

"The [First] Times"

Carroll County Times Article for 15 September 1996

By Jay A. Graybeal

Since 1956 this paper has been known as The Carroll County Times, however; long time readers may remember when the masthead read The Times. The recent gift of an June 18, 1831 Taneytown newspaper reminded me that there was an earlier Maryland newspaper by this name. The paper, The Regulator and Taney-Town Herald, carried an advertisement for starting a new newspaper in Frederick.

PROPOSALS

BY JAMES M. SHELMAN

For publishing a Weekly Newspaper in the City of Frederick, to be called

THE TIMES

A Family Newspaper, devoted to Literature, Science, Agriculture and News.

In presenting to the Public the above proposals, it is proper briefly to declare the principles upon which "The Times," will be conducted; the motives which have induced its establishment, and the objects which will be distinctly and steadily kept in view to be secured, if practicable.

Believing that our Republican institutions, as they exist in theory, and have been carried out into practice are not only admirably calculated to secure, but have actually secured a greater amount of individual happiness and national prosperity than any other system of government, ancient or modern, of which authentic history has furnished any account; and convinced that their perpetuity depends upon the virtue and intelligence of the people, the fountain of all legitimate power, it shall be a main office of "THE TIMES" to collect and present to its patrons faithful accounts of all the important measures and movements of the general and state governments.

To discuss freely and frankly their principles and policy. To recognise and support no man or set of men, no state or section of country by the mere Shibboleth of party, but to approve or condemn both men and measures, as they shall be found imbued with, or opposed to, what the Editor considers the true spirit and sound policy of our free Institutions. The constitution in its unso, histicated construction, shall be the polar star by which "The Times" shall be guided in pronouncing its judgement upon the statesmen and legislators of the country. The national welfare, by which the Editor means the PRESERVATION OF THE UNION; the support and gradual increase of the navy; a system of internal improvement which shall facilitate the social and commercial intercourse of every portion of the Republic, and increase the means of defence against its enemies, foreign or domestic; a moderate but steady protection of home industry; a national Bank so regulated and restricted as not to create a monied aristocracy, but to accommodate the people by securing a sound circulating medium and to facilitate the fiscal operations of the government. The national welfare, thus briefly defined, shall command the vigilant attention and best efforts of the Editor to advance and guide it.

But the columns of "The Times" shall be mainly devoted to the publications of all such matter unconnected with the politics of the day, as shall be most interesting to THE FARMER, MECHANIC AND THE MERCHANT. The improvements in agriculture, the progress of science as connected with the mechanic and fine arts and the state of trade and commerce, both at home and abroad, shall, from time to time, be fully, and faithfully noted.

We selected, as well as original essays upon the subjects of morality, agriculture, and taste, calculated to instruct and improve every class of readers, shall have their due portions in the columns of "The Times."

In a word, every effort shall be made, and the Editor hopes successfully, to render THE TIMES an interesting paper, occupying the middle ground between the political and the mere Religious newspaper, and marked by a spirit of moderation, and candor, that shall insure general approbation. Such a paper properly conducted, the Editor has long since considered a desideratum in this community. He has therefore determined to test the correctness of this opinion through the medium of "THE TIMES."

And he trusts that his fellow citizens will extend to him that patronage which, in the commencement, is necessary to enable him fully and fairly to make the experiment.

CONDITIONS:-"THE TIMES" will be printed with good type on an extra-size Imperial paper, of excellent quality.

Advertisements handsomely inserted at the usual rates.

Terms of Subscription-\$2.50 cents a year, or \$2 if paid within the year. No subscription will be discontinued until all arrearages are paid, unless at the option of the Editor.

JAMES M. SHELMAN.

Shellman's advertisement provides an interesting look at how a new paper was started and also reveals several political issues of his day. The advertisement also shows that his paper, unlike typical papers of its day, was intended to be non-partisan. Although, Shellman was successful in starting his paper in 1831, the enterprise failed after a few years. Regrettably, only a few scattered issues of his paper survive in public collections. Shellman later moved to Westminster and established a successful legal practice. He became the first mayor of Westminster and also the first Auditor of the Court of Carroll County. He served in the Maryland House of Delegates from 1845-1846. Shellman died in 1851.

Photo caption: This c. 1850 pencil sketch of James M. Shellman drawn by William Seavy. Shellman was the editor of The Times newspaper published in Frederick 1831; he later became the first mayor of Westminster. Historical Society of Carroll County collection.