

A look back to 19th Century thoughts on British Free Press & The Law.

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Between 1801 and 1894 a little newspaper in the North of England ran this motto underneath it's title.

A Free Press, Without Licentiousness, Is The Best Palladium Of British Liberty

(The Lancaster Gazette 1801-1894)

Strong sentiment from a regional newspaper which ran for almost a hundred years, and motto of the sort which is difficult to find today. We took a look in the archives for some of the discussions around the Free Press happening in our newspapers. Some of the arguments and language used may sound familiar.

Only 34 years after John Stuart Mill published "On Liberty" and with a nod to the American ideal of liberty A minor victory over libel claims is cheered by [The Huddersfield Daily Chronicle](#) (West Yorkshire, England), Monday, May 01, 1893; pg. 4; Issue 8034. [19th Century British Library Newspapers: Part II](#).

More triumphalism from the Northern presses.

Where, but in this country, would the caustic satire of Punch, vehement in its attacks on everyone, from Royalty downwards, have prospered so long?

A FREE PRESS .

[The Lancaster Gazette, and General Advertiser for Lancashire, Westmorland, Yorkshire, &c.](#) (Lancaster, England), Saturday, July 27, 1850; pg. 4; Issue 3303. [19th Century British Library Newspapers: Part II](#).

In Scotland the misdeeds of Newspapers were met with condemnation not from the state but from the pulpit.

We...forbid all ecclesiastics under our jurisdiction, with all the authority which the Church has given us, to take any share in the publication of this paper...to abstain from writing, or in any way whatever, directly or indirectly, orally or otherwise contributing to it.

DENUNCIATION OF THE "FREE PRESS."

[Glasgow Herald](#) (Glasgow, Scotland), Monday, February 10, 1868; Issue 8768.

Technology may have changed but "Watchdog Press" arguments like this are still as popular as ever.

All the scandals arising out of the incompetence of the Commissariat Department would not have been made known until it was too late to put a stop to them.

OUR VANISHING FREE PRESS .

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