



The Times

For much more than a century *The Times* has been an integral and important part of the political structure of Great Britain. Its news and its editorial comment have in general been carefully coordinated, and have at most times been handled with an earnest sense of responsibility. While the paper has admitted some trivia to its columns, its whole emphasis has been on important public affairs treated with an eye to the best interests of Britain. To guide this treatment, the editors have for long periods been in close touch with 10 Downing Street.

Allan Nevins, the historian of journalism, 1959

The Times, daily newspaper published in London, is one of Britain's oldest and most influential newspapers. It is generally accounted, with *The Guardian* and *The Daily Telegraph*, one of Britain's "big three" and has long been recognized as one of the world's greatest newspapers.

Founded by John Walter on January 1, 1785, as *The Daily Universal Register*, the newspaper began as a 2½-penny broadsheet whose main function was to publicize a system of typography in which Walter was then interested. It became *The Times* on January 1, 1788, publishing commercial news and notices, along with some scandal. The founder's son, John Walter II, took over the newspaper in 1803. He expanded it from 4 pages to 12 large pages, and, by the time control of the paper passed to his son, John Walter III, in 1848, the foundations of *The Times's* reputation as Britain's preeminent national journal and daily historical record had been laid.

Under its first great liberal editor, Thomas Barnes (editor from 1817 to 1841), *The Times* developed into a strong independent newspaper popularly described as the "Thunderer."

Late in the 19th century, overspending and the inadvertent publication of a forgery against the Irish hero Charles Stewart Parnell brought *The Times's* finances, reputation, and circulation to a serious low. Its editorial reputation continued to deteriorate until 1922.

In the 1950s, when Sir William Haley, then the director general of the BBC, became the editor, *The Times* once again became a great newspaper. News was put permanently on its front page in 1966 in place of advertisements.

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