

Families 10 years with the Herald

JOHN JAMES WESTON
... he wanted to start
a Taranaki newspaper.



This history begins in London more than 20 years before the Taranaki Herald was launched in August, 1852. John James Weston had two ambitions to take his wife and five boys to a new and challenging life in the distant settlement of New Plymouth and there to establish a newspaper.

HENRY WESTON
... son of J. J. Weston, sole proprietor of the Herald, 1867-1920.



The family arrived in October, 1850, in the barque named "The Waverley" which had called at Dunedin and Wellington before reaching New Plymouth. After the shelter of two splendid New Zealand



FEAR OF FIRE has dominated the thinking of successive proprietors of the Herald, and with good reason. Shows here is the scene following the third major fire in the Herald's history, which completely destroyed, but the Herald appeared that day as usual when it was printed on the press belonging to the Taranaki News. The brick premises in the background are still in use.

Fourth Dimension
Open letter to examinees
By Dean Chandler

dear young friends, the present Institute. Lost opportunities cannot be recovered, but with the know-

One hundred years ago this week New Zealand's oldest newspaper, the Taranaki Herald, passed into the ownership of the Weston family. That interest continues today with two members of the Weston family being directors of the amalgamated newspaper company, Taranaki Newspapers Ltd., publishers of the Taranaki Herald.

It is understandable that their long history of family association with the Herald is a continuing influence in their decisions.

harbours the Weston family John Warwick, Thomas Shailer, Henry and William Joseph the youngest; the New Plymouth surfboat, but there is no mention of any fishing dsmay at their choice of a new home. It was a coincidence that on the Mariner there was another family, that of William Collins, a printer trained in the topographical department of the London Morning Post. And it was Collins who in 1852 entered into partnership with youth full Garland William Weston, son of a Wesleyan missionary, in the establishment of Taranaki's first newspaper.

Bought a farm
John James Weston, 44 and his wife, Mary, 47 they faced the uprooting of London life and the transplanting to a new soil. Their five sons, ranging in age from the late teens down to a nine-year-old, were

did not live long enough to see all this family blossom. He died in July, 1857, aged 51, and the obituary notice in the Herald refers to his "painful and lingering illness". He had left Omata to reside in Cliff Cottage with his attractive garden in Carrington Rd overlooking the Huxton. The edition recording his death also carried an advertisement, "Messrs Weston and Co. have one case of goods ex Kenilworth now open for inspection at The Willows, Queen St." In this

Cautious
Revenue, however, was slow to develop. Having lost £750 for the newspaper and equipment, Weston kept a cautious eye on expenditure. The first full year saw an excess of revenue over expenditure of £140, and dropped to £96 in 1860 and reached a low peak of £27 in 1870.

But 1871, when the tide of renewed settlement was flowing strongly, brought credit balance of £349. There were some more anxious years, but by the early 1880's the balance was satisfactory. It not lucrative. Fortunately Henry Weston did not rely wholly on the Herald for a living. He was new Plymouth agent for the New Zealand Insurance Coy and his office in Devon Street was the principal property of that period. His older brother Warwick had done insurance as a career, and by 1864 held the important position of inspector of branches with the New Zealand Insurance Coy.

By now Henry Weston was an established and successful newspaper owner, an enterprising local politician, had a marked influence in the affairs of the community. The press was completely destroyed, but the Herald appeared that day as usual when it was printed on the press belonging to the Taranaki News. The brick premises in the background are still in use.

thing about the calm approach which mentioned earlier in this letter. The way we address our articles is a clear indication of character, the development of which should be the principal aim of all true education.

There was once a widowed queen who offered her hand in marriage to the man who could provide for her son a sound education. Applications had to be set forth in detail! The setting forth in detail! The setting forth in detail!

merchants business the "19-year-old Henry was associated with his elder brother John.

Faith
The Moori War of 1860 delayed development found the Weston sons, with one exception, were to the New Plymouth scene. The exception was Henry. The decade following his father's death gives an impression of the "quiet man" patiently gaining experience, garnering his resources through the bad years, achieving a strong quality of reliability and staunchness.

Thus in 1867 when Woon, unable to win a secure living from the Herald, decided to move to the Wanganui district. Henry Weston achieved the ambition his father had nourished - he became owner of the town's first newspaper.

In fact, the transaction was between Weston and William George, who had married Woon into his partnership with Henry Weston, and had later gained out to reside in Cliff Cottage with his attractive garden in Carrington Rd overlooking the Huxton. The edition recording his death also carried an advertisement, "Messrs Weston and Co. have one case of goods ex Kenilworth now open for inspection at The Willows, Queen St." In this

It needed plenty of faith to persuade Weston to buy the Herald in 1867. Elsewhere with the setbacks of the Moori War, colonial settlements were short-lived, and the flames roaring through to the field of view Plymouth was being shared by two newspapers. Within a few years Henry Weston had brought W. H. Seffern to the reporting, editing and it was a wise choice. Seffern was vigorous, knowledgeable and had a printing training. He was editor for the next 27 years.

Lynch gate
In the year before his death Henry Weston was associated in giving his nephews in four of the eastern wall and graceful lynch gates, the church tower wherein lies the family grave. The lynch gate bears the inscription, "A memorial to the late Henry Weston and Maria Crawford, who were married on 25th February 1852. Born in 1812 in Ireland and died in 1892 in New Plymouth. His last days were spent in this lynch gate. He was a generous and kind-hearted man, and his death was a great loss to the community." The lynch gate was built by his brother, Henry, and their four sons, in 1919.

WALTER C. WESTON
... nephew of Henry Weston, sole proprietor 1920-1930, chairman of Directors and managing Director from 1930 until his death in 1961.

factory, a wooden shed but adequate for a quick move of printing machinery and newspaper offices.

A different kind of excitement gave of demands from New Zealand and Australian cities "to sell or not to sell?" His late wife, Mary, who had been a partner in the firm, allowed to buy their way into "Taranaki's Bonanza". This was the case for Henry Weston's decision was easy: the Taranaki Herald came first.

Tom Tiddler's ground
Firm faith
A Rugby fan, a friend of mine, Dropped in to see my Rugby shrine. He first of all confronted me With charges of apostasy. He said, "It's been so long a time Since last you wrote a Rugby rhyme, We Rugby fans suspect with grief That you've abandoned your belief."

By Brian Scanlan

(Editor of the Herald 1937-64)

ment and Loan Society, the Taranaki Savings Bank, and a director of several local companies. He had been associated with Thomas Kelly in raising the first loan of £200,000 to establish the harbour at New Plymouth and become chairman of the sinking fund commissioners at the harbour board.

Between Henry and his brother, Thomas Shailer, there was obviously a deep friendship. Henry had no children, room at the rear of his church solicitor had five sons. It can be surmised that, for the future of the Herald was often discussed with the two brothers.

Fire
So the years passed for Henry but not uneventfully. Seffern retired from the Herald editorship in 1885 to be succeeded by W. J. Penn. Four years later New Plymouth was plagued by an incendiary and the Herald building in Devon St did not escape. When the alarm was given at 2 a.m. the public building in Devon St was a mass of flames.

With well-intentioned members of the Daily News staff burst open the front door but the draught of the flames roaring through to the roof of the upper papers. Within a few years Henry Weston had brought W. H. Seffern to the reporting, editing and it was a wise choice. Seffern was vigorous, knowledgeable and had a printing training. He was editor for the next 27 years.

Henry Weston died in 1920 at the age of 82. In a letter to the Herald, "His invariable kindness and thoughtfulness, especially in times of trouble, earned the affectionate regard of those who were fortunate enough to be in his service. In all public matters and in the influence he was able to exert through his newspaper Mr Weston was invariably guided by a high sense of honour and integrity."

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PROMENADE CONCERTS in Mr Henry Weston's gardens of Lower Carrington St were a popular attraction in New Plymouth when the gardens were opened to the public at the weekends. The garden, on part of the site of the present New Plymouth City Council buildings, disappeared in the early 1870s when the land was taken over for the railway line, which first crossed Carrington St (by bridge) and the centre of Devon St.

He resigned from the office of Taranaki Herald Co member of his late uncle's estate, the Taranaki Herald Co member of his late uncle's estate, the Taranaki Herald Co member of his late uncle's estate. Miss Constance Lillian that is how the great-granddaughter is a sister of Mrs C. H. Weston. They are daughters of pioneer settlers of the Hawera and East Plymouth newspapers whose durability is indicated by the fact that they are two of the three oldest newspapers in the Dominion.

Changes
New Plymouth ownership in New Plymouth altered significantly after 1936 when New Zealand Newspapers Ltd purchased a big share in the ownership of the Daily News following Mrs Weston's death in 1934. While this large public company manages advertising and proprietorship.

Tribute
There are many both on the staff and retired who recall with affection their association with the Herald in the production of the paper. Mr Weston's tributes to his staff and retired who recall with affection their association with the Herald in the production of the paper.

Life-long interest
Indeed, New Plymouth fire brigade activities were his almost a life-long interest. When the volunteer fire brigade began in 1866, it was led by Mr Weston, first secretary and was a major witness for the fire. Mr Weston's fire brigade interest followed the demands of the insurance companies to North by-election, which he took on Saturday.

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