

The Observer (Amherstburg)

Title Variation

The Observer and Agricultural Record for the County of Essex (Amherstburg)

Publication Dates

Vol. 1: no. 1 (1860: April ?) – vol. 2: no. ? (1861: June ?) and almost certainly longer

Frequency

Weekly

Online Holdings

Vol. 1: no. 15 (1860: July 20)	4 pages	2 copies
Vol. 1: no. 36 (1861: Feb. 22)	4 pages	

Source of our Digitized Holdings

Museum Windsor

Description

The Observer and Agricultural Record for the County of Essex was published in Amherstburg from about April 1860 to at least June 1861, and likely quite a bit longer. It was a weekly that appeared every Friday morning at a cost of \$1.50 per year, in advance. Its motto was "Improvement! Improvement! Improvement!". Politically, the newspaper was conservative leaning, and was a rival to the more liberal paper of the time, the Maple Leaf (Sandwich and Amherstburg, 1856-1861?)

Based on the 2 remaining issues, the content appears to be quite standard for the period. There are extensive business advertisements, local notices, laws, bylaws, poetry, prose, and trivia, as well as plentiful reprints of news from other Canadian and international newspapers. There is some regional and local reporting, e.g. a detailed account of the public examination of the Amherstburg Common School, or, the reports

of Agricultural Societies' meetings. Page 2 of the February 22, 1861 issue contains an editorial taking the Maple Leaf newspaper and local liberals to task for claiming credit for the passage of certain laws such as the Bankrupt and Homestead laws.

The publisher and editor of the Observer was John Richmond. He was born in Glasgow, Scotland about 1825, and eventually settled in Colchester with his wife Elizabeth Richmond (nee Boyle). The Canadian censuses list his occupation as being a farmer. However, he was involved with a number of newspapers. In the early 1850s, he was editor of the Amherstburg Courier. He then founded and published the Observer (Amherstburg, 1860-1861?), and later started the Dominion/Daily Dominion (Windsor, 1867-1875). From the 1860s to the 1880s, John Richmond also served on the Essex County Council as Deputy Reeve and Reeve. He died September 12, 1900, and is buried in Colchester in the old cemetery.

Updated: Katharine Ball, June 2020