

Essex Times (Windsor)

Publication Dates

1876-1878

Frequency

Weekly

Online Holdings

1876: October 24 (Vol. 1: no. 40) 4p.

Source of Digitized Holdings

Museum Windsor

Description

The Essex Times (Windsor) was a conservative leaning newspaper founded by Major John Lewis. Major Lewis purchased his printing equipment from John Murdoch when the Daily Dominion (Windsor) ceased in 1875. The Essex Times was published between 1876 and 1878. Its offices were located on the south side of Sandwich Street West (now University Avenue West), just west of Ferry Street, in the Baby Block.

The Essex Times appeared weekly, first on Wednesday mornings, and then on Thursday mornings. It was a large format paper (28 x 44 inches) that cost \$1.50 per year, in advance, and had a circulation of between 1,000 and 1,500 copies per issue.

Judging from the sole remaining issue, and a number of references in other papers, the content was fairly standard for the period: plenty of local advertising, a smattering of poetry and prose, international and national stories reprinted from other newspapers, as well as a reasonable amount of local news. The Township of Sandwich by Frederick Neal (1909) reported on page 280 that it was "a well-printed and edited paper".

Major John Lewis was born in Athboy, County Meath, Ireland, on July 12th, 1843. He arrived in Lambton County, Ontario, about 1860. There he married Sarah Ellis, started a family, and worked as a school teacher. He also became a Major in the 27th Lambton

Battalion of Infantry. In 1875, he moved to Windsor, and started the Essex Times newspaper not long after. He was a prominent member of the Windsor Conservative Association, and well-known nationally in conservative circles. By early 1877, he seemed to have had a business partner. Rowell's American Newspaper Directory for 1877 stated that the paper was edited and published by Lewis and Stuart. By October 1877, however, "the Essex Times [had] passed into the hands of Mr. John McCrae of Windsor" (Globe and Mail, October 6th, 1877, page 3). Major Lewis may have sold the Essex Times because at this point he had been commissioned by the Federal Government to prepare a report on ship wrecks and salvage operations in the Canadian waters of the Great Lakes. The paper did not last too much longer under the ownership of John McCrae. According to The Township of Sandwich, "it went into liquidation, leaving many heavy creditors".

By the early 1880s, Major John Lewis had moved to Winnipeg where he spent the rest of his life in the lumber business. John McCrae continued to live in Windsor and worked as an insurance agent and divisional court clerk. He died on November 8th, 1901, and is buried in Windsor Grove Cemetery.

Updated: Katharine Ball, January 2020