

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

ANTIMASONIC STATE CONVENTION

HELD JAN. 16, 1835.

AND THE

PROCEEDINGS

OF THEIR NOMINATING COMMITTEE,

HELD AT THE STATE-HOUSE IN PROVIDENCE

FEB. 20, 1835.

PROVIDENCE:

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1835.

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1835.

Antimasonic Prox.

FOR GOVERNOR,

JOHN BROWN FRANCIS

OF WARWICK,

FOR LIEUT. GOVERNOR,

JEFFREY HAZARD

OF EXETER.

FOR SENATORS.

1. Alpheus Billings, . . . of Providence.
2. Sanford Almy, . . . of Little Compton.
3. Samuel Weatherhead, . . . of Cumberland.
4. Robert F. Noyes, . . . of South Kingstown.
5. Christopher Spencer, . . . of Warwick.
6. Thomas Corey, jun. . . . of Portsmouth.
7. Isaac Wilkinson, . . . of Smithfield.
8. Jacob Babbitt, . . . of Bristol.
9. Joseph Spink, . . . of North Kingstown.
10. William F. Potter, . . . of Coventry.

Henry Bowen, Secretary.

Albert C. Greene, Attorney General.

John Sterne, General Treasurer.

PROCEEDINGS, &c.

The Delegates to the Convention met in the Senate Chamber at six o'clock, P. M. and being called to order, elected the Hon. Elisha Matthewson of Scituate, Chairman, and Aaron White, jr. and Walter Paine, jr. Secretaries.

The returns from the several Towns represented in Convention were presented and read, by which it appeared, that the Primary Conventions had elected seventy two delegates to attend the General Convention—several gentlemen present from different towns in this State, were by vote of the Convention, requested to take seats as honorary members—and the whole Convention comprising the delegated and honorary members, consisted of the following persons, viz :

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| <p><i>Newport.</i>
Augustus Peckham,
Nichols Hassard,
George C. Shaw,
George Turner,
Henry Oman,
Elisha Case,
Joseph Case,
Henry Battey,
George Correll, jr.
John H. Moore,</p> <p><i>Providence.</i>
Edward S. Williams,
Henry Coddington,
Benjamin Cowell,
Tillinghast Sheldon,
George F. Mann,
Zachariah Tucker,
Wm. B. Bradford,
Peleg W. Gardner.</p> <p><i>Portsmouth.</i>
Peleg Almy,
Thomas Corey, jr.
David Anthony,
Peleg Thurston,
Samuel Corey, jr.
Joseph Cornell,
Parker Hall,
Albert G. Cook,</p> <p><i>Warwick.</i>
William Sprague, jr.
Bennett Low,</p> | <p>Josiah Wescott,
Gideon Spencer,
Benjamin Tibbitts,
James Fisher,
Elisha Brown,
Stephen Holden.</p> <p><i>East Greenwich.</i>
Silas Weaver,
Ray G. Huling,
Thomas Bateman,
Carr Harrington.</p> <p><i>North Kingstown.</i>
John Hall,
Alfred Updike,
Jabez Bullock,
Lodowick L. Thurston.</p> <p><i>Smithfield.</i>
Gideon Mowry,
Elisha Smith,
John S. Appleby,
Thomas Mowry.</p> <p><i>Scituate.</i>
Elisha Mathewson,
Jonah Titus,
Stephen Corp,
Robert Knight.</p> <p><i>Glocester.</i>
Richard Aldrich,
Reuben B. Page,
Emor Smith,
Daniel Owens.</p> |
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Tiverton.
 Robert Gray,
 William Boomer.
Cumberland.
 Aaron White, jr.
 Fenner Brown,
 Stephen Farnum,
 Joseph Cole.
Johnston.
 Daniel Mathewson,
 Nicholas Smith,
 William Smith,

William Sprague of *Cranston.*
 Richard Knight, *do*
 Welcome Arnold of *Coventry.*
 Sanford Almy of *Little Compton.*
 Robt. F. Noyes, *Sth. Kingstown.*

Otis N. Angell.
North Providence.
 Adams Park,
 William Bayley,
 John Greene,
 Elisha Newell.
Burrillville.
 Nathan Taft, jr.
 Jeremiah Mowry,
 Jason Jenckes,
 Eddy Keech.

Gideon Hamilton, *N. Kingstown.*
 Renselaer B. Smith, *Glocester.*
 Flavel Patterson, *Scituate.*
 Abm. Wilkinson, *N. Providence.*

On motion of Benjamin Cowell, Esq. of Providence, a committee of two from each county represented, was appointed to consider the expediency of forming a Prox at the present meeting. This committee consisted of Messrs. Anthony, Cowell, Mathewson, White, Mowry, Thurston, Spencer, Harrington and Weaver, who after a short absence, reported that it was inexpedient at this time to proceed to the formation of a Prox, but recommended that a committee be appointed by the Convention, with full power to nominate a Prox for General Officers for the ensuing political year, with power to fill vacancies therein; and that this committee shall publish the Prox agreed on, as soon as they may deem it expedient. This report was read, accepted and adopted, and a Committee appointed in pursuance of said recommendation, consisting of the following persons, viz:

For the County of Providence—William Sprague, Edward S. Williams, Benjamin Cowell, Aaron White, jr., Daniel Mathewson, Richard Aldrich, Abraham Wilkinson, Elisha Smith.

For the County of Newport—David Anthony, Peleg Almy, Peleg Thurston, George C. Shaw.

For the County of Washington—John Hall, Alfred Updike, John Nichols, Samuel Pierce.

For the County of Kent—William Sprague, jr. Carr Harrington, Silas Weaver, Samuel Arnold.

For the County of Bristol—Bennett Munro, Joshua Bicknell, Stephen Davol, Dyer Child.

The following persons were appointed the Anti-Masonic State Committee, for the ensuing political year, viz:

Benjamin Cowell, Edward S. Williams, Samuel E. Wait, Bates Harris, William Sprague, Moses Mowry, George Turner, Alfred Updike, John Brown, Richard Shaw, Bennett Munro, Nicholas Smith.

A communication from the Democratic Republican Convention sitting in the Representatives chamber, was received and referred to the committee for nominations—and Messrs. Williams, Sprague, Cowell and Spencer, were appointed a committee to confer with a similar committee of said Democratic Republican Convention.

On motion of Mr. Cowell, the following Resolutions were read and unanimously adopted.

1. *Resolved*, That the success which has attended the Antimasons of this State, since our last annual Convention, in their efforts to suppress the institution of Free Masonry, affords just cause for congratulation. The institution of Free Masonry, having long baffled and eluded investigation, has at last been thoroughly examined, fully heard, impartially considered and unequivocally condemned before our highest public tribunal. Its charters have in part been repealed, and the institution itself subjected to the operation of wise and salutary penal laws. But it is not in the abrogation of Charters or the passage of restrictive statutes, that we chiefly congratulate ourselves; it is in this we rejoice, that the rites, principles and practices of Free Masonry have been clearly and authentically disclosed. In this disclosure, Free Masonry has received a fatal wound, and the idea that the institution can now of its own virtue, and against the wakeful vigilance of its opponents, continue to live and flourish among us, find old adherents faithful and new votaries coming forward, we believe to be a moral impossibility. The character of Free Masonry has been clearly unveiled, and is now universally understood, and to suppose that such an institution can subsist in an enlightened community, in the avowed practice of the most disgusting rites and ceremonies, and the known adherence to a yet more revolting system of moral conduct, is supposing such an absence of natural decency, such a want of moral sense as the history of human nature has never yet presented. In Rhode-Island, Free Masonry has been attacked, defeated, and exposed, and for the future, the Antimasonic party in this State, have not so much to contend with its living energies, as to guard against the pestilential influence of its decaying relics. In the accomplishment of this victory, achieved for the welfare of our country, for the welfare of society, and for the honor of human nature, we trust all will admit that the small, but united and persevering phalanx of Rhode-Island Antimasons, have thus far, faithfully done their duty.

2. *Resolved*, That while congratulating ourselves on the successful issue of our labors, we are not unmindful of the services of our friends and fellow laborers, the Democratic Republican party; that for the active and efficient aid they have afforded in the promotion of those great objects, so peculiarly interesting to us as Antimasons, and to all true Republicans, and for their uniformly fair, upright and honorable deportment towards us, as friends and supporters, they are entitled to the respect and gratitude of every Antimason; That this conduct on their part, appears to us in still stronger colors, when contrasted with the unprovoked hostility and unblushing perfidy we formerly experienced at the hands of their political opponents, then called the National Republican party, and for the present, the Whig party of Rhode-Island.

3. *Resolved*, That this Convention recommend to their Antimasonic fellow citizens, whether acting as electors or public officers, to cultivate an union of feeling and harmony of action with the Democratic Republican party of this State, wherever it can be done consistently with their principles as Antimasons.

4. *Resolved*. That we highly approve the conduct of those indi-

vidual Masons, who have publicly and privately in this and other States, recommended the entire abandonment of their institution, and that we ardently and sincerely hope that this recommendation will be adopted by all the members of the Masonic Fraternity.

5. *Resolved*, That this Convention entertain a deep sense of the loss they have sustained since their last assembling at this place, in the sudden removal by death, of one of the earliest, most steadfast, active, energetic, laborious, liberal and efficient Antimasons of this State, the late Dr. Benjamin W. Case, of Newport—a man, whose conduct was such as to attach to his character the peculiar homage of Masons, that of being mercilessly traduced; and whether regarded in reference to intrepid hardihood, unconquerable perseverance, unceasing labor and devotion, or to any distinguishing feature of a brave, resolute and indefatigable foe of Masonic despotism, will justly entitle him to a place with the most meritorious American Antimasons—and to the lasting and honorable remembrance of every man who dares rightly appreciate the liberty of thought, the liberty of speech, the liberty of courts, the liberty of legislation, the liberty of elections, the liberties in short founded by the blood and treasure of our ancestors.

ELISHA MATHEWSON, President.

AARON WHITE, Jr. and
W. PAINE, Jr. Secretaries,

After adopting these Resolutions, the Convention dissolved.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE.

Pursuant to notice, the committee of the Anti-Masonic State Convention, appointed to select and nominate a Prox for General Officers, for the annual election in April, 1835, met at the state house in the city of Providence, on the 20th day of February, A. D. 1835—William Sprague of Cranston, being Chairman of the Committee, and Aaron White, jr. of Cumberland, appointed Secretary—a committee was appointed to confer with the committee of the Democratic Republican Convention, and after receiving the report of said committee, and hearing letters and information from different parts of the State, and carefully considering the qualifications of the different candidates proposed, the committee unanimously agreed to present for the suffrages of their fellow citizens, at the ensuing yearly election, the following Prox for general officers:

For Governor, John Brown Francis, of Warwick.
Lieut. Governor, Jeffrey Hazard, of Exeter.
1st Senator, Alpheus Billings, of Providence.
2d do Sanford Almy, of Little Compton.
3d do Samuel Weatherhead, of Cumberland.
4th do Robert F. Noyes, of South Kingstown.
5th do Christopher Spencer, of Warwick.
6th do Thomas Corey, jr. of Portsmouth.
7th do Isaac Wilkinson, of Smithfield.
8th do Jacob Babbitt, of Bristol.
9th do Joseph Spink, of North Kingstown.
10th do William F. Potter, of Coventry.
Secretary, Henry Bowen, of Providence.
Att'y. General, Albert C. Greene, of Providence.
General Treasurer, John Sterne, of Newport.

A motion was made by E. S. Williams, that the Chairman of the committee write the Antimasons named in the prox to obtain their views in regard to the election of a senator to Congress.—The motion was preceded by some remarks intended to show that they ought to be pledged to vote for an Antimasonic candidate.—This course was opposed by Messrs. Mathewson, Wilkinson, Shaw, Cowell and White, who severally expressed their opinions, its object not being authorized by the convention from whom the Committee derived their appointment, as, being contrary to the usage and practice of the Antimasonic Conventions heretofore held in this State, they never having required any further assurance than that the candidate should support the Antimasonic cause, and as also being inexpedient and unnecessary, as Antimasons would of course support their own candidate, when they had one, and as tending to distract the friends of the Prox. The course proposed by Mr. Williams was almost unanimously rejected.

The committee on the adoption of the foregoing Prox, voted to

recommend to the Anti-Masonic Republican Freemen of this state, to use all fair and honorable means, to secure the election of the candidates therein selected, to their respective offices.

Benjamin Cowell and Aaron White, jr. were appointed a committee to prepare and publish 2000 copies of the proceedings of the late Anti-Masonic state Convention, with the doings of this committee, and to cause the same to be distributed.

WILLIAM SPRAGUE, Chairman,
AARON WHITE, Jr. Secretary.

The following is a copy of the correspondence which took place between Benjamin Cowell, Esq. one of the members of the Anti-Masonic state Convention, and Jacob Babbitt, Esq. of Bristol, one of the candidates selected for senator in the Anti-Masonic Proxy, on the subject of Free Masonry, and which was laid before the Anti-Masonic nominating committee at their late meeting, and whereupon it voted unanimously, that Mr. Babbitt be recommended as 8th senator.

Providence, Feb. 20, 1835.

Sir—I am requested to ask you, whether you are an adhering Free Mason, and whether you are or are not now in favor of the Masonic Institution.

BENJAMIN COWELL.

To Jacob Babbitt, Esq.

Providence, Feb. 20, 1835.

Sir—In answer to your questions I have to state that about thirty years ago, I joined a Masonic Lodge in Bristol, but for the last twenty years, I have not been into a Lodge as a Mason, nor do I calculate to have any thing to do with Masonry hereafter, but have wholly abandoned it.

JACOB BABBITT.

To Benjamin Cowell, Esq.