



Moruya's Newspapers and the people who ran them Part 2.

Wendy Simes

Changing ownerships of the Moruya Examiner

Following the Harvisons came a steady stream of different proprietors, many of whom were very short lived as was the case of the next owner Wolff Muller.

Wolff Muller and daughter Ruth

After the death of Olive in February 1939 Arthur sold the newspaper to **Wolff Muller**. Mr Muller was an experienced newspaper man having been on the staff of the Manning River Times and Advocate¹ and the proprietor of the Canowindra Star and had previously conducted the Carcoar Chronicle and the Eugowra Mid-western.

However by April 1940 the editorial work was handed over to his daughter **Ruth Muller** and ill health prevented him from continuing with the newspaper. He died in September 1941 with the newspaper having been sold in January 1941 to Frank Handley.

Frank Hanley

Frank Hanley had previously been the proprietor, with his brother, of the Port Fairy Gazette, Victoria. He moved to Moruya with his wife and two sons to take over the paper.

The Braidwood Review and District Advocate described his first issue as a big improvement, describing the issue as "*brightly written and very attractively set up.*" Mr Hanley obviously had a sense of humour as the excerpt reported in the Illawarra Mercury 9 April 1943 illustrates.

"EDITORS AND GRAPE GROWERS. The editors of three southern papers claim to be growers of out sizes in grapes and tomatoes. The editor of the Cobargo Chronicle has offered to adjudicate as to who has the right to claim the championship if two pounds of each variety are sent to him by the rivals. The editor of the Moruya Examiner has offered to send his quota along, but wants to know what he will do with the other half of the tomato."

In December 1945 he also purchased the Shoalhaven News at which time Hanley was the proprietor of the Moruya Examiner, the Bateman's Bay Times and the Milton Times.

Like many other newspaper proprietors Mr Hanley ran his papers with the support of his wife Jessie Tullock. The Scone Advocate in reporting the sale of The Moruya Examiner says of Jessie "*Mr Hanley made a success of his chain, I fancy, because of the journalistic and business aptitude of his good wife.*"²

However in December 1946 Mr Hanley who was then living in Nowra sold the Moruya Examiner, Batemans Bay Times and Milton Times and the Shoalhaven Nowra News to Mr Howard N. Wilson of the Barrier Miner of Broken Hill.

Frank died in 1978 aged 83 at Labrador on the Gold Coast and Jessie in 1988.

¹ Manning River Times and Advocate 22nd November 1939

² Scone Advocate 24th December 1947



Mr Howard Noel Wilson

Mr Wilson had obtained his printing experience with the Barrier Miner, Broken Hill. In February 1947 the Barrier Miner reported that Mr and Mrs Wilson and daughter Sadie were leaving Broken Hill for Nowra. Both Howard and his wife Edna Newton has been born in Broken Hill so moving to Nowra would have been a big step in their lives, but evidently a successful one. Mr Wilson's paper the Shoalhaven and Nowra News in 1950 and 1951 received the W.O. Richards trophy for the best produced country weekly newspaper in NSW³. He died in Nowra aged 78 in January 1980.

He did not keep the Moruya Examiner long, selling it in 1948 to John J. Stewart.

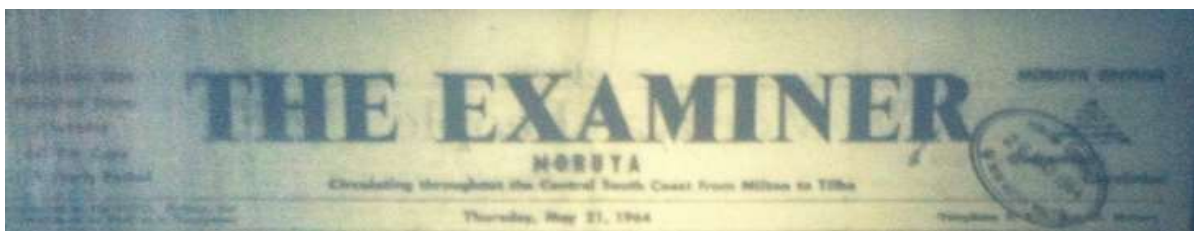
John J Stewart

In a supplement to the Moruya Examiner to celebrate 125 years of publications the writer states "in October 1948 control passed to John J Stewart who moved up from Eden. He was a good owner, forthright, an old time editor who said what he thought." This perhaps explains why the staff found the atmosphere at the office no longer a pleasant working space with two long term staff resigning.

It was John Stewart who purchased the Heidelberg platen jobbing press, considered at the time the best machine available for jobbing work.

The press came to Moruya on a semi-trailer and had to be unloaded with the crane at Crockers sawmill. "Mr C. Irving then used the bigger of his tow wagon cranes to lift the crated machine off the ground. With Mr J. Brown and G. Taylor standing on the front of the tow truck to keep its front wheels on the road the tow truck with the crate behind crawled up Vulcan Street and around to the Examiner office where the crate was gingerly lowered to the ground."⁴

His wife Marjorie helped run the paper. Marjorie was still living in the district in 1991 and still active at age 95. She died in July 1993.



Vincent Kilgallon

Mr Kilgallon purchased the paper in 1960.

1960 saw the purchase of a new printing press an 18in by 24 in Heidelberg.

In May 1964 he adopted a new masthead for the paper "The Examiner". He states in the paper of May 21st 1964 "the paper today serves a far wider community, today the paper is sold at newsagents from Milton to Cobargo

³ Barrier Miner 7th November 1951.

⁴ The Moruya Examiner 4th March 1960.

and news is gathered to service the residents within this widespread area.” They were finding more news than they could fit in the paper’s 12 pages. “In making the paper for Narooma readers therefore, Milton-Ulladulla news is held back” and visa a versa. The edition for each district in the future will be clearly shown at the top-right corner of the masthead; where necessary a special edition for Batemans Bay will be printed also.”

In 1968 Mr Kilgallon sold to Maxwell Newton who bought up a series of newspapers on the South Coast. Under Maxwell Newton the paper lacked community engagement and a local presence, leading to another quick sale to Bradley and Wood (from the Queanbeyan Age) in July 1971.

The sale of the Moruya Examiner led to the establishment of the Southern Star, but that is another story.

The paper which was no longer printed locally would from now on be owned by various media companies. Giving an opportunity for an opposition newspaper to emerge in the Southern Star. Over the next decades mergers and incorporations of other newspapers would take place and titles would vary according to which district the paper was serving or which paper was dominant at the time.

Employees of the Moruya Examiner

There would have been over the years far more employees of the paper than I have been able to trace. The proprietors have left a trail that can be followed behind them but most knowledge of their employees has been gained from mention of their occupations in their obituaries.

Albert (Bertie) Walter (1864-1883)

Albert Walter, aged 19, youngest son of Mr Edward Walter of Moruya. Deceased was formerly in the ‘Examiner’ office from whence he lately left for Sydney to gain a master knowledge of the art of printing. Mr Walter, never of a strong constitution, found that Sydney did not agree with his health and returned about a fortnight ago to his native place, Moruya, suffering from pneumonia.⁵

Mr Edwin Walter (1853-1924)

Edwin was the third son of the late Mr Edward Walter of Moruya. Born in Peckham, Surrey, England, Mr Walter, with his parents arrived in this country in January 1859. Forty years ago he joined the staff of the Moruya Examiner, of which he was a member for a long period. Subsequently he went to Sydney where he worked at many leading offices. Prior to his illness of about six weeks duration, he was employed by Fourth and Nall Printery.⁶

His brother Thomas records the following in his diary “on July 5th his brother Edwin first began work with T.C Lodge to learn to be a printer and on the 3rd of November recorded that Edwin had been apprenticed. With the closure of the Moruya Telegraph in August 1872 Edwin accepted an offer of employment with the Bega Gazette.

Mr Herbert Bishop (1867-1947)

Herbert was born in Moruya in 1867 and at age 13 was apprenticed to the Moruya Examiner printing office staying on for many years after the end of his apprenticeship.⁷ He married Mary Pfeiffer in 1891 and remained manager of the newspaper for another 12 years. In 1903 he purchased the Ulladulla and Milton Times which he edited until 1920 when he sold the paper and moved to Sydney. Here he acquired the Hornsby Advocate and remained the editor until his retirement. On two occasions after retiring he came down to Moruya to help with the production of the Moruya Examiner when Mrs Constable was unwell.

William Daniel Pfeiffer (1868-1947)

Born in Moruya in November 1868 William also served an apprenticeship at the same time as Herbert Bishop in the office of the Moruya Examiner, he was there for six years from 13 October 1879. Later he began a newspaper called the **Moruya Advance** but competition was too strong. On 27 August 1892 he published the first edition of the ‘**Pambula Voice**’ which was a success, selling it in 1905 to move to Sydney where the family lived for two years at Mosman, moving then to Grenfell where he printed the ‘Grenfell Observer’ from 1907 to 1927. In retirement he and his wife lived at Peshurst, Sydney.⁸

⁵ Obituary Moruya Examiner 28th August 1883

⁶ Obituary Moruya Examiner 29 March 1924

⁷ Moruya Examiner 15th August 1947

⁸ Moruya Pioneer directory. MDHS

Charles Amos Swain (1869-1950) and John (Jack) Buckley Swain (1875-1914)

Charles was the son of James Swain and Sarah O'Herir and born at Gundry in 1869. Charles started working for the paper when the office was in Page Street. He had learnt his printing trade with the Cobargo Watch and then found a job with the Moruya Examiner. He also became a cheese maker at Mogendoura but by 1920 he was back with the Moruya Examiner before moving to Sydney to work for the Government Printer. His brother Jack was also a printer who learnt his trade at the Moruya Examiner. Jack was younger than Charles being born in 1875. He was said to be one of the smartest typesetters on the South Coast. Jack went missing from his camp site at Dalgety in 1914 and his body was not found.⁹

**Mr James Smith (1870-1814)**

James was born in Braidwood in 1870 and was only 44 when he died. He served his apprenticeship with the Moruya Examiner and was undoubtedly, as well as being intellectually clever, one of the smartest compositors who ever stood at a case.¹⁰ He had for many years been employed in the Government Printing Office, at which establishment his eldest daughter is also engaged.

William Rowland Williams (1881-1947)

Rowley, as he was known to everybody, was a son of the late Mr and Mrs Peter Williams and was born in Moruya 65 years ago. He was perhaps, one of the best known identities of the district and was a general favorite of all the kiddies in the town. Owing to an accident in his very young days, Rowley was partially crippled and was not able to engage in hard work, but for many years, before the advent of electricity in Moruya, he was the 'power plant' which turned the big Wharfdale printing press in the 'Examiner' office for the printing of the papers.¹¹

**Frank Toose (Club) (1884-1959)**

Frank worked for the Examiner at the same time as Roly Louttit and left when Roly left in 1949 due to changed conditions of employment and dissatisfaction with the management.¹² Frank was the grandson of Dr Edward Boot his mother being the Doctor's eldest child Angelina Boot.

George Michael Conway Irwin (Con) (1886-1958)

After leaving school Con went to work for the Mr R.H. Harvison as a compositor. In those days the type was set by hand and there was said to be no better than Con. He later went to New Zealand where he worked as a cheesemaker for some time, and on returning carried on with this profession at Moruya, Moggendoura and Kiora. He remained at Kiora until he retired and came to Gundry to live.¹³

Always a keen poultry fancier, he bred and judged fowls around the district all his life. Con was a keen sportsman, and in addition to being an excellent shot with rifle or gun, he bred many greyhounds which won races all over N.S.W.

He married Miss Annie Honan and they had two daughters, Mary (Mrs Jack Clarke, Moruya), Tessie (Mrs Abbey), and one son Frank (Wollongong).

Roly Louttit (1910-1972)

Roly worked for the Examiner from the time he left school in 1924 at age 14 until 1949¹⁴. He was a skilled linotype operator as well as a hand compositor. In 1949 working with the new owners became unbearable and he left to eventually start up his own printing business and eventually to start the Moruya Advertiser. More details on Roly can be found in the March 2017 issue of our Journal.

⁹ Moruya Examiner 9th May 1914

¹⁰ Obituary Moruya Examiner 5th December 1914

¹¹ Obituary Moruya Examiner 24 April 1945

¹² Obituary - Moruya Advertiser by Shirley Jurmann. Journal of the Moruya & District Historical Society March 2017.

¹³ Obituary Moruya Examiner 23rd July 1958

¹⁴ Obituary - Moruya Advertiser by Shirley Jurmann. Journal of the Moruya & District Historical Society March 2017.

Moruya's 3rd Newspaper. The Moruya Telegraph and the Lodge Family

After the Moruya Examiner ceased publication in 1868 a new paper the Moruya Telegraph was founded in December 1868 with the Empire of the 12th of December reporting “*that an effort is about to be made to re-establish a newspaper at Moruya.*” Unfortunately no copies of this newspaper remain today. **Thomas Campion Lodge** was said to have established this paper with the backing of William Thomas Flanagan and Robert Anderson¹⁵.

Thomas was the son of Oliver Lodge the local Postmaster and Church of England school teacher. Surprisingly Thomas at this time would have only been 15½ having been born at Kiora on the 22nd of May 1853. Oliver Lodge, his father had died in February of 1868 and his mother Catherine two years previously to that. The two younger sons appear to have taken over the responsibilities of supporting the family in the Moruya area. The two eldest Lodge boys Oliver and Barton were working as bank clerks. Barton with the Australian Joint Stock Company bank in Sydney.

The boys would no doubt have previously helped their parents in the Post Office but Thomas must have had some earlier experience in the printing business for two well known Moruya identities to back him in the enterprise of the Moruya Telegraph.

His brother Harold who was two years older than Thomas became the Postmaster being appointed to the position previously held by his father. He is recorded as becoming the Post Master in 1868 at age 17 and the Telegraph Operator in January 1869. However difficulties arose for the brothers when Harold made some error's in his returns relating to the money orders. There was no question of the money being stolen but he had to resign his position as Postmaster. Questions were asked in the Parliament of the day and they reveal that the accounts had been deficient by £300 which had since been paid. They also tell us that Thomas then was appointed to the position of Post Master in the place of his brother, with the backing of Mr. Clarke M.L.A. and Mr Grenville M.L.A. A condition of his appointment was that he resign all connection with the Moruya Telegraph newspaper and his brother Harold was not permitted to enter the Post Office. I presume the Post Office position would have offered Thomas a more certain income than that offered by the paper. He continued in the Post Office position until the 3rd November 1874 when Mr William Morks took over to be succeeded on the 2nd February 1875 by John Walter.

In his diary Thomas Edward Walter records that on July 5th 1870 his brother Edwin first began work with T.C Lodge to learn to be a printer and on the 3rd of November recorded that Edwin had been apprenticed. Edwin was actually the same age as Thomas Lodge. In August 1872 Edwin Walter accepted an offer of employment with the Bega Gazette. In May 1872 his brother John who was two years younger the Edwin went to work for Thomas Lodge in the Post Office. The two families would seem to have been close friends.

Thomas Walter also reports the death of Harold Lodge who was an old school mate on the 30th September 1872 and the arrival by steamer of Barton Lodge and Mr Henry Clarke 12 days later.

Presumably Thomas Lodge then left Moruya to also join the Australian Joint Stock Bank as he eventually became the manager of the bank branch in Lismore. Here he married Hannah Marks in 1890 and they had two daughters Hannah and Alice. He retired to Leura where he died in 1921 leaving an estate of £22,823.

Barton Lodge was also a Bank manager and went on to become the Chief Inspector of the bank. He left Australia with his family for a trip to Europe, but unfortunately he died whilst in England in January 1895. His body was returned to Australia for burial.

The two younger Lodge sisters Catherine and Sarah Ann both went on to marry and have families. Sarah Ann had 4 sons and a daughter. She had married John Cameron in a joint wedding with Barton when he married Mary Smith in Mudgee in 1877. Her husband was owner and partner in a number of properties in Queensland and also became a member of Queensland parliament. Her son Donald also went into politics, but Federal politics and was knighted.

¹⁵ Gibney, H. J. Eurobodalla History of the Moruya District from Register of Newspaper Affidavits 4/7819 NSW Archives

Catherine married in 1881 to William Henry Lindsay Thornton of “Tower Hill” Station Muttaborra (near Longreach QLD).

So Catherine and Sarah who were 13 and 4 when their father died appeared to have been well looked after by their brothers. Both unfortunately died at a young age, Catherine at 33 when at her sister’s property at Toowoomba and Sarah in 1893 aged 35.

Brother Oliver died aged 23 of Consumption. Harold also suffered from consumption (as Tuberculosis was frequently called then) and died at age 21. Their mother also had died from a form of tuberculosis.
