

ORLEANS AMERICAN.

ANTIMASONIC REPUBLICAN.—I understand the principle of their Oath to be, to assert the Supremacy of the Law.—W. STONG

WHOLE NO. 40
VOL. II.—NO. 17.

BY T. C. STRONG.

ALBION, N. Y., WEDNESDAY, JAN. 1, 1834.

NEW GOODS.

H. N. & L. BURROWS.

DRY GOODS.

Blue, Black, Brown, Red, Green, & Dark BROADCLOTHS, Cassimeres, Sattinette, Filled Cloth; White, Green, and Yellow Flannels; Baizes, Frieze Cloth;

SCOTCH PLAINS; A large assortment of CALICOES; Rascos, Laventines, Gros de Naples, Gros de Berlin, Italian and Florence SILKS.

Bombazines, Black, and of all Colors.

A large assortment of Merino & Common CIRCASSIANS.

Shawls.

Dress Edging, Silk & Tobby Velvet.

Muslin, Fongee, Glasgow, Irish Linens, Linnen & Cottons, &c.

ROCKEFER Fire Engine Manufactory.

THE undersigned has the honor to announce that he has been appointed by the Board of Directors of the City of New York, to superintend the construction of a new fire engine, to be used in the City of New York.

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MISCELLANY.

The King's Page.

Oh! how I wish I were a King's page,

To see the monarch in his state array,

To see him in his robes of state array,

To see him in his robes of state array,

To see him in his robes of state array,

To see him in his robes of state array,

To see him in his robes of state array,

To see him in his robes of state array,

To see him in his robes of state array,

To see him in his robes of state array,

To see him in his robes of state array,

To see him in his robes of state array,

A DRY LETTER.

Well, dear Tom, I'm all right.

Your letter was really good.

I found a little to smile at.

And as the time is gone, I have learned.

The little you write to me.

And will you stop on the occasion.

I have a good quantity.

A month ago, on such a occasion.

I had a different feeling.

The letter was extremely good.

And for my pen and ink.

And then the weather was very good.

And when the letter is back, I have learned.

THE KING'S PAGE.

Oh! how I wish I were a King's page,

To see the monarch in his state array,

To see him in his robes of state array,

To see him in his robes of state array,

To see him in his robes of state array,

To see him in his robes of state array,

To see him in his robes of state array,

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To see him in his robes of state array,

The masthead of the Orleans American published by Timothy Clapp Strong in Albion, Jan. 1, 1834.

Early newspapers waded into politics

OVERLOOKED ORLEANS: Publications throughout the county evoked a raucous political environment

By MATT BALLARD
Orleans County Historian

ALBION — Although society laments the apparent death of objective journalism, bias in the media is far from a new phenomenon.

In fact, the concept of non-partisan news is just over a century old as journalism developed as a profession at the turn of the 20th century. Newspapers of the early 19th century provided political parties with official "organs" that disseminated platform-based editorials and spewed vitriol about rival candidates.

The history of newspapers in Orleans County is a lengthy one, but a story that originates in the early 1820s. Attributed as the first published newspaper in Orleans County, Batavianative Seymour Tracy produced the short-lived *Gazette* in Gaines.

Tracy, known locally as "One-Legged Tracy," was recognized throughout Batavia for his intemperate habits leading fellow printers to attribute that behavior to the sudden failure of his paper. John Fisk, who worked with Tracy, picked up the loose ends and continued the newspaper as the *Orleans Whig* in 1827.

Other evidence suggests that Tracy published his first issue of the *Gazette* around 1824, which

would make it the second paper published in Orleans County.

The first, then, is attributed to Benjamin Franklin Cowdery who established the *Newport Patriot* in 1823. Born on May 26, 1790 at New Marlborough, Massachusetts, fellow printers regarded Cowdery as an "itinerant printer" due to his frequent movements across the wilderness of Western New York.

His earliest newspaper publications included the *Hamilton Recorder* at Olean in 1819 and the *Angelica Republican* in 1820.

According to published histories regarding the printing industry in Western New York, Cowdery was responsible for publishing at least eight different newspapers prior to 1830. This, in the mind of fellow printers, suggested that Cowdery was ill-equipped to speak on behalf of the profession.

Instead, Cowdery's rapid establishment and sale of printing enterprises represents the volatility of newspaper publication on the frontier. As Cowdery learned in Olean, the number of paid subscribers was insufficient to support the ongoing operation of the paper.

It is likely that he faced a similar realization in Albion leading to the sale of the *Newport Patriot* to Timothy Clapp Strong in February of 1825. The subsequent change of the paper's

name to *The Orleans Advocate* provided Strong with a fresh start for the newspaper in the burgeoning Canal town.

The disappearance of William Morgan in 1826 gave Strong, a long-standing Freemason, the opportunity to disavow the organization and rename his newspaper *The Orleans Advocate & Anti-Masonic Telegraph* in early 1828. The name was quickly shortened to *The Orleans Anti-Masonic Telegraph* in February of that year and by July 4, 1828, Strong's name appears as a signer of the "Declaration of Independence" signed at the Convention of Seceding Masons held at Le Roy.

The name change provides the first direct insight into the political leanings of the publication, but local pressure against the paper's name must have been immense as Strong once again changed the name to *The Orleans Telegraph* in late 1828. The Republican leanings of the *Telegraph* led then Village of Albion president, Alexis Ward, to seek out Cephas McConnell to publish a Democratic-leaning paper.

The newspaper changed names to *The American Standard* and eventually became *The Orleans American* in 1833. Strong sold out to John Denio and moved to Geneva in order to attempt the establishment of another newspaper. In 1839,

a newspaper article from the *Wayne Sentinel* highlighted Strong's new venture.

The article opened by referencing Strong's unofficial title of "Iscaiot, from whence obtained we do not know," continuing, "We predict he will not meet with better success there, than in other places in which he has figured as a champion of anti-masonry... Timothy will find but few that will follow him as a political guide."

The nickname, derived from Judas Iscaiot, is likely attributed to his betrayal of the Freemasons. By the mid-1830s, anti-masonry had melded into the Whig Party and the publication of such papers was viewed as obsolete.

An issue from the *Orleans American* reveals the limited amount of advertising matter in local papers during the early 19th century.

The two largest advertisements relate to the dry goods business of Roswell and Lorenzo Burrows. Aside from legal announcements and advertisements, there are no articles concerning local matters in this early issue.

The majority of the content consists of serialized literature, poetry, and state or national news. Printers often avoided publishing content that subscribers could get by word-of-mouth.

ORLEANS COUNTY HISTORIAN'S OFFICE