

Ivess's use of non-union labour and paying of low wages is well documented. He was known as 'Joey Low-Wages' at the end of his career in Taihape<sup>53</sup> but this trait can be noted much earlier. In 1878 Ivess was called the 'long hour proprietor', one who did not believe in 'the good old axiom: "A fair day's work for a fair day's pay."'<sup>54</sup> Much was made of the low wage issue during the 1887 Napier election when Ivess was lambasted by both workmen and employers for his defence of newspaper proprietors who payed low wages:

he is a veritable Ishmael of New Zealand journalism . . . If the multiplication of small and struggling country sheets and poorly-equipped job offices be a boon, Mr Ivess is a benefactor . . . The man who establishes a business where a reasonable opening exists, takes a personal interest in the venture, charges fair prices, pays fair wages, and makes the concern remunerative, is a gain to the whole community. He, on the other hand, who engages in such unbusinesslike speculations as that of Timaru, and saddles his workmen with a share of the loss, not only does irreparable injury to his own trade, but indirectly to every other industry.<sup>55</sup>

This same election campaign produced an anti-Ivess broadsheet in which his actions at the *Timaru Herald* were compared with the exemplary record of his opponent J. D. Ormond. The author, a workman on the *Timaru Herald*, described how they had been paid award rates before Ivess took over, but the news of his arrival caused most of the compositors to try to find work elsewhere, 'well knowing Mr Ivess's liking for cheap labor'. Ivess notified the compositors that he would have to dismiss some of them and replace them with boys. The outcome was that the compositors formed a cooperative to set the paper ready for the printer, for a fixed weekly sum regardless of hours worked. Ivess introduced boys anyway and trained them to replace the compositors, who were put on piece work. This also proved too expensive for Ivess, who reduced the piece work rate still further. The conclusion was that

with one exception, no man has done so much injury to our trade. Although Mr Ivess has started a number of papers in various parts of the colony, I do not know one of which he may feel proud. They are all very inferior papers, and he generally employs the cheapest labor—men who have half learnt their trade, and who could not hold their own among good men.<sup>56</sup>

Another example comes from William Hearn Thomas, managing editor of the *Geraldine Guardian* when Ivess arrived to establish a rival newspaper, the *Geraldine Advocate*. Thomas noted that Ivess employed 'a bevy of young girls at the type cases' whose work needed close supervision.<sup>57</sup>

One final example of Ivess's practice confirms the importance of government advertising for the viability of the country newspaper. Correspondence preserved at National Archives shows that Ivess was