Edward Levy-Lawson, 1st Baron Burnham

British Newspaper Editor and Proprietor


He was educated at University College school. His father, Joseph Moses Levy, acquired the Daily Telegraph and Courier in 1855, a few months after it was founded by Colonel Sleigh. Aided by his son, Levy soon raised it to a leading position and made it the pioneer London penny paper. Edward Levy (he took the added name of Lawson under his uncle’s will in 1875) acted as editor of the Daily Telegraph until his father’s death and then served as its managing proprietor and sole controller until 1903, when he was made a baron and passed over these duties to his son [Harry Levy-Lawson]. He had received a baronetcy in 1892.

For many years Lawson was one of the outstanding figures in English journalism. No one in Great Britain did more to brighten and humanize the daily newspaper and transform it from a plain chronicle of the day’s events into a readable and entertaining presentation of the world’s news. The abolition of the last of the paper duties (1861), in
journalism. His conception of a popular daily paper was that it should be a faithful mirror of the times and appeal to the taste of its readers. Part of this appeal was Lawson's acknowledgment that, for most readers, “politics are fearfully dull,” especially in comparison with society news; his *Daily Telegraph* reflected this sentiment.

Under his direction the *Daily Telegraph* raised large funds for national, patriotic, and charitable objects, dispatched missions of exploration to Central Africa and elsewhere, and started novel features, such as popular correspondences on live topics of the day, which later became the established commonplace of journalism. For many years the *Daily Telegraph* warmly supported the Liberal Party, but it strongly dissented from Prime Minister William Gladstone's anti-Turkish policy, and the final severance came on his Irish policy of *Irish Home Rule*. Lawson was strongly attached to the idea of the *British Empire*. Edward VII, as *prince of Wales* and later as king, frequently visited his home.

Burnham served as president of the Institute of Journalists (1892–93) and the Newspaper Press Fund (1908–16), and in 1909 he presided over the first Imperial Press Conference, in London.
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## Edward Levy-Lawson, 1st Baron Burnham

### QUICK FACTS

**BORN**  
December 28, 1833  
London, England

**DIED**  
January 9, 1916 (aged 82)  
London, England

**NOTABLE FAMILY MEMBERS**  
Father Joseph Moses Levy

Levy was educated at Bruce Castle school and in Germany. He acquired a printing shop on Fleet Street in London and, in 1855, became proprietor of the *Sunday Times* (which he kept for a year) and the *Daily Telegraph and Courier*, which he acquired from a Colonel Sleigh in settlement of debts. The paper’s name was abbreviated to *Daily Telegraph* and became the first London daily to sell for a penny.

With the assistance of his eldest son, Edward (see *Burnham, Edward Levy-Lawson, 1st Baron*), Levy created one of the most dynamic and creative newspapers of his time, surpassing its rivals in circulation in the 1870s. He invested heavily in the enterprise, hired some of the leading writers and journalists of the day, and contributed many of the artistic and theatrical articles himself.
Edward Levy-Lawson, 1st Baron Burnham

Edward Levy-Lawson, 1st Baron Burnham, English newspaper proprietor who virtually created the London Daily Telegraph. He was educated at University College school. His father, Joseph Moses Levy, acquired later that year by Joseph Moses Levy who, with his son Edward Levy (later Edward Levy-Lawson), renamed it The Daily Telegraph, transformed it into London's first penny paper...
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**BORN**
December 15, 1812
London, England

**DIED**
October 12, 1888 (aged 75)
Ramsgate, England

**FOUNDER OF**
“The Daily Telegraph”

**NOTABLE FAMILY MEMBERS**
Son Edward Levy-Lawson, 1st Baron Burnham