanings,* 'Provocative Boer Utterance', March 1897.

[459] "Daily Mail, March 16th 1897", *National Union Gleanings,* 'What Does It Mean?', March 1897.

simplification. It provided a plainly-described, step-by-step guide through the offending phrase, and why exactly it was offensive to the Queen.

The *Daily Mail* would continue to appear in *Gleanings* after this point, but only rarely. Its next use after its debut would be exactly one year later, and would, again, be for its particular coverage of imperial matters. In one instance, it is included to, again, detail behaviour in the Transvaal that is confrontational to the British, with its summary of Boer seizures of British-owned mining lands.[460] In the other, its summarising of the 1898 Local Government (Ireland) Bill is included under the heading 'The Scheme Explained'.[461] After a full year of not being included, the *Mail* was again used in *Gleanings* in a specific way which represented it as a newspaper that provided concise, easy to understand information about political topics, and was particularly invested in colonial issues.

This pattern of inclusion in *Gleanings* would continue both for the *Daily Mail* and, after 1900, the *Daily Express.* Similar to the *Mail,* the Express had to wait for over a year of circulation[462] before entering *Gleanings* as a source of relevant and useful information for Conservative agents. When seen together, the new dailies became used for very similar reasons as the *Mail* had been since it was first introduced into the journal. The two papers were included primarily when discussing imperial matters, and more specifically the troubles in South Africa and the Second Boer War. Indeed, the first inclusion of the *Express* is very similar to that of the *Mail,* as it is an article lamenting how dying Boer children seemed to illicit more sympathy from politicians than the deaths of British women and children in the

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[460] 'The *Daily Mail* on Boer Cupidity and theft of mining land', *National Union Gleanings,* March 1898, Index.

[461] "Daily Mail, Feb. 22nd 1898", *National Union Gleanings,* 'The Scheme Explained', March 1898.

[462] The first inclusion of an *Express* cutting was in July, 1901.

same region.[463] The similarity here comes both in the provocative nature of the included piece, similar to the 'race hate' debut of the *Mail,* and the simplicity of what the piece has to say.

The inclusions of both the *Mail* and the *Express* in *Gleanings* would continue to follow the general themes seen in their earliest inclusions. Over time, the topic of the chosen cuttings would diversify from solely pro-imperial or colonial matters. For example, both papers were included side by side in a section detailing the emigration of military workmen from Woolwich Arsenal to Germany[464], and sections from both papers were used within a month of each other to outline some of the policies of[465], and need for resistance against[466], British socialism. However, colonial and international coverage from these two papers still featured strongly, such as the *Express's* discussion regarding the employment of non-British workers in the navy[467].

What is striking when looking at how these two new popular dailies were included in this Conservative party journal is how specifically the papers were utilised. It is important to point out that the topics that both the *Mail* and the *Express* were used to discuss were not unique to them. Other newspapers and magazines included in *Gleanings* discussed the same political topics seen in the cuttings of the new dailies; the empire, socialism and industry.

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[463] "Daily Express, June 18th 1901", *National Union Gleanings,* 'A Few Press Opinions', July 1901.

[464] "Daily Mail and Daily Express, 3rd May 1907", *National Union Gleanings,* 'The Radical Exportation of State Secrets', June 1907.

[465] "Daily Mail, Jan. 27th 1908", *National Union Gleanings,* 'How Socialists would deal with the Unemployed', February 1908.

[466] "Daily Express, Dec. 27th 1907", National Union Gleanings, 'How to Fight Socialism', January 1908.

[467] The Daily Express on the employment of Chinese Labour in the British Navy', *National Union Gleanings,* August 1907, Index.

Also, neither of the dailies were unique in how they discussed these issues in terms of emotive language; the frequent inclusion of speeches and editorials from elsewhere carried similar levels of emotive, partisan political standpoints as were used in the new dailies. Moreover, the *Mail* and the *Express* were not the only newspapers who were used to offer simplified versions of political news. Almost every publication included in *Gleanings,* from *The Times* to *Reynolds Newspaper*, was used at point or another to give a concise summary of a broader topic or particular complex issue.

What made the new dailies unique, however, was how this emphasis on short simplicity, clarity of expression and passionate, partisan language was present in the vast majority of inclusions. Whereas other newspapers, such as *The Times,* the *Daily News* or the *Daily Chronicle,* would occasionally talk about the same topics in the same kinds of language, this was not their sole focus. The inclusions of the new dailies were, in comparison to other more traditional national newspapers and magazines of the period, few and far between, with use of their content separated by several months or sometimes over a year. Then, on the few occasions they were included in *Gleanings,* it was using sections of articles that, regardless of the story, were framed as summaries, break-downs or step-by-step, hand-holding explanations of topics. Their inclusions were headlined by *Gleanings* with words like 'summary', 'guide' or 'what does it mean?'. Their cuttings were often no more than a paragraph or two[468], and sometimes certain phrases or words were highlighted in bold by the makers of *Gleanings*[469]*,* likely to point readers towards key words within already short inclusions.

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[468] The notable exception was a verbatim reprint of a *Daily Mail* investigation of the pro-Liberal Cobden Club (Nov. 29th, 1902).

[469] 'The Alien who Emigrates to England', *National Union Gleanings,* March 1905.

The ways in which *National Union Gleanings* incorporated the new dailies *Mail* and *Express* shed interesting light on how they may have been seen and understand by the wider Conservative party in Long Edwardian Britain. At an elite level, their emergence was a continuation of old reactions to the press, which was extremely limited in this appreciation of their new and unprecedented popular reach. At a more grassroots level, the new dailies were constructed in this aspect of Conservative discourse as newspapers defined by simplicity of expression and use of plain, often blunt, language. Their extremely irregular inclusion in these monthly journals showcased them as newspapers best read for stripped down summaries and emotional, accessible descriptions of politics that had a strong pro-imperial, anti-Radical and anti-socialist ideology. They did not become a regular or prominent source of news like *The Times* or the traditional Liberal dailies, but became occasional, brief and simplistic contributors to the informing of the wider party. For all of their incredible popular success, and for all the attention paid to their owners by limited elite sections of the party, the wider Conservative party was reacting to the new popular press in ways which suggested a level of interest an enthusiasm for its content different from both much of the mass public and their own party leaders and elites. While not dismissed out of hand, their vibrant place at the heart of British news culture was not reflected in their place within grassroots Conservative party culture. Far from being integral allies of the party – as voices within Edwardian Labour and the Liberals accused – the new dailies occupied a minor place within the wider Conservative party and its relationship with the newspaper industry of the period. The new dailies may have been Unionist allies, but the Unionists themselves paid surprisingly little attention to their development.

Conclusion

The concluding years of the Long Edwardian period between the last two general elections and the outbreak of world war reflected the ways in which the three major political

parties of the period reacted to the new dailies and their potential political significance. It was the year that offered examples from each party that spoke of broader attitudes across the period to this new press, and how the manner of each party's reaction spoke considerably of their broader understandings of the value of popular newspapers as political communicators in proto-ass democratic Britain pre-1914.

One the one hand, 1912 was the year that the Labour party, barely a decade after fighting their first general election, launched the *Daily Citizen*: their attempt to combine traditional 'red' socialist approaches to mass political journalism with 'yellow' emphases on sensation and scandal that they identified as part of the new dailies' particular success among lower-middle class readers. While the *Citizen* would not succeed long-term, its launch (and the near-decade's worth of negotiations and party wrangling to get an equivalent newspaper launched) represented how Labour, both as a party and as a broader political movement, saw the political potential of a newspaper which sold so successfully to large numbers of readers through an emphasis on 'human interest' journalism driven by dramatic language and editorial emphases on certain genres of news, such as crime and sport. While they recognised its potential, the execution of the *Citizen* as a popular political daily exposed how the party' understanding of the new dailies potential was relatively superficial. They understood the basic components of why they were popular, but could not separate themselves from deep-rooted ideological concerns within the British Left about the moral worth of newspapers that explicitly prioritised popular news. They grasped at what the new dailies could do politically, but could not translate them into a workable reality in the form of the *Citizen,* as their significance clashed with socialist ideas of political journalism and popular communication that inherently saw popular newspapers as an enemy. They did, however, battle significantly to try and accept this 'inherent' enemy and the lessons it espoused for their own political ends.

By contrast, the Long Edwardian Liberals did not appear to consider them with any considerable intrigue. Like Labour, they too understood these new newspapers as entities in of themselves that were hostile to their political ambitions. In place of Labour's disdain of a dishonest 'halfpenny' press encroaching on their desired political audience with the wrong kinds of messages, Liberal disdain took the form, on the few occasions it existed, of jokes tinged with a begrudging acceptance. More prominently, however, the new dailies were met with near-deafening silence.

Thirdly, while Labour launched a new daily of their own and the Liberals steadfastly looked away, the Conservatives saw out the period by continuing a gradual party evolution that spoke of their broader understanding of the new dailies as a continuation, however minor, of their traditional approaches to communicating with the British newspaper industry. Most significantly, the Conservatives made British political history in late-1910 through their creation of a new official party post. This post was first held by John Malcolm Fraser, who would later receive a knighthood for his wartime services to the Admiralty. Before his military heroics, however, he was appointed the first Advisor to the Conservative Party on Press Matters. Frustratingly little has survived in the archive which documents his years in this position, but what there is points tantalisingly at the party's understanding, however slight, of the new dailies' political significance. On the one hand, one of the few letters remaining from his pre-war position is addressed to the *Daily Mail*, presenting Alfred Harmsworth with the offer (which was rejected) of a peerage, for his services to the press industry.[470] On the other, his professional background before this political position was a journalist. Most notably, after spells at several London evening papers, he was an editor at the

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[470] Letter from John Malcolm Fraser to Alfred Harmsworth, in *Correspondence and papers, 1912-1960, of Sir Malcolm Fraser (1878-1949),* Oxford, Bodleian Library [MSS. Eng. c. 4788].

Daily Express. Just as the Long Edwardian period was drawing to a close, the Conservatives had turned to a former editor of a new daily to coordinate their press concerns, and one of his few surviving letters addressed the owner of the other two new dailies with an offer of political power and prestige. In terms of the party's internal communication, isolated individual practice and, by the close of the period internal hiring practice, the Conservatives had grown aware of the potential power of the political new daily press.

This awareness can also be seen within the second of Bonar Law's surviving correspondence with Blumenfeld, written just over a year after the first. In place of his refusal in 1910, Bonar Law wrote to the editor of the *Express* requesting that one of his writers, a 'Mr. Pollock', send a copy of a forthcoming article to 'Mr. Thornton'[471]. The significance of this comes from the fact that the Mr. Thornton with whom Bonar Law wanted the *Express* to liaise was, at the time of the letter, the private secretary to Arthur Steel-Maitland: the Conservative Party Chairman from 1911 until 1916.

Bonar Law's willingness to engage with *Express* by the end of the Long Edwardian period, which occurred after the hiring of Fraser as a press advisor, was also noted by the owners of the new dailies. In a letter noted by the archivist to have been written between December 1911 and January 1913, Lord Northcliffe wrote to Max Aitken, the later Lord Beaverbrook and then significant investor in the *Daily Express* about a possible future meeting that suggested that the hiring of Fraser had reaped some direct contact with the new dailies;

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[471] Letter from Andrew Bonar Law to Ralph Blumenfeld, 13 January 1912, Blumenfeld papers, Parliamentary Archives [BLU/1/13/LAW.2]

'I wired today suggesting that Bonar Law might be able to come to Sutton (Northcliffe's private residence) *on Sunday and talk shop and play golf'.*[472]

While the response to this proposed meeting was not among the fragments of the current archive, the fact that the owner of the *Daily Mail* and the *Daily Mirror* was writing to the future owner of the *Daily Express* with the belief that he could invite the current Conservative leader (and a future Prime Minister) to his private residence to play golf together and 'talk shop' shows a significant development across the Long Edwardian period. Not only had the new dailies grown into becoming significant forces within the British press and political culture of the period, but the leader of the Conservative party, by the end of the period, was moving within the same social circle. The likelihood of Lord Salisbury socialising and talking 'shop' with the proprietors of a newspaper which he saw fit only for 'office boys' underlines the development across the period within the Conservative party, which saw the significance of the new dailies develop.

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[472] Letter from Lord Northcliffe to Lord Beaverbrook, December 1911 – January 1913, Beaverbrook Papers, Parliamentary Archives [BBK/G/4/82].

Chapter Seven:

Conclusion

This thesis explored the political significance of the emergent 'new daily' press of the Long Edwardian period. Through exploration of both the newspapers' election-time editions and the archived reactions from within the leading political parties of the period, this thesis challenges the dismissal of the mass daily press in Britain as politically 'feather-brained'. Rather, it asserts that the election-time political content of these three daily newspapers in the years between their births and the outbreak of World War One marked a significant period in the histories of both the British press, the British political system, and pre-1918 British mass democracy.

As outlined in the introduction (Chapter Two), the new dailies represented the most-read and the most commercially-successful newspaper press that had ever existed up to that point in British history. Their success came from their ability to sell spectacularly well to millions of lower-middle and upper-working class people, the archetype of whom was identified by the new dailies themselves and by this thesis as the 'man in the street'. This individual, and the millions he represented, flocked to the new dailies thanks to news content which was concise, comprehensible and entertaining. These same millions, as Chapter Two also argues, were the same mass audience to whom the political establishment of the period was increasingly keen to communicate with. This overlap between the readers of the new dailies, and the voters wanted by the three parties investigated in this research, was what makes the political content, and significance of, the new dailies, such an important addition to current knowledge of pre-Great War British political culture. The significance of this thesis's findings, and how they add to our current knowledge of both the British press and British politics, is outlined below.

Politics within the Pages of the New Dailies

Throughout Chapters Four and Five, this thesis explored a variety of ways in which the new dailies reported on the four general elections of the Long Edwardian period. The findings from the newspaper investigations discovered a number of ways that the new dailies' election news content resonated with their better-known human-interest content. The repeated use of metaphorical representations of elections as war discussed in Chapter Four, for example, spoke of the wider popularity of reportage of war and conflict by the British popular press and its place within Long-Edwardian culture.[473] This in turn represented the wider popularity of representations of violence within late-Victorian popular culture, from which the new dailies could trace a direct lineage back to the likes of Stead.[474] Similarly, the election barometers featuring racing men and motorcars resonated with the success of sporting news

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[473] Hampton, 'The Press, Patriotism, and Public Discussion: C. P. Scott, the Manchester Guardian, and the Boer War, 1899-1902'; IAIN SHARPE, 'Empire, Patriotism and the Working-Class Electorate: The 1900 General Election in the Battersea Constituency', *Parliamentary History* 28, no. 3 (1 October 2009): 392–412, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1750-0206.2009.00116.x; Potter, 'Jingoism, Public Opinion, And The New Imperialism'; Michael Hughes and Harry Wood, 'Crimson Nightmares: Tales of Invasion and Fears of Revolution in Early Twentieth-Century Britain', *Contemporary British History* 28, no. 3 (3 July 2014): 294–317, https://doi.org/10.1080/13619462.2014.941817; Bingham and Conboy, *Tabloid Century : The Popular Press in Britain, 1896 to the Present*, chap. 1; Glenn R. Wilkinson, *Depictions and Images of War in Edwardian Newspapers, 1899-1914* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2003).

[474] Judith. Rowbotham, Samantha. Pegg, and Kim. Stevenson, *Crime News in Modern Britain : Press Reporting and Responsibility, 1820-2010* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), chaps 2–4; Drew Gray, 'Gang Crime and the Media in Late Nineteenth-Century London', *Cultural and Social History* 10, no. 4 (December 2013): 559–75, https://doi.org/10.2752/147800413X13727009732209; Jacobs, 'Edward Lloyd's Sunday Newspapers and the Cultural Politics of Crime News, c. 1840–43'; Curtis, *Jack the Ripper and the London Press*; Judith Knelman, 'Women Murderers in Victorian Britain', *History Today*, vol. 48, 1998; Anwer, 'Murder in Black and White: Victorian Crime Scenes and the Ripper Photographs'.

within British popular journalism, and especially racing and sport's perchance for dramatic, narrative-dependent reporting.[475] Moreover, the representations of election results explored in Chapter Five showcased the new dailies incorporating elements of mass visual and spectator culture within their commentary on results, including the particularly-popular music hall.[476] In this sense, the thesis argues how the political coverage of the new dailies showcased the newspaper's broader awareness of the lives of their readers, and tried to connect the general elections of the period to the enjoyable, accessible mass culture to which their readers flocked.

The political significance of the new dailies coverage came from their content's resonance with the wider consumer culture of the period. The new dailies situated general elections within the lived experiences of their mass readerships. Through their allusions to their other popular news genres, as well as elements of the mass culture of which they

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[475] Tony. Mason, *Association Football and English Society, 1863-1915* (Harvester Press, 1980); Lawrence A. Wenner, *Media, Sports, & Society* (Sage Publications, 1989); Richard Holt, *Sport and the British : A Modern History* (Clarendon Press, 1993); Matthew McIntire, 'Odds, Intelligence, and Prophecies: Racing News in the Penny Press, 1855–1914', *Victorian Periodicals Review* 41, no. 4 (2008): 352–73, https://doi.org/10.1353/vpr.0.0056.

[476] Barry J. Faulk, *Music Hall and Modernity : The Late-Victorian Discovery of Popular Culture* (Ohio University Press, 2004); Matthew Roberts, 'Election Cartoons and Political Communication in Victorian England', *Cultural and Social History* 10, no. 3 (September 2013): 369–95, https://doi.org/10.2752/147800413X13661166397229; Bernard Lightman, 'Victorian Science and Popular Visual Culture', *Early Popular Visual Culture* 10, no. 1 (February 2012): 1–5, https://doi.org/10.1080/17460654.2012.637389; Thompson, '"The Lights of the Electric Octopus Have Been Switched Off": Visual and Political Culture in Edwardian London'; Ray Johnson, 'TRICKS, TRAPS AND TRANSFORMATIONS', *Early Popular Visual Culture* 5, no. 2 (July 2007): 151–65, https://doi.org/10.1080/17460650701433673.

themselves were a prominent part, the new dailies represented political news as an exciting, accessible, and involving part of their reader's day-to-day lives. News of elections was dramatic, and readers were actively encouraged to keep up the date with the election 'races' and 'conflicts' so as to not miss out on news that was made to be unmissable. Indeed, the *Mail* encouraged readers to actively engage in keeping up to date with election news through use of their colour-coded wall charts, which crystallised all the various elements of the new dailies' 'human interest' approach to election news by making the process of tallying results an enjoyable, affordable and accessible activity which encouraged the reader to invest in the daily returns.

More than being dramatic and entertaining, the new dailies also represented their readers, as represented through the archetypal 'man in the street', as important parts of the political process. As Chapter Five detailed, they situated their readers, and by extension the same symbolic 'man in the street' Briton being sought by the political parties of the period[477], at the heart of the elections. There were notable limitations to who fitted within the 'man in the street' archetype, notably on grounds of gender, which resulted in women being excluded from the new dailies' political inclusivity. This gendered limitation still resulted, however, in the active inclusion of millions of lower-middle and upper-working class men of all ages within the election process. Stories of voters travelling to cast their ballots, often at considerable personal trouble, were portrayed as examples for others to follow. Far from being difficult, however, the new dailies situated elections as important yet perfectly accessible part of their readers' lives. In this regard, they were a vital component of the mass, masculine political culture of pre-Great War Britain identified by Thompson, Windscheffel

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[477] See Chapter Three: 'Long Edwardian Politics'

and Trentmann, due to their particular attention to the 'man in the street' noted especially by Thompson.

Advertisers reflected this connection between the elections and the lives of the new dailies' 'man in the street' readers, and featured advertisements that directly linked their products to the elections during which they were published. These had the collective significance of situating election news within the food, drink, furnishings, and other day-to-day belongings which formed part of reader's daily routines and home lives. Beyond an election's convenience, the significance of the various ways in which all three new daily newspapers represented the place of their readers within the elections of the Long Edwardian period was to give them, the everyman readers, power. Everyday citizens were represented as active participants who held real sway, as they were the people whom politicians depended on for support. Said politicians, moreover, were represented as an everyday elite who, while often respectable and even laudable in certain cases, were at the whim of the 'man in the street' for their seat in the next Parliament.

A significant part of the election content of all three new dailies identified by this thesis was the use of visual material. These included the daily cartoon races which represented the overall state of a given election; the photographs of election culture including the 'man in the street' casting his vote; the depictions of the election light shows; and the *Mail's* election wall chart. A particular growth in visual material was noted in the elections of 1906 and 1910. The election-themed advertisements discussed in Chapter Five, for example, appeared across all three new dailies but never during the elections of 1900. Similarly, the light shows and music hall result acts created by the new dailies occurred after 1900, as did the *Mail's* wall charts. The particular prominence of visual election material after 1900 contributes particularly to Trentmann's history of the visual culture of later Edwardian elections, and thus contributes to existing knowledge of this period as one which possessed a

vibrant and especially visual political culture, to which the new dailies were prominent and popular components.

Seen together, the election-time political coverage of the Long Edwardian new dailies represented politics as more enjoyable and easy-to-access than any past popular press, whilst also emphasising the importance of, and the power wielded by, the millions of people who purchased and read their content so readily every single day. They made elections into spectacles both on their pages and in the streets of cities, whilst also outlining how central the man in the street was to British politics, and how easily the somebody who fitted the new dailies' definitions of a 'man in the street' could engage positively and enjoyably with the electoral process. Far from being feather-brained, the new dailies represented politics in complex and fascinating ways which resonated with readers in the same ways that their hugely-successfully and better-known human-interest content. Through the content discussed in these two chapters, they actively included millions of their readers within the political culture of the period by placing elections within their lives, and placing their lives within the election process. The ways that politicians of the period appreciated this, and the second part of this thesis's investigation, is summarised below.

Party-Political Significance

As well as studying the digital newspaper archives through Chapters Four and Five, this thesis explored the ways in which politicians from within the Liberal, Labour, and Conservative parties reacted to the rise of this new press that, as the previous section surmised, represented an important new medium of mass political communication which spoke particularly well to millions of lower-middle class urban Britons. These same people were, as recent historical scholarship has asserted, the types of potential voters increasingly

of interest to politicians from the late-Victorian period onwards.[478] Moreover, much of the

new dailies' election content mirrored the other types of mass political communication

available to Long Edwardian politicians.[479] The study of how political parties understood this

potential new political press would speak, therefore, of broader attitudes within each party to

the merits of popular political communication. This section of the thesis, in turn, contributes,

to the existing histories of each party, as it explores how each party understood and

appreciated the rise of a press that spoke to millions of the people they wanted to connect

with, using communicative methods similar to their own methods of party communication

and propaganda. The extents to which different parties appreciated, or did not appreciate, the

political potential of the new dailies provides deeper insight into the relationship of each of

the three parties with the man in the street who held such electoral power pre-war, and whose

power only grew after 1918 with the expansion of the electoral franchise.

The reactions, or non-reactions, of the Liberal party offer perhaps the most tantalising

addition to the existing historiography of one of the three parties. The lack of material found

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[478] See JON LAWRENCE, 'Class and Gender in the Making of Urban Toryism, 1880–1914', *The English Historical Review* CVIII, no. 428 (1 July 1993): 629–52, https://doi.org/10.1093/ehr/CVIII.428.629; Alex Windscheffel, *Popular Conservatism in Imperial London, 1868-1906* (Royal Historical Society, 2007); James Thompson, *British Political Culture and the Idea of 'Public Opinion', 1867-1914*, n.d.; Luke Blaxill, 'The Language of Imperialism in British Electoral Politics, 1880–1910', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 45, no. 3 (4 May 2017): 416–48, https://doi.org/10.1080/03086534.2017.1302118; MARC BRODIE, 'Voting in the Victorian and Edwardian East End of London', *Parliamentary History* 23, no. 2 (17 March 2008): 225–48, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1750-0206.2004.tb00728.x.

[479] See Miller, *Politics Personified : Portraiture, Caricature and Visual Culture in Britain, c.1830-80.*; Thompson, '"Pictorial Lies"? - Posters and Politics in Britain c .1880-1914'; Thompson, '"The Lights of the Electric Octopus Have Been Switched Off": Visual and Political Culture in Edwardian London'; Lightman, 'Victorian Science and Popular Visual Culture'.

in this thesis's archival investigations, and the limited nature of the new daily-specific

reactions found within the Liberal-supporting press, admittedly paints an incomplete picture.

It does, however, offer an insight into a political party that, as so many histories of the party

have noted, fell apart in part due to the swelling of the electorate after 1918[480]. However, the

'franchise factor' argument[481], like any single factor explaining a party's later collapse, is

unwise to subscribe to completely. As Chapter Six outlined, the findings of this thesis also do

not represent sufficient new evidence to confirm or support any particular side of that

lingering historical debate. However, they do offer fascinating additional context to help

explain the demise of the Liberal party from its heights of the 1906 landslide. The

relationship between the Liberals and the mass press is an additional angle of investigation

that future scholars of the party's decline would be wise to pursue, beyond the limited

reactions explored in this particular project and the existing work that details the limited

Liberal elite attitudes to the popular press of the period.[482]

Regarding Labour, their archived reactions also spoke of a political party that was

hostile to the rise of the new dailies. Unlike the Liberal's indifference, reactions from within

the Labour archives were part of a much broader reaction across the party and the wider

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[480] Packer, *Liberal Government and Politics, 1905–15*; Searle, *The Liberal Party : Triumph and Disintegration, 1886-1929*, 165–75.; Bernstein, *Liberalism and Liberal Politics in Edwardian England*, chaps 6 & 7; Cross, *The Liberals in Power (1905-1914)*; Koss, 'The Destruction of Britain's Last Liberal Government'; Sykes, *The Rise and Fall of British Liberalism, 1776-1988*, chap. 5.

[481] P. F. Clarke et al., 'Liberals, Labour and the Franchise', *The English Historical Review* 92 (1977): 582–90, https://doi.org/10.2307/566076.

[482] McEwen, 'Northcliffe and Lloyd George at War, 1914–1918'; Kenneth O. Morgan, '7 December 1916: Asquith, Lloyd George and the Crisis of Liberalism', *Parliamentary History* 36, no. 3 (1 October 2017): 361–71, https://doi.org/10.1111/1750-0206.12318; McEwen, 'Lloyd George's Acquisition of the Daily Chronicle in 1918'.

British left which, as Chapter Six detailed, prompted a complex and divided party response. Most notably, the party launched their own daily newspaper called the *Daily Citizen* which was deliberately styled upon the new dailies and attempted to emulate aspects of their hugely successful content. This thesis, therefore, recalibrates existing work on Labour's relationship with the mass media[483], by noting how the party actively tried to establish a mass media presence within Britain before the previously understood 'start' of their developments post-1918.

The launch of the *Citizen* was not, however, a straightforward development. Rather, its launch and later demise occurred within a broader dialogue across the British left which exposed fundamental differences of opinion regarding what type of press was worthy of being 'political', and what type of press should be courted by both Labour politicians and potential Labour voters. This difference speaks of the wider mistrust between Labour and the British press noted by past scholarship[484], but also provides vital new thinking by situating the party's supposed maturing relationship with the mass media back in time by almost a decade. While the *Citizen* was fraught with ideological tension both within in each edition and as highlighted by the fierce differences of opinion found in the party's archives, it represented the most tangible reaction from across the Edwardian political establishment as to the potential of the new dailies as a political communicator. Many in Labour distrusted and outright-hated the type of journalism that they represented, but its particular appeal with the British lower-middle and working classes was something keenly noted by voices across the

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[483] Beers, *Your Britain : Media and the Making of the Labour Party*.

[484] See Lindsay Tanner, 'A Protracted Evolution: Labor in Victorian Politics 1889-1903', *Labour History*, no. 42 (1982): 40–53, https://doi.org/10.2307/27508514; James Thomas, *Popular Newspapers, the Labour Party and British Politics*, n.d.

party. This, in turn, highlights how keenly aware the party was as to the potential rewards of popular media as a medium for speaking to potential supporters of the Labour movement.

The reactions of the Conservatives, in contrast, were considerably less frenetic. At an elite level, Salisbury's 'office boys' critique seemed to resonate, as Chamberlain stood as a sole leading Conservative who saw the potential in the new dailies as a political communicator. In this way, the two elder parties within British politics shared a scepticism of the new dailies' potentials, as both the Liberal and Conservative elites were broadly dismissive of the new dailies within their first decade of their existence. Even when offered a direct opportunity by a leading figure in popular journalism, as occurred to the latter party with Stead's offer to the Conservative leader Balfour, the chance to engage with popular journalism as a political medium was dismissed until right before the end of the Long Edwardian period.

However, the Conservatives concluded the Long Edwardian period with the tantalising appointment of the first government role specifically tasked with 'Matters of the Press'. This appointment of a former new-daily editor, combined with the findings from the party's internal *Gleanings* monthly, present a more complex set of reactions than that of the Liberals. As seen in *Gleanings,* the new dailies steadily became a part of the recommended reading material for party agents, almost exclusively as a source of concise and accessible news items which summarised larger topics relating to foreign or domestic politics. Then, just as the period came to a close, the party created a position within the party with the specific task of liaising with the press, and chose somebody whose background was from one of the new dailies. This final note, regrettably incomplete in the archives, does still relate this thesis to the recent body of work on the late-Victorian Conservatives which note how, far from a period of crisis, the party was growing its support outside of traditional 'villa toryism' voters through communication with lower-middle and working-class urban citizens which related

party policy to key parts of the lived experiences of urban dwellers, such as alcohol and sport.[485] Their appointment of a press liaison, therefore, should be understood within a broader framework that sees the Long Edwardian Conservatives, if slower than Labour, seeing the real potential of the new dailies as a potential pathway through which the party could communicate with millions of lower-middle and upper-working class people who, as the new dailies themselves asserted, held real political influence.

Summary

The period between the launch of the first new daily in 1896 and the outbreak of global war, so this thesis concludes, is one that should be understood as a fascinating period within histories of British politics and the British press. It was a new mass press which sold to millions of people every day, and represented news from elections in ways which made the political process more open, accessible, and enjoyable than any press than had come before it. Considering that this same period was one where the new dailies' 'man in the street' was increasingly sought after by political parties, this made the new press a vital and important new medium of mass political communication, which included millions of people into election processes which, historically, they had long been denied access to. More than just making politics easy and entertaining to read about, they made elections into arenas where their readers' involvement was welcome and possessed real power. Their readers were placed at the centre of the political process in a variety of ways which made their acts of voting an enjoyable and engaging act that also came with a real sense of significance and pride.

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[485] LAWRENCE, 'Class and Gender in the Making of Urban Toryism, 1880–1914'; Windscheffel, *Popular Conservatism in Imperial London, 1868-1906*; DAVID THACKERAY, 'RETHINKING THE EDWARDIAN CRISIS OF CONSERVATISM', *The Historical Journal* 54, no. 01 (31 March 2011): 191–213, https://doi.org/10.1017/S0018246X10000518.

The potency of this new press, and their ability to speak so successfully to their millions of readers, led to a complex variety of reactions from across the major political parties of the period. These reactions, ranging from one party's indifference to another's launching their own halfpenny daily, provide fascinating insight into pre-1914 political culture in Britain by better understanding the differing ways that parties understood and reacted to a new press that was speaking to the 'man in the street' to whom they all wished to communicate. In the case of the Conservatives and especially Labour, the archives demonstrate two parties who saw the potential of a press that sold so well to the man in the street. In the case of the Liberals, this thesis adds additional fuel to the ongoing debates about the party's decline, and how they – in contrast to the other two parties – saw so little in a daily press that sold to the kinds of people who, after the end of the war, would eventually vote them into the political abyss.

In summary, this potent and powerful new political press, and the complexity of the political reactions they provoked, represented something that was far from 'feather-brained'…

Further Research

This thesis has encountered several areas in its approach to the research material that point towards the need to further study some of its conclusions. As the following section will discuss, some of these avenues for future research came about due to limitations of the project's methodology, both in terms of its use of the newspaper material and the extent of the 'reactions' used in Chapter Six. Others, meanwhile, draw on aspects of the research which the researcher argues as viable avenues for future study, but that went beyond the scope of the thesis's research.

One of the most significant areas for future research that this thesis would encourage is a greater understanding of the political 'reactions' to the new mass daily press in the pre-Great war period. This thesis explored archive material from a variety of physical sites, in an attempt to source as many reactions from within collections related to the three major political parties of the period: Liberal, Conservative, and Labour. These collections represented a substantial amount of work, and housed information that made for interesting discussion within Chapter Six. The limitations placed by this thesis on the 'reactions' investigated were justified within Chapter Three, but there is undeniable scope for future work which better explores how the three new dailies were responded to by parties and politicians across Long Edwardian Britain.

Specifically, an investigation of Long Edwardian election addresses would likely prove a rich source of relevant material. Quotes from election addresses appeared in this thesis's study of reactions, such as Lloyd George's joke about the *Mail* quoted in the *Daily News*. Considering the work by Lawrence on the significance of the hustings and the platform within pre-1914 political culture, a study which explored how politicians potentially discussed the new dailies within their election campaigning – parallel to the periods of

election coverage explored in Chapters Four and Five – would be a fascinating next step for this area of research. The growing digitisation of historic election addresses, such as the Scottish Political Archive at the University of Stirling, further suggests the possibility of an avenue of research that, while outside the scope and scale of this thesis, would provide fascinating and welcome additional information to the reactions explored in Chapter Six. Moreover, this thesis's focus on party-political archives excluded collections of private papers which, if interrogated, may have yielded further examples of political 'reactions' to the new dailies. In particular, the papers of Lord Northcliffe at the British Library may contain material that future study may be wise to pursue in order to more fully flesh out the political responses to the new dailies during the Long Edwardian period.

Further regarding digitisation, there is room for additional work that does explore the quantitative computational possibilities of the new dailies' online archives. As Chapter Three detailed, the poor usability of the new dailies' archives led to a restriction in the work that was completed using the keyword possibilities of a digital newspaper archive. Nicholson's dismissal of the 'near-unusable' UKPressOnline catalogue was proven correct, as attempts to utilise further quantitative explorations of the *Express* and *Mirror* were hindered considerably by the poor quality of the search engine, and the opaqueness of any keyword-sourced results. This thesis does not however want to discredit quantitative 'DH' work into online newspaper archives in general. As a result, there is scope to better apply quantitative methods to study patterns within the political content of the new dailies. If nothing else, further quantitative studies of these collections may better re-raise Clare Horrocks' concerns of the commercial issues of newspaper archiving online, and how the new dailies' privatisation has led to digital collections that actively limit the possibilities for researchers due to poor usability.

Regarding this thesis's placing of the new dailies within the mass consumer and political culture of the pre-Great War period, there is also scope for additional work.

Specifically, Chapter Five's identification of the new dailies' election light shows and music hall acts encourages the further study of how wider mass culture, of which the new dailies were a part, engaged with elections. Similar to Thompson's study of the 'electric octopus' at the 1907 London Council elections, there is considerable potential to explore how the general elections of the Long Edwardian period became a part of the mass culture explored in part within Chapter Five of this thesis. A fuller understanding of this culture, and how music, sport, literature, theatre, and public leisure all engaged with election-time political content, would further flesh out the place of the new dailies within said culture. Moreover, it would further contextualise the significance of the new dailies within this political culture. This is because it would shed further understanding on the extent to which the new dailies were a part of a broader election atmosphere within which the 'man in the street' experienced election-themed entertainment beyond those acts paid for by one of the new dailies. This fuller fleshing out of the everyman culture would be a welcome addition to the recent scholarship on the period discussed at the end of Chapter Three, and build on the findings and discussion raised within this thesis which has further pointed to the vibrancy and inclusivity of pre-1914 political culture in Britain.

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Number of articles featuring the words 'war' AND 'election', separated by newspaper and by general election period.

	Daily Mail	*Daily Express*	*Daily Mirror*
1900	57	108	N/A
1906	16	47	29
1910 (January)	21	46	10
1910 (December)	14	30	5

Table 2:

Number of articles featuring the words 'election' AND 'fight' OR 'fighting', separated by newspaper and by general election period.

	Daily Mail	*Daily Express*	*Daily Mirror*
1900	104	102	N/A
1906	44	49	43
1910 (January)	42	59	14
1910 (December)	39	40	16

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Newspapers & Periodicals

Cooperative News

Daily Citizen

Daily Express

Daily Mail

Daily Mirror

Daily News

Labour Leader

National Union Gleanings

Archive Collections

Bishopsgate Institute, London

Bodleian Library, University of Oxford – Conservative Party Archives

Bristol University Library

British Library, London

London School of Economics – Liberal Special Collections

Parliamentary Archives, London

People's History Museum, Manchester – Labour Party Archives

Working Class Movement Library, Salford

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