

**‘When Media Histories Collide’: Researching the Development of Print
Media in Australia and New Zealand, 1840–1940**

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Denis Cryle has presented the rationale for a research project that will examine the significant contribution of the colonial press to the processes of settlement and modernity. He proposes a more integrated study of the commonalities and differences between Australian and New Zealand print media in the period 1840 to 1940, a century of major change in settlement and communications patterns in both countries, than has occurred in previous studies. The proposed project investigates the two-way flow of personnel, equipment, plant, information and ideas between Australia and New Zealand, and examines the ways in which this relationship was altered or renegotiated in times of nationalism and independence. It builds on recent and current research by Cryle, notably his ARC Discovery Grant (2004-2006) ‘“Empire to Antipodes”: Australia-New Zealand in the Empire/Commonwealth Press Union (1909-1970)’ and Harvey’s ongoing investigations into New Zealand press history, including some work into trans-Tasman relationships.

This paper suggests how the research could be carried out. Broadly speaking, the research approach is to survey existing comparative sources and approaches, identify their strengths and limitations, then seek to round out the picture by locating complementary sources and developing a richer, more detailed description of the nature and extent of the relationship between the Australian and New Zealand print media from 1840 to 1940. In the process

selective case studies across print media, including newspapers, magazines and books, will be developed.

The methodology to be employed falls into two distinct categories:

- empirical and historical, involving extensive literature reviews and intensive investigation of primary sources and archives; and
- quantitative, involving content analysis of selected newspapers at critical periods of the century under investigation.

The empirical and historical approaches will pay special attention to collections relatively unexplored by print media historians: the Alexander Turnbull Library (Wellington), the Hocken Library (Dunedin) and the Mitchell Library (Sydney). The collections of the National Library of Australia (Canberra) will also be investigated extensively.

The case study approach, as used in the History of the Book in Australia project (Lyons and Arnold 2001) and to a lesser extent in the New Zealand equivalent project (Griffith, Harvey and Maslen 1997) will also be applied. The research will develop selective case studies that exemplify key aspects of the relationships between Australia and New Zealand; these will contribute to a larger historical survey that will be an outcome of the research. Case studies will be in three categories – of

- journalists and printing trade personnel who worked in both New Zealand and Australia;
- specific newspapers, noting particularly the New Zealand and Australian news they included and the sources of this news; and
- press-related organizations such as press associations, the Empire Press Union, typographical unions, and companies whose activities encompassed both countries.

This is where the quantitative methodological approach comes into play. These case studies will include extensive examinations of the ‘mental maps’ (Atkinson 1978) that can be deduced from a geographically-grounded content analysis of specific newspaper titles, to determine the sources of news. A quantitative approach will also be applied to print media

personnel, to address questions such as how many moved across the Tasman, where did they come from, how often they migrated, and when these migrations took place.

To summarise: the approach falls into three principal phases:

1. Surveying existing comparative sources and approaches
2. Developing a richer, more detailed description based on four periods
3. Developing themes and case studies.

These phases will proceed simultaneously, but for the sake of clarity are described here as if they will be carried out consecutively.

In order to structure and make sense of the large quantities of data that will be generated as this research proceeds, and to present its results in a meaningful way, the century under investigation will be divided into four periods:

- Early and mid-colonial periods (settlement, to 1860)
- Late colonial period (the expansive decades, 1860-1890)
- Federation period (1890-1920)
- Inter-War period (1920-1940).

Phase 1: Survey of existing comparative sources and approaches

The basis of this research will be a close reading of the documentary evidence to reveal new insights. This research must therefore, inevitably, begin with an extensive literature review. The obvious start is with the relatively small quantity of literature that has already been published about trans-Tasman connections in journalism, the press, and the book trade. Work by Harvey (1999, 2002, 2003), Harvey and Somerville (1998), and Cryle (2002, 2004), and the surveys of the history of the book in Australia (Lyons and Arnold 2001) and New Zealand (where it is also termed *print culture*: Griffith, Harvey and Maslen 1997) provides a starting point, one convincingly indicating that the extent and significance of the Australian-New Zealand relationship is a fruitful area for further investigation. The journal literature from both countries will be thoroughly examined to determine further relevant material (examples here include the *Bibliographical Society of Australia and New Zealand Bulletin*, the standard Australian and New Zealand history journals, journals that publish media history articles such

as *Australian Journalism Review*, and journals that occasionally publish relevant material, such as *Journal of Australian Studies*). Work in empire press history (such as Potter, 2003, and Kaul, 2003) will be used as a base to establish the dominant metropole/periphery paradigm on which much previous research into print media history in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries has been based, and which this research will investigate and react to.

As indicated, some preliminary investigations have been carried out in relevant areas: indicative examples follow. Harvey has compared lists of newspaper personnel in Australia with lists of those working in New Zealand to identify names in common. Although this comparison has to date been selective, being based only the period 1870 to 1900 for New Zealand and on personnel working in Victoria from 1838 to 1924 (Darragh 1997), it has determined that this is a fruitful avenue to pursue. Russell's listing of early Melbourne printers (Russell 2005) will also assist. The archives of the New Zealand Press Association (held by the Turnbull Library, Wellington) have been examined by both Harvey and Cryle, and further investigation into them will reveal more about the Australian connections with New Zealand, and vice versa. Earlier work on Joseph Ives (Harvey 1988), a 'rag-planter' (establisher of newspapers) identified an Australian connection that will be pursued, and related unpublished work by Harvey indicates that Ives was not alone in these activities in both countries. Harvey's research into David Burn, editor from 1848 to 1861 of the Maori language newspaper *The Maori Messenger*, whose activities in Australia before emigrating to New Zealand included journalism in Tasmania and accompanying Sir George Grey on his explorations of the western and north-western coastal regions of Australia, have indicated that studies of key personnel are fruitful.

Phase 2: Developing a richer, more detailed description

The second phase will seek to flesh out the incomplete picture identified in the survey of existing comparative sources and approaches by locating and examining sources that are complementary to the material located in the first phase, and from this developing a more holistic description that seeks to better explain the nature, extent, significance and influences of the trans-Tasman relationships in the print media during the century 1840 to 1940. It will be structured around four periods (early and mid-colonial periods, settlement to 1860; late colonial period, 1860-1890, Federation, 1890-1920, and the inter-War period, 1920-1940).

In this phase an early step is to survey existing research in order to identify other researchers working in this and cognate fields, and to clearly ascertain the gaps that exist in our current state of knowledge. This phase is an exercise in clarification, in making more specific what has already been identified in the preceding literature review, rather than new work (although it is envisaged that research and researchers currently unknown to the CIs will be identified and the relevance of their work assessed in relation to this project). For example, it is anticipated that research carried out at the Stout Research Centre, Victoria University of Wellington, most recently by Lydia Wevers (of which Wevers 2002 is an example) will feed directly into and inform this research.

Another early step in this phase is to identify significant sources that warrant detailed investigation. As noted earlier, the collections of the Alexander Turnbull Library (Wellington), the Hocken Library (Dunedin), and the Mitchell Library (Sydney) have been identified as having material relevant to this research, and they have not to date been heavily mined by press or print historians. For instance, the Turnbull Library's extensive biographical indexes and major collections of archival material, such as the NZ News and NZPA collections, are relevant to this research. The Hocken Library contains relatively unexplored archival material about the *Otago Daily Times*, a significant business and newspaper for this research because of its extensive connections with Victoria and New South Wales. The Mitchell Library's archival material about the early colonial period will bear re-interrogation against this project's research questions. The National Library of Australia's extensive collections of journals, online resources, monographs, Australian newspapers, and biographical compendiums, such as biographical dictionaries, trade journals (especially the *Australasian Typographical Journal*), and published biographies provide an excellent base for this and the preceding phase of this research. The National Library of Australia also holds manuscript sources to examine for this research: illustrative examples from the many that could be selected include, for the early colonial period, T.S. Forsaith's 'Autobiographical Memoranda' (1846-) containing information about several Auckland and Dunedin newspapers, and significant collections of archival material relating to the twentieth century, such as A. T. Shakespeare papers in the National Library's Australian Journalists archives, and papers of the Australian Provincial Press Association. Online access mechanisms to other manuscript material, such as NRAM (the New Zealand National Register of Archives and Manuscripts) and its Australian equivalent RAAM (Register of Australian Archives and Manuscripts) will be thoroughly investigated.

Investigation of the typographical societies and other unions of press personnel will identify commonalities, especially in personnel who worked in both countries, but also in other aspects of practice: here an obvious example is in the flow of machinery and printing equipment between Australia and New Zealand, although there are many other areas also to be investigated. This investigation will be developed through a close reading of the journals published by these societies (for example, the *Australasian Typographical Journal* 1870-1916, and the *New Zealand Press News and Typographical Circular* (later the *Colonial Printers Register*, then *Griffin's Colonial Press Register*, 1877-1881) and also – if extant – any archives of these societies. (This close reading will also form the basis of case studies in the third phase, described below.) During the process of investigating these sources a list of personnel will be compiled electronically and used for comparative purposes. This will reveal the extent of the trans-Tasman migration and suggest any patterns, such as increased movement in particular periods, or between particular cities and/or colonies. Some existing listings of personnel will be used as a starting point: Ian Morrison's database available through the University of Otago's English Department, based on the *New Zealand Press News and Typographical Circular* and on newspaper registrations submitted to the New Zealand Supreme Court, and Harvey's unpublished listing of Christchurch newspaper personnel, 1880-1900, are two examples. Existing biographical dictionaries (such as the *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography* 1990-2000 and its associated web site, and the *Australian Dictionary of National Biography*) will be important sources to investigate in identifying personnel and assessing the extent and impact of their activities.

Another fruitful area to be examined in depth are the bibliographies of the printed output of Australia and New Zealand. The recently published *Books in Maori 1815-1900: Nga Tanga Reo Maori* (Parkinson and Griffith 2004) is likely to prove very fertile as a source of information about early collaborations between the two countries, especially Sydney, Auckland and Wellington. Although many of these links have already been already identified, such as the printing of Maori material in Sydney in 1815, 1827 and 1830 (Bagnall, v.1, entries 2971, 447, 448) new collaborations have been identified by Parkinson and Griffith. The retrospective national bibliographies of Australia (Ferguson, 1941-1969 and the *Retrospective National Bibliography of Australia* for the period 1901-1950) and New Zealand (Bagnall 1969-1985) are, here, major sources to be investigated.

Through each phase of this research the newspapers and journals published from 1840 to 1940 in Australia and in New Zealand are themselves a key source. New Zealand newspapers will be accessed through the National Library of New Zealand's *Papers Past* web portal and microfilms of New Zealand newspapers. New Zealand-published journals will be accessed at the Turnbull Library (Wellington). Australian newspapers and journals will be accessed at the libraries which have major holdings of them: the National Library of Australia, the Mitchell Library, and the State Library of Victoria; and through the small but increasing number of newspaper and journal titles available in full text through the Internet. (In this respect the recent announcement by the National Library of Australia that it would soon begin digitising major Australian dailies from their date of publication up to 1954 is welcome.)

It is possible that there are other print culture activities which can illuminate the print media connections being investigated in this study. For example, there is a possible parallel between newspapers and colonial editions (Johanson 2000). Identifying and examining such activities will be pursued as part of this phase of the research.

Phase 3: Themes and case studies

The second phase will identify material from which themes and case studies will be developed in the third phase. Although it is perhaps premature to conjecture about precisely what these themes might be, some that are likely to emerge are:

- For the early and mid-colonial periods (settlement, to 1860): the development of print industries in relation to settlement patterns, including trans-Tasman migration
- For the late colonial period (the expansive decades, 1860-1890): the expansion of communication and media industries; the changing role of specific centres (Wellington/Auckland and Melbourne/Sydney)
- For the Federation period (1890-1920): contradictions of nationalism and independence; ongoing links in literary journalism (e.g. *The Bulletin*); unionisation (journalists and printing associations); rise of the illustrated press and the sporting press
- For the inter-War period (1920-1940): renewed Dominion ties and post-war competition.

Selective case studies from the print media are a key aspect of this research, to provide indicative examples of themes and major influences. Some of these case studies will be comparative, to identify and describe some of the differences and similarities between the two countries. The use of case studies provides a kind of grounded theory basis for this research, and is based on that approach taken by the History of the Book in Australia project (Lyons and Arnold 2001).

These case studies will encompass:

- journalists and printing trade personnel who worked in both New Zealand and Australia;
- specific newspapers, noting particularly the New Zealand and Australian news they included and the sources of this news; and
- press-related organizations such as press associations, the Empire Press Union, typographical unions, and companies whose activities encompassed both countries.

Case studies of personnel

Case studies of journalists, printing trade personnel and others involved in print media who worked in both New Zealand and Australia will make clearer the nature and extent of trans-Tasman relationships. These case studies will focus on the individuals' political intersections with newspapers, as the careers of Julius Vogel (Dalziel 1986), Joseph Ives (Harvey 1988) and journalists examined by Cryle (1990) exemplify. The previous phases of this research will identify some relevant case studies; new case studies which complement them and flesh out a more rounded picture will be developed. Examples of case studies from the early decades of the century this study will investigate include the activities of David Burn, editor of the Maori language newspaper *The Maori Messenger* from 1848 to 1861, whose Australian connections were significant in explaining his career in New Zealand. Although some of Burn's activities as a newspaper editor in New Zealand have been reported on by Harvey (1991), continuing investigations based on archival sources at the National Archives of New Zealand will allow a more complete picture of Burn's activities in Australia and of his 'mental map' to be drawn. Salmond's (1995) review of the activities of Geoffrey Eagar and John Moore in New Zealand during the first half of the 1840s, is another existing study that, when expanded to the rest of their careers, will cast new light on trans-Tasman contacts. Both Eagar and Moore worked in Sydney before moving to New Zealand to establish

newspapers and provide printing services to the fledgling colonial government; Moore in particular is worth further study because he regularly moved between the two countries during his career, and Salmond's study notes only a small part of his activities.

From a later period, Harvey's study (1988) of Joseph Ivess identified Australian connections that will be investigated, and Ivess's role in attempting to float the Anglo-Colonial Press Association in 1894 as an alternative source of cable news for country newspapers in New Zealand is another aspect of his activities where further investigation will add to our current state of knowledge. Ivess's activities as a 'rag-planter' were also pursued by others, and there are many examples of individuals who worked in both countries: Gresley Lukin (Queensland, Wellington) and J.T Paul (Victoria and Dunedin), are prominent names that have been identified as working in both countries, and many others, less well known, have been identified by Harvey through a comparison of newspaper registrations in New Zealand with those in Victoria (Darragh 1997) for the Federation period and up to the First World War.

Another productive topic for a case study is an examination of Sydney newspapers (the *Daily Telegraph*, *Sun*, and *Daily Guardian*) as a 'Fleet Street' for journalists from New Zealand. Oosterman's study (2005) provides some starting points. The question of whether there was a Melbourne equivalent in an earlier period, based perhaps on the *Argus*, could also be examined.

Case studies of newspapers

Detailed case studies of specific newspapers which investigate the New Zealand and Australian news they included, the sources of this news, and the mechanisms used to share it, will be developed. Critical influences on news gathering and the availability, style and content of news were the effect of the telegraph (most notably the opening of the trans-Tasman cable in 1876) and shipping links. Although these have been investigated in some depth (e.g. the role of the telegraph by Day 1986, Potter 2003), such a geographically grounded analysis of news sources between New Zealand and Australia is likely to produce new insights, as Rees Jones (2004) has shown in her study of the *Poverty Bay Herald* (Gisborne, New Zealand). Mail services and shipping routes warrant more attention than they have yet received: for example, a special deal was struck by the New South Wales government with New Zealand (a deal that did not include Victoria) for a San Francisco mail service in the early 1870s (information from Peter Putnis, email 3 May 2005) and the effect

of this and similar arrangements require investigation. Connections between the illustrated newspapers published during the nineteenth century in Australia and those published in New Zealand have been suggested by Dowling (1995) who points to the exchange of stereotyped illustrations among these illustrated newspapers as worthy of further investigation. A thorough study of the *Australasian*, with its inter-colonial audience, combined with a comparison of weekly newspapers from each country, will clarify the nature and extent of such connections. Another case study that is likely to prove fruitful is an examination of Norton's *Truth*, which will indicate whether its New Zealand edition was similar to an Australian state edition, and the nature of the differences.

More needs to be said about the quantitative research that will be undertaken to determine where news came from. A geographically-grounded analysis of news sources based on the approach used by Atkinson (1978) and subsequently further developed (see Walmsley (1980) and Western and Hughes (1983: 109-133) for examples) will – as indicated in the previous paper – provide valuable insights into the Tasman connection, indicating more precisely how information, ideas and commerce flowed between Australia and New Zealand. Atkinson's approach provides a means of identifying 'mental maps' and 'international networks that involve ideas both about places and about the people who lived in them' (1978:88). One aim of such an analysis in this project is to establish a base-line norm, so that it can be established whether there were periods of divergence or convergence in the century under study. It is therefore critical to select for analysis an appropriate sample, representing a range of characteristics: before and after the introduction of the telegraph, representative of both countries, metropolitan and country newspapers, and metropolitan and popular papers at a later period. A quantitative approach will also be applied to print media personnel, to address questions raised by their migration across the Tasman in both directions. This data will allow a better sense of what happened across the whole period being examined in this research to be developed. It will also identify specific periods which were anomalous and which therefore need to be accounted for in the samples selected for case studies.

Case studies of press-related organisations

Similarly, case studies of press-related organizations, such as press associations, the Empire Press Union, and companies whose activities encompassed both countries will be developed to illustrate the extent and nature of their trans-Tasman activities. In some cases these case studies will extend existing research, such as Cryle's investigations into the Empire Press

Union (Cryle 2002) and Gordon and Gotch (Cryle 2004, 2005). Other candidates for closer study include equipment suppliers such as the firm of F.T. Wimble, companies who supplied copy to newspapers (one of these, S. and D. Reid based in Melbourne, is noted in Harvey (2003)), and typographical associations.

Case studies of some newspaper chains will also be developed. They could include the activities of the influential Auckland-based Horton family whose *New Zealand Herald* was the flagship of an expanding chain of activities, and Hugh Denison's Newspapers Company, which operated its own cable service, and was aggressively expanding. The post-war period also saw the beginning of some of the now dominant Packer and Murdoch chains, which may also be noted.

Other case studies are also being contemplated as part of this research: one such is a study of the reception of linotypes in the newspaper industry in Australia and New Zealand, where there is evidence (for example in the business records of the *Lyttelton Times*, held by the Turnbull Library) that connects both countries in collaborative ventures. This case study links in to one of the main themes of this study, that promoting technology innovation.

An approach such as that described in this paper will provide a grounded study of the press in Australia and New Zealand for the century 1840 to 1940. This longitudinal study will allow a fuller understanding of the fluctuations on both sides of the Tasman in labour relations, resources, communications and co-operation. It will also allow better identification of the commonalities of traditions and attitudes shared by the Tasman press.

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