Machinations in Fleet Street:

Roy Thomson, Cecil King, and the creation of a magazine monopoly

Howard Cox and Simon Mowatt

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Leading English Magazine Publishers Jan 1957

ODHAMS PRESS
- Daily Herald
- The People
- Woman
- Illustrated

HULTON PRESS
- Picture Post

AMALGAMATED PRESS
- Daily Telegraph
- Woman’s Weekly
- Woman’s Illustrated
- Everybody’s
- Southern Television

GEORGE NEWNES
- Woman’s Own
- Tit-Bits
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Leading English Magazine Publishers in Jan 1961

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A Marriage of Convenience

ODHAMS PRESS
• Daily Herald
• The People
• Woman
• Woman’s Realm
• Woman’s Own
• Woman’s Day
• Tit-Bits
• Illustrated

THOMSON NEWSPAPERS
• The Scotsman
• Sunday Times
• Other newspapers, mainly provincial
• Scottish Television
# A Monopoly of Convenience

## ODHAMS PRESS
- *Daily Herald*
- *The People*
- *Woman*
- *Woman’s Realm*
- *Woman’s Own*
- *Woman’s Day*
- *Tit-Bits*
- *Illustrated*
- Around 40 magazines

## FLEETWAY PRESS
- *Daily Mirror*
- *Sunday Pictorial*
- *Woman’s Weekly*
- *Woman’s Illustrated*
- *Everybody’s*
- *Over 100 magazines*
- *Associated Television*
Political considerations

• Possible closure of the *Daily Herald* was more likely in Mirror than Thomson takeover so remedy proposed by King and Cudlipp

• Attorney General expressed doubts over value of referring takeover to Monopolies Commission – despite breach of one-third market share – but argued that referral should not be ruled out in advance

• Widespread clamour for enquiry was met instead by setting up of Royal Commission to investigate the economic efficiency of the press, notably:
  - Trade union power
  - Influence of advertisers
Conclusions

- Magazines given scant attention by Royal Commission
- Takeover led to very little change in the range of periodicals produced by the newly formed IPC
- Lord Shawcross argued that in the case of the magazine industry “Big was Efficient”
Selling the news: *(above)* news vendors of 1893; *(below)* a news stand set up for an Obse photographer in 1961 to show all the publications controlled by the *Daily Mirror* after merger that produced the International Publishing Corporation.
References


Thomson, R. (1975) *After I was Sixty*, Hamish Hamilton, London

CAB 21/5960 *Amalgamation of Newspapers*, National Archives, Kew