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Cumberland and the Slavery Issue

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Cumberland and the Slavery Issue



Sally A. Merrill

Cumberland and the Slavery Issue (1830-1865):
Facts, Legends, and Context

Sally A. Merrill

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Insofar as possible, I have used primary source material. Among this material, I have examined Cumberland Town Meeting Records, Volume I (1821-1851) and Volume II (1851-1898). From these records, I have designed two charts depicting how Cumberland voters cast ballots for Congressional Representative from District Two and Governor (1833-1871). In addition, I have included direct quotations from newspapers of that period.

It is important to remember that although Cumberland seemed to be a small, rural community somewhat isolated from the issues of the day, it was also the home of early families who played a decisive role in local and state politics. Even these early families were divided on the issue of slavery.

As a student of history, I can never be certain I have captured events and motives as they actually were. Events thirty to forty years prior to Civil War are many generations removed from the present day. Recognizing my imperfect knowledge of prevailing conditions, I focus on key questions, relevant for the current generation. The Narrative is organized around three key questions. The Timeline provides a chronological of relevant events.

.....
In preparing this material, I have reflected on the legacy of my two grandfathers, both born in Cumberland, and both connected with events of this period.

My paternal grandfather, Wallace Lincoln Merrill (1865-1947), lived his entire life in Cumberland. By trade, he was a farmer and a “building contractor.” As such, he built many homes, barns, and sheds in the town and adjacent communities. A man of few words, he was steeped in the values of hard work, honesty, and fairness. As a child, I reveled in his hearty laughter. Disciplined and dedicated to the temperance movement, he led his life in harmony with the values of his namesake, Abraham Lincoln.

My maternal grandfather, Harry Percy Sweetser (1873-1952) grew up in Cumberland, and later became a lawyer with offices on Exchange Street in Portland. He “read the law” with lawyers having links to abolitionists Samuel Fessenden and Francis O. J. Smith. His first born son, he named Douglass in honor of Frederick Douglass, an abolitionist and statesman. His only daughter, he named for Clara Sturdivant Sweetser, his foster mother who served as a station-master for the Underground Railroad in Cumberland.

To the memory of these two grandfathers, this manuscript is dedicated.

Preface

Why is the issue of slavery still so important? The Civil War (1861-1865) has ended. The system of slavery has been abolished by law. And yet, repercussions still reverberate today.

What lingers is racial profiling. Today, it takes the form of prejudice not only against Blacks, but also against Muslims and Immigrants. We are reminded of George Santayana's warning, "Those who cannot learn from history are doomed to repeat it." Chiming in with a bleaker view, Eugene O'Neill observed, "there is no present, no future, only the past happening over and over again."

Prejudice is not an accident. It has causes and consequences. Often prejudice is accumulated generation after generation until we recognize it for what it is and discover how to break through its barriers. Often prejudice persists because we are unwilling to abandon ingrained views. Sometimes it persists because we are unaware our views reflect prejudice. Significantly, prejudice is something that can be eliminated. However, it will persist until we realize its roots and eradicate them.

The aim of this narrative is to examine, insofar as can be determined, the slavery issue, how it influenced residents of Maine and especially how it influenced residents of Cumberland. To that end, three basic questions are considered.

First, what are the known facts about the status of slavery in Maine? When, where, and who in Maine was involved? How well were slaves integrated into society, namely schools and churches? How did slavery in Maine differ from slavery in the South?

Second, how did residents learn about slavery? Viewing the slavery issue through the perspective of newspaper editors, itinerant speakers, eyewitness accounts, political party leaders, and presidential politics, Cumberland residents garnered information from secondary sources. Occasionally, slavery events involving Maine residents would have national ramifications, and invariably these events would reach the attention of Cumberland residents.

Third, how did residents respond to the issue of slavery? In word and deed, how did Cumberland residents respond to the slavery issue? The evolving position of the church and its pastors indicate shifting positions, as events unfolded and passions intensified. Early responses to "strangers" such as Native Americans were imbedded in family oral traditions, and easily were passed down from generation to generation. For several residents, the Underground Railroad offered an opportunity to help fugitive slaves. Finally, Cumberland's voting records for Governor and Congressional Representative for District Two suggest trends in party identification, party disintegration, and realignment, each of which was influenced by the

slavery issue. To facilitate organization of the material, two charts are presented, one for Cumberland's Congressional vote (1830-1865) and one for its gubernatorial vote.

Events happen in sequence, amid a steady stream of changing circumstances subjected to cross-currents. To provide a context for this sequence of events, a Timeline is provided at the end of the narrative. By reviewing the chronological sequence, new connections, causal and non-causal, may be discovered.

In conclusion, this is a story of two world views colliding: pro-slavery and anti-slavery. After identifying these views, what lessons are learned? Alas, lessons are repeated until they are learned.

Patterns of prejudice persist until they are identified and eliminated. We may ignore the past or we may deny it, but no one can escape it. This is a study of a tempestuous period, in which we witness mob riots, hangings, and vitriolic arguments. Recognized or not, causes and consequences prevail. We revisit the past in order to release it.

While it is painful to reflect on so much suffering, these reflections are helpful in explaining past discrimination, avoiding such misdeeds in the present, and moving forward toward the future.

.....

Just inside the gates of the Unitarian Church in Charleston, South Carolina, is a slab of salvaged bricks. Attached to the front is a metal bird looking backwards. The plaque explains that this bird is a West African symbol which means "learning from the past in order to move forward." The inscription dedicates the slab of salvaged bricks to "the enslaved workers who made these bricks and helped build our church."

Cumberland and the Slavery Issue

Why is it so important to understand the Slavery Issue? During the nineteenth century, no issue was more divisive. This is true for the nation at large. This is also true for the state of Maine and for residents of Cumberland. Different parts of the country and different parts of the community responded very differently. The issue of slavery was one of the strongest forces which led to the Civil War. It also had an enormous impact on the evolution of the party system, both at the national and the local levels.

Today in the twenty first century, racial prejudice and racial profiling remain unresolved. If we can better understand the roots of resistance and roots of support for the slavery issue, we may better understand the divisive racial tension of our own time.

Part I: What are the Known Facts about Status of Slavery in Maine?

Relatively speaking, Maine slavery was short lived. It lasted about 120 years. Generally, it was confined to the elite, and the total number of slaves probably never exceeded 500-600. Usually, slaves were used as domestic help or as wage labor. When, where, how and why did slavery in Maine develop?

When

Africans arrived in Maine at least as early as the Europeans. Often acting as domestic servants, they accompanied Portuguese fisherman, French explorers, and English settlers. Upon landing on the shore, they may have held the boats for the Europeans and helped establish shelters.

Cape Verdeans, for example, fished with the Portuguese. Regular trade was conducted between Cape Verde and Maine. Cape Verdean surnames among blacks who live along the coast of Maine provide some evidence that their ancestors arrived early.¹ Carter from “de Carter” is Portuguese or Cape Verdean. Black Carters have lived and worked from Warren to Portland since the 1700s.

In addition to isolated arrivals of individual blacks in the company of Europeans, small groups of blacks began arriving. In 1638, the first group of blacks reached Massachusetts. Governor John Winthrop’s list of imports reveals blacks as part of the cargo of a ship returning from the West Indies. As commerce with the West Indies increased, and small elites become wealthier and wealthier, they began to emulate the aristocratic lifestyle of the wealthy West

¹ Price, H. H. and Gerald E. Talbot, *Maine’s Visible Black History: The First Chronicle of Its People*, Gardiner, Maine: Tilbury House, 2006, page 5.

Indies planters.² Slowly, groups of blacks were acquired by Maine merchants and filtered into Maine. Soon, Boston slave markets provided an organized center for acquiring slaves. In 1644, Massachusetts colonists began to trade directly with Africa for slaves.

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Maine had a special relationship with Massachusetts. In 1622, Sir Ferdinando Gorges (1566-1647), a shareholder in the Plymouth Colony, received a land patent from the Plymouth Council for Northeast for the Province of Maine. Then, as one result of the English Civil Wars (1642-1657), the Puritans of Massachusetts usurped Ferdinando Gorges' land claims. By 1658, all of Maine had been annexed. From 1677-1691, Maine was a colony of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. From 1691-1820, Maine was full part of Massachusetts. That had implications for the issue of slavery in Maine.

Who and Where

By the end of the 1600s, the wills and deeds of the elite show slavery ownership was common among the leaders of York and Kittery. According to a York deed dated 1663, Thomas Bolt gave a "Negro boy named Mingo" to his son-in-law. Three Justices of the General Court, Charles Frost, Samuel Wheelwright, Francis Hookes, all owned slaves.³

Perhaps the most famous Maine slave owner was William Pepperell of Kittery. As early as 1719, Pepperell received slaves in Kittery on consignment from Antiqua. After leading colonial forces in the capture of the French fortress of Louisburg in 1745, Pepperell became the first American to be named a baronet. With this advance in status, Sir William engaged in a new level of style which included "a splendid barge, with a black crew dressed in uniform."⁴ In his will, Pepperell left his widow a large fortune, including four slaves.

During the 1600s much of the slave trade took place in York, Wells, and Piscataqua. In Wells, slavery became an "element in social life."

Human beings were regarded as chattels; used and sold in the market as freely as cattle. The number was small, but only so in consequence of the inability of the people to purchase and maintain a large number. ... These slaves were generally treated with kindness by their masters. Some fell into cruel hands, and

² Stakeman, Randolph, "Slavery in Colonial Maine." *Maine Historical Society Quarterly*, Vol. 27 Fall 1987, page 60.

³ Stakeman, Randolph, *op. cit.*, page 64.

⁴ Price, H. H. and Gerald E. Talbot, *op. cit.*, page 9.

were called to endure the severe burdens and other ill treatment which inhumanity seldom fails to inflict on those who fall under its unlimited control.⁵

The number of slaves in Wells fluctuated from year to year.

Our slaves were generally purchased in Wells. In the latter part of the slave era there were many small vessels owned on the seaboards, which were employed in the West Indies trade, by which they were readily transported here. Almost every vessel would return with a few and they were purchased at very low prices.⁶

By the mid eighteenth century, informal trade in slaves was replaced with a more formal system, as the demand escalated beyond the upper class to the upper middle class.

In addition to the merchants, ministers also acquired slaves. In 1732, the First Church of Christ in York voted to purchase a slave for its minister, Reverend Samuel Moody, and by 1734, they had raised the 120 pounds for this purpose. However, the expense and trouble of keeping a slave proved too much, and so Reverend Moody had the slave sold four years later in 1736.⁷

Closer to Cumberland, in the town of North Yarmouth, Reverend Nicholas Loring of the First Church on February 17, 1737 married Mary Richmond, a woman from a wealthy family in Tiverville, Rhode Island, where slavery was more common. As a part of her wedding portion, Mrs. Loring received a female house servant, "Billender".⁸ This slave served faithfully and was provided for in her mistress' will. At the time, the Town of North Yarmouth embraced the present towns of Cumberland, Yarmouth, North Yarmouth, Pownal, Freeport, and Harpswell. Some residents of Cumberland attended that church and must have been aware of the situation.

With the influx of migrants to Maine during the eighteenth century, more and more migrants brought slaves with them. In 1717, Andrew Dunning moved to Brunswick and became the town's first slaveholder. In 1764, Abiel Lovejoy from Massachusetts settled in Pownalborough and brought several slaves with him. Prior to the American Revolution, Isaac Royall from Antigua introduced slavery to Durham.⁹

⁵ Bourne, Edward E., *The History of Wells and Kennebunk*, (Portland, Maine: B. Thurston and Co., 1875), page 406.

⁶ *Ibid.*, page 407.

⁷ Stakeman, Randolph, *op. cit.*, page 65.

⁸ Corliss, August W. *Old Times of North Yarmouth, Maine, 1877-1884*, (Somersworth: New Hampshire Pub. Co., 1977), page 878.

⁹ Stakeman, Randolph, *op. cit.*, page 66.

The census of 1764 estimated Maine had 322 blacks, but the census does not distinguish between free blacks and slaves. Geographically, blacks were scattered throughout Maine, but could be found primarily in coastal towns.

How Well Integrated?

Although black slaves were integrated into colonial life of their slave owners, they were kept apart and subordinate to white communities. At the time, in some towns, church attendance was mandated by law, but slaves were accommodated in special balconies or specific pews. Puritan beliefs relegated blacks to second class members within the community. On June 22, 1736, the First Church of North Yarmouth voted to build seats in side galleries to accommodate that town's growing population of Negroes and Indians.¹⁰ Although Whites, Negroes, and Indians were baptized, married, and buried by the same clergy, they were not considered equal. Some parishioners disagreed with the vote and went across the street to found the Universalist Church.

How did the slave trade work in Maine?¹¹ During the early nineteenth century, Portland became known for its rum distilleries which lined Fore Street near the waterfront. Distillers sent lumber known as shook (boards used to make casks and barrels) to islands in the West Indies, particularly Antigua and Jamaica. This lumber was traded for molasses or sugar cane, which was grown on large plantations worked by slaves. In turn, molasses and/or sugar cane was shipped back to Portland and made into rum. There were so many distilleries producing so much rum that the locals could not consume it all.

What to do with all that rum? It could be sold throughout the United States. However, the most profitable thing to do was to ship it to Africa, where it was traded for human beings who then were sold as slaves either to the West Indies or to the American continent. This trading strategy was known as Triangulation. Its implementation made many New Englanders, including Mainers, rich. They became rich off the labor and sale of human beings. For economic reasons, these traders became supporters of the pro-slavery faction.

How Did Slavery in Maine Differ from Slavery in the South?

Like their Southern brethren, slaves in Maine lacked control over their persons and families. The ever-present possibility of sale or bequest loomed large. Like their Southern brethren, blacks in Maine feared their families could be broken up at any time. Depending upon the situation, the threat of beating weighed heavily.

¹⁰ Corliss, *op. cit.*, page 463.

¹¹ Bruce, Noah, "Maine's Role in our Nation's Most Sordid History," *Portland Phoenix*, August 30-September 6, 2001.

In Maine, the slave codes were not as complex as in the South. Allegedly, Maine's punishments were slightly less severe. Slaves had a legal right to testify, seek redress in the courts, and receive some legal protection. Even so, one cannot claim treatment was necessarily more benign. Although slaves in Maine had legal rights and thus the possibility of a better life, in practice, the record reveals gross discrepancies.

In late 1694 or early 1695, in Kittery, an African-American enslaved woman named Rachel was murdered by her enslaver, Nathaniel Keen. Subsequently, on May 16, 1695, Keen was placed on trial for murder.¹² This trial established a court precedent in which an actual slave owner was placed on trial for murdering a slave. According to testimony, Rachel, living in the town of Kittery, was owned and beaten to death by the defendant, Nathaniel Keen. Instead of the original charge of murder, the jury found Keen guilty of the lesser charge of cruelty, due to "cruel beating and hard usage" of his Negro woman. Keen's sentence was a fine of 10 pounds and 10 shillings, but it was suspended until a later date.¹³

As late as 1780s, a Bristol minister owned a slave girl, who had been given as a gift from his father-in-law at the time of his marriage. Many years later, in autumn, when the ground was covered with snow and sleet, the cows did not return home as usual.

The colored girl poorly clad was sent to find them. In the evening, she came in declaring she was unable to find them; but her master sternly ordered her to continue the search until she would be successful. The poor girl, "with tears freezing upon her face," left his presence, and in the morning was found dead by the side of a fence, not far from the house. It was supposed that, being unable to find the cows, and afraid to enter the house, being much fatigued, she lay down to rest herself, and froze to death.¹⁴

The fact that this incident occurred in the family of a clergyman was shocking. This particular pastor, noted for his extensive education and his unshakeable piety, also was known for certain unfavorable qualities. Trained among the aristocrats in his native land of Scotland, he practiced very strict and rigid standards which made it difficult for him to permit allowances for human weakness. He treated his parishioners and even his own family with the same severity, as illustrated in this anecdote. The "colored girl" was a most unfortunate victim.

¹² Allen, Neal (1958). *Province and Court Records of Maine*. Portland: Maine Historical Record. Pp. 34-35.

¹³ Greene, Lorenzo, *The Negro in Colonial New England*. (Port Washington: Kennikat Press, 1947), page 234.

¹⁴ Johnston, John, *A History of Bristol and Bremen in the State of Maine, including the Pemaquid Settlement*, (Albany, New York: Joel Munsell, 1873), page 373.

Although the laws in Maine appear to be less stringent, in practice, instances of gross injustices can be identified.

Part Two: How Did Cumberland Residents Learn about the Slavery Question?

For the most part, residents had to rely on secondary sources of information. By the nineteenth century, newspapers were readily available. Some families subscribed to two or more newspapers, while others learned about reports from group discussions around pot-bellied stoves at the general store. Quite often, itinerant speakers appeared in nearby towns. Sometimes, when Cumberland sea captains returned home, they gave family members eyewitness accounts of slavery as practiced in Southern ports. Leaders in political parties presented conflicting positions, the positions of Presidents revealed conflicting views on slavery. Occasionally, residents of Maine, by their actions on slavery issues, attracted national attention. Four examples are the case of Atticus, the martyrdom of Elijah Parish Lovejoy, the trial of Nathaniel Gordon, a slaver from Portland, and Clifton Harris accused of double murder in East Auburn.

During the nineteenth century in Cumberland, two political issues were regarded as paramount importance. The first was the Temperance question. The second was the abolition question. The question of Temperance was an issue most people could understand, since it touched them directly either through family, through neighbors, or through teachings of Church pastors.

Writing in 1861, Isaac Weston, Pastor of the Cumberland Congregational Church, observers:

The Temperance movement finds many friends; the Congregational Church is virtually a Temperance Association. Intoxicating liquors, as a beverage, are not sold in town, and the disgusting sight of a drunkard, our children are seldom, if ever, permitted to witness. They are brought up in such entire ignorance of the nature of wines and ardent spirits, that it is doubtful whether one in fifty of them could distinguish one sort from another.¹⁵

Religious organizations reinforced the prohibition, and offered help in resolving the issue.

As for the slavery question, the subject, to some, seemed remote inasmuch as Cumberland had few, if any, black residents. Geographically, Cumberland was far removed

¹⁵ Weston, Isaac, *A History of Congregational Church and Society of Cumberland, Maine* (Portland, Maine: Brown Thurston, 1861), page 30.

from slavery in the South. Moreover, some religious leaders claimed political issues were not worthy of serious discussion. According to Pastor Weston, "People must have something to talk about and their hours of leisure are better employed in conversing with the great themes of revealed truth than in retailing the gossip of the neighborhood, or in becoming mad in the discussion of political or other secular subjects."¹⁶

Newspapers

Newspapers had a short life span, had fine print, and their editors were fiercely independent. Local and state politics were covered by countless letters and essays. Painful invective and personal prejudices added interest. The editorial column was placed on the second or third page. A typical paper had four pages, of which more than half the space was devoted to advertisements. By 1835, due to the rapid increase of literacy, 91% of the whites over 20 years of age were literate.¹⁷ As a result, the number of newspapers and the number of readers increased, although the number of subscribers did not. Alexis de Tocqueville observed "the power of the periodical press is second only to that of the people."¹⁸

In the Greater Portland area, about sixteen newspapers were published during the 1830s, including *The Eastern Argus* (1803-1863), *Portland Advertiser* (1824-1834), *Portland Daily Advertiser* (1840-1898), *Christian Mirror* (1822-1899), and the *Family Reader* (1829-1833). These newspapers had subscribers in Cumberland. However, circulation was limited. Often, people gathered at the local general store to hear a reading of the day's news.

Newspapers covered the slavery issue comprehensively. An Editorial as well as a report on an Abolitionist lecture by William Lloyd Garrison at the First Parish Church was published in the *Portland Advertiser*, September 23, 1832. An Editorial on abolitionist disturbances was printed in the *Eastern Argus*, November 8, 1833, page 2. An article in *The Jeffersonian*, June 9, 1834, page 2, column 3, reported the refusal of the First Parish Church to permit a lecture on abolition therein. An Essay entitled "Treatment of Colored People in the North" was published in the *Christian Mirror*, August 14, 1834, page 1, column 3.

Notably, the *Christian Mirror* was supported by Congregational Ministers, who reaffirmed their support in a letter dated June 1828. Reverend Asa Cummings served as editor.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, page 19.

¹⁷ Jordan, Jr. William B. *Index to Portland Newspapers, 1785-1835*, (Bowie, MD: Heritage Books, Inc., 1994), Preface.

¹⁸ De Tocqueville, Alexis, *Democracy in America*, Vol. I (New York: Langley, 1840), page 188.

By 1833, it was published by the Maine Missionary Society. Maine's earliest antislavery newspaper was the *Advocate of Freedom* (1838-1841), which was published in Brunswick by the Maine Antislavery Society. Additional abolitionist newspapers included *Liberty Standard* (1841-1848), the *Bangor Gazette* (1842-1843) *Free Soil Republican* (1848-1849), and the *Portland Inquirer*, official newspaper of the Maine Free Soil Party, 1848-1855.

How did Maine antislavery newspapers portray the fugitive issue? How did their editors perceive the issue? First, editors placed the blame on the system rather than the individual slave owner. "It is slavery which we oppose, and not the Southerner," stated *Liberty Standard*, April 5, 1843. This position was comforting to those whose relatives had moved to the South. Once relatives relocated to the South, it is claimed, they could not prevent themselves from coming under the sway of the system.

According to antislavery advocates, southern whites failed to see the horror of the system because the system itself blinded them to the flaws of their behavior. Habits were ingrained and difficult to correct. If southerners were impervious to the suffering of slaves, it was because they were corrupted by the power of the system.

Second, Maine antislavery newspapers depicted white southerners as poorly educated and culturally inferior. An article in the *Bangor Gazette* presented statistics to support the South's illiteracy rate, and then concluded, "Behold then what slavery does for letters – one in every four persons in the slave states, who can neither read nor write!" Moreover, "seven eighths of all American authors of any note in Literature or Science, are born, and flourish North of the Mason's and Dixon's line."¹⁹

Third, religion became the ground for moral persuasion. However, the concept of evil, commonly used to describe the system, was seldom used to characterize white Southerners.²⁰ After all, Southerners and Northerners shared a common cultural heritage, and thus shared similar values. Even if Northerners moved to the South, their Northern friends believed, those transplanted Northerners would likely be corrupted by the system. In fact, as reported the *Advocate of Freedom* on June 21, 1838, not even a Yale or Dartmouth education prevented two New England Presbyterian ministers, who moved to the South, from becoming advocates of slavery and slaveholders.

Even Christian slaveholders were vulnerable to the requirements of the slave system. In the case of a Christian slaveholder who had whipped an innocent Christian slave child to death, the slaveholder's religion failed to act as a restraint because he perceived cruelty as a rule in a

¹⁹ *Bangor Gazette*, May 28, 1842.

²⁰ Farmer, Rod, "Maine Abolitionists View the South: Images in Maine Antislavery Newspapers, 1838-1855," *Maine Historical Society Quarterly*, Vol.25 Summer 1985, page 5.

slave system. As reported by the *Bangor Gazette*, “It is part of the system, and a necessary part.”²¹

Particularly perplexing were the religious differences between northern and southern denominational links. Abolitionists tended to believe Protestant Christianity to be the supreme religion.²² Although Southern slave owners subscribed to the same denominations as did Northerners, yet most southern views on slavery were strictly opposed to northern views. Distraught, Maine crusaders concluded that southern Christian conscience was “palsied” from its contact with slavery.²³ In other words, the system of slavery could make even Christianity “impotent.” Abolitionists viewed white Southerners as poorly informed about Christianity and less religious than New Englanders.²⁴ These views had wide circulation. Abolitionist newspapers had subscribers in Cumberland.

The question, though, is how did the reader respond to this information? How did readers distinguish between fact and opinion? What were their priorities, prejudices, and preoccupations? How important did they regard those events happening faraway? How are we interconnected? Does it matter to residents of Cumberland what is happening in the rest of the country? Could residents place slavery question in national context?

Speakers

William Lloyd Garrison (1805-1879)

In addition to newspapers, speakers in the Greater Portland area were influential in presenting abolitionist views. In 1831, in Boston, the fiery abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison together with his friend Isaac Knapp co-founded a weekly anti-slavery newspaper, *The Liberator*. To recruit supporters for his cause, Garrison visited Maine in 1832 and 1833 and helped give birth to the abolitionist movement in the state. Inspired by Garrison, in November 1833, the first anti-slavery gathering in Maine convened in Hallowell. The following month, in December, the national anti-slavery society was formed in Philadelphia, and Samuel Fessenden served as one of the 25 Vice Presidents. In 1834, the Maine State Anti-Slavery Society was organized in Portland. It censured the use of uncharitable language, disclaimed any personal hostility to slave holders, and denied any intention of forming a political party. Its mission was

²¹ *Bangor Gazette*, January 28, 1843.

²² *Advocate of Freedom*, May 2, 1840; *Liberty Standard*, April 4, 1843, July 11, 1844, April 24, 1845; *Portland Inquirer*, February 16, 1855.

²³ *Advocate of Freedom*, January 3, 1839.

²⁴ Farmer, Rod, *op. cit.*, page 12.

to educate the public about the “evils of slavery” and the need for abolition. However, its meetings were often poorly attended.

In contrast, radical views espoused by Garrison aroused strong opposition. Southerners demanded suppression of the *Liberator*. Many readers in the North felt the same way. The *Eastern Argus* on May 3, 1833 observed there are “indications of a spirit at the South, to seize upon the most trifling provocations of [for] a rupture of the Union of the States.” Furthermore, it continued, “the South is beginning to be sensible of the true character of slavery... The people of the South will overrule it, in due season, for the general happiness of both masters and slaves, provided they are let alone by us of the North.” [Emphasis as printed in article].

The prevailing views of Garrison’s opponents reflected caution and moderation, lest the Union be splintered. No matter how well intentioned these anti-slavery societies were, in reality, they appeared to prepare the way for insurrection and war. Preserving the Union must be a priority.

Opponents to Garrison’s brand of abolitionism appealed to public opinion. Meetings were held in many towns to denounce abolitionism. At a meeting in Portland, August 18, 1835, the group agreed slavery was morally wrong and politically and economically evil, but that “its immediate eradication would produce evils which cannot be contemplated without dismay.”²⁵ The group strongly protested inflammatory and incendiary discourse for the remedy of the evils of slavery. At the same time, the group placed its confidence in the “generous and chivalrous South to give the attention it demands and that in due time . . . their better information shall dictate slavery shall gradually disappear from our country and that the stain upon our national scutcheon be wiped away.”²⁶ This resolution was unanimously adopted, and the *Eastern Argus* cordially endorsed it.

This vacillation between opposing viewpoints added to the ambiguity of the issue. Not surprisingly, residents in Cumberland were divided in their allegiance. Some residents could sympathize with both perspectives, and as a result were indecisive about which position or which party to support.

Samuel Fessenden (1784-1869) was an attorney, abolitionist, and politician. Born in Fryeburg, Maine, he graduated from Fryeburg Academy and from Dartmouth College, class of 1808. He “read the law” with Judge Dana of Fryeburg and Daniel Webster. He was admitted to the bar in 1809.

²⁵ Hatch, Louis C., *Maine: A History* (New York: The American Historical Society, 1919), page 288.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, page 289.

Fessenden began his law practice in New Gloucester, where he rose to distinction in his profession. In 1815-1816, before Maine became a separate state, he served in the general court of Massachusetts and then 1818-1819, he represented his district in the Massachusetts Senate. For 14 years he was a major-general of the 12th Division of Massachusetts militia.

In 1822, Fessenden moved to Portland. An ardent Federalist and abolitionist, he was one of the initial supporters of the Anti-Slavery Society in Maine. As one of William Lloyd Garrison's ardent supporters in Maine, Fessenden became an eloquent proponent of abolition, but practiced what he avowed. According to Portland historian William Willis, Fessenden received African Americans "into his house, he took them with him to church, he visited them in their families and encouraged them in every way to give them self-respect and a place in society."²⁷ By the 1840s, the issue of slavery had begun to define Fessenden's public life.

As an ardent abolitionist, Samuel Fessenden mentored many lawyers, among them Macon Bolling Allen. Born in Indiana in 1816 of Native American, Scotch, and African ancestry, A. Macon Bolling, in his own words, declared he was simply "descended from Africa." By early 1844, he found his way to Massachusetts. In January of that year, he officially changed his name to "Macon Bolling Allen." Later in 1844, Allen arrived in Portland and studied law under the tutelage of Samuel Fessenden. On July 3, 1844, at a Portland courthouse, Macon Bolling Allen, then age 28, made history by becoming the first African American in the country admitted to the bar.

Actually, Fessenden first tried to gain Allen's admission to the Maine bar in April 1844. Under Maine law at that time, anyone who was a citizen of good moral character was eligible. However, Allen was initially rejected because, as an African American, he was not legally a "citizen." Unfazed, Fessenden tutored Allen, who again applied and was admitted using an alternate method. On this second attempt, Allen passed an examination and was admitted to the bar on July 3, 1844.²⁸

In 1847, Fessenden was nominated by the Liberty Party for governor and for congress. As a candidate, he received a large number of votes, but failed to win office. In Cumberland, for the gubernatorial race in 1847, voters gave Fessenden 11 votes, and in 1848, 30 votes. By the 1850s, Fessenden became an early supporter of the Republican Party. For forty years he stood at head of the bar in Maine and spoke as an ardent anti-slavery advocate.

Reverend Austin Willey (1806-1896) was a preacher, abolitionist, author, and editor of the abolitionist newspapers, *Advocate of Freedom*, 1839-1841; *Liberty Standard*, 1842-1845;

²⁷ Quoted by F. Mark Terison in H. H. Price and Gerald E. Talbot, *Maine's Visible Black History*, *op. cit.*, page 276.

²⁸ For more details on Allen, consult the Timeline and his entry under the year 1844.

Portland Inquirer, 1851-1854. Born in Campton, New Hampshire, Willey had 9 siblings. Of the nine, at least two siblings also committed to the ministry.

When speaking as an antislavery advocate throughout the State of Maine, Willey often was interrupted by mobs throwing eggs and wielding hoses. Sometimes, in order to preserve his own safety, he was forced to exit through the rear door. In some communities, no one wanted to provide him housing. In other communities, he faced angry crowds and was refused a meeting place.

Together with Fessenden, Willey was one of the founders of Maine's Antislavery Society, first meeting in Hallowell on November 18, 1833 and then established in Portland in August of 1834. In its Constitution, the group asserted "the most high God had made of the blood all the families of men to dwell on all the face of the Earth and hath endowed all alike with certain inalienable rights, among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." These founders believed that slavery was a gross violation of the law of God, as well as a violation of fundamental principles of the U. S. government.

Beginning in 1842, Willey often travelled on speaking tours with Lewis G. Clark, who had been enslaved in Kentucky, escaped to Canada, and later returned to the United States in order to campaign against slavery. When Clark first arrived in Portland in 1842, no assembly hall would allow him to speak, except the Abyssinian where he attracted a large crowd.

In 1843, when Clark spoke at the Eighth Annual Maine Anti-Slavery Society meeting in Hallowell, Willey wrote "Few could reach the hearts of an audience like him." In 1846, Clark and Willey spoke at meetings in Atkinson, Brownville, Dover, Foxcroft, Garland, Milo, Monson, and Sebec. According to Willey, "farmers left their work by the hundreds to hear them."

In 1848, Willey became editor of the *Portland Inquirer*, continuing as editor for about 8 years. Speaking at the Democratic National Convention in 1852, Willey asserted that the Compromise of 1850 was so ambiguous than anyone could interpret it in whatever manner he or she pleased. On that ground, Willey urged the Compromise proposal be rejected.

As author of *The History of the Antislavery Cause in State and Nation*, published in 1886, Willey insisted the Antislavery movement had lessons for church, state, and citizen. Its lessons had a place in every pulpit, every press, every school and every family. If the lessons were disregarded, he warned, there would be appalling consequences. Fraternal unity must not be ignored.

Reverend Oren Burbank Cheney (1816-1903), a prominent abolitionist, was a Free Will Baptist clergyman and first president of Bates College. He too was a leader in the New England antislavery movement. Serving in the State Legislature in 1851, he became an ardent

antislavery advocate. He also served as editor of the *Morning Star*, a Free Will Baptist magazine, which had a prominent place in the Abolitionist Movement. Writing in the *Morning Star*, Cheney said, "We shall speak against slavery, as we have hitherto done; we can find no language that has the power to express the hatred we have towards so vile and so wicked an institution."

Born in Holderness, New Hampshire and raised in a deeply religious family, Cheney's parents were ardent abolitionists. His father, a paper manufacturer and a conductor on the Underground Railroad, was a friend of Frederick Douglass. As a student, Cheney enrolled in Brown University, but due to high levels of racial intolerance, he transferred in 1836 to Dartmouth. In 1844, Cheney was ordained as a Free Will Baptist minister.

In 1850, he founded Lebanon Academy in Lebanon, Maine. In 1851, he served in the State House of Representatives and became a strong advocate of the anti-slavery movement. In 1852, he was elected as delegate to Free Soil Party Convention in Pittsburgh. In 1853, he was a delegate to the Free Will Baptist General Conference. In 1855, he founded the Maine State Seminary, which reflected his core beliefs in the causes of abolitionism and temperance. The school was open to all students regardless of race, gender, wealth, or religion. In 1863, Cheney petitioned the Maine legislature for a change in the Charter to permit a collegiate course of study. He also changed the school's name to Bates College in honor of Benjamin E. Bates, the industrialist and philanthropist who made substantial early gifts to Cheney's school. On March 16, 1864, the State Legislature chartered Bates College.

Inspired by the evangelical abolitionist movement, Cheney implemented his vision of egalitarian standards. No restrictions were placed on race. All students, regardless of race, sex, or income, were welcome to apply. At the time of Bates' founding, only a handful of colleges in the United States accepted African-American students, and at these schools African-Americans often were not seen as equals. Bates offered a different perspective.

During the early 1830s Cheney became acquainted with industrialist and philanthropist Benjamin Bates IV (1808-1878). One of Bates' major accomplishments was the establishment of Bates Manufacturing Company in Lewiston. Bates Mill was a textile factory founded in 1850 and completed in 1852. It was located at 35 Canal Street, near Lewiston Falls which provided the mill with power. This company became the largest manufacturing company in Maine and provided two thirds of all textile output for the state. As the single largest employer in the Maine, the mill employed about 5000 people of Canadian and Irish descent.

As a result of ongoing contacts with Cheney, Bates became interested in Cheney's educational efforts. With the wealth generated from this mill, Bates made substantial

donations Cheney's Maine State Seminary and then, upon its change of name, to Bates College. Bates was the largest of the early donors to Bates College.

Like numerous factories in Maine, Bates' mill received cotton from the South, where it was grown and cultivated by slave labor. Anticipating the secession of Southern States and the eventual shortage of cotton, Bates bought unprecedented amounts of cotton prior to the outbreak of the Civil War.

From one perspective, Cheney accepted money from Bates in apparent conflict with his own convictions. Much of the capital needed for founding Bates came indirectly from slave labor. Cotton and mill industries made Benjamin Bates wealthy, but at the same time, these industries required slave labor. For some critics, Cheney accepted money in ways inconsistent with his antislavery position. Be that as it may, Cheney continued to serve as an ardent advocate for the antislavery cause.

Francis O. J. Smith (1806-1876) was born in Brentwood, New Hampshire, was educated at Phillips Exeter Academy, and read law in the office of Ichabod Bartlett of Portsmouth. Completing his study, he continued to Portland, Maine, where he transferred to the office of Samuel Fessenden and Thomas Amory De Blois. Smith was proud of his humble origins and lack of university training. Boasting of being a "self-made man," he identified with the common man. He attacked political and economic institutions which favored the wealthy and elite. Smith was admitted to the bar in 1826.

In 1827, as editor of Portland's *Eastern Argus*, the state's most influential Democratic newspaper, Smith ignored the views of party leaders and supported Andrew Jackson for President. When senior party leaders, namely, William King, William Pitt Preble, Ashur Ware and John Chandler proved unsupportive, Smith shouldered them aside, thereby gaining a reputation for ruthlessness.²⁹ Advocating for Jackson during the 1828 presidential election, Smith engineered a stunning upset in the Cumberland County Congressional district, which cast the only electoral vote in New England for Jackson.

Using his editorial position as a springboard, Smith, at age 25, served in the Maine House in 1830, but lost his bid for reelection. In 1831, he began publication of the *Augusta Age* in Augusta, and that September was elected to the Senate, serving as President of the Senate in 1832. By 1831, Smith had firmly re-established the Two Party System in Maine and consolidated support for Jackson.

²⁹ Mundy, James H., *Presidents of the Senate of Maine from 1820*, (Augusta, Maine: J. S. McCarthy Office, 1979), page 10.

Ever ambitious, Smith, age 27, was elected to Congress in September 1832. When Smith departed for Washington, former Senator John Chandler forewarned Vice President Van Buren, saying, "Smith is certainly a young man of considerable talent, tact, cunning, management and industry, great perseverance, and...vindictive."³⁰

Smith was reelected in 1834 and 1836. Cumberland voters, in 1833, gave Smith 10% of their votes; in 1834, 48.8%, by a margin of 7 votes; and in 1836, 49% by a margin of 3 votes. Smith did not seek re-election in 1838.

In 1837, the split in the Democratic Party was widening. At the state convention, Smith became involved in an intraparty dispute. Since 1831, Smith had been harboring a grudge, and in 1837, he seized his opportunity for revenge. Smith reinforced his reputation as a trouble-maker. In 1837, his differences with the Van Buren administration caused him to form the Conservative Democracy movement. He championed the state banking system and opposed implementation of an Independent Treasury.

By 1840, Smith switched parties and jumped aboard the Whig bandwagon. During the early 1840s, Smith served as Daniel Webster's secret agent during the adjustment of the Northeast Boundary controversy. The successful negotiation of the Webster-Ashburton Treaty of 1842 was, in part, made possible to his skillful manipulation of public opinion in Maine.³¹ For nearly a decade, Mainers disputed among themselves the merits of the treaty, which had resulted in a significant loss of land claimed by Maine.

During the 1840s and 1850s, Smith devoted most of his attention to the promotion of Samuel F. B. Morse's magnetic telegraph, an enterprise from which he made a fortune. Samuel Morse had gone to Smith hoping for his support to obtain a grant from Congress to build an experimental telegraph line. Smith, ever alert to possibilities of financial gain, offered to become Morse's counsel, publicity director, and promotional agent for the invention. In 1838, Smith was taken into partnership with Morse and given one quarter interest in the patent. Smith authored a bill to appropriate \$30,000 for a line between Washington and Baltimore. The first line was finally built and the first message sent in 1844.

Impatient with progress, Smith switched his attention from the Northeast to the Northwest and attempted to develop income from the patent for himself. Due to patent disputes, Smith lost control. His dream of a western telegraph empire dissolved when the directors failed to issue him stocks. Another plan failed, and the project went bankrupt.

³⁰ Carleton, Mabee, *The American Leonardo*, (New York, 1943), page 209.

³¹ Mundy, James H., *op .cit.* page 10.

Resilient, though defeated, Smith switched his attention to other projects, this time to the advancement of the Republican Party and the defeat of Southern slave power.

In a fiery speech before the Republican State Convention in Portland on July 8, 1856, Smith exclaimed, “freemen of this State are now challenged by the myrimidon and sycophants of the slave power of the south.”³² He referred to the doctrine of “political paganism” that extends the “blight of slavery over free lands of the nation.” With a clarion call, Smith concluded his address:

In the name of God may I not ask, if our people are capable of such degradation; if they could thus suddenly become traitors to the cause of human liberty and republican government in our land; if they could so tarnish the past, and be insensible to the shame of the present, and so reckless of the future, what vengeance of Heaven though heated a hundred fold hotter than the lightning that splinters and blasts the gnarled oak, would not be justly merited by those under Divine Providence. Fellow Citizens, this huge sin must not be laid to our charge.³³

In 1862, Smith bought the *Portland Advertiser*, which had the largest circulation of any newspaper in the state. Within two years, the subscription list plunged from 2000 to 600 subscribers. Due to a drastic decline in advertising as well as the precipitous drop in subscribers, the newspaper was suspended October 31, 1866.

Still finding political arena irresistible, during the Civil War, Smith served two more terms in the Maine House. However, after the Lincoln administration issued the Emancipation Proclamation, Smith severed his connections. Switching his position yet again, he became notorious as a southern sympathizer and “copperhead.” Smith died bankrupt and unlamented.

These three speakers, Fessenden, Willey, and Cheney, tirelessly and eloquently made the case against slavery. Smith epitomized those who fluctuated and vacillated, according to the way they perceived the political winds to be blowing. Seemingly, he was unable to take a stand and stay the course. Their voices must have been heard by some of the residents in Cumberland, which was part of the Greater Portland community. With access to newspapers and speakers, it must have been difficult for Cumberland residents to ignore the slavery issue.

In addition, black speakers played a pivotal role in advancing the anti-slavery cause in Maine. They told stories of their escape from slavery and persuaded white listeners to take action. Local black leaders often made arrangements for out-of-state speakers, some of whom

³² Smith, F. O. J., “Record of political parties down to 1856 in opposition to slavery.” Portland: Republican State Convention, July 8, 1856.

³³ Smith, F. O. J. Smith, *ibid.* page 21.

stayed several months and traveled throughout the state. They started arriving in 1833 and kept coming until 1864. Foremost among these speakers was Frederick Douglass.

Frederick Douglass (1818-1895) was an African-American social reformer, abolitionist, orator, writer, and statesman. After escaping slavery in Maryland, he became a national leader with the abolitionist movement in Massachusetts and New York. He was known for his dazzling oratory and incisive writing. In 1845, he published his autobiography, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave*.

Starting in 1842, Douglass spoke many times and in many towns to people in Maine, giving talks, shaking hands, staying in people's homes. On at least one occasion he stood on the steps of City Hall in Portland and spoke to a crowd of one thousand. Conceivably, people from Cumberland attended, or they heard about it from their relatives.

Henry Bibb (1815-1854) was born a slave in Shelby County, Kentucky. In 1837, he escaped, only to be recaptured while trying to rescue his wife and daughter. By 1842, he escaped once again and settled in Detroit, Michigan. In 1843, Bibb attended the Michigan Black State Convention and subsequently began lecturing for the Michigan Anti-Slavery Society. In 1845, he began speaking on behalf of Liberty Party candidates. During the fall and winter of 1846, he toured New England. Two years later, he again toured the East, at one point acting as an agent for Frederick Douglass' *North Star*. Inspired by Douglass, he wrote about his own experience escaping slavery in his *Narrative of the Life and Adventures of Henry Bibb*, 1849.

At the 1848 Liberty Party Convention in Hallowell, Henry Bibb, a runaway slave, spoke and sang "The Slave's Lamentation" by Fairbank Bush (1773-1873) of Norwich, Vermont. Composed of eight stanzas, this poem is vivid and compelling. The first four and the final stanzas read as follows:

Ye sons o freedom now give ear, and o our sufferings you shall hear,

While bound in slavery's chains;

We have no friends to soothe our grief – none to grant the least relief,

Or feel our cutting pains.

Our friends are sold from place to place, our children torn from our embrace,

And sold in foreign lands;

Poor souls are gone, we know not where – they're far beyond our mother's care,

And placed in cruel hands.

No tongue can tell, or mortal know, what gloomy hours we undergo,

When all our joys are fled;

Our cup is full of grief and woe, despair doth follow when we know

Our comforts are all dead.

We've laid our cause before the great who rule the vast affairs of state,

When met at Washington;

Their mouths were sealed, their reason fled, and all the people boldly said,

They're gng'd by Atherton.

Is this the land of Washington, of Adams, and of Jefferson,

Who laid the corner stone?

Of equal rights, and rightful laws, of freedom and her noble cause,

So dear to everyone?

Imagine this poem presented as a lament. Reverend Austin Willey said Bibb's oration was "unequaled" except for that of Frederick Douglass.³⁴ In 1849, Bibb returned and spoke in

³⁴ Price, H. H. and Gerald E. Talbot, *op. cit.*, page 264.

Portland, Windham, and North Yarmouth. A few Cumberland residents or their relatives may have heard him speak in North Yarmouth.

Frances Ellen Watkins Harper (1825-1911)

Born in Baltimore, Maryland to free parents, Frances Watkins was an African-American abolitionist, suffragist, poet, and author. In 1851, she helped fugitive slaves along the Underground Railroad, en route to Canada. After joining the American Anti-Slavery Society in 1853, she began her career as a public speaker.

Her first big break came when she traveled to Maine in September 1854 to give a series of lectures for Maine Daughters of Freedom, an anti-slavery and temperance organization with connections to the Free Soil and Republican Parties. In a letter to William Still, Watkins wrote:

Buckstown Centre, Maine September 28, 1854

The agent of the State Anti-Slavery Society of Maine . . . is a pleasant, dear sweet lady, I do like her so. We travel together, eat together, and sleep together. (She is a white woman.) In fact I have not been in one colored person's home since I left Massachusetts; but I have a pleasant time. My life reminds me of a beautiful dream... I have met with some of the kindest treatment up here that I have ever received... if you could see our Maine ladies – some of them among the noblest types of womanhood you have ever seen! They are for putting men of Anti-Slavery principles in office.....³⁵

Another of her traveling partners was Margaret Anderson Daggett, a leading female abolitionist in the state Daughters of Freedom. They shared the podium in small towns and villages in rural Maine, such as Limerick, Springvale, Litchfield, Temple, Fayette, South Paris, Mechanic Falls, New Sharon, Farmington, and Norridgewock.

One of Watkins' most acclaimed addresses was her message on February 21, 1855 in Augusta during a large convention of the Daughters of Freedom. Austin Willey, editor of the *Portland Inquirer*, describes the situation this way:

In the evening, Winthrop Hall – the largest in the place – was packed to the utmost, and a more thrilling and delightful anti-slavery meeting, we have scarcely, if ever attended. – Besides the music and the songs, the principal address was by Miss Watkins, the amiable and accomplished colored lady from Baltimore. The

³⁵ Still, William, *The Underground Railroad* (Philadelphia: Porter and Coates, 1872) page 758-759.

power of her simple, unaffected appeals, no heart could withstand and good judges affirmed that for richness of thought, and beauty of writing her address, she had not been equaled [sic] in that place this winter. It was about an hour long, and was frequently interrupted by applause.³⁶

Later, in 1858, Watkins refused to give up her seat or ride in the “colored” section of a segregated trolley car in Philadelphia. That was 100 years before Rosa Parks did the same. In 1860, she took leave of the speaking circuit and married Fenton Harper, a widower from Ohio.

Clearly, black speakers made an indelible impression on Maine audiences. For many listeners, it was the first time they personally met and heard black speakers. For the first time, they could draw their own conclusions without relying on secondary sources. Many were moved to action. No doubt, some Cumberland residents traveled to locations where blacks were speaking.

Eyewitness Accounts

In addition to newspapers and speakers, residents of Cumberland had family members who traveled outside the state and witnessed slavery first hand. For example, Margaret Wyman remembered how her father recalled his father, Captain Charles Wyman (1812-1885), saying he saw slaves being sold in the slave markets of New Orleans.³⁷ Whatever that meant is unclear. Were further questions asked? Was the scene accepted as “normal” and perhaps a Southern custom?

Another account alleges Captain David Wilson (1818-1897), a Cumberland resident, saw *Grape Shot*, a schooner built by Cumberland native David Spear, Jr., off the mouth of the Mississippi River. The vessel had a cargo of “black cattle.” The narrator, referring to the vessel, exclaims, “She had fallen to the depths of infamy as a slaver.”³⁸

Like much of the northern part of the country, Cumberland residents were divided between Pro-Slavery and Anti-Slavery factions. In fact, from the beginning of the antislavery conflict until after the outbreak of the Civil War, much of the North was pro-slavery. Today, some of us may find that claim astounding, as well as appalling. However, closer examination reveals how that way of thinking could materialize.

³⁶ *Portland Inquirer*, March 1, 1855.

³⁷ Sweetser, Phyllis, compiler, *Cumberland, Maine in Four Centuries*, *op. cit.*, page 82.

³⁸ Sweetser, Phyllis, compiler, *op. cit.*, page 55.

Many of the residents of the town have “gone down to the sea in ships.” This is not surprising when one realizes the east end of the town opened to the ocean. Many young boys and young men in the nineteenth century yearned to make their livelihood on sea-faring vessels. They were thrilled by a sense of adventure and exploration. They were lured by the ever-changing face of the ocean, mysterious and mercurial. Captains were attracted by the challenge of charting a course through tumultuous and tranquil waters.

In Cumberland, several families included prominent sea captains among their members. Beza Blanchard (1765-1792) and his wife had 12 children, of which at least three sons became sea captains. As was the custom, boys went to the sea at an early age. Captain Reuben, the oldest son, spent 18 years at sea. Captain Enos, another son, sailed the seven seas. Captain Beza Blanchard, Jr. experienced en route to Madeira high winds that drove his vessel off course and ended in a shipwreck. Another captain from Cumberland, Joseph Blanchard, made “more trips to the West Indies than any other sea-going man in Maine.”³⁹

Not only was adventure part of the attraction, but economic gain from trade was appealing. The West Indies Trade was lucrative. Ships would depart with lime and lumber from Maine and return with sugar, molasses, guavas, mangoes for Boston and Portland. Most of the time, these commodities were harvested and loaded by slave labor. In this way, these Black slaves became an indispensable part of the trade. To support fugitives, some reasoned, would destroy livelihoods. At least that was true for some of the sea captains. For economic self-preservation, let the slave system continue.

In the Town of Cumberland at least fifty ships were built at the David Spear shipyard, which was located at the foot of Spear’s Hill at the end of Tuttle Road. On Chebeague Island, Captain Ebenezer Hill, before he was thirty years old, had built five ships. Nearby Yarmouth shipyards built over three hundred ships. Shipyards used local materials readily available, namely, tall pines for masts and spars, hack-ma-tack for knees, and oak for planking. Given the proximity of these shipyards, it is understandable so many sea captains in Cumberland went “down to the sea in ships.”

To place this in larger perspective, by the year 1860, there were 11,375 mariners in the State of Maine. This number constituted almost one fifth of the population. Of these mariners, 759 were masters of ships.⁴⁰ Sea captains and ship builders supported one another.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, page 68.

⁴⁰ Sweetser, Phyllis, compiler, *op. cit.*, page 59.

Clearly not all sea captains and ship builders were pro-slavery. However, considered from an economic perspective, it is reasonable to assume that some were. We simply do not know which ones. At one time, as many as 13 sea captains were members of the Cumberland Congregational Church.⁴¹

In the nearby town of Windham, resident Charles G. Parsons during 1852 and 1853 actually travelled to the South to visit relatives, some of whom were slaveholders in Georgia. Arriving in Savannah on November 22, 1852, Parsons, a political abolitionist as well as a trained physician, kept a journal of his observations and subsequently published his report. Key chapters in this report included "Are Slaves Contented?", "Illusions of Slavery", "Yankees and Slaveholders Compared," "Treatment of Slaves," "Slavery Hardens the Heart," and "Slavery and Christianity."

In his chapter on "Illusions of Slavery," Parsons warns against being deceived.

No man can visit the South for the first time without having his views of slavery, whatever they may be, to some extent modified. If he is credulous, disposed to believe that everything is really what it seems to be, that the surface of society mirrors that which lies beneath, as well as that which is above it, if he credits all that is told him, and looks at the slavery through the slaveholder's glasses, he will return home with a south-side view, and his acquaintances in the South will laugh at his credulity. But if he takes nothing on trust, examines everything, for himself, engages in business, and gains confidence of the slaves, so that he can feel their hearts beat and throb against the wrongs, and look at the system with their eyes, instead of their master's "remembering those in bonds as bound with them" he will understand his own coldness hitherto. And from this new position he will understand some of the ways in which men have been deceived; or have deceived themselves on this subject.⁴²

Not only were Northerners easily deceived by slaveholders, but slaveholders themselves could be deceived by their slaves. When asked about his situation, a slave, out of fear, might reply that he had "kind masters", was "content", and "did not desire freedom." Hearing this reply, a gullible Northerner or even a gullible Southern slaveholder would believe what he heard. Upon investigation, he would learn otherwise. Parsons provides documentation.

⁴¹ Small, Carolyn, President of Cumberland Historical Society, "History of Cumberland Congregational Church," February 2017. [Lecture given at the church].

⁴² Parsons, Charles G., *Inside View of Slavery or a Tour among the Planters*, (Boston: John P. Jewett & Co., 1855), pages 53-54.

Considering that residents of Windham and Cumberland were virtually neighbors, it is likely that some Cumberland residents learned of Parsons' trip to the South, either by reading his book or by hearing him speak about it. In addition to visiting relatives in Georgia, Parsons also traveled in Florida, Alabama, Tennessee, Virginia, and the Carolinas.

Political Parties

To what extent does a political party provide a vehicle for expression of voter sentiment on issues such as the slavery issue? In many cases, voters gravitate to certain parties due to their preferences on certain economic, social, and political issues. These preferences are deep seated and often transferred within a family from generation to generation. Party identification tends to be relatively stable, when socio-economic conditions contributing to it remain stable. What then are socio-economic conditions which helped shape the two dominant parties?

During the First Party System, 1792-1824, two opposing tendencies competed for control of the Presidency, Congress and State governments. The Federalists, under Alexander Hamilton, appealed to banking and commercial interests. New England was the stronghold of the Federalist Party. In opposition, the Democratic-Republicans, under Thomas Jefferson and James Madison, appealed to small farmers, debtors, and frontiersmen. Their stronghold was in the South. However, Cumberland, at the time, was a small rural community, and voters consistently supported Democratic-Republican candidates both for governor and for Congressional representative.

These two opposing tendencies surfaced at state conventions. Watchword for the Federalists was Order. Emphasis was on a strong central government. In contrast, watchword for the Democrat- Republicans was Liberty.

In Cumberland, 1821-1828, voters chose gubernatorial candidates who without exception were members of the Democratic-Republican Party. In 1821, the Democratic-Republican candidate won by 54% of the vote and by 1825, with the same candidates competing, the Democratic-Republican candidate for Governor won 98.7% of the vote. Based on voting results during the 1820s, Cumberland clearly was a strong Democratic-Republican town.

During the Second Party System, 1828-1854, voter interest increased markedly, as evidenced by higher voter turnout, more political rallies, more partisan newspapers, and the emergence of strong party loyalty. Two major parties again dominated the political landscape. The Democrat-Republican Party was led by Andrew Jackson, John Calhoun, Martin Van Buren, James Polk, and Stephen Douglas. The Whig Party, an outgrowth of the National-Republican

Party, was led by John Quincy Adams, Henry Clay, Daniel Webster, and William H. Seward, all opponents of Jackson. Minor parties included the Anti-Masonic Party (1827-1834), the abolitionist Liberty Party (1840-1848), and the anti-slavery Free Soil Party (1848-1852).

Democrat-Republican support was strongest on the frontier and in subsistence farming areas. Catholic immigrants, especially Irish and Germans, strongly supported the Democrat-Republican Party. Whigs found pockets of support among Evangelical Protestants as well as English and Scottish immigrants. Whigs tended to be better educated, more urban, and more entrepreneurial. Cumberland did have pockets on Evangelical Protestants as well as English and Scottish immigrants. These small pockets of Whig support helped to keep candidates in Cumberland competitive.

Despite their strengths in party organization, the Whig Party was weakened by its inability to take a position on slavery. Comprised, in part, of a coalition of National Republicans and Southern Nullifiers, Whigs were divided North and South, as each region held opposing views on slavery. Their political campaigns were successful only as long as they ignored the slavery issue.

By 1852, traditional party loyalties started to splinter. Older economic issues were no longer relevant. Old leaders, Calhoun, Webster, Clay, Jackson, and Polk had passed from the scene. New issues included slavery, nativism, and religious concerns. New leaders either worked within the Democratic Party or helped form third parties, such as the Liberty Party and the Free Soil Party.

In 1852, Cumberland voters gave the Democratic gubernatorial candidate 38.7% of their vote as opposed to 30.8% of their vote for the Whig candidate. The Whig candidate won the statewide election. For the Congressional representative, Cumberland voters cast 34.8% of their votes for the Democratic candidate and 51.7% of their votes for the Whig candidate. Third Party candidates received 13% of the vote. The Democratic candidate won the District wide vote. Party loyalties were becoming weaker.

In Maine, the Liberty Party (1840-1848) emerged as one of the strongest voices against slavery. At a meeting of the national convention held during May 1840 in Warsaw, New York, fourteen of the 906 delegates were from Maine. Among the fourteen delegates were John Appleton, Austin Willey, and Samuel Fessenden, all active in the formation of Maine's Anti-Slavery Society in 1833 and 1834.

What provided unexpected impetus to the movement was the untimely death of President William Henry Harrison. Whigs were shocked when Harrison died April 4, 1840,

having served less than 32 days in office. John Tyler, a slaveholder from Virginia, succeeded to the Presidency. In response, Liberty Party leaders, such as Samuel Fessenden, abandoned the Whig Party and defected to the Liberty Party. With this loss of Whig votes to the Liberty party, candidates from the Liberty Party, by 1842, began winning a few seats in the State Legislature, as well as local contests for sheriff, board of supervisors, coroner, and town clerks.⁴³

In the gubernatorial election 1842 and 1843, John Appleton, a former Federalist and state legislator was the candidate for the Liberty Party. In accepting the nomination, Appleton wrote, he “would not be supposing that Congress has the power to abolish slavery in the states,” but he wondered “is slavery consistent with a republican form of government?” He did not think so, and felt the question should be adjudicated in the US Supreme Court. Appleton was well known for his moral character, intense religious devotion, and sympathy to temperance. As he perceived it, his moral duty was to participate in anti-slavery politics.

As a gubernatorial candidate, Appleton, in the statewide vote for 1842, received 4080 votes and in 1843, 6746 votes, a 63% increase. In 1843, the Liberty Party, only two years old, received 10% of the votes for governor. For 1842 and 1843, respectively, Cumberland voters gave Appleton of the Liberty Party 10 votes and 23 votes, but cast the majority of their votes for the Democratic candidate each time. By mid-1843, the Liberty Party was firmly established. Party presses became important instruments for party success.

To this success of the Liberty Party, the two major parties reacted strongly. The Whigs attacked the Liberty Party Presidential candidate, Birney, on several grounds. In their view, Birney was sympathetic to Catholicism and served as a pawn of the British abolitionists. They also falsely claimed he sold his former slaves for a profit. As for the Democrats, their powerful political machine was unfriendly to abolitionist activity. Consistently, the Democrats supported southern statesmen as they maneuvered against abolitionist principles.

In view of Maine’s support for Democratic candidates, people believed, according to Austin Willey, the state “was bound to the South by political and commercial bands of steel.”⁴⁴ Clearly intimidated, the Democrats were leery of nominating certain candidates. In 1843, for example, they failed to re-nominate Congressmen Nathaniel Clifford and Nathaniel Littlefield because party leaders feared their pro-Southern votes in Congress would prevent their reelection. Notably, though, neither major party embraced wholeheartedly anti-slavery positions.

⁴³ Johnson, Reinhard E., *The Liberty Party 1840-1848: Antislavery Third Party Politics in the United States*, Baton Rouge. LA: Louisiana State University Press, 2009.

⁴⁴ Willey, Austin, *op. cit.*, page 43.

In 1846, Liberty Party experienced unparalleled success. Samuel Fessenden, the party's gubernatorial candidate in both 1845 and 1846 received 4000 votes more than any Liberty candidate previously had received. Members gained confidence. Fessenden received 15% of the state vote and thereby prevented both parties from gaining a simple majority. As a result, the election went to the state legislature. Not until the spring, when the legislature convened, could the Democratic candidate declare victory. Most of the gains for the Liberty Party in 1846 came at the expense of the Democrats. Increasingly, the Democrats were identified as the pro-slavery party. The Democratic state organization appeared to be connected with national policy. As a result, anti-slavery Democrats looked for an alternative and turned to the Liberty Party.

During the spring of 1847, members of the Maine Liberty Party were entangled in a decisive debate over whether to broaden its platform or keep it focused strictly on antislavery. Initially, party leaders such as Fessenden and Willey believed they should remain true to the original intentions of founders. "Shall the Liberty Party," Austin Willey asked, "be dissolved or maintained as it is?"⁴⁵ At the time, Fessenden and Willey believed it should be maintained as it is.

In 1848, Liberty Party endorsed Samuel Fessenden for President but as a candidate, he refused to cooperate with either major party. That refusal was to his detriment. Factions within the party began to disagree with him, particularly with regard to the "true mission" of the party. Two factions seemed irreconcilable. The first faction comprised of party leaders such as Willey, Fessenden and several "old school" Liberty men tended to view the party primarily as a vehicle of moral reform.⁴⁶ The second faction, composed of more pragmatic, younger men, focused on winning elections. Due to these competing factions, there seemed to be no viable alternative but to join the Free Soil Party.

Oddly enough, Fessenden and Willey in 1848 reversed their position, and both men participated in organizing the Free Soil Party in Maine. This reversal can partially be attributed to Willey's selection as one of the seventeen delegates to attend the Free Soil Party Convention in Buffalo, New York on August 9, 1848. After attending the meeting, he began to have second thoughts. This shift in viewpoint is reflected in subsequent change in the name of Willey's newspaper from *The Liberty Standard* to the *Free Soil Republican* on August 31, 1848.

⁴⁵ Schriver, Edward O. "Antislavery: The Free Soil and Free Democratic Parties in Maine, 1848-1855," *The New England Quarterly*, Vol. 42, No. 1 (March 1969), page 82.

⁴⁶ Johnson, Reinhard O., "The Liberty Party in Maine 1840-1848: Politics of Anti-slavery Reform" *Maine Historical Society Quarterly* 19 (Winter 1980) page 160.

On September 27, 1848, nearly two thousand enthusiastic delegates crowded into Representatives' Hall in Augusta to hear a series of scheduled speakers and to participate in the business of organization. That day the delegates adopted as their own platform one drafted by the national convention held in Buffalo that August. Maine abolitionists pledged their allegiance to a national platform of freedom taking an unshakeable stand against slavery. Essentially, these "Free Soilers" admitted that Congress could not legislate against slavery in those states where slavery already was established, but at the same time they insisted that Congress work "to limit, localize and discourage slavery."⁴⁷ They claimed Congress did not have the power to make a man a slave or to create a monarchy, but that it did have a constitutional duty to prevent the extension of slavery. These Maine antislavery delegates emphasized it was no longer possible, nor prudent, to compromise with slavery.

Not all was harmonious, however, for the convention endorsed Free Soil candidates for President and Vice President, namely Martin Van Buren and Charles Francis Adams. Willey, for example, found it very difficult to accept Van Buren. Nevertheless, in the interest of harmony, Willey relented, attempted to overlook the mistakes of Van Buren, the New Yorker, and editorialized in the *Free Soil Republican*, October 5, 1848,

That whatever may have been the past errors of the candidate nominated at Buffalo, whether as regards slavery or other questions, we recognize, is [sic] Martin Van Buren, occupying his present position, a great man, yielding in a spirit of self-sacrifice, the energies of his riper years to the cause of humanity and of liberty, in opposition to slavery and the extension of slavery; and in Charles Francis Adams we behold a worthy coadjutor in the same great cause.

Delegates were charged to mobilize the grassroots by circulating correct information and forming organizations in every village and town and city. Particularly attractive to Cumberland voters was the additional commitment against intemperance. Like slavery, temperance was regarded as an evil to oppose. Those who opposed the evils of slavery were likewise obliged to oppose demon rum.

Between 1848 and 1853, Free Soil candidates for Governor included Samuel Fessenden, George F. Talbot and Ezekiel Holmes. All three stood firmly against slavery and were committed to eliminating it from the political system. In Cumberland, in 1848, Fessenden received 30 votes; in 1849, Talbot received 31 votes; in 1850, Talbot received 30 votes; in 1852, Anson Chandler, member of the anti-prohibition wing of the Democratic Party, received 67 votes and Holmes 2; in 1853, Holmes received 30 votes and the Know

⁴⁷ Schriver, Edward O., *op. cit.*, page 83.

Nothing candidate running on the Maine Law ticket, Anson Morrill, received 31, thereby splitting the Third Party vote.

In 1854, in Cumberland, Cary received 12 votes and Jerome 2 votes and the Know Nothing candidate, Anson Morrill, 95 votes. Anson Morrill held strong antislavery and temperance views. He had first attracted attention of the abolitionists when he presided at a mass anti-Nebraska meeting held in Augusta on March 1, 1854.⁴⁸

As reported in the *Portland Inquirer*, March 23, 1854, Morrill directed his attention southward, stipulating no further concessions to demands of the South and "Henceforth non extension of slavery into any territory belonging to the United States." Free Soil leaders enthusiastically accepted Morrill as a worthy representative of their views and endorsed him as gubernatorial candidate in 1854. These feelings were not unanimous and dissenters offered a resolution to nominate only a "Free Democrat" for governor, namely Ezekiel Holmes. At first Holmes declined, but his supporters persisted. Again Holmes declined. The dissenters then nominated George F. Talbot, another "Pure" Free Democrat. Losing patience with the dissenters, the majority finally endorsed Anson P. Morrill for governor.

The year 1854 was a year of fusion, not only in Maine but elsewhere in New England. The factions which were to form the Republican Party were beginning to unite. As reflected in the Cumberland voting, the Free Soil Party had virtually disappeared and the Know Nothing Party surged only to evolve into the Republican Party. In 1854, the election for governor, due to lack of majority, was directed to the state legislature. Cumberland voters gave Morrill a three vote margin and 39.2% of the vote.

When that body convened in January 1855, the House gave Reed 115 and Morrill only 106. Ten minutes after their names went sent to the Senate for final action, Morrill was declared the winner. The Morrill Democrats, anti-slavery Whigs and Free Democrats were ecstatic. Willey opined in September 1843, "We doubt if the political history of the country affords a parallel to the revolution now complete in Maine." The Liberty and Free Soil evolved into the new Republican Party.

As the Second Party System of Jackson Democrats and Clay Whigs began to fragment, the Democrats' efforts to expand slavery into western territories, especially Kansas, led to organized political opposition, which in 1854 coalesced in Congress as the "Opposition Party". As the Whig Party disintegrated, many local and regional parties

⁴⁸ Schriver, Edward O. *op. cit.*, page 91.

emerged. As yet, the new Republican Party had not fully formed, and so significant numbers of politicians, mostly former Whigs, ran for office under the Opposition Party label.

Following the 1854 election, the Opposition Party was the largest party in the House of Representatives. Of the 234 Representatives, 100 were Oppositionists, 83, Democrats and 51 Know Nothings. . With the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act in 1854, the Whig Party fractured along pro- and anti-slavery lines. The emerging Republican Party attracted anti-slavery Whigs and Democrats. For many, the Opposition Party served as a successor to the Whig party. The Know Nothing Party members discovered that their appeals to the immigrant prejudice were faltering, and so they sought more open and inclusive appeal to broaden a candidate's chances at the polls. For the 34th and 35th Congresses, the term "Opposition Party" encompassed Independent, Anti-know-nothing, Fusion, Anti-Nebraska, Anti-Administration, Whig, Free Soil, and Unionist.

By the 1856 elections, the Republican Party had formally organized. In Cumberland, voters gave the Republican gubernatorial candidate, Hannibal Hamlin, 54.1% of the vote. For the 34th Congress, voters gave the Opposition/Republican Candidate, Charles Gilman, 54.3% of the vote. In that 35th Congress (1857-1859), there were 132 Democrats, 90 Republicans, 14 Americans, 1 Independent Democrat. The Third Party System (1850s-1890s) was taking shape. Cumberland voters reflected this splintering of established parties and realignment of new coalitions.

Presidential Politics and Responses to Slavery Issues: 1828-1856

Another way in which Cumberland voters learned about the slavery issue is through Presidential action. As one of the dominant and most divisive issues of the mid-nineteenth century, the slavery issue could not escape attention from successive presidents. In fact, their position on the issue could influence their tenure. How did Presidents during the Second Party System (1828-1854) handle slavery controversies?

Andrew Jackson, the seventh president, is considered founder of the Democratic Party. During the 1824 election, he received a plurality in both the electoral and popular vote against three major candidates, but failed to get a majority and consequently, the results were sent to the House of Representatives where he lost the election to John Quincy Adams. In 1828, after building a base in the West and attracting new support from Virginia and New York, Jackson again ran against Adams, but this time won by a landslide. In philosophy, he tended to follow the positions of Thomas Jefferson.

In practice, Jackson, like many landholders in his geographical area, prospered as a planter, slave owner, and merchant. In 1804, he acquired the Hermitage, a 640 acre plantation near Nashville, Tennessee. Later he added 560 acres. The primary crop was cotton grown by slaves. By 1820, he held 44 slaves, later, 150 slaves. During his lifetime, he may have owned as many as 300 slaves.

In Maine, Jackson received one electoral vote in 1824 and John Quincy Adams, a New Englander, received 81.5% of the votes and 8 electoral votes. Four years later, in 1828, Adams received 59.71% of the votes and 8 electoral votes, while Jackson received 40.03% and 1 electoral vote. This single electoral vote was due to the efforts of F. O. J. Smith in District Two. In 1832, results were essentially reversed. Jackson received 54.7% of the popular votes and 8 electoral votes, while Adams received 43.9% and 1 electoral vote. Given this reversal, party allegiance was relatively weak.

Regarding slavery controversies, attention focused on Texas. In 1835, the Texan Revolution began when pro-slavery settlers in Texas fought the Mexican government for Texan independence. By May 1836, the Republic of Texas had been established. This new Texan government legalized slavery, and demanded that President Jackson recognize it and allow it to be annexed into the United States. Jackson hesitated. He did not want to make Texas an anti-slavery issue during the 1836 election.

On the last day of his Presidency Jackson recognized the Republic of Texas and nominated a charge d'affaires. As a firm advocate of federal union, Jackson rejected any talk of secession, and affirmed "I will die with the Union."

Turning to the 1836 election, Jackson's Vice President, Martin Van Buren, Democrat, opposed William Henry Harrison, a Whig. In Maine, Van Buren, a Democrat, received 58.92% of popular vote and all ten electoral votes. His opponent, a Whig, received 38.21% and minor parties receiving 2.87% of the popular vote. The Jackson coalition appeared to hold. Van Buren, eighth president, served one term.

Early in his life, Van Buren had owned a slave named Tom, who served as his personal valet. In 1814, Tom ran away and settled in Canada, but Van Buren made no effort to locate him. In 1824, Tom was found living in Worcester, Massachusetts. Since Van Buren still legally owned Tom, Van Buren agreed to sell Tom to the finder for \$50.00, providing the finder could guarantee Tom would be captured without violence. Since the finder could not agree to such a guarantee, Tom remained free. Quite probably, that is what Van Buren intended.

Considering Van Buren's likely motivation, some observers point to the political implications. Had he publicly allowed a former slave to remain free, which would have been the case had he done absolutely nothing, he would have offended Southern slave owners. At the same time, if Tom had been captured and re-enslaved, he would have infuriated abolitionists. In this case, Van Buren was politically astute. He appeared to satisfy both sides of the issue.

Van Buren considered slavery immoral but believed it was sanctioned in the Constitution. Consistently, he threaded the needle so both sides appeared satisfied. In his inaugural address, March 4, 1837, he referred to the institution of slavery as "perhaps the greatest source of discord and disaster".

I must go into the Presidential chair [as] the inflexible and uncompromising opponent of every attempt on the part of Congress to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia against the wishes of slaveholding States and also with a determination...to resist the slightest interference with it in the States where it exists.

He would side with the South and oppose Congressional efforts to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia, and he would resist any interference by Free States to obstruct slavery in Slave States. Desperately, he tried to hold the Union together by upholding the Constitution as he understood it. To preserve the Union, he struck a balance between opposing views.

Slavery controversies continued. In contrast to Jackson's position, Van Buren in August 1837 denied the Texan request to join the United States. Why? He was unwilling to upset the balance of free and slave states, as set forth in the 1820 Missouri Compromise. In addition Van Buren wished to avoid war with Mexico over the Texas annexation. Quietly, he arranged to purchase territory from the Mexican government.

Van Buren's approach to the slavery issue is further illustrated by how he handled the Amistad Incident of 1839. The *La Amistad* was two mast schooner built in the United States but owned by two Spaniards living in Cuba. On June 28, 1839, fifty-three slaves were placed on this small boat which was destined for Guanajay, Cuba, where they were to work for the two Spaniards on a sugar plantation. Half of the captives were placed in the main hold and the other half on the deck. Relatively free to move about, they

discovered it would be relatively easy to gain control of the ship. In the main hold below the decks, they found a rusty file and sawed through their manacles.

Once free, about June 30, the men below quickly went up on deck. Under the leadership of Sengbe Pieh, 53 Mende captives, armed with machete-like cane knives, staged a revolt, killing the captain and the cook, but spared the life of the navigator so he could sail the ship back to Africa. Two crew members escaped on a lifeboat.

Sengbe Pieh and the Mende captives took the navigator and the two Spaniards as prisoners and ordered them to sail the ship back to Sierra Leone. Contrary to this directive, while the Mende were sleeping at night, the navigator and the two Spaniards deceived them and maneuvered the ship along the northern American coast, eventually reaching the coast of Long Island. Given the small ship and the meandering route taken, that journey took about two months. At Long Island, the vessel was detained by Lt. Cmdr. Thomas Gedney of the brig *USS Washington* and placed under U.S. custody.

When Gedney boarded the vessel, he experienced a shocking sight. Cargo was strewn all over the deck. Fifty men were nearly starved and destitute, their skeletal bodies naked or barely clothed in rags. A black corpse was lying in decay on the deck, its face frozen as if in terror. Upon learning of the murder of the captain and the cook, U.S. officials charged the Mende with mutiny and murder, and took them to New Haven, Connecticut where the Mende captives remained in jail while they awaited federal court proceedings.

On January 7, 1840, the federal district court found that the transportation of kidnapped Africans across the Atlantic on a slave ship, *Tecora*, was in violation of laws concerning the international slave trade as held by Great Britain, Spain, and the United States. It ruled the Africans were entitled to the use force, if necessary, to secure their freedom. It declared the Africans were legally free because the United States had banned the African trade in 1808.

Enter the Evangelical abolitionists who decided to publicize the incident to expose brutalities of the slave trade. Led by Lewis Tappan, they viewed slavery as a deep moral wrong and not subject to compromise. The tension escalated, and the political situation became such a serious problem that President Van Buren decided to intervene.

Fearing that a public dispute over slavery would divide the Democratic Party which rested on a tenuous North-South alliance, President Van Buren resolved to try diplomatic pressure. Working through his secretary of state, slaveholder John Forsyth

from Georgia, Van Buren sought quietly to solve the problem by complying with Spanish demands. He also confronted serious diplomatic issues. If the U.S. government failed to return Africans to their “owners”, it would be violating Pinckney’s Treaty with Spain. Unable to resolve the issue and pressured by international and regional concerns, President Van Buren ordered the case appealed to the United States Supreme Court. Five of the justices, including Chief Justice Taney, were southerners who had been or were slave owners.

On February 22, 1841, arguments were heard in the Supreme Court. Abolitionists had persuaded John Quincy Adams, age 73, nearly deaf, and absent three decades from court proceedings, to take the case. His arguments were based on doctrine of natural rights found in the Declaration of Independence. Associate Justice Storey wrote the decision that freed the mutinous Mendes. Abolitionists heralded the case as a milestone in the long and bitter fight against the “peculiar institution” of slavery.

Meanwhile Van Buren had lost his bid for re-election in the 1840 Presidential election. Due to the Panic of 1837, Van Buren became a target of criticism from the Whigs. In addition, his loss was attributed, in part, to his *Amistad* policy, which many northerners perceived as pro-Southern.

In Maine, the 1840 vote for President was extremely close. William Henry Harrison, a Whig, received 50.23% and incumbent President Van Buren received 49.77%. The difference was 422 votes. Again, traditional party allegiance was weakening.

What was Harrison’s position on slavery? Briefly, he attended a boys’ academy in Southampton County, Virginia where allegedly he was influenced by anti-slavery Quakers and Methodists. However, in 1790, his pro-slavery father had him transferred to Philadelphia for medical training. Due to his father’s death and lack of funds as well as his own disinterest in medicine, he abandoned medical school for a military career.

Following the death of his mother in 1793, Harrison inherited a portion of his family’s estate, including 3000 acres of land and several slaves. At the time, he was serving in the army and so Harrison sold his land to his brother. Historian Kenneth Robert Janken notes that Madeline Harrison, mother of Walter Francis White, an African American Civil Rights leader and president of NAACP during the mid-twentieth century, traced some of her mixed-race white ancestry to Harrison in Virginia.⁴⁹ Her family holds

⁴⁹ Janken, Kenneth Robert, *Walter White: Mr. NAACP*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), page 3-4.

that Dilsia, a female slave belonging to William H. Harrison had 6 children born by him and born into slavery, 4 of them were said to be sold to a planter in Grange, Georgia.

Whatever Harrison's actual position on slavery was by the time he assumed the Presidency, he did not have much time to express it, for he died during his 32nd day in office. His Vice President, John Tyler, became the tenth President. An ardent supporter of state's rights, Tyler was willing to back nationalist policies as long as they did not infringe on the power of the states. Though a Democrat, Tyler opposed several policies of Jackson and Van Buren. He firmly believed the President should set policy instead deferring to Congress. Most of the cabinet soon resigned.

During December 1841, Tyler was attacked by an abolitionist publisher, Joshua Leavitt, who alleged Tyler had fathered several sons with his slaves, and later sold the offspring. Several African-American families have an oral tradition of descent from Tyler, but as yet there is no firm evidence. Descended from an aristocratic and politically entrenched family, Tyler grew up in Greenway Plantation, a 1200 acres estate. The family's 40 slaves grew various crops, including corn, wheat, and tobacco.

During his last two years in office, he sought annexation of Texas. Residents in Texas actively pursued joining the Union, but Jackson and Van Buren had been reluctant to inflame tensions over slavery by annexing another southern state. Tyler pursued annexation. This issue was divisive. Fearing a sectional split between the North and the South, the Whigs refused to take a stand on the Texan question. Maine's Senator John Fairfield opposed annexation. Eventually, Secretary of State, Daniel Webster, opposed this effort and convinced Tyler to focus on Pacific initiatives.

These conflicting positions played a dominant role at the May 1844 Democratic National Convention. Initially the convention split between 3 candidates: abolitionist Martin Van Buren, leader of the dominant Jackson faction; James Buchanan, Senator from Pennsylvania and "moderate"; and Lewis Cass, advocate of territorial expansion. Annexation of Texas was the chief political issue. Van Buren, initially the leading candidate, opposed annexation because he feared a sectional crisis over the status of slavery, if Texas were annexed. On the eighth ballot, the Massachusetts delegation presented House Speaker James Polk as a compromise candidate. Polk called for "immediate annexation of Texas and re-occupation of disputed Oregon territory." On the 9th roll call, Polk was nominated unanimously. Tyler, ever hopeful, was unable to find supporters. In Maine, Democrat delegates strongly favored annexation and supported Polk. Senator Fairfield, however, supported Van Buren.

For the 1844 Presidential election, in Maine, Polk received all nine electoral votes and 53.83% of the popular vote. Henry Clay, the Whig candidate, received 40.48% of the popular vote and James G. Birney of the Liberty Party received 5.59% of the popular vote.

During his presidency, many abolitionists criticized Polk as an instrument of “slave power.” They claimed spreading slavery was the reason he supported annexing Texas and waging war with Mexico. Polk opposed the Wilmot Proviso that would ban slavery anywhere in any territory that might be acquired from Mexico. The bill passed in the House but not in the Senate. Although Polk opposed the Wilmot Proviso, he condemned Southern agitation on the issue and accused both North and Southern leaders of attempting to use the slavery issue for political gain.

For his entire life, Polk was a slaveholder. Once he became President and could afford it, he bought more slaves. His will stipulated his slaves were to be freed after his wife Sarah died. However, the Emancipation Proclamation and the Thirteenth Amendment freed all remaining slaves long before the death of his wife in 1891. Polk died in 1849, three months after he left office.

In 1845, as the annexation of Texas progressed, President Polk dispatched Zachary Taylor to the Rio Grande area in anticipation of the War with Mexico. During April 1846, that war did erupt, and Taylor led his troops to defeat the Mexican troops. After a series of battles, culminating in the Battle of Buena Vista in February 1847, Taylor emerged as a national hero.

Despite Taylor’s lack of interest in politics, the Whig Party leaders convinced reluctant Taylor to head the ticket in 1848. Millard Fillmore was selected as his Vice Presidential Candidate. Taylor won the election against Democrat Lewis Cass and Free Soil Candidate Martin Van Buren. In Maine, Taylor received 40.25% of the popular vote and Lewis Cass, Democrat, received 45.87% of the popular vote. Cass received all nine electoral votes, but Taylor, a Whig, won the election. Martin Van Buren, the Free Soil candidate received 13.87% of the vote. Generally, Maine preferred Democratic candidates.

Once Taylor reached Washington, several weeks before the Inauguration on March 4, 1849, incumbent President Polk, upon meeting with Taylor, privately deplored his lack of credentials, claiming Taylor to be “without political information” and “wholly unqualified for the station” of President. As President, Taylor kept his distance from Congress and even his own Cabinet. Partisan tension over the slavery issue threatened to divide the Union, as Southern states threatened to secede.

Despite being a Southerner and being a slave holder, Taylor did not push for the expansion of slavery. He urged settlers in New Mexico and California to bypass the territorial stage and draft constitutions for Statehood, thereby setting the stage for the Compromise of 1850. The Compromise defused a four year political confrontation between Slave states and Free states, concerning the status of territories acquired during the Mexican–American War (1846-1848). Before the Compromise was enacted by Congress in September 1850, Taylor died on July 4, 1850, allegedly due to a digestive disorder. His Vice President, Millard Fillmore, became the thirteenth President of the United States.

Upon becoming President, Fillmore dismissed Taylor's Cabinet and formed his own. Fillmore supported Henry Clay's bill, which was the basis of the Compromise of 1850. Taylor had not done so. The Fugitive Slave Act was a controversial part of the Compromise. Even though its passage damaged his popularity with the Whig Party, Fillmore felt duty-bound to enforce the Compromise.

Initially, Fillmore was a member of the Anti-Mason Party but during the mid-1830s became a Whig. Born in a log cabin on a farm in Moravia, New York, Fillmore decried slavery as an evil. However, he viewed its elimination beyond the powers of the federal government.

Fillmore failed to receive the Whig Party endorsement in 1852, but in 1856, he received the endorsement of the Know Nothing Party. After Fillmore's completion of his presidency, the Whig Party broke up. Fillmore's conservative wing of the Whig Party emerged as the American Party, also known as the Know Nothing Party. The Second Party System was starting to collapse.

Viewed as a compromise candidate at the 1852 Democratic Party Convention, Franklin Pierce was nominated on the 49th ballot. In the general election, Pierce easily defeated Whig Party candidate General Winfield Scott. In Maine, Pierce received 50.63% and Scott 39.6% of the vote, while John P. Hale, the Free Soil Party candidate received 9.77%. Again, Maine favored the Democratic candidate.

Pierce, a northern Democrat, saw the abolitionist movement as a fundamental threat to unity of the nation. Actually, he found the abolitionist "agitation" to be an annoyance. Even although he himself morally opposed slavery, the "religious bigotry" of the abolitionists repulsed him because they considered their political opponents as "sinners." While serving in Congress, Pierce, in December 1835, wrote,

I consider slavery a social and political evil and sincerely wish that it had no existence upon the face of the earth. One thing must be perfectly apparent to every intelligent man. This abolitionist movement must be crushed or there is an end to the Union."⁵⁰

The slavery issue continued to haunt Pierce throughout his Presidency, 1853-1857.

The defining issue of his Presidency was passage of the Kansas-Nebraska bill of 1854. Essentially, it provided that local settlers could decide whether to allow slavery in their territory. The northern part would be called Nebraska and the southern part Kansas. Expectations were that Kansas would allow slavery and Nebraska would not. If passed, that would repeal the Missouri Compromise of 1820. Such a possibility provoked a public outcry among Maine voters. For the first time, if the bill passed, slavery would be legal north of the Mason and Dixon line.

Regarding the Kansas-Nebraska bill, President Pierce himself was skeptical, but Senator Stephen Douglas and his colleagues convinced the compliant Pierce to support it. Senators Salmon P. Chase and Charles Sumner vehemently opposed the bill. Tenaciously, they rallied Northern support against the bill. The Pierce administration used threats and promises to keep most Democrats on board in favor of the bill. The Whigs split along sectional lines.

The Maine legislature instructed all of the state's representatives to oppose the bill, as long as it contained a repeal of the Missouri Compromise. To Mainers, the Missouri Compromise must be supported. Despite ardent protest from the North, the Kansas-Nebraska Bill did pass, but resulted in a firestorm that damaged Pierce's Presidency.

Passage of the bill resulted in so much violence between groups that the territory became known as Bleeding Kansas. Political Parties split into opposing factions. The political turmoil gave rise to the anti-Catholic American Party, often called the Know Nothings and the founding of the Republican Party. Following passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act in 1854, midterm Congressional elections had a devastating impact for the Democrats who lost almost every state outside of the South. Third Party candidates gained favor. Cumberland supported Opposition Party candidates.

⁵⁰ Wallner, Peter A. "Franklin Pierce and Bowdoin College Associates Hawthorne and Hale" (*New Hampshire Historical Society*:Spring 2004), page 34-35.

Six days prior to passage of the act, on May 24, 1854, Anthony Burns, an escaped slave, was seized “while walking in Court Street” in Boston. Born a slave in Stafford County, Virginia, Burns in 1853 had escaped from slavery and reached Boston. The following year, 1854, he was captured under the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 and tried under that law in Boston. Numerous residents tried to free Burns. President Pierce, attempting to enforce the Fugitive Slave Act made a concerted effort to support the case against Burns. The incident turned many New Englanders against slavery. Previously, they passively accepted its existence.

On May 26, a crowd of abolitionists of both races, outraged at Burns’ arrest, stormed the court house to free him. Police kept Burns captive, but crowds of protesters persisted. Burns’ trial was a formality, since the provisions of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 were clear. On June 2, throngs witnessed Burns being taken to the ship that would carry him back to slavery in Virginia. This event generated fierce opposition in the North to President Pierce and his administration.

Repercussions of the Kansas-Nebraska Act were directly felt in Maine. With the passage of that Act, the Maine Democratic Party split into “anti-Nebraska men” and “Nebraska men.” The latter supported Congress in this pro-slavery law.

In 1855, Biddeford became a city. A section of the city, between the present Granite and Hill Streets, became known as “Nebraska.” In that section, several residents, known as “Nebraska men”, were outspoken in support of the pro-slavery Nebraska faction. In a Biddeford newspaper during July 1854, James Andrews, a stone cutter, advertised that he wished to sell his house on the corner of Hill and Acorn streets because he intended “emigrating to Nebraska.” He supported slavery.

Learning of these “Nebraskan tendencies”, anti-slavery advocates began visiting Biddeford. Among the anti-slavery advocates visiting Biddeford in 1855 were Henry Ward Beecher, Horace Greely, and Frederick Douglass. They lectured to a sympathetic audience in the Methodist Church at Alfred Street.

In March of 1855, a party of 31 emigrants departed on the covered wagon trek to Kansas, as part of an effort by New Englanders to thwart an influx of slave owners from changing anti-slavery Kansas to a slave State. The local newspaper recorded 26 men and 2 women and 3 children departed on this trek. The newspaper reporter added that they were “all persons of character.” Biddeford residents gave further aid to anti-slavery efforts in Kansas by sending money, which was raised by several public events featuring entertainment.

In 1856, President Pierce expected to be re-nominated by the Democrats. To his surprise, Democratic leaders, sensitive to Pierce's vulnerability due to the Kansas-Nebraska Act, bypassed Pierce in favor of James Buchanan. As a former Senator from Pennsylvania, Buchanan had solid political connections, but as Ambassador to Great Britain, he had been safely out of the country during the political uproar over the Kansas-Nebraska Act. He was nominated on the 17th ballot.

As they focused on the 1856 elections, Maine Republicans framed their campaign strictly on the slavery issue. At least two national events reinforced the importance of that decision. First, the Sacking of Lawrence, Kansas on May 21, 1856; second, the caning of Senator Charles Sumner on May 22, 1856. Each incident was reported in detail by the *Portland Daily Advertiser* and other local newspapers. Cumberland voters had access to that newspaper.

Lawrence, Kansas was home to residents dedicated to ensuring Kansas would become a Free State. It was founded in 1854 by anti-slavery settlers, many of whom received support from the Massachusetts Emigrant Aid Society. Created in 1854, this Society transported immigrants to Kansas Territory in an effort to shift the balance of power so Kansas would enter the United States as a free state rather than a slave state. Initially, the Company's founder, Eli Thayer, capitalized on antislavery sentiment and sent settlers to Kansas to purchase land, build houses, and establish shops and mills. Having done that, they would sell land at significant profit and send the proceeds back to Thayer and his investors.

Some of Thayer's investors found that act of profiting from the anti-slavery cause distasteful, and so the mission was shifted to that of a benevolent society. In 1855, the company was re-established as the New England Emigrant Aid Company. Lawrence was named after the Company's secretary, Amos Lawrence. In December 1855, the town had been besieged, but not directly attacked. As more and more settlers arrived, the divisiveness intensified and spurred the arrival of the Border Ruffians from nearby Missouri where slavery was legal.

On May 21, 1856, a posse led by Sheriff Samuel J. Jones approached the town. This large force staked out a station on high ground at Mount Oread, which overlooks the Kansas and Wakarusa rivers. During August 1854, the first settlers from Massachusetts pitched their tents, and named the place after Oread Institute, a women's college founded in 1849 in Worcester, Massachusetts. Probably these early settlers received some support from the Massachusetts Emigrant Aid Society. Mount

Oread has an elevation of 1037 feet above sea level, and Lawrence, an elevation of 846 feet.

Sheriff Jones positioned his posse on Mount Oread and placed several cannon to cover and command the surrounding area. The house of Charles L. Robinson, later to be the first governor of Kansas, was seized and served as headquarters for Sheriff Jones. Every road to town as well as the opposite side of the river was guarded to prevent Free-Soilers from fleeing. Two flags appeared: a blood-red flag inscribed with "Southern Rights" and the "stars and stripes."

The first order of business was to sack the two printing offices, smash the presses, and throw the type into the river. Next, they made the Free State Hotel their target. Built in 1855 by settlers from the New England Emigrant Aid Company, the hotel initially was intended to serve as temporary quarters for those settlers who arrived from Boston and other areas while their homes were being built. The name Free State was chosen to make clear the commitment of early settlers: Kansas should enter the Union as a Free State. David Rice Atchison, a member of posse, fired the first cannon shot aimed at the hotel, but he missed his target. Atchison, a former Democratic Senator from Missouri, owned many slaves and a plantation, and was a prominent pro-slavery activist deeply involved with violence against abolitionists. Nearly 50 more shots were fired at the Hotel, but even direct hits barely made a dent on its massive walls. Desperate to destroy the Hotel, they torched it and by evening, it became a roofless, smoldering ruin.

Before retreating, the posse burned Robinson's home on Mount Oread and looted the town. During the attack, one member died, namely a posse member who was struck by falling masonry. Though the event was located half a continent away, Maine Republican leaders duly noted the event and used it to buttress their case against slavery.

Closer to home, another event received even more attention from Maine party leaders and newspaper editors. On May 22, 1856, Representative Preston Brooks (D-SC) attacked Senator Charles Sumner (R-MA) on the floor of the Senate. On May 19 and May 20, Sumner had delivered his "Crime against Kansas" speech in which he urged immediate admission of Kansas as a free state and fiercely attacked slave holders, including Andrew Butler (D-SC). Butler was an ardent advocate of slavery and together with Stephen Douglas authored the Kansas-Nebraska Bill of 1854. In his speech, Sumner referred to Stephen Douglas as a "noise-some, squat, and nameless animal." In addition, Sumner abused Butler personally in ways considered beyond the bounds of

parliamentary propriety. Entangled in his harsh language, Sumner mocked Butler's speaking ability, which had been impeded by a recent stroke. Brooks, Butler's second cousin, was enraged. He determined Sumner's vicious personal attacks required retaliation.

Instead of a duel, suitable for gentlemen of equal social standing, Brooks concluded it was more appropriate to humiliate Sumner by beating him with a cane in a public setting. Two days later, on the afternoon of May 22, Brooks entered the Senate chamber with Representative Laurence M. Keitt (D-SC) and Representative Henry A. Edmundson (D-VA).

Keitt was included in several lists of "Fire Eaters," men who adamantly urged secession of Southern states from the U.S. and resisted all measures of compromise and reconciliation. He assisted Brooks by brandishing pistol and cane to prevent horrified Senators from entering the chamber and coming to Sumner's aid.

Ten days earlier, Edmundson, during a House session on the Kansas-Nebraska bill on May 12, 1854, was arrested by Sergeant-at-Arms for attempting to attack Lewis D. Campbell who was staging a filibuster. Edmundson was an ardent pro-slavery advocate. Campbell, a Free-Soiler, was joined by other antislavery northerners exchanged insults and invective with the Southerners. Weapons were brandished on the floor of the House, and Edmundson had to be restrained.

On the afternoon of May 22, after entering the Senate chamber with Keitt and Edmundson, Brooks waited for the Senate galleries to clear. They were particularly concerned that no ladies be present to witness what Brooks intended to do. As Sumner sat writing at his desk in a nearly empty Senate chamber, Brooks, speaking in a calm, quiet voice said, "Mr. Sumner, I have read your speech twice over carefully. It is a libel on South Carolina, and Mr. Butler, who is a relative of mine."

As Sumner started to stand, Brooks, using a thick gutta-percha cane with a gold head, beat him severely on the head before Sumner could fully stand on his feet. The impact of these blows caused the shocked Sumner to lose his sight immediately. Later, Sumner recalled, "I no longer saw my assailant or any other person or object in the room. What I did afterwards was done almost unconsciously, acting under the instincts of self-defense."

Due to the force of repeated blows, Sumner was knocked down and trapped under his heavy desk which was designed to move back and forth on a track. Too

bewildered to think clearly, Sumner failed to slide his chair back so he could escape. As a result, he was pinned under his desk. Brooks mercilessly continued to strike Sumner, who finally summoned his strength, rose to his feet, and ripped the desk from the floor.

By this time, Sumner, with blood flowing from his head wounds and clouding his vision, staggered up the aisle, arms outstretched, as he vainly attempted to defend himself. Having emerged from partial protection of his desk, Sumner now was an easier target for Brooks, who continued to beat him over the head as well as across his face and shoulders “to the full extent of [my] power.” The ferocity of these blows caused the cane to snap, but Brooks relentlessly continued thrashing Sumner with the piece which held the gold head. Sumner stumbled and staggered convulsively. “Oh Lord,” he gasped, “Oh! Oh!” According to Brooks, Sumner “bellowed like a calf” and then collapsed unconscious. Undaunted, Brooks grabbed the collapsing Sumner, held him up by the lapel with one hand, and continued to lash him with the cane in his other hand.

Incredulous, several Senators and Representatives attempted to intervene and help Sumner. However, they were blocked by Edmundson who yelled at the spectators to leave Brooks and Sumner alone. At the same time, Keitt brandished his own cane and a pistol, shouting “Let them be!” and “Let them alone, God damn you, let them alone!”

Eventually, Senator John J. Crittenden (KY-Whig) prevailed and pleaded with Brooks not to kill Sumner. Entering the fray, Senator Robert Toombs (GA-Constitutional Union Party) told Keitt not to attack Crittenden who was not a party to the dispute. Later Toombs indicated that he had no issue with Brooks beating Sumner, and in fact approved of it.

Two Republicans from New York, Representative Ambrose S. Murray and Senator Edwin D. Morgan, were finally able to intervene and restrain Brooks, who then quietly left the chamber. Murray secured the help of a Senate page and the Sergeant at Arms. As Sumner regained consciousness, they assisted him in walking to a cloakroom. Sumner received medical attention, including several stitches. With the aid of Nathaniel F. Banks, Speaker of the House and Senator Henry Wilson, Sumner was able to travel by carriage to his lodgings, where he received further medical treatment. Both Banks and Wilson were Republicans from Massachusetts, Sumner’s home state.

Meanwhile, Brooks also requested medical attention. Apparently, he had hit himself above his right eye, as he gathered force for one of his swings against Sumner. Brooks was arrested for his assault.

The cane which Brooks had used was broken into several pieces, which were scattered on the blood soaked floor of the Senate chamber. Some pieces, including the cane's gold head, were recovered by Edmundson, who gave the portion with the head to the House Sergeant at Arms. This portion of the cane was refinished to smooth the edges. Eventually, it was placed in the Old State House Museum in Boston. Out of the other pieces retrieved by Edmundson, Southern lawmakers made rings which they wore on neck chains to show their solidarity with Brooks, who boasted, "The pieces of my cane are begged for as sacred relics."

The caning of Charles Sumner polarized the country. In the North, Sumner became a martyr. In the South, Brooks was a hero.

Northerners were outraged. Writing in the *New York Evening Post*, William Cullen Bryant asked, "Has it come to this, that we must speak with bated breath in the presence of our Southern masters? ... If we continue to laugh at them, or to question their logic, or dispute their facts, are we to be chastised as they chastise their slaves? Are we too, slaves, slaves for life, a target for their brutal blows, when we do not comport ourselves to please them?"⁵¹

In the North, thousands thronged to rallies in support of Sumner. More than a million copies of Sumner's speech were distributed. Two weeks after the caning, Ralph Waldo Emerson pinpointed the polarization, "I do not see how a barbarous community and a civilized community can constitute one state. I think we must get rid of slavery, or we must get rid of freedom."⁵²

Similarly, Southerners were enraged. Brooks was praised for his southern patriotism. The editor of the *Richmond Enquirer* wrote Sumner should be caned "every morning" and praised Brooks' attack as "good in conception, better in execution, and best of all in consequences." Southerners sent Brooks hundreds of new canes. One was inscribed "Hit him again."

Their cycle of revenge and counter revenge continued.

Representative Anson Burlingame (MA-Know Nothing Party) delivered on the House floor a "celebrated speech" in which he scathingly denounced Brooks' assault

⁵¹ Gienapp, William E. *The Origins of the Republican Party, 1852-1856* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1987), page 359.

⁵² Puleo, Stephen, *The Caning: The Assault That Drove America to Civil War* (Yardley, PA: Westholme Pobl, 2013), pages 36-37.

on Sumner and branded Brooks as the “vilest sort of coward”. In response, Brooks challenged Burlingame to a duel, stating he would gladly “face him in any Yankee mudsill of his choosing.”

Burlingame, a well-known marksman, eagerly accepted. He chose rifles as weapons and the Navy Yards on the Canadian side of the U.S. border in Niagara Falls as the location. This site was chosen to circumvent the U. S. ban on dueling. Brooks, apparently intimidated by Burlingame’s unexpected enthusiastic acceptance and his reputation as a crack shot, neglected to appear as planned. Instead, he cited unspecified risks to his personal safety if he were to cross “hostile territory” in order to reach Canada. Burlingame’s staunch defense of his Bostonian colleague Sumner enhanced his stature in the North.

The cycle of revenge and counter revenge continued.

Senator Henry Wilson, Sumner’s colleague from Massachusetts, called the beating by Brooks “brutal, murderous, and cowardly.” In response, Brooks challenged Wilson to a duel. However, Wilson declined, saying he could not legally or even by personal conviction participate, for he deemed dueling “the lingering relic of a barbarous civilization.” Hearing a rumor that Brooks might attack him in the Senate, Wilson told the press “I have sought no controversy, and I seek none, but I shall go where duty requires uninfluenced by threats of any kind.”⁵³ Wilson continued to perform his duties in the Senate, and Brooks did not make good on his threat.

Meanwhile, Senator Sumner suffered head trauma that caused him chronic, debilitating pain for the rest of his life. Those symptoms are consistent with what is now called traumatic brain injury and post-traumatic stress disorder. He spent three years convalescing before returning to his Senate seat.

Brooks claimed that he had not intended to kill Sumner. If that had been his intention, he argued, he would have used another kind of weapon. In defense of his action attacking Sumner, he addressed the House, saying he “meant no disrespect to the Senate of the United States” or to the House of Representatives. Brooks was tried in a District of Columbia court, convicted for assault, and fined \$300 (\$8,000 in today’s dollars), but received no prison sentence.

⁵³ “Senator Wilson and Mr. Brooks” *Daily Courier*, Louisville, KY, June 4, 1856, page 3.

A motion to expel Brooks from the House failed to receive the necessary two-thirds vote, but he resigned on July 15 in order to permit his constituents to ratify or condemn his conduct. A special election was called. Brooks was unanimously re-elected and resumed office August 1. Later in 1856, he was re-elected to a new term of office, but died of croup January 27, 1857, a few weeks before his new term would have begun.

Keitt, who facilitated Brooks' attack, was censured by the House. In protest, he resigned. However, his loyal constituents ratified his conduct by overwhelmingly re-electing him to his seat within a month.

Parenthetically, on February 5, 1858, Keitt attempted to choke Representative Galusha Grow of Pennsylvania (Republican). Offended by Grow having stepped over to Keitt's side (Democratic) of the House chamber, Keitt dismissively demanded that Grow sit down, calling him a "black Republican puppy." Grow responded by telling Keitt that "No negro-driver shall crack his whip over me." Keitt became enraged and attempted to grab Grow's throat, shouting he would "choke [him] for that!" A large brawl involving approximately 50 representatives erupted on the House floor and ended when a missed punch from Representative Cadwallader Washburn [Maine native, brother of Israel Washburn] of Wisconsin upended the hairpiece of Representative William Barksdale of Mississippi. Embarrassed, Barksdale accidentally replaced the wig backwards, causing both sides to erupt in spontaneous laughter.

The cycle of revenge and counter revenge continued.

Returning to repercussions of Sumner's caning, Brooks' second accomplice Edmundson failed to receive censure from House, due to insufficient votes.

Surprisingly, during the 1856 lame duck session of Congress, Brooks made a speech calling for the admission of Kansas "even with a constitution rejecting slavery." His conciliatory tone impressed Northerners and disappointed slavery's supporters. Within a month or so, he would be dead.

In Maine, Republican leaders exploited the opportunities presented by these two major outrages, the Sacking of Kansas and the Caning of Senator Charles Sumner. They blasted the Pierce Administration and especially those Democrats who defended the administration's policy toward Kansas. The Republican Party platform highlighted the shift from its Democratic anti-slavery position in 1849 to its popular

sovereignty position of 1856. Democrats were invited to abandon their party and join the Republicans.

As for the Whigs, they had to choose between Republican and Democratic parties. Old issues were dead. The shared positions between Whigs and Republicans convinced many Whigs to transfer their allegiance to the Republicans. Both were conservative and skilled. Both viewed the “rabid abolitionists” with disdain.

Having settled on anti-slavery as the cornerstone of their campaign, Republicans rallied to build their party at the grassroots level. They raised money and appealed to contributions from outside the state. They distributed campaign biographies of the Presidential candidate, Fremont. Political leaders trudged across the State, delivering speeches at mass meetings. Novice speakers were encouraged to keep their remarks to thirty minutes. Farmers were urged to get involved after the haying season ended. Perseverance was the watchword.

Recruiting volunteer workers, party leaders provided precise directions for mobilizing support at the grassroots level. The task was:

To ascertain precisely how each of his neighbors stands, and what light, if any he needs, to conduct him to his proper vote at the polls. If conversation is required, let it be had; if the attendance at meetings of discussion, let the access be ensured; if documents, let them be provided. Let no voter be overlooked, and let no means be neglected to see that he understands the cardinal issues of this contest. Kindly discussion and a steady dissemination of facts should be going on in every school district....⁵⁴

For the first time, results from straw polls were published in the *Portland Daily Advertiser*. According to these polls, Fremont, the Republican Presidential candidate was definitely the choice of the people.

Democrats claimed a Republican victory would result in an economic disaster for Maine. It would mean the end of Southern freight for Maine shipping. And it would mean the end of bounties for Maine fishermen. The Republican Party, they claimed, was a “sectarian, proscriptive, Catholic-church-burning party, filled with Know-Nothings.”⁵⁵

⁵⁴ *Portland Daily Advertiser*, August 4, 1856.

⁵⁵ *Portland Daily Advertiser*, August 7, 1856.

State elections were held in September 1856. On Election Day, polls had to be watched. According to reports published in the newspapers, about two hundred “border ruffians” were being brought from Boston to Portland, where they would use fake naturalization papers to vote.⁵⁶

For the Republicans, their victory was a landslide. Republican candidates succeeded in all six Congressional districts candidates, they controlled both houses of the legislature by large margins, adding 65 seats in the House and 28 in the Senate. Hamlin, the Republican gubernatorial candidate, had a majority in every county except Aroostook.

In Cumberland, Hamlin received 54.1% of the 327 votes cast, while Samuel Wells, the Democrat, received 39.7%. Similarly, in the Congressional race for District Two, Charles Gilman received 54.2% and his Democrat opponent received 45.7%. Party coalitions were shifting. Traditional Democratic alliances were collapsing.

Turning to the national election in November, in Maine, the Republican candidate Fremont received 61.34%, the third highest in the country, and Buchanan, the Democrat, 35.68% and Fillmore, the American Party Candidate 2.98%. Nationwide, Buchanan won the election.

What factors contributed to this Republican landslide in Maine? Democrats claimed it was the abundance of Republican money, the personal popularity of Hamlin, and the rigorous campaign activities of the Republican Party. Republicans claimed their victory was due to their laser-like focus on the anti-slavery issue. They strongly opposed repeal of the Missouri Compromise, an issue nearly sacred to Maine residents. Clearly, the election of 1856 was a transformative event. The voting turnout, in many locations, was the highest ever. In Cumberland, it was the highest on record.

Born in a log cabin in Cove Gap, Pennsylvania, James Buchanan (1791-1868) recognized the need to resolve the slavery issue. As a Senator (1834-1845), he opposed the gag rule. As northern abolitionists flooded both houses of Congress with petitions to abolish slavery, pro-slavery forces responded with a series of gag rules, which automatically tabled all such petitions thereby preventing them from being read and discussed.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, September 3, 1856.

Once Buchanan was elected President, he continued his efforts to resolve the slavery issue. Prior to his inauguration on March 4, Buchanan in January 1857 wrote Supreme Court Justice John Catron and asked about the pending outcome of the Dred Scott case, and suggested that a broader decision would be more prudent. Buchanan hoped that a broad Supreme Court decision protecting slavery in the territories could resolve the issue once and for all and thereby allow the country to focus on other issues such as annexation of Cuba and acquisition of more Mexican territory.

On February 10, 1857, Justice Catron, originally from Tennessee replied that the Supreme Court's southern majority would decide against Scott but would likely have to make the decision on narrow grounds if there were no support from northern justices – unless Buchanan could convince his fellow Pennsylvanian, Justice Robert Cooper Grier, to join the majority. Buchanan wrote Justice Grier, and successfully prevailed upon him to shift his position. This shift allowed the majority to issue a broad ranging decision that transcended specific circumstances of Scott's case and to declare the Missouri Compromise of 1820 unconstitutional. Two days after Buchanan's inauguration, Chief Justice Taney announced the Dred Scott decision, asserting that Congress had no constitutional power to exclude slavery in the territories. Buchanan had hoped such a decision would destroy the Republican platform, but on the contrary, Republicans were outraged.

On December 9, 1857, President Buchanan appointed Nathan Clifford of Portland, Maine to the Supreme Court. This did not occur without preparatory groundwork. John Appleton, formerly Congressman from Maine's Second District (1851-1853) and at the time, fourth Assistant Secretary of State (1857-1860), wrote Clifford on September 11, 1857:

I delivered your letter to the President, & had a few minutes' conversation with reference to the Judgeship, but he said nothing from which I could fairly infer his intention. I sincerely hope, however, he will appoint you, & whatever, in my humble way, I can do to produce that result, I will do & do it heartily.⁵⁷

In addition, Hugh J. Anderson, former Congressman (1837-1841) and former Governor (1844-1847) and at the time, commissioner of customs in the U. S. Treasury Department, wrote Clifford on November 12, 1857. Referring to President Buchanan,

⁵⁷ Clifford, Philip Greely, *Nathan Clifford – Democrat*, (New York: G. P. Putman's Sons, 1922), page 267.

He did not say a great deal, but listened with apparent satisfaction & all that he did say was highly favorable... and I am decidedly of opinion that the matter now is all right...What may transpire in the month intervening before the nomination ...I cannot predict, but see no reason to apprehend any change unfavorable to you.⁵⁸

These impressions were confirmed by John Appleton in a subsequent letter dated November 25, 1837: "You will be nominated as soon as the Senate is ready to receive nominations. There can be no doubt of this, & you may safely proceed quietly to make your arrangements."⁵⁹

Once Buchanan's nomination of Nathan Clifford for Associate Justice of the Supreme Court was received in the Senate, his nomination was hotly contested. Throughout the northeastern states, Judge Clifford was perceived as a pro-slavery Southern sympathizer, otherwise known as "doughface". So incensed were the anti-slavery Senators and so fiercely opposed to his nomination, they delayed his confirmation for 34 days. On January 12, 1858, he was confirmed by a vote of 26-23.

Buchanan aspired to be a President who historians would rank as highly as George Washington. However, his inability to resolve divisions between pro-slavery and anti-slavery partisans and his failure to address the succession crisis has led historians to rank him consistently among the least successful presidents. In Buchanan's view, succession was illegal, but going to war to stop it also was illegal. His mantra was "I acknowledge no master but the law." The day before his death, Buchanan predicted "history will vindicate my memory." That was not to be.

Maine Residents Involved in Slavery Events with National Ramifications

At least four incidents highlight ways in which actions by Mainers contributed to the national dialogue on slavery issues. The case of Atticus involved a long dispute between the State of Maine and the State of Georgia, the latter insisting on Maine's compliance with the Fugitive Slave Law of 1793. Elijah Parish Lovejoy, a Maine native living in Alton, Illinois, became a martyr for the abolitionist movement. Nathaniel Gordon, a slaver born in Portland, Maine, went on trial in a federal court and was

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, page 268.

⁵⁹ Clifford, Philip Greely, *op. cit.*, page 268.

sentenced to death. President Lincoln refused to grant clemency. Clifton Harris, a free black working on a farm in West Auburn area, was accused without evidence of murdering two elderly women. He received the death sentence, and Governor Joshua Chamberlin declined to grant clemency. Each of these incidents was widely reported in the national press, and undoubtedly each incident was discussed among residents of Cumberland. Each incident vividly reveals a panorama of prejudice and preconceptions.

Atticus: Fugitive

In the spring of 1837, Captain Daniel Philbrook of Camden and his First Mate Edward Kellerman of Cushing set sail from Rockland on the schooner *Boston* bound for Savannah, Georgia. The vessel carried a cargo of lime, which was a lucrative money maker for people in the Thomaston and Rockland area. Many local fortunes were built on trade with lime, which was used extensively in agriculture and construction.⁶⁰ Nearly everyone in the area became engaged in its production or in its support industries such as firewood, cooperage, and shipping. The livelihood of many area residents depended on lime.

While in Savannah, the captain and his first mate hired James Saugurs, a carpenter to make some repairs on the schooner. While repairing the ship, Saugurs often brought along his slave Atticus to help with the repairs. As a ship's carpenter, Atticus had unrestricted access to the vessel. As a result, he became well acquainted with its layout, its nooks and crannies, hidden and unhidden. He also had opportunities to talk freely with the sailors on board and learn how he could make a living in the Free States.

Just before the schooner set sail for its return trip on May 4, Atticus hid himself on board the vessel and was not discovered until after many days at sea. Upon arrival in Thomaston, Mr. Kellerman took Atticus to his farm in Brooklyn Heights, where Atticus did some work for him. . Concurrently, upon discovering his slave had disappeared, Saugurs, his master, hired a vessel and sailed from Savannah in pursuit of the cargo ship. Arriving in Thomaston, his master, armed with pistols, took steps to claim Atticus.

After much difficulty and delay, Saugurs filed papers at the law office of H. C. Lowell Esq. for the arrest of Atticus, a runaway slave. After searching Mr. Kellerman's farm, the fugitive was not found. Desperate, Saugurs bought an ad which posted a reward of \$20 for the slave's apprehension.

⁶⁰ Higgins, Pat, "Atticus" in *Hidden History of Mid coast Maine*, (Charleston, South Carolina: The History Press, 2014).

Seeking the reward, two local men under the pretense of befriending Atticus, induced him to hide in Swan's Barn where, probably due to their direction, he was discovered, arrested, and delivered to his master. At East Thomaston, Saugurs, his master, embarked with his human property, Atticus. An indignant and sympathetic crowd witnessed the scene.

Subsequently, the Governor of Georgia demanded that Philbrook and his mate Kelleran be extradited to Georgia and placed on trial as criminals. Marshals were dispatched from Georgia to arrest Captain Daniel Philbrook and First Mate Edward Kellereen for violation of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1793. When the Marshals arrived in Thomaston, the locals told them the two supposed felons had "gone fishing" out on the banks. When would they return? Hard to say!

A long legal battle ensued. Georgia demanded the extradition of the Philbrook and Kellereen. Maine skirted the issue. Insisting on Maine's compliance with the Fugitive Slave Law, Georgia sought help from Congress and from the governments of other states. On legal and constitutional grounds, Governor Dunlap, and subsequently Governors Kent and Fairfield, refused to extradite the two alleged felons. Between 1837 and 1844, three Maine governors were embroiled in this legal fight. Under Maine law, human beings are not property.

During the legal wrangling, Maine and Georgia nearly came to blows over the "law", the Constitution, abolition, and States Rights. Without question, it was one of a series of "little" events that lead to the Civil War. This case occurred at the beginning of the abolition movement in Maine. With its small free black population, Mainers had little understanding of the plight of slaves in the South. The case of Atticus was an important link in enlarging that understanding.

Elijah Parish Lovejoy: Abolitionist

Born in Albion Maine and the first of nine children, Lovejoy (1802-1837) graduated from Waterville College (now Colby College) in 1826. His father was a Congregational preacher and farmer. His mother was a devout Christian. His teachers at Waterville College advised him that he would best serve God in the West. By 1827, he settled in Saint Louis and entered into partnership with T. J. Miller as an editor on the *Saint Louis Times*, a paper that supported Henry Clay for President. Through this partnership, Lovejoy was introduced to like-minded community leaders, many of whom were members of the American Colonization Society.

In 1832, influenced by the abolitionist David Nelson, he joined the First Presbyterian Church and decided to become a preacher. After selling his interest in the *Times*, he returned east to study at Princeton Theological Seminary and in April 1833 became an ordained Presbyterian minister. In 1833, Friends in St. Louis offered to finance a Presbyterian newspaper if Lovejoy would agree to edit

it. Returning to St. Louis, Lovejoy accepted, and on November 22, 1833, the first issue of the *St. Louis Observer* was published. His editorials criticized slavery.

During the spring of 1834, Lovejoy wrote articles and editorials which criticized the Catholic Church. The articles, needless to say, offended the large Catholic community in St. Louis. Nevertheless, he continued to write and began to include editorials on tobacco and liquor as well. That same year, Lovejoy began editorializing on slavery. Lovejoy's views on slavery began to incite complaints and threats. Tension escalated, as Lovejoy intensified his views.

On March 4, 1835, Lovejoy married Celia Ann French.

In October 1835, rumors of mob action against the *Observer* were heard. A group of civic leaders, including some friends, wrote Lovejoy and pleaded with him to cease discussion of slavery in the newspaper. Lovejoy responded that he did not agree. Tensions escalated, Lovejoy would not relent. He was asked to resign as editor. He agreed. New owners of the newspaper asked him to continue. He agreed.

On April 28, 1836, a free mulatto boatman, Francis J. McIntosh, who worked as a porter and cook on board the steam boat, *Flora*, disembarked at the port of St. Louis. He had planned a rendezvous with a chambermaid who worked aboard the *Lady Jackson*. Both vessels docked the same day. As McIntosh disembarked the *Flora*, two police officers were chasing another sailor and requested McIntosh's assistance. McIntosh did not assist, and so he was arrested for interfering with the apprehension. He was hauled before a justice of the peace and then marched off to jail.

En route to the jail, McIntosh asked how long he would be held there and was told at least five years. Hearing this and perhaps thinking of his thwarted rendezvous, he grabbed a knife and stabbed both policemen. One was killed and the other seriously injured. McIntosh, attempting to escape, fled down Market Street to Walnut, scaled a garden fence, and hid in an outhouse. Upon discovering his hiding place, a crowd took McIntosh to jail.

After he was locked in a cell, a much larger white mob stormed into the jail and removed McIntosh. This mob took him to the outskirts of the town, chained him to a locust tree, and piled wood around and up to his knees. Someone from the mob lit the wood with a hot brand. McIntosh asked the crowd to shoot him, but no one did so. He then began to sing hymns, as he was slowly roasted to death. After about twenty minutes he died. His charred remains were hung from a branch for all to see. The next day, April 29, "a rabble of boys" threw rocks at the corpse, attempting to break the skull.

On May 16, 1836, a grand jury convened to investigate the lynching. Judge Luke Lawless presided and encouraged no indictment. He considered the crime a spontaneous mob action and

thus there were no specific people to prosecute. In his summary, Judge Lawless claimed Lovejoy and the *Observer* had incited McIntosh into stabbing the policemen.

The lynching of McIntosh, a free black, prompted Lovejoy to intensify his arguments against slavery. Lovejoy claimed he would rather “be chained to the same tree as McIntosh and share his fate” than to accept the ideas of Lawless.⁶¹ Until laws are enforced, added Lovejoy, mobs will continue to “destroy, plunder, and burn.”

In Lovejoy’s view, McIntosh had been arrested unfairly and then burned to death by mob hysteria. Lovejoy was deeply moved and depressed. As he reported, “We stood and gazed for a moment or two upon the blackened and mutilated trunk – for that was all that remained of McIntosh before us, and as we turned away, in bitterness of heart, we prayed that we might not ‘love.’”⁶²

Having alienated and angered nearly every powerful group in Saint Louis, Lovejoy, fearing for the safety of his wife and newborn son, decided to move the *Observer* to Alton, Illinois. He believed people in Illinois, a free state, would be more tolerant of his anti-slavery opinions. Such expectations proved to be false. Although Illinois was a free state, Alton was a center for slave catchers and pro-slavery forces.

Before Lovejoy could move the press to Alton, an angry mob broke into the *Observer* office and vandalized it. No policemen or city officials intervened. Lovejoy packed what remained of the office and placed it on the river back in preparation for shipment the next day to Alton. Overnight it remained on the riverbank unguarded. By morning, it had been thrown into the Mississippi River.

A few civic minded leaders urged supporters to raise funds so Lovejoy could return to the newspaper business. Many citizens urged him to be less outspoken on slavery. In response, Lovejoy pledged to devote less space to slavery. However, he added, “But gentlemen, as long as I am an American citizen and as long as American blood runs in these veins, I shall hold myself at liberty to speak, to write, and to publish whatever I please on the subject.”⁶³

A new press was ordered. Within months, Lovejoy was back in business. His views were intensely unpopular. Quoting from an anti-slavery convention meeting in Ann Arbor, Michigan,

⁶¹ Simon, Paul, “Elijah Parish Lovejoy surrendered His Life for Free Speech, Free Press, and Free Men,” an essay which later became the basis for *Freedom’s Champion: Elijah Lovejoy* (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University, 1994). page 2

⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶³ *Ibid.* page 3.

Lovejoy said, "All attempts to justify slavery from the Word of God are gross perversions of its precepts and principles."⁶⁴

These radical views provoked a storm of public criticism. As opposition grew, so did Lovejoy's courage. In early issues of the *Alton Observer*, he said slavery was a sin. Escalating his rhetoric, he claimed those who don't fight slavers "are fighting against God." As a minister he felt the obligation to preach against slavery, "whatever the risk."

Issue by issue, Lovejoy intensified his anti-slavery statements. On July 4, 1837, as people celebrated the anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, Lovejoy wrote an editorial saying

What bitter mockery is this? We assemble to thank God for our own freedom, and to eat and drink with joy and gladness of heart, while our feet are in the necks of nearly 3,000,000 of our fellow men. Not all our shouts of self-congratulation can drown their groans. Even that very flag of freedom that waves over their heads is formed from materials cultivated by slaves, on a soil moistened with their blood.⁶⁵

In the same issue, he asked, "Is now not the time to form an Illinois anti-Slavery Society?"

A public meeting was convened to determine how to deal with Lovejoy. A Committee of Five was appointed to oversee a resolution to request Lovejoy to discontinue his publication of "incendiary doctrines which alone have the tendency to disturb the quiet of our citizens and neighbors." Instead of visiting Lovejoy face-to-face, the committee sent a letter to that effect. However, Lovejoy stood fast and refused to bow to their request.

By late July 1837, Lovejoy had identified himself completely with the abolitionists. For a second time, a group of men broke his printing press and tossed it into the river. As public opinion shifted, some supporters deserted him. Some ministers "washed their hands" of the whole thing. "Both sides are wrong," they claimed. Businessmen were either hostile or frightened into silence.

Supported by friends and followers, Lovejoy next surreptitiously stored, at night, a new press in a warehouse, which now was guarded. The next day, word spread quickly. His foes became angry. The angrier they became, the more they drank; the more they drank, the angrier they became.

At the height of this anger, a group left a local bar, formed a line and headed for the stone warehouse. As they marched, more joined the procession. At first only a few had guns. Most had clubs or sticks. Some had stones. By the time they reached the warehouse, 150 shouting, stone-throwing men congregated along the side of the warehouse.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵ Simon, Paul, *op. cit.* page 3.

Spectators were eager for excitement. “Fire the house!” “Burn them out!” “Shoot every abolitionist in the building!” Suddenly, a barrage of stones battered the building. Locked doors were under assault. Shots were fired. From within, someone returned fire and wounded someone in the mob.

Leaders of the mob set up a ladder against the warehouse. They dispatched a youth known as “Okey” who began climbing up the ladder onto the wooden roof to light a fire. Surprising the mob, Lovejoy and his supporter Royal Weller went outside and pushed the ladder to the ground. Again the mob set up the ladder. Again “Okey” commenced his climb. Before the blaze ignited, three or four people, including Lovejoy, pushed “Okey” to the ground.⁶⁶

In quick order, Lovejoy and Royal Weller approached another person who was attempting to torch the roof. Weller was shot, and Lovejoy was shot five times. “My God, I am shot!” he shouted and then died immediately. The building was engulfed in flames. The mob destroyed the new printing press by carrying it to a window and throwing it out onto the riverbank. They then broke it up and dumped the pieces into the river. Lovejoy was buried on his 35th birthday. Left with their two children, his wife was a widow at age 24.

The district attorney of Alton prosecuted Lovejoy’s murder, but no one was declared guilty. No one was ever convicted. The presiding judge also served as a witness to the proceedings. The jury foreman was a leader of the anti-Lovejoy faction and had been wounded in the attack. The verdict was “not guilty.” Lovejoy’s murder symbolized the rising racial tensions within the country. He has been called “the first casualty of the Civil War.”

Nathaniel Gordon, Slaver

The third incident involved the actions of Nathaniel Gordon, captain of the ship *Erie*. Nathaniel Gordon (1826-1862) was the only American slave trader to be tried, convicted, and executed “for being engaged in the Slave trade” in accord with the U. S. Piracy Law of 1820. Gordon was born in Portland, Maine. At an early age, he went into shipping and eventually owned his own ship, *Erie*. Prior to slave trading, he operated as a pirate along the coast of the United States. By the time of this incident, Gordon had successfully engaged in the slave trade for many years, and had always eluded capture.

On August 7, 1860, he loaded 897 slaves at Sharks Point, Congo River, West Africa. About half were children, one quarter of them were male, and one quarter were female, ranging in age from 6 months to 40 years of age. Gordon preferred to carry children because

⁶⁶ Ibid. page 4.

they could not contest his cruelty. As each person came over the side, Gordon would take them by the arm and shove them here or there, as the case might be. If by chance anyone was covered merely with a strip of rags, Gordon, with his knife, would cut it off, fling it overboard, and push the wretch naked forward toward the others.⁶⁷

The next day, on August 8, the *Erie* was captured by the *USS Mohican*, fifty miles outside the River Congo. Initially, Gordon thought this was a routine check. After all, he had never been caught before and he was seasoned slave trader. About noontime, Lt. Todd from the *Mohican* set foot on the deck of the *Erie* and found 897 Negroes so crowded together that Todd could scarcely find a place to put his feet without stepping on them. The stench from the hold was fearful, and filth caked onto their persons was indescribably offensive. They were so tightly squeezed together they appeared to be in great agony. The entire group was infected with "running sores and cutaneous diseases, painful and contagious." Wretchedness reigned supreme.

Lt. Todd ordered the slaves taken to Liberia, where the American Colonization Society had established a Colony for the settlement of free blacks. As for Gordon, he was ordered to take the *Erie* back to New York. Upon arrival he was arrested. His first trial ended in a hung jury. On November 9, 1861, his second trial, before Judges Nelson and Shipman at the US Circuit Court of New York, ended in conviction of piracy, and he was sentenced to be hanged Friday, February 7, 1862.

In passing the sentence, Judge Shipman addressed the prisoner:

Let me implore you to seek the spiritual guidance of the ministers of religion, and let your repentance be as humble and thorough as your crime was great. Do not attempt to hide its enormity from yourself. Think of the cruelty and wickedness of seizing nearly a thousand fellow beings, who never did you harm, and thrusting them beneath the decks of a small ship beneath a burning tropical sun, to die in disease or suffocation, or be transported to distant lands, and be consigned, they and their posterity, to a fate far more cruel than death.....Do not flatter yourself that because they belonged to a different race from yourself, your guilt is therefore lessened - rather fear it is increased.⁶⁸

After Gordon's conviction, his lawyers exercised the only option open to them and appealed to President Lincoln for a pardon. Lincoln granted a two week stay of execution so the prisoner

⁶⁷ "The Execution of Gordon, the Slave-Trader." *Harper's Weekly*, March 8, 1862, page 157.

⁶⁸ *Worcester Aegis & Transcript*, December 7, 1861, page 1 column 6.

could have time for his final preparations. The new date for execution was set for February 21, 1862.

Lincoln, well known for his kindness and mercy, withheld customary clemency. In his response, he wrote, "I believe I am kindly enough in nature, and can be moved to pity and pardon the perpetrator of almost the worst crime that the mind of man can conceive, the aim of man can execute; but any man, who, for paltry gain and stimulated only by avarice, can rob Africa of her children to sell into interminable bondage, I never will pardon."

On the evening before his execution, Gordon unsuccessfully attempted suicide with strychnine poison. At three o'clock on Friday morning, February 21, jail keepers became alarmed by the prisoner suddenly seized with convulsions. Upon closer examination, they recognized he was suffering from the effects of poison. The prison physician was summoned. Immediately, the physician sent for stimulants to counter the effects of poison. For the first 30 minutes, the prisoner remained rigid, due to the effects of the poison, and his pulse could scarcely be felt. Officials feared the gallows would be cheated of its victim. Three doctors labored hard to resuscitate the dying man. Finally, by means of the stomach pump and the use of brandy, the patient sufficiently recovered to speak. Not until 8:00 A.M. did physicians have any hope of saving Gordon's life. Gradually Gordon revived, but remained subject fainting fits. He begged the doctors to leave him alone, saying he preferred to die by his own hand rather than endure the ignominy of public execution.

Where did Gordon get the poison? The only way jail keepers could account for the presence of the poison is its introduction into the cigars which Gordon had smoked so freely the night before. Someone must have provided him with the cigars.

Shortly after 11:00 A.M., when it was clear the execution would proceed, Gordon requested to see Marshal Murray because he wanted to convey something of a personal nature. When Marshal Murray arrived, Gordon raised himself from his cot, and speaking with much difficulty, said, "Cut a lock of hair from my head and give it to my wife." Then, taking a ring from his finger, he requested that the ring also be sent to his wife in remembrance of her husband. Both requests were cheerfully granted. Overcome with emotion, the Marshal left the unhappy prisoner to his fate.

At 12 noon, Gordon received notice the hour had arrived. A clergyman entered his cell and prayed for him. The Deputy Marshal helped Gordon dress and gave him a large drink of clear whisky, tied his arms, and haphazardly placed the black cap on one side of his head. Gordon was carried to a chair in the corridor. The effect of the poison and counteragent of whisky was apparent. Gordon sat lolling in the chair, gazing listlessly around. The Marshal read to him his

death warrant. Gordon requested more whisky, the officials complied, and then they escorted him, upheld by Marshals, toward the scaffold.

Before the scaffold 400 people stood solemnly within the stone-walled courtyard of the Tombs, New York City jail. Eighty of them were marines dressed in Union blue. They stood rigidly at attention with loaded rifles and fixed bayonets. The rest of the crowd consisted of reporters, politicians, and observers. Flanked by officials, a small dark haired man in a black frock coat tottered into the scene. His arms were pinioned, a black hood covered his face, and a noose encircled his neck.

When Gordon reached the scaffold, he said, "Well a man can't die but once; I'm not afraid." The cap was drawn down over his head, the noose-knot carefully adjusted under his ear. With a jerk of the rope, the victim was flung high in the air and then fell lifeless. His body swayed for a few moments and then all was quiet. A native of Portland, Maine, Nathaniel Gordon was the only man in American history to be executed for the crime of slave trading.

Clifton Harris: A Murderer?

The fourth incident occurred on a frigid, snowy night in January 1867, when two elderly sisters, one a spinster and one a widow, were brutally murdered in their home in West Auburn Maine. Up to that time, it was one of the more chilling murders in Maine. Clifton Harris, a young black man with a hazy past, was named the murderer.

A frenzy of fear gripped the area. The *Lewiston Evening Journal* fanned those flames of fear. Police were under pressure to find the person who committed such a heinous crime. Residents trembled in fear of their safety. Police had no answers and no suspects. Frantically, they searched for a credible culprit.

At that time, investigation was in its infancy. Police had little ability to collect and analyze evidence. Without witnesses, the search was reduced to a system of "by guess and by gory". Even when a suspect was named, convictions relied heavily on confessions.

With the help of a New York detective, local authorities came across a likely suspect. Clifton Harris was a young, itinerant black man with a hazy past. He had claimed he was a fugitive slave. He claimed at one time he had enlisted in a TN Union regiment, and at another time he claimed he had served in the Confederate Army. In reality, he served in Company F of the 6th US Colored Heavy Artillery Regiment and he had never been a slave.

At the time of the murders, he was working on a nearby farm butchering cattle. In his background, there was no evidence he had murder in his blood. However, he did associate with

Luther Verrill, a fellow farmhand with a less-than-savory past and a known propensity for violence. Once identified, Harris was arrested and quickly confessed to the crime.

Despite his confession, no physical evidence connected him to the crime. However, evidence at the time and now suggests Harris was mentally deficient and therefore unable to give a reliable confession. Nevertheless, his confession was duly entered in court testimony. He was convicted and sentenced to death.

At the time, Joshua Chamberlain was governor. Though not an abolitionist, Chamberlain abhorred the institution of slavery. At the same time, however, he had no particular fondness for blacks. The law required the governor personally to sign the death warrant and have it delivered to the hangman. Sensitive to Maine ambivalence toward capital punishment, Chamberlain steadfastly refused to sign death warrants. Previously, he allowed 12 other prisoners, who were sentenced to death, to escape the gallows, but this time, he fought hard to ensure Harris received his due.

Why did Chamberlain let 12 other prisoners sentenced to death escape the gallows, but fought hard to ensure Harris received his due? Chamberlain's position on the Harris case set him at odds with his own party. He was harshly condemned by Republicans across the state. A significant number of Democrats joined the protest. Even his Attorney General, the man who prosecuted the Harris case, fiercely opposed carrying out the sentence. Chamberlain, allegedly stubborn by nature, did not relent.

Clifton Harris was hung March 13, 1869 at Maine State Prison in Thomaston. Harris was the last man ever executed in Maine. That year, 1869, was the fourth and last year Chamberlain served as candidate for Governor.

These four incidents cut to the core of divisive values driving the dialogue on the status of slavery in Maine. The Atticus Case illustrates how Maine responded to fugitives and was forced to comply with the 1793 Fugitive Slave Law. At the same time, it illustrates how Maine responded to repeated requests from the State of Georgia for two Maine residents to be extradited. The second incident highlights the unrelenting efforts of a Maine native, espousing the cause of the abolitionists, even to the point of dying for his convictions. The third incident showcases the execution of Nathaniel Gordon, as the only man in American history to be tried, convicted, and executed as a slave trader. Gordon was born in Portland, Maine and educated in Portland, Maine. In the process of pursuing material gain, he became oblivious to suffering of other human beings. Until the end, he protested his innocence. The fourth incident shows how easily preconceptions and prejudice can identify blacks although evidence of guilt is lacking. Confessions are easily gained, especially when then confessor does not fully understand the issues and consequences involved.

Part Three: How did Cumberland Residents Respond to the Slavery Issue?

Like much of the northern part of the country, Cumberland residents were divided between Pro-Slavery and Anti-Slavery. In fact, from the beginning of the antislavery conflict until after the outbreak of the Civil War, much of the North was pro-slavery. Today, some of us may find that claim astounding, as well as appalling. However, closer examination reveals how that way of thinking could materialize.

Position of the Church

In the nineteenth century, Congregational churches were the most numerous and perhaps the most influential denomination in the state.⁶⁹ However, its pastors and leaders were far from united in their views. Some were apologists for slavery, and some were ardent abolitionists. As such, they represented a microcosm of the national controversy.

The Cumberland Congregational Church was established in 1793. During the ministry of its first three pastors- Rufus Anderson, 1794- 1804; Amasa Smith, 1806-1820; and Samuel Stone, 1821-1829; we have no indication of their views on the slavery issue. Probably most of their efforts were directed toward establishing the church and increasing its membership.

During the period prior to 1830, several significant events occurred. First, in 1793, the same year as the founding of the Cumberland Church, Congress passed the Fugitive Slave Act. Second, in 1808, the slave trade legally ended. Third, in December 1816, the American Colonization Society was founded, and Reverend Asa Cummings of North Yarmouth became a life member. Later, in June of 1825, Reverend Cummings became editor of the *Christian Mirror*. Finally, in 1820, Maine became a state. In 1821, Cumberland became a town separate from North Yarmouth. During the 1820s, the Maine public, and certainly the Cumberland public, in general, lacked interest in the slavery issue.

During the 1830s, Isaac Weston, from 1830-1840, served as pastor of Cumberland Congregational Church. From his *History of the Cumberland Church*, we learn he did not consider political issues, of which the slavery issue was one, worthy of his parishioners' attention. Weston observes, "People must have something to talk about and their hours of leisure are better employed in conversing the great themes of revealed truth than in retailing

⁶⁹ Clark Montague, *American Slavery and Maine Congregationalists*, (Bangor, Maine) page vii.

gossip of the neighborhood or in becoming mad in discussion of political or other secular subjects.”⁷⁰

Regardless of Weston’s views, significant steps toward organization and discussion of the slavery issue were taken at the state level and the national level. On November 26, 1833, The Maine Antislavery Society convened its first meeting. The following week, Maine dispatched four delegates to the national convention in Philadelphia.

From August 10-16, 1834, The Cumberland Association of Congregational Ministers held a meeting in Portland. Nearly all the Congregational pastors in the County attended. The matter of the impending Convention had become a controversial subject. An informal poll of prevailing opinions was taken. The vote was unanimous in casting doubts on the wisdom of measures taken by the American Anti-Slavery Society; namely, in deprecating “the usual agitation of this subject in our churches, as likely to do mischief without promising much, if any good;” and also in disapproving “the introduction of the subject into the pulpits on Sunday.”⁷¹ Whether or not Pastor Weston attended this meeting, is not known. Be that as it may, Cumberland County Congregational clergy who attended appear to regard issues adopted by the American Anti-Slavery Society as unsuitable for sermons and inappropriate for church discussions.

On August 21, 1834, the *Christian Mirror* published a call for a State Convention inviting “all the Anti-slavery Societies in Maine to be held on the third Wednesday of October, the fifteenth. This Call was signed by 36 men from 14 towns. Cumberland was not represented. For a third time, in September, the Call was repeated, and this time 55 men signed. This time, in an effort to broaden its base, the Baptists, Free Baptists, Unitarians, Friends, and Methodists were included along with the Congregationalists. Both Unitarians and Congregationalists were divided. Again, Cumberland was not represented. It appears Pastor Weston did not attend.

The following year, September 16, 1835, the Convention met in Portland’s City Hall. Representing 39 Maine towns, 74 men were present. Of the 71 delegates from within the state, 36 were Congregational ministers. The Town of Cumberland was represented. Pastor Weston or his representative attended. The Convention was dominated by Congregational pastors and lay leaders. By this time, Baptists and Free Baptists were Abolitionists. However, the Methodists, at its July 1835 meeting, had adopted six resolutions reflecting a pro-slavery position.

⁷⁰ Weston, Isaac, *op. cit.*, page 19.

⁷¹ *Christian Mirror*, August 21, 1834, page 6.

The second annual meeting of the Maine Anti-slavery Society, scheduled for October 26, 1836, at Portland City Hall, as approved by the Mayor. However, the evening preceding the scheduled meeting, the Mayor, due to citizen protest, “revoked” his consent. As a result, the Anti-Slavery Society was obliged to hold its meeting, first in a private house, and then at the Friends’ meeting-house. Even then, delegates were assailed by a mob.

As far as the Cumberland Conference is concerned, reports on meetings from 1830-1844 reveal not the slightest reference to the subject of slavery. Apparently, by common consent and rule of the majority, the subject was excluded from deliberations of the Conference. Resolutions regarding slavery, though passed, never were reported out of committee.⁷² Apparently, members, divided in their views, used this favorite parliamentary device to block such resolutions. At the Conference held in North Yarmouth, in 1837, the subject of slavery was passed over in silence.⁷³

Although in the early 1830s positions on the slavery issue had been lukewarm, gradually, clergymen and lay leaders were awakening. What served as a catalyst was the martyrdom of a Maine native and abolitionist, Elijah Parish Lovejoy who was murdered November 7, 1837, in Alton, Illinois, for the cause of abolition. Lovejoy was the son of a Congregational minister from Maine. Suddenly, up and down the State of Maine, the subject of slavery was regarded a matter of prime importance as residents engaged in prolonged and heated discussion. Cumberland was no exception.

The following year, 1838, the subject of slavery required more positive and concrete action. The Somerset Conference urged correspondence with Ecclesiastical bodies of slaveholding States. The Conference appointed a Committee of Correspondence. This Committee of seven members was “convinced that the subject can be written upon with a calm and kind spirit.”⁷⁴ Correspondence between the committee and the Tombebee Presbytery in Mississippi consisted of the Original Letter to the Presbytery, the reply by the Presbytery, and the answer to his reply, which was made by Reverend Silas McKeen of Belfast.

The Original Letter dated December 28, 1838, six months after the committee was appointed, begins apologetically, asking for more knowledge. About 8-10 questions regarding slavery were asked, particularly the relation between slaves and the church. The writers took pains to emphasize that the questions are not to be regarded as judgmental, but simply sent from “brethren of the same family.” In the closing paragraphs, the writers acknowledge that

⁷² Clark, Montague, *op. cit.*, page 78.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, page 88.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, page 91.

northerners are divided in opinion, with some churches warmly supporting it, and others opposed or indifferent. Nevertheless, “the conviction and feeling among us is universal that slavery is a great evil; and nearly so, that slaveholding is a crime.”⁷⁵

The Reply, dated April 9, 1839, came from the Tombechee Presbytery in Starksville, Mississippi. After acknowledging the delicacy of the subject which was growing more delicate day by day, the Presbytery states it does not understand what is meant by “natural law,” and declares that “it is willing to be guided by the Bible.” Citing appropriate texts, it proceeded to give a brief summary of its view regarding teachings in the Bible as well as the matter of slavery. The entire Reply of the Presbytery was published, as requested by the Conference of Maine.

Reverend Silas McKeen of Belfast provided the “Answer” to the “Reply”. Fourteen columns in the *Christian Mirror* were devoted to printing that “Answer.” As regards, Jewish servitude, “There is no sufficient proof to warrant belief that the Hebrew laws ever authorized, or in any way recognized slavery in the American sense of that term.” McKeen claimed the Presbytery confuses the work “servant” with that of “slave.” Moreover, slaveholding, McKeen contended, is condemned by biblical teaching in general, especially by the Golden Rule. In conclusion, he vigorously refuted the Presbytery’s contention that southern slavery is a benevolent institution.⁷⁶ In conclusion, McKeen notes, “Most of the questions of right and honor which have been contested among the nations and been settled on fields of battle drenched in blood, have been trivial indeed in comparison with this.” “O Sirs, the doctrines of slaveholders are fearfully dangerous doctrines.” This “Answer” was unanimously adopted and “sent to every southern Presbytery.

With the arrival of the 1840s Cumberland Congregational Church had a new pastor, Joseph Blake, who served from 1841-1859. This is a critical period, when views on slavery, pro and con, were more pronounced. Appropriate courses of action were still unclear to most. Clearly, though, residents awoke to the growing need for political as well as moral action. His parsonage became a “station” in the Underground Railroad.

Residents of Cumberland recognized the need to elect members of the State legislature especially members of Congress willing to take a stand openly and ardently against slavery. Political parties became vehicles for expression of pro-Slavery and anti-Slavery views. Parties took positions on the Mexican War, Slavery in the District of Columbia, and the annexation of Texas.

During the 1850s, the “Gathering Storm” advanced and escalated in force. This fateful decade was dominated by three major events. First, Congress enacted the 1850

⁷⁵ Clark, *Montague*, *op. cit.*, page 96.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, page 98.

Compromise, introduced by Henry Clay of Kentucky and Daniel Webster of Massachusetts. Comprised of four compromises, two favored the North and two favored the South. To the fury of the abolitionists, the Fugitive Slave Law was tightened.

The second event was the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854, organizing the vast territories of Kansas and Nebraska and opening territory to slavery on the principle of popular sovereignty, an act nullifying the Missouri Compromise. Even in Maine, the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854 had repercussions. The Town of Biddeford was divided in its allegiance. Some supported Kansas, a free state, and others supported Nebraska a slave State. In a letter dated June 21, 1856, Rev. J. J. Carruthers, a member of the Cumberland Conference clearly described the situation in Kansas,

Towns sacked, dwellings destroyed, innocence violated, and men and women wantonly driven from their homes, reduced to starvation, and murdered in cold blood; such are the scenes enacted in the middle of the nineteenth century by creatures calling themselves Christians, and – save the mark! – American patriots.⁷⁷

Although Maine was far from Kansas, some residents of Biddeford departed for the “dark and bloody ground.” Cumberland residents were increasingly in support of Free States to be carved from the contested territory.

The third of these major events was the Dred Scott decision of 1857, which denied Negro slaves or their descendants, slave or free, could become citizens of the United States. At the same time, it declared that the Missouri Compromise had been unconstitutional. For most Maine residents that last provision was crossing a “red line.”

At the meeting of the Cumberland Conference held in Standish October 1854, members of the Conference broke with its entire past history and enacted as set of resolutions, one of which states:

That in the opinion of this Conference, a most solemn crisis in the history of our country is approaching; indicated by the persistent, increasing, and hitherto successful demands of that Power which threatens, in disregard of sacred compacts, to subjugate Northern freemen as well as Southern slaves.⁷⁸

For the Cumberland Conference, these resolutions marked a seismic shift from the past. Here was determination, resolution, and boldness which heralded a new perception of the

⁷⁷ Clark, Montague, *op. cit.*, page 180.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, page 168.

slavery issue. This new tone was defiant. Presumably, Pastor Blake attended this meeting. However, by the end of the 1850s, it became apparent that words were now futile, resolutions were in vain, and actions now must speak.⁷⁹

From 1841-1859, Reverend Joseph Blake served as pastor of the Cumberland Congregational Church. His voice in favor of fugitive slaves became more and more forceful, even though not all members of his congregation shared his views. He began to recognize actions instead of words would be most effective. .

Some members of the congregation supported abolition because they felt it well supported by their Christian beliefs. In justification, some quoted Christ's summary of the Commandments, "Love God with all your heart, and mind and strength, and love your neighbor as yourself." To these members, it was important to put their beliefs into practice.

A few of these members became part of the Underground Railroad. From within Cumberland, Pastor Joseph Blake and his successor, Pastor Ebenezer Jordan, Deacon Nicholas Humphrey, and Parishioner Clara Sturdivant Sweetser actively supported the Underground Railroad. For this group of advocates, humanitarian issues were paramount. "Love thy neighbor." Reverend Blake became a conductor in the Underground Railroad, and used the parsonage as a place to receive fugitive slaves before sending them on toward North Yarmouth. Nicholas Humphrey, a Deacon, also became a conductor and used the upper story of his general store as a place to receive fugitives.

Not all members of the Cumberland Congregational Church favored abolition. Some opposed abolition because they considered abolitionists to be dangerous anarchists. Others opposed abolition because it threatened their livelihood. Included in the congregation were a number of sea captains, ship builders, and sailors. These mariners made their livelihood transporting products that most often were harvested and loaded onto their hardships by slave labor. For example, cotton and molasses were products of the slave trade. Mariners had a vested interest in the status quo. Others simply did not understand the issues involved.

The Cumberland church was not unique in its divided response to abolition. In nearby Yarmouth, the First Parish Congregational Church also included among its members a number of shipbuilders, sea captains, and sailors. In the heat of the anti-slavery debate, some members could not find enough common ground to stay together and so some walked out and founded another church across the street.⁸⁰ There, a strong stance in support of abolition was adopted.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, page 192.

⁸⁰ Gilpin, Susan, "Coming to Terms with Maine's Checkered Record on Slavery," *Portland Press Herald*, May3, 2003, page 2c.

Nevertheless, like it or not, the Town of Cumberland was part of a larger nation, the union of which was being seriously threatened by divisive issues, particularly the issue of slavery. For the most part, Cumberland residents had to rely on secondary sources. Newspapers published news of the emerging national conflict. However, these reports were far from comprehensive.

Response to "Strangers"

Returning to the question of how residents in Cumberland responded to the slavery question, consider the deeper question of how did early family settlers respond to strangers who were racially different? Through the family grapevine, many residents heard stories about ancestors who had suffered from Indian attacks. In fact, Cumberland historian, Mary E. Sweetser observes,

The physical features of harbor, islands, the small but valuable river, a bountiful supply of timber, and favorable locations for settlements, early invited white settlers. The Indians, too, considered this a favorable hunting ground and with their favorite burial place on Lane's Island it is not to be wondered at that they resisted the occupation by the whites. Perhaps no other settlement in the whole State was met with so much hostility by the Indians."⁸¹

On the one hand, the geographical location of Cumberland is very attractive. No wonder the Indians and the settlers were drawn to it. On the other hand, who arrived first? Was the land simply claimed or did the Indians and settlers establish common ground? Did the settlers alone meet hostility or did the Indians also meet hostility?

The first white settler of Cumberland allegedly was George Felt (1600-1688). He lived in a stone garrison at Broad Cove, on land which he had purchased from John Phillips, a Welch man, and which in 1643, Felt had re-purchased from an agent of Sir Ferdinando Gorges, Proprietor of Maine. Felt had two sons George and Moses. In August 1676, Indians attacked settlements and killed several settlers. Others fled, taking refuge on Jewell's Island and House Island. George Felt, grandson of the Foreside pioneer, took his family to House Island, but later he was killed by Indians on nearly Peaks Island.

The following month, on September 2, 1676, while the men were harvesting corn on one of the neighboring islands, and while the women were washing clothes in the cove, one of

⁸¹ Sweetser. Mary E., *op. cit.*, page 4.

the young boys in the house fired two guns, killing two Indians and causing a cry of alarm.⁸² The men rapidly returned to the Island and engaged the Indians, but they lost seven, and several of the women and children were captured. Indian attacks became more frequent.

Five Indian Wars reinforced views held by settlers. The first one, King Phillip's War (1675-1678), resulted in 360 settlers killed. Then, for the next ten years, there was no serious trouble.

Early in 1688, friction developed in the Saco area and some Indians were taken as hostages. This angered Indians throughout the region. Indians began seizing settlers. On the morning of September 19, 1688, two Indians and a captured Englishman came up the Royall River in a canoe to speak with Mr. Walter Gendall, who at the time was near the Royal garrison. Soon Gendall realized it was not a friendly visit. When Indians persisted in landing, Gendall ordered the soldiers at the fort to fire on the canoe. Momentarily the Indians retreated, but soon fifty more Indians appeared in canoes, paddling up the river and landing on the west bank. The Indians proceeded overland to where Gendall's crew was working on the new garrison located on the west side of the river. They picked a quarrel with the workmen and the exchange escalated into a fight. The battle lasted all day. Toward evening, the settlers and soldiers were running out of ammunition. However, Gendall was determined to save his men. He ordered his Negro servant to paddle him across the river. Before the boat reached the opposite shore, Gendall and his servant received mortal wounds. Gendall's death was mourned by the whole District.⁸³ No mention is made of his Negro servant, except to say he received a mortal wound. This incident helped launch the second Indian War known as King William's War (1688-1699).

Friction continued between the English settlers and the Indians. The third Indian War, Queen Anne's War (1703-1713), involved a few Wabanaki raids. Garrison houses were built, two in what is now Yarmouth and one in present day Cumberland. The latter was called the William Scales garrison, probably located on what became the Phillips Payson property. Settlers who went to the Scales garrison during danger included Joseph Felt, grandson of George, the first settler; James Nichols, his cousin; Francis Wyman who came from Woburn; James Buxton who came from Salem; and Matthew Scales who, with his brother came from Rowley.⁸⁴ These families lived at Cumberland Foreside between 1715 and 1723.

Both the Scales brothers and Joseph Felt were killed in Indian attacks about 1723, and Mrs. Felt was taken captive and carried to Quebec by the Indians. She remained there for five

⁸² Sweetser, Harlan H. "The Early History of the Area Which Later Became the Town of Cumberland, Maine," in Phyllis Sweetser, compiler, *Cumberland, Maine in Four Centuries*, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, page 7-8.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, page 9.

years before being ransomed by her son-in-law, Peter Weare.⁸⁵ Meanwhile, the fourth Indian war, Dummer's War (1721-1727) was unfolding. During the 1730s, many new families arrived in the area. Indian "trouble" continued to be sporadic.

The fifth Indian War, King George's War (1744-1748) intensified the latent friction. Massachusetts declared war on the Wabanaki and attacked French strongholds. The Siege of Louisbourg occurred in 1745 when a New England colonial force aided by a British fleet captured Louisbourg, the capital of the French province of Royale (Cape Breton Island) during the War of the Austrian Succession, known in the British colonies as King George's War. Louisbourg was strategic since it commanded the main entrance to Canada and threatened to ruin the fisheries, which were considered vital to future of New England. The Expedition, with 4200 soldiers and sailors aboard 90 ships, set sail from Boston early March 1745. The battle occurred from May 11 to June 28, 1745.

By mid-1745 nine garrison houses were in use in North Yarmouth, and two of them were located in what is now Cumberland Foreside. The Nathaniel Blanchard garrison was located on the northwesterly side of Foreside Road. It had a strong stockade with watch boxes. On June sixteenth, Nathaniel Blanchard, son of the settler, had a narrow escape from ambush by Indians. About the same time, Joseph Sweat, riding horseback, was killed and scalped. Later, in early August, Philip Greely was killed by a party of thirty or more Indians who were hidden ready to ambush.⁸⁶ Philip Greely was the grandfather of Eliphat Greely, founder of Greely Institute in Cumberland.

Scalping entailed the act of cutting or tearing a part of the human scalp, with hair attached, from the head of a perceived enemy. Creeping up behind the victim, the scalper seized a hunk of hair on the head of a subdued adversary, made several quick semi-circular cuts with a sharp instrument on either side of the area to be taken, and then vigorously yanked at the nearly severed scalp. The scalp separated from the skull along the plane of the areolar connective tissue, the fourth and least substantial of the layers of the human scalp. Scalping itself was not necessarily fatal. The scalp was regarded as a trophy.

Up until the fall of Quebec on September 13, 1759, North Yarmouth, like all other towns, was subject to Indian raids. Many settlers were killed. Many women and children were carried into captivity. The last Indian attack on North Yarmouth came in 1757. When news of the fall of Quebec reached North Yarmouth on October 14, 1757, great relief was felt and great rejoicing was heard. The 25th of October was set aside as a day of thanksgiving.

⁸⁵ Sweetser, Harlan H. "The Early History of the Area Which Later Became the Town of Cumberland, Maine," *op. cit.*, page 9.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, page 17.

Eventually, some of the children who had been taken to Canada in captivity were returned to their former homes. Upon the conclusion of the French and Indian War (1754-1760), a sense of peace, at least for the moment, was restored.

By 1764, North Yarmouth, including present day Cumberland, was the third largest town in Cumberland County. Its population consisted of 1079 whites and 18 blacks. They constituted 188 families living in 154 houses.⁸⁷ At the time, Cumberland was part of North Yarmouth.

From another perspective of the Indian conflict, another historian, Floyd Norton quietly observes, "In hindsight we are bound to feel that had the later "early" settlers in Massachusetts, as well as in Maine, treated the aborigines with more humane consideration than they did, the white intruders would have suffered much less hardship than had become their lot."⁸⁸

Settlers became captive to their fear of Indians. In 1743, Nathaniel Blanchard and his wife Hannah Shaw together with eight children arrived in Cumberland from Weymouth, Massachusetts. They settled on the Foreside Road, not far from Broad Cove. Their son National Blanchard (1727-1807) used to tell how he would husk corn in the barn, in the evening, without a lantern for fear of lurking Indians. When going from house to barn, he would be afraid of being shot down by them. Twice he remained in the barn all night not daring to go to the house.⁸⁹

Underground Railroad in Maine and Cumberland

For about thirty five years, the Underground Railroad ran through 14 northern states. Maine was the last stop for many passengers travelling to Canada, where slavery was outlawed. Current research⁹⁰ indicates there were at least 75 Underground Railroad sites throughout Maine.

In Portland, site 55, several well-documented Underground Railroad locations tell the history of the abolitionist movement and identify African-American religious and cultural contacts. Fugitives could arrive as stowaways on vessels from Southern ports, and continue

⁸⁷ Sweetser, Harlan, *op. cit.*, page 19.

⁸⁸ Norton, Floyd, *Norton's Hand-Hewn History of Maine and Its Representative Town of Cumberland*, privately published, page 2.

⁸⁹ Sweetser, Mary E. *op. cit.*, page 13.

⁹⁰ Jepson, Brenda, "History's Hidden in the Floorboards," *Portland Press Herald*, February 26, 2012. Included in the article is a map showing the location of the 75 sites.

by sea to Saint John, New Brunswick in Canada.⁹¹ Fugitives also could arrive by freight car and continue by Grand Trunk rail to Montreal, Canada. Most often, however, fugitives arrived overland, continuing surreptitiously from “station” to “station.”

From Portland, fugitives, using an overland route, could follow one of two branches which encircled Sebago Lake and united in Bridgton. From there, fugitives could take a single path toward the northwest and the Vermont border. At Lunenburg, one branch took its course up the Connecticut valley to Stratford and on to Stanstead, Quebec. The other branch passed to western Vermont and joined the branch from Montpelier at Barton, and from there entered Canada.⁹² In addition, two subsidiary routes were well travelled. Fugitives from Portland could travel toward South Paris and Lovell. Alternatively, they could move toward Effingham, West Parsonsfield, and Porter. The route to Cumberland provided another option.

Station masters in Portland included Mrs. Oliver Dennett, Nathan Winslow and General Samuel Fessenden. Names of Underground Railroad operators in Cumberland County include General Appleton, Oliver Dennett, General Samuel Fessenden, Colonel Levi Hall, Samuel F. Hussey, Peter Morrill, Professor A. S. Packard, A., F, Parsons, William Smyth, Dr. Pease, Mrs. Elias Thomas, Brown Thurston, Nathan Winslow and the Honorable J. C. Woodman.⁹³

In Cumberland, site 23, several houses were used as “stations” to protect fugitives. Stationmasters included the Revered Joseph Blake, pastor of the Cumberland Congregational Church, Deacon Nicholas L. Humphrey, and Clara Sturdivant Sweetser, wife of Ezra K. Sweetser, schoolmaster. Little is known about these stationmasters, as written records or journals were not deemed safe. If information about arrival and departure of fugitives were written, both fugitives and stationmasters could face danger. Most of what we know is based on oral history, passed down generation to generation.

Pastor Joseph Blake served from March 3, 1841 to April 18, 1859. During this period, the parsonage was built, completed in 1842, and served as a “station” for fugitives. That brick building, still standing but having undergone two major renovations, is located at 306 Main Street, north of the church. Original bricks for the building were made in the brickyard, near present Prince Memorial Library. During Reverend Blake’s tenure, significant travel on the Underground Railroad passed through Cumberland. An avid horticulturist, Mr. Blake was also

⁹¹ Siebert, Wilbur H., *The Underground Railroad from Slavery to Freedom*, (New York: The MacMillan Co., 1898), page 133.

⁹² Seibert, Wilbur H. *op. cit.*, page 134.

⁹³ *Seibert, Wilbur H., op. cit.*, page 411.

known for planting trees along the street in front of the parsonage as well as around the church.

Deacon Nicholas L. Humphrey was head of the Underground Railroad in Cumberland. Born on September 2, 1810 to his parents John Humphrey and Mary Ann Loring, he married Lucy Willis Weston. They had four children: John (1840), Frances (1842), Hattie (1852) and Alice (1860). In the center of Cumberland he owned a store⁹⁴ which sold groceries and hardware. Like other country stores, it was a place where men congregated to discuss current events and hear readings from newspapers, such as the *Boston Journal*. Above the store, there was a large open room.⁹⁵ For a time, Samuel Chase of North Yarmouth and Captain Reuben Blanchard used the space to conduct a singing school. Eventually, it was converted to sleeping rooms, where fugitives hid during the day and then at night were sent onward, when it was safe to do so.

Clara Sturdivant Sweetser (1842-1921) was the wife of Ezra K. Sweetser (1831-1902), a respected but stern schoolmaster. They were married in 1869. Although they had no children of their own, the Sweetsters did adopt several infants from an orphanage in Deering, Portland. One of their adopted sons, Harry P. Sweetser, felt so highly of her, he named his only daughter for her. Around town, Mrs. Sturdivant had a reputation of being sweet, gentle, and kind-hearted. Not surprisingly, then, she opened her home to help fugitives. The Sweetser home, located at 363 Tuttle Road opposite the Fire Station, was destroyed by fire. During the 1870s, the Sweetser home was particularly active as a “station” for the Underground Railroad in Cumberland.

From Cumberland, at night, fugitives would be guided toward North Yarmouth, the intersection of present day route 115 and 9. At that juncture, in a red house on the southeast side, Mary E. Dolloff set aside a room for the purpose of sheltering fugitives. From there, fugitives were guided toward Lewiston and Auburn, or perhaps toward Gardiner and Hallowell toward Augusta. Which route they followed depended on information available at that time.

Voting Records

By examining voting records in Cumberland from 1832- 1860, can we find any clues regarding voters’ positions on the slavery issue? Political parties did take positions on the slavery issue. What accounts for the division of voters into different parties? How

⁹⁴ Sweetser, Phyllis Sturdivant, editor, *Cumberland Maine in Four Centuries. op. cit.*, p. 212. Photograph of Nicholas Humphreys house, 282 Main Street. Building on right is his store.

⁹⁵ Sweetser, Mary E., *History of the Town of Cumberland Maine, compiled for the Centennial Celebration, July 2-4, 1921, op. cit.*, page 16.

important are economic issues, political issues, and social issues such as temperance and slavery issues? What is the basis for party identification?

Consider the votes cast for Congressional Representative and Governor. What are some of the prevailing patterns? Did Cumberland residents tend to favor one party over another? If so, why? Did Cumberland residents ever evenly split their votes between two or more candidates? Which elections were competitive and how can one explain the cliffhanging votes? Turn first to the votes for Congressional Representative.

Congressional District Two

For the 23rd Congress, second district, Cumberland voters cast ballots in September 1832, for Levi Cutter 104, F.O.J. Smith 21, and Ephraim Sturdivant, 91. Levi Cutter (1774-1856), born and raised in North Yarmouth, lived there until 1803, when he moved to Portland. Cutter was registered as a Whig. Ephraim Sturdivant (1782-1868) was a resident of Cumberland, and from age of 12 until age 40 spent much of his life at sea. During this time he traded in West Indies and Europe. In 1810, he imported a cargo of Merino sheep from Portugal to Sturdivant Island in Cumberland. In 1812, he received permission from President James Madison to command a schooner, *The Reaper*, as a privateer in the War of 1812. From 1820-1832, he served as the first treasurer of the Town of Cumberland. Well known to Cumberland residents, Cutter and Sturdivant, not surprisingly, received the most votes. Party affiliation, apparently, was a secondary consideration. These two candidates had "local ties." Also, they both were at least a generation older than F.O. J. Smith.

Despite the Cumberland vote, the candidate that won that Congressional seat from the second district was F.O. J. Smith (1806-1876), a Democrat, and lawyer from Portland. He had established a reputation for being a fiery, impassioned orator. He had studied in the law office of Samuel Fessenden, an ardent abolitionist. He was re-elected twice.

For his second term, Cumberland voters gave Smith 123 votes and his opponent James Churchill 116. For his third term, Cumberland voted 102 for Smith and 99 for James Brooks. In Cumberland, Smith's margin of victory was shrinking. James Brooks (1810-1873) was born in Portland, graduated from Colby College in 1831. Upon graduation, Brooks, like Smith, studied law, and for a short time edited the *Portland Advertiser*. Brooks was a Whig. Cumberland voters tended to favor candidates who were Democrats.

For the 26th Congress commencing in 1839, Cumberland voters cast 155 ballots for Ezekiel Whitman, and 142 ballots for Albert Smith. Both candidates were born in Massachusetts, both graduated from Brown University, and both practiced law in Portland. Ezekiel Whitman (1776-1866) was a delegate to the Convention charged with framing the Maine Constitution. As a Federalist, he served in the 17th Congress, 1821-1822, until he

resigned. However, Albert Smith (1793-1867), a Democrat and a generation younger than Whitman, won the election for the District. Cumberland is emerging as a competitive two party town. It did not always favor Democrats, but the margin one way or other was not large.

In the vote for the Maine Second District for the 27th Congress, Cumberland voters cast ballots which tied William P. Fessenden a Whig and the incumbent Albert Smith, a Democrat. Each received 146 votes in Cumberland. How can such a tied vote be explained?

Usually, the incumbent has an advantage, and in Cumberland, the Democrat candidates often were favored. Given these tendencies, Albert Smith, as incumbent and Democrat, had a slight advantage in Cumberland. Nevertheless, a significant number of voters found the articulate arguments of his opponent appealing.

The year of the vote, 1840, was also a Presidential election, in which the Whigs were exceptionally well organized. Smith's opponent was a Whig. That year, being a Whig, was a slight advantage.

William Pitt Fessenden, a persuasive lawyer from Portland and a well-known state legislator, convinced some Cumberland voters to shift their votes. Son of Samuel Fessenden, an ardent abolitionist, he graduated from Bowdoin in 1823, and became a founding member of Maine Temperance Society in 1827, the year he was admitted to the bar. No doubt his support for the temperance issue attracted some Cumberland voters.

Serving in the Maine State House of Representatives in 1832 and 1838, Fessenden became a leading debater and took a strong anti-abolitionist position. In the state legislature, he built an antislavery coalition that eventually elected him to the U.S. Senate. Fessenden appealed to Cumberland voters due either to his temperance views or his anti-abolitionist views or maybe both. In the District at large, Fessenden won the election and served as Congressional representative for one term.

For the 28th Congress commencing in 1843, Cumberland voters cast 109 votes for Robert P. Dunlap, 66 votes for Josiah S. Little, and 24 votes for Samuel Fessenden, an ardent Federalist who appealed to abolitionists. All three candidates were lawyers. Little had served as Speaker of the Maine House of Representatives and was a Whig. Robert Dunlap had served one term in the State House (1821-1823) and several terms in the State Senate, including 3 years as Senate President as well as four terms of governor, 1834-1838. Dunlap was a Democrat. Dunlap won the election.

For the following term, the 29th Congress, starting in 1845, Cumberland turnout was greater, due to the year of the vote, 1844, coinciding with a Presidential election. The same three candidates ranked as they did in the previous election: Dunlap, 144 votes, Little 99 votes, and Samuel Fessenden 10 votes. Proportionally, Dunlap gained more support, and Fessenden lost support.

For the 30th Congress, Cumberland voters gave Asa Clapp 98 votes and Josiah Little 76 votes. Born in Portland, Clapp was a wealthy merchant, but not a lawyer. He was a Democrat. His opponent, Josiah Little was a Whig and a lawyer, but unsuccessfully competed in this and the preceding two Congressional elections. Clapp, a Democrat, won the election and served in Congress for one term.

For the 31st Congress, Cumberland voters cast 117 ballots for Nathaniel S. Littlefield, a Democrat; 72 ballots for Isaac Lincoln, a Whig; and 30 ballots for Samuel Fessenden, a Federalist. Born in Bridgton, Littlefield was admitted to the bar in 1827 and began his practice in Bridgton. He served as the Congressional representative for the 5th district (1841-1843) and then moving to Portland won this election as a Congressional Representative for the 2nd district. Once again, the Cumberland voters favored the Democrat candidate. However, support was growing for the third party candidate.

The election for the 32nd Congressional second district seat, for the term 1851-1853, was tightly contested not only in Cumberland but in the District at large. John Appleton, a Democrat, defeated William Pitt Fessenden, former Congressman and a Whig, by only 40 votes in the District at large. In Cumberland William Fessenden received 115 votes and John Appleton 112 votes, a three vote difference. In Cumberland, the Two Party System remained competitive. The turnout was slightly more than usual. We do not know the salient issues, although Fessenden continued to advance his reputation as an abolitionist.

For the 33rd Congress commencing in 1853, Cumberland voters gave Samuel Mayall 78; Charles Gilman, 116; and Nathaniel Pease, 27. Contrary to the Cumberland vote, Mayall, the Democrat, won the election in the district. Born in North Gray, Mayall served as member of the Maine House of Representatives in 1845, 1847, 1848. He was elected as a Democrat to the 33rd Congress. It is not clear why Cumberland voters favored Gilman, a Whig, over Mayall, a Democrat. The Maine Congressional delegation was composed of 3 Democrats and 3 Whigs.

For the 34th Congress, its election held in September 1854, Cumberland cast 101 votes for William H. Kimball and 127 votes for John Perry, who carried the district. Born in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, Perry and his family moved to Oxford, Maine. He was admitted to the bar in 1844. Perry served in Maine State House of Representatives 1840,

1842, 1843, and in the State Senate 1846. In the 34th Congress, he was an Opposition Party member. The Maine delegation of 6 Congressmen comprised 5 from the Opposition Party and 1 Democrat. With the rise of the Opposition Party, we witness the gradual disintegration of the Whig Party and the fragmentation of the Second Party System of Jackson-Democrats and Clay Whigs. Cumberland voters, by supporting the Opposition Party candidate, reflected this shift in party identification.

For the preceding 80 years, one of the major political issues had been the battle between the pro-slavery and anti-slavery factions. This battle had been fought primarily on the basis of regional and class affiliations rather than along party lines. With the passage of Kansas-Nebraska Act in 1854, the Whig Party divided along pro-and anti-slavery lines, and the Opposition Party served as a successor of the Whig Party for the anti-slavery faction. The defectors needed a party that would encompass Independents, Anti-Know Nothing, Fusion, Anti-Nebraska, Anti-Administration, Whig, Free Soil and Unionist. The Opposition Party served that need.

Following the 1854 election, the Opposition Party was the largest party in the U. S. House of Representatives. Out of 234 Representatives, that Congress comprised 100 Oppositionists, 83 Democrats, and 51 Americans (Know Nothing). That composition reflected a dramatic shift from the previous 33rd Congress (157 Democrats, 71 Whigs, 4 Free Soilers, 1 Independent, 1 Independent Democrat. By the time of the 1856 elections for the 35th Congress, the Republican Party had formally organized. That election yielded 132 Democrats, 90 Republicans, 14 Americans, 1 Independent.

In Cumberland, although Charles Gilman lost his bid for Congressional Representative for the 34th Congress, he did win his bid for the 35th Congress (1857-1859). As Opposition Party candidate, Gilman was one of 100 Opposition Party representatives in Congress. This meant he stood with the anti-slavery faction. His Democratic opponent was Eben F. Pillsbury who garnered 150 votes to Gilman's 178 votes in the Town of Cumberland. In 1860, Gilman decided not to run for re-election. He served as a delegate to the Republican National Convention.

In the election for the 36th Congress (1859-1861), John Perry ran as a Republican, and this time received 155 votes to David Hastings 179 votes in Cumberland. Despite the Cumberland vote, Perry won the District wide election. Hastings was a Democrat. In Cumberland, ties to the Democratic Party weakened slowly.

For the watershed election of 1860, the vote for Congressional candidate in Cumberland was tied. Cumberland voters cast 178 ballots for the Republican winner Charles W. Walton and 178 ballots for his Democratic opponent Calvin Record, a lawyer

from Auburn. Cumberland voters vacillated in their choice, still clinging to the Democratic candidate but open to arrival of a candidate from a new party.

Walton won the District vote and served in the 37th Congress. Born in Mexico, Oxford County, he was admitted to the bar in 1841, and later moved to Auburn. Winning the election, Walton served in Congress from March 4, 1861 to May 26, 1862, when he resigned to accept a judicial appointment as Associate Justice of the State Supreme Court, serving there from 1862 to 1897. When Walton resigned to accept a judicial appointment, Thomas A. D. Fessenden was selected to fill the vacancy. He served from December 1, 1862 to March 3, 1863, the end of Walton’s term.

Due to redistricting, Maine’s Congressional Delegation was reduced from six to five districts, and Cumberland then was included in the First District instead of the Second District. In September 1862, Cumberland voters cast 107 ballots for Thomas Fessenden, 159 votes for Calvin Record and 2 votes for Charles B. Merrill. However, due to redistricting, the Congressional Representative for District One of which Cumberland had become a part, was Lorenzo Sweat, Democrat. Cumberland, in 1862, did not vote on his candidacy. Sweat, a Democrat, served one term in the 38th Congress, 1863-1865.

For the 39th Congress, commencing in 1865, John Lynch, Republican, opposed Lorenzo Sweat, Democrat. John Lynch (1825-1892) was a merchant, manufacturer, and newspaper publisher. In Cumberland, Lynch received 133 votes and Sweat, the incumbent Democrat received 160 votes. In the District, John Lynch won the election, and then served three more terms as Congressional Representative. Sweat unsuccessfully contested Lynch for two more elections, 1864 and 1866. Of Lynch’s four terms, Cumberland voters gave him the majority of their votes twice. The shift toward Republican Party identification was not steady.

Chart 1: District Votes for Congressional Representative, 1833-1871

Cong Rep 2 nd District From 1863 1 st District	Age at Election	Education; college degree received	Occupation	Party ID	Pol. Exper. Elected Office	% of total Votes cast in Cumb.	Cumb. Vote for District 2 winner
23rd (1833) Congress	26	no	lawyer	Jacksonian Democrat	yes	10%	no

Cumberland and the Slavery Issue

F. O. J. Smith							
24 th (1835) Congress F. O. J. Smith	28	no	lawyer	Democrat	yes	48.8%	yes
25 th (1837) Congress F. O. J. Smith	30	no	lawyer	Democrat	yes	47.5%	yes
26 th (1839) Congress Albert Smith	46	Yes Brown Univ.	lawyer	Democrat	yes	47.8%	no
27 th (1841) Congress W. Fessenden	35	Yes Bowdoin	lawyer	Whig	yes	50%/50%	Tie vote Fessenden wins
28 th (1843) Congress Robert Dunlap	40	Yes Bowdoin	lawyer	Democrat	yes	54.7%	yes
29 th (1845) Congress Robert Dunlap	42	Yes Bowdoin	lawyer	Democrat	yes	56%	yes
30 th (1847) Congress Asa Clapp	42	Yes Norwich	merchant	Democrat	no	51.5%	yes
31 th (1849) Congress Nathaniel S. Littlefield	45	no	lawyer	Democrat	yes	52%	yes
32 nd (1851) Congress John Appleton	36	Yes Bowdoin Harv. Law	lawyer	Democrat	Yes	49.3%	no

Cumberland and the Slavery Issue

33 rd (1853) Congress Samuel Mayall	38	no	business	Democrat	yes	34.8%	no
34 th (1855) Congress John J. Perry	44	no	lawyer	Opposition Party	yes	55.7%	yes
35 th (1857) Congress Chas. Gilman	33	Yes Harvard Law Sch.	lawyer	Opposition Party/Rep.	yes	54.3%	yes
36 th (1859) Congress John J. Perry	48	no	lawyer	Republican	yes	46.4%	no
37 th (1861) Congress Chas. Walton	42	no	lawyer	Republican	no	50%/50%	Tie vote Walton wins
38 th (1863) Congress Lorenzo Sweat	44	Yes Harvard Law School	lawyer	Democrat	yes	District 1 and 2 merge	Cumberland not vote for Sweat of District 1
39 th (1865) Congress John Lynch	39	no	Merchant, Newspaper publisher	Republican	yes	44.3%	no
40 th (1867) Congress John Lynch	41	no	Merchant, Newspaper publisher	Republican	yes	50.6%	yes
41 st (1869) Congress John Lynch	43	no	Merchant, Newspaper publisher	Republican	yes	46.9%	no
42 nd (1871) Congress	45	no	Merchant, Newspaper publisher	Republican	yes	51.5%	yes

John Lynch							
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Looking at this chart, what characterizes Congressional candidates chosen by District voters? At the time of election, age of candidates ranges from 26 to 45, with the average age 39.8 years. Of the 13 candidates, 10 were lawyers and 3 were businessmen. Of the 13 candidates, 8 had university degrees. As for party identification, 8 were Democrats, 1 was a Whig, 1 was Opposition Party and 3 Republicans.

How competitive were the political parties in Cumberland? Given the closeness of the vote between competing candidates, Cumberland was essentially a modified one party system in a one party state. Although Democratic candidates most often were winners, the competition from the opposing party was moderately strong. Only twice, 1844 and 1854, did the Congressional candidate win Cumberland votes by a landslide margin, that is, over 55% of votes.

Did Cumberland serve as a bell-weather for the district vote? Not necessarily. Of the 20 elections between 1832 and 1870, on seven occasions, the Cumberland vote was contrary to the District vote. That represents nearly one third of the time. Moreover, on two occasions, 1840 and 1860, the Cumberland vote ended in a tie. Both tie votes occurred during years of Presidential elections.

What was the impact of Presidential elections? Voter turnout and interest was much higher. If voters were displeased with presidential performance, they were more likely to vote against his party's congressional candidate. In Cumberland, for example, in 1832 anti-Jacksonian sentiment in 1832 prevailed against the Jacksonian candidate; in 1838, voters were dismayed by President Van Buren's response to the Panic of 1837; in 1852, many voters opposed the Compromise of 1850 which was supported by President Fillmore.

If economic downturns occurred during a midterm election, voters were less likely to support the party in power. The 1838 election is a case in point. Under the Van Buren Administration, the Panic of 1837 resulted in serious economic dislocation. Instead of supporting the Democratic administration in power, Cumberland voters cast 52% of their votes for Ezekiel Whitman, a Federalist/Whig. The District, however, cast ballots for Albert Smith, a Democrat who won the District vote. Within the District, party loyalty and identification was stronger than in Cumberland.

Gubernatorial Elections

Turning to the Gubernatorial Elections, what do the results tell us about political preferences in Cumberland? Particularly, to what extent do Cumberland residents vote for proponents of the pro-slavery or anti-slavery issue? To what extent do voters in Cumberland reflect voting choices in the state at large? What accounts for the shifts in party preference? What do the two occasions of a tie vote tell us?

Regarding voting preferences for the pro-slavery or anti-slavery issues, data is inadequate to draw definitive conclusions. One can only surmise such preferences did determine votes among a small segment of the voting population. Aside from votes for third party candidates during the late 1840s and 1850s, we do not know how decisive these preferences were.

When each election, 1833-1872, is examined, political preferences in Cumberland appear to deviate from state trends. Significantly, 15 times out of the 39 elections between 1833 and 1872 Cumberland residents failed to vote for the winning gubernatorial candidate. That represents 38% of the elections held. When the last decade, 1862-1872, is considered, Cumberland voters 8 times out of the 11 elections failed to cast ballots for the winning candidate. That represents nearly 73% of the elections held. This discrepancy signals a shift in party realignment. Apparently, Cumberland voters were slow to reflect major shifts in party realignment within the state.

Reviewing briefly each of the gubernatorial elections, 1833-1872, we identify trends in party identification, party disintegration, and party realignment. By the early 1830s, the party system was divided between the Democratic Party of the Jacksonians and the National-Republican Party of John Quincy Adams and Henry Clay. This latter party was the forerunner of the Whigs. Within each of these two major parties, competing factions began to surface. The rise and fall of support for Governor Smith's candidacy helps provide context.

1. Rise and Fall of Governor Smith's candidacy, 1829-1833

Who was Governor Samuel E. Smith? Born in Hollis, New Hampshire in 1788, Smith prepared for college at Groton Academy and graduated from Harvard College in 1808. On leaving college, he studied law and was admitted to the Bar in Boston in 1812. After passing his Bar Exam, Smith moved to Wiscasset and established his law practice. Having grown up in an old Democrat family, he naturally allied himself with that party and became active at the grass roots level. In 1819, he was elected to the Massachusetts Legislature as representative from Lincoln County. The following year, after Maine became a State, he was elected to the Maine Legislature. In 1821, he held the first of several appointed judicial positions until 1830, when he was elected as Governor, a position he held for three

successive terms. In 1832, while Governor, he married Louise Fuller of Augusta and they had seven sons. Smith died in 1860.⁹⁶ Smith first ran for Governor in 1829.

Smith's opponent was Jonathan G. Hunton, a National Republican. Born in Unity, New Hampshire and seven years older than Smith, Hunton moved to Readfield, Maine and studied law in the office of his uncle, Samuel P. Glidden. In 1829, Hunton was a member of the Governor's Executive Council, comprised of 7 members.

During the campaign, Democrats were merciless in their criticism.⁹⁷ They attacked Hunton's private life, his business failures, his legal ignorance, and his lack of intellectual power. They impugned his honesty and questioned his fidelity to his wife. They dismissed him as "A yeoman with half an acre of land." On the other hand, National Republicans portrayed Smith as a man of wealth and culture, moving from place to place to avoid paying taxes.

That year, 1829, Hunton won election as Governor and served one term. In Cumberland, Hunton received 40.7% of the votes and Smith received 59.2% of the votes. Hunton, a National Republican, won with State-wide vote, with about 300 votes to spare. Winning by a landslide in Cumberland, Smith had appealed to party loyalty, and Cumberland voters, at the time, identified strongly with the Democrats.

Hunton was re-nominated the following year. Again, Smith was his opponent. Advocating for Hunton's re-election, the *Portland Advertiser*, argued,

There never was a period when Governor Hunton stood higher in the affections of the people; there never was a time when he could command so many votes as at the present moment. We speak from personal observation, when we say that many are becoming his strongest friends who were reluctant to support him at the last election, and no man has obtained more friends from personal acquaintance in so short a time. We know no Executive whose measures have met with a more cordial approbation. In fact, Governor Hunton, who but a year ago was unknown to the people as a public man, except by his assiduity in the Council, has steadily acquired a reputation and an influence of which he will not easily be deprived."⁹⁸

In another close election, that year, 1830, in Cumberland, Hunton received 50.4% of the votes and Smith received 49.17% of the votes. The difference between them was three

⁹⁶ Chase, Henry, editor, *Representative Men of Maine*, *op. cit.*, page xv.

⁹⁷ Ring, Elizabeth, *Maine in the Making of the Nation*, *op. cit.*, page 134.

⁹⁸ Chase, Henry, *Representative Men of Maine* (Portland, Maine: The Lakeside Press, 1893), page xiii

votes. In the state, Smith won the election by a margin of about 2000 votes, and served the first of three terms as Governor. In Cumberland, the two parties were clearly competitive.

In 1831, Hunton failed to run as a candidate, and in his place the National Republicans nominated Daniel Goodenow to oppose Smith. Born in Henniker, New Hampshire, in 1793, Daniel Goodenow at age 9, moved with his family to Brownfield, Maine. By age 20, he studied law in the office of John Holmes in Alfred and was admitted to the Maine Bar in 1817. In Alfred, he married one of John Holmes' daughters and developed an extensive law practice. In 1825, 1827, and 1830, as a National Republican, he represented his town in the Maine House of Representatives. In 1830, he was "wise enough" to vote for himself as Speaker and won by one vote.⁹⁹ Becoming a Whig at the demise of his old party, he was an unsuccessful candidate for Governor in 1831, 1832, and 1833.

In 1831, in Cumberland, Smith received 53.5% and Goodenow, 46.5%. Smith won the statewide vote. In 1832, Smith received 56.1% of the Cumberland vote and Goodenow 43.9%. Again, Smith won the statewide vote. Do these voting returns suggest that Cumberland is turning toward consistent support of the Democrats?

2. Emergence of Jacksonian Democrats, 1833-1837

In 1833, Governor Smith was opposed by Goodenow and Robert P. Dunlap. Both Smith and Dunlap registered as Democrats. That year, Cumberland voters cast 103 votes for Goodenow, 97 votes for Dunlap and 17 votes for Smith. With the Democratic vote split between Smith and Dunlap, Cumberland cast the majority of their votes for Goodenow, National Republican/Whig. The previous year, 1832, Smith received 53.5% of Cumberland votes, but the following year, 1833, he received only 8%. What accounts for this precipitous drop in support?

Apparently, the nullification crisis in South Carolina created factions within Maine's Democratic Party. The Nullification Crisis occurred after South Carolina declared the federal Tariffs of 1828 and 1832 unconstitutional and therefore null and void within the sovereign boundaries of that state. Shortly after the Maine legislature convened in January 1833, the Democratic leadership introduced a set of resolutions sympathizing with South Carolina but condemning the theory of nullification. A bitter debate ensued. Some members wanted a stronger statement condemning South Carolina. Others pressed for a more moderate version.

⁹⁹ Mundy, James H. *Speakers of the Maine House of Representatives from 1820*, Augusta, Maine: J. S. McCarthy Offset Printing, 1981.

This split surfaced later that year in a struggle over the Democratic gubernatorial nomination. On the one hand, the more radical, younger Democrats demanded the nomination of someone closer to their own political profile. On the other hand, Governor Smith retained support of older militants known as the “Junto”. Caught in this quagmire of polarized views, the Democratic legislative caucus refused to make a nomination, and instead, it insisted the Democratic state committee call a convention for that purpose. This refusal to re-nominate the incumbent was unprecedented.¹⁰⁰

When the convention convened, it was controlled by the more radical element, which nominated Robert Dunlap on the first ballot. The split was confirmed when Smith’s supporters, defying party pressure for conformity, ran him as an independent candidate. In this way, control of the Democratic Party passed from the “Junto”, which had dominated it since the beginning of Maine statehood in 1820, to that wing of the party known as Jacksonians. Dunlap was a Jacksonian Democrat.

Some of the older leaders left the Democratic Party. Ostensibly, they left because of disagreement with Jackson’s bank policy. Actually, many of them left because they had lost power within the party. In contrast, the new Democratic leaders presented a united front by emphasizing Jacksonian views on the bank, the tariff, and domestic policy. These issues resonated with voters during the mid-1830s, and Robert Dunlap served four terms as Governor.

Who was Robert P. Dunlap? Born in Brunswick on August 17, 1794, Dunlap was raised in well-to-circumstances. He was the youngest son of Captain John and Mrs. Mary Tappan Dunlap. In 1815, he graduated from Bowdoin, and in 1818, was admitted to the Bar. A lawyer by profession, he forsook the law and the Federalist Party affiliation of his family and embarked on a life-long political career as a Democratic-Republican and then a Jacksonian Democrat. From 1821-1823, he served in the Maine House of Representatives. Turning to the Maine Senate, he was elected for two sets of non-consecutive terms, 1824-1828 and 1830-1833, including three years as Speaker of the Senate, 1827, 1828, and 1831. Wealthy, personable, and well-liked, he presided over the Senate with unruffled fairness and tact, thereby winning commendation from all parties.¹⁰¹

In the watershed election of 1833, Cumberland voters cast 47% of their votes for Goodenow, 44% for Dunlap, and 8% for Smith, the incumbent Governor. Dunlap carried the election. For the following three elections, Cumberland gave Dunlap a majority of their

¹⁰⁰ Wescott, Richard R. *New Men, New Issues: The Formation of the Republican Party in Maine*, (Portland, Maine: Maine Historical Society, 1986), page 17.

¹⁰¹ Allen Johnson and Dumas Malone, editors, *Dictionary of American Biography* (New York: Scribner’s Sons, 1930), Volume 3, page 515.

votes, 53.9%, 56.7%, 52.6%. Dunlap carried the State and completed four terms as Governor. He defeated his Federalist-Whig opponents on the Jacksonian platform of opposition to the protective tariff and banking interests.

The following year, 1834, in Cumberland, Dunlap received 53.9% of the votes and his opponent Peleg Sprague, an Anti-Jackson National Republican, received 46%. Dunlap won the statewide vote. However, his opponent, Peleg Sprague has an interesting history, relevant to the anti-slavery issue.

Peleg Sprague (1793-1880), upon graduation from Harvard, studied law with a federal judge. In 1815, he was admitted to practice law in Hallowell, Maine. He served one term in the Maine House of Representatives, 1821-1822, and then in 1823 won election from the Fourth District to the U.S. House of Representatives, serving from 1824-1829. Subsequently, he served in the U. S. Senate, 1829-1835. In 1834, as a token candidate against the dominant Democrats, he ran for Governor. After losing the election, he resigned from the Senate and resumed his law practice in Boston.

In Boston, on August 27, 1835, Peleg Sprague joined H. G. Otis and attended a meeting in which people opposed Northern interference to the slavery issue. Sprague opposed slavery, in the abstract, but deprecated Northern coercive measures. In his view, slavery was an evil, but the remedy is not found by inference from the Free States. The mood of these Anti-Slavery leaders is described in a paragraph quoted from Garrison's *Liberator*:

Yesterday afternoon, Fanueil Hall was turned into a worse than Auegan stable, by the pollutions of a pro-slavery meeting, held for the first time within its walls. If a modern Hercules could draw the vast Atlantic through it, he would fail in his attempt to purify it. Call it no longer the Cradle of Liberty, but the Refuge of Slavery!...We shall not abandon a single principle, nor suppress a single publication, nor recall a single Agent, nor dissolve a single Society, nor relax a single effort....If we are beaten with many stripes [*sic.*] and thrust into the inner prison, like Paul and Silas, we shall pray and sing praises unto God...and if they burn our bodies at the stake, a voice from our ashes shall peal this condemnation, *God is against you!*"¹⁰²

Although Sprague opposed slavery, he, unlike the firebrand Garrison, was unwilling for the Free States to interfere in its resolution. How well this ambiguity was understood by Cumberland voters is unclear. As an anti-Jackson National Republican, he did receive 46% of

¹⁰² *New Hampshire Sentinel*, August 27, 1835.

the Cumberland vote for Governor. Did these Cumberland voters identify with his party and/or his stand on slavery?

In 1835, Governor Dunlap's opponent was William King, a Democrat-Republican, who served as the First Governor of Maine. Born in Scarborough, William King (1768-1852) received a limited education and embarked on what appears to be a checkered career. As a teenager, he worked in a lumber mill and eventually became an owner. In 1820, at age 52, he became Maine's first governor, receiving a popular vote of 95.3%. However, he resigned in May 1821 in order to serve as U.S. commissioner working for treaty negotiation with Spain. He held that post until 1824. In 1828, he became the State Building Commissioner, and from 1831-1834, he served as Collector of Customs in Bath. In 1835, at age 67, he ran for governor against incumbent Governor Dunlap. Failing to win the election, King retired from public service.

For the 1835 gubernatorial election, voting turnout in Cumberland was low. Governor Dunlap received 56.8% and former Governor King received 43.2% of the Cumberland vote. Those voting for King perhaps were motivated by party identification. Possibly, the distribution of this vote reflects party identification among Cumberland voters.

In 1836, Governor Dunlap faced Edward Kent, a Whig, as his opponent. Edward Kent (1802-1877) was born in Concord, New Hampshire and graduated from Harvard, in the same class as Ralph Waldo Emerson. Moving to Maine, he apprenticed as a lawyer in Topsham and then moved to Bangor, establishing his practice there in 1825. In 1829, he was elected to the Maine Senate, and served 1831-1833. He subsequently served two terms as Mayor of Bangor, 1836-1837.

In Cumberland, for the 1836 gubernatorial vote, Dunlap received 52.6% of the vote and Kent received 47.4% of the vote. Dunlap's margin of victory was becoming smaller. In Cumberland, the difference was 11 votes. Considering the tightness of the race and the challenging economic issues, Governor Dunlap began to realize that next time he might be seriously challenged and even lose the election.

As Governor, Dunlap was a persistent champion of laboring and agricultural classes, and thus had appeal for Cumberland voters. He initiated the first geological survey of the state and encouraged establishment of the first insane asylum in Maine. However, during his fourth term, starting in 1837, he had several major challenges.

In 1837, two incidents, managed by Governor Dunlap, attracted national attention. In June 1837, a Maine census agent was arrested by the Governor of New Brunswick in the disputed Madawaska territory, a dispute stemming from the Treaty of Paris in 1793. Dunlap claimed the soil of Maine invaded, called out the militia, and corresponded with them

Secretary of State John Forsyth. With his vigor and tact, he brought the situation under control.

The second incident occurred in August 1837 and again commanded national attention when, although a Democrat and sympathetic with grievances of the South, he refused to extradite to Georgia the skipper and mate of a schooner in which a slave had stowed away. This incident is known as the Amistad Incident.¹⁰³ It illustrates Dunlap's position on the anti-slavery issue.

After the economic expansion from mid-1834 to mid-1836, the Panic of 1837 involved a financial crisis that touched off a major recession continuing into the mid-1840s. Profits, prices, and wages went down and unemployment went up. Pessimism abounded. Banks collapsed. Businesses failed. Prices declined, and unemployment may have been as high as 25%. This recession persisted for approximately seven years. At last, the Whigs had an opportunity to reclaim political success at the polls. Perhaps sensing the impending Democratic debacle, Governor Dunlap refused re-nomination in 1837, and the state convention chose as its nominee Gorham L. Parks of Bangor.

3. Seesaw between Kent and Fairfield, 1837-1842

In 1837, Cumberland voters supported the Democratic candidate, this time Gorham Parks (1794-1877) of Bangor. His opponent was Edward Kent, a Whig. Both candidates were from Bangor, both candidates were graduates of Harvard University, and both candidates were lawyers. Significantly, both candidates reflected the growing importance of eastern Maine and its role in state government.

As a Jacksonian Democrat, Parks was anti-bank, anti-monopoly, and anti-paper money. In Bangor, he was prominent leader of the Loco-foco or radical wing of the Democratic Party. In general, the Loco-focos supported Andrew Jackson and Martin Van Buren. They were for free trade and legal protection for labor unions. They stood against paper money, financial speculation, and state banks. The Whigs seized upon the name "Locofoco" and made their own translation, using the Spanish word "loco" meaning "mad" or "cracked brained" and "foco" for "focus." They meant the Democratic Party was a "focus of folly." This derogatory name continued to be associated with the Democratic Party well into the 1850s.

In a very close election, Cumberland voters gave Parks 52.4% and Kent 47.5%, a difference of 11 votes. What caused voters in Cumberland to continue supporting the Democratic candidate, namely Parks, is not clear, but it seems the downward trend in the

¹⁰³ For a detailed account of this incident, consult year 1837 of the Timeline.

economy may have persuaded swing voters to give Parks a chance to remedy the situation. Moreover, party identification seemed quite stable. As yet, Cumberland voters were not ready to give the opposing Whigs a chance. The statewide vote, however, favored Kent, a Whig. In the closely contested race, Parks lost the statewide vote by less than 1000 votes of the 70,000 cast. Democrats challenged the election results, and legal questions were referred to the Maine Supreme Court, which decided in favor of Judge Kent. Parks did not run again for Governor.

With the defeat of Parks, the Democratic Party was shaken to its core and started to splinter into several factions. On the one hand, younger and more radical members were supported by Nathan Clifford and Hannibal Hamlin. This group tended to favor John Fairfield, a second term Congressman. On the other hand, disgruntled Democrats, viewing themselves as Conservatives, disagreed with President Van Buren's bank policies, and refused to accept new party leadership. Gradually, they drifted away and were absorbed in the Whig Party.

Desperately, the Democrats sought a new candidate and nominated John Fairfield, currently serving his second term in the U.S. House of Representatives. In Congress, Fairfield had become well known for speeches he had made after the Cilley duel and for speeches on Maine's northeast boundary question. In addition to being a Congressional colleague of Jonathan Cilley, Fairfield had been a neighbor and friend. These Congressional speeches made him a national figure, and as a result, at the Democratic convention, Fairfield came close to being nominated for Vice President of the United States.

As far as the slavery issue was concerned, Fairfield at the time opposed any interference by Northerners. He opposed slavery but believed Southern States had the right to settle the matter for themselves. Admittedly, abolition assumed a larger place in Congressional debates. In Elijah Parish Lovejoy, Maine had produced an abolitionist who created nationwide stir and in 1837, had sacrificed his life for the cause. Fairfield was not then an abolitionist, but did recognize slavery as unacceptable.

For his part, comfortable in his Congressional role, Fairfield was reluctant to run for the governorship, but when pressed repeatedly, he yielded and accepted the nomination. This reluctance he expressed in one of his letters, dated June 27, 1838, to his wife:

So it seems the matter is settled....For myself, aside from political considerations, defeat would not excite any very strong feelings of regret. The office has nothing inviting about it in my eye. Its duties, cares, responsibilities, *etc.*, are far from being desirable to one who loves quiet as I do. Beside, you know I hate dignity, much more, stiff, stately form and ceremony, and Governor or no Governor, I never can array myself in it.

Another of the unpleasant things connected with my anticipations is the abuse that I must receive from the federal papers. Slander will be heaped on slander; my conduct misrepresented; my motives impugned, my character traduced & everything done & said which may be thought necessary to prevent my election. Well, I must make up my mind to endure it.¹⁰⁴

As soon became apparent, the 1838 gubernatorial campaign, clouded with vicious attacks, confirmed this prediction. The Whigs declared Fairfield young, inexperienced, and a loco-foco.

In 1838 and 1839, Democrats nominated John Fairfield as their candidate for Governor. Born in Saco, Maine, John Fairfield (1797-1847) attended Saco schools, Thornton Academy, and Bowdoin College. Admitted to the Bar in 1826, he was appointed reporter of the Maine Supreme Judicial Court in 1834, and then elected as a Democrat to the United States House of Representatives, serving March 4, 1835 to December 24, 1838, when he resigned, having been elected Governor. Both in 1838 and 1839, Fairfield was opposed by Edward Kent, Whig.

For the 1838 election, the turnout was the highest ever recorded in Cumberland, and Cumberland voters cast 52.18% of their votes for Governor Kent, a Whig, and 47.81% for Fairfield, a difference of 13 votes. Contrary to the Cumberland vote, Fairfield won the statewide vote by about a 3000 vote majority.

For the 1839 election, Cumberland voters virtually reversed their support and cast 52.9% of their votes for Fairfield, and 47% for Kent. This time, the Cumberland vote corresponded to a winning statewide vote for Fairfield.

The 1840 election was a cliffhanger. It was one of the most boisterous in Maine history. It marked the great revival of the Whig Party, both at the State and at the national level. It became known as the "hard cider and coonskin campaign." At their national convention, the Whigs had nominated General William Harrison of Ohio for President and John Tyler of Virginia for Vice-President. The Whigs agreed on little except their united opposition to Van Buren. The Democrats supported Van Buren, the incumbent President. Candidates for governor were Fairfield for the Democrats and Kent for the Whigs, as was the case the previous year.

Turnout again was exceptionally high. Determined to regain the State House, the Whigs waged a vigorous campaign. Haunted by their repeated defeats during the past two

¹⁰⁴ Fairfield, John, *The Letters of John Fairfield*, edited by Arthur G. Staples, (Lewiston, Maine: Lewiston Journal Company, 1922), page238.

elections, the Whigs launched a fresh, aggressive approach. Freeman B. Morse queried his Whig colleague, William Pitt Fessenden,

What do you think of the idea of holding political meetings & making speeches in most of the towns throughout the State? The business may be arranged through the state, town, & county committees. Each county might make arrangements within itself & by some pre-concocted plan speakers might happen along. Our people may be too fastidious to adopt the stumping system at present but I am satisfied it is the most honest and effectual way of electioneering & we may adopt it as far as it will be judicious & safe.¹⁰⁵

By August 1840, this strategy was adopted in full force, and Whigs were stumping all over the State. Emboldened and confident, they held mass meetings which featured speeches and free dinners. The flames of partisan fervor were ignited.

Meanwhile the Democrats, having won the past two elections, felt complacent and confident. They were comfortable with Fairfield again heading the Democratic ticket. Relatively unnoticed was a factional split in the Oxford congressional district, where the district convention ended in complete chaos after a younger group led by Nathan S. Littlefield confronted an older group led by Virgil D. Parris.¹⁰⁶ This split deepened in the month prior to the election.

At the gubernatorial level, the Cumberland vote was tied, with 146 votes for Fairfield and 146 votes for Kent. This tie suggested intense party competition, as well as shifts in party allegiance. The statewide vote was so close that the election results were referred to the State legislature. Statewide, the difference between Fairfield and Kent was 67 votes. The Whig candidate Edward Kent appeared to be the underdog. However, dominated by a Whig majority, the legislature named Edward Kent, Whig, as Governor.

In both houses of the State legislature, the Whigs won. For the first time since Maine became a state in 1820, the Whigs won both houses. Receiving the results, Governor Fairfield wrote his wife a letter dated September 19, 1840.

I regret that I have no more agreeable communication to make to you than the fact of the almost complete rout and overthrow of the Democratic Party in the late election. The Senate is clean gone. The House is yet doubtful... The result of the election is nearly as unexpected to the Whigs here as to us, and is almost

¹⁰⁵ Wescott, Richard R., *op. cit.*, page 18-19. The letter was dated May 16, 1840, and is found in the William Pitt Fessenden papers, Library of Congress.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, page 19.

inexplicable. ...I trust I shall be able to meet this disaster like a Christian and a philosopher.

Nationally, Whigs hoped that as Maine went, so would the rest of the nation. The gubernatorial election in September gave momentum to Whigs' hopes for the national election in November.

For the Whigs, Van Buren became a major target of criticism due to economic difficulties caused by the Panic of 1837. In contrast, Whigs emphasized the virtues of their "simple farmer" candidate, the hero of Tippecanoe. Harrison had run for election in 1836, but won in 1840. He had gained national fame for leading US forces against American Indians at the Battle of Tippecanoe in 1811. Originally, Harrison had come from a wealthy, slaveholding family in Virginia, but during the campaign he was presented as a humble frontiersman in style of Andrew Jackson. Maine Whigs agreed only on the need to eliminate Van Buren. This image appealed to Maine voters and Harrison carried the state, but only by a slim margin of 422 votes, .46% of votes cast.

For the Presidential race, William Henry Harrison carried the state and the nation. This result assigned Maine the role of serving as political barometer for the nation as expressed in the slogan, "As Maine goes, so goes the Union." Although Harrison carried Maine by only a 422 vote majority, he swept the country. In the end, Harrison captured 19 of 26 states and won the Electoral College with 234 for Harrison and 60 for Van Buren. Turnout was 60% higher than in 1836.

The results of the 1840 election are remembered with the song,

Oh, have you heard how old Maine went?

She went, hell-bent, for Governor Kent,

And Tippecanoe and Tyler, too,

Tippecanoe and Tyler, too.

For the first time in a presidential election, the media projected a winner based on a sampling of early votes.¹⁰⁷ Horace Greely's *New Yorker*, on November 6, 1840 proclaimed:

The agony is over. The most excited and vehement political contest which this country has ever known is substantially diminished, and terminated, we believe, in

¹⁰⁷Shafer, Ronald G., *The Carnival Campaign*, (Chicago, Illinois: Chicago Review Press, 2016) page 182.

the election of William H. Harrison of Ohio as President and John Tyler of Virginia as Vice President of these United States.

In Maine, the *Bangor Whig* opined, "A Nation redeemed! The most important event in the political history of a great nation has just transpired. The sun has set upon Martin Van Buren and risen in all its moral splendor upon William Henry Harrison. The election of General Harrison is a moral triumph – a brilliant victory of men – high-minded men – over corruption and power."¹⁰⁸ However, after 32 days into his term, President Harrison died.

Returning to the races for Maine governor, in 1841 election, Fairfield rebounded and won 52.4% of the Cumberland vote as opposed to 47.2% for Kent, his Whig opponent. Fairfield won the statewide vote. Kent did not run again for Governor.

Kent had been a candidate in six gubernatorial elections, 1836-1841, inclusive. In these subsequent elections, Cumberland voters gave him 99 votes, 109 votes, then 155 votes, 136 votes, 146 votes tie, and 125 votes. Turnout was exceptionally high in 1838, 1839, and 1840. In fact not until 1860 and the impending civil war, did turnout surpass that of 1838-1840. High turnout suggests voter dissatisfaction with the current situation and a need to challenge incumbents, be they Whigs or Democrats. That also suggests why there was a "seesaw" between Kent and Fairfield. Parenthetically, in recognition of each governor's contribution to state government, especially with respect to boundary disputes in northern Maine, two towns are named in their honor, Fort Fairfield and Fort Kent.

4. A Decade of Democratic Rule, 1841-1851

For the 1842 election, Fairfield was opposed by Edward Robinson and James Appleton. Robinson was a Whig, and Appleton a member of the Liberty Party. In Cumberland, Fairfield won by a landslide vote of 56.3%.

The Democrats continued to win gubernatorial elections. Hugh J. Anderson served three terms, 1843-1845. John Dana served three terms 1846-1848. John Hubbard served three terms 1849-1851. Cumberland voters supported each one, each time. However, just as Democratic support in Cumberland appeared to be solid and stable, the election of 1852 was won by William G. Crosby, a Whig.

At the May 1844 Democratic National Convention, the delegates split their support among three candidates: the abolitionist Martin Van Buren, leader of the dominant Jacksonian faction, Lewis Cass, advocate of territorial expansion, and James Buchanan,

¹⁰⁸ Quoted in *Niles' Register*, November 28, 1840.

Senator from Pennsylvania and “moderate.” Initially, Van Buren was the leading candidate, but because he feared a sectional crisis over status of slavery in the West, and thus opposed annexation of Texas, he lost support of Southerners and those Democrats who favored expansion. On the eighth ballot, House Speaker James Polk was nominated as a compromise candidate. He called for “immediate annexation of Texas and reoccupation of the disputed Oregon territories. Former President Andrew Jackson, still popular and elder spokesman of the party, gave his support to Polk. On the ninth roll call, delegates voted unanimously for Polk.

In Maine, Democrats who favored annexation supported Polk. Governor Hugh Anderson was a strong supporter of Polk. In contrast, Fairfield, also a Democrat, supported Van Buren. With an exceptionally high turnout, Polk won by a landslide in Maine. Cumberland voters supported Governor Anderson with 56% of their votes.

During Polk’s presidency, many abolitionists criticized him as an instrument of “Slave Power.” In their view, Polk supported annexation of Texas because he favored spreading slavery. Polk also was against the Wilmot Proviso which would have banned slavery anywhere in any territory acquired from Mexico. The Proviso passed in the House but not in the Senate. Polk accused both Northern and Southern leaders of attempting to use the slavery issue for political gains.

Polk was a slaveholder his entire life. Once he became President and could afford it, he bought more slaves. His will stipulated his slaves were to be freed after his wife Sarah died. However, the Emancipation Proclamation and the Thirteenth Amendment freed all remaining slaves long before the death of his wife in 1891. Polk died in 1849, three months after he left office.

Voters in Maine began to feel uncomfortable with Polk’s policies, particularly his position on slavery issues. For the 1846 gubernatorial election, John Dana, a businessman, was the Democratic nominee was opposed by David Bronson a Whig and Samuel Fessenden of the Liberty Party. Cumberland voters gave Dana 52%, Bronson 40% and Fessenden 6.8% of votes cast.

When the same three candidates competed in the 1847 gubernatorial election, Cumberland gave Dana an even higher percentage, 55.3%, Bronson even less than previous year 38%, and Fessenden about the same with 6.47%. However, at the state level, none of the candidates received a majority and so the election was thrown to the state legislature. Fortunately for Dana, the legislature was dominated by Democrats, and so Dana won the election. He was elected as governor in 1846, 1847, and 1848. Dana was a conservative anti-slavery Democrat.

At the state level, in 1848, the Democrats in Maine carried the governorship, and of the 7 Congressional races, 5 went to the Democrats and 2 to Whigs. In the second district, Cumberland voted 55.6% for Asa Clapp, a Democrat.

In 1848, Zachery Taylor, a national hero as a result of Mexican-American war, was Presidential Candidate for the Whigs. Lewis Cass was candidate for the Democrats and Van Buren ran on the Free Soil Party ticket. Both major parties began to splinter into factions, a signal of possible realignment.

Few people in Maine, regardless which party, believed General Taylor fit to serve as President.¹⁰⁹ Taylor himself was a reluctant candidate. Before 1848, he had not voted, nor had he publicly identified his political beliefs. He considered himself an Independent. Devoid of political experience, he was deemed unqualified for the Presidency.

Maine Whigs remained lukewarm toward Taylor. Prominent Whig, William Pitt Fessenden could not support Taylor. Disparagingly, he wrote to his uncle in Fryeburg. Zachery Taylor, he claimed, was a man without political experience, devoid of a fixed opinion on any of the issues of the day, and worse than that he was slaveholder.¹¹⁰

On the other hand, Lewis O. Cass had served as colonel in the War of 1812 and took part in the Battle of Thames; had served as governor of Michigan Territory (1813-1831); served as Secretary of War (1831-1836) under Andrew Jackson; appointed minister to France (1836-1842); ran as candidate for President in 1844, but lost on 9th ballot to Polk; served in US Senate (1845-1848). At the state, national, and international levels, Cass had served his country. However, the Whigs accused Cass of being two-faced, and of drawing excessive compensation, while serving his country.

The *Eastern Argus* tried to mobilize the anti-slavery men among Cass supporters. The newspaper emphasized the fact that Taylor was a slave-holder.¹¹¹ As for Van Buren, the *Argus* had warmly supported him for Democratic nomination in 1844, but now declared his purpose was to organize North against South, a first step in the destruction of the Union.

The *Portland Advertiser*, on the subject of slavery, said:

When Southern slave-holders speak boldly and impudently of their right to extend slavery over territory now free, it is time that the issue should be met boldly and decidedly by the North without any such miserable shifts and

¹⁰⁹ Ring, Elizabeth. *Maine in the Making of the Nation*, *op.cit.* page 308.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹¹ Hatch, Louis C. *op. cit.*, page 343

compromises. "But we must preserve the Union," says one. That is always the cry of slave-holders whenever they wish to intimidate a dough-face. The only way to preserve the Union is to promptly meet and decide this question of liberty.¹¹²

Despite these animated exchanges of views, voters in Maine and in Cumberland remained relatively apathetic. Turnout for the 1848 election was significantly lower than in 1844, despite the increase in population.

In Maine, Cass, the Democratic candidate, received 45.87% of popular vote and all 9 electoral votes, whereas Taylor received 40.25% of popular vote. Nationwide, Taylor took 163 of the 290 electoral votes. In the popular vote, Taylor took 47.3%, Cass 42.5%, and Van Buren, the Free Soil Candidate, 12.10%.

As President, Zachary Taylor's top priority was preserving the Union. Even though Taylor was a Southerner and a slaveholder who owned over 100 slaves, he did not want an expansion of slavery. Taylor believed it was impractical to talk about expanding slavery into western territories, since neither cotton nor sugar could be easily grown there and therefore, slaves were not necessary. Taylor's main goal was sectional peace, in which no region would be favored over another.

Attempting to finesse the question, he urged settlers in New Mexico and California to by-pass the territorial stage and draft constitutions for statehood. By entering the Union as states, this would leave the slavery question out of Congressional domain. By October 1849, delegates attending a Californian constitutional convention unanimously agreed to join the Union and ban slavery within their borders. This set the stage for the Compromises of 1850.

Drafted by Whig Henry Clay and brokered by Democrat Stephen A. Douglas, the Compromise of 1850 defused a four year political confrontation between Slave and Free States. Momentarily, the sectional conflict was lessened. However, indeed it was a compromise and what particularly bothered northerners was the fourth provision, namely, the Fugitive Slave Act. Under this provision, anyone in any state, free or not, was required to arrest runaway slaves and return them to their owners. Anyone who failed to return runaway slaves to their owners would be fined one thousand dollars.

Slowly, the Compromise of 1850 made its way through the legislative process. April 17, 1850, debates flared on the Senate floor. The Compromise floor leader Henry S. Foote of Mississippi drew a pistol against Senator Benton of Missouri. Finally, on September 18, 1850, it was enacted into law. Prior to that, however, events took an unexpected turn.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, page 344. Quoted from Portland Advertiser.

On July 4, 1850, President Taylor attended holiday celebrations and a fund-raising event at the Washington monument, then under construction. As part of the festivities, Taylor consumed copious amounts of cherries and iced milk. Over the course of the next several days, he became severely ill with unknown digestive ailment. Eventually, his doctor diagnosed it as cholera, which is spread mostly through poor sanitation procedures, be it food or water. Despite treatment, Taylor died July 9, 1850. He was 65 years old. After Taylor's death, his Vice President Millard Fillmore became the thirteenth President and completed Taylor's term of office.

When Fillmore became President, he changed the administration's position on the Compromise bill. Fillmore supported Clay's Compromise, although Taylor had not. As Vice President, Fillmore had presided over angry debates, while Congress decided whether to allow slavery in the Mexican Cession.

When administrations change Presidents, members of the Cabinet customarily submit their resignations. Complying with this custom, members of Taylor's Cabinet resigned, but expected Fillmore to reject their resignations. Instead of rejecting their resignations, Fillmore accepted them. To soften this surprise, Fillmore asked them to stay another month. Most of them refused. On July 20, 1851, Fillmore sent new nominations to the Senate, and among them named Webster as Secretary of State.

Fillmore exerted pressure to pass the Compromise of 1850, which eventually passed in September 1850. The Fugitive Slave Law, section four of the Compromise, was particularly controversial. Abolitionists resisted the inequities of the law as it punished severely anyone aiding an escaped slave, and if captured that slave had no due process. Fillmore felt duty bound to enforce it, even though he was opposed to slavery. By doing so, he damaged his popularity within the Whig Party.

The following year, 1851, was relatively quiet, both in the nation and in Maine. Due to an amendment to the state constitution, an amendment changing dates of the sessions of the legislature, no state elections in Maine were held. That meant those elected to state offices would continue from May 1851 to January 1853 whereupon those elected in September 1852 would take office.

In 1849, Hubbard was nominated by his party as candidate for governor. In opposition, the Whigs nominated Elijah L. Hamlin, brother of Hannibal Hamlin. For this election, the Whig Party made a concerted effort to defeat the Democrats in state elections. To appeal to the Free Soil Party, the Whigs embarked on a fusion effort so they could break Democratic control of the Senate and the governorship. The Whigs referred to slavery as the dominant issue of the election. According to the *Portland Advertiser*, as published in its February 1,

1849 issue, "Let us oppose to the last the addition of a single inch of slave territory to our Union. In a word, let us stand firm on Whig ground, and in this way we will maintain the triumphant ascendancy of the Whig Party." This position was shared by the Free Soilers.

In July 1849, the state legislature passed a set of strong antislavery resolves which received nearly unanimous vote.¹¹³ However, when Governor Dana refused to sign them, these resolutions were passed again in both houses by large margins. No matter what the governor's position, the legislature repeatedly recorded its opposition to the extension of slavery.

The Free Soil Party nominated George Talbot. The Democrats nominated John Hubbard. Both men were anti-slavery, but Hubbard by far had wider personal appeal and thereby attracted some votes from the Free Soil Party.

Despite Democratic intraparty disputes and Whig efforts to attract elements of the Free Soil Party, the Democrats won clear victory in 1849. Hubbard easily won the governorship. Total votes for both Whigs and Free Soil Party declined sharply from 1848. The Whig vote declined about 2000 votes; the Free Soil Party dropped nearly 4000 votes; and the Democrats lost only 2100 votes.¹¹⁴ The Democrats won a majority in both houses of the state legislature. The Whigs won two state senate seats in Cumberland County because there the Democrats were embroiled in intraparty fighting. The Cumberland County Democratic Convention in 1849 passed a resolution stating they "would never consent to make opposition to slavery the test of political orthodoxy."¹¹⁵

Hubbard was re-elected in 1850, this time his opponent was William G. Crosby, Whig. Due to an amendment to the Maine Constitution, the beginning of the political year changed to the first Wednesday in January, and the government by act of State legislature continued in place without an election in 1851.

Passage of the Maine Law in 1851 led the Democrat Party to an open rupture between two rival factions, the Woolheads and Wildcats. The Democrats divided 56-35 and the Whigs 34-15 in favor of the temperance bill. Free Soilers supported it. As a non-teetotaler, Governor Hubbard hesitated to sign the proposed law. Recognizing a definite fight for his re-nomination in 1852 and believing public opinion favored the new law, Hubbard finally signed it. A major motive was his need to secure support from the prohibitionists so he

¹¹³ Wescott, Richard R. *New Men, New Issues: The Formation of the Republican Party in Maine*. (Portland, Maine: Maine Historical Society, 1986), page 75-76.

¹¹⁴ Wescott, Richard R. *op. cit.*, page 79, as reported from the Maine Register, 1849.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, page 78.

could win re-election. To further his public position, he led in founding a Legislature Temperance Society and in 1852, presided at the state temperance convention.

5. Party Disintegration and Realignment, 1852-1860

For the Presidential election of 1852, both of the two major parties split into factions. Positions on the controversial Compromise of 1850 caused much of the rift.

The Whigs had three major candidates: President Fillmore, whose strength was in the South; Daniel Webster, whose strength was in New England and the large eastern cities; and General Scott who was a candidate of the anti-compromise Whigs. In Maine, the Whig newspapers tended to support General Scott. People of Maine still had not forgiven Webster his role in the Webster-Ashburton Treaty of 1842.

The South demanded endorsement of the Compromise of 1850, but the “Conscience Whigs” of the North opposed such an endorsement. In Maine, those who favored the Compromise, “Silver Greys,” made a concerted effort in Portland to elect delegates to the State convention, but their delegates were defeated and a resolution praising Webster was voted down.¹¹⁶ The State Convention endorsed Scott and nominated Crosby for Governor. Allegedly, Mr. Crosby was a “Whig of the highest type, a refined and cultured gentleman of excellent moral character, conservative by nature, desirous of improvement but only if it could be obtained without agitation, disorder, and interference with vested rights.”¹¹⁷

The Whig National Convention met on June 16, 1852. Fifty two ballots were cast, but no result. On the fifty- third ballot, General Scott was nominated by a small margin. Whig leaders were aware that the 1840 and 1848 Presidential elections were won with a Whig military candidate. Perhaps that would bode well for 1852. Scott received the bulk of his support from Northern Whigs who opposed the Compromise of 1850

Maine was pleased with the candidate but displeased with the platform which was adopted after Scott received the nomination. When delegates abandoned Fillmore for Scott, they exacted a pledge that the compromise of 1850 be accepted. Such a bargain was an anathema to the anti-slavery supporters. William Pitt Fessenden, serving on the Committee on Resolutions, fought it both in committee and in convention. The South insisted, and so the resolution was adopted 212-70. The Whigs were split.

¹¹⁶ Hatch, Louis C., *op. cit.* page 355.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*

Likewise, the Democratic Party was split and its national convention deadlocked. Forty-eight ballots were cast without result. On the forty-ninth, the convention “broke” to Franklin Pierce, of New Hampshire, a dark horse. One of his principal advocates was Senator Bion Bradbury of Maine, “a college mate and lifelong friend of Pierce.”¹¹⁸

In the summer of 1852, Whig politicians turned their attention toward the influx of immigrants, as a source of new voters. Attracted to the name “Democrat” and repulsed by the nativist wing of the Whig Party, these new voters tended to turn toward the Democrat Party. However, Whig strategists were convinced some of the immigrant Catholics could be induced to support Scott. While serving as military commander during the War with Mexico, Scott had made an effort to court the Catholic clergy and protect church property. Moreover, Scott’s eldest daughter had converted to Catholicism and had entered a nunnery. Such a strategy failed to be effective. After Scott’s nomination, the Democrats made an effort to stir Irish and other Catholics against him.

For the national presidential election of 1852, Pierce carried Maine by a margin of 9000 votes, and swept the nation. The Whig candidate, General Scott carried only four states – Vermont, Massachusetts, Kentucky, and Tennessee.

The Campaign of 1852 was the last campaign to be waged by the Whigs. The Party disintegrated from lack of insight and courage required to meet the new questions which were dividing the country. The *Bangor Whig* prophesied that the demand of the South for acceptance of the Compromise would mean destruction of the Whigs and the rise of a great sectional party in its place.¹¹⁹ This collapse of the Whig Party in 1852 was underscored by the death of two great leaders, Henry Clay in June, and Daniel Webster in October 1852. Clay had been the presidential nominee for his party in 1824, 1832, and 1844. Webster had served as the Whig presidential nominee in 1836, 1840, and 1852.

At the state level, the gubernatorial campaign in 1852 was fiercely fought. Opposition to the incumbent John Hubbard was bitter. As governor, he had offended the old guard by some of his appointments. In 1851, he had signed the controversial Maine Law and presided over the temperance convention held in Augusta. The Democratic Party in Maine was divided between the Hunker and the Hamlin wings.

Those opposed to the prohibitory Maine Law threatened to bolt the party. They were not swayed by appeals to party loyalty. These Hunkers, as they were known, held their own convention and nominated an independent candidate for Governor, Anson G. Chandler. Meanwhile members of a legislative caucus re-nominated Governor Hubbard. The Whigs,

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, page 356.

¹¹⁹ Hatch, Louis C. *op. cit.*, page 358.

in nominating William J. Crosby, tried to stem the flow of temperance men to Hubbard. The Free Soil Party nominated Ezekiel Holmes.

For the election, Cumberland voters gave Governor Hubbard 38.76%, William Crosby 30.8%, Anson Chandler 29.5% and Ezekiel Holmes .8% of the popular vote. The vote between Crosby and Chandler differed by a margin of three votes. Had Chandler not been on the ballot and the Democratic Party not split, Hubbard would have won. Party splits had a cost.

Statewide no candidate received a majority of votes. Even, the state legislature was divided. In such fractious circumstances, a secret deal¹²⁰ was made between Crosby and the Whigs on one side and the Wild Cats on the other. Under the terms of this deal, they agreed the Wildcats should help the Whigs obtain a clear majority in the Senate, thereby ensuring the election of Crosby. In return, the Whigs pledged to vote for the Wild Cat candidate for Senator. That would be former Governor Dana. The alliance was successful. True to their word, the Wildcats voted as pledged, so the Whigs had 18 seats and the Democrats had 15 seats in the State Senate.

The task of the State House of Representatives was to choose two from the four highest candidates for Governor and one of them would be selected by the State Senate. The Whigs had cleared the way in the Senate, but even so, Crosby's election was still not certain. The Democrats voted for Crosby, but in return, they expected some kind of reward, in addition to the pleasure of defeating Governor Hubbard. As a reward, they obtained a majority on the Governor's Council, which was comprised of 4 Hunker Democrats and 3 Whigs. The governor could not appoint anyone without the consent of this Council. Crosby was chosen governor. Notably, the Democratic "split" occurred not only in Maine but throughout the North.

The following year, 1853, for the gubernatorial race, the Whigs re-nominated Governor Crosby. The Democrats, however, had a more difficult task. The Hunkers and anti-prohibitionists were in control at the state convention. Four candidates were considered: Shep Cary, John Hodsdon, W. B. S. Moore, and Eben F. Pillsbury of Machias. On the first and second ballots, Pillsbury took the lead and was nominated on the third. This was a Hunker victory. Pillsbury, however, was not well known.

Not to be defeated, the anti-slavery and "temperance" Democrats held their own convention at Portland. They nominated an independent candidate, Anson P. Morrill. Morrill between 1850 and 1854 served as a land agent and then served one term in

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, page 360-361.

Congress. He was the brother of Lot M. Morrill, one of the leaders of anti-slavery Democrats.

At the September 1853 election, when voters cast their ballots, the “regular” Democrat candidate led, but failed to win a majority. For the state, the official vote: Pillsbury 36,386; Crosby 27,061, Morrill 11,027, Holmes (Free Soil) 8,996 and scattering 157. In Cumberland, Pillsbury led with 101 (46.75%), Crosby 54 (25%), Holmes 30 (13.89%), and Morrill 31 (14.3%) votes. With the Democratic vote split in Cumberland, the Whig candidate, Pillsbury, received the most votes. In the state, with no candidate receiving a majority, the election once again was referred to the state legislature.

After much conniving among Whigs and Morrill Democrats, the Senate prepared to vote. Shortly before the Senators were to vote, one Whig Senator, allegedly leaning in favor of Morrill, was summoned to the lobby, where for one hour a cabal of four leading Whigs finally secured his pledge to vote for Crosby. That vote was the one vote needed to re-elect Crosby. Nine regular Democrats plus 7 Whigs, a total of 16, voted for Crosby, and 4 Whigs, 2 regular Democrats, and 9 Morrill Democrats, a total of 15, voted for Morrill. Shifting one vote made a decisive difference. The result was a shock to all present, except for the 4 Whigs who had effected the conversion of their Whig colleague.

Defeated supporters of Morrill were very angry. In an effort to restore some of the balance, they nominated Morrill’s brother Lot M. Morrill for the U. S. Senate. Hearing this surge of support for his brother, A. P. Morrill told his friends he saw no reason why they shouldn’t support Fessenden as planned, even though he would not actively oppose his brother’s nomination. Some Whigs were unwilling to vote for fellow Whig Fessenden because of his anti-slavery views.

As the Senate assembled to choose a US Senator, Fessenden and Lot M. Morrill, both members of the State House, took seats in front, one on each side of the Speaker’s desk. After collecting and counting the votes, the Committee reported the election of Fessenden. Not a word was spoken, the silence lasting at least a minute. Finally, Lot Morrill rose, and crossed over to the side of Fessenden, shook hands and congratulated him. Applause erupted.

As Senator, William Pitt Fessenden embarked on a career celebrated by his colleagues. Veteran journalist Horace White observed Fessenden had “the most clairvoyant mind, joined to the most sterling character, that the State of Maine ever contributed to the

national councils,” and that “a more consummate debater or more knightly character and presence has not graced the Senate chamber in my time, if ever.”¹²¹

Shortly after taking his seat, Fessenden made a short speech against the Kansas-Nebraska bill and thereby meeting Southern threats of disunion with a steady firmness that delighted his Whig colleagues and thrilled the North. After listening, one Southerner, midway through the speech, exclaimed “Why, what a man is this! All his guns are double-shorted!”¹²²

The Whigs in Maine had won their last victory. The slavery question destroyed the Whig Party and disrupted the Democrats. Both parties were in the process of realigning. Traditional issues in both parties ceased to attract voters. Passage of the Kansas-Nebraska bill served as a catalyst for party disintegration.

By the end of 1853, even before the Kansas-Nebraska bill had been introduced in Congress, party decomposition precipitated the beginning of realignment in Maine and several other northern states. At least four factors contributed substantially to this new realignment.¹²³ First, there was a growth in the pool of new voters who had no strong partisan attachments. Second, there was a weakening of party loyalty among party identifiers. Third, short-term issues, such as Maine Temperance Law surfaced, cut across traditional party lines, and detached voters from their usual party. Fourth, this general malaise affected the attitudes of party leaders. This realignment also emerged in Cumberland.

As political parties continued to decompose, two developments were critical to their continuing disintegration, first, the passage in May 1854, by the Democrat dominated Congress, of the Kansas-Nebraska Act, and second, the expansion of the “secret” American Party, known as the Know Nothings.

When the divisive Kansas-Nebraska bill arose in 1854, traditional party alignment virtually collapsed. Due to the anti-liquor crusade, Whigs suffered defections to the Free Soil Party, some anti-temperance Whigs defected to the Democrats, and some Whigs simply refrained from voting. Democrats suffered fewer defections and succeeded in winning more converts and new voters. That addition of growth in new voters was sufficient for it to survive.

¹²¹ Hatch, Louis C. *op. cit.*, page 370.

¹²² *Ibid.*

¹²³ Clubb, Jerome M., William H. Flannigan, and Nancy H. Zingale, *Partisan Realignment: Voters, Parties, and Government in American History*. (Beverly Hills, California: Sage Library of Social Research, Vol. 108, 1980), page 303.

Meanwhile President Pierce had begun in administration in 1853 with a reservoir of good will. The country experienced prosperity and sectional antagonisms appeared to be subsiding. With the Whigs in disarray, Democrats felt Pierce had an unparalleled opportunity to revitalize his party. Unfortunately, Pierce was unsuited for this task.

Appearing to agree affably with whomever he was conversing, even though he had no intentions of accepting that person's advice, Pierce soon alienated his supporters. When his policies took a different direction, politicians felt deceived. They began to regard him as weak and vacillating. Within six months, Pierce and his advisors sacrificed much of their prestige and influence. In the north, factional rivalries led to intraparty conflict. Maine was no exception.

In the summer of 1854, the American party, composed of anti-Catholic and anti-foreign groups, jolted traditional parties. Called the Know Nothings, its members, if questioned, were told to say they "know nothing." Under new leadership, this party expanded exponentially. However, because its membership was secret, claims of size are difficult to identify precisely. By the end of 1854, state councils had been established in every northern state. Its national secretary confided confidentially there were 10,000 local lodges with an aggregate membership of a million voters.

Membership was restricted to adult native-born males who were unconnected to Catholicism, either personally or through family ties. Its organization was strictly hierarchical with local lodges at the grassroots. To members of the party, the influx of immigrants during the 1850s seemed to pose a threat to the economic security of native born Protestant Americans. Many of these immigrants settled in the textile towns of Maine.

By 1854, Know Nothing Party members represented 52 of the 234 seats in Congress. By December 1855, the Know Nothing Party had 43 Congressional representatives. For the 1856 Presidential election, Fillmore was candidate of the Know Nothing Party, and he carried only the state of Maryland. In Congress, the party support dipped to 12 representatives.

In 1854 the proliferation of party candidates for Governor clearly illustrates the splintering of parties and the failure of fusion. Operating outside the Democratic organization, the A. P. Morrill faction nominated Morrill as an Independent. This faction's platform condemned the overthrow of the Missouri Compromise, strongly endorsed the Maine Law (Temperance), and called for a repeal of the fugitive slave law. The Wildcat Democrats, in control of the party machinery, nominated Albion K. Parris as their candidate. Parris was a temperance Democrat who had defeated Neal Dow, known as Father of the

Temperance Movement in Maine, for mayor of Portland. Diehard Democrats nominated Shephard Cary, a leading critic of Maine law and the temperance movement. Designated as the “Rum Candidate,” Cary ran on the “opposition Democrat” ticket. He had been turned down as a candidate for the past two Democratic State conventions, and decided this was an unparalleled opportunity to run and win.

At the time, Shephard Cary (1805-1866) was one of the most influential leaders of Aroostook County. Cary was involved in nearly every event of importance during the formative years of “The County”. Through his lumber enterprises, he amassed a personal fortune in the process. As he became increasingly wealthy, he purchased large tracts of land, including two full townships along the Allagash River. During the 1840s, Cary remained active in the Maine legislature. In 1843, he was elected to the U. S. House of Representatives. For most of his life he was leader in the Maine Democratic Party. In 1854, he ran for governor on an “opposition Democrat” ticket, but returned to the fold in 1855.

As for the Free Soilers, they were determined to bring about fusion. At their state convention, they endorsed Morrill. However, their efforts to get the Whig party to endorse Morrill fell flat. Several Whig leaders, namely Washburn, Kent, and Fessenden, urged Whigs to unite with the Morrill Democrats. Both groups agreed on the issues, but their leaders remained in sharp disagreement. The Whig Party convention nominated Isaiah Reed with a platform devoted almost completely to the slavery issue.

Fusion failed. For the September 1854 election, three candidates claimed the name “Democrat” (Morrill faction, Parish from Wildcat faction, Cary for “Opposition Democrats”). Two candidates (Morrill and Reed) ran on virtually identical platforms. Fusionists preferred Morrill. He was endorsed by the disbanded Free Soil party and received support from the state temperance group plus endorsement of the Know Nothing party.

Why did Fusion fail? Whigs believed that they could again take advantage of existing Democratic divisions. Prior to the election, Maine Whigs believed their party would emerge once again as “supreme.” When votes were counted, they discovered to their horror the party had completely collapsed. The Whig’s candidate, Reed, experienced astonishing losses.

Morrill led all the candidates but narrowly missed receiving the majority vote. Due to the composition of the new legislature, his election was a foregone conclusion. Commentators were amazed at the depth of Morrill’s support. He polled more than three times as many votes as Reed, the Whig nominee.

Statewide, the results were Morrill (Know Nothing Party) 49.5%, Reed (Whig) 15.5%, Parris (Democrat) 31.3%, Cary (Liberal) 3.8%. In Cumberland, the voting returns were

Morrill 39.2%, Reed 16.9%, Parris 38%, Cary 4.9%, other .5%. Only a three vote margin occurred between Morrill and Parris. The Democratic Party vote in Cumberland was virtually split in half.

Statewide, apparently thousands of voters turned to Morrill, as a man independent from major parties. The Kennebec Journal attributed Morrill's surge due to popular protest, "DISCARD THE OLD BLOOD SUCKERS who have grown fat and corrupt by holding of office all their lives, and who have long since lost confidence of the community."¹²⁴

According to analysis of voting data,¹²⁵ based on 1853 and 1854 state elections for governor, Morrill received overwhelming support from the Free Soil members, won a majority of Whig votes, and a significant number of earlier non-voters. In 1853, almost a quarter of Morrill's supporters had not gone to the polls. Cary's vote came mainly from Democrats.

Having assumed leadership of former Governor Hubbard's Democrat faction, Morrill won the largest share of his voters. The Nebraska issue was crucial. Exploiting the Nebraska issue combined with the growing disenchantment with old parties, Morrill significantly expanded and gave new direction to Hubbard's anti-rum coalition. Morrill also received support from an endorsement by the Know Nothing Party. In fact, as governor, Morrill's party affiliation is listed as Know Nothing.

Who was Anson P. Morrill? Born in Belgrade, Morrill attended local schools, but did not attend college. Briefly, he taught school in New Brunswick, Canada. Returning to Maine, he worked as a store clerk in Dearborn, which is adjacent to Belgrade. From 1825 to 1841, he served as Postmaster for Dearborn. Around 1844, he moved to Readfield and managed a woolen mill, which he eventually purchased.

Readfield is associated with three Maine governors. Jonathan Hunton, Maine's ninth governor (1830-1831) started his law practice in Readfield. John Hubbard, the twenty second governor (1850-1853) was a native of Readfield. Anson Morrill, the twenty-fourth governor, managed a woolen mill in Readfield. Conceivably, Morrill, while managing and owning his woolen mill, associated with Hubbard and received some advice regarding his political aspirations.

¹²⁴ Gienapp, William E., *The Origins of the Republican Party, 1852-1856*, (New York: Oxford Press, 1988) page 132.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, page 132; 503-504.

Although Morrill was the unsuccessful Wildcat candidate for governor in 1853, he did succeed, as we have seen, in 1854. During his tenure as governor, Morrill supported mandatory prohibition measures.

Once he assumed the governorship, Morrill realized he would need the support of a unified party, if we were to win re-election. Hopes of Democratic support were dashed by hostility of “regular” Democrats and the Pierce administration. Due to party factions, personal rivalries, the liquor issue as well as the Nebraska controversy, Maine Democrats found it difficult to establish common ground. By vocational experience and personal inclination, Morrill was pragmatic. After assessing his prospects in the Democratic Party, Morrill decided to discard his Democratic affiliation and participate in the formation of the Republican Party.

On February 22, 1855, pro-fusion members in the legislature convened a convention to organize the Republican Party. A call was directed, regardless of previous party identification, to men “who are in favor of a prohibitory Liquor Law and opposed to the further extension of Slavery.”¹²⁶ Its platform was antislavery, anti-liquor, and anti-immigrant. It nominated Anson P. Morrill as Republican candidate for governor.

Meanwhile, the Democrats tried to avoid sectional issues, endorsed the Pierce Administration, but took no position on repeal of the Missouri Compromise. For its platform, it emphasized nativist and liquor issues. Samuel Wells received the Democratic nomination for governor.

The “straight” Whigs condemned nativism, denounced repeal of the Missouri Compromise and called for an extensive revision of Maine Law. They nominated Isaac Reed as governor. Within the Whig Party, the nativist and Maine liquor law proponents mostly joined the Republican ranks.

As the September election approached, the Republican Party faced two major challenges. First, they were unsuccessful in their efforts to win allegiance of Senator Hannibal Hamlin, Maine’s leading anti-Nebraska Democrat. Second, repercussions of the Portland riot of June 2 turned support toward the Democrats.

In April 1855, Neal Dow narrowly won election as Mayor of Portland. His anti-liquor crusade attracted many enemies, especially merchants and Irish population. On June 2, a riot erupted. Inflamed by a report Dow had violated his own law and purchased liquor for the city, a mob gathered in front of City Hall, where allegedly the liquor was stored. Members of the mob attacked police who were guarding city hall. Without warning, Dow

¹²⁶ Gienapp, William E. *op. cit.*, page 205.

ordered the state militia to fire on the crowd. As a result of ensuing gunfire, one man was killed and several wounded. Dow was placed on trial but was acquitted.

Receiving the issue they needed, Democrats linked Dow to the Republican Party, of which he was a prominent member. "A vote for Morrill is a vote for Neal Dow." As this slogan rang in their ears, the Republicans remained confident. After all, the last three state elections had been won by pro-temperance governors. It seemed unlikely voters would shift their preference to an anti-liquor candidate. But, that is what they did.

For the 1855 state election, turnout was heavy. It was estimated at 73.7%. Morrill received about 6000 more votes than he did in 1854, but Wells increased the Democrat vote by 19,977 votes. Statewide, the official result was Morrill (Republican) 46.6%, Wells (Democrat) 43.8%, Reed (Whig) 9.6%. For Cumberland, official result was Morrill 40.7%, Wells 52.8%, and Reed 6.4%. Cumberland voters divided the majority of their votes between Morrill (Republican) and Wells (Democrat) and gave an edge to Wells, the Democrat. Wells won the statewide vote.

What are some of the factors which account for Morrill's unexpected defeat? What was the basis of Morrill's support, 1855 as opposed to 1854? According to voting data analysis, Morrill won support from 1854 Whigs and Democrats as well as from previous non-voters. Where did he lose support? He lost significant support from voters who defected from 1854 to his two opposing candidates.¹²⁷

In 1855, party identification was shaken. Except for a hard core small faction backing Cary in 1854, every party active in 1854 experienced significant losses in 1855. Morrill won only a minority of the traditional Whig vote. Conservative Whigs were reluctant to support a sectional party, thereby preventing Morrill from attaining a majority.¹²⁸ In Cumberland, comparing 1854 and 1855, Morrill lost voters, who appear to have transferred allegiance to Wells, a Democrat.

Although Morrill led Wells by nearly 3000 votes in the statewide election, he failed to receive a majority of the popular vote. The Democrats were unperturbed because the new Legislature was controlled by Democrats, and thus Wells' election as governor was assured.

Who was Samuel Wells? By profession a lawyer, Wells served as associate justice on the Maine Supreme Court, 1847-1854. In 1840, as a Whig, he supported "Tip and Ty", but shortly thereafter switched to the Democratic Party. During his tenure as governor, the

¹²⁷ Gienapp, William E., *op. cit.*, page 207, and Table 7.7 on page 512.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, page 208 and Table 7.8 on page 512.

1851 Prohibition Law was rescinded, and replaced with a bill permitting a restricted number of liquor sales in each municipality.

Turning to the 1856 election, a presidential year, party realignment continued to accelerate. The Republican Party needed a new candidate at the top of the ticket. Morrill, having competed in three consecutive races, declined to be a candidate. Mainly, leaders recognized his indispensable contribution as a catalyst for fusion and formation of the Republican Party. That was his legacy.

On June 12, six days after the “Bleeding [Charles] Sumner” affair, Senator Hannibal Hamlin in the Senate chamber rose to declare his lack of faith in the Democratic Party. While he promoted party harmony he confessed, “I love my country more than I love my Party.”¹²⁹ He rejected continued defense of the Kansas-Nebraska Act and asserted repeal of the Missouri Compromise a “gross moral and political wrong.”

Ever the political pragmatist, Hamlin also had assessed his own political situation. He wanted to remain in the Senate, where he was known as a “working Senator” rather than a “talking Senator.” However, his term was due to expire in 1857. Realistically, his prospects for re-election as a Democrat were bleak inasmuch as he was at odds with Democratic leadership both at the state and national level. At that time, Hunker Democrats and Governor Wells controlled the State Legislature.

What were Hamlin’s options? If the Democrats won the Governor’s race, as they were eager to do, they would defeat Hamlin, whose anti-slavery followers were joining the Republican Party in droves. If the Republicans won both the governorship and the state legislature, they would be able to send one of their party stalwarts to take Hamlin’s Senate seat. In either case, if Hamlin were not a candidate, he would be sent back home to Hampden as a casualty of shifting party allegiances. On the other hand, if Hamlin converted to the Republican Party and worked hard for the party during the summer of 1856, then a Republican victory would mean Hamlin could be re-elected to the Senate.

Meanwhile, Republicans in Maine clamored for Hamlin to serve as their candidate for governor. Hamlin was lukewarm about the idea because he really wanted to return to the US Senate. “One thing is certain,” wrote C. J. Talbot, “and that is you can’t be returned to the Senate unless we secure the next Legislature. And the Legislature can only be secured *with certainty*, by the use of your name for Gov.”¹³⁰ If some other candidate entered the race, then Hamlin would discover that “the very fact that you was unwilling to stand in the

¹²⁹ Hunt, H. Draper, *Hannibal Hamlin of Maine: Lincoln’s First Vice President*. (Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 1969) page 88.

¹³⁰ Hunt, H. Draper, *op. cit.*, page 91

thickest of the fight would, *I have reason to believe*, put the Senatorship beyond your reach.”¹³¹ Other friends insisted only Hamlin could assure a big Victory for the party and therefore, it was his duty to run. If he won, he would be reelected to the Senate, but if he refused to run, he would almost certainly lose his seat. Even so, Hamlin was not completely convinced.

In Maine the Republican state convention was scheduled to convene in Portland on July 8, 1856. By then, Hamlin had delivered well received speeches in which he had narrowed the choice to “whether liberty and the Union, or slavery and the Union, shall be the characteristic of our government...” For Buchanan, Hamlin had only contempt, “He has been on every side of every important question since he has been in political life...His social qualities are so frigid that a thermometer to take his temperature must have the point of temperature somewhere below the degree in which mercury freezes.”¹³² Hamlin received the Republican Party’s nomination for governor.

The convention drafted a platform squarely opposing extension of slavery and calling this the paramount issue. For Republicans freedom of territories was the only issue. Hamlin did not identify as an abolitionist. He was only concerned slavery not extend into territories and the government not interfere in states where it already existed by law.

Hamlin campaigned tirelessly throughout each of Maine’s sixteen counties. He gave 99 speeches in which he pressed his anti-slavery message. Decked out in his traditional black swallowtail coat, he easily established rapport with his audiences, who traveled for miles to hear him speak.

Statewide turnout for the September election reached nearly 80%, the highest turnout since 1840. Hamlin won by a margin of nearly 18,000 votes. On his coattails, the Republican Party swept all six Congressional districts and carried both houses of the state legislature. State official results were Hamlin 57.4%, Wells 37.1%, and Patten 5%. In Cumberland, Hamlin (Republican) received 54.1%, Wells (Democrat) 39.7% and Patten (Whig) 6.1%. Cumberland turnout at that time was the highest in its recorded history.

According to voting data, Hamlin won virtually all the Republican voters of 1855, plus a small proportion of Democrats and about a fifth of the Whigs.¹³³ Despite the surge in voter turnout, Hamlin’s strength among new voters was not significantly greater than that of Wells, the Democratic candidate. Whig strength fell by almost one half, with nearly all

¹³¹ *Ibid.*

¹³² *Ibid*, page 93.

¹³³ Gienapp, William E., *op. cit.*, page 393 and Table 12.1 on page 521.

these defections going to Hamlin. Hamlin's gains reflected his great popularity with the state's voters.

As for the presidential election two months later, turnout being 7% less than in September, official results for Maine gave Fremont 61.3%, Buchanan 35.7%, and Fillmore 3%. Past partisan conflicts together with national issues helped shape the Republican coalition. Moreover, in Maine, Hamlin's coattails also helped.

At noon on January 8, 1857, Hamlin delivered his inaugural address. Focusing on the issue of slavery in the territories, he asserted, "The true question involved in the late election was substantially, whether the advancement of human freedom should continue to be a fundamental principle and a pre-eminent object of our National Government...or whether its powers should be perverted to the extension of slavery."

The following day, Hamlin was swamped with office-seekers and well-wishers. Five days later, the House and Senate Republicans caucused to nominate a US Senator. Morrill received 40 votes in the House and a few in the Senate. However, Hamlin received a decisive victory with 96 votes and all other candidates combined receiving 51 votes. Gratified, Hamlin confided to his son that reelection to the Senate was particularly important to him because "it will enable [me] to complete the education of all my children. That is what I most desire, for they are all very dear to me."¹³⁴ As United States Senator, he would receive a salary of \$5000, which was five times that of the governor of Maine.

On February 19, 1857, Hamlin, as governor, gave a large party at the Augusta House. Six days later on February 25, he resigned his governorship, packed his bags, and left for Washington to begin his third term as United States Senator from Maine. After winning the governorship with a landslide, he served as governor for 48 days.

In his Inauguration Address, President Buchanan referred to the territorial question as a matter of "little practical importance" since the Supreme Court was about to settle the matter "speedily and finally." Whatever the decision, Buchanan vowed he would "cheerfully submit."

Two days later, Chief Justice Taney, announcing the decision for the Dred Scott case, asserted Congress had no constitutional power to exclude slavery in the territories. Specifically, Dred Scott, a descendent of a Negro slave, could not be a citizen. In reaction, the uproar in the north was deafening.

¹³⁴ Hunt, H. Draper, *op. cit.*, page 102.

Northern commentators viewed the decision as another blow to slaves and another nail in the coffin of the Democratic Party. However, most Democratic papers heralded it as a victory. The *Portland Argus* declared the decision caused “a great fluttering in Republican ranks, as well it may. It has cut them up root and branch, and dispersed their straggling forces even beyond the headwaters of Salt River.”¹³⁵

The *Portland Advertiser* acknowledged the decision was a nominal advance for slavery, but added, “The Supreme Court is not a Grand Lama, before whom body and soul are to be prostrate in abject passivity...The Judges differ – some of them err, perhaps all of them (for they all are human) and time reverses their firmest decrees.”¹³⁶

For the 1857 gubernatorial elections, the Republicans were determined to make extension of slavery the cause celebre. At the Republican Convention, Lot M. Morrill, brother of Anson, was nominated 585 to 16. Trained as a lawyer, he served in the Maine House as a Democrat, 1854-1855. He also served as chairman of Maine’s Democratic Party. In 1856, he broke away from the Democratic Party due to their national stance on slavery, and as a Republican was elected to the Maine Senate.

At the Democratic convention, Manasseh H. Smith was nominated as their gubernatorial candidate. In 1848 and 1849, Smith had been a member of the Governor’s Council and in 1856 a candidate for Congress. The Democrats focused on temperance as a vital issue. In response, Morrill, speaking in Durham, said, “I will not insult your understandings by presenting so low an issue as Maine Law. What do we care how much grog you drink? Take your bitters when you please. Only vote right.”¹³⁷

Statewide the turnout fell by 22,000 votes. Official results gave Morrill 55.8%, Smith 43.9%, and scattering .26% of the popular vote. In Cumberland, Morrill received 48.7% and Smith 51.2% with a margin of an 8 vote difference. Party competition now appeared to be between the Republicans and Democrats. Cumberland remained competitive, but gave the majority of its votes to the Democratic candidate.

Lot Morrill won three consecutive terms as governor. Each time Cumberland voters gave the majority of their votes to his Democratic opponent, Manasseh H. Smith. Was this because the majority of Cumberland voters identified strongly with the Democrats?

Both nationally and locally, 1860 was a watershed year. The Democratic Presidential Nominating Convention met in Charleston, South Carolina on April 23. The “fire-eater”

¹³⁵ Hatch, Louis C., *op. cit.* page 407.

¹³⁶ Hatch, Louis C., *op. cit.*, page 408.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, 411.

majority working on the party platform produced a pro-slavery document. After 57 ballots, Douglas still failed to get the required two thirds majority to win the nomination. Six weeks later, on June 18 in Baltimore, Maryland, the Convention reconvened. Douglas won the nomination on the second ballot. Senator Benjamin Fitzpatrick of Alabama was nominated for Vice President, but later declined the position. With the convention concluded and suddenly no Vice President, Douglass offered the nomination to a known moderate, former governor Herschel V. Johnson of Georgia.

The Republican Presidential Nominating Convention convened May 16-18 in Chicago. On the third "corrected" ballot Lincoln was nominated for President. Hannibal Hamlin was nominated on the second ballot for Vice President.

Back in Maine, on June 8, the Republican state convention was held at Norumbega Hall in Bangor, not far from the home of Congressman Israel Washburn who had returned from Washington to attend. Throughout the whole state, voters were electrified by Hamlin's selection as Vice Presidential candidate. Prior to his selection, no one from Maine had served as a national candidate. Party leaders realized they had a responsibility to wage an intense campaign for a strong Republican vote in September. Momentum in September would help the party in November. At the top of the state ticket, they needed a candidate who could win and win decisively. Who then could carry the banner?

At first glance, Washburn, though well-liked, seemed an unlikely choice. For the past decade he had served in Congress. Although he had established a reputation as an articulate, informed spokesman for Maine, he had been far removed from Maine political scene. In fact, he had no aspiration for the office. He much preferred to be in Congress. All previous overtures, he rebuffed. In one of his letters dated November 16, 1859, he writes, "You will not doubt me when I say 'I do not want to be the candidate.'...The case cannot arise, I am sure."¹³⁸

Circumstances change. In Augusta, party leadership had become embroiled in a scandal involving the State Treasurer. James G. Blaine wrote in defense of the Treasurer, the Rev. Benjamin D. Peck. Suddenly, the Democrats had a local issue, which would challenge the integrity of Republican office holders. They eagerly anticipated a toxic campaign. To counter the charges, the Republicans needed someone with impeccable credentials, someone completely uninvolved in the scandal. Washburn was a prime candidate.

To the delight and surprise of the delegates, Washburn accepted the nomination for governor. With 363 votes needed to secure the nomination, Washburn had 429 on the first

¹³⁸ Kelsey, Kereck, *Israel Washburn, Jr.: Maine's Little Known Giant of the Civil War* (Rockport, Maine: Picton Press, 2004) page 106.

ballot. On that day, a colleague described Washburn as “overwhelmed” and confessing he “could hardly conceive the idea.”¹³⁹

Why then were party delegates so delighted to have Washburn as their nominee? First, he was an experienced politician, having campaigned across the breadth of Maine, from north to south, east to west. He was well known, articulate, and a hard worker for the Republican Party. Second, his popularity was well documented by winning five terms in Congress, each term won by a comfortable margin even in areas where Democratic popularity was pronounced. Third, he was highly regarded by many national Republicans, and so should the Republicans win in November, Maine would be in a good place to receive federal favors later.

Considering how much he preferred to be in Congress, why did Washburn accept the nomination? Upon reflection, he realized he was frustrated by deadlock in Congress. He viewed the central government as weak and the states as strong. If the Southern states seceded as they were threatening to do, the Union would not survive unless it received immediate support from northern governors. If this reasoning were correct, then he could do more for the country as Maine’s governor than he could do as only one of six congressmen from Maine. Feeling strongly that the Republican ticket nationally had to win in November, Washburn knew a strong campaign and Republican victory in September was vital. Leadership from the top of ticket would be indispensable. He was ready to serve.

Not to be overlooked was his long cherished desire to be a U. S. Senator from Maine. The state legislature chose the Senators. To be considered, Washburn needed to renew his relationships with state legislators, who met in Augusta. As Governor, he could develop a close working relationship with the legislature.

If the Lincoln-Hamlin ticket won in November, as Washburn thought it would, then Hamlin’s Senate seat would be vacant and a replacement must be found in January, after Washburn assumed office. Alternatively, another vacancy might occur if Senator Fessenden were appointed to a Cabinet position. Admittedly, Lot Morrill, now completing his third term as governor, had an advantage, at least, this time. Looking toward the future, Washburn needed to build political support in the state legislature now, if he were to be considered for a US Senate seat in the future.

Democrats chose Ephraim K. Smart. As a student, Smart attended Wesleyan Seminary at Readfield. After being admitted to the bar in 1838, he set up his practice in Camden. Entering politics, he served as State Senator, 1841-1842, and subsequently served two terms in the US House of Representatives, 1847-1849, 1851-1853. In 1854, he established *Maine Free Press* and served as its editor for three years. In 1858, he won election to the Maine House of Representatives. Versatile and

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, page 107.

clever, Mr. Smart, as standard bearer for his party's gubernatorial nomination, took to the stump on his own behalf and waged a vigorous campaign against his opponent.

Indeed, the 1860 campaign for governor was one of the most colorful campaigns in the state's history. As a campaigner, Washburn was indefatigable. Energetic and emphatic in stating his opinions, Washburn conveyed no bitterness. Ever loyal and optimistic, his enthusiasm was contagious. Republican parades featured marching clubs known as "Wideawakes." These clubs were composed of young men, many below voting age, who wore firemen's coats and helmets and carried flaming torches. In one month, Washburn gave 28 speeches as he traveled from South Berwick to Eastport, at the Canadian border. Sometimes, he drew crowds as large as 8000.

Contrary to the lofty idealism of Washburn, the Republican State Chairman, James G. Blaine, campaigned throughout the state, exposing the inconsistencies and turns of the Democratic nominee, Mr. Smart. As a student of the Bible, Blaine began every speech by saying "Ephraim is a cake not turned," and then added, "I propose to turn him."¹⁴⁰ His scathing denunciation was based on his reading of Hosea 7.8. "Ephraim, he hath mixed himself among the people; Ephraim is a cake not turned."

According to a literal translation, Ephraim ("is become") is a cake ("in the coals") not turned. This cake to which Ephraim is likened, namely, "uggah" (lit. circular), is a thin pancake to which scorching heat is applied on one side. If the pancake remained long "untuned," it was burned on one side; while the other side continued unbaked and doughy. The one side was scorched and black, the other side damp, doughy, and lukewarm. The whole was worthless and fit only to be cast away. Such is root of "half-baked".

According to Hosea, as interpreted by Blaine, Ephraim "mixed himself among the people," and thus with the pagans. In the process, he corrupted himself. These people, these pagans, these party members of the opposition, are hypocrites, appearing on the surface to be good, but actually that is only one side. Do not be deceived! Do not associate with such people. Do not "mix yourself" among them. The implications and insinuations are clear.

Washburn received a majority, which was considerably larger than Morrill had received the previous year. Voter turnout, namely 124,135 votes cast, was 25% higher than ever recorded in Maine history. More than before, Maine voters were very concerned about their government.

Official results recorded with Washburn 56.4%, Smart 42.1%, Barnes of the Constitutional Union Party, 1.4%. Washburn won by a margin of nearly 18,000 votes. Washburn led his party to sweep all six congressional districts, win all seats in the State Senate, and win seats with a 4-1 margin in the State House. Republicans won fifteen of the sixteen counties in the state.

Curiously, the Cumberland voters gave only a razor thin margin to Washburn. He won by merely one vote over his Democratic opponent Smart. The official results in Cumberland: Washburn 48.4%,

¹⁴⁰ Hatch Louis C. *op. cit.*, page 428.

Smart 48.2%, Barns, 3%. At 365 votes, Cumberland turnout was the largest in its recorded history. Voters were concerned, but it is difficult to gauge which issues were most important to them.

Two months later, Republicans won the 1860 presidential election. In Maine, despite inclement weather, the Republican margin of victory was 24,000 votes, an even larger margin than their victory in September. Nationally, the Democrats were split between Douglas and Breckinridge. As a result, Lincoln won the election with less than 40% of the popular vote.

After participating in frantic efforts during December to thwart the erosion of support from southern States, Washburn returned to Maine ready to assume his duties as Governor. His perspective was unique. After serving more than a decade in Washington and being acknowledged as a leading spokesman for his party, he was particularly sensitive to issues affecting the country far beyond the borders of his state. He remained close to some of the most influential of the nation's new leaders.

In his Inaugural message on January 3, Washburn forewarned a "cloud, gathered in the southern sky, is casting its portentous shadow over the land." He emphasized the need to hold firmly to principles no matter what perils threatened. State legislators, in response, set aside their differences and sent a resolution to Washington, in which they pledged the state's support with "all the means and resources which it can command."¹⁴¹

With Hamlin soon to become Vice President, the next order of business was for the legislature to elect a new U. S. Senator. Former Governor Lot Morrill was the favored Candidate. He too was a veteran of Congress. Nevertheless, many legislators were aware Washburn was interested.

Why did not Washburn, after assuming the governorship, follow in the footsteps of Hannibal Hamlin and claim the vacated Senate seat? This time, Israel Washburn was not a candidate. Placing party harmony ahead of his own personal preferences, he realized it would enhance political harmony, if Lot Morrill, an ex-Democrat, served with Fessenden, an ex-Whig, than for he himself and Fessenden, two ex-Whigs, to represent the state.¹⁴² Moreover, at this juncture in American history, state governors could play a pivotal role in supporting the Union government. Should war erupt, governors would be responsible for responding to requests for state militia and financial support. Washburn was dedicated to that effort. That meant putting his country first.

The first few weeks were quiet but portentous. Few people in Maine, even their new governor, expected Southern states to shatter the Union. To Washburn, such a situation was unfathomable. He doubted the south, even in its frustration, would actually break up the Union. On February 22, still an optimist, Washburn asked, "How can this Union be broken up? . . . It cannot be destroyed, and in the end no one will desire its destruction."¹⁴³ Even the press agreed. Then the unthinkable happened.

¹⁴¹ Kelsey, Kereck, *op. cit.*, page 115.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, page 117.

On April 12, 1861, South Carolina opened fire on Fort Sumter, a federal property in Charleston Harbor. Instantly, the abstract issue of slavery was replaced with the reality of defending the country. Across the state of Maine, people were riveted on this task. The central national government was under attack. The call to save the country resonated much more deeply than the call to free the slaves. Survival of the Union was at stake.

Two days after Fort Sumter surrendered, President Lincoln called for 75,000 troops. Maine's share was one regiment – not to exceed one thousand men. At that time, Maine had virtually no military infrastructure, no basis for recruiting troops, and no fund to support that effort. Governor Washburn called for a special session of the state legislature, which finally convened on April 22. Washburn, a little embarrassed, spoke emphatically:

All of us . . . have failed to perceive the intentions . . . of the malign spirits who have dominated the policy of a large number of the Southern States for many years. . . The idea of secession being a remedy . . . must be rebuked, exploded, exterminated. Rather than a calamity so dire and dreadful should befall our country . . . let the loyal states exhaust every resource they possess.¹⁴⁴

Why did political leaders fail to perceive what was happening in the South? In Congress, Maine had two senators and six representatives; one of them was Washburn having served ten years. By the time Fort Sumter was hit, seven Southern States had already seceded. South Carolina seceded on December 20, 1860, Mississippi on January 9, 1861, Florida on January 16, 1861, Alabama on January 11, 1861, Georgia on January 17, 1861, Louisiana on January 26, 1861, Texas on February 1, 1861. These successive secessions are cold facts. No one, particularly political leaders in Washington, could ignore them.

How could leaders be so blindsided? Was it because they were so confident in their own powers of persuasion that they felt they could win Southerners to their point of view: the Union must be preserved at all costs. Was it because they were so committed to the Union that they failed to see how Southerners could be otherwise? Was it because they failed to understand the deep roots of Southern grievances? Was it because they failed to see how the country was dividing into two factions which confronted one another on virtually each controversial bill. Again, the evidence was clear: voting results on the Wilmot Proviso, the Kansas-Nebraska bill, the Dred Scott decision. Gradually, two world views, two opposing world views, dominated legislative discourse. Rhetoric became reality.

As Washburn continued to address the legislature, "This is no time for words. The hour for action has arrived – prompt, vigorous, decisive, patriotic, action."¹⁴⁵ Promptly, within the next three days, Maine House and Senate authorized money to procure and equip vessels for the defense of the state's coast. They revised the state's militia statute to allow local troops to be mustered into federal service. They authorized raising 10 regiments of volunteers – ten times the number requested by

¹⁴⁴Kelsey, Kereck, *op. cit.*, page 121.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

President Lincoln. Finally, they authorized the Treasurer of State to borrow \$1,300,000, which nearly tripled the state debt.

In response, 6000 troops enlisted. That represented 4% of all eligible males in the state. They enlisted within 13 days following Lincoln's call to arms.

What motivated these troops to enlist? In Cumberland, during the first year, quite a few were caught up in a wave of patriotism. That made official recruitment unnecessary. However, on July 21, 1861, Cumberland citizens gathered at a town meeting "to see what measures the town will take to raise volunteers for the army also to see if the Town will raise money, be it loan or otherwise to help pay them."¹⁴⁶ They voted to pay \$100 each for volunteers, provided there were 19 persons acceptable to the government, and they voted to authorize the Treasurer to borrow \$1900 on the "best possible terms." In addition, a committee was appointed to assist in the recruitment.

Despite this monetary incentive, volunteers were slow to enlist. Another meeting was called for the following month. They agreed to allow the recruits to receive their money at the time of enlistment, instead of waiting until the quota of 19 was fulfilled. Even so, volunteers were still slow to enlist.

In Augusta, Governor Washburn was building an impressive army, regiment by regiment. Washburn was passionate about saving the Union and defeating slave power. He exuded confidence in this cause, and Maine citizens supported him. The Governor was responsible for assembling all the paraphernalia needed by the regiments. That included all clothing, shelter (tents, axes, blankets), transportation (wagons, horses, harnesses), weapons (cartridge cases, rifles, artillery), and even band instruments.¹⁴⁷ Once assembled, everything had to be counted, checked, and distributed. He was responsible for transporting recruits to collection points, where they would be drilled and mustered into Federal service. Then Washburn was responsible for getting the regiments on specially chartered trains, together with their horses and wagons, bound for Boston and points south. Washburn offered decisive leadership, but it was exhausting.

During July 1861, Governor Washburn received word that the Union Army had been defeated at the First Battle of Bull Run. Nearly one fourth of the Northern troops were from Maine. New regiments of volunteers were needed as soon as possible.

In September 1861, Governor Washburn was a candidate for re-election. After the Battle of Bull Run, the Democrat Party split into two factions, namely the anti-war Democrats and the pro-war Democrats. After performing well at Bull Run, Colonel Charles D. Jameson returned home to serve as one of two Democratic candidates to challenge Washburn for the governorship. This time, Cumberland voters gave Washburn (Republican) 49.1%, John Dana (anti-war Democrat) 44%, and Charles D. Jameson (pro-war Democrat) 6.8%.

¹⁴⁶ *Cumberland Town Records*, Vol. II, 1851-1898.

¹⁴⁷ Kelsey, Kereck, *op. cit.*, page 125.

Governor Washburn's second term began in January 1862. Addressing the state legislature, he reported that the state's recruiting was 578 over quota, and Aroostook County had the highest participation of any county in the state. He was firm about those who opposed the war, stating emphatically, "A conditional Union man is an unconditional traitor."¹⁴⁸ On the subject of slavery, he was more cautious, saying the War was being fought to preserve the government, not to abolish slavery. Expressing Maine's mission in both national and universal terms, he ended his report by saying "We are here, then, not only as the representatives of the people of Maine, but also in the broader and higher capacity of representatives of the American Union, and, in that, of freedom, civilization, and humanity."¹⁴⁹

Although the previous year, Washburn himself had handled payment for the troops and procurement of arms, he now, under new protocol, had to wait for settlement by officials far removed from Maine. He became very frustrated as he saw thousands of unpaid and unassigned men, languishing outside his office window. According to the *Kennebec Journal*, 5953 men camped in Augusta between December and March and that 48 of them had died. According to the surgeon's general report dated January 28th, 702 men were sick in hospitals.

Fuming, Washburn fired letters to Senator Morrill, Senator Fessenden, and Secretary of State Seward. Most of his fire was directed toward Vice President Hamlin. Particularly, Washburn was upset with the performance of General George McClellan, under whom Maine troops had spent most of 1862 mired in Virginia without tangible result. Washburn wrote, "Men ask what's the use to send soldiers to loaf near Manassas, or contract fatal diseases at Yorktown, in waiting to give the rebels time to make a masterly retreat?"¹⁵⁰

Recruitment became more difficult, and it was soon taken over by the federal government. On May 3rd 1862, Lincoln called for 40 new regiments of volunteers, all for three years, or the duration of the war. Initial enthusiasm for the war effort waned and resistance to recruiting increased.

Governor Washburn, exhausted and harassed, declined his party's nomination for a third term. In August, new draft quotas were received. Governor Washburn objected. Expressing his views to Secretary Stanton, he said Maine had supplied five times as many sailors as other states, and there were no more eligible males in coastal towns. As a result, the state's pool of draft-able males had to be drawn from interior towns, which already had furnished more than their quotas. A national draft was imminent.

In September 1862, after the Battle of Antietam, the long list of casualties aroused new questions about the effectiveness of McClellan's leadership. Washburn, torn between his loyalty to Lincoln and his anguish over the lack of progress, attended a meeting of northern governors at Altoona,

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, page 138.

¹⁴⁹ *Kennebec Journal*, January 3, 1862.

¹⁵⁰ Kelsey, Kereck, *op. cit.*, page 141.

Pennsylvania. They prepared a petition demanding McClellan be replaced, that Negroes be enlisted, and that the war be waged more energetically.

In November 1862, Washburn made a trip south for his last time as governor to visit with troops. Upon arriving in Washington, he directly went to the President with his complaints about McClellan. Lincoln conceded he was just as frustrated. That evening, he had dinner with Stanton and Seward. The next day, Stanton told Washburn that orders relieving McClellan of his position had been dispatched. As Washburn headed into Virginia to visit troops, his train halted at the Manassas Junction to allow passage of the deposed general's train heading in the opposite direction.

Upon completion of his second term as governor, Washburn was celebrated for his unwavering leadership of the Republican Party, as well as his stalwart support of the national government. When crisis arrived, he used his powers of persuasion and inspired citizens to action. During times of discouragement, he stayed the course, and made a decisive difference. Washburn's exit opened the door for James Blaine to begin his 20 year reign as "dictator" of the state Republican Party.

Meanwhile, on June 5, 1862 in Portland, the Republican Party State Convention gathered. As prearranged by Blaine, Abner Coburn won on the first ballot. Coburn, a holder of vast tracks of forest, was one of the richest men in the state. For quite a while, he had been Blaine's first choice for governor. The Convention was packed with Coburn's lumberjacks. Coburn was a passive political leader. Although wealthy, he had high standards of morality and integrity. Although he had ample executive ability, he was not an orator. His words were few but to the point. He was celebrated for self-control, self-reliance, and reticence, as well as later, his generosity.

As for the Democrats, they called for a "People's Convention" on June 26, 1862 in Bangor. Half of the delegates appeared to support Dana, the anti-war candidate. After a sharp debate in which Dana was denounced, delegates supported a resolution which proclaimed the convention would "resist all measures and efforts calculated to convert this war for the Union into a crusade for negro emancipation."¹⁵¹ Another resolution proclaimed "we cordially approve the patriot course of the brave General McClellan, that we approve his genius and skill as commander of an army . . ." ¹⁵²

Ignoring support for Dana, one delegate moved to nominate Colonel Jamison by acclamation. Another delegate moved to substitute the name of Bion Bradbury. When ballots were cast, Jamison received 166 votes and Bradbury 106. In general, Eastern Maine delegates supported Jameson. Delegates from Augusta, Portland, and western Maine sought someone who could unite the party. And the party was not united.

On August 14, a "Dana" convention was held. Bradbury of Eastport was nominated by a vote of 278 as opposed to 133 votes for James White of Belfast. Delegates resolved, "Union is formed by spirit

¹⁵¹ Hatch, Louis C. *op. cit.*, page 447.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*

of concession and compromise and must be preserved by the same means and not by military force alone.”¹⁵³

In Cumberland, official results of the September 1862 election show 42.2% of the votes for Coburn (Republican), 56.9% for Bradbury (Dana Democrat) and two votes for Colonel Jameson (Democrat). Was Cumberland reinforcing its Democratic Party affiliation, or was it anti-war?

Statewide, Jameson received only 6,764 votes. Some were quick to claim the Pro-War Democrat movement to be close to a complete failure. Statewide, Coburn carried the State and led Bradbury by less than 11,000 votes. That margin was not great enough for Blaine. Four months into Coburn’s term as governor, Blaine began planning for Coburn’s successor.

Due to the relatively low voter support received by Governor Coburn in 1862, James G. Blaine, as chairman of the Republican State Committee, decided Republicans should drop their party name and replace it with a Union organization. According to a notice issued by Blaine and his committee, “the citizens of Maine who are unconditionally loyal to the Government of the United States, and who unconditionally support all measures for the suppression of the rebellion and who are resolved to spare no endeavor to maintain the National Union both in principle and territorial boundary, are invited to send delegates to a Convention to be held in the City of Bangor, on Wednesday, the 1st day of July next, for the purpose of nominating a candidate for Governor.”¹⁵⁴ Representation was to be proportional to the number of inhabitants, not to the number of Republican voters.

The Democrats cheerfully claimed the Republican Party had dissolved. Hard-core Republicans urged party members “stand your guard,” and added the country needs service as an organized party more than ever. The Whigs endorsed the call, claiming that Mr. Hamlin, the Vice President, also favored steadfast support for the Republican Party.

In advance, Blaine chose Samuel A. Cony as the next governor. Until the outbreak of the war, Cony had been a Democrat. As a true patriot, he vigorously had supported the government and had advanced money from his own private fortune to pay soldiers as necessary.

On the day and place appointed, in the name of the Union and the loyal masses, Blaine called the convention to order. While the committees were out of the room, Lewis Barker of Stetson took the floor and delivered an impassioned speech.

We are here to crush the copperhead faction – a pack of guerrillas who have stolen the livery of Democracy for evil designs. If a Democrat comes here merely as a Democrat, I spurn him; if a Republican comes here, I do the same – but if you come as Union men without condition, I am with you and welcome you.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵³ Hatch, Louis C. *op. cit.*, page 447.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.* page 452.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, page 454.

Blaine regained the floor and said he was authorized by Governor Coburn to say that he fully sympathized with the movement for Union.

... that feeling thus and wishing to do all in his power to promote union of action among loyal men, regardless of past party differences, the Governor did not consider that his nomination a year ago by a somewhat different constituency gave him any priority or precedence at the hand of this convention. He, therefore, claimed none, but simply submitted his name to the consideration of the convention. If nominated, he would endeavor to faithfully serve the public interests. But if it should be adjudged wise policy to take another candidate, he would most cheerfully and cordially sustain him by his vote and whatever influence he might possess. The perils of our national crisis demand, in the Governor's view, a union of all patriotic hands and hearts, and the man should be chosen for our standard bearer who can make this union most cordial and effective.¹⁵⁶

Clearly, Governor Coburn, a reticent man of few words, did not offer such an elaborate explanation of his position. Intent on having Coburn step aside, Blaine had carefully articulated every aspect of the situation and provided Coburn with a graceful exit.

On the first ballot for Governor the results were: Samuel Cony 474; Abner Coburn 418; Joseph Williams 176; scattering 15. To avoid a bitter contest, B. W. Norris of Skowhegan stood and said he was authorized to withdraw the name of Governor Coburn. He then proposed to nominate Samuel Cony by acclamation. After further discussion, the second ballot resulted in the nomination of Samuel Cony by vote of 899 to 66 for Williams and 26 for Coburn. The "Union" platform required firm and unanimous support of the Administration in Washington. The orchestration of Cony's nomination appeared flawless.

Originally, the Democrats had planned to convene in July, but postponed their convention until August 6. The probable re-nomination of Bradbury provoked a difference of opinion. Before these differences could be settled, the convention met in Portland on the designated day. Delegates adopted a platform declaring "we will earnestly support every constitutional measure tending to preserve the Union of the States," but they could not "support the present Administration, its course being destructive of the Union and the Government....The war is now being conducted, not for the restoration of the Union but for the Abolition of Slavery and the destruction of the Republic."¹⁵⁷

Pursuant to their concerns, delegates asked questions about Bradbury's commitment to the war effort. General S. J. Anderson responded that Mr. Bradbury was "as much opposed to the war as now conducted by the Administration as any gentleman present is or can be."¹⁵⁸ Another delegate asked if Bradbury were elected, would he withdraw Maine troops from the army, as he

¹⁵⁶ Hatch, Louis C. *op. cit.*, page 454.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.* page 455.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.* page 456.

would be justified in doing. General Anderson replied, "If Governor Seymour should withdraw New York troops, then Mr. Bradbury would take similar action."¹⁵⁹ Questions and doubts seemingly satisfied, Bradbury on the first ballot was nominated by 797 out of 893 votes.

The subsequent 1863 campaign was a vigorous one. Blaine had been responsible for holding the Union convention and the nomination of a War Democrat, Samuel Cony. Blaine's prestige and political status was at stake. Aware that his own political future would be affected by the result of the election, Blaine organized

...the most systematic and thorough canvass Maine had ever known. Political rallies were held in every town and hamlet. Speeches and other documents to be read at home were sent out in sufficient numbers to reach every voter, not once but many times. A considerable part of the funds necessary to defray the expenses of the campaign was obtained by the assessment of office holders, a practice against which no objection was then raised in any quarter.¹⁶⁰

For Blaine, the results were rewarding. Cony defeated Bradbury by about 18,000 votes.

In Cumberland, Bradbury, Democrat, received 54.3% of the votes and Cony, the Union candidate, 45.6%. That was a decisive difference. Was the deciding factor a rejection of Cony's views supporting the war? Or, was the difference due to long standing party allegiance to the Democratic Party? Given the limitation of the data, it is difficult to say. Clearly, though, Cumberland voters stood apart from majority of state's voters. Cony won the state wide election.

To place the election in context, Cumberland had been challenged by the mandate to supply soldiers. As a form of conscription, the Enrollment Act of March 3, 1863, known as the Civil War Military Draft Act, required all able bodied men between the age of 18 and 45 to enroll. Federal agents set quotas for troops in each Congressional District, and each town was given a quota. Towns were forced to raise money to hire substitutes when local supplies of young men were exhausted. Naval volunteers were included and could be calculated as part of Cumberland's quota.

At its July 30, 1863 meeting, Cumberland residents voted to comply with the law. Draftees had three options. First, they could receive \$300.00 from the Town and go to war. Second, they could take the \$300.00 bounty and use it to buy a substitute. Third, they could give their bounty to the United States Treasury and remain at home.

The policy of substitution was particularly controversial. Under this policy, substitutes had powerful incentives to desert after enlisting. Career "jumpers" made a living by enlisting as substitutes, collecting compensation, deserting before units were dispatched to the front and then repeating the process. For some, an appropriate slogan was "rich man's war, poor man's fight."

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

Many Cumberland men were attracted by this \$300.00 bounty. Jobs were scarce. Money was scarce. In 1863, this bounty was higher than the annual average per capita income which was \$259.00 in the United States.¹⁶¹ Some draftees found it more profitable to provide a substitute and stay home, pursuing more lucrative business enterprises. In Cumberland, 22 men turned their bounty over to a substitute; 14 of them came from the mainland, while 8 came from Chebeague.

As a case in point, those recruits from Chebeague were all involved in the Rock Sloop business. The margin of profit in this business far exceeded the \$300.00 bounty offered by the town. These men were engaged in hauling stone, constructing breakwaters, and navigational aids, as well as working on the construction of Fort Gorges.¹⁶² Easily, they could reason that their contribution to the country's war effort could be better placed by remaining at home, and allowing substitutes to do the fighting.

Again and again, the Town Treasurer was requested to borrow enough money to pay the volunteers and draftees. Cumberland's quotas must be met. With each new request, Cumberland went deeper into debt. Local leaders emphasized the need to uphold Maine's honor and save the Union. Nevertheless, war hung like a cloud over the community.

The Town of Cumberland struggled to fill draft quotas and provide financial support for the troops. In November 1863, Cumberland borrowed \$7,200.00, but that was insufficient. Two months later, January 1864, Cumberland authorized another loan for \$2000.00. Voters were not comfortable with these continuing allocations.

Even when monetary compensation was met, the quotas were difficult to fulfill. Under the draft, the options were limited. Eleven concerned citizens petitioned the Town to call a special Town Meeting to discuss a method of raising soldiers to respond to the call of August 1864. A committee was charged with the task of filling the Cumberland quota. This committee, composed of three townsmen, was to receive \$25.00 for each man accepted for service in the Union Army. This plan put the town \$2,700.00 further in debt.

Not surprisingly, by September 1864, State funds were running low and so the town itself had to advance \$300.00 to the men, when they qualified for service. These advances were made in the form of a loan from Cumberland to the State at the lowest possible rate of interest. Taxpayers were paying for the Civil War.

As governor, Cony followed in the footsteps of Governors Washburn and Coburn, supporting every call of President Lincoln for additional troops. Three times, 1863, 1864, and 1865, Cony was elected Governor. In 1863, Cumberland voters gave Cony 154 votes, that is 45.8%, and in 1864, 130 votes, that is 44.3%. Nevertheless, despite Cumberland's lack of support, Cony was re-elected governor, both in 1863 and 1864. Finally, in 1865, Cumberland did support Cony by 52.3%, that is 144 votes. In part, these differences reflect the level of turnout, which was relatively high in 1863, low in

¹⁶¹ Miller, Donna L., "Cumberland's Role in the Civil War," *op. cit.*, page 129.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*

1864, and even lower in 1865. Cumberland voters were tired of the war, and tired of repeated requests to raise money to support local troops.

In January 1865, Robert Dyer, one of the three member recruitment committee, was appointed as the sole recruiting agent. Soon Cumberland was requested to fill yet another quota. Money was a primary concern, and Dyer was requested to complete his task at minimal cost to the Town. During the past several years, many patriotic citizens had been privately contributing funds so that the Town could meet its commitments to the soldiers. Citizen contributions had been made with no assurance of repayment.

During the civil war, in order to support the recruits, the Town of Cumberland had borrowed money to pay the notes that came due. The repayment of Civil War debts took many years. Residents of Chebeague felt they were charged with a disproportionate share of the debts, and some considered seceding from the Town.¹⁶³ Despite its distance from the battlefield, Cumberland felt the financial burden and the human loss of life. Over 130 people from the Town of Cumberland served in the Civil War. Fourteen of them died in service.

Chart 2: Cumberland Votes for Governor, 1833-1871

Governor	Age At Inaug.	Education College Degree Rec'd?	Occupation	Pol. Party	Pol. Exper.	Year of vote	Total Cumb Votes Cast	% Cumb Votes for Winner	Cumb Vote for Winner?
Robert P. Dunlap	39	Yes Bowdoin	lawyer	Dem.	Yes State HR&S	1833	217	44%	no
Robert P. Dunlap	40					1834	252	53.9%	yes
Robert P. Dunlap	41					1835	192	56.7%	yes
Robert P. Dunlap	42					1836	209	52.6%	yes
Edward Kent	36	Yes Harvard	lawyer	Whig	Yes State Sen.	1837	229	47.5%	no
John Fairfield	41	Yes Bowdoin	lawyer	Dem	Yes USHR	1838	297	47.8%	no

¹⁶³ Miller, Donna L., "Cumberland's Role in the Civil War," *op. cit.*, page 131.

Cumberland and the Slavery Issue

John Fairfield	42			Dem		1839	289	52.9%	yes
Edward Kent	39	Yes Harvard	lawyer	Whig	Yes State Sen.	1840	292	Tie 50%	yes
John Fairfield	44	Yes Bowdoin	lawyer	Dem	Yes USHR	1841	265	52.%	yes
John Fairfield	45					1842	213	56.3%	yes
Hugh J. Anderson	42	No	lawyer	Dem	Yes USHR	1843	200	54%	yes
Hugh J. Anderson	43					1844	257	56%	yes
Hugh J. Anderson	44					1845	204	53.9%	yes
John W. Dana	35	No	Business man	Dem	Yes State HR & Senate	1846	191	52%	yes
John W. Dana	36					1847	170	55.3%	yes
John W. Dana	37					1848	223	54.7	yes
John Hubbard	55	Yes Dartmouth Univ of PA	M.D.	Dem	Yes State Senate	1849	218	50%	yes
John Hubbard	56					1850	231	51.9%	yes
John Hubbard	57					1851	No Elec.	No Elec.	No Elec.
William G. Crosby	47	Yes Bowdoin	lawyer	Whig	no	1852	227	30.8%	no
William G. Crosby	48					1853	216	25%	no
Anson P. Morrill	51	no	mill mgr.	Know Nothing	Yes State HR	1854	242	39.2% 3 vote margin	yes
Samuel E. Wells	54	no	lawyer	Dem	Yes State HR	1855	280	52.8%	yes
Hannibal Hamlin	47	Studied law	Editor	Rep	Yes State HR USHR US Senate	1856	327	54.1%	yes

Cumberland and the Slavery Issue

Lot M. Morrill	44	Studied Waterville College	lawyer	Rep	Yes State HR State Sen.	1857	320	48.7%	no
Lot M. Morrill	45			Rep		1858	335	46.2%	no
Lot M. Morrill	46			Rep.		1859	315	47.6%	no
Israel Washburn Jr.	47	Studied Law; not college grad.	Lawyer	Rep.	Yes State HR USHR	1860	365	48.4% 1 vote margin	yes
Israel Washburn Jr.	48			Rep.		1861	293	49.1%	yes
Abner Coburn	59		Business man	Rep.	Yes State HR	1862	279	42.2%	no
Samuel Cony	52	Yes Brown	lawyer	Rep.	Yes State HR	1863	337	45.6%	no
Samuel Cony	53			Rep.		1864	300	44.3%	no
Samuel Cony	54			Rep.		1865	275	52.3%	yes
Joshua Chamberlain	37	Bowdoin, Bangor Theo. Seminary	Educator	Rep.	Lt. Col. 20 th ME	1866	313	50.5% 4 vote margin	yes
Joshua Chamberlain	38			Rep.		1867	254	45.3%	no
Joshua Chamberlain	39			Rep.		1868	377	46.9%	no
Joshua Chamberlain	40			Rep.		1869	235	42%	no
Sidney Perham	51	Bates- left before grad.	Educator	Rep.	State HR USHR	1870	227	51.5%	yes
Sidney Perham	52			Rep.		1871	242	46.7%	no
Sidney Perham	53			Rep.		1872	298	48.99%	no

								6 vote margin	
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Of the 16 governors, 1833-1871, 2 were educators, 3 were businessmen, 1 was an editor, 1 was a doctor (M.D.) and 9 were lawyers. Of those elected governor in state-wide vote, 6 were Democrats, 2 were Whigs, 1 was Know Nothing, and 7 were Republicans. On four occasions, Cumberland voters gave gubernatorial candidates a landslide vote: 1835 for Dunlap (56.7%); 1842 for Fairfield (56.3%); 1844 for Anderson (56%); 1847 for Dana (55.3%).

Summary of Voting Trends in Cumberland

Prior to the Civil War, Cumberland was a modified one party town in a one-party state. Few candidates won by landslide margins. Competition between the two major parties continued with periods of dominance for the Democrats.

How can we account for voting patterns in Cumberland prior to the Civil War? During this period, Cumberland remained ethnically homogeneous. Its residents were overwhelmingly Anglo-Saxon and Protestant. Cultural variables were minimal.

Geographically, however, the town was diverse. Shaped as a rectangle, its boundaries extended inland approximately 8-10 miles, its coastline along the shore covered about 3.5 miles. In addition, the island of Chebeague and several other inhabited islands were part of the Town. This geographical diversity fostered a variety of agricultural and maritime enterprises.

Economic diversity was not pronounced. Democrats, known as the party of the working man, were more likely to be farmers, artisans and skilled workers such as carpenters, masons, and blacksmiths. The party also attracted maritime workers, such as boat builders, sail-makers, and ship canvas makers. In Cumberland small boat building yards were scattered along the coves. These small vessels were used to transport goods locally, island to island. Gundalows were used to carry produce and supplies to the islands. In addition to Greater Cheabugue, these Cumberland islands included: Little Chebeague, Broken Cave, Hope, Smooth Clapboard, Basket, Bates, Stave, Ministerial, Bangs, Sturdivant, Goose, Crow, Sand, and Jewell. During summer months, these small boats were used to take livestock to the islands for summer grazing.

At Spear’s Ship Yard, David Spear Senior built about 30, and his son about 20 large ships. This shipbuilding industry in Cumberland started to decline with the Panic of 1857. Wood became scarce and expensive. Steel began to replace wood as material in ship construction. Steam power replaced sails. However, due to strong ties with trade to the southern states, ship builders and sea captains shared a perspective different from maritime workers. This difference often was reflected in the way they voted.

Cumberland supported little communities within its boundaries. Essentially, these communities included Poland’s Corner, Cumberland Center, West Cumberland, and Chebeague.

Each had its own post office. Within months after Cumberland seceded from North Yarmouth in 1821, Cumberland had its first post office in the village of Poland's Corner, in the vicinity where Middle Road intersects Tuttle Road. A second post office was established in the village of Cumberland Center in May 1826. The third Post Office was established in the village of West Cumberland in 1846. These little communities appeared to be remarkably similar insofar as each supported general store, blacksmith, church, post office, one room schoolhouses, slaughter house, and brick yards.

One of these communities was Poland's Corner, located at the crossing of Tuttle and Middle Roads. Broad Cove and the coastline were located only about one quarter mile away. Between 1830 and 1855 it was a small hamlet of about 20 dwellings, clustering around Charles Poland's store and the Cumberland station for the Grand Trunk Railroad. Within this small community, residents established a post office, general store, school, railroad station, and church. Small enterprises sprang up to serve the community. For example, a print shop was established in the Gray home, a blacksmith shop at the McClellan place, a slaughter house, and even a Sulphur Springs Sanitarium and health resort. A private school for young ladies was run by Maria Buxton. Farmers raised hay, a crop well suited to the coastal soil. Swedish and Danish immigrants were attracted to the area and eager to become land owners.¹⁶⁴

Approximately four miles inland in the center of Cumberland, another small community supported its own post office, general store, blacksmith shop, church, slaughter house, sawmill and railroad station. In West Cumberland, a smaller community took shape. In each community, residents were engaged in similar occupations. Many were land owners, but they did not consider themselves property owners. Democratic Party flourished in this kind of situation.

In contrast, the Whigs attracted merchants, professional men, and lawyers. During this antebellum period, not many men in Cumberland made a living by figuring interest, balancing books, or charging a retainer for services performed. For most of the nineteenth century, Cumberland supported agricultural and maritime occupations.

Differences between the Democrats and the Whigs are reflected in measures of wealth. Whigs were more apt to be property owners and be engaged in business investments. Although sea captains and lumber mill owners built stately homes in colonial style, most residents seemed satisfied with humbler homes. Democrats appeared largely disinterested in business enterprise and investment. Accumulation of personal wealth was not a priority for them.

1830s For the most part, Cumberland during the 1830s voted for candidates who were Jacksonian Democrats, and so the Second Party System remained in place. However, there were two exceptions. In 1830, for the Congressional race, Cumberland voted for the Federalist candidate as opposed to the Democratic candidate, by a margin of 6 votes. Similarly, for governor, Cumberland voted for the National Republican candidate as opposed to the Democratic candidate,

¹⁶⁴ Chandler, Marion L. "The Poland's Corner Neighborhood," in Phyllis Sturdivant Sweetser, *Cumberland in Four Centuries*, *op. cit.*, page 42.

by a margin of 3 votes. Both in the District and in the state, the Democratic candidate won, contrary to the way Cumberland voted.

In 1833, for both the Congressional seat and the governorship, Cumberland supported the Whig candidate. For the case of the Congressional seat, the race was three-way, between a former resident of North Yarmouth (104 votes), a resident of Cumberland (91 votes), and a Democrat (21 votes). Cumberland voters split their votes between the two local candidates, but District-wide the Democrat won. As for the three-way gubernatorial race, Cumberland voters by a margin of 6 votes chose the Whig candidate as opposed to the Democrat candidate. The race was complicated by the fact that the incumbent Governor, a Democrat, ran as an Independent. Had the two Democrats not competed for votes, the statewide Democratic choice, Dunlap, would have won in Cumberland.

What accounts for failure of the incumbent Democratic governor, Governor Smith, to win the election? Restless with current challenges, Cumberland voters opted for a change. The incumbent Governor was a Jacksonian Democrat, seeking a fourth term. The victorious Democrat nominated by his party, Robert Dunlap, offered a fresh perspective on the anti-slavery issue, the boundary dispute, and may have had support from the anti-Mason Party. Wanting change from Jacksonian Democrats, Cumberland voters gave the majority of their votes to the Daniel Goodenow, the Whig candidate.

1840s During this decade, there were subtle signs of imminent party collapse. That was true for both parties. Cumberland voters were apathetic. Although the 1840 election, for a variety of reasons, attracted the highest turnout until 1856, Cumberland voters refrained from becoming actively involved in the issues. As party loyalties began to weaken, voters stayed home or considered switching party allegiance. As a symbol of latent dissatisfaction, a Third Party emerged. By the end of the 1840s, the long term Democratic Party contained two rival factions: the Wool-heads and the Wildcats.

With one exception of the tie vote 1840, Cumberland voters throughout the decade supported the Democratic candidates, who in turn won seats in Congress and the State House. In 1840, both in the contest for Congressional delegate and the contest for governor, Cumberland voting resulted in a tie. Such tightly competitive races, coupled with record breaking turnout, signaled a slight shift in party allegiance. Voters were becoming willing to vote for candidates of another party. In addition, non-voters were engaged enough to turn out and vote. The governor's race was decided in the state legislature, which the Whig party dominated. The District race was also decided in favor of the Whig candidate, William Pitt Fessenden. For the remainder of the decade, Cumberland voters favored the Democratic candidates, both for governor and for congressional seat.

Why was 1840 such an unusual year? Due to the Presidential election and the selection of Presidential candidate, the Whig Party was invigorated. This vigor was directed toward reinforcing party structure at the local levels. Cumberland must have felt some of that impact, and as a result was stimulated to consider the Whig candidates. At the national level, William Henry Harrison, a

Whig, won the Presidency. Unfortunately, he died after only 32 days in office. His Vice President, John Tyler, failed to keep the momentum going for the Whigs.

In Maine, in 1844, Democrats were divided between those who supported Polk for President and those who supported Van Buren. The gubernatorial candidate, Hugh T. Anderson, supported Polk, and swept to a resounding victory. Cumberland voters gave Anderson 56% of their vote. Turnout was high, but not as high as in 1840.

In 1848, the Free Soil Party called for a national convention. This new party was opposed to the extension of slavery. In Maine, the Free Soil Party was dominated by former Liberty Party leaders. As the party grew, it held the balance of power in Maine. In 1848, votes for the Whig candidate Elijah Hamlin and the Free Soil Candidate, Samuel Fessenden, exceeded the number of votes cast for the Democrats. A Third Party began to make a decisive difference. In Cumberland, the Free Soil Candidate, Samuel Fessenden, was on the ticket for both the gubernatorial and the congressional races. For each position, he garnered 30 votes or 13.4% of the votes cast.

Although Cumberland voters held steady for Democratic candidates during the remainder of the decade, the Democratic Party was in disarray. Old party issues no longer seemed relevant. Voters were disgusted with the struggle for patronage. Late in 1847, with the death of Senator Fairfield, the Democratic Party searched for a new leader, and the Democratic state legislature chose Hannibal Hamlin. However, Democratic consensus was momentary inasmuch by the end of the decade the party split into two factions: the Wool-heads and Wildcats.

In 1849, the Democrats elected the Wool-head John Hubbard as governor and retained control of the state legislature. Cumberland gave Hubbard 109 votes (50%). The Whig candidate received 78 votes (35.7%) and the Third Party candidate received 31 votes (14.2%). Again, had the Whig and Third Party vote been combined, the Democratic candidate would have been defeated. The Third Party vote in Cumberland was making incremental gains.

1850s This decade was dominated by two major issues, both freshly crystallizing in voter consciousness. For each issue, supporters stopped trying to use moral persuasion and focused on forming coalitions of supporters. A step by step, year by year account, may serve to clarify the process of party disintegration, which led within the decade to party realignment.

The first major issue was the passage of the Maine Law in 1851. In the state legislature, the Democrats voted 56-35 and the Whigs voted 34-15 in favor of this temperance law. All the Free Soil representatives favored it. Both major parties clearly lacked consensus on the question. This division was reflected by Governor Hubbard, not a teetotaler, who hesitated, but finally did sign the bill.

The second issue was continued rise of the Maine Anti-slavery Society. For each issue, supporters stopped trying to use moral persuasion and focused on forming coalitions of supporters. Abolitionists tried to gain support from Protestant churches. The Methodists questioned priorities: save souls or save slaves? The Baptists did not want to offend their southern brethren. The

Congregationalists declared each church should decide for itself. Congressional and state legislatures received petitions.

In general, Democrats and Whigs opposed slavery and liquor, but increasingly voters crossed party lines to support reform candidates. These two issues disrupted party alignments, which in turn prepared the ground for a new party system. Cumberland's margin of support for Democratic candidates decreased and support for Third Party candidates increased.

For the 1850 election, in Cumberland, Hubbard received 120 votes (51.9%), Crosby, a Whig, received 81 votes (35%), and Talbot the Third Party candidate received 30 votes (12.98%). Hubbard did win the state-wide vote. For Congress, Fessenden, a Whig, received 115 votes (50.6%) and his Democratic opponent, Appleton, received 112 votes (49.3%), a difference of three votes. Appleton won the election district wide. Cumberland voters remained clearly divided. In fact, some crossed party lines, voting for the candidate of one party for governor, and voting for the candidate of another party for congressman. In 1851, no state-wide elections were held.

The year 1852 marks a crucial step toward party decomposition both in Maine and in Cumberland. Evidence of this decomposition is seen in the strength of Third party movements, weakening party loyalties, the proportion of voters splitting their tickets or switching parties, plus the extent of voter apathy. This process of decomposition and realignment occurred in two stages; 1852-1856 and 1856-1860. Events at the state level did impact the local level.

Both parties split into factions. The impetus was the Compromise of 1850. The Democrats split into anti-Jackson and pro-Jackson factions. The Anti-Jackson group, led by Calhoun, took control of the party. The pro-Jackson group grappled to restore the principles of Jackson and get rid of corruption.

The Whigs were divided North and South over the slavery issue. Millard Fillmore and Daniel Webster led a faction in support of the Compromise of 1850. Both sought the presidential nomination, but Webster believed Fillmore should defer to him. Fillmore was plagued by doubts, though he was the choice of Southern Whigs. The eventual nominee, General Scott received support of the Northern Whigs who opposed the Compromise and successfully won support from the Free Soil leaders. On the 53rd ballot Scott won the nomination. In the election, General Scott failed to carry Maine, and Franklin Pierce, the Democratic candidate, won the state's electoral votes.

The fissures in these two major parties were mirrored in Maine politics. In 1852, there were five candidates for governor. Two supported the Maine temperance Law of 1851, and three opposed it. The Democrats were divided into Hunker and Hamlin wings. Due to bitter opposition to Hubbard within the Democratic Party and thus their refusal to nominate Hubbard, the State legislative caucus re-nominated Hubbard. Despite derisive caterwauling from the Hamlin wing, the disgruntled Hunkers withdrew from the caucus and nominated Anson G. Chandler as an Independent candidate. The majority of Maine Democrats allegedly approved the Maine

temperance law of 1851. That included Governor Hubbard. On the other hand, Crosby, a Whig, and Holmes, a Free Soil candidate, condemned the law.

Cumberland voters, in 1852, mirrored the split. Governor Hubbard received 88 votes (38.76%), Anson G. Chandler received 67 votes (29.5%), Crosby, the Whig candidate, received 70 votes (30.8%), and Holmes received only 2 votes. Despite Cumberland's lukewarm preference for the Democratic incumbent, Crosby, a Whig, won the gubernatorial election.

For the Congressional race, Democrat Mayall received 78 votes (34.8%), Whig candidate Gilman received 116 votes (51.7%) and Third party candidates received 27 and 3 votes (13%). Although Cumberland voters gave the majority of their votes to Gilman, the Whig candidate, Mayall the Democrat won the District-wide vote. Clearly, voters were splitting their tickets, voting for one party for the gubernatorial race and for another party for the Congressional race. Which was dominant, their choice for party, for candidate, or for issues?

What Cumberland's voting results illustrate is the initial stage of party disintegration and realignment. Party identification was weakening. Split ticket voting was more common. Voter apathy was apparent.

Even although 1852 was a presidential year, and voter turnout could be expected to be high, Cumberland turnout remained low at 227 votes, as opposed to a peak of 292 in 1840. Presumably this failure to vote suggested more than momentary inconvenience or apathy. Conceivably, Cumberland voters were caught in confusion between competing positions and simply stayed at home.

When viewing events through the prism of party identity, the voter often relies on party leaders to analyze the issues. Very few voters actually for themselves think through the issues. Rather, they are more apt to respond to party slogans on an emotional level and fail to process information on an intellectual level. Customarily, each party provides positions which voters have neither time nor inclination to investigate. In 1852, party leaders themselves were divided.

Even when new issues emerge and party leaders present a compelling case for these new issues, voters find it difficult to disengage from long term party identity. The psychological bond between voter and party images is usually cultivated in the family and passed on generation after generation until new issues emerge and demand the voter's attention. Although party identification is the single most important influence on voter's political behavior, compelling new issues weaken party allegiance and often lead to political disintegration. In 1852, that was happening in Cumberland.

From the perspective of the state vote, when compared with voter turnout in 1850, those who voted in 1852 helped confirm signs of party disintegration. In Maine, approximately 30% of Whigs, 50% of Democrats, and more than 80% of Free Soil voters in 1850 either voted for a

different party in 1852 or did not vote.¹⁶⁵ Two factors were critical in leading to party decomposition in Maine, namely, the rise of new voters and the high proportion of voters switching parties.

To garner his coalition, Governor Hubbard attracted new voters as well as Whig and Free Soil voters who abandoned their traditional party affiliation to vote for him. Altogether, Hubbard received sizable support from three groups, especially Whigs, new voters and former non-voters. His winning margin came entirely from men normally unaffiliated with a party.¹⁶⁶ Among traditional Democrats, Chandler ran about even with Hubbard. The former opposed the temperance law and the latter supported it.

The following year, 1853, political instability became even more pronounced. Within the Democratic Party, factions fought for control of the party. State-wide, the standard Democratic nominee, Albert Pillsbury, won a plurality with half of his support from the Democrats, a quarter from Free Soil and Whigs, and a quarter from Maine Law supporters. Anson Morrill, the Know Nothing candidate, received support from the hardcore Woolheads, who endorsed the Maine Law. As for the Whigs, their voting base was rapidly disintegrating, with a large number of Whigs declining to vote. In reality, Whigs were as confused as the Democrats. Nevertheless, the Whig candidate, William Crosby, was elected by the legislature.

In Cumberland, the turnout of 216 voters was the lowest since 1847. Cumberland voters cast 101 ballots (46.8%) for Pillsbury, the Democrat, 54 ballots (25%) for Crosby, the Whig, 30 ballots (13.8%) for Ezekiel Holmes, Free Soil candidate, and 31 ballots (14.3%) for Anson Morrill, Know Nothing candidate. Crosby won the election.

Notably in 1853, those voters switching parties increased dramatically. Prohibition (Maine Law) had produced a fundamental cleavage within both parties, but political leaders were unable to channel this divisive issue within the prevailing party systems. New voters flooded into voting booths, but at best party loyalties were weak.¹⁶⁷ By the end of 1853, party decomposition in Maine and in Cumberland had progressed to a point it could not be reversed. The second party system was collapsing – beyond being retrieved.

With the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska bill in 1854, the question of slavery in western territories regained center stage. In Maine, most newspapers as well as the state legislature denounced its passage. The two fundamental issues – slavery and temperance – tended to coalesce, to intensify, and to splinter the party system. Political parties

¹⁶⁵ Gienapp, William E. *op. cit.*, page 49.

¹⁶⁶ Gienapp, William E., *op. cit.*, page 47.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, page 51.

became even more fragmented. For the 1854 gubernatorial election, five candidates were on the ballot.

Much to the delight of the Whigs, the divisions within the Democratic Party continued to deepen. At the 1854 Democratic State Convention, the Wildcat Democrats nominated Albion K. Parris, a temperance Democrat, who in Portland's 1852 Mayoral Race had successfully defeated Neal Dow. Nicknamed "Napoleon of Temperance," Dow had been an author of the Maine Temperance Law. Parris was a pro-Temperance Democrat. In contrast, the Anti-Temperance Democrats, were led by Shep Cary who decided to run as an independent Democrat. Cary condemned abolition and condemned prohibition. His independent candidacy weakened the Democrats even further.

Working defiantly outside the established Democratic Party organization, Anson Morrill, a former Democrat, assumed leadership of Hubbard's wing of the Democratic Party and emerged as a Know Nothing candidate. He endorsed the Maine Law, condemned the overthrow of the Missouri Compromise, and called for a repeal of the fugitive slave law. His coalition was known as the Morrill Democrats.

The Free Soil Party tried fusion, recognizing they could not win on their own. At their state convention, leaders urged delegates to endorse Morrill. That they did.

As for the Whigs, they nominated Isaac Reed on a platform which focused on the slavery issue. The platform condemned the Kansas-Nebraska Act, opposed extension of slavery to any territory, and recommended modification of the fugitive slave law. One plank endorsed the prohibition law, but not much was said about it, either in the convention or on the campaign trail.

Movement toward fusion gained momentum. Several Whig leaders such as Isaac Washburn, Edward Kent, and William Pitt Fessenden, urged the Whigs to unite with the Morrill Democrats. In reality, Morrill and Reed ran on virtually identical platforms. Moreover, members in both Democratic factions preferred success of the Whigs to that of their party nominees, Parris and Cary. With these efforts at fusion, the Whigs began to believe their party was on the verge of supremacy. When the votes were counted, however, it was clear their party had completely collapsed. Fusion had failed.

When State-wide votes were tallied, Morrill led all candidates and narrowly missed receiving a majority (49.1%). Parris received 31.4%. Morrill received more than three times as many votes as Reed who received 15.4%. Morrill won a majority of Whigs and a significant number of earlier non-voters. One fourth of Morrill's voters had not voted in

1853.¹⁶⁸ In addition, Morrill, leader of Hubbard's Democratic faction, won the largest share of his followers. His position on Nativist issues and the Kansas-Nebraska bill helped sway some voters. Difficult though it was for many to believe, the Whig Party was so weak, no fusion could revive it. Morrill won the gubernatorial election.

These statewide results were largely mirrored in the Cumberland vote. Votes for Morrill (39.2%) and Parris (38%) differed by a margin of three votes. Reed received 41 votes (16.9%) and Shepherd Cary with 12 votes received 4.9%. For the Congressional race with only two candidates, John Perry, the Democrat, won by a landslide vote of 55.7% and William Kimball, the Whig, won 44.3%. District wide, Perry won the seat.

Why did fusion fail? Confused by party fragmentation, voters seemed anxious for a new party. They distrusted old party organizations. One newspaper headline read "DISCARD THE OLD BLOODSUCKERS!" Many had supported Morrill because they believed him to be independent of party.

Indeed, a new party was forming. Leaders in different parts of the country echoed the call for a new party which would combat the Kansas-Nebraska Act. On March 24, 1854, the first "anti-Nebraska" meeting was held in Ripon, Wisconsin, where the name "Republican" was first suggested for the new anti-slavery party. On July 6, 1854, the first statewide convention, under the name Republican, met in Jackson, Michigan to form a platform and to nominate candidates. About one month later, in Maine, committees of the anti-slavery Democrats, Whigs, and Independent Democratic parties published on July 27, 1854, a notice in the Farmington *Chronicle*, inviting each of these three parties to send 100 delegates to a Republican Party convention.¹⁶⁹ They condemned the Nebraska law and defended the prohibition law. Seeds for the new Maine Republican Party had been planted.

Early in 1855, Governor Morrill discarded his Democratic/Know Nothing affiliation and became actively involved in helping form the new Republican Party. Carefully courting Whig leaders, he tried to bring the bulk of members into the Republican ranks. Toward that end, as governor, he retained most of the Whig appointees of his predecessor, Governor Crosby.

Working with a fusion controlled legislature, Morrill attempted to conciliate various anti-Democratic factions. The Know Nothings constituted the largest bloc in the legislature. In an attempt to placate their nativist tendencies, the legislature passed one law forbidding state courts from naturalizing any one, and another law preventing

¹⁶⁸ Gienapp, William E., *op. cit.*, page 132.

¹⁶⁹ Hatch, Louis C. *op. cit.*, page 381.

naturalized citizens from voting unless they presented their citizenship papers to proper authorities for registration at least three months prior to an election.

To pacify anti-slavery concerns, the legislature passed a bold resolution that declared slavery to be a moral evil, and the fugitive slave law of 1850 unconstitutional, even calling for its repeal. The legislature also opposed admission of more slave states.

Pro-fusion members of the legislature also called for a convention to be held February 22, 1855 to organize the Republican Party. This summons called for delegates, regardless of party affiliation, to assemble and work toward supporting a prohibition liquor law and opposing further extension of slavery. Relatively inexperienced politicians predominated, but Morrill received the gubernatorial nomination on a platform of anti-slavery, anti-liquor and anti-immigration.

For the gubernatorial election of 1855, the Whigs, slow to recognize their drop in support, nominated Isaac Reed. Only nine of the sixteen counties were represented at its convention. Its platform condemned nativism and proposed an extensive revision of Maine Law, thereby finessing the controversial issue. Within the Whigs, however, nativist and temperance members drifted over to the Republican ranks.

The Democrats nominated Samuel Wells.

Meanwhile the fledgling Republican Party experienced two setbacks. First, their leaders failed to win over the allegiance of Hamlin, a leading anti-Nebraska Democrat. Secondly, a Portland riot on June 2, 1855, inextricably linked Neal Dow, a prominent Republican, with alleged improprieties involved in his handling of the municipal liquor storage. Delighted, the Democrats depicted the Republican Party as a party of fanaticism, obsessed with nativism and "Dow-ism."

Nevertheless, Republican leaders remained confident. After all, for the past three state contests, Maine voters had elected a pro-temperance governor and surely, they would do so again this time. Simply stay the course.

For the gubernatorial election of 1855, the turnout was heavy. Compared with the previous year, 20,000 more voters went to the polls. As incumbent governor and Republican candidate, Morrill received 6,636 more votes than he did in 1854. However, he won only a minority of the traditional Whig vote. Morrill consistently ran well among voters who had in the past backed pro-temperance candidates.¹⁷⁰ Although he won some

¹⁷⁰ Giennapp, William E., *op. cit.*, page 207

support from Whigs and Democrats and previous non-voters, Morrill suffered defections of his 1854 supporters to the two opposing candidates, Wells and Reed.

As far as the Democrats are concerned, now that they offered only one candidate, the choice for Democratic strong party identifiers was clear. Statewide, Morrill Republicans won a narrow plurality of the popular vote in a three way face. Once the election reached the legislature, “straight” Whigs cooperated with the Democrats, thereby giving anti-Republican forces control of the legislature. As a result, Samuel Wells, Democrat, was elected Governor.

In Cumberland, voters gave Wells 52.8%, Morrill 40.7% and Reed 6.4% of their votes. Statewide Wells won the election easily. The 1855 election challenged partisan affiliations to a greater extent than had the 1854 election.¹⁷¹ This represented an even bigger step in party disintegration.

Why were the Republicans, with incumbent Governor Morrill as one of the leaders, defeated? By making rum an issue, the Republicans allowed the Democrats to avoid their position on territorial acquisition and focus on unrelenting criticism of Neal Dow, Republican Party leader and guiding force behind the temperance bill. Moreover, the Republican Party’s strident anti-slavery platform weakened candidate Morrill by scaring nervous conservatives. In the aftermath, party leaders realized they needed to tone down their anti-slavery rhetoric. The Free Soil sentiment, not abolition, reflected a wider base of voters in the state.

New leaders were needed. After three consecutive races, Morrill declined re-nomination. To his credit, he had served as a catalyst for fusion. Now party leaders needed to find a suitable successor. United in their vision, party leaders issued to Senator Hamlin a desperate call, asking him to join the Republican Party and become the gubernatorial candidate in 1856.

After concerted cajoling by party leaders and soul searching on his part, Hamlin did become gubernatorial candidate in 1856. Several factors made him the strongest candidate. For the past decade, he had been in Washington, and thus was not entangled in the “vexed question” of Maine Temperance Law. He was sufficiently conservative so he could avoid the taint of radicalism that had weakened the party in 1855. Perhaps most significantly, as a former Democrat, he could attract wavering Democrats. This appears to be especially true in Cumberland.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, page 207.

According to official results for the 1856 election in Cumberland, Hamlin received 54.1%, Wells, 39.7%, and Patten 6.1% of votes cast. Similarly, in the Congressional contest, Charles J. Gilman, Republican, won 54.2% and Eben F. Pillsbury, Democrat, won 45.7% of the votes. Shifts in party alignment assisted growth of the Republican Party. How stable were these shifts?

In 1857, Cumberland voters gave the majority (51.2%) of their votes to Manassah Smith, Democrat and 48.7% of their votes to Lot M. Morrill, Republican candidate. Among a small segment of voters, traditional party identification was difficult to release. Statewide, Morrill won the gubernatorial election. Some Cumberland voters were reluctant to release their identity as Democrats.

In 1858, with approximately the same level of turnout, Cumberland voters again favored Mannasah Smith by a slightly larger percentage (53.7%) to Morrill's 46.2%. Compared to the previous year, a small number of voters shifted in favor of the Democratic candidate. In like manner, for the Congressional race, Cumberland voters favored the Democratic candidate, David R. Hastings by 53.5% as opposed to the Republican candidate, John J. Perry, with 46.4%. Hastings had received one less vote than the Democratic gubernatorial candidate Smith. However, Perry, the Republican, won the District vote.

In 1859, for Governor, the same two candidates were on the ballot. In Cumberland, Smith received 52.3% and incumbent Republican Morrill received 47.6% of the vote. Turnout was lower by 20 voters, but the results were remarkably the same. Again, contrary to the Cumberland vote, Morrill won the statewide election for governor. Clearly, Cumberland voters' affinity for Democratic candidates was difficult to change. On the national scene, cataclysmic changes were forcing party realignment.

1860s In 1860, a presidential year, three candidates for governor were on the ballot: Israel Washburn, Republican; Ephraim K. Smart, Democrat; and Phineas Burns, third party. Turnout was the highest in Cumberland's recorded history. Cumberland voters gave Washburn one more vote than they did Smart. Statewide Washburn won the election. The question was whether Cumberland would continue to support Republican candidates or were they simply attracted to the candidate, Washburn?

For the 1860 Congressional race the two candidates, Calvin Record and Charles Walton, received the same number of votes. There was no third candidate. District wide, the Republican candidate, Charles Walton, won the election. Nationally, of the 183 Congressional seats, 102 were held by Republicans, 45 by Democrats, 23 by Unionists, and 5 by another party. The Republican Party was beginning its ascendancy. Cumberland voters still were not convinced.

In the subsequent 1862 Congressional election, Cumberland by a landslide supported the Democratic candidate Calvin Record (59.3%) as opposed to the Republican Thomas Fessenden (39.9%). Fessenden won the District election. Turnout was relatively low.

For the 1864 Congressional election, Cumberland voters supported the Democratic candidate, Lorenzo D. Sweat, by 55.6% of the vote, as opposed to 44.3% for John Lynch, Republican candidate, who won the District wide election. Sweat failed to be re-elected in 1864 and the next time in 1866 he was an unsuccessful candidate. However, Cumberland remained loyal to Sweat by a landslide vote.

The year 1866, in another rematch of the same Congressional candidates, voters in Cumberland did support the Republican Congressional Candidate, John Lynch, as opposed to Lorenzo Sweat by a margin of 4 votes.

At the Gubernatorial level, in 1866, Cumberland voters supported the Republican candidate, Joshua Chamberlain, as opposed to his Democratic candidate Pillsbury, also by a margin of 4 votes. The tide seemed to be turning. State-wide, Chamberlain received 62% of the vote.

However, for the following three elections, 1867, 1868, and 1869, when the same two candidates competed, Cumberland voters turned and gave Chamberlain fewer and fewer votes. In 1867, Cumberland voters gave Chamberlain 45.3%, but statewide, he received 55.5% of the vote. In 1868, Cumberland gave Chamberlain 46.9%, but statewide, he received 72.1% of the vote. In 1869, Cumberland gave Chamberlain 42% of their votes,

but statewide he received 55.4% of the vote. For four successive elections, 1866-1869 Chamberlain carried the state. Why were Cumberland voters so reluctant to support the Republican candidate? Was it his military history? Was it their reluctance to switch party identification?

As successor to Joshua Chamberlain, Sidney Perham ran as a Republican gubernatorial candidate. In Cumberland, in 1870, voters gave 51.5% of their votes to Perham. However, the following year, 1871, voters gave him 46.7% of their votes. In 1872, Perham received 48.99% of the vote with only a 6 vote margin. Statewide, Perham carried the state 1870-1872. Cumberland voters wavered, first supporting him, and then turning to support his opponent.

For the next several decades, the State would consistently support Republican candidates, but Cumberland often continued to support Democratic candidates. Realignment had finally occurred in Maine, but Cumberland was slow to make the shift.

Ambivalence and Voter Vacillation in Cumberland

What accounts for the ambivalence with which Cumberland residents viewed the slavery issue? Being ambivalent is having simultaneous and contradictory attitudes or feelings. These attitudes can lead to voter vacillation, such as Cumberland voters expressed during the 1850s and 1860s. In Cumberland, why was the shift in party identification from Democrat to Republican so much slower than in the state at large? In part, the slowness of this shift mirrored ambivalent perceptions on the slavery issue and preservation of the union.

Envision various places where Cumberland residents would gather to discuss "current events." Some would exchange views at the train station, while waiting for trains to arrive or depart. Some would gather at Fred Adam's Blacksmith shop, while waiting for their horses to be shod. Some would congregate at the general store, pull out their tobacco pouches, and sit down on benches in front of the pot-bellied stove to discuss the national situation. Was the country drifting toward a calamity in which the nation would be "half slave" and "half free?"

Some could see both sides of the issue. Those favoring one side or the other were not bashful. They spoke. They voted.

Cumberland was economically diverse. The maritime industries were concentrated along the coast, at the east end. Ship builders, sea captains, and fishermen depended on the sea for their livelihood. In fact, for more than forty years, Maine had prospered in the shipping trades. Because of extensive trade with the south, some Cumberland residents developed strong ties with their Southern “neighbors.” Not surprisingly, quite a few southern sympathizers could be found in Cumberland. At one time, there were as many as 13 sea captains who were members of the Congregational Church.

The South was known as the land of cotton. In 1850, cotton was king, with 60% of the slaves working in cotton, a plantation crop requiring continuous attention of slaves. By the 1850s, Maine enjoyed a virtual monopoly in the cotton carry trade. Loss of this business due to Union blockades during the Civil War was a serious blow. Of the 52 vessels sunk by the *Alabama*, 11 were from Maine. For 40 years, Maine had prospered in shipping southern slave-raised cotton, and in the process, citizens developed strong ties with Southern “neighbors.” In Cumberland, as in Maine, a great deal of southern sympathy had been generated due to trade.

By 1860, two-thirds of the total exports of the United States consisted of cotton. Inextricably connected with the production of cotton, slaves were the only available labor for large-scale cotton plantations. Because all available capital was tied up in slaves, there were few textile factories in the South. New England built quite a few textile factories, and ships were the means of transporting cotton to these textile factories. Maine had factories in Lewiston/Auburn as well as the Biddeford/Saco area. Cumberland ships and Cumberland sea captains with local crew gained livelihood by transporting cotton to Maine factories.

Like it or not, cotton was indispensable life blood of Southern agriculture, where it was grown with slave labor. Like it or not, cotton was also a significant revenue source of Northern textile industry that processed it and the maritime trade which transported it. Under these circumstances, Northerners were willing to break blockades in order to exchange a variety of goods for Southern cotton. However, during the 1850s and 1860s, politicians began to realize the country could not carry on this kind of trade and war at the same time.

Economic diversity did characterize Cumberland residents. Inland residents engaged in small scale farming, sawmill production, and various trades. Along the coast and on Chebeague, residents engaged in the maritime trades of ship building, fishing, and sea transport. Diverse occupations led to a difference between relatively high and low income. This diversity was reflected in attitudes and voting preferences.

A second source of ambivalence was ethnic-cultural homogeneity. By far the majority of Cumberland residents were Anglo-Saxon Protestants. They cherished traditional values of self-reliance, hard work, thrift, and sacrifice. They retained serene confidence in these traditional values. A sense of Yankee ingenuity reinforced that confidence. Grounded in these values, they questioned the repeated requests for revenue to support soldiers and the apparent corruption among certain office-holders. However, they understood the need for patriotism.

A third source of ambivalence was geographical isolation, which for many led to ignorance. By virtue of its geographical location, seemingly far removed from the cauldron of conflict, Cumberland residents had little or no first-hand experience regarding the slavery issue. Few if any Blacks lived within a five mile radius of Cumberland. Residents of Cumberland were challenged to know what actually was happening. They witnessed leaders struggling to shape the nation's destiny. During their most optimistic moments, they convinced themselves that the gulf between sides could be bridged. In contrast, pessimists claimed the gulf was unbridgeable.

Cumberland residents realized they were ignorant of many ramifications of the national issues, but they also realized they could not ignore these issues. Tensions seemed to be escalating faster than solutions were found. They had little or no direct experience with the slavery issue. They had to rely on secondary sources of information. Some regarded slaves, as they did the Indians, as strangers. Sometimes strangers are to be feared. Why get involved? Where we are, here, is satisfactory, why invite trouble, why interfere?

Finally, many were skeptical of the importance of their vote. Periodically the turnout was high, and then it would plunge to low levels. Reinforced from generation to generation, party identification was difficult to change. If a particular party was good enough for one's ancestors, why shift party identification now?

Part IV: CONCLUSIONS

No one will deny that slavery was a watershed issue (1830-1865). The question remains did anyone see this issue evolving and gaining momentum? Did anyone warn of the impending crisis? Did anyone foresee how certain causes would lead to civil war? In Cumberland, we have no documentary evidence that residents foresaw the impending crisis. At the state level, Governor Washburn admitted he had not foreseen the dissolution of the union. However, in the national context, Abraham Lincoln, in his speeches, repeatedly warned of the potentially explosive situation.

In his Address before the Young Men's Lyceum of Springfield, Illinois, on January 27, 1838, Lincoln reminded us we have inherited political institutions which are a fundamental blessing. These institutions were bestowed by "hardy, brave, and patriotic" founding fathers, now departed. These men established a "political edifice of liberty and equal rights; 'tis ours only to transmit... un-decayed by lapse of time and un-torn by usurpation." Continuing his speech, Lincoln asserts "this task we are required to perform in gratitude to our fathers, justice to ourselves, duty to posterity, and love for our species."

How shall we perform this task? "At what point," asks Lincoln, "shall we expect the approach of danger?" Will it be some kind of external force? "Shall we expect some transatlantic military giant, to step the Ocean, and crush us at a blow? Never!...All the armies of Europe, Asia and Africa combined, with all the treasure of the earth (our own excepted) in their military chest; with a Bonaparte for a commander, could not by force, take a drink from the Ohio, or make a track on the Blue Ridge, in a trial of a thousand years."

If not by external force, then at what point is the approach of danger to be expected? Lincoln replies "if it ever reach us, it must spring up amongst us. It cannot come from abroad. If destruction be our lot, we must ourselves be its author and finisher. As a nation of freemen, we must live through all time, or die by suicide." The challenge is internal, not external.

What is the evidence of an impending crisis? Although hoping he was mistaken, Lincoln identified several ill-omens. He cited "the increasing disregard for law which pervades the country; the growing disposition to substitute the wild and furious passions, in lieu of the sober judgment of Courts; and the worse than savage mobs, for the executive ministers of justice." In any community, such tendencies are fearful. As for ours, Lincoln reluctantly admitted, "it would be a violation of truth, and an insult to our intelligence, to deny" it.

Are such outrages limited to certain parts of the country? "Accounts of outrages committed by mobs have pervaded the country from New England to Louisiana," Lincoln emphasizes. "These outrages are not due to the climate, nor are they confined to the slave-holding or the non-slaving-holding States." They are "common to the whole country."

Lincoln refers to the hangings of Negroes suspected of insurrection, caught and hanged in all parts of Mississippi. Victims included gamblers and Negroes, Negroes and whites, itinerant strangers, "till dead men were seen literally dangling from the boughs of trees from every road side and in numbers almost sufficient to rival the native Spanish moss of the country, as a drapery of the forest."

To further document his claim of outrages, Lincoln presented the case of Francis McIntosh.¹⁷²

Turn, then, to that horror-striking scene at St. Louis. A single victim was only sacrificed there. His story is very short.... A mulatto man, by the name of McIntosh, was seized in the street, dragged to the suburbs of the city, chained to a tree, and actually burned to death; and all within a single hour from the time he had been a freeman, attending to his own business, and at peace with the world.

Lincoln added, "Such are the effects of mob law; and such are the scenes, becoming more and more frequent in this land so lately famed for love of law and order."

Surely, Lincoln was aware of the murder of Elijah Parish Lovejoy on November 7, 1837 in Alton, Illinois, located not far from where he was speaking. Not only was Lincoln aware of this situation, people in Maine, by means of newspaper accounts, learned about Lovejoy's martyrdom. This was another case of rule by "mob law."

Continuing his speech, Lincoln asked, "What has this to do with the perpetuation of our political institutions?" When mobs are permitted to rule, the effects are threatening our political institutions. Mob law is becoming more and more frequent, Lincoln observed, in a land famous for its love of law and order. In confusion, someone who is neither a gambler nor a murderer, someone who is innocent, may fall victim to the ravages of mob law. Step by step, "walls erected for the defense of property and individuals are trodden down and disregarded." Perpetuators go unpunished. "Lawless in spirit, they are encouraged to be lawless in practice." Such perpetuators become "absolutely unrestrained."

On the other hand, Lincoln observes, "good men who love tranquility, who abide by law, who would gladly spill their blood in defense of the country, see their families insulted and their lives endangered, and so, these good men become disgusted with government that offers no protection." "This mobcratic spirit," said Lincoln, "is now abroad in the land."

"Whenever this effect shall be permitted to gather in bands of hundreds and thousands, and burn churches, ravage and rob provision-stores, throw printing presses into rivers, shoot editors, and hang and burn obnoxious persons at pleasure, and with impunity; depend on it, this Government cannot last." Why is this so? "The feelings of the best citizens will become more or less alienated from it; and thus it will be left without friends, or with

¹⁷² For details, consult the Timeline under the year 1836.

too few, and those few are too weak....At such a time and under such circumstances, men of sufficient talent and ambition will not be wanting to seize the opportunity, strike the blow, and overturn that fair fabric, which for the last half century, has been the fondest hope, of the lovers of freedom, throughout the world." Such are the unforeseen consequences of mob behavior.

How then can we fortify against mob behavior? The answer is simply, claims Lincoln. "Let every American, every lover of liberty, every well-wisher to his posterity, swear by the blood of the Revolution, never to violate in the least particular, the laws of the country; and never to tolerate their violation by others." This heritage must be instilled in home and school. "Let it be taught in schools, in seminaries, and in colleges; let it be written in Primers, spelling books, and in Almanacs; - let it be preached from the pulpit, proclaimed in legislative halls, and enforced in courts of justice." Admittedly, however, not all laws are just. If bad laws exist, they "should be repealed as soon as possible."

Skeptics may ask, why suppose our political institutions are endangered? After all, these institutions, at the time of this speech, have been preserved for more than fifty years. Lincoln cautions, to conclude that no danger may ever arise, would itself be extremely dangerous. Consider the fact that many causes now exist, causes that did not exist previously when our political institutions were established.

Although the original motivation and circumstances are not entirely forgotten, with the passage of time, they grow dim. Even if they are not forgotten, they now are not as strong as originally conceived. At the time of the founding of our nation, the experiences were extremely vivid as told from father to sons or brother to sister. That was living history, found in nearly every family. They heard about limbs mangled, scars of wounds received, thereby learning of indubitable testimonies of the families' own role in creating a nation. These were stories to be understood by all alike, young and old, ignorant and wise. Now those stories have dimmed and new ones are created.

These stories, says Lincoln, were "the pillars of the temple of liberty; and now, that they have crumbled away, the temple must fall, unless we, their descendants, supply their places with other pillars, hewn from the solid quarry of sober reason. Passion has helped us; but can do so no more. It will in future be our enemy. Reason, cold, calculating, unimpassioned reason, must furnish all the materials for our future support and defense." From these new pillars,"we will mold general intelligence, sound morality, and in particular, a reverence for the constitution and laws: and, that we improved to the last; that we remained free to the last."

As Lincoln continued his path in politics, he grew more and more eloquent on why the Union must be preserved. In his speech June 16, 1858, when he accepted his party's nomination for U. S. Senate, he delivered his famous "House Divided" speech. Referring to passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Law of 1854, its avowed object being to end slavery agitation, Lincoln observed that contrary to expectations, agitation has not ceased but had continued to increase. "In my opinion" he said, "it will not cease, until a crisis shall have been reached and passed...." Quoting directly from the Bible (Mark 3:25), he said "A house divided against itself cannot stand." Elaborating on this quote, he said "I believe this government cannot endure, permanently half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved – I do not expect the house to fall – but I do expect it will cease to be divided."

In his riveting remarks delivered at Gettysburg Cemetery, November 19, 1863, President Lincoln intoned, "Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent, a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal." Countless school children have memorized this opening line. Understanding "equal" is another task.

His second Inaugural Address delivered March 4, 1865 offers conciliatory gestures. Referring to the civil war, he says neither side expected the magnitude or the duration. Each looked for easier triumph and a result less fundamental and astounding. "Both read the same Bible, and pray to the same God; and each invokes His aid against the other. It may seem strange that any men should dare to ask a just God's assistance in wringing their bread from the sweat of other men's faces; but let us judge not that we be not judged. The prayers of both could not be answered; that of neither has been answered fully."

Concluding with his unforgettable lines, Lincoln says, "With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan – to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace, among ourselves, and with all nations."

From these quotations, we learn Lincoln clearly warned of impending crisis, thereby foreseeing the consequences of certain courses of action. He presented an impassioned case for why his generation must chart fresh paths, if the vision of the Founding Fathers is to evolve. In Lincoln's words, "The dogmas of the quiet past are inadequate to the stormy present. Let us disenthral ourselves." Placing the issue of slavery in perspective, certain conclusions are clear.

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First, slavery is not a racial problem, but a human problem. As human beings, we are all interdependent and interconnected. Economically, Northerners and Southerners were connected through trade. Environmentally, Northerners and Southerners live on the same planet. We recognize the well-being of others is important for all concerned. When we recognize interdependence, our perception of the world shifts. Walls of illusions evaporate. Dichotomies between “me” and “other”, “white and black”, “North and South” disappear. Suddenly, we realize all living beings are interconnected. Recognizing interdependence, we move toward accepting universal responsibility.

For those who fail to understand this interdependence, one remedy is to connect with others through common causes. During the antebellum era, Baptists in the North were concerned about their Southern brethren. As a result, it was difficult for them take sides, one way or the other. Today, common causes include climate change, helping immigrants, and engaging in cultural exchange programs. We are human beings who welcome strangers.

Second, the reality of equality needs to be re-affirmed in speech, thought, and deed. As Lincoln observed in his Gettysburg Address, we are a “nation conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition all men are created equal.” This vision needed to be renewed in the mid-nineteenth century...as well as the twenty-first century.

We all are part of the universal fabric of life. We need to respect one another so we can heal. No matter the pigment of a person’s skin, we do not see the pigment but we see the spirit of a person and know we all are related. Those who avoid racist views do not think in terms of “we” and “them”, “superior” and “inferior.” Within this universal fabric, we experience diversity and welcome it.

As Picasso reminds us, “What you look at is not as important as what you see. What you see depends upon where you stand.” Whites and Blacks have historic reasons to distrust one another. Segregated schools, churches, buses, and voting places have left scars. Scenes of brutality linger in the inner recesses of the subconscious mind. Old habits of perception persist, but they can be purified.

Third, we need to purify our perception. We need to see in a “sacred manner.” We need to recognize when our vision is obscured by anger or fear, hate or pride.

How can we prevent ourselves from being deceived by certain politicians, whose arresting personalities and imperturbable self-confidence intimidate us? How shall we

untangle knots of prejudice colored by dogmatic truths and ideological certainty? If we fail to learn from history, our prejudicial perceptions will prevent us from drawing appropriate conclusions. Clearly, these questions are not limited to events of the nineteenth century.

Recall how party leaders become captive to greed and self-promotion. Both parties had defenders of slavery as well as opponents of slavery. Both parties were eager to secure the Southern vote. Both sacrificed principles in pursuit of electoral success. Both had conservatives and extremists. These extreme views became intractable. Neither party could succeed without votes of extremists. How could deception be unveiled and its roots recognized? Both sides appeared locked into a collision course. Could the confrontation have been avoided?

Recall how some abolitionists veered toward extremist views. Some people in Cumberland became alienated from extremist views, even while agreeing with core principles upon which these views were based. Common ground seemed to evaporate. The center did not hold.

Prejudice is not an accident. It has causes and consequences. It can be controlled and eliminated. If it persists, then it continues because we are unwilling to abandon ingrained views. Sometimes it persists because we are unaware we are prejudiced.

Finally, we are faced with an age-old issue. Welcome the stranger. Welcome the Native-American, the Afro-American, and the immigrant. Eventually, we learn to view the world in the ways "strangers" view the world. We learn to walk in someone else's moccasins. In Cumberland, some of the first inhabitants had unfavorable contacts with Native-Americans. Incidents of scalping and killing were passed down generation to generation. In some cases, even today, residues of these events linger in the subconscious of some residents. Each generation revisits these riddles anew. A continuing thread, however, is the feeling about welcoming strangers and loving one's neighbor. We are all human beings and we are all connected.

When plunging into the irredeemable past, we avoid denouncing the actions of our ancestors. Quoting from the Sermon on the Mount, Lincoln admonished, "let us judge not that we be not judged" (Matthew 7:7). Circumstances and conditions of that era were different from our own. We cannot know fully how we would have responded under similar situations. How wide or narrow would have been our vision? How would we have processed all the secondary sources of information found in the newspapers and heard from itinerant speakers? Recognizing the prejudices of the past, we make amends as best we can and move forward.

Are we destined to continue the course of our ancestors? As quoted in Ezekiel 18.2, "The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge." In other words, our ancestors engaged in warfare and expressed prejudice; must we, their descendants, pay the price? Every event, past or present, leads to a result. We cannot escape the chain of causality. What happens now is a result of what occurred previously.

Nevertheless, we have choices. We can continue in a similar direction, or we can choose to take a different path. We are not doomed to follow a similar path. We are not doomed to repeat history. However, if we fail to learn from history, we will repeat it. In that case, we will experience the bleak view of Eugene O'Neill when he wrote in *Moon for the Misbegotten*, "there is no present, no future, only the past happening over and over again now."

Lessons are repeated until they are learned. If we could not change our course of action, old habits would persist, and ingrained patterns of speech, thought, and behavior would play out again and again. In the twenty first century, the good news is we can change, and we are changing!

Timeline

To provide context for the slavery issue, the following timeline is provided. Reference to action which occurs in the State of Maine is underlined>.

1472 Portuguese negotiate the first slave trade agreement that also includes gold and ivory.

1503 Spanish and Portuguese bring African slaves to the Caribbean and Central America to replace Native Americans in the gold mines.

1537 Pope Paul III forbids slavery of indigenous peoples of the Americas.

1542 Spain enacts New Laws abolishing slavery of Native Americans.

1562 British Slave trade to the New World begins.

1590 Toyotomi Hideyoshi bans slavery in Japan.

1609 Dutch trader brings ship cargo of slaves to Jamestown Colony.

1610 Henry Hudson's *The Half Moon* arrives in the "New World" most likely carrying African slaves. The Dutch were deeply involved in the African slave trade and brought the slave trade to the American colonies. The Dutch grew wealthy on the import of sugar, slaves, and ships.

1619 A Dutch ship brings the first permanent African slaves to Jamestown, Virginia.

1638 Journal entry by Governor Winthrop of Massachusetts constitutes the earliest recorded account of Negro slavery in New England. On December 10, 1638, Captain W. Pierce returned to Salem on the ship *Desire* from Tortugas, where he had exchanged a group of Pequod Indian warriors for "salt, cotton, tobacco, and Negroes." [Source: John Winthrop, *The History of New England, 1630-1649*, Vol. I [New York: C. Scribner's 1908], page 260.]

1641 Massachusetts becomes the first colony to recognize slavery as a legal institution. This recognition is recorded in the 1641 *Body of Liberties*.

1645 New England Colonists showed a marked preference for black slaves as opposed to Indians or white indentured servants. In 1645, Edward Downing, writing to his brother-in-law, Governor Winthrop, argued that blacks were essential to the growth of the colony; even expressing his interest in a "juste warre" with the Indians so he could obtain Indian captives to exchange for blacks via West Indies trade. "The colony will never thrive until we get... a stock of slaves sufficient to doe all our business." [Source: Lorenzo G. Greene, *The Negro in Colonial New England, 1620-1776* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1942), page 60.]

1651 Rhode Island declares an enslaved person must be freed after 10 years of service.

1663 A Virginia court decides a child born to an enslaved mother is also a slave.

1671 George Fox, founder of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), influences agitation among Quakers against slaveholding by Society members.

1671 One of Maine's first physicians, Dr. Antonius Lamy, a Portuguese black, arrived in Casco Bay.

1672 The King of England charters the Royal African Company, thereby encouraging the expansion of the British Slave Trade.

1676 Nathaniel Bacon led an armed rebellion by 1000 Virginian settlers against the rule of Governor William Berkeley. They succeeded in chasing Governor Berkeley from Jamestown and torching the capital. An alliance between indentured servants (mostly Caucasians) and Africans (most enslaved until death or freed) disturbed the ruling class, who responded by hardening the caste of slavery, as a step toward preventing subsequent uprisings. Bacon's Declaration of 1676 challenged the economic and political privileges of the governing elite and announced the principle of consent of the people.

1676 Slavery is prohibited in West New Jersey, a Quaker settlement in current day South New Jersey.

1688 In Germantown (now Philadelphia) Quakers and Mennonites protest against slavery.

1691 Bay Colony (Massachusetts) is given control over the District of Maine.

1695 Rachel of Kittery, Maine was an African-American enslaved woman who was murdered by her enslaver Nathaniel Keen. The trial established court precedent in New England colonies for how juries ruled on murder cases in which a slave owner murdered an enslaved individual. Rachel was a slave, who was owned and beaten to death by Nathaniel Keen in late 1694 or early 1695. On trial May 16, 1695, Nathaniel Keen, the defendant, was tried for murder of Rachel. Of the three Justices, Samuel Sewall was a strong advocate for the rights of slaves, even though he probably was a slaveholder himself. The case was committed to the jury, who found Nathaniel Keen guilty of cruelty to his negro woman, Rachel, rather than the original charge of murder.

1700 Justice Samuel Sewall publishes a book entitled *The Selling of Joseph* in which he argues New England should do away with the practice of slavery.

1704 Slave patrols are first established in South Carolina. This practice soon spread throughout the thirteen colonies. Slave patrols were called, by the slaves, patter-rollers or paddy rollers.

When slaves were caught, punishment was expected, and often took the form of floggings and beatings. Slaves were returned to their owners or sent to the auction block.

1705 Massachusetts outlaws interracial sexual relations and marriage.

1712 New York Slave Revolt of 1712 was an uprising in New York City of 23 enslaved Africans who killed 9 whites and injured another 6. In the early eighteenth century, New York, as a British Colony, had one of the largest slave populations. What apparently precipitated the revolt was a decrease in freedom when the colony transferred from Dutch to British sovereignty. Under Dutch rule, freed slaves had certain legal rights, such as right to own land and to marry. After the British took over New Amsterdam in 1664 and made it a colony of New York, they enacted laws that restricted the lives of enslaved peoples. A slave market was built near present-day Wall Street to accommodate the increase in slaves being imported by the Royal African Company. By early 1700, enslaved blacks constituted twenty percent of the population.

On the night of April 6, 1712, men gathered and set fire to a building on Maiden Lane near Broadway. While white colonists tried to put out the fire, enslaved Africans, armed with guns, hatchets, and swords, attacked them and ran off. Seventy blacks were arrested and put in jail. Six are reported to have committed suicide. Twenty seven were put on trial and 21 convicted and sentenced to death. Twenty were burned to death and one executed on a breaking wheel which was a torture device used for capital punishment. This wheel was used in public executions by breaking convicted person's bones and bludgeoning him to death. Between 1730 and 1754, 11 slaves in French controlled Louisiana, who had revolted against their masters, were killed on the wheel.

1717-1735 Andrew Dunning one of the earliest and wealthiest citizens of Brunswick holds slaves.

1730 From this time onward, England trades aggressively in North American slaves, with New York, Boston and Charleston as major ports for slave vessels.

1739 William Black, a freedman, and family settle on Bailey's Island.

1741 Increasingly, the English colony in New York City felt anxious. They worried about Spanish and French plans to gain control of New Amsterdam. They felt threatened by a recent influx of Irish immigrants, whose Catholicism might incline them to accept jobs as Spanish spies. Above all, they feared the city's growing slave population might revolt. That slave population now numbered twenty percent of the 1100 residents of Manhattan and increasingly competed with white tradesmen for jobs.

When a series of 13 fires broke out in March and April of 1741, English colonists suspected a Negro plot. Much as in Salem, a half century before, a wave of hysteria swept the area. Soon New York City jails were filled to overflowing. Despite grave questions about the suspected conspirators, 35 defendants were executed. Thirteen black men were burned at the stake and seventeen more hanged. In addition four alleged white ringleaders, two male and two female, were sent to the New York gallows.

1750 Georgia is the last of the British North American colonies to legalize slavery.

1750s Quakers prohibit slave ownership by any member.

1754 John Woolman urges his fellow Quakers to recognize the evil of slavery.

1754 By mid eighteenth century, enslavement of Africans had become a common practice in Massachusetts. A 1754 census listed nearly 4500 slaves in the colony.

1759 Death of William Pepperrell (1696-1759). He was a lifelong resident of Kittery, Maine. In his Will, he bequeaths to his wife "any four of my negroes which of them She Shall choose."

1765 District of Maine population comprised of 23,686 white; 322 black. (about 1.5%)

1767 In Portsmouth, New Hampshire, 124 male and 63 female slaves.

1771 Two slaves are recorded as held in Brunswick.

1775 Population of District of Maine is about 47,000.

1775 Founding of the Pennsylvania Society for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery (PAS), the world's first antislavery society and the first Quaker antislavery society.

1775 Thomas Paine speaks out against slavery. Together with Benjamin Rush he joins the PAS.

1781 Quock Walker case, decided in the Massachusetts Supreme Court, outlawed slavery for Massachusetts, which then included Maine. Quock Walker (1753-d. unknown) was an African slave who sued for and won his freedom in June 1781. The case cited a clause in the new Massachusetts Constitution (1780) that declared "all men to be born free and equal." This case is credited with helping abolish slavery in Massachusetts. By the 1790 federal census, no slaves were recorded in the state. Massachusetts by judicial activism was the first state of the union to signal it would no longer protect the legality of slavery.

1783 Samuel Thompson, a delegate from Topsham to the State convention to ratify the Constitution, expressed strong disapproval of George Washington for continuing to hold slaves who "have as good a right to be free as he has."

1783 New Hampshire begins gradual abolition of slavery.

1784 Connecticut and Rhode Island begin gradual abolition of slavery.

1786 Publication in London of *An Essay on the Slavery and Commerce of the Human Species* by Thomas Clarkson. It is quickly reprinted in the United States and becomes the most influential antislavery work of the 18th century.

1787 Northwest Ordinance bans slavery in the newly organized territory ceded by Virginia.

1787 The ratified U. S. Constitution allows a male slave to count as three-fifths of a man in determining representation in the House of Representatives. The Constitution sets 1808 as the earliest date for the national government to ban the slave trade.

1787 Rhode Island outlaws the slave trade.

1789 U. S. Constitution came into force, having been ratified by 9 states.

1790 First U. S. Census registered 3,900,000 citizens and 700,000 Slaves. The District of Maine had population of 96,540 plus 27 freedmen which with families totaled 110.

1791 Eli Whitney patents the Cotton Gin, making it possible for the expansion of slavery in the South.

1791 Bill of Rights to the U. S. Constitution enacted.

1793 U. S. Congress enacts the first Fugitive Slave Act which required the return of fugitives to their slave owners.. This Act outlaws any effort to impede the capture of runaway slaves.

1794 As an act of self-determination and a protest against segregation, the first independent black churches established in Philadelphia. The St. Thomas African Episcopal Church was founded by Absalom Jones, and Bethel Church was founded by Richard Allen.

1794 Congress enacts the Slave Trade Act of 1794. Under terms of this Act, American vessels are prohibited from transporting slaves to any foreign country from outfitting in American ports.

1800 Absalom Jones (1746-1818) and other Philadelphia blacks petition Congress against the slave trade and against the Fugitive Slave Act of 1793. Born into slavery in Sussex County, Delaware, Jones eventually became a freed man, an African American abolitionist and clergyman. After founding a black congregation in 1794, he was the first African American ordained as a priest in the Episcopal Church.

1800 For violating the 1794 Slave Trade Act, the U. S. naval vessel *Ganges*, off the coast of Cuba, captures two American vessels, carrying 134 enslaved Africans and brings them to Philadelphia for adjudication in federal court by Judge Richard Peters. Judge Peters turns custody of the Africans over to the Pennsylvania Abolition Society, which attempts to assimilate the Africans into Pennsylvania by using the indenture system. Many local Quakers served as sponsors.

1800 Gabriel's Revolt was planned for August 30, 1800. Born into slavery at Brookfield, a tobacco plantation in Henrico County, Virginia, Gabriel had two brothers, Solomon and Martin. They were held by Thomas Prosser, the owner. Gabriel and Solomon trained as blacksmiths. Gabriel was also taught to read and write. During the spring and summer of 1800, Gabriel planned the revolt. On August 30, 1800, Gabriel intended to lead slaves into Richmond, but the rebellion was postponed because of rain. The slaves' owners were suspicious of an uprising and two slaves told their owner, Mosby Sheppard, about the plans. Sheppard warned Virginia's Governor, James Monroe, who called out the state militia. Gabriel escaped to Norfolk, but he was spotted and then betrayed by another slave for the reward offered by the state. The slave did not receive the full reward. Gabriel was returned to Richmond for questioning, but he did not submit. Gabriel, his two brothers, and 23 other slaves were hanged.

1800 After 1800, some Cherokee and four tribes of the Southeast (Chickasaw, Choctaw, Creek, and Seminole) began buying and using black slaves as labor. After their removal to Indiana Territory in the 1830s, these tribes took as many as 15,000 enslaved blacks with them.

1803 Benjamin Rush is elected president of the Pennsylvania Abolition Society.

1807 Parliament outlaws British participation in the African Slave Trade.

1808 United States bans American participation in the African Slave Trade. However, between 1808 and 1860, approximately 250,000 Slaves were illegally imported. In effect, the ban increased the value of slaves already on American soil.

1812-1814: Revolutionary War of 1812.

1816 American Colonization Society is formed to encourage free blacks to settle in Liberia, West Africa. Led by Robert Finley of New Jersey and a coalition of Quakers and Evangelicals, the Society believed blacks would face better chances for freedom in Africa. Toward that end, the Society helped establish the colony of Liberia 1821-1822. After 1821, thousands of free blacks moved to Liberia.

1816 Richard Allen is elected first bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church. Born into slavery in Delaware, Richard Allen (1760-1831) bought his freedom in 1780. In 1794,

in Philadelphia, Allen founded the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church, which was the first independent black denomination in the United States. In 1816, Allen was elected the first bishop of that Church. As bishop, he focused on organizing a denomination where free blacks could worship without racial oppression and where slaves could find a measure of dignity. He organized Sabbath schools to teach literacy and promoted national organizations to develop political strategies.

1820 Missouri Compromise allows Missouri to become a slave state and establishes Maine as a free state separating from Massachusetts. It forbids slavery in new territories north of latitude 36 deg. 30 mm.

1820 The Piracy Act of 1820 places slaves and pirates under the same rules. Death penalty for any caught.

1821 Maine Legislature outlaws interracial marriage.

1822 Denmark Vesey organizes an unsuccessful slave uprising in Charleston, South Carolina. Denmark Vesey (1767-1822) was a literate, skilled carpenter and leader of the African American community in Charlestown, South Carolina. In 1818, he was among the founders of an independent AME Church in Charleston, S.C. This church rapidly attracted 1,848 members, making it the second-largest AME congregation in the nation, second only to Mother Bethel in Philadelphia. In 1819, Vesey was inspired by the congressional debates over the status of Missouri and the status of slavery.

In 1822, Vesey allegedly was ringleader of a planned slave revolt. He and his followers were said to be planning to kill slaveholders in Charlestown, liberate the slaves, and sail to Haiti for refuge. According to some accounts, this revolt would have involved thousands of slaves in the city as well as from plantations many miles distant. Learning of the plot, city officials ordered the militia to arrest the plot's leaders and suspected supporters in June, before the uprising could occur.

Vesey and 5 slaves were among the first group of men quickly judged guilty by secret proceedings of city appointed Court and condemned to death. They were executed by hanging on July 2, 1822. Vesey was about age 55. Later, 30 additional supporters were executed.

1822 Segregated schools for blacks open in Philadelphia.

1824 Liberia, on west coast of Africa, is established by freed American slaves.

1826 John Brown Russwurm (1799-1851) became the first African American to graduate from Bowdoin College. Born in Jamaica in 1799, he was son of an English merchant and an unknown black slave mother. In 1807, the elder Russwurm was assigned to Quebec and took his young

son with him. In 1812, they moved to Portland, Maine, where a year later the elder Russwurm married Susan Blanchard.

Susan Blanchard insisted that John Russwurm, now her husband, acknowledge "John Brown" as the boy was then known, and grant him his surname. He did so. John Brown Russwurm lived with his father, his stepmother, and her children from a previous marriage. They lived in a Federal style two and one half story house at 238 Ocean Avenue between Gleckler and Wellington Roads in the Back Cove area. The elder Russwurm died in 1815, but John Brown Russwurm remained close to his stepmother, even after she remarried.

Young Russwurm received a formal education. He attended Hebron Academy, and then enrolled in Bowdoin. After graduating from Bowdoin, he moved from Portland to New York City where with Samuel Cornish he founded the abolitionist newspaper *Freedman's Journal*, the first paper owned and operated by African Americans.

Russwurm supported the efforts of the American Colonization Society to develop a colony for African Americans in Africa. In 1829, he moved to what became Liberia. In 1833, he married Sarah McGill, daughter of the Lt. Governor of Monrovia. They had one daughter and three sons. In 1836, Russwurm was selected as governor of Maryland, a colony in Africa that later became part of Liberia. He served there until his death in 1851.

In 1850, shortly before his death, Russwurm returned to Maine and brought two sons with him. They were enrolled in North Yarmouth Academy between 1850 and 1852. While there, they lived with Russwurm's step mother, Susan [Blanchard] Russwurm Hawes, with whom he had maintained cordial relations.

1826 Greater Portland has about 600 black residents.

1827 John Russwurm and Samuel Cornish establish the African American newspaper *Freedom's Journal* in New York. The paper circulates in 11 states and the District of Columbia, Haiti, Europe, and Canada.

1827 New York legally abolishes slavery. Enslavement of African peoples began in New York as part of the Dutch slave trade. The Dutch West India Company imported 11 African slaves to New Amsterdam in 1626, with the first slave auction being held in New Amsterdam in 1655. The last slaves were freed on July 4, 1827, although many black New Yorkers continued to serve as apprentices to their mother's masters.

1828 Sojourner Truth, born Isabella Baumfree (1797ca. - 1883), was the first black woman to win a case to recover her son against a white man. That was in 1828. Born into slavery in Swartekill, Ulster County, New York, she escaped with her daughter to freedom in 1826. She

gave herself the name Sojourner Truth in 1843. She conducted several speaking tours in Maine, and spoke in Augusta in 1855. During the Civil War, Sojourner Truth helped recruit black troops for the Union Army. After the war, she tried unsuccessfully to secure land grants from the federal government for former slaves.

1828 Abyssinian Religious Society is established in Portland. The Abyssinian Meeting House is located at 73-75 Newbury Street in the Munjoy Hill neighborhood of Portland. Built 1828-1831 by free African-Americans, it is Maine's oldest African-American church building and the third oldest in the nation. Once established, it became a place for worship and revivals, as well as abolition and temperance meetings. From the mid-1840s through mid-1850s, it served as a black school. The Reverend Amos Noe Freeman (1810-1893) was the first full time minister. His tenure lasted from 1841-1851, and focused on employment, temperance, and abolishing slavery.

1829 David Walker of Boston publishes his fiery denunciation of slavery and racism, *Walker's Appeal in Four Articles*, arguably the most radical of all anti-slavery documents. It caused a great stir, with a call for slaves to revolt against their masters and its protest against colonization.

1829 Indictment of the Slave Trader, Patty Cannon, whose birth name may have been Lucretia Patricia Hanly. She was an illegal slave trader and co-leader of the Cannon-Johnson Gang of Maryland-Delaware, which operated for about a decade during the 1820s, kidnapping free blacks and fugitive slaves to sell into slavery in the South. It became known as the Reverse Underground Railroad. In 1829, Cannon was indicted for four murders. After remains of four blacks were discovered on property she owned, she was tried, convicted, and sentenced to be hung at Georgetown, Delaware. She confessed to nearly two dozen murders and died, at the estimated age of 60-70 years, in her prison cell.

1830-1865 Nationwide 60,000 Slaves escape to Canada.

1830 Virginia legislature launches an intense debate on abolishing slavery.

1831 William Lloyd Garrison of Boston begins publishing *The Liberator*, the most famous antislavery newspaper.

1831 Tice Davids, an enslaved runaway, fled from Kentucky with his owner in pursuit. Davids swam across the Ohio River and suddenly disappeared near Ripley, Ohio. After crossing the river by boat, his master searched the shoreline but found no trace of his slave. In exasperation, the owner exclaimed, "that slave must have gone off on some underground." Purportedly, this use of "underground" was adopted for use by the Underground Railroad.

1831 On August 21, 1831, Nat Turner (1800-1831), an enslaved African American, led a rebellion of slaves and free blacks in Southampton County, Virginia. This rebellion resulted in the deaths of 55-65 whites. In retaliation, during the course of putting down the rebellion, enraged white militias and mobs killed more than 200 black people. Turner successfully hid for two months. When found, he was tried, convicted, and sentenced to death by hanging. His body was flayed, beheaded, and quartered as an example to frighten other would-be rebels. The massacre of blacks after the rebellion was typical of white fears and overreaction to black violence. In response to Turner's rebellion, southern state legislators passed new laws to control slaves and free blacks. They prohibited education of slaves and free blacks, restricted rights of assembly for free blacks, and required white ministers to be present at all black worship services.

1831-1837 *Family Pioneer* and *Juvenile Key*, a Maine newspaper, advocates for abolition of slavery. That newspaper later becomes *Juvenile Key*. It was published in Brunswick.

1832 Maria W. Stewart (1803-1879) of Boston launches a public career as a speaker and pamphleteer. William Lloyd Garrison publishes two of her pamphlets in his newspaper, the *Liberator*. Stewart is one of the first black American women to establish the tradition of political activism and freedom struggle among black women. She calls on black women to take up work as teachers, school founders, and education innovators. She is the first known woman to speak to a mixed audience of men and women, white and black.

1833 Slavery Abolition Act of 1833 was an Act of Parliament of the United Kingdom abolishing slavery. On July 26, 1833, its third reading passed the House of Commons. On August 28, 1833, the Act received Royal Assent, and came into force one year later on August 1, 1834. Specifically, it excluded were "The Territories in the Possession of the East India Company, or to the Island of Ceylon, or to the Island of St. Helena."

1833 American Antislavery Society, led by William Lloyd Garrison, is organized in Philadelphia. For the next three decades, the Society campaigns that slavery is illegal under natural law. Within five years, the organization has more than 1350 chapters and over 250,000 members.

1834 On August 1, Britain abolishes slavery in the colonies. As a result, Canada became a place of refuge for fugitive slaves. The date became a holiday for black Americans.

1834 Maine Antislavery Society founded in Augusta.

1835 Southern states expel abolitionists and forbid mailing antislavery materials to the South.

1835 Abolitionists launch a campaign flooding Congress with antislavery petitions.

1836 Robert Benjamin Lewis of Hallowell authored the nation's first Afro-centric history book, *Light and Truth*. He was born in Pittston, Maine. He denounced notions of white supremacy and claimed we all are human beings and of common origin.

1836 In Saint Louis, April 28, 1836, a mob burned Francis McIntosh alive. He was a mulatto freeman working on a river boat. His crime was refusing to assist two cops who were chasing another sailor who had been in a fight. When under police custody, he learned he would have to spend five years in prison. While attempting to flee from punishment he perceived to be unjust, McIntosh, stabbed one of the officers to death and wounded the other. After a brief chase, McIntosh was captured and placed in jail.

Very soon thereafter, a white mob broke into the jail and removed McIntosh. The mob took him to the outskirts of the town, chained him to a locust tree, and piled wood around and up to his knees. When the mob lit wood with a hot brand, McIntosh pleaded with the crowd to shoot him, and then he began to sing hymns. After nearly twenty minutes, McIntosh died. During the night, an elderly African-American was paid to keep the fire lit. The next day, April 29, a group of boys threw rocks at the corpse in an attempt to break the skull.

On May 16, a grand jury convened to investigate the lynching. No one was charged or indicted. Judge Luke E. Lawless remarked in court that McIntosh's actions were an example of "atrocities committed in this and other states by individuals of negro blood against their white brethren," and that with the rise of abolitionism, "the free negro has been converted into a deadly enemy."

1837 In the spring of 1837, the schooner *Boston* with a cargo of lime left Rockland for Savannah, Georgia. While in Savannah, Captain Daniel Philbrick of Camden and Edward Kelloran of Cushing, master and mate of the schooner, hired James Sagurs and his slave Atticus to make some repairs on the vessel. While thus employed, Atticus had an opportunity to talk freely with sailors on board and learned how he could make a living in the Free States. As a ship's carpenter, he had unrestricted access to the vessel and was able to acquaint himself with its layout. Just before the vessel sailed, Atticus hid himself on board the vessel and was not discovered until after many days at sea.

Upon arrival in Thomaston, Atticus worked for Mr. Kelloran. Meanwhile his master arrived in pursuit. After much difficulty and delay, his master obtained a warrant from H. C. Lowell Esq. for his arrest. However, the fugitive could not be found. An ad was issued offering \$20 for the slave's apprehension. Under the pretense of befriending Atticus, two men induced him to hide in Swan's Barn where, probably due to their direction, he was arrested and delivered to his master. Sagurs, his master, embarked with his human property, Atticus, at East Thomaston. An indignant and sympathetic crowd witnessed the scene.

Subsequently, Captain Philbrook and his mate Kelleran were demanded by the Governor of Georgia to be extradited to Georgia and placed on trial as criminals. However, on legal and constitutional grounds, Governor Dunlap, and then Governors Kent and Fairfield, refused to do so. Between 1837 and 1844, three Maine governors were embroiled in this legal fight. Under Maine law, human beings are not property. In 1838, the people of Thomaston were so incensed at the recapture of Atticus they passed a law fining up to one thousand dollars or imprisonment up to five years for anyone assisting in seizing a runaway from authority.

1837 In late August of 1837, a slaveholder named David Castleman travelled from Kentucky to Niagara-on-the-Lake in Upper Canada (now Ontario). Armed with criminal indictments and an extradition request from the Governor of Kentucky, he went to the sheriff and demanded the arrest of his former slave, Solomon Moseby, for the crime of horse-stealing.

In those days, horse stealing was a very serious offense. As a result, Moseby was imprisoned and a case prepared against him. More than 200 Black supporters camped out around the Niagara jail, waiting for the government's decision. Both black and white residents of Niagara wrote petitions to the Lieutenant Governor, saying they believed Castleman was using the theft of his horse as a trick to take Solomon Moseby back to slavery. The African Canadian community raised \$1000 to repay Castleman for the lost horse, far more money than the horse was worth, but Castleman refused the money.

If Solomon Moseby were returned to the US due to horse stealing, African Canadians were afraid that other slaveholders might imitate Castleman's trick. Canada would no longer be a safe place for freedom-seekers. For more than 2 weeks, peaceful protest continued. Soldiers came to reinforce the sheriff's men because the sheriff was afraid the crowd would try to rescue Solomon Moseby. When on September 6, the warrant arrived from Toronto ordering Moseby released to American custody, the Niagara sheriff ordered the crowd to leave. However, people did not move.

As Moseby was brought out of the jail on September 12, two black men rushed to rescue him. A crowd of 400 Moseby supporters charged the troops. The soldiers fired. Two protesters were killed and 40 arrested, in what was Canada's first race riot. In the confusion, Moseby escaped. Feeling no longer safe in Canada, Moseby fled to England.

Solomon Moseby's case raised an important question for Canadians: Should Canada send an accused person to another country for trial, if the punishment in that country is harsher than Canadian standards would permit?

1837 Philadelphia blacks, under the leadership of Robert Purvis, organize the Vigilance Committee to aid and assist fugitive slaves. By his contemporaries, Purvis is referred to as the "President of the Underground Railroad."

1837 Elijah Lovejoy (1802-1837), Presbyterian minister, newspaper editor, ardent abolitionist, was murdered on November 7 by a pro-slavery mob in Alton, Illinois, during an attack on his warehouse to destroy his press and abolitionist materials. Oldest of nine children, he was born November 9, 1802 in Albion, Maine. His father was a Congregational minister and his mother was said to be a devout Christian. At an early age, he was taught to read the Bible and various theological texts. After completing early studies in public schools, Lovejoy attended Monmouth Academy. After becoming proficient enough in Latin and mathematics, he enrolled at Waterville College, now Colby College. In September 1828, Lovejoy graduated with first-class honors at the top of his class. During the winter and spring, he taught at China Academy.

Dissatisfied with daily teaching, Lovejoy thought about moving to the South or Western United States. His former teachers at Waterville College advised him that he would best serve God in the West. In May 1827, settling on Illinois as his destination, Lovejoy moved to Boston to earn money for his journey. Unsuccessful at finding work, he started to Illinois by foot. Discovering Illinois to be sparsely settled, Lovejoy continued on to St. Louis. Eventually attracting a like-minded community leaders, Lovejoy joined forces and began work at the *Times*. In 1832, influenced by the Christian revivalist movement led by abolitionist David Nelson, he joined the First Presbyterian Church and decided to become a preacher. Selling his interest in the *Times* he returned East to study at Princeton Theological Seminary. In April 1833, he was ordained as a minister of the Presbyterian Church.

Back in St. Louis, his friends agreed to finance a newspaper, if Lovejoy would agree to edit it. On November 22, 1833, the first issue of the *St. Louis Observer* was published.

On March 4, 1835, Lovejoy married Celia Ann French. Eventually, they had two children.

In October 1835, rumors of mob action against the *Observer* circulated. A group of civic leaders, including some friends, wrote Lovejoy and pleaded with him to cease discussion of slavery in the newspaper. Lovejoy responded that he did not agree. Tensions escalated, Lovejoy would not relent. He was asked to resign as editor. He agreed. New owners asked him to continue as editor. He agreed.

On April 28, 1836, a mulatto boatman, Francis McIntosh was caught and murdered by a mob. The presiding judge, Judge Lawless made insinuating remarks that abolitionists, including Lovejoy and the *Observer*, had incited McIntosh into stabbing the policemen. The lynching of McIntosh, a free black, prompted Lovejoy to intensify his arguments against slavery. Lovejoy claimed he would rather “be chained to the same tree as McIntosh and share his fate” than to accept the ideas of Lawless. Until laws are enforced, added Lovejoy, mobs will continue to “destroy, plunder, and burn.”

Having alienated and angered nearly every powerful group in Saint Louis, Lovejoy, fearing for the safety of his wife and newborn son, decided to move the *Observer* to Alton, Illinois. He believed people in Illinois, a free state, would be more tolerant of his anti-slavery opinions. Such expectations proved to be false. Although Illinois was a free state, Alton was a center for slave catchers and pro-slavery forces. Within hours of his arrival in Alton, Lovejoy's printing press was knocked to pieces and thrown into the river.

A few civic minded leaders raised funds to get Lovejoy back in the newspaper business. Many citizens urged him to be less outspoken on slavery. In response, Lovejoy pledged to devote less space to slavery. However, he added, "But gentlemen, as long as I am an American citizen and as long as American blood runs in these veins, I shall hold myself at liberty to speak, to write, and to publish whatever I please on the subject."

His radical views provoked a storm of protest. As opposition intensified, so did Lovejoy's courage. He insisted slavery was a sin. Escalating his rhetoric, he claimed those who don't fight slavers "are fighting against God." As a minister he felt the obligation to preach against slavery, "whatever the risk."

A public meeting was convened to determine how to deal with Lovejoy. A Committee of Five was appointed to oversee a resolution to request Lovejoy to discontinue his publication of "incendiary doctrines which alone have the tendency to disturb the quiet of our citizens and neighbors." Instead of visiting Lovejoy face-to-face, the committee sent a letter to that effect. However, Lovejoy stood fast and refused to bow to their request. By late July 1837, Lovejoy had identified himself completely with the abolitionists. For a second time, a group of men broke his printing press and tossed it into the river. As public opinion shifted, some supporters deserted him. Some ministers "washed their hands" of the whole thing. "Both sides are wrong," they claimed. Businessmen were either hostile or frightened into silence.

Supported by friends and followers, Lovejoy surreptitiously stored, at night, a new press in a warehouse and left it guarded. The next day, word spread quickly. His foes were angry. The angrier they became, the more they drank and the more they drank, the angrier they became.

On November 7, 1837, at the height of this anger, a group left a local bar, formed a line and headed for Gilman's stone warehouse, where the press was kept. As they marched, more joined the procession. At first, only a few had guns. Most carried clubs or sticks. Some had stones. By the time they reached the warehouse, 150 shouting, stone-throwing men congregated along the side of the warehouse where Lovejoy had hidden his printing press. Spectators were anxious for excitement. "Fire the house!" "Burn them out!" "Shoot every abolitionist in the building!" Suddenly, a barrage of stones battered the building. Locked doors were under assault. Angry protestors fired shots.

According to an account in the *Alton Observer*, the mob fired shots into the warehouse. When Lovejoy and his men returned fire, they hit several people in the crowd, killing a man named Bishop. Leaders of the mob set up a ladder against the warehouse and sent a boy holding a torch up the ladder to set fire to the wooden roof. Lovejoy and his supporter Royal Weller emerged, surprised the pro-slavery partisans, tipped over the ladder, and then retreated back inside the warehouse. Again the mob raised the ladder. When Lovejoy and Weller re-emerged to overturn the ladder, they were spotted and shot. Lovejoy was hit five times with slugs from a shotgun and died immediately; Weller was wounded.

The building became engulfed in flames. Members of the mob broke up the press and dumped it into the river. Lovejoy was buried on his 35th birthday. Left with their two children, his wife was a widow at age 24. Despite trials, no one was declared guilty. No one was ever convicted. The jury foreman was a leader of the anti-Lovejoy faction.

1837 First gathering of the Antislavery Convention of American Women, an interracial association of various female antislavery groups.

1837-1839 Approximately, 225,000 Africans were brought to Cuba as slaves.

1838 Second meeting of the Antislavery Convention of American Women gathered in Philadelphia at the newly built Pennsylvania Hall. The building was attacked by a mob. The mob burnt down the Hall, set fire to a shelter for black orphans, and damaged a black church. Pennsylvania Hall was open only three days when it fell.

1838 Philadelphia is plagued with anti-black and anti-abolitionist violence. Workers fear they have to compete with freed slaves for jobs.

1838 Pennsylvania blacks are disfranchised in the revised State Constitution.

1838 A Maryland slave named Fred runs away and later becomes Frederick Douglass.

1838-1839 Another Maine newspaper, *Advocate of Freedom*, makes the case for abolition. In 1839 the semi-monthly publication moved from Brunswick to Hallowell and became a weekly.

1839 Pope Gregory XVI condemned slavery and the slave trade.

1839 Amistad Incident. In the spring of 1839, 49 men, one boy, and three girls were taken from their homes in Mendeland, an area on the west coast of Africa, and sold as slaves. For the trans-Atlantic voyage they were forced to lie very close to one another in the hold of the ship with hundreds of other people. They were all chained together. The voyage took two months. Many passengers became sick and died.

Arriving in Cuba, 49 men, one boy and three girls were sold as slaves. On June 28, 1839, they were put on smaller boat, the *Amistad*, and transported from Havana to Guanajay, Cuba, a distance of about 240 nautical miles. In addition to the Africans, the boat carried a captain named Ramon Ferrer, his crew, and two Spaniards, named Jose Ruiz and Pedro Montez, who had purchased the Africans as slaves to work on their sugar plantation in Guanajay, Cuba. The Africans did not know what was happening, and so they chose as their spokesperson a young man who tried to communicate with their captors. Using sign language, this spokesperson asked the ship's cook what would happen to them. Thinking this was a huge joke, the cook made signs that the Africans were to be eaten.

To save their lives, the Africans launched a revolt. In the fight, the captain, the cook, and two Africans were killed. Two crew members escaped in a life boat. The Africans decided to spare the lives of the two Spaniards as well as the navigator, and directed them to sail the ship east to Africa. Contrary to that plan, the Spaniards, while the Mende were sleeping, sailed north, along the coast of the United States.

Two months later, the *Amistad* was intercepted by the U. S. Navy off the coast of Long Island, New York. The two Spaniards who had enslaved the Africans were freed, and the slaves were transported to Connecticut and imprisoned. To solve the situation, President Martin Van Buren, along with many newspaper editors, favored extraditing the Africans to Cuba. However, abolitionists won an American trial for them.

A federal district court judge ruled the Africans were not liable for their actions because they had been enslaved illegally. Pro-slavery factions were appalled. Under international and regional pressure, President Van Buren ordered the case appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court. That Court affirmed the lower court ruling and authorized release of the Africans, but overturned the lower court order that the Africans must be returned to Africa at government expense. Supporters arranged temporary housing in Farmington, Connecticut, as well as funds for travel. In 1842, those who wanted to return to Africa were given passage, thanks to funds raised by abolitionists.

1839 Abolitionists form the Liberty Party to promote political action against slavery. Founded November 1839 in Warsaw, New York, it broke away from the American Anti-Slavery Society (AASS) to advocate the view that the Constitution was an anti-slavery document. William Lloyd Garrison, leader of AASS, held the contrary view that the Constitution should be condemned as an evil, pro-slavery document. Members of the Liberty Party were willing to work within electoral politics, contrary to Garrison who opposed working within the system.

1840 U. S. Census recorded Maine with 500,000 population with 1,355 black citizens.

1840 Aged and venerable abolitionist Thomas Clarkson chairs the World Anti-Slavery Convention in London. American attendees include William Lloyd Garrison, Lucretia Mott, and Elizabeth Cady Stanton. American women were not allowed to sit among the men or serve as delegates. Upon return to America, the women held a women's rights convention, which met in Seneca Falls, New York.

1841 The Boston Vigilance Committee was an abolitionist organization formed in Boston, Massachusetts on June 4, 1841. Its mission was to protect fugitive slaves from being kidnapped and returned to their Southern owners as required by the 1793 Fugitive Slave Act. The organization was led by Theodore Parker, an American Transcendentalist and reforming minister of the Unitarian Church. Parker is also known as a member of the Secret Six, an abolitionist group which supported John Brown.

1841 United States Supreme Court case: *The U.S. v. The Amistad (1841)*. The historian Samuel Eliot Morrison described this case as the most important court case involving slavery prior to being eclipsed by that of Dred Scott (1857).

1842 Webster-Ashburton Treaty between Great Britain and the United States established the northern boundary of Maine and required each country to patrol the African coast by ship to prevent trade of Slaves. This latter provision is not well-known.

1842 *Prigg v. Pennsylvania (1842)*. Edward Prigg, a professional slave catcher, seized Margaret Morgan, a runaway slave from Maryland, living with her husband and 2 children in Pennsylvania. As required under the federal Fugitive Slave Act of 1793 and an 1826 Pennsylvania personal liberty law, Prigg applied to a state magistrate for certificates of removal. He needed those two certificates in order to legally remove Margaret Morgan and her 2 children from Pennsylvania to Maryland. Often overlooked is the fact that one of captives was not a slave.

The Pennsylvania law had a higher standard of proof for demonstrating the slave owner applicant's title to the slaves. After the magistrate refused to issue the certificates, Prigg illegally returned the slaves to Maryland and prepared them to be traded and shipped as slaves to the south. Under the 1826 law, Pennsylvania indicted Prigg for kidnapping and extradited him from Maryland to Pennsylvania.

Following his conviction, Prigg appealed to the United States Supreme Court. By a vote of 8-1, the Supreme Court reversed Prigg's conviction. Writing for the majority, Justice Joseph Story concluded the PA law was unconstitutional because it conflicted with federal law. His reasoning was based on the Fugitive Slave Clause contained in Article IV Section 2 of the US Constitution. Story claimed that the clause was a "fundamental article, without the adoption of which the Union could not have been formed." It was a "practical necessity." Without that clause, every

non-slaveholding state would have been at liberty to free all runaway slaves coming within its boundaries. Instead, that clause directs the return of runaway slaves to the State from which they come. Story established that the Fugitive Slave Clause guaranteed the rights of slave owners to reclaim runaway slaves and to prevent non slaveholders from interfering with such property rights.

Storey cited the Fugitive Slave Act of 1793 for enforcement of these rights. Storey ruled that states were not compelled to enforce federal fugitive slave provisions. Though Storey wished state judges would execute federal law, he understood federal government had no power to require them to do so. Why? It would be inconsistent for Court to declare preeminence of federal law and then require state courts to help carry out that law. The federal government must use its own legal, legislative, and administrative departments, as required. Federal law is superior to state law, but states do not have to use their resources to enforce federal law. States do not have to aid in the return of runaway slaves.

1842 An angry mob of whites in Philadelphia attacks a black temperance parade. A riot ensues with mayhem lasting three days and resulting in numerous injuries to blacks who are dragged from their homes and beaten. Several homes, an abolition meeting place, and a church are set on fire.

1842 Slave Revolt in the Cherokee Nation, then located in Indian Territory (Oklahoma) west of the Mississippi River, was the largest escape of a group of slaves from among the Cherokee. The slave revolt began on November 15, 1842, when a group of 20 African-American slaves owned by the Cherokee escaped from Webbers Falls and started toward Mexico, where slavery had been abolished in 1836. Most of the 20 slaves were from the plantations of "Rich Joe" Vann and his father James. Along the way they picked up another 15 slaves escaping from Creek territory. A posse of Cherokee and Creek pursued the fugitives, but the slaves managed to hold them off. In one altercation, 14 slaves were either killed or captured, but the remaining 21 continued south. The Cherokee and Creek pursuers returned to their nations for reinforcements.

Along the way, the fugitives encountered two slave catchers, James Edwards, a white man, and Billy Wilson, a Lenape (Delaware Indian), who were returning to Choctaw territory with an escaped slave family of three adults and five children. The fugitive party killed the bounty hunters and freed the slave family. Together they continued south, their progress impeded by traveling with five children.

On November 17, the Cherokee National Council in Tahlequah passed a resolution authorizing Cherokee Militia Captain John Drew to raise a company of 100 citizens to "pursue, arrest, and

deliver the African Slaves to Fort Gibson.” The commander at Fort Gibson loaned Drew 25 pounds of gunpowder for the militia.

This large force caught up with the slaves seven miles north of the Red River on November 28. The tired fugitives, weak from hunger, offered no resistance. They were forced to return to their owners in the Choctaw, Creek, and Cherokee reservations. The Cherokee later most of his surviving slaves to work shoveling coal on his steamboats.

This slave revolt inspired future slave rebellions in Indian Territory. By 1851, a total of nearly 300 blacks had tried to escape from Indian Territory. Most headed for Mexico or the area of the future Kansas Territory, where residents prohibited slavery.

1844 Jonathan Walker (1799-1878), also known as “The Man with the Branded Hand.”, was an abolitionist who became a national hero in 1844 when he was tried and sentenced as a slave stealer, following his attempt to help 7 runaway slaves find freedom. While working as a Railroad contractor in Florida, Walker aided seven slaves as they attempted to escape in an open boat from the coast of Florida to the British West Indies. En route, Walker fell seriously ill and the crew, ignorant of navigation, would have drowned if a wrecking sloop had not rescued them and taken Walker to Key West. From there, Walker was sent in chains aboard the *USSS General Taylor* to Pensacola, where he was put in prison, chained to the floor, and deprived of light and proper food. Put on trial in federal court, Walker was convicted, sentenced to be tied to a pillory and publicly branded on his right hand with the letters “S.S.” designating “slave-stealer.” In addition, he was imprisoned and heavily fined. Walker was confined to jail for 11 months and then released when northern abolitionists paid his fine. After reading a biography of Walker, James Whitcomb Riley wrote his poem “The Man with the Branded Hand.”

1844 Macon B. Allen, a black from Portland, was admitted to Cumberland County bar as an attorney. He was the first African American lawyer in Maine. During the early 1840s, he moved from Indiana to Portland and worked as a law clerk for Samuel Fessenden, abolitionist. On July 3, 1844, after passing his bar exam, he became the first African American licensed to practice law. Finding it difficult to obtain legal work in Maine because few blacks lived in the state and because whites generally were unwilling to have a black attorney, Allen in 1845 moved to Boston. To take the Massachusetts bar exam, Allen walked 50 miles to the test site because he could not afford transportation. Even after passing the bar exam and being licensed on May 3, 1845, Allen failed to make an adequate living from his legal practice because of prevailing racial prejudice. To supplement his income, he sought to become a judge. After passing a rigorous exam, he became a Justice of the Peace. As such, he was the first African American to hold a judicial position in the United States. In 1868, he moved to Charleston, South Carolina.

1845 *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave* was published in Boston.

1845 Louis G. Clarke, *Narrative of the Sufferings of Lewis Clarke During a Captivity of More Than 25 years among the Algerines of Kentucky, one of the so-called Christian States of North America Dictated by Himself*. Boston: David H. Ela, printer, 1845. This narrative presents a vivid account of the “dark cloud of slavery.” Some say it served as source material for Harriet Beecher Stowe’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*. Later, Clarke became a public speaker. Rev. Austin Willey claimed “farmers left their work by the hundreds to hear him.”

1846 American Missionary Association was a Protestant based abolitionist group founded September 3, 1846 in Albany, New York. Its main purpose was to abolish slavery, to educate African-Americans, to promote racial equality, and to promote Christian values. Its members and leaders were of both races. The Association was chiefly sponsored by the Congregational Churches in New England. Leadership was integrated. Its first board was composed of 12 men, 4 of them black. It started the *American Missionary* magazine 1846-1934 and founded anti-slavery churches.

1845 Lysander Spooner (1808-1887), essayist, Unitarian, and Christian abolitionist, published his most famous work titled *The Unconstitutionality of Slavery* in 1845. His book contributed to the controversy among abolitionists over whether the U.S. Constitution supported the institution of slavery. The “dis-unionist” faction led by William Lloyd Garrison and Wendell Phillips argued the Constitution legally recognized and enforced oppression of slavery (Article IV, Section 2). They argued that keeping Free states in a political union with the slave states made citizens of Free states complicit with the slave system, and they denounced the Constitution as “a covenant with death and an agreement with hell.” Spooner challenged that claim. He used a complex system of legal and natural law arguments to show that the clause cited did not, in fact, support slavery. Spooner’s arguments were cited by other pro-Constitution abolitionists such as Gerrit Smith and the Liberty Party. Smith was a staunch abolitionist and was a member of the Secret Six who financially supported John Brown’s raid at Harper’s Ferry, West Virginia. Frederick Douglass, originally a Garrison dis-unionist, later came to accept the pro-Constitution position and quoted Spooner’s argument in support.

1846-1848 U. S. Mexican War results in adding a significant western territory to the United States and opens a new arena in the fight to stop the spread of slavery.

1847 Frederick Douglass broke with abolitionist Garrison and establishes his own newspaper, *North Star*.

1848 Free Soil Party organized to stop the spread of slavery into the Western territories. Founded in Buffalo, New York, it was a single-issue party. Its leadership consisted of anti-slavery former members of both the Whig Party and the Democratic Party. Its main purpose was to oppose expansion of slavery into western territories, arguing that free men on free soil comprised a morally and economically superior system to slavery. It opposed slavery in the

new territories. It worked to remove existing laws that discriminated against African Americans in states such as Ohio. It nominated Martin Van Buren for president in 1848 and John P Hale for president in 1852. In 1854 and 1856, its membership was largely absorbed by the Republican Party by way of the Anti-Nebraska Movement.

1849 Harriet Tubman (1822-1913) escapes from slavery. She becomes a major “conductor” in the Underground Railroad, as well as an advocate for Women’s Rights. During the Civil War she served as an armed scout and spy for the U. S. Army.

Born into slavery in Maryland, Tubman, as a child, was beaten and whipped by various masters. Early in her life, she suffered a traumatic head injury when an angry slave owner threw a heavy metal object intending to hit another slave but hit her instead. That injury caused dizziness, pain, and spells of hypersomnia. These side effects of her injury reoccurred throughout her life. She was a devout Christian and experienced “strange” visions and vivid dreams.

In 1849, she escaped to Philadelphia, and then immediately returned to Maryland to rescue her family. Traveling by night and in extreme secrecy she “never lost a passenger.” After passage of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, she helped guide fugitives toward British North America and helped many freed slaves to find work. She conducted some 13 missions to rescue approximately 70 enslaved families and friends. She used a network of anti-slavery activists and safe houses known as the Underground Railroad.

1849 Henry “Box” Brown (1816-1897), a Virginian slave, escaped to freedom by arranging to be mailed in a wooden crate to abolitionists in Philadelphia. Brown was married to another slave named Nancy, but their marriage was not recognized legally. They had three children born into slavery under the *partus sequitur ventrem* [“that which is brought forth follows the womb”] principle.

Brown was hired out by his master in Richmond, Virginia, and worked in a tobacco factory. He rented a house where he and his wife lived with their children. Brown paid his wife’s master so his family would not be sold, but the man betrayed Brown, selling pregnant Nancy and their three children to a different slave owner.

Brown made arrangements to be shipped in a box to a free state. After receiving a report from his emissary who traveled to Pennsylvania and consulted with members of the Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society, Brown worked out the details. The box would be mailed to the office of Quaker merchant, Passmore Williamson, who was active with the Vigilance Committee.

To be relieved from work the day he planned to escape, Brown burned his hand to the bone with sulfuric acid. Specially designed, ” the box was 3 feet long by 2 feet 8 inches deep and 2 feet wide. It was labeled “dry goods” and was lined with baize, a coarse woolen cloth. The box

had a single hole for air and was tied with straps. For the trip, Brown carried only a small portion of water and some biscuits.

The trip began March 29, 1849. The box was transported by wagon, railroad, steam-boat, wagon again, railroad, ferry, and finally delivered by wagon 27 hours later. Despite instructions to “handle with care” and “this side up,” carriers on several occasions placed the box upside-down or handled it roughly.

The box was received March 30, 1849 by Williamson, William Still and other members of the Vigilance Committee. Gingerly, they opened the box. When Brown emerged, one of the men remembered his first words, “How do you do, gentlemen?” He then sang his own rendition of Psalm 40. The first stanza reads, “I waited patiently for the Lord/ And he, in kindness to me, heard my calling/ And he hath put a new song into my mouth/ Even thanksgiving – even thanksgiving Unto our God!”

1850 The Compromise of 1850 was a package of five separate bills which defused, in part, a four year political confrontation between slave and Free states, particularly with regard to the status of territories acquired during the Mexican-American War. It was drafted by Whig Senator Henry Clay of Kentucky and brokered by Democrat Senator Stephen Douglas of Illinois. Controversy arose over the Fugitive Slave provision. The Fourth Statute, informally known as the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, bolstered the Fugitive Slave Act of 1793. Under the 1850 version, federal judicial officials in all states and federal territories, including states in which slavery was prohibited, were required to assist actively with the return of escaped slaves to their masters. Any marshal who did not arrest an alleged runaway slave was liable to a fine of one thousand dollars. Law enforcement officials had a duty to arrest anyone suspected of being a fugitive slave, even if evidence was no more than a claimant’s sworn testimony of ownership. Suspected slaves could not ask for a jury trial or testify on his or her behalf. Anyone aiding a runaway slave by providing food or shelter would be subject to 6 months imprisonment and a one thousand dollar fine. This had serious implications for those providing food or shelter on the Underground Railroad. Officers capturing a fugitive slave were entitled to a fee for their work. This law was rigorously pro-slavery.

1851 The Christiana Riot of September 1851 erupted when a slave owner from Maryland attempted to arrest four fugitive slaves who had been living on a farm near Christiana, PA. During an exchange of gun fire, the slave owner, Edward Gorsuch, was shot dead. This incident reflected escalating tensions over enforcement of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850. A manhunt was launched to find and arrest the fugitive slaves who had fled northward. With the help of the Underground Railroad and the personal intercession of Frederick Douglass, the fugitive slaves made their way to freedom in Canada. Other slaves present at the farm were hunted down and arrested. One white man, a local Quaker named Castner Hanway, was charged with

treason. The Federal government put Hanway on trial in Philadelphia in November 1851. His defense was masterminded by Thaddeus Stevens, lawyer, Congressman, and ardent abolitionist. Hanway was acquitted. The Christiana Riot was another flashpoint in the struggle against slavery.

1851 The Jerry Rescue occurred on October 1, 1851, and involved the public rescue of a fugitive slave who had been arrested that day in Syracuse, New York. The escaped slave was William Henry, a 40 year old cooper from Missouri. He called himself "Jerry." Under the Fugitive Slave Law, William Henry was arrested in Syracuse on October 1, 1851. At the time, the anti-slavery Liberty Party was holding its state convention in Syracuse and when word of the arrest spread, several hundred abolitionists broke into the city jail and freed him. The event came to be widely known as the Jerry Rescue.

For several days, William Henry was hidden in Syracuse,, and then he was taken first to the Orson Ames House in Mexico, New York, and then to Oswego, from where he crossed Lake Ontario into Canada. A total of 26 rescuers were tried for their actions, but only one was convicted. The suspects were bailed out by a number of people, including U.S. Senator and former governor of New York William H. Seward. Nine others, including Reverend Jermain Wesley Loguen, himself a fugitive slave, were charged, but fled to Canada.

1852 Harriet Beecher Stowe publishes her novel, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. The first year it sold over 300,000 copies. Harriet Beecher Stow (1811-1896) was an American abolitionist and author. She is best known for her novel, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, which depicts the harsh life for African Americans under slavery. This book energized the anti-slavery forces in the American North and provoked widespread anger in the South. In 1850, at the time of the Fugitive Slave Act, she moved with her family to Brunswick, Maine, where her husband taught at Bowdoin College.

1852 Soon after the publication of Stowe's novel, Senator Charles Sumner in May 1852 began his efforts in the U.S. Senate to repeal the Fugitive Slave Act. Sumner pointed to the example of George Washington who let one of his slaves remain unmolested in New Hampshire rather than "excite a mob or riot or even uneasy sensations in the minds of well-disposed citizens." Sumner noted that execution of the Fugitive Slave Act involved mobs, cruelty, and violence wherever its enforcement was attempted. In the U. S. Senate, Sumner became known as Champion of the Fugitive Slave.

1852 Congress repeals the Missouri Compromise, thereby opening western territories to slavery and setting the stage for a bloody struggle between pro and anti-slavery forces in Kansas Territory.

1854 Kansas-Nebraska Act created the territories of Kansas and Nebraska and was drafted by Senator Stephen A. Douglas and President Franklin Pierce. The purpose was to open land for

thousands of new farms and to make feasible a Midwestern Transcontinental Railroad. It had the effect of repealing the Missouri Compromise of 1820 by allowing white male settlers in those territories to determine through popular sovereignty whether they would allow slavery within each territory. That is to say, it allowed settlers to decide whether or not to accept slavery and thus whether they would enter the union as a free or slave state. The Kansas-Nebraska Act divided the nation and pointed toward a Civil War. It split Democrat and Whig parties and gave rise to the Republican Party.

1854 Anthony Burns (1834-1862) on May 24, 1854, "while walking on Court Street" in Boston was discovered and arrested. Born a slave in Stafford County, Virginia, Burns was owned by Charles Suttle. As a young man, Burns became a Baptist and "slave preacher." In 1854, while working in Richmond, Burns boarded a ship heading north to Boston. Arriving in Boston during March, Burns was a fugitive but free.

Due to a misdirected letter, Suttle discovered the location of Burns, and promptly traveled to Boston to claim his "property." On May 24, under the pretext of being charged for robbery, Burns was arrested. Boston abolitionists, vehemently opposed to the 1850 Fugitive Slave Act rallied to support Burns, who was being held on the third floor of the federal courthouse.

On May 26, two separate groups met at the same time to discuss Burns' recapture. A large group of white abolitionists met at Faneuil Hall. A smaller group, mostly blacks, met in the basement of the Tremont Temple. The latter group quickly decided to march to the courthouse and release Burns. They vowed to use force if necessary. Meanwhile the group at Faneuil Hall debated appropriate courses of action. However, as soon as the intentions of the Tremont Temple gathering were announced, the discussion abruptly stopped and about 200 citizens left and headed to the courthouse.

Outside the courthouse, the crowd quickly grew from several hundred to about two thousand. A small group of blacks, led by a white minister, Thomas Wentworth Higginson, charged the building with a beam which they used as a battering ram. Applying heavy force, they succeeded in creating a small opening, but only for a moment. A shot was fired. A deputy marshal, James Batchelor, shouted he had been stabbed. Several minutes later, the deputy died. Higginson and a black man gained entry, but they were repulsed by six to eight deputies.

Determined to enforce the Fugitive Slave Act, President Franklin Pierce ordered marines and artillery to assist the guards watching over Burns. Pierce also ordered a federal ship to return Burns to Virginia after the trial. On June 2, Burns' trial was a formality, as requirements of the Fugitive Slave Act mandated it. As a result of the decision, Burns was remanded to his owner, Charles Suttle of Alexandria, Virginia.

Thongs witnessed Burns being taken to the ship that would carry him back to slavery in Virginia. Witnessing a strong show of force, many New Englanders turned decisively against slavery. Previously, they passively accepted its existence. In the North, this event generated strong opposition to President Pierce and his administration.

1854 Maine Daughters of Freedom founded an antislavery women's group.

1854 On June 10, 1854, James Augustine Healy (1830-1900) was ordained at Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris as a priest to serve in Boston. He was the first African American to be ordained as a Roman Catholic priest. On June 2, 1875, Pope Pius IX appointed him to position of second bishop in Portland, Maine. He became the first African American to be consecrated as a Catholic bishop. Healy was the eldest of ten siblings born near Macon, Georgia to Michael Morris Healy, an Irish immigrant plantation owner and his common-law wife Eliza Smith, a mixed race African American slave. Beginning in 1837, Michael Healy started sending his sons to school in the north. James went to a Quaker school in Flushing, New York and later attended College of Holy Cross in Worcester, MA. James Healy graduated as valedictorian in the college's first graduating class in 1849.

1855 Biddeford became a city. A section of Biddeford, between the present Granite and Hill streets, became known as "Nebraska". When Congress passed the Kansas-Nebraska Act of May 30, 1854, and for the first time threatened introduction of slavery north of the Mason and Dixon line, the resentment of anti-slavery men was so great as to split existing political parties and resulted in formation of Republican Party. In Maine, the Democratic party divided into "anti-Nebraska men" and "Nebraska men" The latter supported Congress in this pro-slavery law. In the section between Granite and Hill Streets of Biddeford lived several of these "Nebraska men." The section became known as "Nebraska." This name arose as a result of the struggle over the organization of the Kansas and Nebraska territories. This nickname of "Nebraska" was first publicly used in an advertisement in a Biddeford newspaper of July 1854, in which James Andrews, a stone cutter, advertised that he wished to sell his house on the corner of Hill and Acorn streets because he intended "emigrating to Nebraska." By 1866, the name had become so well known that the Biddeford directory published that year gives the location of the home of James Andrews and his brother simply as "Nebraska."

1855 Among the anti slavery advocates visiting Biddeford were Horace Greely, Henry Ward Beecher, and Frederick Douglas who lectured in the Methodist Church on Alfred Street to a sympathetic audience. Evidence supports the claim that Biddeford was a station on the "underground railroad" by which escaping Southern slaves were helped to Canada.

1855 In March of 1855, a party of 31 emigrants departed from Biddeford on the covered wagon trek to Kansas as part of an effort by New Englanders to prevent slave owners from making

Kansas their own. The local newspaper records 26 men and 2 women and three children departed on this trek. The newspaper mentions they were “all persons of character.” Biddeford residents gave further aid to Kansas by sending money, which they raised by several public events featuring entertainment.

1855 While passing through Pennsylvania with her master John Hill Wheeler, Jane Johnson sought help from the Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society, where William Still worked as a clerk. Under Pennsylvania Law, slaves brought to a free state voluntarily by a slaveholder could choose freedom. William Still and his white colleague Passmore Williamson intercepted slave owner, his slave Jane Johnson, and her two sons, as they were leaving town. Still and Williamson helped Jane and her children leave their master to freedom in New York. Williamson was incarcerated for several months because he refused to bring Jane Johnson to court. This case became a nationwide news story, continuing from August through November 1855. Set free under Pennsylvania Law, Jane Johnson and her two sons continued to New York. Her master and slave owner, John Wheeler, was the newly appointed U. S. Minister to Nicaragua.

In August 1855, Wheeler sued William Still and five other African-Americans for assault and kidnapping. Jane Johnson returned from New York to Philadelphia and testified in court she, when choosing freedom, had made her decision independently. As a result of testimony, Still and four others were acquitted. Two others received reduced sentences.

1856 Portland integrates black students into public schools, thereby ending separation of schools by race.

1856 Republican Party, newly formed from groups opposing the extension of slavery, holds its first convention in Philadelphia.

1856 The Osawatimie Creek Massacre took place on August 30, 1856, when 250-400 Border Ruffians led by John W. Reid attacked the town of Osawatimie in Kansas. Reid was intent on destroying the Free State settlement and then moving on to Topeka and Lawrence to do more of the same. John Brown first learned of the raiders when they shot his son Frederick. With forty or so men, Brown tried to defend the town against pro-slavery partisans. After sustaining heavy casualties, Brown and his group were forced to withdraw. The town of Osawatimie was then looted and burned. This was one event in a series of clashes between abolitionist and pro-slavery Missourians in what has been known as Bleeding Kansas. The passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act in 1854 was the single most important event in the inception of “Bleeding Kansas.” Whether the new Kansas territory would be slave or free was to be determined by popular sovereignty, contrary to the prohibitions of the 1820 Missouri Compromise. Violent

struggles erupted into a full blown border war between the “Free States” and the “Border Ruffians.”

1857 Dred Scott Decision declared blacks, whether free or slave, have no rights of citizenship. Also, the Supreme Court affirmed the right of slave owners to take their slaves into Western territories, thereby negating the doctrine of popular sovereignty. Several other provisions undermined the platform of the newly created Republican Party. Scott claimed he and his wife should be granted freedom because they lived for four years in Illinois and Wisconsin territory where slavery was illegal. However, the Supreme Court was stacked in favor of slave states. Five of the nine Justices were from the South. The Court held that Scott was not free, based on his residence in Wisconsin and Illinois, because he was not considered a person under the US Constitution when it was drafted in 1787. According to Chief Justice Taney, Dred Scott was the property of his owner and property could not be taken from a person without due process of law. The Court claimed Congress does not have the right to prohibit slavery in any territory of the US and blacks can never become citizens of the US and slaves do not become free upon entering a free state.

1859 John Brown conducts a raid at Harper’s Ferry, Virginia to free and arm slaves. John Brown (1800-1859) was an American abolitionist who believed armed insurrection was the only way to overthrow the institution of slavery. During the 1856 .conflict in Kansas, Brown commanded forces at the Battle of Black Jack and the Battle of Osawatimie. Brown’s followers killed the 5 slavery supporters at Pottawatomie. In 1859, Brown led an unsuccessful raid on the federal armory at Harpers Ferry. That raid ended with the multi-racial group’s capture. Brown was tried on treason against the Commonwealth of Virginia for the murder of 5 men and inciting a slave insurrection. He was found guilty on all counts and sentenced to death by hanging.

The Secret Six was a group of men who secretly funded the 1859 raid on Harper’s Ferry by abolitionist John Brown. These Secret Six were Thomas Wentworth Higginson, Samuel Gridley Howe, Theodore Parker, Franklin Benjamin Sanborn, Gerrit Smith and George Luther Stearns. All six had been involved in the abolitionist cause prior to their meeting John Brown, and gradually became convinced that slavery would not die a peaceful death. Of these six men, Smith and Stearns were “wealthy;” the others consisted of two Unitarian ministers, a doctor and a teacher.

Although it is unclear whether these men knew of Brown’s ultimate plan, it is known that some were ambivalent regarding the use of violence as a way to destroy slavery. Brown met with the Six several times during 1858 and 1859 and tried to explain how he would attack the slave system. In October 1859, Brown’s plan failed.

During and after his trial, names of the Six were linked to Brown. On November 7, Smith had himself confined to an insane asylum and denied he had been involved in supporting Brown. Howe, Sanborn and Stearns fled to Canada to avoid arrest. Parker was in Italy where he was a guest of Robert and Elizabeth Barrett Browning. Italian climate, it was believed, would be helpful to those suffering from tuberculosis. Parker, dying of tuberculosis, remained in Italy until his death in 1860. Higginson was the sole member of the Six to stay in the United States and to publicly proclaim his support for Brown. He even developed a plan to have Brown rescued from his jail cell, but Brown did not want any part of it.

1860 On April 27, 1860, Charles Nalle, a fugitive slave, was on his way to work in a bakery in Troy, New York, when he was arrested by U. S. Deputy Marshall John W. Holmes and Henry Wale, a slave catcher from Stevensburg, Virginia. Born 1821 into slavery in Stevensburg, Virginia, Nalle had decided to flee, shortly before being placed on the auction block. Leaving his family behind, he and another slave, Jim Banks, made their escape in October 1858. Eventually, Nalle arrived in Troy, New York, which by 1860 was highly industrialized and one of the richest cities in the country. Unable to read or write, Nalle sought the assistance of an unemployed lawyer, Horace Averill. He asked Averill to help him write letters that might help free his family members. Unfortunately, Averill had southern sympathies and betrayed Nalle to his former enslaver. When friends in Troy noticed Nalle's disappearance, they searched for him and quickly discovered what had happened. He had been taken before the U. S. Commissioner to get authorization to take him back to the South. The local vigilance committee swung into action and a crowd gathered outside the Commissioner's Office. As it happened, Harriet Tubman was in the area to visit relatives. Disguising herself as an old woman, she managed to get to Nalle and signaled him to exit through the window. A great melee ensued. Nalle was brought down from the window and hustled across the river to Watervliet, where soon he was rearrested. Tubman and a crowd of blacks and whites crossed the river and liberated him, through gunfire, a second time. Money was raised to buy his freedom for \$650.

1860 The slave ship *Erie*, captained by Nathaniel Gordon of Portland, is captured by the USS *Mohican* with a cargo of 897 slaves which were picked up near Congo River. Of the cargo, ranging in age from 6 months to 40 years, one quarter were men, one quarter were women, and half were children. Gordon preferred to carry children because they could not rise up and avenge his cruelties. The USS *Mohican*, a steam sloop named for the Mohican tribe, was commissioned 29 November 1859. Assigned to the African squadron, *Mohican* departed Portsmouth 19 January 1860 to patrol against pirates and slavers off the coast of Africa. On August 8, 1860, the sloop captured the slaver *Erie*, commanded by National Gordon, off the Congo, and forced that ship to unload its captive cargo at Monrovia, Liberia. Gordon was on his way to Havana, Cuba.

Captain Nathaniel Gordon (1826-1862) was the only American slave trader to be tried and convicted, under the Piracy Law of 1820, for being engaged in the Slave trade. Born in Portland, he went into shipping and eventually owned his own ship, the *Erie*. On August 7, 1860, he loaded 897 slaves aboard his ship at Sharks Point, Congo River, West Africa. The *Erie* was captured by *USS Mohican* 50 miles from port. The slaves were sent to Liberia by the American Colonization Society for settlement of free blacks from the US. Gordon was sent back to New York for trial.

Gordon's first trial ended in a hung jury. His second trial on November 9, 1861 in circuit court in New York City sentenced him to death by hanging on February 7, 1862. The Judge admonished him, "think of the cruelty and wickedness of seizing nearly 1000 fellow beings, who never did you harm, and thrusting them beneath the decks of a small ship, beneath a burning tropical sun, to die in disease or suffocation, or be transported to distant lands and be consigned, they and their posterity, to a fate more cruel than death." Gordon's supporters urged President Lincoln to pardon him. President Lincoln responded "any man who, for paltry sum and stimulated only by avarice, can rob Africa of her children to sell into interminable bondage, I never will pardon."

1861 President Lincoln is inaugurated. Six additional states secede from the Union and form Confederate States of America. The Secretary of the Navy authorizes enlistments of contrabands (slaves) taken in Confederate territories.

1861 Mary Richards Bowser (1846-1867), married April 16, 1861 to Wilson Bowser, was a Union spy during the Civil War. She was a former slave and worked in connection with Elizabeth Van Lew, an ardent abolitionist. Born near Richmond, Virginia, Mary Richards may have been a slave of Eliza Baker and John Van Lew or their extended family. Elizabeth Baker and her daughter Elizabeth Van Lew took special notice and sent Mary Richards north to school in Philadelphia Pennsylvania or Princeton, New Jersey, probably a Quaker school like the one Elizabeth Van Lew attended. In 1855, Richards, as arranged by Elizabeth Van Lew, went to Liberia to join a missionary community. By 1860, Richards had returned to Richmond. On April 16, 1861, she married Wilson Bowser. The ceremony took place just four days after Confederate troops opened fire on Fort Sumter. Van Lew reportedly convinced Varina Davis, second wife of Jefferson Davis, to hire Bowser as a household servant, thereby enabling Bowser to spy on the Jefferson Davis White House of the Confederacy. Allegedly, Mary Bowser served an important role in the spy ring organized by Elizabeth Van Lew. The value of Van Lew's spy ring was noted by Generals Benjamin Butler, Ulysses S. Grant, and George H. Sharpe.

1862 First black Union Army forces are organized in South Carolina.

1863 Emancipation Proclamation abolishes slavery in states controlled by Confederate government. The Presidential order also authorizes the mustering of black men as federal regiments.

1863 On the morning of June 2, 1863, Harriet Tubman guided three steamboats around Confederate mines which were planted in the waters leading to the shore along the Combahee River. Once on shore, Union troops set fire to plantations, destroying the infrastructure and seizing thousands of dollars' worth of food and supplies. When the three steamboats sounded their whistles, slaves throughout the area understood that the area was being liberated. Tubman watched as slaves stampeded toward the three boats. Women carried still-steaming pots of rice, pigs squealed in bags slung over shoulders of men, babies hanging around necks of their parents. Hearing the commotion, slave owners armed with handguns and whips tried to stop the mass escape. Confederate troops raced to the scene. The steamboats, packed to capacity with slaves, took off toward Beaufort. More than 750 slaves had been rescued.

1863 The 54th Massachusetts regiment is organized at Camp Meigs, Readville, Massachusetts. Spearheaded by Harriet Tubman's ally and patron Governor Andrew and led by Robert Gould Shaw, about 650 free blacks from throughout the North enlisted in this regiment.

1863 New York Civil War Draft Riots occurred July 13-16, 1863. That year Congress passed new laws drafting men for the ongoing Civil War. Smoldering discontent among longshoremen in Lower Manhattan erupted in violent disturbances against blacks. During the four days, approximately 120 men were killed and 11 blacks were lynched. 1864 Congress rules that black soldiers must receive equal pay.

1864 The National Equal Rights League convenes in Syracuse, New York. Working through state chapters, the League promoted an aggressive advocacy agenda to obtain civil rights for blacks.

1865 President Lincoln initiated a Bill which established the Freedmen's Bureau on March 3, 1865. It was intended to last one year. Led by Union Army General Oliver O. Howard, the Bureau was challenged by Southern legislatures which passed laws for Black Codes. These Codes restricted the movement, conditions of labor and other civil rights of African Americans. In effect, these Codes nearly duplicated the conditions of slavery.

The Bureau helped solve everyday problems of the newly freed slaves, such as obtaining clothing, food, water, health care, jobs, and communication with family members. It distributed 15 million rations of food to African Americans and set up a system where planters could borrow rations in order to feed freedmen they employed. Despite good intentions by Bureau staff, medical treatment of the freedmen was severely deficient. Most southern white doctors and nurses would not treat freedmen. Blacks had not had much opportunity to

develop their own medical personnel. Sanitation was a major challenge. River corridors became breeding grounds for cholera and yellow fever.

In addition, Bureau agents served as legal advocates for African Americans in both local and national courts, mostly in cases dealing with family issues. The Bureau also encouraged former major planters to rebuild their plantations and urged freed blacks to return to work for them. As a matter of policy, the Bureau encouraged whites and blacks to work together as employers and employees rather than as masters and slaves.

In 1866, Congress renewed the charter for the Bureau. President Andrew Johnson, a Southerner, vetoed the bill because he believed that it encroached on states' rights, relied inappropriately on the military in peacetime, and would prevent freed slaves from becoming independent by offering too much assistance. By 1869, the Bureau had lost most of its funding and as a result it was forced to release much of its staff. In 1872, Congress abruptly abandoned the program.

1865 Civil War ends May 9, 1865.

1865 Upon assassination of President Lincoln, Andrew Johnson becomes President. He begins to implement his own Reconstruction Plan that does not require the franchise of black men in the former Confederate States.

1865 Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution abolishes slavery and involuntary servitude. It was passed by Congress January 31, 1865 and ratified December 6, 1865. It was announced on December 18, 1865.

1865 The Ku Klux Klan is formed in Pulaski, Tennessee by the 6 former members of the Confederate Army Confederates. The initial stage of its formation occurred between December 1865 and August 1866.

1866 Republicans begin efforts to extend suffrage in the District of Columbia. Initial attempts fail due to President Johnson's veto.

1866 Congress passes the first Civil Rights Act. President Johnson's veto is overturned by two thirds majority in both Houses and the bill becomes law. Johnson's attitude contributes to the Radical Republican movement. These Republicans favored increased intervention in the South and more aid to former slaves, and ultimately Johnson's impeachment.

1866 In Nashville, Tennessee, Fisk University is established for former slaves by the American Missionary Association. The school becomes the first Black American College to receive a class "A" rating by the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools in 1878. W. E. B. Dubois graduated from Fisk in 1888.

1866 Republicans gain veto proof majorities in both the Senate and the House.

1867 On a frigid, snowy night in January 1867, two elderly sisters, one a spinster and one a widow, were brutally murdered in their house in West Auburn, Maine. It was one of the more chilling murders in Maine up to that time. With *Lewiston Evening Journal* leading the charge, a frenzy of fear gripped the area. Police were under pressure to find the person who committed the heinous crime which had left residents trembling in fear of their safety. Police had no answers and no suspects. At that time, investigation was in its infancy. Police had little ability to collect and analyze evidence. Without witnesses, the search was reduced to a system of “by guess and by gory.” Even when a suspect was named, convictions relied heavily on confessions. With the help of a New York detective, local authorities came across a likely suspect. Clifton Harris was a young, itinerant black man with a hazy past. He had claimed he was a fugitive slave. He claimed at one time he had enlisted in a Tennessee Union regiment, and at another time he claimed he had served in the Confederate Army. In reality, he served in Company F of the 6th US Colored Heavy Artillery Regiment and he had never been a slave. At the time of the murders, he was working on a nearby farm butchering cattle. In his background, there was no evidence he had murder in his blood. However, he did associate with Luther Verrill, a fellow farmhand with a less-than-savory past and a known propensity for violence. Once identified, Harris was arrested and quickly confessed to the crime. No physical evidence connected him to the crime. However, the evidence then and now suggests Harris was mentally deficient and therefore unable to give a reliable confession. Harris’ confession was duly entered, and he was convicted and sentenced to death.

At the time, Joshua Chamberlain was governor. Though not an abolitionist, he abhorred the institution of slavery. At the same time, however, he had no particular fondness for blacks. The law required the governor personally to sign the death warrant and have it delivered to the hangman. Sensitive to Maine ambivalence on capital punishment, Chamberlain steadfastly refused to sign death warrants. Between 1868 and 1869, he pardoned 35 prisoners. In the case of Clifton Harris, he did sign the death warrant. There is no clear reason why Chamberlain let 12 other prisoners sentenced to death escape the gallows, but fought hard to ensure Harris received his due. Chamberlain’s stance on the Harris case set him at odds with his own party. He was harshly condemned by Republicans across the state. A significant number of Democrats joined the protest. Clifton Harris was hung March 13, 1869 in Maine State Prison in Thomaston, the last man ever executed in Maine. That year, 1869, was the last year Chamberlain served as governor.

1867 The first election in the District of Columbia to include black voters resulted in a victory for the Republican ticket. Similar results were repeated in other areas of the country where blacks are granted the franchise. These elections also produce new black political leaders.

1867 Over President Johnson's veto, Congress passes bills granting franchise to black men in the territories of Nebraska and Colorado.

1867 Congress charters Howard University, named after General Oliver D. Howard, Commissioner of the Freedmen's Bureau and the college's first president. From its outset, it was non-sectarian and open to people of both sexes and all races. It plays a vital role in civil rights history. Thurgood Marshall earns his law degree at this institution.

1868 Fourteenth Amendment making blacks citizens is ratified.

1868 White voters in Iowa pass a referendum granting franchise to Black voters.

1868 The Ku Klux Klan evolves into a hooded terrorist organization known to its members as "The Invisible Empire of the South." An early influential Klan "Grand Wizard" was Nathan Bedford Forrest (1821-1879), who was a Confederate general during the civil war. In 1868, Forrest claimed the Klan had 40,000 members in Tennessee and 550,000 members nationally.

Later in 1874, after the murder of 4 blacks by a lynch mob, Forrest wrote Tennessee Governor Brown offering to "exterminate the white marauders who disgrace their race by this cowardly murder of Negroes." By 1875, Forrest advocated admission of blacks to law school. He lived to fully renounce his involvement with the Klan which he had headed and abolished.

1869 Congress approves an amendment to the Reconstruction Bill for Mississippi, Texas, and Virginia, requiring those states to ratify the Fifteenth Amendment before being readmitted to Congress.

1869 James Lewis, John Willis Menard, and Pinckney Benton Stewart Pinchback, all black men from Louisiana, are elected to Congress but never seated.

1870 Fifteenth Amendment permitting black men to vote is ratified.

1870 Joseph H. Rainey of South Carolina is the first black to be seated in the House. In all, 22 blacks are elected to Congress during the Reconstruction. There were seven lawyers, three ministers, one banker, one publisher, two school teachers, and three college presidents.

1870 Hampton Normal Agricultural Institute is founded by Samuel Chapman Armstrong and chartered as one of the first colleges for blacks. Booker T. Washington was among its early graduates. Also, the college pioneered in teaching American Indians.

1870 Pennsylvania, a major center for the abolition movement, granted the franchise to black men after 32 years of disfranchisement.

1871 National Equal Rights Leader, Octavius V. Catto, is assassinated by a white man who attempted to discourage black voting in a key Philadelphia election. Catto's funeral is the largest public funeral in Philadelphia since Lincoln's funeral and his death is mourned by the black community throughout the country.

1875 U. S. Congress passes the Civil Rights Act of 1875. The law protects all Americans, regardless of race, in their access to public accommodations and facilities, such as restaurants, theaters, trains, and other public transportation, and grants the right to serve on juries. However, the law was not enforced, and in 1883, the Supreme Court declared it to be unconstitutional.

1881 Blanche K. Bruce, Mississippi Republican, ends his term in the U. S. Senate. He is the last black to serve in the Senate until Edward Brooke, Massachusetts Republican in 1967. With Reconstruction, voting rights for blacks cease in many areas and greatly curtailed in others.

1881 Booker T. Washington began work at the Tuskegee Institute and builds it into a center of learning and agricultural and industrial training for blacks.

1889 A musical play, *Slaves' Escape or Underground Railroad* written by Pauline Elizabeth Hopkins (1859-1930), an African American novelist, journalist, playwright, historian and editor. She was born in Portland, Maine in 1859.

1895 W.E.B. Du Bois begins his social analysis of the black conditions in Philadelphia. Published in 1899, *The Philadelphia Negro* becomes a lightning rod for black activism.

1896 The Supreme Court establishes the "separate but equal" doctrine with *Plessey v. Ferguson*. This decision enabled the expansion of growing segregation or "Jim Crow" practices across America, with many states codifying segregation in state constitutions and local laws. By 1910, every state in the former Confederacy fully establishes a system of legalized segregation and disenfranchisement. Northern states also embrace "Jim Crow" practices, some of them codified into law.

1901 George Henry White (North Carolina, Republican) is the last black to serve in the House of Representatives during the 19th century leaves office.

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