

Title:	Anti-Masonic party broadsides, 1830-1835		
Creator:			
Dates of Material:	1830-1835	Record Group Number:	RG 821
Summary of Contents:	<p>Two Anti-Masonic party broadsides, 1830s. The first broadside it titled “A Disclosure” and contains Samuel Anderton’s account of the murder of Captain William Morgan. It is dated at Boston, March 15, 1830 and is taken from the Anti-Masonic Christian Herald. It begins “<i>On Monday last (the 15th of March), Mr. Samuel G. Anderton of Boston, a Knight Templar, voluntarily appeared before a Notary Public and Justice of the Peace in the City, and in presence of several members of the State Committee and other Citizens assembled, made solemn oath to the following statement—disclosing a most barborous MURDER, of which he was an eye witness, in a Royal Arch Chapter of Freemasons! Immediately on the receipt of this document, several members of the Investigating Committee in Boston, to whom he was less known, took measures more fully to inquire, and satisfy themselves as to the character of Mr. Anderton, and particularly as to such facts, stated by him, which might be known here. They found upon inquiry a mass of evidence in support of his testimony...</i>” This is followed by a numbered list of evidence substantiating Anderton’s claim. The affidavit of Samuel J. Anderton is also included.</p> <p>The second broadside is titled “Supplement to the Watchman and State Gazette” and announces the Anti-Masonic party’s meeting on October 19, 1835 in which they laid out their political views. It is written that “<i>The Antimasons of Vermont, having deemed it necessary to make their opposition to Freemasonry political, and to organize a party for that purpose, have, in prosecuting the purpose of their organization, been brought into conflict with two other parties in the State...the Antimasons of Vermont would not have been true to themselves or their country, if they had failed to investigate them, and to make the result of their investigation, to some extent, the basis of their political action. They have, accordingly, freely examined the great questions involved in the present administration of the National Government. Its principles and policy have been made by them the subject of frequent deliberation, and their views have been frequently expressed in resolutions and addresses of their representative bodies. These views are well known; and would, under ordinary circumstances, need no reiteration. But inasmuch as the time approaches when the Antimasons of Vermont will be called on to act in an election deeply involving the welfare of the whole country, and in which their attachment to the principles they have avowed will be put to a severe trial, it would seem to be fitting they should re-examine those principles, and decide whether they will, with the firmness and constancy of Antimasons, and carry them out in the approaching contest.</i> This is followed by a list of 17 resolutions made at the meeting. It is signed in print by Silas H. Jenison.</p>		

Physical Description / Condition:	2 broadsides (27 x 39 cm or smaller)		
Administrative/ Biographical Sketch:	<p>The Anti-masonic party's origins can be traced back to the 1826 disappearance of William Morgan. Morgan was a bricklayer in western New York who supposedly wrote a book divulging the secrets of the Masonic order, thereby breaking his vow of secrecy to the Freemasons. His disappearance led to rumours that he was murdered by the Freemasons. Since many professionals such as businessmen, judges, and politicians were Masons, some members of the public began to believe that these professionals favoured one another and that the Masonic order was an elitist group. This led to a general distrust of the Freemasons and the belief that those critical of the Masons would be eliminated. It was believed that the Masons would use their professional offices to obstruct any investigation into such disappearances.</p> <p>The Anti-masonic party was considered America's first third party. It was also the first political party to develop a platform for voters and the first to hold a national nominating convention. The party had some success in the 1828 election but their popularity declined throughout the 1830s. Many Anti-masons joined the Whig party instead and by 1840 the party was no longer a national organization.</p>		
Location:	Brock University Archives		
Source Information:	Acquired from University Archives in 2022.		
Described by:	Chantal Cameron	Date:	January 2023