



# The Happy Hack: A Memoir of Fleet Street in Its Heyday

*Michael Molloy*

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Today, Fleet Street is just a term for the newspaper business. But not so long ago it was a real place. Each paper had its own favorite pubs, its own extraordinary characters, and its own stock of legendary tales about the triumphs and disasters that had befallen friends and enemies. It was the Street of Dreams; the Street of Adventure; the Street of Disillusion; and, in the end, sadly, the Street of Profits. But once upon a time it was a place of magic. Mike Molloy began in Fleet Street as a messenger boy on the *Sunday Pictorial*, and subsequently worked as a cartoonist, page designer, feature writer, and features executive. Eventually he was appointed the 13th and youngest editor of the *Daily Mirror*, a post he held for 10 years. To his surprise, as he had opposed the take-over, when Robert Maxwell bought the *Mirror*, Maxwell made him editor-in-chief of the group. This is Molloy's engrossing, and often hilarious, account of his years working with some of the giants, and pygmies, who produced the nation's daily papers. Along the way he tells of his encounters with politicians, prime ministers, rock stars, American presidents, trade union leaders, members of the royal family, and some of the legendary figures of show business. In a searing finale, the book charts the author's astonishingly surreal five years with Robert Maxwell, whose chaotic—and criminal—reign brought new heights of blundering absurdity to the role of the tyrannical "press lord."

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