

AS LEVEL

FACT FILES

Journalism

For first teaching from September 2013

For first AS award in Summer 2014

For first A Level award in Summer 2015

History of Print
Journalism in the
UK and Ireland

FACT FILE

journalism

in the Media and Communications Industry (JMC)

History of Print Journalism in the UK and Ireland

Learning Outcomes

Students should be able to:

- Understand the key industry developments in the history of print journalism in the UK and Ireland

Course Content

Development of Industry and Technology in Print Journalism

(page 6, specification)

The origins of print journalism

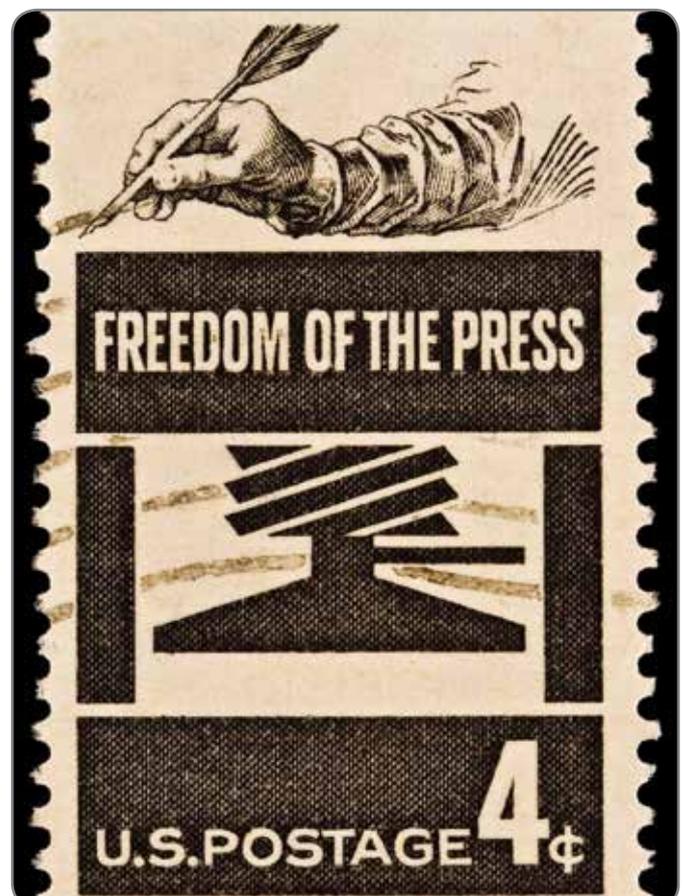
- Before printing, texts had to be copied by hand, an expensive and time consuming process. This was the method used in the medieval period in Britain and Ireland. The Book of Kells, a 9th-century gospel manuscript, is an example of this type of manuscript. It can be seen in the library of Trinity College, Dublin.
- It is thought that printing technology was first developed in China. A Chinese government official, Cai Lun, is traditionally credited with inventing **paper** in 105 A.D, however, it may have existed in China before then. **Woodblock printing** was also used in China before 220 A.D.
- The German inventor Johannes Gutenberg invented



Digital Vision / Thinkstock.com

the precursor to the modern printing press around 1450. Gutenberg's machine had movable metal parts and made printing easier and cheaper than the woodblock method. It paved the way for the development of mass media and widespread literacy.

- England's first printing press was set up by William Caxton in Westminster in 1476. It was used to print books including Chaucer's Canterbury Tales.
- Printed pamphlets and rudimentary news letters were produced in early modern Europe but the origins of the newspapers we know today lie in the mid-17th century. It was a time of great political turmoil, including the English Civil War (1642-1651),



iStockphoto / Thinkstock.com

and the demand for news increased. Around this time, publications known as **newsbooks** began to appear. They were often published irregularly but the more successful ones appeared weekly.

- These early newspapers marked Western culture's first viable method of sharing ideas and information to a mass audience. They became vital to the spread of ideas, the development of public debate and, ultimately, democracy. However, the power of the early press was suppressed by the English ruler Oliver Cromwell in the 17th century.
- In 1649, Cromwell suppressed all newsbooks on the eve of Charles I's execution, an early example of political interference and **censorship** of the press. Cromwell continued to crack down on public debate and the newsbooks were one of his main targets. By 1655, all publications other than two state-run newspapers were suppressed.
- The first regular daily newspaper in English, the Daily Courant, was published in 1702. Others followed. **The Belfast News Letter** was founded in 1737. It is



Digital Vision / Thinkstock.com

the world's oldest surviving daily newspaper.

The development of print technology

- The printing technology developed by Gutenberg remained largely unchanged until the early 19th century. In 1800, Earl Stanhope of England invented a cast-iron printing press that produced clearer impressions.
- **Paper making** continued to evolve and in the early 1800s, the development of the Fourdrinier machine allowed the production of a continuous roll of paper rather than individual sheets for the first time.
- Until the late 19th century, all type was still set and composed by hand, as it had been in Gutenberg's time. Invented in the 1880s in the US, the Linotype printing machine used a mechanised method of



iStockphoto / Thinkstock.com

setting type. The New York Tribune started using it in its printing process in 1886. Before its invention, no newspaper could easily run to more than a few pages.

- Linotype dominated the newspaper industry until the 1960s and 1970s, when computers were integrated into the printing process. Modern printing devices can produce prints at a much faster rate than those that were used in the past.

Print journalism in the 21st century

- The development of typesetting from manual methods to the digital age made producing newspapers cheaper, easier and more efficient.
- The first **desktop publishing software**, PageMaker for Mac, was invented by Aldus in 1985. QuarkXPress and Adobe's InDesign are now industry standards.
- The Irish Times became one of the first newspapers anywhere to launch an online version in 1994. Most newspapers in the UK and Ireland swiftly followed. A print publication without an online presence is now unusual.
- Newspapers continue to develop their online



iStockphoto / Thinkstock.com

presence by, for example, embedding video content into online 'print' stories and encouraging readers to comment and share stories online.

- The internet has revolutionized how journalists work – blogs, social networking sites and YouTube are now

rich sources of information. The internet and mobile phones with camera and video capability have facilitated the rise of **'citizen journalism'**.

The decline of print journalism?

- The easy availability of news online and on 24-hour television news networks has contributed to falling sales and advertising revenue and ultimately the decline of print journalism. The Audit Bureau of Circulations' figures show that sales of virtually all the UK and Ireland's newspapers are falling year on year.
- While popular, online news is not as profitable as print as content is still mostly given away for free. Because of the different way in which people engage with a website, an online advert is worth much less than a printed one. Some newspapers, including The Times, are experimenting with charging for online content.



iStockphoto / Thinkstock.com

