

The Morning Post.

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The Morning Post was founded on November 1772 by a group of 12 men in an attempt to circumvent the Stamp Duty payable by newspapers – it was claimed on its masthead that it was an advertising pamphlet rather than a newspaper but although more space was dedicated to advertisements than news in its early issues the authorities were having none of this and the threat of legislation being put through Parliament to close this loophole the paper fell into line in its fourteenth issue, being forced to halve its pagination as a result.

But despite this and other early setbacks the paper eventually found its feet under its owner from 1795-1801 Daniel Stuart, when it could call upon the services of such literary figures as Charles Lamb, Samuel Taylor Coleridge and William Wordsworth, and by the time of its 50,000th issue in 1932 could claim the record of having the longest period of continuous daily publication in the English-speaking world, and consider itself the Senior Daily of the British Empire.

Amongst its accomplishments in its history was that it was the first daily newspaper to include a women's page, and employ the first female war correspondent, Lady Florence Dixie during the first Anglo-Boer War in 1881. Indeed it was its negative coverage of a woman, namely Caroline of Brunswick, wife of George IV after the latter's accession in 1820 which created trouble for the paper with an enraged mob smashing up the front of the paper's offices in the Strand. Even worse was to follow for its then owner, Nicholas Byrne, who was stabbed at his desk in 1832, eventually succumbing to his injuries the following year.

Another change of owner saw another period of decline, despite having a young Benjamin Disraeli among its writers, but under the editorship of Algernon Borthwick, later Lord Glenesk, who was just 20 years of age when he took over the post from his father in 1852 it regained its respect and profitability, helped by being the first London paper to start printing regular notices of plays, concerts and operas; Glenesk would buy the paper in 1876 for £25,000, reduce the cover price to 1d and see the paper thrive to the extent it had to expand back into the Strand from its

Wellington Street site. In 1907 the paper moved to purpose-built premises at 1 Aldwych, where it would remain for the next 20 years, notably housing the Government's General Strike-breaking British Gazette in 1926 and creating controversy by its presenting, after organising a collection, a large cheque and golden sword to Reginald Dyer who had overseen the Amritsar Massacre of 1919, and the following year publishing a series of articles on the Protocols of the Elders of Zion.

But the writing by then was nearly on the wall. A consortium headed by the Duke of Northumberland had bought the paper in 1925, and reduced its price back to a penny the following year, but the circulation had failed to increase substantially and standing at only 100,000 the paper was once again in financial difficulties. Lord Camrose, proprietor of the Daily Telegraph, was approached, and he agreed to take over the paper. However in doing so it would be merged with that title rather than continued in its own right. Thus on September 30 1937 the last issue was printed, much to the dismay of Margot Asquith, widow of the former Prime Minister, who praised the fact that it had had "character - which few papers have, and above all courage – which no paper has." The name lived on for a further 32 years, as part of the Telegraph's full title, but gradually in diminishing emphasis until October 21 1969 when it was finally dropped and passed fully into history.

