Connecticut Newspapers during Ratification

The best sources for the Federalist response to the Constitution are the state’s nine weekly newspapers. They were so overwhelmingly Federalist that they printed only a handful of Antifederalist items.

Two newspapers were published in New Haven, one of the state’s two capitals. They were Josiah Meigs’s The New-Haven Gazette, and the Connecticut Magazine and Thomas and Samuel Green’s The Connecticut Journal. The New Haven Gazette published Roger Sherman’s five essays signed “A Countryman.” A third southwestern newspaper was Francis Forgue and Peter Bulkeley’s The Fairfield Gazette; or, the Independent Intelligencer, but only a few issues are extant.

Two newspapers were published in Hartford, the state’s other capital. They were Barzillai Hudson and George Goodwin’s The Connecticut Courant, and Weekly Intelligencer and Elisha Babcock’s The American Mercury. Their principal original material consisted of the “Landholder” essays by Oliver Ellsworth.

The Courant probably had the largest circulation of any Connecticut newspaper, and items from it were often reprinted in other states. A third Connecticut River newspaper was published in Middletown by Moses H. Woodward and Thomas Green. It was called The Middlesex Gazette until 5 November 1787, when it became The Middlesex Gazette, or, Foederal Adviser.

Two newspapers were printed in eastern Connecticut: Timothy Green’s The Connecticut Gazette in New London and John Trumbull’s The Norwich Packet, And the Country Journal in Norwich. Both papers reprinted a great deal from other Connecticut newspapers.

The ninth Connecticut newspaper was published by Thomas Collier in the northwestern town of Litchfield. It was called The Weekly Monitor until 31 December 1787, after which it became Collier’s (Litchfield) Weekly Monitor.

Original source: Ratification by the States, Volume III: Delaware, New Jersey, Georgia, and Connecticut