political aims, the *Weekly Chronicle* featured a variety of material, such as foreign* and national news*, London news, outlines of the week, law intelligence, court* reports, insurance reports, book reviews* and literary criticism. Costing 6d in 1846, its price fell as taxes were removed (4d [1856] and 3d [1860]).

Although owned and edited* by the same person, the *Weekly Chronicle* was published by a succession of different publishers*. It appeared with varying frequency*: three times a week during 1846 (Friday, Saturday and Sunday), twice a week during 1851 and 1856 (Saturday and Sunday) and once a week during 1860 (Saturday). The *Weekly Chronicle*’s sales also varied considerably: 17,000 to 21,000 copies were sold during the early 1840s, whereas in 1848 its circulation* peaked at 152,000 issues. After 1848 the numbers dwindled, although 1851 still saw the sale of 50,000 copies. OD

**Weekly Dispatch** (1795-1961) This newspaper became renowned as the *Weekly Dispatch*, although it underwent numerous title changes* in its first three decades. Founded by Robert Bell* as *Bell’s Weekly Dispatch*, it became the *Weekly Dispatch* in 1801, reverted to *Bell’s Weekly Dispatch* in 1812, changed to *Kent’s Weekly Dispatch and Sporting Mercury* (1814-1823), reverted to the *Weekly Dispatch* for over a century (1823-1928), ending up as the *Sunday Dispatch*. Robert Bell was the first proprietor*, and sometime editor* (1815, 1824), as well as publisher* (1813, 1824). Later proprietors included Ashton Dilke (1875), George Kent, Alderman Harmer, Alfred Charles Harmsworth* and George Newnes*. Pierce Egan* (1825), William Cox Bennett, George Gissing, John Stuart Mill* and Eliza Orme are among many notable contributors. As a Sunday* paper, aimed at working-class readers*, it specialized in sensational news* and sport* in its early phase, from vivid crime reports such as the supposed involvement of the preacher Anthony Bell* in a brothel to Pierce Egan’s noted boxing reports.

In 1840, with a circulation* of over 60,000, three times that of its closest rival, the *Weekly Dispatch* was clearly the most powerful metropolitan* newspaper in terms of sales. According to the journalist George Grant circulation rose 'with rapidity which probably had no previous parallel in the history of the *Weekly World Newspaper Press*' (Grant: 43). This was largely due to the proprietorship of Alderman Harmer who 'lost no time in greatly enlarging its size', and adding new and attractive features to

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*Note: The text continues with further detailed information and analysis related to the history and content of these newspapers.*

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**Figure 65:** The *Spirits of the Times*, 29 Oct. 1825, an early nineteenth-century weekly.