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Examining the workings of a late nineteenth century provincial press conglomerate: Frederick Edward Roe and his newspapers

Lisa Peters

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research

The newspapers

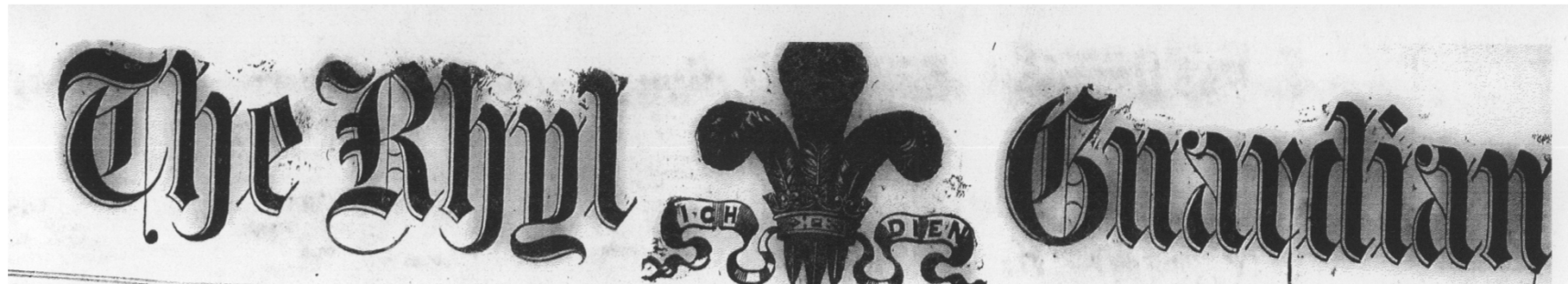
- *Wrexham (later North Wales) Guardian* (est. 1859)
- *Rhyl Guardian* (est. 1873)
- *Shropshire & Montgomeryshire Post* (est. 1881)
- *Y Llan* (purchased June 1882)

Were they a conglomerate?

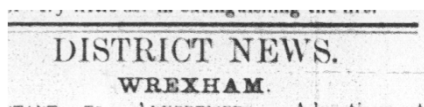
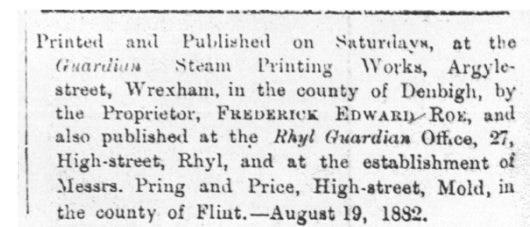
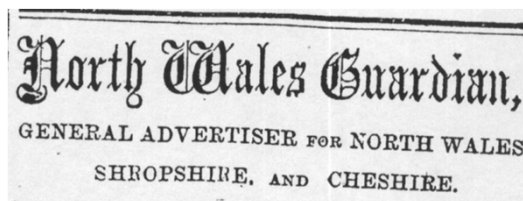
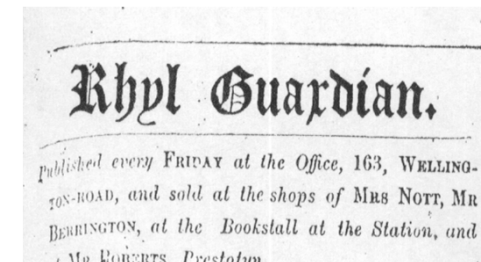
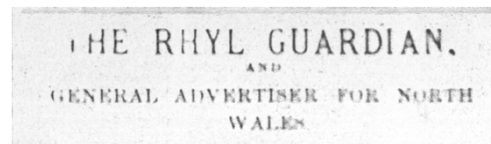
- News
- Advertising
- Editorials
- Printing offices
- Staff

Wrexham / North Wales Guardian

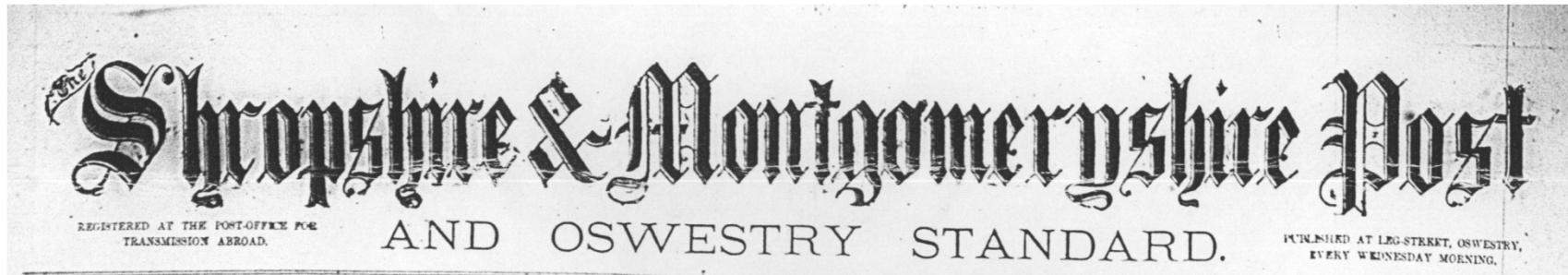
- “maintains the largest and most expensive Editorial Staff for a weekly newspaper published in Wales”
- “The aim of the paper is to provide a cheap newspaper for the people, containing full and accurate reports of all the news of Wrexham, and the district, a carefully selected summary of the news of the world, and other interesting and health literature” (Sell’s dictionary of the world’s press, 1885)
- Localised issue for Rhyl



- Identical to Wrexham version
 - The two Rhyl Guardians
 - Why?



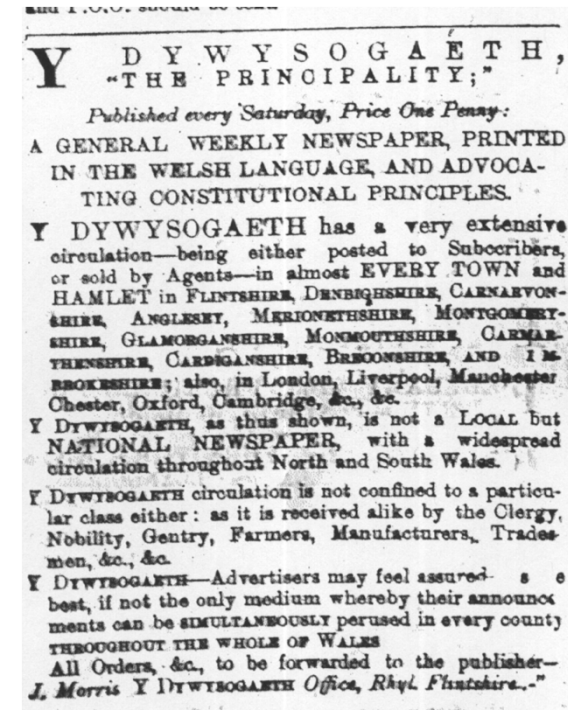
Rhyl Guardian for 19 August 1882. The *North Wales Guardian* has "LOCAL NEWS" without Wrexham heading



- Why not the *Shropshire & Montgomeryshire Guardian*?
- Common features
 - Advertising rates
 - Editorials
 - International and national news
 - Features
 - Some advertising
- Different
 - Local advertising
 - Local news
 - Agents

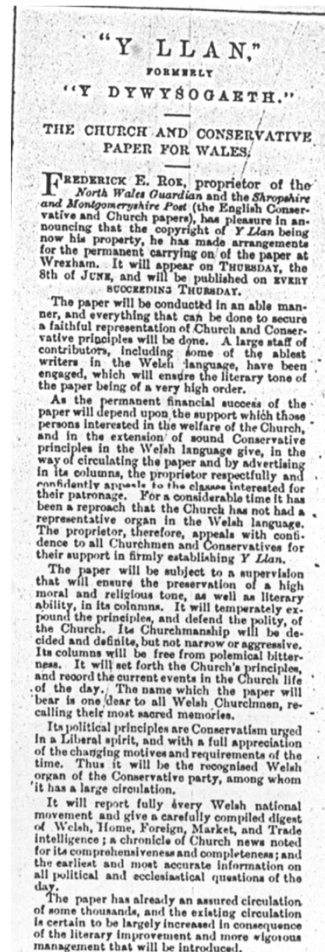
Y Llan

- Previously *Y dwysogaeth* (*The principality*)
- Possibly bought by Church of England and turned into a pro-Anglican newspapers
- Previous advertising in NWG (1875-1881)
- Advert for NWG in Y Llan



NWG. 6 Feb 1875-19 March 1881

Roe and Y Llan



- Bought by Roe in June 1882
- No surviving issues in his ownership
- Sold March / April 1883?

Sharing content

Year	NWG	RG	SMP
1878	100%	100%	
1880	100%	100%	
1882	100% 52.1%	100%	52.1%
1884	100% 23.7%	100%	23.7%
1886	100% 38.7%	100%	38.7%
1888	100% 77%	100%	77%

Sharing content

Wrexham, August 22nd, 1885.

To the Editor of the "Birmingham Daily Post."

Sir,—Mr. W. Allard, of the Birmingham Liberal Association, has forwarded me, with his compliments, a cutting from your paper containing some correspondence which I initiated with the purpose of arriving at "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth," with regard to the monopoly in the screw trade, which the firm of Nettelford and Co. (of which the Right Hon. J. Chamberlain, it is alleged, is a member), secured by somewhat questionable means. Presuming that this is so, some may think that it is a pure business matter, and as such, the public at large have nothing whatever to do with it. To a great extent this is no doubt true, but considering the position Mr. Chamberlain now holds, and it is said will eventually hold, and the doctrines he openly preaches throughout the country, he must be judged by his career as a whole, each individual action being duly considered. Not only here, but throughout the country, the actions of the firm to which Mr. Chamberlain belongs, in securing their position in the manufacture of screws, is being continually raised, and it seems to me that it would be well if once and for all, the matter was thrashed out and done with. It was with this purpose that I (entirely upon my own responsibility) opened up a communication with Mr. Barton at Birmingham, asking him to place me in communication with a gentleman in Birmingham, who was "conversant with the facts." Mr. Frearson's name was given me, and in my letter to him, I said what was wanted "was to get at the truth of the matter" with a view to publishing them in the paper which I conduct, and asking him to kindly give the information, "stating the facts as you personally know them."

To my simple request Mr. Frearson did not accede; such being the case, I think that it will be admitted by everyone that his proper course would have been to write to me to that effect. Instead, however, of doing this, he prefers to take a week to concoct a letter, entirely beside the question I raised and then to hand over my private letter to him, and his reply, to Mr. Allard, of the Birmingham Liberal Association, who forthwith pens another letter and then hands the whole over to the Editor of the *Birmingham Daily Post* for publication. One naturally expects strange things to be done at the head centre of the Americanised Caucus, but I think the public had yet to learn that private correspondence was to be treated as public and forthwith published in a paper without the consent of the parties concerned, without the solicitation of the party originating it, and at the very least without an intimation that such a course was proposed to be taken. But as I have said they do strange things in Birmingham. The first intimation I had that a private letter I wrote to a gentleman in Birmingham was to be made public property in the newspaper press was the receipt of a copy of the paper containing it. I think no right-minded person will commend this course.

But so far as I am personally concerned I do not regret the publication of my letter, but I must protest, and that strongly, against dragging persons into the controversy who are in no way concerned in the matter. I wrote my letter on my own responsibility and without consultation with anyone; but an attempt has been made to associate other persons with the enquiry. This is a political dodge which everyone can see through.

As I have failed to secure the required information from Mr. Frearson (who knows everything about it but will not tell), may I be permitted through your columns to publicly state that I should be obliged if any one who is personally acquainted with the facts in question to kindly forward them to me with a view to publishing them in the paper I conduct. It is now time that the question was settled once and for all; and if Mr. Chamberlain himself or any member of the firm to which he belongs will elucidate the vexed question, by stating the facts as they actually occurred, I will undertake that he shall have the opportunity, and I am sure that the public will be glad to have the matter settled, and to hear on which side right lies.

Yours very truly,
FREDERICK E. ROE.

North Wales Guardian,
Wrexham, August 22nd, 1885.

The Bristol Daily Times and Mirror, the leading

SMP. 29 August 1885

DEATH OF MR. RICHARD SAMUEL FRANCE.
W. (Shropshire and Montgomeryshire Post) announce with much regret—a regret which will be shared in by many in the neighbourhood—the death of the above-named gentleman, who was much respected for his uprightness of character and his business capacity. After a lingering illness, brought on by the anxieties and labours of the past 22 years.

NWG. 19 August 1882

Sharing content

GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY.
SUMMER EXCURSIONS.
EVERY SATURDAY.—To Llangollen, Corwen, Denbigh, Ruthin, Bala, Dolgelly, Barmouth, Chester, Rhyl, Abergelle, Llandudno, Birkenhead, and Liverpool, leaving Oakengates at 2.10, Wellington 2.20, Shrewsbury 2.40, Oswestry 2.45, and Gobowen 3.10 p.m., to return the following Monday.
EVERY MONDAY.—To Chester, Rhyl, Abergelle, Llandudno, Birkenhead, and Liverpool, leaving Baschurch at 6.45 a.m., Rednal 6.56, Oswestry 7.15, Whittington 7.5, and Gobowen 7.15 a.m., to return same day.
For fares, &c., see special bills, which can be obtained at the stations.
J. GRIERSON, General Manager.

IMPERIAL PARLIAMENT.
HOUSE OF LORDS.
THURSDAY — 26 AUGUST 1882

FOREIGN & COLONIAL.

AGRICULTURE.
THE MEMORABILIA AGRICULTURE

SMP. 23 August 1882

NWG. 26 August 1882

SOCIETY GOSSIP.
(From the "World.")
The names of the Social Families are printed

HOUSEHOLD HINTS.

EPITOME OF NEWS.

SMP. 10 July 1886

NWG. 10 July 1886

Sharing Editorials

Guardian (5 issues)	Post (4 issues)
<p>Henry Gordon John Bright “We need not go so far for unscrupulous politicians” Death of Mr J Parry-Jones Wrexham parishioners</p>	<p>Joseph Chamberlain John Bright Stanley Leighton</p>
<p>Parliament Joseph Chamberlain Ruthin School Board Stanley Leighton Wrexham court case Annual meetings of the Denbigh and Wrexham infirmaries</p>	<p>Parliament House of Commons update Possible Conservative victory in Montgomeryshire in general election</p>
<p>House of Commons update Lord Randolph Churchill on Egypt Mr Morgan Owen, HM’S Inspector of Schools for North Wales Religion in Denbigh Memorial to Townshend Mainwaring Possible Conservative victory in Montgomeryshire in general election</p>	<p>Egypt Conservatives in Newtown Criticism of <i>Wrexham Advertiser</i> Stanley Leighton in Manchester Mr Morgan Owen, HM’S Inspector of Schools for North Wales</p>
<p>Egypt George Osborne Morgan and Sir Robert Cunliffe Conservatives in Wrexham Tramps in North Wales</p>	<p>Royal Commission on working class housing “Jupiter and Mars” Cambrian Railway Company</p>
<p>Royal Commission on working class housing Elections to council of the University College of North Wales in Bangor Presentation at Wrexham Deanary Association Wrexham Town Council meeting Annual meeting of the Provincial Insurance Company</p>	

Promoting each other

THE
NORTH WALES GUARDIAN
*And General Advertiser for North Wales,
Shropshire and Cheshire.*

THE *Guardian* is the only recognised County Paper for Denbighshire and Flintshire, being, in fact, the only paper which receives the official advertisements for both counties, by the special order of the Courts of Quarter Sessions; and it has a large circulation throughout North Wales, as well as in the adjacent counties of Shropshire and Cheshire. Its regular subscribers include the nobility, clergy, gentry, landowners, agriculturalists, and colliery proprietors, as well as the mining, trading, and commercial classes generally of the extensive and important district through which it circulates.

The *Guardian* always contains a carefully prepared Summary of the News of the Week, and great attention is paid to the Local and District Intelligence. It is, therefore, a first-class FAMILY NEWSPAPER, and the BEST ADVERTISING MEDIUM in the district.

PUBLISHED EVERY SATURDAY, PRICE TWOPENCE.
Chief Office: ARGYLE-STREET, WREXHAM.

SMP. 13 July 1881

"Y LLAN,"
FORMERLY
"Y DYWYSOGAETH."
THE CHURCH AND CONSERVATIVE
PAPER FOR WALES.

THE "LLAN AND DYWYSOGAETH" for
JANUARY 12 contains the following :—

WEEKLY NOTES.
ECCLESIASTICAL NEWS.
POETRY.
CORRESPONDENCE.
LEADING ARTICLES—Church Tithes; Welsh Colleges.
"LLAN CWM AWEN."—Chapter XXVII.
WELSH DISTRICT NEWS.
MARKETS.
IRELAND.
HISTORY OF THE WELSH.
RED RIBBON ARMY.
SOUTH WALES LETTER.
DRINIOI WYN.
TEMPERANCE NOTES.
HOME, GENERAL, POLITICAL, AND FOREIGN NEWS.
BIRTHS, MARRIAGES, AND DEATHS, &c.

To be had of all newsagents, price 1d., or by post direct from the office at the following terms :—

	Prepaid.	Credit.
One Year	6s. 6d.	7s. 6d.
A Half Year	3s. 3d.	3s. 9d.
A Quarter	1s. 8d.	2s. 0d.

Stamps received in payment.

Agents will be supplied on the usual terms.
Y Llan will be posted from the Office on Thursday evenings.

It will circulate extensively among the Clergy, leading Churchmen, and Conservatives throughout the whole of Wales, and is therefore an excellent advertising medium.

Advertisements will be inserted on most moderate terms. They will be published in the language in which the copy is written, but they will be translated into Welsh free of charge, on the desire being expressed.

Publishing Offices: ARGYLE STREET, WREXHAM.
FREDERICK E. ROSE, Proprietor.

SMP. 17 Jan. 1883

NWG. 13 Jan. 1883

**THE MOST INFLUENTIAL ADVERTISING MEDIUMS
IN NORTH AND MID WALES,
AND NORTH SHROPSHIRE.**

Extensive Circulation throughout the Districts.

The North Wales Guardian,

AND
GENERAL ADVERTISER FOR DENBIGHSHIRE, FLINTSHIRE, CARNARVONSHIRE,
MERIONETHSHIRE, MONTGOMERYSHIRE, SHROPSHIRE AND CHESHIRE.

Published every THURSDAY during the Market. Price 1d.

The North Wales Guardian

IS the leading Commercial and Family Newspaper, and having the most influential circulation throughout the whole of North Wales, and also circulating in the adjoining English counties of Shropshire and Cheshire, offers superior advantages to those Advertisers who desire to bring their announcements before the most intelligent classes of readers. The regular subscribers include the Nobility, Landowners, Clergy, Gentry, Solicitors, Ironmasters, Colliery Proprietors, Merchants, Bankers, Auctioneers, Farmers, and the leading tradesmen throughout North Wales and the border counties. Thus, to those who desire to attract the attention of the nobility, gentry, agriculturists, and professional classes to the sales of estates, valuable stock, implements, or financial investments of any kind it is especially suitable.

The GUARDIAN being the only paper published at the popular price of One Penny, and circulating very extensively among all classes, Advertisers can have no better medium for their announcements.

The GUARDIAN is the authorised official organ for the Counties of Denbigh and Flint, thus showing the estimation in which it is held by the magistrates in the two counties.

Chief Office—Argyle Street, Wrexham.

BRANCH OFFICES in DENBIGH, OSWESTRY, NEWTOWN AND RHYL.

THE
Shropshire & Montgomeryshire Post

AND OSWESTRY STANDARD.

Published every SATURDAY. PRICE ONE PENNY.

THE POST is an eight-page paper, containing special and full reports of all local proceedings, together with a summary of the week's news.

The Paper being published at the popular price of One Penny, it finds its way equally among all classes, and its importance as an Advertising Medium is therefore very great. It has an extensive circulation throughout North Shropshire and Mid Wales.

Offices—Oswestry and Newtown.

PROPRIETOR: **FREDERICK E. ROE.**

The *Guardian* claimed to have branch offices in Denbigh, Oswestry, Welshpool, and Rhyl (Sell's dictionary of the world's press, 1885)

The conglomerate after Roe

- Frederick William Brodie
- The *Post* leaves
- The *Rhyl Guardian* ends
 - pp. 2, 3, 6, 7 heading “North Wales Guardian” Friday Jan 9
 - pp. 4-6 heading “The Rhyl Guardian”, Tuesday Jan 13

Conclusion

- “A modern student of the nineteenth-century political press, leafing through its faded and disintegrating pages ... cannot hope to comprehend every allusion or to discern the complex interplay of forces behind the scenes” (Stephen Koss)