

A 100-YEAR RECORD: THE HISTORY OF THE *SHERBROOKE DAILY RECORD*

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Based on research and text by Tara McCully

What a challenge — to cover the 100-year history of our daily newspaper in a matter of minutes!

Before I get into the text I'm going to present, I'd like to give you a little background on the basis for this lecture. *The Record* was fortunate to benefit from a Young Canada Works grant this past summer.

Tara McCully, 1997 Bishop's graduate in English and History, was engaged as part of a centennial project. She and I met with Dr. Robin Burns and Sylvie Côté, of the Research Centre, seeking their advice as Tara began to research the newspaper's history. During our conversation, Dr. Burns smilingly said, "To fully study and write the history of *The Record*¹ could well take ten years." It's a comment both Tara and I have oft remembered these past few weeks.

The approach Dr. Burns recommended, and the one we took, was to trace the evolution of the newspaper at 25-year intervals. Today's lecture, "A 100-Year Record," is based on Ms. McCully's research and resulting text, with contributions by Kirsty Robertson, another of our summer students, currently in her final year at Bishop's and editor of both *The Campus* and *The Mitre*.² The slides are the handiwork of photographer Perry Beaton.³

INTRODUCTION

For the past one hundred years, *The Record* has played a major role in the communities of the Eastern Townships, fulfilling that essential role of all newspapers—informing its readers of key developments and events in their neighborhoods and beyond. Because of the demographics and traditions of the English-speaking population of the region, *The Record* has also played a vital role in linking Townshippers with their community organizations, churches, and schools, with

each other, and with the broader Eastern Townships community, promoting a sense of togetherness and fostering a sense of place.

Townshippers have a fierce and loyal attachment to their local daily newspaper — many families have been *Record* subscribers for generations and cannot remember a time when *The Record* was not a part of the family. Ida Johnston of the Wales Home, now 101, is a subscriber to *The Record*, as were her parents.⁴

There are stories of family rituals—like that of my grandmother, who, as soon as the paper arrived in the mail, would drop whatever she was doing, pull up a chair in front of the wood stove, put her feet up on its open door, and proceed to read the news, word by word, from cover to cover, oblivious to time and the tasks beckoning her.

Carlton Ladd of Waterloo recalls his grandmother teaching him the letters of the alphabet using the *Sherbrooke Daily Record*. And I've been told of the great pride my grandfather took in responding to queries about his age with the statement, "Just look at the front page of the *Sherbrooke Daily Record*—I'm the same age as the newspaper."

The Record, as it is now known, has managed to survive and even thrive, in spite of the demographics of a rapidly diminishing anglophone population and an aging readership. How?

The answer can be seen through the past one hundred years of the paper's history: *The Record* constantly reinvents itself in order to meet the needs of its readers, always returning to its roots, the Eastern Townships, featuring a unique blend of news from local communities and beyond. The paper that is published today looks radically different from the first copy that rolled off the presses in 1897, but a dedication to bringing local news to Eastern Townshippers on a daily basis remains the priority.

The changes that were made to *The Record* over the years reflect the changes that were occurring throughout the Eastern Townships. It was the first edition of the paper that set the precedent for the future of *The Record*.

THE LAUNCHING OF THE *SHERBROOKE DAILY RECORD*

The *Sherbrooke Daily Record* was launched by Leonard S. Channell on February 9, 1897, after he had garnered several years' experience in the printing business in New York, Boston, and several Townships towns. Born in Stanstead in 1868, Channell had moved to New York at the age of fourteen to study the printing business and learn the tricks of the trade. Following his training in New York, Channell returned to Stanstead, where he finished his education.

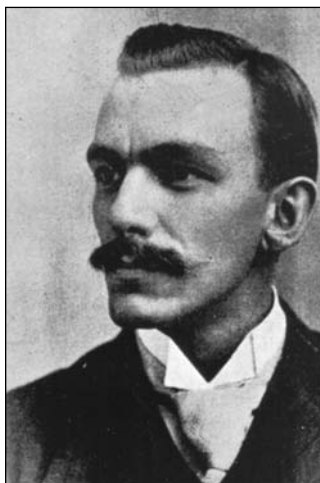
After graduating, Channell was employed by several newspapers both in the United States and locally. Then, in 1890, he felt prepared to start his own paper, the *Compton County Chronicle*.

Over the six years that Channell owned the weekly *Chronicle*, the paper thrived. However, he had his hopes set on higher goals, convinced that there was a market for a daily newspaper in the Eastern Townships. One hundred years later, readers of *The Record* continue to prove him right.

Channell's launching of the *Sherbrooke Daily Record* can only be described as a leap of faith — he had no type, no press, and no building from which to operate. It has been said that anyone with less conviction and less resolve might have given up such an undertaking. Undaunted, Channell arranged for his newspaper to be printed on the press owned by L.A. Bélanger, publisher of *Le Progrès de l'Est*, located on Wellington Street. The staff was composed of Channell, Victor E. Morrill as news reporter, and F.T. Enright as court reporter. They worked out of a room on the ground floor of the same site.

When the *Sherbrooke Daily Record* hit newsstands in 1897, it was sold for only \$.01 per copy; a twelve-month subscription could be obtained for \$1.50. The paper took the format of a broadsheet over five columns and the first edition of the paper was a mere four pages. Shipped throughout the Eastern Townships via train, the *Sherbrooke Daily Record* soon became a household fixture.

Published six days a week, and the only major daily outside the major centres of Montreal and Quebec City, the *Sherbrooke Daily*



Leonard S. Channell, founder of the *Sherbrooke Daily Record* (file photo, *The Record*).

Sherbrooke Daily Record.

NO. 1.

SHERBROOKE, P. Q., FEBRUARY 22, 1927.

PRICE ONE CENT.

HOCKEY AT LENNOXVILLE.

A Close Game.

College Won the Playoff

Being a College, the Lennoxville team first volunteered to be the home team. The college team was selected to play the game at 7:30 p.m. on the 20th. The team which had captured the "Cup" at the end of the season was the college team. The college team had the advantage in the game, and had won 3-2. The game was held at the college rink. The college team was the home team. The game was held at 7:30 p.m. on the 20th. The college team was the home team. The game was held at 7:30 p.m. on the 20th. The college team was the home team.

Leaving No Doubt

The game was held at the college rink. The college team was the home team. The game was held at 7:30 p.m. on the 20th. The college team was the home team. The game was held at 7:30 p.m. on the 20th. The college team was the home team.

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BISHOP THORNELOE

Widely and Well the Marie Congregational on his Appointment

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SHERBROOKE MARKET

Butter and Eggs sold readily

The market on Saturday was the best since our revival of trade. There was a good demand for the various commodities. All commodities were in demand. The market was very active. The prices were very good. The demand was very strong. The supply was very ample. The market was very healthy. The prices were very reasonable. The demand was very steady. The supply was very good. The market was very active. The prices were very good. The demand was very strong. The supply was very ample. The market was very healthy. The prices were very reasonable. The demand was very steady. The supply was very good. The market was very active. The prices were very good. The demand was very strong. The supply was very ample. The market was very healthy. The prices were very reasonable. The demand was very steady. The supply was very good.

Death of W. P. Jones

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Watch This Space IT WILL PAY YOU.



We will save that are now... ..

Have you seen the champagne New Orange, for setting and filling a... ..

Costs only \$1.70 and \$1.25. A few shaves will from the... ..

J. B. MITCHELL & CO.,

SHERBROOKE, P. Q.

CIRCULAR AND MILL SAWS OF EVERY DESCRIPTION.

Special attention given to repairs.

WE EMPLOY THE MOST SKILLED WORKMEN.

Call 2nd St. Sherbrooke, P. Q. you satisfaction.

CALL AT Griffith's Drug Store

FOR YOUR DRUGS.

PATENT MEDICINES

TABLET ARTICLES.

Purity of drugs, strict attention to business.

DR. NELSON'S Condition: Powders.

THE BEST for horses and milch.

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HOVEY'S name is synonym of perfection in

Ham, Bacon, Lard, Sausage, &c.

WATCH THIS SPACE. THE LITTLE GROCER

makes his bow in the Daily paper.

Must everybody has known the goods are... ..

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THE BON-TON

Black Dress Goods

When it comes to black goods the ladies all know that we lead. The big novelties of this spring's importation bring out expressions of surprise even from the ladies who are used to seeing the kind of goods we sell. We will not try to describe the goods. We want you to come in and see them with your own eyes. Yes, and buy your pair of spectacles, too, if you wish, or the quality will stand close inspection, and the prices are guaranteed to be lower than any other house.

No trouble to Show Goods. No one urged to buy.

STRICTLY ONE PRICE.

THE BON-TON, 13 AND 15 COMMERCIAL 1927. L. E. CHAMBERLAIN.

PURE, SPARKLING AND DELICIOUS ALES AND CREAM PORTER

Put up in quarts and pints, pronounced by experts to be perfection.

For Sale Everywhere by all First-Class Dealers.

Bell telephones 220 and 221. - Skinner telegraph, 54.

SILVER SPRING BREWERY SHERBROOKE.

H. C. WILSON & SONS, PIANO WORKROOMS, Established 1872.

THE JENCKES MACHINE CO., SHERBROOKE, P. Q.

BUILDERS OF...

Engines, Boilers, Saw Mill Machinery, and General Iron Work.

WRITE FOR ESTIMATE AND CATALOGUES.

THE RECORD

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Record was significantly different from other dailies in circulation at the turn of the century:

- its subscription rate was considerably lower than that of most other dailies;
- the main focus of the paper was local rather than national;
- and in the first edition, Channell published a mission statement whereby he promised that the news of the Eastern Townships would take precedence over all else.

Oddly, however, Channell also presented, in the same edition, a policy of no editorials, claiming they were a waste of time and space, concluding, "Consequently we shall devote the money that could be paid for second-class editorial writers, to the gathering of readable and interesting news items." Within a month, however, Channell realized that it would be impossible to run a quality newspaper without editorial comment and rescinded his original policy.

The "gathering of readable and interesting news items" to which Channell had referred has made, and continues to make, *The Record* truly unique. Since its inception, *The Record* has maintained a network of social correspondents who have provided readers with local information from every corner of the Eastern Townships.

Page 3 of the first issue ran a column of "Cookshire Notes," which have a certain charm to them and covered a wide range of news items:

Cookshire Notes.

Cookshire, Feb. 8. — Success to the "Record".

Charlie Bailey is learning to waltz. [my own favourite]

Mr. Arthur Cann is rapidly improving.

The girls Gym of the "Academy," has received a large stock of Indian Clubs. "More power to their elbow."

Rev. C. W. Finch, denounced carnivals and hockey matches being held on Saturday night, as tending to desecrate the Sabbath.

Cookshire Mill Co., loaded and shipped over two hundred cars of Pulp wood last week ending 6th.

The staff of the Academy are trying to improve the library. Donations thankfully received.

An India Famine Fund is being raised by the Churches in town.

It is reported that Harold Wilford has secured a position in the Peoples Bank in Halifax.

A large number drove to Angus to witness the 6th match in the local series of League games. They went down very joyful but came back making as little noise as possible, it being Sunday.

Although Channell stressed that the primary focus of the *Sherbrooke Daily Record* would be local news, he outlined in his letter to readers that the *Record* would also carry the latest telegraphic and cable news from all parts of the world. Channell noted that, though the *Record* would not at first be able to compete in world news with larger dailies in circulation at the time, a summary of all the important world events would appear daily in the *Record*. This made for an interesting mix of information being provided in the paper.

Headlines from the first edition included the following: "Hockey at Lennoxville: A Close Game"; "City Council: Estimates for the Year Presented"; "War Almost Inevitable Between Greece and Turkey."

It's interesting to note that stories had a major headline and two sub-headlines underneath, each followed by a period. This was to be characteristic of *Record* stories for more than a decade.

Channell also outlined his position on the place that advertising would occupy in his new paper:

In starting we have made the size of the paper small, but shall enlarge it as fast as the advertising patronage will warrant. One thing we shall always remember, is not to allow the advertising to encroach on the news columns. It is not an advertising sheet that we purpose issuing, but a news paper in every sense of the word.

Convincing local businesses to advertise presented no small hurdle for the debutante paper. Newspaper advertising was a new concept for Eastern Townships entrepreneurs.

Advertising in the first edition of the *Sherbrooke Daily Record* was fairly extensive and presented an eclectic combination of businesses and services from the Bon-Ton Black Dress Goods store, which was featured on the front page [see page 74], to D. McManamy & Co., importers of wines and liquors.

Of particular interest to some of you may be the ad for Hovey's [see facing page].

Channell recognized the importance of local support for his paper, but he also demonstrated good business sense by stressing the benefits

HOVEY'S
 name is synonym
 of perfection in
 Ham, Bacon,
 Lard, Sausage, &c.

WATCH THIS SPACE.
"THE LITTLE GROCER"
 makes his bow in the new
 Daily paper.

Most everybody now knows
 his goods ARE GOOD and his
 prices ARE LOW and every ar-
 ticle that he sells gives entire
 satisfaction.

You Will find His Little Store at
NO. 4 BECKETT RD.

Bell Tel. No. 154. Sherbrooke Tel. No. 111.
 The DAILY RECORD will be on sale here every
 afternoon, or will be delivered at your house.

Advertisement for Hovey's
 from the first edition.

of advertising, and by providing a medium through which local businesses could expand their client base. An in-house ad calling for advertisers to try their luck with the new paper in town states: "Give the *Sherbrooke Daily Record* and any other paper you advertise in a fair chance to prove its work as a good advertising medium. Put in honest, up-to-date ads, and change them frequently.... Trial ad 26 cents."

Advertising did pick up shortly after the first edition of the paper, and a large portion of the ads were for local enterprises, which illustrates the relative prosperity of the Eastern Townships, and of Sherbrooke in particular, at the turn of the century. Though national ads would eventually be published, the focus was regional and many local businesses were loyal supporters of their local paper.

Because the *Sherbrooke Daily Record* was the new business in town, its circulation at first was somewhat limited. For the first few weeks, however, Channell sent the paper to several homes in the area free.

Residents of Sherbrooke could have the *Record* delivered to the door or buy it from local merchants. For those living elsewhere in the Townships, the paper was printed in time to connect with the trains to Magog, Lake Megantic and all other intermediate stations, ensuring that readers in outlying regions would receive their news on time every day.

With the most common means of transportation, horse and buggy, taking too long, the *Record* relied on the services of CP Rail for prompt and efficient delivery. The newspapers were sorted at the train station and from there sent to their various destinations throughout the Townships.

A QUARTER-CENTURY OF PROGRESS: 1897–1922

On the occasion of the *Sherbrooke Daily Record's* twenty-fifth anniversary, a look back over its first quarter-century revealed that the paper had matured considerably from its humble beginnings. By 1922, the *Record* had over 100 employees on payroll, including correspondents.

[...]

The newspaper had grown by leaps and bounds. On June 29, 1903, new presses and equipment had been installed at the *Record's* offices at 100 Wellington Street. In 1904, the *Record* had absorbed the *Sherbrooke Examiner*, a local weekly.

Similarly, the *Sherbrooke Gazette* was purchased in 1908 and became a part of the much larger daily.

As the *Sherbrooke Daily Record* grew, the need for a permanent home became a somewhat pressing matter, and in 1906 the *Sherbrooke Daily Record* building was constructed at 69 Wellington Street North in downtown Sherbrooke. This new building would house all elements of the newspaper's operations, from the presses to the business offices.

According to the twenty-fifth anniversary edition of the *Record*, "This gave the *Record* one of the most conveniently arranged printing premises in Canada, the business, editorial and mechanical departments all being located on the ground floor. It is believed that no other daily newspaper in Canada enjoys this convenient arrangement."

In 1907, The Sherbrooke Record Company was founded by Channell, and its members included V.E. Morrill — his business partner and editor of the *Record*. The *Record* was heading towards the peak of its growth when readers were shocked and dismayed to learn of Channell's sudden death.

The Monday, July 19, 1909, edition of the *Sherbrooke Daily Record* reported that Leonard S. Channell had died, "At his summer cottage 'Fern Bank' on the shore of Lake Massawippi, at 9:45 Saturday morning.... The summons came suddenly, as almost up to the last moment he had apparently been in his usual health."

Channell's obituary includes a passage emphasizing the fact that Channell had not been in the least influenced by naysayers, who didn't believe that a project such as the *Sherbrooke Daily Record* could succeed.

Channell had not only been well respected in the communities of the Eastern Townships, but his work in the field of journalism had also been recognized throughout Canada. He had been president of the Canadian Press Association, the first time a newspaperman from the Province of Quebec had held the prestigious title.

When Leonard Channell passed away, he left the *Record* in very good condition. Circulation figures for the first ten years of its operation had jumped from roughly 2,400 in 1898 to 8,000 in 1907. These numbers continued to spiral upwards throughout the first 25 years of the paper's history until circulation rates reached a near saturation point, with well over 10,000 copies of the paper being delivered to

homes across the Eastern Townships daily.

This remarkable growth in circulation was attributed to editorial content. To quote the twenty-fifth anniversary edition of the *Record*, “The establishment of correspondents to report the local news in the various Eastern Townships communities has always been marked by growth of circulation in those communities.”

“Daily News Specials from All Parts of the Eastern Townships” were a regular front page feature of the *Sherbrooke Daily Record* in its early years.

[...]

[A sample from December 30, 1910, shows a] range of localities — from Graniteville to Melbourne, from Black Lake to Dunham—and a variety of happenings covered—from sliding accidents to the availability of town water, from a gift received to a school closure.

The 1922 article on the *Record's* circulation goes on to state, “And likewise as the telegraphic as well as the home news services have been developed, the *Record* has come to be regarded as more and more complete as a newspaper, until today a very large proportion of the *Record's* readers, perhaps three-fourths of the whole, take no other daily paper.”

The *Record* had installed a Canadian Press leased wire service which brought the news of the world directly to the editor's desk and into the paper daily.

[The November 10, 1909, front page] shows that a third of the page contained news from beyond the Eastern Townships—from London, Ontario; London, England; New York; Montreal; Knoxville, Tennessee; and Winnipeg. This was an improvement over the paper's humble beginnings when only snippets of far-away news were transmitted to readers.

With the technological advances to the wire service available to the *Record*, the news of the world could be brought to the doorsteps of Townshippers. News of many international events reached people in the Eastern Townships only via the pages of the *Record*.

In the newspaper's early years, the death of Queen Victoria in 1901 was one of the major world happenings to hit the front page. The *Record* acknowledged the importance of her death by using the thick vertical column separators, or “mourning bars,” associated with the death of an important person. The headline read, “The Queen is Dead; Her Empire Mourns Today.”

In 1912, the sinking of the *Titanic* shocked many. The front pages of the *Sherbrooke Daily Record* were emblazoned with headlines like “Feared Over 1200 Persons Perished by Foundering of *Titanic* After

Colliding With Iceberg” and “Catastrophe Worst In History of the Sea.”

One report complained that because of the “women first” regulation, the lives of many prominent men had been lost. Another *Record* article related that a bust of Sir Wilfrid Laurier destined for the Chateau Laurier was lost in the disaster.

On Monday, August 3, 1914, the *Record* announced that “European War Has Begun With All Great Powers Involved.” Only then, when it looked as though Britain would be involved, did the *Record* devote all its attention to the situation that had been unfolding in Europe. It seemed obvious that Britain would be involved, and Canada, as a Dominion, along with it. The *Record*, along with most other newspapers, was reporting that the war would not last long and that German food supplies were already running short.

The *Record* was there when Britain declared war on Germany, and it chronicled the battles and movements of troops overseas, rearranging its services to give better war coverage. It now had access to the entire Associated Press Service. As well, it had access to bulletins on stock wire to provide up-to-the-minute information and to an illustrated service to provide photographs and drawings.

In the August 5, 1914, edition of the *Record*, the following notice appeared:

Realizing that the communities of the Eastern Townships, where the *Record* circulates, will be deeply interested in the war news, the *Record* desires to announce that it will be prepared to give brief bulletins of the news in answer to long distance calls after 10:30 in the morning. It is suggested that communities interested in this offer, arrange through a local committee to post a daily bulletin. The *Record* will not be able to provide this news to individual inquirers but will do so for communities which make such arrangements for posting bulletins.

Every community in the Eastern Townships had family members or friends who were overseas and the *Record* provided this service for its readers because management knew that many of its readers could not wait for the following day to trace the progress of the war. For Townshippers, war reports from the *Sherbrooke Daily Record* were the closest thing to a letter home from the many young soldiers from the Eastern Townships who went off to fight in the Great War.

Throughout the war, many truths were kept from readers, partly due to censorship, but also because news of what trench warfare was really like would simply have been too traumatic for relatives waiting at home to bear. Thus, despite the *Record's* efforts to secure informa-

tion, the amount of war news that got through to *Record* readers was minimal.

When a soldier from the area was injured or killed, it was usually someone who was known to many subscribers. Bulletins generally read something like the following: "Coaticook, May 10, 1915. Mrs. Mary Forest received a message from Ottawa announcing her son Gunner Henry S. Forest, of the 2nd Field Artillery Brigade had been killed in action. Much sympathy is felt for the parents of this young soldier, who was well known in Coaticook and only about 18 years of age."

The paper tried to keep its stories original and included anecdotes such as that of two Eastern Townships ladies who sent soldiers cakes with notes of encouragement or letters from soldiers at the front. For the most part, Townshippers read about how well their troops were doing and heavy losses the Germans had suffered.

By 1917, war reports no longer took up the entire first page, although they still told of heavy German losses. As things became more optimistic, the headlines grew accordingly.

On November 11, 1918, the entire front page was dedicated to the end of the Great War.

Sherbrooke declared a public holiday and the *Record* reported,

"Crowds Grabbed Pans to Use As Drums" and celebrations spilled over into the streets. When the troops returned, the front page of the *Sherbrooke Daily Record* proudly displayed celebratory Union Jacks and Canadian flags on either side of the *Record's* name and welcomed the soldiers home, thanking them for their service to their country.

Sherbrooke and the Eastern Townships were honored by a Royal visit in 1919, a very special occasion that would rarely be repeated. On the day of the Prince of Wales' visit, industries in Sherbrooke declared half work days and during the actual two-hour visit, all business in Sherbrooke was suspended. The *Record* wrote, "... Prince Edward of Wales, heir apparent to the British throne, comes to Sherbrooke today. The welcome which Sherbrooke will accord him will speak for itself, giving undying evidence of the loyalty and patriotism



Headlines on Armistice Day.

of the people of these Eastern Townships.”

Advertising that appeared in the first 25 years of the *Record's* history reflected changing times. The Victory Loan campaign figured prominently among post-war advertising campaigns. Ads regarding health care and the prevention of unpleasant illnesses became commonplace.

In the October 29, 1919, edition of the *Record*, an ad appeared for Zutoo, which “will cure any headaches in 20 minutes, will nip a cold in the bud, will relieve the monthly pains of women, and in every case it Leaves you Feeling Good.” Another ad for a vitamin supplement stated: “Afraid She Was Dying: suffered terribly until she took ‘Fruit-a-tives.’” Cures for stomach ailments and severe skin conditions were also featured regularly.

Advertisements also show how drastically different the cost of travel was from that of today. In the August 5, 1914, issue of the *Record*, several ocean liners were advertising rates of under \$100 from Montreal to ports throughout Europe. Some third-class tickets could be obtained for as low as \$20.

Frequent local advertisers during this era included H.C. Wilson & Sons, the Eastern Townships Bank, Griffith's Drug Store, J.S. Mitchell, Allatt's, and His Majesty's Theatre.

Several special supplements printed on glossy paper were published by the *Sherbrooke Daily Record* during this period. These included “The Christmas Record,” noteworthy also for its use of red ink on its front, back, and centre pages, on December 16, 1911, and “Eastern Townships Agriculture” on May 28, 1914.

On its twenty-fifth anniversary, the *Sherbrooke Daily Record* received numerous messages of congratulations both from fellow newspapermen and major advertisers.

Congratulations came from, among others, the *Calgary Daily Herald*, the *Toronto Globe*, the *Halifax Daily Chronicle*, Bovril Limited and Baby's Own Soap.

Two letters are of particular note. From the *Mail and Empire*, Toronto: “The *Record* has always been an outstanding example of the best there is in journalism and we hope that in the coming years you may be able to harvest the prosperity you deserve from the splendid seed you have sown in the twenty-five years that lie behind you.”

From the *London Daily Advertiser*:

Congratulations to you and to the good men about you, on your accomplishment in building a newspaper that because of its honesty of purpose and fearless attitude in fighting for the rights of the people, has come to be looked upon as one of the ideals of newspaperdom in Canada. The confidence reposed in The Daily

Record by the people of Sherbrooke and surrounding district, and the prestige of *The Record* among Canadian publishers, is ample evidence of the fact that success is not always measured in circulation figures that run in the hundreds of thousands. Long may you live and prosper.

Although 25 years of operation seemed a great achievement, those associated with the *Record* realized, "Twenty-five years is not a great age as newspapers go." Several Canadian publications had already celebrated their centennials. This led J.H. Woods of the *Calgary Herald* to refer to the *Record* as having just emerged from its youth.

THE 50-YEAR MARK: THE *RECORD* GROWS UP: 1923–1947

By the time the *Sherbrooke Daily Record* had been in publication for fifty years, it had weathered many storms and had come through unscathed. The *Record* had survived two World Wars, a depression, good times and bad. The newspaper had been blessed with a truly dedicated staff which had been instrumental in producing a first-rate community newspaper and keeping it functioning, even through the hardest of times.

An editorial published on the cover of the fiftieth anniversary edition of the *Record* praised staffers who had contributed to the life of the paper.

Among those lauded in the editorial was long-time employee Charlie Pearson, a worker in the press room, who had dedicated 47 years to turning the papers out day after day. He was actually to work a total of 52 years at the *Sherbrooke Daily Record*, from 1900 to 1952.

Also mentioned were Ruby Bailey, an employee of 45 years, A.J. O'Boyle (45 years), Joe Blais (41 years), and Edna Beerworth (35 years).

Over the span of its first fifty years, the *Record's* look had changed considerably from its earlier days. In 1927, the newspaper changed its format, still a broadsheet, but now over eight columns rather than five.



The front page of 21 March 1929 illustrates the change to eight columns.

You'll notice that the period in the masthead is gone and there are no longer periods at the end of headlines. And only one subheading is used. The newsprint used was wider and thus the *Sherbrooke Daily Record* contained a considerable amount of information daily. Also, with improving technology, the *Record* began publishing more photographs, especially on the cover, bringing new life to the paper. In 1930, news printers were installed in the newsroom, giving the editorial staff immediate access to stories directly off the wire service, bringing the news of the world automatically to the editor. Later on, the words "THE PAPER OF THE EASTERN TOWNSHIPS" were added to the masthead.

During the years of the Second World War, a V for victory and a Union Jack flanked the words "Sherbrooke Daily Record" on the masthead.

Most stories on the cover page were related to the war. [There was a "War Bulletins" section, and election results from PEI were almost lost amongst the war stories.]

Management of the *Record* fell into many hands in its first fifty years. Following Channell's death, ownership of the *Record* went to his wife, Winnifred Buckland Channell. Victor E. Morrill became managing editor during this time and remained as such until his death in 1928. Morrill was replaced by Erasmus G. Pierce, who had been with the *Record* as assistant manager for 27 years and became general manager for almost two years, until his death in 1930.

In 1930, the *Record* was purchased by Alfred Wood and Gordon Miller became editor of the paper. This arrangement lasted until 1935, with the passing of Wood and the purchase of controlling interest in The Sherbrooke Record Company by John Bassett, Sr., then president of the *Montreal Gazette*.

Bassett held the position of President of The Sherbrooke Daily Record Company until 1945, when the post was then occupied by his son, John Bassett, Jr., who carried on until 1968.

Through all of its different owners, managers and editors, the *Sherbrooke Daily Record* maintained a very high standard of excellence. Its commitment to Channell's original motto of "community first" remained strong until the Bassett era, when it began to waver somewhat as the *Record* became a training ground for reporters who came from outside the area and were headed for the Toronto beat.

The *Record's* circulation remained fairly steady during its first fifty years. At its twenty-fifth anniversary, circulation levels had hit the ten thousand plus mark, and these levels remained fairly steady for the next 25 years. Was this perhaps due to the need for up-to-date infor-

mation regarding the war or Townshippers' desire to keep in touch with members of its various communities through the columns of social correspondents?

After all, where else could one learn about the comings and goings in the Townships, from meeting reports to who visited whom, from graduation dances to announcements of new families moving in.

This particular excerpt [see right] tells us of visitors to "Bonnie View Farm" in Ayer's Cliff, of a Mother's Day gift of roses and chocolates cabled to a mom in Beebe from her son stationed in Italy, and of the South Bolton Catholic congregation's first church service in what was formerly "Wedge's Store."



A much-loved feature of The Record is its social notes. These date from 6 June 1944.

In 1947 the cost of the *Record* was still comparatively low. Fifty years after its original cost of \$1.50 for an annual subscription, the cost of the *Record* was \$13 per year if delivered by carrier and \$6 if delivered by mail.

Major local stories covered in the *Sherbrooke Daily Record* between 1923 and 1947 included the unveiling of Sherbrooke's Soldiers' Monument on King Hill on November 7, 1926,

The first few lines of the story read,

With one thought in common, that of perpetuating the names and memory of the heroes from the city of Sherbrooke who gave their lives on the altar of sacrifice at the call of King and country, and to honor the deeds and bravery of those who offered their services, withstood the war and returned to their native land, citizens of Sherbrooke, regardless of creed, class or nationality, united together on Sunday afternoon as true Canadians and loyal British subjects to attend the unveiling and dedication of Sherbrooke's monument to its glorious soldier-dead. Favored with fine weather, the ceremony, which was very impressive, was carried out in a most successful manner, was one which did full justice to the noble motives of the citizens and will long be remembered by those who were present.

A fire at Stanstead Wesleyan College on May 28, 1938, was the subject of a front page story.

[...]

The era of the *Record's* second quarter-century was marked by

major international developments. October 29, 1929, is often identified as the starting day of the Depression. Ironically enough, the headline of the *Record* that day screamed out, "Land Values at Asbestos Take a Big Jump; Land Boom Strikes Town of Asbestos and Forces Property Values To Sky." Property in Asbestos was worth \$100,000, a lot of money considering one could rent a brand new house for \$15 per month.

At the beginning of the Depression, the stock market crash was greeted with a small article on the front page. Nobody seemed particularly worried. The *Record* was still packed with ads for radios and brand new appliances. Gradually, however, the headlines became more pessimistic, one from 1931 saying, "Serious Internal and External Problems Confront All Nations." The ads gradually shift towards practical things, with people afraid of losing their jobs and having to save and scrimp money. Throughout the early 1930s, there are almost no want ads, whereas before the paper had been packed with them.

In 1936, news of the abdication of King Edward hit the front page of the *Sherbrooke Daily Record*.

In 1939, King George VI and Queen Elizabeth visited Sherbrooke, and a specially wrapped issue of the *Sherbrooke Daily Record* was placed on the Royal Train.

In this second 25-year period of the *Record's* history, war once again figured prominently. Canadian troops, including several Townships regiments, were once again overseas and families at home were left to worry about their well-being. The *Record* was left with the responsibility of tracking the war and bringing the news to Townshippers. Throughout the entire war, "determined calm" is the prevailing spirit as the *Record* reported on the war but little else.

The surrender of France was not reported as a catastrophe, but simply one more thing to deal with. Once again, censorship meant that the important turning points of the war were almost overlooked.

Many employees of the *Record* served in the war, as well as their family members. E.C. Bampton, a press-room employee in 1945, recalls the dilemma with which he was faced when *Record* employees learned of the end of World War II, but were not allowed to share the



This editorial cartoon from the 6 June 1944 edition reflects preoccupation with the war.

news until noon. Bampton’s father and brother were serving in the war and his mother was extremely anxious for their safe return.

Bampton also remembers that on the day that victory was declared, the masses had gathered outside the *Record* offices on Wellington Street to get the official news: “We worked hard to get the paper out before noon. By 11 o’clock, the noise from Wellington Street was getting into the building. People had gathered on the street, stores closed, horns honked and folks were patting each other on the back.”

The *Record* was the official word in town and the citizens of Sherbrooke and the Townships depended on it to give them the most up-to-date information available every day.

That same day, May 7, 1945, the *Record* accorded the war a huge headline with the words “GERMANY QUILTS” taking up half the page on VE Day. The war in the Pacific was still raging. Then it was over, and another huge headline was splashed across the front page, “Japan Surrenders.”

The *Record* had published an annual review in February of 1945. The first page of section 2 featured a tribute to soldiers. Then in January of 1946, a special “WELCOME HOME” edition was published.

Advertising during the second 25-year period in the *Record*’s history again reflected the times.

NEW! JUST ARRIVED! RIGHT ON TIME FOR EASTER!

FOR EASTER SUNDAY
To Celebrate the Week
of Resurrection, Mourning and Hope

\$12.99

THE PALM SUNDAY ENSEMBLE \$25.00
Includes: Blouse, Skirt, Jacket, Hat, Shoes, Gloves, Bag, Hat, Shoes, Gloves, Bag, Hat, Shoes, Gloves, Bag

CROCHET HATS \$2.95 — \$3.95

Leather Handbags 2.95

COATS \$12.95

Sport and Utility Coats \$9.95 - \$16.95 - \$20 - 25

Better Spring Coats \$20 - \$25 - \$35

KUSHNER'S LIMITED
Sherbrooke's Largest Ready-to-Wear Store

It's easy to see this ad for Kushner's dates from the flapper era (21 March 1929).

TO 1972: TRIALS AND TRIBULATIONS, OR “REACHING 75: OLDER IS NOT NECESSARILY BETTER”

The next 25 years (1947–1971) did not run as smoothly for the *Record* as had the first half century.

The fifties and early sixties have often been described as the *Record*’s heyday: no more depression, no more wars, business was booming. Annual reviews came in as many as five sections of 24 pages each—120 pages of supplement plus the day’s regular paper.

In terms of specific events, in 1952 the *Sherbrooke Daily Record*’s front page on February 6 announced the death of King George. Black mourning bars were used to mark the sad occasion. If we take a look at a few of that issue’s other pages to get a sense of what the newspaper

of the 1950s was like, we find “The City Page” featuring articles on meetings, concerts, and business news.

There was also a page called “In the Women’s Sphere,” featuring social and personal news, patterns, recipes, an advice column, and reports from various organizations. The day’s sports page covered local and national events in hockey, basketball, skiing, curling and badminton.

A decade later (May 26, 1962, to be exact), the paper was running columns written by Len O’Donnell and “Ted” Anderson. The front page of that edition featured a dramatic local story, “EIGHT KILLED IN ASBESTOS BLAST” [see below].



The front page of the 26 May 1962 edition headlined a local tragedy.

A closer look at the masthead shows us features that had been added on either side of it, “Today’s Chuckle” and “The Weather.” On the same front page is an article with the headline, “Sherbrooke Record Threatened by Strike”.

The *Sherbrooke Daily Record’s* multi-paged annual reviews alluded to earlier contained stories

on a wide range of topics — business developments, reviews of local happenings, personality profiles, and more.

[...]

From March 15, 1952, “A Year’s Activity at Boundary Reviewed in Report to Society” is a colorful summary of the events of 1951 in Stanstead County. The following are two excerpts from that article:

THE DEMOCRATIC MIND AT WORK is very aptly illustrated in the development of local projects towards realisation. There is much conversation: some throwing about of local weight, a good deal of acrimony and violent reactions and partisanship. Then when the smoke of the battle clears away, sensible agreement is arrived at and progress is made.

This is the best illustration in the Protestant School situation. The school had a stormy inception, quarrel as to location, violent partisanship between supporters of the College and of the School Board, and between Rock Island and Stanstead again about an amalgamation. Finally by July 9th, the new school board of the united municipalities was formed happily and quietly with an excellent choice of members. The first sod was turned by Miss Grace Libby, First Year’s beloved teacher, and as you walk down

the street, you will see the constructive result, progress in the building of Sunnyside School.

We have to thank the defunct boards for their efforts, for their candid approach to the citizens by inviting them to their meetings, the building committee for hanging onto their plan, Dr. Shurtleff for his guiding hand, to Mr. Gerin, our MLA, for his support with the government. If one can add not a sour note, but a clear note to be kept in the ear of the board, may two women be appointed to the board.

[...]

The most lurid subject of conversation or controversy, that aroused the greatest animosity and partisanship, that made the columns of the Sherbrooke Record hot reading, our daily entertainment that added nothing to prove anything was the Holland Will Case. Some distant day when our chairman, John T. Hackett, QC, is bowed with years and rheumatism, he will cup his ear with his hand to hear the verdict.



One of the previous year's stories featured in the annual review published 16 May 1957.

The 1957 sixtieth annual review featured, among many others, a story on Sutton chinchillas [see left] and one describing 1956 as a poor year for farmers. The 1962 review included stories on a *Record* carrier and a long-time rural postman. The latter article was written by Mrs. George Parsons, the first of three generations of

women in her family to be a *Record* correspondent.

In 1963, the *Record* published a special supplement on the occasion of the centennial of H.C. Wilson & Sons.

[...]

The glorious times for the *Sherbrooke Daily Record* were not to last. The paper fell on hard times in the mid-sixties, due to both external and internal factors.

In the early days of the paper's publication, the Eastern Townships had been home to a significant anglophone population. Over the years, however, these numbers declined considerably—to the point where the English-speaking population seemed to disappear in certain communities.



An ad from the 15 March 1952 edition.

Townships and by extension *Record* subscribers. During these 25 years, circulation numbers dove, advertising potential declined, and the times of subscribers numbering over ten thousand were gone.

Internal problems also played a role in the paper's troubles. The entire premise for the *Sherbrooke Daily Record*, as Channell had outlined in its first edition, was a commitment to community and the affairs of the Eastern Townships. These ideals were maintained throughout the first 50 years of the paper's history, but over time priorities changed. The *Record* came to be run exclusively as a business and was no longer the vital community link that it had been in the past.

While the *Sherbrooke Daily Record* was under the ownership of the Bassett family, it became just one paper in a large conglomerate. John Bassett, Sr., was president of the *Montreal Gazette* when he purchased the small community daily. His son John Bassett, Jr., was linked to the newspaper and television industry in Toronto. The main concern for the Bassetts, therefore, was their larger investments, and the *Record* came to be run as just one paper among many larger papers.

It did not command the attention that it needed or that it deserved.

Under the ownership of the younger Bassett, the *Record* became a "farm paper" for the *Toronto Telegram*, and much of the news that would be published in the metropolitan-area paper would find itself in the pages of the *Record*. The community focus that was considered so fundamental in its early years began to dwindle, as did community support for the newspaper. Information that was important to Torontonians did not necessarily reflect that which was important to Townshippers.

In 1968, the possibility of the *Sherbrooke Daily Record* ceasing to exist became very real when Bassett, Jr., decided to cease publication

The main external factor that contributed to the paper's difficulty was the political situation in Quebec during the sixties and early seventies.

Disenchanted, Anglo-Quebeckers were packing their bags and heading for points across North America to avoid a situation that was becoming more and more unsettling. This profoundly affected the English-speaking population in the Eastern

of the *Toronto Telegram*. He wanted to move out of the newspaper business completely, in order to focus his attention on the growing television industry and his CTV network. The decision was therefore made to sell his interests in the *Sherbrooke Daily Record*, despite the fact that a new site at CPR Terrace and a new press for the Townships daily had been recently purchased.

A photograph in the January 28, 1968, edition of the *Sherbrooke Daily Record* captured the image of one of the last newspapers rolling off the old press. A Joyce Cochrane sketch of the retired press ran in the paper about two weeks later.

The new Goss printing press was delivered to the *Record's* new home at CPR Terrace.

On August 1, 1968, the *Record* was purchased by Ivan Saunders and Robert Stafford under the name of Progressive Publications Inc.

Saunders had at one time worked for the *Montreal Gazette*, and moved to the *Sherbrooke* paper in 1944 as business manager. Saunders had been in charge of the *Record's* day-to-day operations since 1948, while Bassett, Jr., concentrated his interests on his business dealings in Toronto.

By the time Saunders bought the *Record*, the paper had almost reached the point of no return. Advertising revenue and circulation numbers had both plummeted. It did not look like the paper could be saved. Saunders found himself in the unfortunate position of trying to sail an already sinking ship.

The *Sherbrooke Daily Record* put on a brave face, profiling the use of its newspaper in grammar class, dropping publication of the Saturday edition and starting up a new weekend section, and hosting an "Open House" that stretched over three evenings. A special "Open House" edition profiled the newspaper operation and its staff.

Saunders managed to stay afloat for a few months, but the paper was losing money and it became obvious that the *Record* would fold if drastic action were not taken. This drastic action came in the form of the sale of the newspaper to Conrad Black, Peter White and David Radler. Peter White had unsuccessfully tried to buy the *Sherbrooke Daily Record* from the Bassett family.

By 1969, the *Record* was no longer a part of the Bassett family hold-



The new Goss press being moved to the newspaper's new premises in 1968 (file photo, The Record).

ings, and Saunders was ready to sell it. In exchange for the assumption of debts and payroll costs, White, Black and Radler took over the *Record*, and a new era in the paper's history began. On July 23, 1969, less than a month after they had made their purchase (June 26), the owners renamed the newspaper the *Sherbrooke Record*.

As Richard Siklos writes in his 1996 biography, *Shades of Black: Conrad Black and the World's Fastest Growing Press Empire*,

When businesses, and newspapers in particular, pass between owners, there are usually two versions of what transpired. Those whose careers were disrupted or terminated by the incoming managers invariably deride the new owners, lamenting the decline in the quality of the product, the demise of tradition and the most intangible journalistic quality of all, "community service." Those brought on by the new owners after the house is put in order to their liking, however, tend to be more sympathetic to their employers. The *Sherbrooke Record* in the summer of '69 was no exception (Siklos, p. 42).

There were, indeed, many hard feelings about the tactics of the new management of the *Sherbrooke Record*. Black, White and Radler had enacted extreme measures in order to save the paper from extinction. This included paring the staff down from 48 to 24 within the first few weeks of their ownership. In a 1997 *Record* interview, White attempted to shed some light on the situation: "The staff had too many people.... There is absolutely no question about it. It had to be done. It wasn't pleasant doing those kinds of things [laying off long-time employees], but it had to be done to survive."

Business decisions were not the only aspects of the Black, White and Radler era that were looked upon with scorn. As far as editorial policy goes, it can be fairly said that there really was no policy. The first item of business for the new owners was to keep the business afloat. The contents of the paper seemed of little importance.

[...]

At the newspaper's seventy-fifth anniversary mark, things were not looking good for the paper. Readers had become disillusioned with the route the paper had taken. A 1956 "Out Our Way" cartoon found during our research, of a boy trying to learn to pull the tablecloth out from under a pot with his mother coming upon the scene, calls to my mind's eye a modified version, with *Record* subscribers in place of the mother, and young Black, Radler and White in place of the boy. Local coverage was at an all-time low, and subscribers were showing their disapproval by letting their subscriptions run out. The special anniversary poem written in 1957 by Tom Gordon, and published on

March 16 1957 (p. 123), would not have reflected the mood of subscribers in the early 1970s:

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE SDR,
ON ITS SIXTIETH ANNIVERSARY
Hats off to the Record, in its sixtieth year.
It has brought many a laugh, many a tear.
It brought us the news, day in, day out.
It's a paper we feel we can do not without.
It covers the news of the world, in brief.
In events of moment, and items of grief.
The Social news of the Eastern Townships.
Cover far more than one hundred places.
Births and deaths, engagements and weddings, too.
Of interest to folk, like me, and like you.
Pages of sports for young, and the old.
If we would keep young, keep active, we're told.
Then look at those ads, classified and others.
That help you to make the best use of your dollars.
And its page Editorial, which gleans the world's press.
Our Editor gives us, what he thinks and feels is best.
If there's only one paper that they can afford.
Thousands will say it's the Daily Sherbrooke Record.
So, Good Luck to its Editor, its Staff and its Pages.
May the Record live on, for ages and ages.

1973–1997: ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF HISTORY

Though the years from 1947 to 1972 presented many difficulties for the *Record*, the following 25 years represent a period of recovery. As can be seen by the paper's current success, the *Record* has emerged from its trials and tribulations relatively unscathed.

This quarter-century began with trying times, however. Editors came and went with frightening speed, with as many as three per year. Many *Record* subscribers remember the days when editorials were taken from the *Winnipeg Free Press* or the *Peterborough Examiner*. Peter White has explained, "That was sort of a desperate measure. Rather than not have any [editorials] at all we occasionally did take editorials from the Canadian Press. Eventually, as we got more experienced staff, we changed that."



Page 3 of the edition of 19 March 1978.

The *Record* remained in the hands of the threesome for eight years, until 1977. In the latter years of the Black, White and Radler proprietorship, a more community-oriented paper was produced—it had become clear that the *Record* could not survive, no matter how good the business sense, without the support of the community. Time has told that Channell's "community first" promise is the vital link that keeps the paper in operation, even in the hardest of times.

A semblance of stability was provided when Barbara Verity Stevenson came back to the *Record* in 1974—a year after the operation had moved to Roy Street. She'd been a *Record* reporter in the mid 1960s. Her three-year stint as editor was the longest any editor would remain in place under the paper's rule by Black, White, and Radler.

A glance at the April 5, 1975, *Sherbrooke Record* gives us an idea of what the paper was like near the end of the Black years.

[During this time, the front page used the format of featuring] a story above the masthead [see left]. Notice the mix of local and provincial front-page news stories. Page 3 contained quite a combination of articles: legal, school, bus, accidents. To situate us with what was happening of historical significance nationally, [I note that] page 4 of that issue featured a cartoon on the change to Celsius: yes, we've been living in the Celsius world for over 20 years!

[...]



The front page of the 5 April 1975 edition.

Although Conrad Black and his partners are credited with saving the paper from virtual extinction, it is the years that would follow that would really bring the paper back to life. In 1977, after only eight years of ownership, Black and company sold their interests in the paper to move on to bigger ventures. (Conrad Black is currently one of the biggest newspaper tycoons in the world, and Peter White has recently been honored by the French government with the Légion d'honneur—and it all started with a small anglophone daily in the Eastern Townships of Quebec.) The *Sherbrooke Record* was purchased by George MacLaren and associ-

ates for the princely sum of \$865,000, almost \$845,000 more than what the Black group had paid for it.

Though the paper was clearly out of the red, it was now MacLaren's task to win back the anglophone population of the Eastern Townships. This was not an easy task—many bridges had been burned. Along with a new ownership came a new editor, James Duff, and the task of rebuilding the *Record* began.

It was back to its roots for the *Sherbrooke Record*. A firm commitment to local news and notes of interest was advertised. New management vowed that never again would the newspaper publish an editorial from the *Winnipeg Free Press*. They stood by their promise.

Slowly, but surely, former *Record* readers came around. Content in the paper was a mixture of regional, national, and international news, but the primary focus was local in nature. On its eight-first birthday, seven months after MacLaren and Duff had been at the helm, the paper's masthead was accompanied by a slogan, "The Voice of the Eastern Townships." More changes were to come.

The first edition of "Townships Week" was published on July 20, 1979. Popularly viewed as an entertainment magazine, the weekly Friday supplement, still published today, focuses on local and national entertainment news. It also includes columns, reviews and a summary of what's on in terms of art and entertainment, as well as the weekly TV listings.

"Townships Week" cover stories have featured many cultural sites and events, local artists and entertainers, promoting cultural venues in the region and talented Eastern Townshippers.

The supplement has won many awards for its covers [see right], highlighting the artistic talents of those behind the camera at the *Record*.

Back to 1979: on November 5, MacLaren and company changed the paper's name to *The Record*. The philosophy surrounding the use of only the words "The Record" was that this name more accurately reflected the vast circulation area that the paper served. In



Readers look forward to the Friday insert, "Townships Week," for in-depth coverage of local arts and entertainment. (25 July 1997)

fact the majority of subscribers to the paper were and continue to be from outside the immediate Sherbrooke area.

In April of 1981, the newspaper's operations moved to 2850 Delorme Street, its current location. Another Open House was held, drawing a crowd of visitors.

A few months later, James Duff left for another media position and Charles Bury took over the position of editor. Bury was to become the newspaper's longest-standing editor.

The year 1982 featured an eighty-fifth anniversary *Record* reunion, which brought together many current and former employees. A *Record* report on the reunion focused on the "outspoken tradition" of *The Record* that MacLaren and Bury were carrying on.

More changes had to be made—Canada Post stopped its Saturday rural delivery. Neither the paper nor its mail subscribers were amused. In response, *Record* management chose to publish two papers on Fridays.

Social notes had continued to be a regular part of the daily paper throughout these times. Their topics ranged from reports on monthly meetings to family news from a multitude of Townships communities. Correspondent-photographer Perry Beaton recalls, "Generations of editors tried to get rid of the social notes ... at their peril."

In 1983, a public attack on *The Record's* social notes and meeting write-ups elicited a rare "Commentary" piece by Mrs. Helen Evans. A normally shy Mrs. Evans informed the critic that "these correspondents" were the backbone of *The Record*. Helen Evans knew whereof she spoke. Her career with *The Record* had begun in 1953 as a proof-reader. She later took on responsibilities as correspondents' editor for a network of over 80 correspondents from across the Townships. This poem by Beryl Williams, published August 25, 1982 (p. 10), illustrates the esteem in which Mrs. E., as she is fondly called by *Record* staff members, has always been held:

THE PROOF IS IN THE READING

There is a woman I know
who could run circles
around anyone
wherever she might go.

Dedicated to her job
through snow, sleet and rain.
Even when she's overloaded
she somehow manages to smile again.

If it weren't for her integrity
and tireless, scanning eye
woe! to the bad spellers
for those errors that would slip by ...

Yes, people like her are rare
and must have been made in heaven.
You must have guessed by now,
it's our own dear Mrs. Evans.

Helen Evans was social correspondent editor for 43 years before retiring at the beginning of this year.

Today, social notes still have their place in *The Record*, in no small measure due to Mrs. Evans' commitment to the "social" news and to her correspondents, many of whom have been among *The Record's* contributors for almost a half century.

In 1987, *The Record* was sold by MacLaren to Pierre Péladeau, owner of Communications Québecor inc., a media conglomerate based in Montreal. M. Péladeau, whose photo hit the front page of [the 29 October 1997 issue of the] *Record* [was] among those to receive France's Légion d'honneur.

Once again, the newspaper was a small fish in a big sea, but this time, the outcome has not been negative. Randy Kinnear, a native Townshipper who had worked closely with MacLaren on the accounting side of the operation as controller, was named publisher.

Rather than being treated as a "farm paper" as it was in the Bassett era, *The Record* has been allowed and even encouraged to remain true to its roots, as a community paper serving the English-speaking Eastern Townships population.

May of 1990 saw the launching of the weekly *Brome County News* supplement.

The *Brome County News* is a free distribution paper concentrating on the Brome-Missisquoi region, but also made available through *The Record* to its subscribers. Initially planned as an advertising supplement, the *Brome County News* gathered such a following that it became an integral part of the anglophone community in the western part of the Townships. People count on their "BCN" for weekly community news. They also anxiously await the next episode of Sharon McCully's column, "Out of the Brome Closet."

On April 28, 1995, the last broadsheet edition of *The Record* was printed. Publisher Randy Kinnear and editor Charles Bury outlined the change in a message to readers. From day one, May 1, the tabloid format received rave reviews—being much easier for readers to handle.

Then, in the spring of 1996, as a cost-cutting measure, arrangements were made with *La Tribune* and *La Voix de l'Est* for early morning delivery by their motorized vehicle carriers.

Charles Bury left the position of editor in the summer of 1996. Still linked to *The Record* through his page 2 and "On the Wild Side" columns, this award-winning journalist and former president of the Canadian Association of Journalists is destined for further success in the media world.

Veteran reporter and *Brome County News* managing editor Sharon McCully has been editor since Bury's departure from the newsroom.

More changes were on the way. Last fall, Québecor invested in new computer equipment, "a demonstration of confidence in the future of the English-language daily that has served Townshippers for 100 years," and the newspaper made the transition from manual paste-up to computerized layout. A network of community correspondents was set up and the "Community Forum" concept introduced. Then, to coincide with *The Record's* centennial, a new look was launched, along with the publication of a hundredth anniversary supplement.

A month ago, the first "Lennoxville Link," published on Tuesdays, was added to the paper, along with a special local sports section printed on Mondays.

Here's a quick look at a few of the *Record* people who helped to bring you your daily newspaper—with apologies to the many who are not included.

[At this juncture, Ms. Mastine showed slides of staff photos of editorial personnel, newsroom staff, and carriers.]

Historic moments have been captured by our community daily, some of them marked with the publication of special supplements. There've been floods, political changes, anniversaries.

Battles have been fought on other fronts. Just months after her first day as editor, McCully took the step of publishing a rarely-seen front page editorial expressing the community's frustration over the issue of bilingual signs in a local hospital. Thousands of Townshippers supported this gesture, signing a petition which was presented in the National Assembly.

The Record has published annual reviews, complaints about our ink—which inspired poetry to come out of the editor's pen—and captured everyday moments.

100 YEARS IN A NUTSHELL

Former *Gazette* editorial-page editor Joan Fraser was quoted in the January 25, 1984, edition of *The Record* in an article by Jim Davidson, then a student at Carleton University. The article was entitled, “*The Record*—a study in ‘modern-day miracles’?” This is what Ms. Fraser had to say about our daily newspaper: “I think it is very important that there be an English paper in the Townships. *The Record* is a most valuable institution. If the Eastern Townships community remains as lively and coherent as it is that is in large measure due to *The Record*.”

The article continued with the following:

While much of the reason for The Record’s miraculous survival lies with the printing and advertising advantages, the intangible factor of a stubborn English community that sees its paper as essential to its own survival cannot be discounted. Another key element in The Record’s continued strength is the dedication and determination of the people who work for the paper.

[...]

Neither Bury nor any of the other Record employees are holding their breath for the paper’s demise. They’re too busy trying to keep it alive.

Production manager Richard Lessard has worked 21 years at The Record under Bassett, Saunders, Black and MacLaren and he’s not about to let the paper just fade away. “I told George one day, ‘I’ll stay with you. If the thing goes down, I’ll go with you.’ Everybody will fight very hard before we let this thing go down. I don’t know one person here who wouldn’t help him to the very end.”⁵

The article’s author concluded, “Publisher MacLaren doesn’t seem to be too worried about ever seeing that end. ‘We’re working on the assumption that we’re going to be around a long time.’” Words that still apply today.

On the editorial side of the paper, many journalists have come and gone, but all have fond memories of their *Record* days. *The Record* has a long-standing reputation of being a training ground for reporters. Some of the country’s top newspeople have been part of our daily’s news team—Norman Webster, Lou Harris, Paul Waters, Bernie St. Laurent, Crosbie Cotton, Avril Benoit, to name a few.

Townshippers can boast that they have had top-quality reporting in their local paper for 100 years, and the tradition is still running strong.

The success of *The Record* can be attributed to a tremendous dedi-

cation to it by *Record* owners, employees, and the anglophone community of the Eastern Townships. Current editor Sharon McCully wrote in the hundredth-anniversary edition of the newspaper, "While much ink has been spilled on the business and management styles of various owners, one thing is certain: each played an important role in the survival of *The Record* and few made money doing it."

Publisher Randy Kinnear, also on the occasion of the paper's centennial, echoed Leonard Channell's 100-year-old message to readers: the *Sherbrooke Daily Record* has come to stay. He noted the many English-speaking individuals, organizations and institutions in the Eastern Townships who rely on *The Record* for news and coverage of community events — a role to which *The Record* is committed.

A congratulatory letter from Ola Dyer Carr of Sutton described the place that our daily newspaper has in our lives:

My husband and I have been subscribers for 50 years. The paper has had many ups and downs, as has many of us, but it survives.

Our joys and sorrows have been recorded in it. Descriptions of weddings, showers, deaths, reunions, have all been recorded and clipped out to send to relatives and friends.

We Townshippers are keeping in touch with each other through the pages of *The Record*.

Congratulations, best wishes and thanks.

Townshippers keeping in touch: that's what *The Record* is all about — it's all about us, at home, or wherever we may find ourselves.



Then publisher George MacLaren and photographer Perry Beaton display the Canadian Press award given for "It's All about Us," a promotional series featuring community members and places.

(Source: unidentified clipping in *The Record* fonds,
ETRC Archives Department; ca. 1981.)

NOTES

By the Editors of the *Journal of Eastern Townships Studies*

- 1 In this text, “the *Sherbrooke Daily Record*” refers to the newspaper during the long period it officially bore that name (except in the lecture’s title, where it refers to the paper’s full lifespan) and “the *Record*” is a short form of the same name. “*The Record*,” with both words italicized, has been the paper’s official name since 5 November 1979. It is used in the text both for references relating to the years since that date and for references to the newspaper as an ongoing daily publication from 1897 to the present.
- 2 *The Campus* is Bishop’s University’s newspaper and *The Mitre* is its literary magazine.
- 3 When Ms. Mastine presented this address, it was accompanied by numerous slides, some of which are reproduced here. Except where noted in the captions, these slides were made by *The Record*’s correspondent-photographer Perry Beaton from original copies of the newspaper provided by individual subscribers.
- 4 The sources for this and other facts presented in the address are found in correspondence by individuals with *The Record* and in the relevant issues of the newspaper itself. Queries about specific sources may be addressed to Ms. Mastine, who has information on file.
- 5 Richard Lessard has now been in his position for 37 years.

ERRATUM

In *Journal of Eastern Townships Studies* no. 11 (Fall 1997), an error crept into the endnotes to the article by J.I. Little, "A Moral Engine of Such Incalculable Power: The Temperance Movement in the Eastern Townships, 1830–1852." Following endnote 92, p. 35, the number 93 was used for two endnotes in succession. The second 93 should of course have been 94 and been keyed to superscript number 94 in the text at p. 22. The endnotes numbered 94 through 126 are all, therefore, one step out of alignment with the superscript numbers in the text. The Editors regret the error and any inconvenience it may cause in consulting Dr. Little's article.