

News Printing Company, Incorporated

Goshen Democrat (also *Daily Democrat*)

Founded: 1837

Location: Main Street (1860, 1874); 114 ½ North Main Street (1897)

Goshen News (also *News-Times*, *News-Times and Democrat*, and *News-Democrat*)

Founded: 1884

Location: 207 South Main Street, Goshen (1884–1911); 114 South Main Street (1911–)

Goshen Times (also *Elkhart County Times*, *Daily Times*, and *Midweek Times*)

Founded: 1856

Location: Metropolitan Block (1860); Times Building, Market and Fifth Streets (1868, 1874); 127 East Lincoln Avenue (1897)

Ebenezer Browne founded the first Democratic party newspaper in Goshen in May 1837. Thomas H. Bassett served as the first editor, but may have had a drinking problem, causing the *Goshen Democrat* to be issued in irregular intervals during his tenure. After two years as publisher Browne sold the venture to an unknown number of partners who, in turn, hired Dr. Erastus Winter Hewett Ellis, a medical doctor from New York and a Democratic partisan, to edit the weekly.

Ellis had experience in the newspaper business before coming to Indiana. As a teenager during his medical apprenticeship he had edited the *Brockport (N.Y.) Village Herald*. Ellis moved to South Bend in 1837 to become a partner in his father's medical practice, but was enticed to Goshen by E. M. Chamberlain, who promised him a salary of \$200 a year and board to edit the *Democrat*. Ellis met Chamberlain while at the Democratic congressional convention at Lafayette in January 1839. Chamberlain had promised Ellis that he would be able to continue his practice, but he later found it was

impossible to do so. In 1839 subscribers at the paper numbered around four hundred, and the job printing opportunities were limited, but Ellis was able to run the enterprise at a profit.

Ellis quickly purchased an interest in the organization and shortly became the sole proprietor in mid-1839. He continued to direct the weekly until 1850. In the early 1840s he twice formed a partnership with his brother, William R. Dr. Ellis never practiced medicine after 1839, instead choosing to delve further into politics and the newspaper business. He was elected Elkhart County auditor in 1844 and was later appointed to the post of state auditor in 1850. He was defeated in his bid for another term as auditor in 1852 in part because his opposition to the expansion of slavery ran counter to the party line. He later left the Democratic party over the issue. After the Civil War he returned to Goshen and edited the Republican-oriented *Times*.

After several changes in ownership William Beane purchased the *Democrat* from Robert Jillson in 1860. Beane was a native of Ohio and thirty-two years old when he purchased the paper and printing company for \$700. He had learned the newspaper business as an apprentice under Dr. Ellis in the 1840s. Beane continually sold and reacquired the journal throughout the 1860s. He sold the weekly four times within the decade. In 1873 he finally acquired a lasting interest in the business by teaming with Charles L. Murray.

Murray was a strange choice as a partner for Beane, an intense Democratic partisan. Murray began his career as an editor for a Pennsylvania Whig paper in 1828. After a committee of citizens offered him some incentive to do so, he brought the first newspaper to Goshen. Murray sold the *Express* in 1840 upon his appointment as

postmaster of Goshen by President William Henry Harrison. In 1859 Murray was elected to the Indiana General Assembly on the Republican ticket and served as a quartermaster in the Civil War. In 1872 he fell somewhat out of disfavor with the Republican hierarchy, however, after he attended the liberal Republican convention. He remained a partner with Beane in the newspaper enterprise for five years.

After 1878 Beane continued to publish the paper alone until his death in 1893. His son, Joseph A., became the sole proprietor until after World War I, when he included his son-in-law, Dean L. Barnhart, in the business. Joseph was a native of Goshen and had literally grown up in the offices of the *Democrat*. In 1880 at age seventeen he began his life work with the paper, starting as a printer's devil and ending up as the publisher and editor. Unlike his father, who stayed out of active politics, Joseph was appointed postmaster of Goshen by Grover Cleveland in 1893.

Beane continually tried to keep pace with the competition. In 1897 he launched a daily, the *Daily Democrat*, to compete with two other newspapers. Around the turn of the century he changed the *Democrat* into a semiweekly and purchased a Linotype machine. Joseph Beane died just before the start of the Great Depression. Barnhart merged the *Democrat* with the *News-Times* in June 1933, becoming a partner in the new enterprise for six years. The paper was renamed the *Goshen News-Times and Democrat*, shortened three years later to the *News-Democrat*.

The *Elkhart County Times* was established as a Republican party journal in 1856 by James M. Defrees and Robert Jillson. Defrees was a graduate of Wabash College and Harvard University. He was elected prosecuting attorney of Elkhart County in the mid-1850s, dying at age twenty-six in 1859. In 1857 Dr. Ellis, former editor of the *Democrat*,

acquired the weekly in partnership with Chauncey W. Stevens. Ellis later sold out to Stevens who remained as publisher until mid-1862. After several changes in ownership, William M. Starr bought the journal, remaining its publisher and editor until he retired in 1880.

Dr. Henry J. Beyerle, Starr's partner since 1877, took over the management of the paper, introducing a daily edition in 1882. Beyerle, a Pennsylvania native, had been elected to the legislature on the Republican ticket in 1862. After writing for several magazines and founding a manufacturing firm, Beyerle moved to Goshen and purchased an interest in the *Times* from Starr. After settling in Goshen he was elected to the town council and the school board. The doctor sold the *Times* to W. H. Ragan and W. S. Gard on the eve of the twentieth century. In 1901 Ragan, sole owner for a year, sold the journal to the News Printing Company, headed by George W. Kinnison. Kinnison merged the *Times* with the *News*, forming the *News-Times*.

The *News* was the youngest of the three papers that eventually became the *News-Democrat*. It started on 10 December 1884 as a continuation of the *Independent*, a paper that moved from Kosciusko County to Goshen in 1878. Thomas A. Starr had purchased the *Independent* in 1882, renaming it the *Daily News* a year later. When Starr bought the paper it still used a handpress. Within six months he had acquired a steam-power press and within two years had added a bindery to the enterprise.

Thomas Starr was born in Ohio and at age thirteen began working in the newspaper business in Goshen. In 1892 Starr and his brother Martin V. formed the News Printing Company. By mid-1894 the brothers were printing weekly, daily, and semiweekly editions. Two years later Thomas sold his interest to his brother, Lou W.

Vail, and George W. Kinnison. By 1901 Kinnison had assumed controlling interest in the business, merging the *News* with the *Times*. In 1914 a fire damaged the offices of the *News*. Within a year the building was rebuilt, and new equipment was purchased.

Charles E. Gorham and Oliver Kinnison became the publishers of the *Goshen News-Democrat* in 1939. Gorham passed his share in the business to his son, Dow M., in 1954. Frank L. Hascall inherited Kinnison's interest five years later. The partners shortened the name of the journal to the *News* in 1954. Throughout their tenure the paper's editorials reflected a moderate to conservative stance on issues. The editorials crafted by the editors usually focused on local concerns and shied away from national politics. By 1980 Hascall, Gorham, Robert W. Conrad, and Harmon W. Williams ran the *News-Democrat*. In 1991 the partners sold the paper to John W. and Jane H. Gemmer. Gerry Hertzler continued the editorial tradition of the paper.

In 1998 John Gemmer served as publisher and Hertzler edited the daily. Sales for the fiscal year were projected to top \$5 million, and the company employed sixty-five workers. Besides newspaper publishing the company continued to offer commercial offset and letterpress printing as well as computer typesetting.