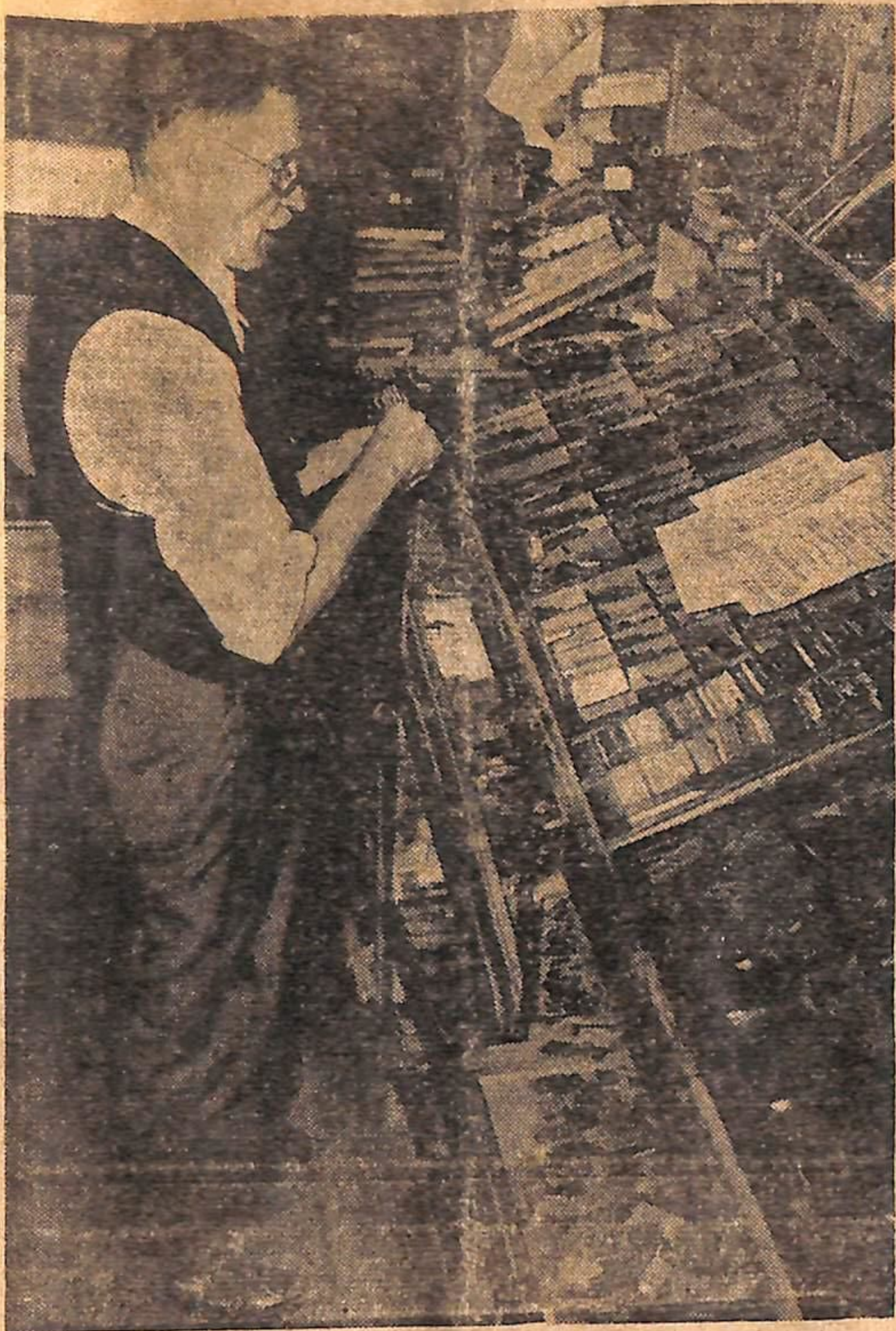


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"DAN" MCKENZIE

A lifetime of service and devotion to his community, his fellows and his family was ended on Friday night, November 4th, when death claimed Donald "Dan" McKenzie, of The Advocate, in his 87th year. Although he had been in failing health for some months, he had remained active, and his passing came quickly and as a shock to those who were closely acquainted with him.

For 57 years Dan McKenzie had published and edited The Advocate. Born October 15th, 1863, at Branchton, Ontario, near Galt, a son of Alexander and Isobel McKenzie, he was the eldest in a family of eleven brothers and sisters. His grandparents, born in Scotland, had emigrated to New York State, and came to Canada with the United Empire Loyalists, settling on farms near Galt.

Shortly after his birth Mr. McKenzie's parents moved to Sombra Township, on the St. Clair River. When he was four years old, the family removed to the 4th concession of Elderslie Township, and a year later to the 2nd concession, and he first attended school in S. S. No. 2 Elderslie. In the fall of 1869 the family came to Paisley, where the subject of this sketch attended the original brick schoolhouse on Queen Street south, and later the four-room school erected in 1872. For years his father, Alexander McKenzie, was school caretaker. The task of providing for the growing family presented problems. So, when the publisher of The Advocate proposed to his parents that Dan McKenzie enter the printing trade, the latter's school days ended and he entered upon his lifetime's work. He started his duties as a 'printer's devil' at the age of 14, and at a wage of 50 cents a week. With pride, Dan McKenzie has related how, when his father, mother and one sister lay seriously ill for weeks with typhoid fever, he was able to provide for the family. His duties in the little shop that housed The Advocate included manipulating the roller on the hand press and delivering the papers to subscribers in town.

In the winter of 1880 Dan McKenzie left Paisley to take employment at Ingersoll. En route to that town he stopped over at Galt. There a former associate in The Advocate offered him one dollar a week more than he was to receive at Ingersoll, and he joined the staff of the Galt Reformer. Throughout his life he regarded this move as a regrettable breach of contract or of faith. With his added experience in 1882 he moved to Toronto, where he worked in the old Presbyterian publishing house. But the sanitary conditions of the city in that era undermined his health, and he returned to The Advocate. Then, as a partner with Robert Munro, principal of Paisley schools, he purchased The Waterloo Chronicle, but soon they sold out to take over The Port Elgin Times. He remained in the lakeshore village for four years, and in 1892 acquired ownership of The Paisley Advocate.

Then began a career unique in the annals of weekly journalism in Canada. For the ensuing 57 years of his life, Dan McKenzie unobtrusively exerted upon the community served by his pen and his newspaper a tremendous influence for good and advancement. If not by the brilliance of his writings, then by the clarity of his thought and steadfastness of purpose he was able to impress his reading public with the virtues and advantages of every worthy cause or institution. Likewise, he felt it his duty to criticise the unworthy. Unequivocally he opposed the liquor traffic. Editorially, he held to a political independence, catering to no party, but supporting legislation he believed to be in the people's best interests.

Chronicling the events of the community for more than half a century, he was very closely in touch with the history of the district and the daily lives of its citizens, and throughout his lifetime took a personal interest in the ebb and tide of the surging stream of life about him. As a result, he was a reliable authority on the lore of Bruce County generally, and of the Paisley district in particular. The minor details and the momentous events alike of local history he knew intimately. He had retained interest in and contact with a legion of former residents who had removed to distant places.

Out of this bond of interest which stretched around the continent grew the great Bruce County Old Boys' and Girls' Re-

The Paisley Advocate

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 1949

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union of 1948. Out of an exchange of letters between Mr. Ed Mahon of Vancouver, B.C., and Mr. McKenzie, the seed was sown. Nurtured through its embryo stages on editorial publicity in The Advocate, the re-union was successfully carried out as one of the most brilliant and memorable episodes in Bruce County history.

Such progressive steps as the installation of hydro in Paisley and the erection within a year of two community centres—the first burned down five days after its official opening—the installation of a modern waterworks system and an up-to-date fire truck and pumper, all received stimulus by the support accorded through the columns of Dan McKenzie's newspaper.

On July 1st of this year, encumbered by advancing years and ill health, Mr. McKenzie relinquished the duties of management of The Advocate. But he still maintained an active interest in this realm he knew and loved, and as recently as Monday, October 31st, he had spent a full day in the office and composing room. On Wednesday, however, he was confined to bed, and when pleurisy developed, he sank rapidly, his heart finally failing and his death ensuing late Friday night.

Without political aspirations, he was, however, a school trustee for a number of years and was chairman of the board when the present fine public and continuation school was built in 1912. He had also served for many terms as a member of the library board. In politics he was a Liberal. For 55 years he had been a member of Ahrim Lodge, I.O.O.F., and for 45 years a member of Aldworth Lodge, A.F. & A.M.

A member of Knox United Church, formerly the Presbyterian church, Dan McKenzie was for fifty years a mem-

ber of the choir, and for exactly half of that period, had been choir leader. A music lover, and possessor of a fine tenor voice, he sang for many years as a soloist and member of local quartettes. Partial loss of his voice a few years ago forced him to give up active enjoyment of music, a circumstance of keen disappointment to him.

In 1890 Dan McKenzie was married to Amelia Scott of Port Elgin, who predeceased him in January, 1932. Of a family of five sons, four survive: Stewart S., publisher of The Witness Bradford, Ont.; Donald Elroy, associated with the B. S. F. & D. advertising agency in Detroit, Mich.; A. Ross, present editor and publisher of The Advocate, and C. Bruce, of the advertising department of the Sun-Times, Owen Sound. All four sons learned the printing and newspaper business in the backshop of The Advocate, under the exacting tuition of their father. Of four brothers and six sisters, two survive—(Nancy) Mrs. H. Felker, Olds, Alta., and (Margaret) Mrs. H. S. Petrie, Lindsay. There are seven grandchildren.

The funeral was held on Monday with private service at the house, followed by a public service in Knox United Church, with the pastor, Rev. H. C. Linstead, officiating.

Rev. Mr. Linstead referred to the many years of his life which Mr. McKenzie had passed in Paisley, and the distinction with which he had filled a position of unique public service as editor for 57 years. He loved his church and was a regular worshipper until recent months when increasing deafness interfered.

The funeral address was based on the familiar words of I Corinthians 13: "Now abideth faith, hope, love—these three." Rev. Mr. Linstead dealt with the supreme importance of seeking and laying hold of these things which are permanent in life. In the midst of a changing world, and changing human experiences of which death is the great example, the Apostle Paul set forth these three—faith, hope and love—elements of character and personality which endure. The life which has

found these in Jesus Christ is firmly anchored in this world and that which is to come.

Members of Aldworth Lodge, No. 235, A.F. & A.M., filled a section of the church, and the brethren carried the beautiful and numerous floral tributes, and conducted the last rites of the Order at the graveside in Stark Vale Cemetery. The casket bearers were Messrs. S. F. Baillachey, Neilson Stark, Chas. Fewster, H. C. Barnett, R. G. Grant and Dr. D. D. Campbell. Honorary pallbearers were all long-time friends of Mr. McKenzie: Messrs. Wallace Megraw, Geo. Craig, Jas. McNeill, I. Shoemaker, D. Forrester, Jas. Steele, John A. McArthur and J. A. Logie.

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