RUFUS KING

AND

THE PROBLEMS OF HIS ERA

by

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PREFACE

The purpose of this study is to trace the life of Rufus King from 1814 to 1876 and to correlate this life to the panorama of American history and attempt to show the effect, if any, upon the problems of his era.

Up to the present time, Mr. King must be regarded as one of the forgotten men of Wisconsin and the nation's history. Enigmatically, for a man of his prominence, Mr. King left no papers, diaries or memoirs. His no doubt voluminous private correspondence is equally obscure. Mr. King's only biographer has been his son Charles, who has expressed a far greater interest in his grandfather. Nevertheless, the man that was Rufus King is not easily relegated to obscurity. His services to his nation are emblazoned forever in the Official Records of the War of the Rebellion and the Diplomatic Records of the Rome Legation. His services to both New York State and Wisconsin may be found in the annals of those states.

The most valuable primary source of information on Mr. King, excluding those already mentioned, is the Milwaukee Sentinel, which he edited for sixteen years. While material has been drawn freely from the Sentinel, at the same time, an attempt has been made to reflect Mr. King's opinions upon the problems of the day and his solutions to them.

The nature of the subject and the lack of other primary sources necessitates the assumption that the editorials cited do reflect the opinions of Mr. King and were written by him.

The writer wishes to express his appreciation to the custodians and

officials of the Milwaukee Public Library and the Huntington Library for their courtesy and generosity. A great debt of gratitude is owed to the faculty of Marquette University, especially Dr. Frank L. Klement, who suggested the topic and was always available for advice. My thanks also to my parents, who have always encouraged me, and to my grandfather, from whom I inherited my love of history. Finally, my thanks to my wife Jean, who has served as both proofreader and chief typist. To all of these people, I only hope my thanks will suffice.

C.W.M.

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INTRODUCTION

In the annals of American history the King family has blazoned a prominent, though often unnoticed page. In the early days of our Republic the name King ranked on an equal plane with such names as Hamilton, Clinton, Jay and Burr. However, down through the vestige that is history the name has lost its luster. It is hard to determine where the fault for this neglect lies. Perhaps it may be traced to historians, who were enamoured by the prominence attained by that great contemporary American family of the Kings: the Adams. Wherever the fault lies, there is no question that an injustice has been done. Members of the King family have given unstintingly of their time to the public service. The family has furnished statesmen, journalists, educators, businessmen and soldiers to the American scene. While other families have perhaps attained more prominence, certainly none have served the nation any better than the Kings.

Considering our present day fetish with the Civil War and the recent retrogression of Milwaukee into a one newspaper town, a study of the life of a local member of the King family is quite apropos. The life of this member, Rufus King, is everlastingly interwoven with the Milwaukee scene. A Brigadier General during the Civil War, his name is immortalized with the Iron Brigade and inexorably connected with Wisconsin and Milwaukee.

When Rufus King first arrived in 'Milwaukie', Wisconsin Territory, the area and more especially the town were both still essentially back-woods localities. The State was, as yet, not in the Union and the town had less than 10,000 population. When he died in 1876 the State had

become the thirtieth star in the flag and the city had grown to 100,000. His services to both State and city will perpetually form an integral part of the history of both.

RUFUS KING AND THE PROBLEMS OF HIS ERA

Chapter I

Genealogy

The lineage of Milwaukee's Rufus King may be traced to Kent, England. It was here that one day in the year 1710 the patriarch of the King family in the United States, John or Richard, left Kent and sailed to America, settling near Boston.[1] For the next fifty years the genealogy of the King family is somewhat obscure. The only member important enough to be recorded by history is one Richard King of Scarborough, Maine, a son of the initial settler. Richard was a prominent farmer, merchant, lumber dealer, shipbuilder and a partner in the New York banking house of Ward and King. Richard is also responsible for initiating the King family into military service. During King George's War he served as a captain and commissary at the seige of Louisburg. The most prominent offspring of Richard King is the first Rufus King, grandfather of the subject of this study, born in Scarborough, in 1755.[2]

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[1] There is some dispute regarding whether this man's given name was John or Richard. According to E. H. Brush it was John; while Charles King states it was Richard. Edward H. Brush, Rufus King and his Times (New York, 1926), 14; Charles King, "Rufus King: Soldier, Editor, and Statesman," Wisconsin Magazine of History, IV (June, 1921), 371.

[2] Ibid.

The initial Rufus King obtained his early education in Scarborough and one Samuel Moody prepared him for college. He graduated from Harvard in 1777, acclaimed for his classical and literary attainments and oratorical powers. Rufus next turned to the study of law under Theophilus Parsons, afterwards Chief Justice of Massachusetts. However, he gave this up to become aide-de-camp to General John Glover, who commanded a brigade under General John Sullivan, in the expedition to repel the British invasion of Rhode Island in 1778.[3]

Following the aforementioned expedition, the Army honorably dismissed King from the service. He had attained the rank of major. In 1780 he was admitted to the bar and began the practice of law in Massachusetts. By 1783 the people had selected him as a representative in the General Court of the State and the next year he was a delegate to the Continental Congress at Trenton, New Jersey. Mr. King recorded his first vote in favor of locating the National Capital on the banks of the Delaware.[4] On March 16, 1785, Mr. King introduced his famous proposition regarding the disposition of public lands. "There shall be neither slavery nor involuntary servitude in any of the States described in the resolve of Congress of the 22nd of April, 1784."[5] This resolution temporarily not acted upon, later became the cornerstone of the Northwest Ordinance of 1787.[6] In 1787 Massachusetts chose King as her representative to the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia. There he took part in

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[3]Brush, Rufus King, 15; Charles Elliot Fitch, ed., Encyclopedia of New York (New York, 1916), 34-35.

[4]Ibid., 15-18, 35.

[5]Brush, Rufus King, 18.

[6]Ibid., 19.

all the deliberations and debates, and his colleagues selected him as a member of the committee chosen to revise the style and arrangement of the final articles.[7] Following his signing of the Constitution, King returned to Massachusetts to lead the successful ratification fight.[8] He then moved with his family to New York.

Mr. King, upon his arrival in New York, quickly became a part of the most influential Federalist social and political circles of the day. Among the other luminaries in this group were Alexander Hamilton, John Jay, Gouveneur Morris and the Livingstons.[9] The Federalist philosophy regarded the ideal statesman as a leader of measures and not men, administering a government large in power, respected among nations and yet liberally benevolent in purpose.[10] Mr. King's philosophy coincided exactly with this and he rapidly assumed an important role in Federalist affairs. By 1789 he was elected to the State Assembly and later the same year the legislature selected him, along with General Philip Schuyler, as the Empire State's first Senators. Mr. King drew the long term. Throughout the administrations of George Washington, Senator King played an important role in settling the new nation's financial affairs and placing its credit on a sound basis. King, along with Jay and Hamilton, facilitated the ratification of the Jay Treaty by anonymously authoring the "Camillus" essays. In 1795 Senator King was re-elected despite the opposition of Governor George Clinton. The following year

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[7] Brush, Rufus King, 28; Fitch, Encyclopedia, 35.

[8] Brush, Rufus King, 34.

[9] Fitch, Encyclopedia, 35.

[10] Dixon Ryan Fox, The Decline of Aristocracy in the Politics of New York (New York, 1919), 10.

President Washington offered him the portfolio of State recently relinquished by Edmund Randolph, but Senator King declined, preferring instead an appointment as Minister to England. There he remained throughout the Adams and the first Jefferson administrations.[11]

By the early 1800's the power that was Federalism began to wane. With Washington dead, Adams sulking, Hamilton devoted to the law and money-making, and Jay in deep retirement, Ambassador King became the pre-eminent Federalist in the nation. King received a message in London, requesting him to return home and lead the Federalist hosts. Thus, in 1804, Mr. King returned to New York to accept the proffered leadership, which once assumed, remained undisputed until his death.[12] The year of his return he became the Federalist candidate for Vice President on the ticket headed by C. C. Pinckney. They were overwhelmingly defeated. In 1808 the same ticket was re-nominated and again defeated. For the next few years Mr. King remained in semi-retirement, devoting himself to the local rather than national political scene. However, in 1813 King once again was elected to the Senate. Senator King was a staunch supporter of the administration during the War of 1812 and opposed, but to no avail, the chartering of the Second Bank of the United States. In 1816, DeWitt Clinton defeated Senator King for the Governership of New York. That same year James Monroe defeated King for the presidency.[13]

In 1820 Senator King was re-elected to the Senate for his fourth and final term. During this term he actively opposed the admission of

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[11] Brush, Rufus King, 34-38; Fitch, Encyclopedia, 35-36.

[12] Fox, Decline, 10.

[13] Fitch, Encyclopedia, 36-37.

Missouri to the Union as a slave state and on February 11, 1820, made perhaps the greatest speech of his life and certainly one of the strongest ever heard in the Senate for free soil.[14] Senator King advocated colonization of slaves financed by the sale of public lands. On March 4, 1825, Senator King hopefully retired from public life, but one final honor was still to be his. President Adams appointed him, once again, Minister to Great Britain. Mr. King accepted with misgivings because of ill health and his misgivings proved correct, forcing his resignation. He returned to King's Manor at Jamaica, Long Island, where he died April 29, 1827, at the age of seventy-two.[15]

Throughout his illustrious career Mr. King not only represented New York, but illustrated a rapidly passing way of life. To the end of his days he was a model of courtly refinement with the formal courtesy, hauteur, pride and bearing of the true aristocrat.[16] Like his contemporaries Alexander Hamilton, John Adams and John Jay, he lived on after his death -- in his sons, grandsons, and great-grandsons.

The eldest son of Rufus King, John A. King, arrived in the world January 3, 1788, in New York, where he resided all his life. John King received his advanced education at Harrow and later in Paris, while his father was Minister to England. Upon his return to New York Mr. King began the study of law and was admitted to the bar. During the War of

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14 John Quincy Adams, who heard the speech, writes that: "the great slave holders in the House gnawed their lips and clutched their fists as they heard him." Charles Francis Adams, ed., Memoirs of John Quincy Adams (12 vols., Philadelphia, 1874-77), IV, 522.

15 Fitch, Encyclopedia, 37.

16 For a complete description of Rufus King see Thomas H. Benton, Thirty Years' View (2 vols., New York, 1857), I, 57.

1812 Governor Daniel Tompkins commissioned King a lieutenant in the Hussars. Following the war Mr. King retired to a life of farming on Long Island, but in 1819 the people elected him to the New York State Assembly. Assemblyman King was re-elected in later years, serving seven terms in all. Although a Federalist, opposed to the Clinton faction of the Jeffersonian Republicans, Assemblyman King advocated the Erie Canal, realizing its commercial importance. Together with his father, he worked for the revision and adoption of a new State Constitution and upon its passage was elected to the State Senate in 1824. The following year Mr. King served as Secretary to the London Legation under his father and upon the elder King's return home, was charge de' Affaires until the arrival of the new minister.[17]

Following the death of his father, John bought King's Manor from the family estate and there he resided the rest of his life. In 1828 Mr. King ran for Congress as a supporter of John Quincy Adams, but he was defeated. Being instrumental in obtaining the initial railroad charter from Brooklyn to Long Island, the directors named Mr. King president of the line. With the collapse of Federalism, Mr. King became a Whig and in 1839 was a delegate to their national convention. Originally a supporter of Henry Clay for the presidential nomination, he switched to Harrison after his arrival. Strongly opposed to the extension of slavery, as was his fater, Mr. King was able to fight against this in Congress after his election in 1848. Congressman King strongly opposed the Compromise of 1850, especially the Fugitive Slave Bill, and partici-

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Brush, Rufus King, 127-29; Fitch, Encyclopedia, 172-73.

pated in the discussion preceeding California's admittance to the Union. In 1852 he was again a delegate to what became the last Whig nominating convention.[18]

With the collapse of the Whig party following the 1852 election, Mr. King, naturally, gravitated to the new Republican Party. In 1856 he was a delegate to their first nominating convention in Philadelphia and he was instrumental in obtaining the "plum" for John C. Frémont. Offered the Vice-Presidency on the ticket, he relinquished the offer and returned to New York where the party chose him as the Empire States's first Republican candidate for Governor. Triumphantly elected, Governor King served one term and in 1860 was again a delegate to the Republican Convention at Chicago. Here he advocated the nomination of William H. Seward, but was disappointed. Chosen as an elector at large, King held no grudge and cast his ballot for Abraham Lincoln. In 1861 Governor Edwin Morgan chose Mr. King as New York's representative to the abortive Virginia peace conference. During the Civil War, like his father before him, he strongly supported the administration. John A. King died on July 7, 1867 mourned by friend and foe.[19]

Charles King, the second son of Rufus, made his initial appearance in New York, March 16, 1789. Like his brother he received his education abroad. Upon his return to the United States Charles embarked upon a mercantile career, interrupted by the War of 1812. During the war he

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18 Brush, Rufus King, 129-32; Fitch, Encyclopedia, 173-74; Dumas Malone, ed., Dictionary of American Biography (16 vols., New York, 1933), X, 394-95.

19 Ibid.

served briefly as a captain of volunteers. In 1813 Charles became a member of the New York Legislature, but public life held no allure for him. In 1814 his oldest son, the subject of this study, arrived in the world. During the year 1823, the mercantile house with which he was associated failed and Charles King became an associate editor of the New York American and in a few years its sole proprietor. He held this position until 1848 when he retired. Retirement, however, soon ended and in the following year Mr. King became President of Columbia College. President King held this position until 1863 when he resigned because of ill health. His ill health, combined with the fact that his son was Minister to Rome, caused him to move to Italy and there he died at Frascati, on September 27, 1867.[20]

James G. King, born May 8, 1791, was the third prominent son of Rufus King. Also educated in Europe, he graduated from Harvard in 1810 and began the study of law. During the War of 1812 he served as assistant adjutant-general of militia. In 1815 James founded James G. King and Company in New York, but in 1818 returned to Liverpool, England, to engage in foreign trade. Mr. King returned to New York in 1824 and became a partner in the banking house of Prime, Ward, Sands and King. One of the foremost promoters of the New York and Erie Railroad, King became President of the line from 1835 to 1839. During the panic of 1837 Mr. King returned to London, where he used his influence and ability to induce the Bank of England to advance $5,000,000 in gold to his firm.

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20 Brush, Rufus King, 137-38; Fitch, Encyclopedia, 348-49; Malone, Dictionary, 382-83.

This money became the basis for resumption of specie payments throughout the nation. In 1848, following the family tradition, Mr. King was elected to Congress as a Representative of New Jersey. Like his brother John, he was strongly opposed to the Compromise of 1850 and he voted against it. James G. King died October 3, 1853.[21]

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21 Brush, Rufus King, 138-39; Malone, Dictionary, 392-93; Lyman H. Weeks, ed., Prominent Families of New York (Revised edition, New York, 1898), 341.

Chapter II

Early Life

The subject of this study, Rufus King, eldest son of Charles and Eliza (Gracie) King, made his appearance in the world on January 26, 1814, in New York City.[1] His distinguished ancestry, already discussed, greatly influenced his boyhood and later career. He spent his early years in New York City where M. Peugnet, an old French soldier and scholar undertook his education.[2] Following brief preparatory work at Columbia College, young Rufus received an appointment to the United States Military Academy, July 1, 1829, when only fifteen.[3] West Point, at this stage in our nation's development, was a Mecca for all the sons of wealthy and influencial citizens. Young Rufus fit in extremely well and on July 1, 1833, graduated fourth in his class.[4] Upon graduation,

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[1] Edward H. Brush, Rufus King and His Times (New York, 1926), 141; James S. Buck, Milwaukee Under the Charter (4 vols., Milwaukee, 1884), IV, 79; Charles King, "Rufus King: Soldier, Editor, and Statesman," Wisconsin Magazine of History, IV (June, 1921), 371; Dumas Malone, ed., Dictionary of American Biography (16 vols., New York, 1933), X, 400; A. M. Thomson, A Political History of Wisconsin (Milwaukee, 1900), 300; Jerome A. Watrous, ed., Memoirs of Milwaukee County (3 vols., Madison, 1909), I, 97.

[2] Thomson, Political, 300.

[3] Brush, Rufus King, 141; Buck, Milwaukee, 80; King, in Wisconsin Magazine of History, 371; Malone, Dictionary; Alan T. Nolan, The Iron Brigade (New York, 1961), 24; Milo M. Quaife, ed., The Attainment of Statehood (Publications of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Evansville, Wisconsin, 1928), IV, 914-15; Thomson, Political, 300; Watrous, Memoirs, 97.

[4] H. Russell Austin, The Milwaukee Story (Milwaukee, 1946), 109; Brush, Rufus King, 141; Buck, Milwaukee, 80; Milo M. Quaife, ed., Wisconsin: Its History and Its People (4 vols., Madison, 1924), I, 567; Thomson, Political, 300; Watrous, Memoirs, 97.

Rufus was commissioned a Brevet Second Lieutenant in the Corps of Engineers and his first assignment was assistant engineer in the construction of Fortress Monroe, Virginia.[5] Here he served in 1833-34 under the command of Captain Robert E. Lee and formed a lasting affection and respect for him.[6] Between 1834-36, Lieutenant King aided in a survey of the Ohio-Michigan boundary line and began a study for the improvement of navigation on the Hudson River.[7]

In September, 1836, Lieutenant King came to the realization that the army in peace time offered little opportunity for a young man seeking a career. Possessed of an ardent temperament, he sought something more exciting than the monotony and indolence of military life. Consequently Lieutenant King resigned his commission on September 30, 1836, to assume a more lucrative position as a civil engineer on the New York and Erie Railroad, of which his uncle, James G. King, was president.[8] This same year Rufus King married Ellen Eliot, the daughter of Robert Eliot, a direct descendant of John Eliot, the noted Apostle of the Indians, but his wife died within the year.[9] In 1838 the New York and Erie Railroad, affected by the panic of 1837, discontinued building. The same year saw the resignation of engineer King, who returned to Albany to begin a new career.[10]

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5 Brush, Rufus King, 141; Buck, Milwaukee, 80; George W. Cullum, Biographical Register of the Officers and Graduates of the United States Military Academy (3 editions, 6 vols., Cambridge, 1891), I, 537; King, in Wisconsin Magazine of History, 371; Thomson, Political, 300; Watrous, Memoirs, 97.

6 Brush, Rufus King, 141; King, in Wisconsin Magazine of History, 371.

7 Cullum, Biographical, 537; King, in Wisconsin Magazine of History, 371-73; Quaife, Attainment, 915; Thomson, Political, 300.

8 Buck, Milwaukee, 80; Cullum, Biographical, 537-38; King, in Wisconsin Magazine of History, 372; Malone, Dictionary, 400; Watrous, Memoirs, 97.

9 Brush, Rufus King, 141; King, in Wisconsin Magazine of History, 373; Thomson, Political, 301.

10 King, in Wisconsin Magazine of History, 372; Thomson, Political, 300.

The new career which called him away from the railroad was journalism, and in 1839 Mr. King succeeded James Gordon Brooks as editor of the Albany Daily Advertiser.[11] At last Rufus King had found his proper niche in life, and for the next twenty-two years he remained a newspaperman. As soon as he became comfortably settled in Albany, Editor King began the study of law and proceeded to take an active part in the politics of the area.[12] New York State at this time had just elected a new Governor, the honorable William Seward. The first duty of Governor Seward was dividing the spoils among deserving Whigs. Thurlow Weed, the notorious political boss of New York, aided Seward in his task. The problem of rewarding his followers was both embarrassing and thankless to Governor Seward, since they were all so devoted and meritorious. For the office of adjutant-general for example, there were three candidates equally well qualified and with equally strong political claims. Perplexed over this situation, Seward delayed appointing an adjutant-general until absolutely necessary. Then, late at night, Weed and Seward after spending several hours in deliberation, proposed a new name which had not been thought of before, and which was instantly accepted. The new man, of course, was Rusus King, then, according to Weed, "a young Lieutenant of the United States Army, on a visit to Albany."[13] Mr. Weed, selected to inform King of the honor, stated: "I found him at the house of his father-in-law,

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[11] Austin, Story, 109; Buck, Milwaukee, 80; Cullum, Biographical, I, 538; Malone, Dictionary, 400; Quaife, Attainment, 915; Quaife, Wisconsin, I, 567; Watrous, Memoirs, 97.

[12] Brush, Rufus King, 141; Buck, Milwaukee, 80; King, in Wisconsin Magazine of History, 372; Watrous, Memoirs, 97.

[13] On this particular point Mr. Weed seems confused since all other sources agree King resigned from the Army in 1836 and was associated with the Daily Advertiser at this time. See footnotes 8 and 11. Thurlow Weed, The Life of Thurlow Weed (2 vols., Cambridge, 1883), I, 456-57.

Colonel Elliott (sic), packing his trunk. It is scarcely necessary to add that the trunk packing was suspended, and an amiable family were made quite happy by a surprise, which entirely changed the fortunes of the young lieutenant."[14] General King, eminently qualified for the position by his thorough military education, did a creditable job throughout Governor Seward's incumbency.[15] King was especially effective in handling the anti-rent riots of 1839.[16]

Mr. King's newspaper career also continued to improve. By 1841 his inherent editorial spark had been noticed by Governor Seward and Thurlow Weed. In that year, Governor Seward, by now a life-long friend, persuaded King to sever his connection with the Daily Advertiser and become associate editor of the Albany Evening Journal under Weed.[17] King readily accepted. With Weed, he attempted to carry out the plans of Governor Seward to preserve the Empire State for Whig principles and save it from "Democratic misrule."[18] Continuing his residence in Albany, King became the captain of their famous Burgesses Corps. In 1844 he married Susan Eliot, a younger sister of his first wife.[19]

Gradually his position on the paper became more important and whenever Mr. Weed was away King was in charge. During these moments of power, Editor King strongly upheld the Whig principles and kept Weed constantly

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[14] Ibid.

[15] Brush, Rufus King, 141; Buck, Milwaukee, 80; King, in Wis. Magazine of History, 372; Malone, Dictionary, 400; Nolan, Iron Brigade, 24; Quaife, Attainment, 915; Thomson, Political, 300-01; Watrous, Memoirs, 97; Weed, Life, 456-57.

[16] The anti-rent riots or "Helderberg War" started when the old "patroon" of Van Rensselaer Manor died. He had long neglected to collect his rents and when his sons tried, the tenants rioted. The Militia under King quickly ended the uprising. F. W. Seward, William H. Seward: An Autobiography (3 vols., New York, 1891), I, 449-53.

[17] Brush, Rufus King, 141; Buck, Milwaukee, 80; King, in Wis. Magazine of History, 372; Nolan, Iron Brigade, 24; Quaife, Attainment, 915; Thomson, Political, 300-01; Watrous, Memoirs, 97; Weed, Life, 456-57.

[18] Buck, Milwaukee, 80.

[19] King, in Wis. Magazine of History, 373; Thomson, Political, 301.

informed of events.[20] However, in spite of his apparent idyllic existence, King became increasingly restless. His thoughts constantly returned to the West he had first seen while in the army. An old acquaintance of his army days interested him in 'Milwaukie'[21] and since the commercial possibilities of this area already fascinated him, he lent a ready ear. In 1845 the Milwaukee Sentinel, the leading Whig organ of Wisconsin Territory, made a liberal offer to Mr. King to assume its editorial chair along with part ownership of the paper. The offer was too good to refuse, and in September, 1845, Rufus King and family arrived on the steamer Empire State.[22]

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[20] For example, in a letter written to Weed while in Europe King states: "The cauldron does not boil in your absence dear Mr. Dictator. I see nothing more promising than when you left. In the street today a gentleman asked me if I had heard from Bishop Weed? So you see the people think that Hughes has already converted you into a Catholic. Captain Tyler's friends tried to get up a reception for him in New York, but it was 'stale, flat and unprofitable.' The truth is, Tyler is about used up. He means to 'cut' Albany, as our common coucil refused to invite him hither. But to this calamity we are all resigned." In another letter King states: "We are enjoying the most beautiful weather imaginable. Even Captain Tyler can't cheat us out of that." Weed, Life, II, 111.

[21] Milwaukee at the time of King's arrival was still spelled Milwaukie. The spelling remained this way until some time in 1846 when it was changed to its present spelling. For clarity's sake, the modern spelling will be used from this point on. Howard L. Conrad, ed., History of Milwaukee (3 vols., Chicago, 1895), II, 49-50.

[22] Brush, Rufus King, 141; Buck, Milwaukee, IV, 80-81; King, in Wis. Magazine of History, 373; Malone, Dictionary, 400; Nolan, Iron Brigade, Thomson, Political, 301; Watrous, Memoirs, 97.

Chapter III

The Sentinel and Manifest Destiny, 1845-1849

The Milwaukee Sentinel, the leading Whig organ of Wisconsin Territory, initially appeared in June, 1837. Solomon Juneau of Milwaukee, and Achilles J. Rousseau of Troy, New York, first financed the paper. John O'Rourke, a former journeyman in the office of the Milwaukee Advertiser, had the honor of being the first publisher. After a brief tenure, Mr. O'Rourke relinquished his position to Harrison Reed in 1840.[1] In 1844 Mr. Reed combined the Sentinel with Elisha Starr's tri-weekly Commercial Herald, Starr becoming publisher. Late in the same year, the Sentinel again changed hands and on December 9, 1844, David M. Keeler issued the first daily. However, once again, publication of the Sentinel fluctuated and in February, 1845, John S. Fillmore and Jason Downer became co-owners. The former became the business manager and the latter, editor. The new proprietors, devoted Whigs, quickly realized they needed a young, energetic editor who shared their political views. They solicited the advice of the leading Whig editor in the nation, Thurlow Weed, who promptly recommended his associate editor Rufus King.[2]

Mr. King came to Milwaukee, ostensibly on a journalistic vacation to record his impressions of the Great West for the people of Albany, but in

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[1] Bayard Still, Milwaukee--The History of a City (Madison, 1948), 67-68.

[2] Ibid.

reality the purpose of the trip was to discuss the position on the Sentinel. His initial sojourn began on June 13, 1845. Mr. King established headquarters at the American Hotel and began to record his impressions of Milwaukee.[3] According to one of his letters reprinted in the Sentinel from the Evening Journal, these impressions were very favorable. King reported to his readers that in 1835 there had been only one inhabitant in Milwaukee; ten years later there were 8,000, with every boat bringing more. He discussed the advantageous geographical location of the city, along with the number of churches, doctors, lawyers, stores, hotels, and newspapers. He criticized the Federal Government for building the government piers too far from the town and for not cutting a channel to allow the Milwaukee River to run straight into the lake. King believed that if the latter were done, vessels could proceed into the heart of the city. However, in spite of these faults King informed his readers 'Milwaukie' would eventually be the chief commercial and manufacturing city of the 'Western Empire."[4]

The exact details of King's business conferences with the Sentinel proprietors are unknown to this day, but to all intents and purposes, they must have been successful. Immediately following their completion, King returned to Albany and severed his connection with the Evening Journal. As already mentioned, he moved to Milwaukee with his family in

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[3]The Sentinel states: "General King of Albany, came passenger in the Wisconsin last evening and has taken lodgings for a few days at the American. General King has been, for the last three years, connected with the Evening Journal, and is one of the ablest, and most vigorous and efficient writers in New York." Milwaukee Sentinel, June 14, 1845.

[4]For the full text of the letter see Milwaukee Sentinel, July 14, 1845.

September 1845. The family's first residence was the United States Hotel on the corner of Huron and East Water Streets.[5] It was while quartered there that Rufus King became officially connected with the Sentinel, when Jason Downer resigned as editor and part owner, and King replaced him.[6]

At the time of King's ascendency to the editorship of the Sentinel, Wisconsin newspapers were just beginning to thrive. Newspapers were no longer dependent upon the landowner's subsidy. New revenue, derived from advertising, made newspaper publishing an affluent business. The conventional paper of the period contained four pages. Pages one and four consisted entirely of advertisements, page two carried three or four news columns, and page three occasionally a single news column. Anyone having the price could purchase space, and neither accuracy of claim nor decency of language was a prerequisite.[7]

King's former associate, Thurlow Weed, furnished the new editor's introduction to the public. Weed wrote a farewell editorial in the Evening Journal which the Sentinel reprinted. Weed eulogized King as "one whom we love as a Brother." Mr. Weed beseeched the citizens of Wisconsin to give General King a warm and cordial reception. Weed also

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[5]Charles King, "Rufus King: Soldier, Editor, and Statesman," Wisconsin Magazine of History, IV (June, 1921), 373.

[6]M. Russell Austin, The Milwaukee Story (Milwaukee, 1946), 109; Edward H. Brush, Rufus King and His Times (New York, 1926), 142; James S. Buck, Milwaukee Under the Charter (4 vols., Milwaukee, 1884), IV, 80; Howard L. Conrad, ed., History of Milwaukee (3 vols., Chicago, 1895), II, 50; John S. Gregory, ed., History of Milwaukee (4 vols., Milwaukee, 1931), II, 1,008; King, in Wis. Magazine of History, 373; Milwaukee County Writer's Project, History of Milwaukee County (Milwaukee, 1947), 301; Alan T. Nolan, The Iron Brigade (New York, 1961), 24; Milo M. Quaife, ed., The Attainment of Statehood (Publications of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Evansville, Wisconsin, 1928), IV, 915; A. M. Thomson, A Political History of Wisconsin (Milwaukee, 1900), 301; Jerome A. Watrous, ed., Memoirs of Milwaukee County (3 vols., Madison, 1909), I, 97.

[7]Project, History, 301.

assured the Whigs of Wisconsin that throughout his association with King "he has been in constant political and social communion with us." Milwaukeeans received the promise that General King would participate ardently in all the business enterprises of the town and would be useful "in all the Institutions and Associations that elevate and adorn society." Weed wished King "warmest wishes for his health, prosperity and happiness."[8]

On the following day Editor King assumed his duties with the Milwaukee Sentinel. In his introductory editorial he thanked both Weed and Downer for their kind words, although he cautioned the public of their partiality. King then went on to give the reader an indication of what might be expected from the Sentinel and warned that in one regard his friends had not said enough:

> But in so far as they have pledged us heart, head and hand, to the advocacy of the Whig cause, they have said not a word too much. Cherishing, as we do, the conviction that the progress and prosperity of the country, the spread of liberal principles, the cause of Law and Order, the permanency of Republican Institutions and the perpetuity of the American Union, are one and all identified with the ultimate ascendancy of Whig principles and policy, we shall labor zealously, hopefully, and untiringly to bring about a consumation so devoutly to be wished for.... It will be our duty to make the Sentinel an attractive and useful sheet for the Farmer, the Mechanic and the Merchant, as well as for the Politician.... With these few promises, we enter, hopefully and heartily, upon the duties of our vocation.[9]

The prevalent theme in the United States from 1845-1849 was "manifest destiny." For a long time the people believed the nation's boundaries were

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[8]Milwaukee Sentinel, September 19, 1845.

[9]Ibid., September 20, 1845.

limited and exhibited no particular interest in the country west of Missouri. However, by 1840, due to a variety of circumstances, this feeling changed. The pulse of the people exhibited a marked increase in annexationist beatings. The election of James K. Polk, an ardent expansionist, in 1844, manifested this new sentiment. The new President immediately acceded to the public's bidding and the resulting problems of the Mexican War, the Wilmot Proviso, California, Oregon and increased agitation over slavery, becoming the dominant problems of the nation and the Sentinel throughout this period.

Prior to election, President Polk promised to enact a lower tariff. Henry Clay, in effect, drafted the tariff of 1842, and it was completely Whig in principle. King, being a devoted Whig, strongly opposed any changes in the prevailing tariff. The Sentinel pointed out that tariff-free foreign products would ruin the American economy and make the nation dependent on imports.[10] The Sentinel could see no reason for "tinkering with the tariff."[11] Regarding the alleged proposition that we would lower our tariff if England would give up her claims to Oregon, the Sentinel stated: "It would be purchasing peace by an inglorious concession and at far too costly a price." The Sentinel suggested that it would be far better to pay at once whatever sum England deemed equivalent for her alleged title. If we were forced to lower our tariff, we might as well abolish our existing institutions, strike our flag, and become again in name, as in fact, mere colonies of the Mother Country.[12] However,

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[10] Ibid., September 25, 1845.

[11] Ibid., October 20, 1845.

[12] Ibid., November 17, 1845.

in spite of King's ardent editorials, the Walker Tariff went into effect July 30, 1846. The Sentinel, in reply, asked: "Is this a time to recklessly break up the regular business of the country, derange trade and improverish the people individually and as a nation?" The Sentinel believed the demagogues of modern democracy would find sweet music in the groans of the oppressed. "But we trust," the Sentinel stated, "the retribution will be as speedy and as signal as the treason has, been gross and ruinous."[13]

The Sentinel's position on the expansionist theme of the era stated that "the acquisition of California is vastly more important than either the 're-annexation' of Texas, or the immediate occupation of Oregon."[14] The Sentinel, unlike most of its contemporaries, did not shout "Fifty-four-forty or fight," or "All of Oregon or none." Why bother to fight over a Territory which our emigrants were conquering? War was not for Republics, but for Kings and despots. Our national honor was not slighted, our rights and interests not violated. "Oregon must and will be ours; and ours as soon and as surely, if we remain at Peace as if we resort to War," wrote the pacifistic editor. He suggested trusting our arts, rather than arms, to reclaim and settle Oregon. That would be a triumph worthy of a civilized and Christian Republic.[15] The Sentinel considered the annexation of Texas a national crime--"a fact admitted by nine-tenths of all political parties at the North."[16]

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[13] Ibid., August 5, 1846.

[14] Ibid., November 22, 1845.

[15] Ibid., November 28, 1845.

[16] Ibid., May 30, 1846.

Like Congressman Abraham Lincoln, who authored the "spot resolutions," Editor King vehemently opposed the Mexican War and claimed it resulted from the desire for added territories. The Sentinel blamed Polk's Administration for the war:

> ...this war has been brought upon the country by the rash folly of the Federal Administration. It is a war...which has been declared and made by the President of the United States...without the assent or advice of Congress and contrary to the wishes and interests of the People. No one can fail to see that the advance of General Taylor's force to the Rio Grande was merely calculated... to provoke hostilities.... Loathing with our whole hearts the cause which has wrongfully and unnecessarily plunged us into a war with Mexico, we...recognize it as the duty of every patriot and citizen to stand by the country and aid in retrieving the disgrace and disaster which official mismanagement has brought upon us.[17]

The Sentinel continued its harangues against the war. It rhetorically asked why fifty million dollars was spent, five thousand lives sacrificed and Mexico invaded. "Surely none of these were necessary to extort Mexico's permission to assume her obligations and pay her debts," wrote King. "As little could they have been required to induce her to sell...or to grant us a right of way." If this was Polk's intention, he could have secured it more cheaply, more certainly, and more expeditiously, with diplomacy and friendly negotiations. Had we any excuse, any reason for the war? Could we show the war was necessary? Was it possible to justify ourselves in the eyes of God and man for making war at all.[18] Other Sentinel editorials continuously deplored our "manifest destiny" and feared we would never secure a permanent peace.[19]

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[17] Ibid., May 21, 1846.

[18] Ibid., June 15, 1847.

[19] Ibid., January 22, 1848.

The Sentinel consistently hoped for peace. Editor King regarded war as "the trade of Despotisms." "The ballot," wrote King, "not the bayonet, is the appropriate weapon of Freemen."[20] The Sentinel also foresaw the danger of a military oligarchy arising because of the war. Military heroes were considered the only available candidates for the Presidency. Civilians were constrained to hide. Services in the National Legislature and the claims of statesmanship were of little account in comparison with the glory won on the other side of the Rio Grande. Hereafter officers of the army would wield a most important influence in the direction of national affairs. If the Mexican War was continued, then the evil alluded to would increase. We would discover that "our manifest destiny" would be to tread the downward road to national decay, ruin and death.[21]

The Sentinel voiced other complaints against the Administration regarding the Mexican War. Editor King criticized the President for allowing Santa Anna to return to Mexico. "There cannot be found in the history of civilized nations an instance of fatuity so gross," wrote King, "or treachery so wicked or immorality so glaring, as the admission of Santa Anna into Mexico by order of Polk and his advisors." If they believed Santa Anna would assist in promoting a just peace, they had defeated the very end they hoped to accomplish; if they wanted him to organize armies they were guilty of treason; or if they proposed that he should invite rebellion, they violated the rules of international morality.[22] The Sentinel likewise disapproved of the treatment of Generals Taylor and

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[20] Ibid., February 19, 1848.

[21] Ibid., January 20, 1848.

[22] Ibid., August 20, 1847.

Scott. Editor King chastised the Administration for not furnishing Taylor enough troops to win victories after Buena Vista.[23] As to Scott, the Sentinel stated: "It would seem that the Administration are disposed to mete out to General Scott...the same ungenerous fate which was extended to General Taylor." The Sentinel believed Mr. Trist should have remained at home and General Scott furnished with the men and means he asked for and which he was promised. The Mexican capital would long ago have surrendered to Scott. The Sentinel despaired of either a permanent, or an honorable peace, if the settlement of the terms was to be left to a man so unfit for the work as Mr. Nicholas P. Trist.[24]

Besides criticizing the Administration on the tariff, "manifest destiny," and the Mexican War, the Sentinel voiced opposition on other issues. The Sentinel criticized President Polk for his appointment of a post master for Milwaukee. Editor King believed the citizens were much more competent to choose their post master than Polk.[25] He likewise took Polk to task for his veto of the harbor bill.[26] Editor King mounted numerous personal attacks against the President. The Sentinel claimed his executive messages were too long and claimed that condensation was a faculty of superior minds.[27] King lamented: ..."the unfortunate delusion, which...placed at the head of our...Government a man without the experience and ability requisite." He deplored the sad blindness which led to the rejection of the venerable patriot who carried the nation through the last

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[23] Ibid., August 7, 1847.
[24] Ibid., September 29, 1847.
[25] Ibid., October 15, 1845.
[26] Ibid., August 17, 1846.
[27] Ibid., December 13, 1845.

war. The Sentinel reflected with chagrin and regret, upon the consequences which this unfortunate national mistake had brought upon us.[28] King assessed Polk for "his small statesmanship and vacillating character.... How different from the man of iron will whose actions Mr. Polk has tried to ape! He a 'young Hickory' indeed! Why he has not the firmness or consistency of a straw!"[29] "The history of the Oregon question," wrote King, "stamps him as the quack statesman who blusters without courage,--the political trickster, who wears ...two faces."[30] The Sentinel was not disappointed in Polk's display of talent and ability as a statesman, since it never believed he possessed the proper qualities. But he had put some things on paper handsomely and forcibly. The people were told that their title to Oregon was clear and unquestionable, and that the acquisition of Texas was to be bloodless. Locofocos asserted that the Administration would never submit to a boundary short of 54°, 40". The Whigs had insisted James K. Polk would back out. And what about the bloodless acquisition of Texas? The blood-stained banks of the Rio Grande would answer![31]

Since 1848 was an election year, the Sentinel began to take early pot shots at the potential Democratic candidates.

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[28] Ibid., May 15, 1846.

[29] Ibid., June 18, 1846.

[30] Ibid., July 25, 1846.

[31] Ibid., July 30, 1846.

"We perceive by the proceedings of a Convention held at Harrisburg, Pennsylvania," wrote King, "that Mr. Buchanan is to be a candidate for the Presidency, if, by dint of crafty management he can succeed in leading off the other distinguished aspirants to the honor, of his own party." A Federalist of the old school was an excellent Democrat of the present day.[32] The eventual winner of the 1848 Democratic nomination, Lewis Cass, also repeatedly felt the Sentinel's lash. If the people had to select for President, the most practiced demagogue, the most thorough dough-face, the most devout worshipper of power and place, the most skillful political trimmer, the most inveterate office hunter, the most notorious political weathercock, the most unsafe, unstable, untrustworthy of all public men in the United States, Lewis Cass was, without dispute and beyond all rivalry, the first, best, and strongest candidate.[33] "The nomination of Mr. Cass," according to King, "is unexpected and unwelcome news to the great mass of his own party friends." They felt that their wishes had been disregarded, their interests trifled with, their feelings outraged. Cass was not their first, nor second, nor third choice. It was only the leaders, the wire-workers, the office-seekers, and office-holders, who thought him a fit and convenient tool, and intended to use him for their advantage.[34] The Sentinel

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[32] Ibid., January 29, 1848.

[33] Ibid., May 27, 1848.

[34] Ibid., June 2, 1848.

criticized Cass as "the nominee of the Federal Office Holders' Convention." King accused Cass of repudiating the Northwest Ordinance and of giving in to the South on the Slavery Question, to gain their support for the Presidency.[35] Still another Democrat who fell under the Sentinel's whip was ex-President Martin Van Buren, the "Free Soil" candidate for the Presidency. According to the Sentinel: "No Northern President, or politician ever exhibited a greater devotion to Southern interests, or a more unhesitating submission to Southern behests at the expense of Northern rights."[36]

The Sentinel offset the venom it spewed on the Democratic Party and candidates, by dripping honey upon all things Whig. Editor King, somewhat perplexed as to who would be the best Whig choice for Wisconsin, believed that five-sixths of the Whigs in eastern Wisconsin would prefer Henry Clay; although he was positive Clay could not be elected as the Whigs would have to draw votes from the Locofocos. On the other hand, King thought General Taylor would have great popularity among the Germans and Irish and be extremely popular in southwestern Wisconsin. "If old Zack would only quit writing letters it would be an easy trick to make this sentiment universal."[37]

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[35] Ibid., June 21, 1848.

[36] Ibid., August 18, 1848.

[37] These political observations were written to John H. Tweedy. Joseph Schafer, "Memorials of John H. Tweedy," Wisconsin Magazine of History, VIII (March, 1925), 352.

After considerable thought, King finally decided to back Taylor for the nomination. The Sentinel initiated its drum-beating in 1847. "There is a growing impression abroad that the qualities of mind and heart," wrote King, "the self-possession, the sagacity, the fortitude, the firmness of purpose and the humanity displayed by 'Rough and Ready' on the immortal fields of Palo Alto, Resaca de la Palma, Monterey and Buena Vista, are precisely the qualities most to be desired and commended in a great statesman." Any man that could plan a campaign, handle an army, fight a battle and follow up a victory as well as General Taylor, would find little difficulty in filling the office of President, at least as well as James K. Polk![38] The editor of the Sentinel wrote, "General Taylor has showed himself to be possessed of great and striking capacity for civil government." The very qualities he had displayed on the Rio Grande, at Monterey and at Buena Vista, and which illustrated every line of his admirable dispatches, were precisely the ones most needed in a President.[39]

After the nomination of Taylor, the Sentinel stated: "The ticket, in our judgement is the best and strongest that could have been elected. It presents a combination which will be found, like the Hero whose name leads it, everywhere Irresistible."[40] Throughout the campaign the Sentinel

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[38] Milwaukee Sentinel, May 8, 1847.

[39] Ibid., May 11, 1847.

[40] Ibid., June 10, 1848.

continued its unstinting praise of Taylor. The Sentinel contrasted Taylor with Cass in regards to personal character, public service and beliefs. Editor King presented Taylor as a peace advocate and Cass as a war-monger. The people were warned that under Taylor they would have peace--under Cass constant war.[41] Various editorials reminded the Whigs to adhere to their principles and success would be certain.[42] King proved to be correct; success was certain and Zachary Taylor became the twelfth President of the United States.

There was yet another issue which concerned the Milwaukee Sentinel during the period under discussion. This issue, presumedly ended with the Missouri Compromise of 1820, once again, like a phoenix, arose. The issue was slavery. The agitation over slavery, in spite of the Missouri Compromise, never completely fled the American scene. Throughout the 1820's it flourished in the South and by the 1830's an active opposition began to vociferously oppose it in the North. By 1840 these opponents, called abolitionists, were able to run a candidate for President. Their strength continued to grow and with the inducement of new territories from the expansionist sentiments prevalent in the 1840's, the agitation over slavery increased.

Because of his ancestry, it is easy to ascertain that Rufus King would be in the vanguard of the opposition to slavery. It

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[41] Ibid., June 12, 1848.

[42] Ibid., August 22, September 18, 1848.

has already been seen that his grandfather, father and uncles opposed slavery. Rufus did not deviate from the family tradition. While his opposition never went to the extremes of some of the abolitionists, it nevertheless was a powerful force. As early as 1845 King expressed his sentiments in the Milwaukee Sentinel. He hailed the establishment of an anti-slavery paper in Maryland with the words "that Maryland first, and then each of her sister Slave States, will put a period to an Institution which retards their growth, blights their prosperity and brings reproach and odium upon the whole Republic."[43] With the tumult over the proposed Wilmot Proviso at its zenith, the Sentinel stated: "These threats of dissolving the Union, which some of the 'chivalry' are fond of using...have lost their terrors for the North." The South could not complain if the North and West insisted on setting bounds to the progress of the "peculiar institution." At any rate, complain or not, King hoped to see the proviso adopted. The Slave States had ruled the country since the first organization of the Government. It was about time for Free States to claim their turn.[44] When the proviso failed to pass, the Sentinel blamed the President and said the wishes of the people had been subverted. "We know not what members deserted the Free Standard on this question, or whoever they are, the People will mark and remember them."[45]

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[43] Ibid., October 10, 1845.

[44] Ibid., January 27, 1847.

[45] Ibid., March 15, 1847

Through the ensuing years the Sentinel continued its anti-slavery crusade. Whenever Congress passed any anti-slavery legislation the Sentinel rejoiced.[46] The Sentinel hailed the passage of the Oregon Bill, with its anti-slavery proviso. "The action of the present Congress, has at length fixed a limit to this Institution. The Free States have said to Slavery 'Thus far shalt thou go and no farther.' And what they have said, they will stick to."[47] The Sentinel believed that the annexation of Texas and the Mexican War, both done for slavery's sake, had taught the people a lesson. It claimed "no member of Congress from any Free State will dare to vote for a law to establish Slavery in Territory now free."[48] Editor King could not see how slavery could progress into New Mexico or California. The people opposed it and immigration could not change this opposition. "We entertain the undoubting belief that a limit has at last been set to the extension of Slavery; that all our new Territories...will be consecrated to Freedom, and that Times will eventually work out the emancipation of every slave within the bounds of the Union."[49] The Sentinel chastised the fanatics of both parties

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[46] For example, the Sentinel acclaimed the passage of a petition asking for the prohibition of the Slave Trade in the District of Columbia. Ibid., January 7, 1848.

[47] Ibid., August 23, 1848.

[48] Ibid., August 26, 1848.

[49] Ibid., December 6, 1848.

for threatening to dissolve the Union if Congress affixed a limit to slavery.[50] Secession held no fear for the Sentinel. Editor King believed dissolving the Union would be the death blow to slavery. Surrounded by free territory, the slave states would be unable to enforce slavery. While it was not proposed to interfere with the constitutional right of the Southern States to regulate their local institutions, the free states had and would exercise their right to protest against and oppose the extension of slavery into free territory common to the whole Union. The South was welcome to keep slavery, but the North could not and would no consent to share the burden and the blame of its extension.[51] The Sentinel believed "it a much more probable supposition that our Republic will be converted into a Monarchy, than that another inch of Slave Territory will ever be added to our Union."[52]

Despite his involvement with national affairs during this period, Mr. King did not neglect his personal and civic life. In 1846 the King family moved from the United States Hotel to a small house on Jefferson Street, where on October 11, 1846, Fanny King made her appearance in the world. Early in 1847 the family again moved to their Milwaukee residence, a small frame house, on the Northeast corner of Mason and

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[50] Ibid., February 14, 1849.

[51] Ibid., December 13, 1849.

[52] Ibid., August 22, 1849.

Van Buren which quickly became known as "King's corner."[53] At the same time Mr. King began to play an important role in local affairs. He had the honor of being named school commissioner from the Third Ward and elected as the first president and superintendent ex-officio of the public school system on April 14, 1846.[54] Later, in 1848, King became one of the first Regents of the University of Wisconsin.[55] King also endeavored to carve out a political career for himself during this period. In 1846 he headed the Whig city ticket against Byron Kilbourn, but not defeat.[56] However, toward the end of 1848, the Whigs rewarded King for his staunch campaigning for Taylor by naming him an elector on the Whig ticket.[57] Among his other personal activities at this time were membership in the Odd Fellows, Wisconsin Temperance Society and a captaincy in the Milwaukee Light Artillery.[58]

Business affairs also occupied some of Mr. King's time during this period. On February 16, 1846, the Milwaukee Sentinel merged with its arch-rival, the Milwaukee Daily Gazette.

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[53] King, in Wis. Magazine of History, 373.

[54] Buck, Milwaukee, IV, 81; Conrad, History, I, 129; Project, History, 655.

[55] He served as Regent until 1854. Brush, Rufus King, 143; King, in Wis. Magazine of History, 374.

[56] The vote was Kilbourn 1,079; King 881. Conrad, History, I, 79.

[57] Ibid.

[58] Buck, Milwaukee, IV, 82; Conrad, History, II, 54; Milwaukee Sentinel, July 1, 1846.

The rival owners formed a partnership and christened the new paper the Milwaukee Sentinel and Gazette.[59] By 1848 the new paper installed the first power press in the history of Milwaukee journalism.[60] However, once again the ownership fluctuated. William Duane Wilson retired from the partnership and sold his interest to King. Thus, for a brief period, Rufus King became sole owner of the Sentinel, but he quickly remedied this by selling a half interest to William H. Watson and J. S. Fillmore.[61] King stayed as editor and the name remained unchanged.

During the year 1846, Wisconsin Territory was preparing itself to apply for statehood under the provisions of the Northwest Ordinance. In conjunction with this, legislators were meeting at Madison to prepare a State Constitution. Toward the end of the year, Editor King published his ideas on what the proposed Constitution should be. King wanted: "a constitution simple in its provisions, liberal in its spirit, comprehensive in its scope, adapted to our present wants and not antagonistic to our future fortunes....as shall make suffrage and education universal; as shall secure to us a limited

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[59] The Milwaukee Daily Gazette was started in October, 1845, by William Duane Wilson. It was edited by I. S. Rowland and Elisha Starr, and although identified politically with the Sentinel, was still a popular and dangerous rival. Although the new paper was re-named, the footnotes will continue to refer to the Milwaukee Sentinel. Conrad, History, II, 50.

[60] Project, History, 304.

[61] Milwaukee Sentinel, April 22, 1848; Conrad, History, II, 54.

Executive, a responsible Legislature, and an efficient, upright, able Judiciary?"[62]

Evidently the Constitution of 1846, submitted to the people for ratification in 1847, did not fulfill editor King's expectations, for the Sentinel vehemently attacked it throughout the latter year. Typical of the Sentinel's comments on the Constitution is the following:

> Fellow Citizens of Wisconsin, can you, as intelligent, reflecting, honest men support such a Constitution.... Will you vote for a Constitution, which discriminates against the Poor and in favor of the Rich Man? Will you vote...which destroys credit, excludes capital and makes it a penal offence to give or take Bank Bills? Will you vote...which loosens the marriage tie....Will you vote...which releases the fortunate owner of one or two thousand dollars from all obligations to pay his debts, and Bars The Poor Creditor, the Laboring man, and the Mechanic, of his remedy against the dishonest debtor?--Will you vote...which was made for Rogues and not for honest men; which must retard the growth, cripple the energies and arrest the enterprise of our Territory.... Let not Wisconsin come into the Union with the instruments of Fraud in her hand....Let not this fair Territory be converted into an Asylum for 'distressed husbands;' a place of refuge for dishonest creditors; a receptacle for stolen goods....Freemen of Wisconsin.... Whigs, Democrats and Abolitionists; Farmers, Mechanics, Merchants and Laboring Men, Native and Foreign Born; Young and Old;--Rich and Poor, to come to the Polls, side by side and shoulder to shoulder .... and to the question, 'shall this Constitution be adopted,' return an emphatic, unhesitating, decisive, NO! 63

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[62] Milwaukee Sentinel, September 1, 1846.

[63] Ibid., March 23, 1847.

Editor King not only attacked the proposed Constitution in the Sentinel, but also organized the opposition throughout the eastern portion of the Territory. Finding himself outnumbered newspaperwise on the local scene, Mr. King organized the Volksfreund in February, 1847. King hoped the Volksfreund would counteract the influence of the Wisconsin Banner with the foreign, and especially German, voters. Mr. Frederick Fratney of New York City edited the new paper. The success of King's strategy is reflected in the fact that Milwaukee voters unanimously rejected the Constitution of 1846.[64]

In 1848, as a reward for his yeoman service in defeating the Constitution of 1846, the people elected King the only Whig delegate from Milwaukee at the new Constitutional Convention convening at Madison.[65] Mr. King took a prominent and active part in this convention, even to working harmoniously with Democrats![66] King served on the legislative, executive and administrative committees and introduced the resolution that no municipal corporation could take away the

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[64] Milwaukee voted 1,437 to 1,148 against the Constitution. Mr. Fratney remained as editor of the Volksfreund until his death in 1855 when the paper was absorbed by the Banner. Conrad, History, I, 78; Project, History, 303.

[65] Brush, Rufus King, 142; Conrad, History, I, 78; King, in Wis. Magazine of History, 373; Malone, Dictionary, 400; Milwaukee Sentinel, December 1, 1847; Nolan, Iron Brigade, 24; Project, History, 303; Thomson, Political, 301.

[66] The Wisconsin Democrat stated: "The Milwaukee K's are regarded as the Siamese twins of the convention--a separation would be fatal to both." This referred to King's working with Byron Kilbourn. Wisconsin Democrat, January 11, 1848.

private property of any citizen, unless the necessity was established by a jury verdict.[67] The convention record stands as a monument to King's fealty, for, out of 242 roll calls, he missed only one, a record unmatched by any other delegate.[68]

Upon his return to Milwaukee, Editor King used the Sentinel to acquaint the public with the provisions of the new Constitution and endorsed it wholeheartedly. "We regard it as eminently liberal and republican," wrote King, "and as admirably calculated to secure the rights of individuals, and to promote the welfare, advance the interests, and exhalt the character of the State." Although the Constitution was not wholly free from defects, it had as few, as other State Constitutions. With such a fundamental law combined with the practice and virtues of the Bill of Rights Wisconsin could confidently count upon a bright, prosperous, and happy future.[69] With the Sentinel leading the way, the people of Wisconsin endorsed the new Constitution. As an additional reward for his service, the Legislature offered King one of the senatorial positions, but he declined, feeling

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[67] This proposal was adopted 44 to 17. Conrad, History, I, 78; Quaife, Attainment, 735,895.

[68] The only roll call missed was number 125, Quaife, Attainment, 885-99.

[69] Milwaukee Sentinel, February 5, 1848.

that the building up of the Sentinel required his personal attention.[70]

These then were the dominant issues during Editor King's initial tenure with the Milwaukee Sentinel. Despite his opposition, King saw the Whig tariff of 1842 lowered. Despite his opposition, the United States entered into an expansionist war with a neighboring Republic. However, his opposition helped defeat the Constitution of 1846. He then aided in formulating a new Constitution and by supporting it with the Sentinel, enabled Wisconsin to achieve statehood in 1848. And again a Whig occupied the White House. The fires of "manifest destiny" appeared quenched by the blood of the Mexican War. In spite of King's opposition, we had succeeded in rounding out our boundaries. But now that the coveted land had been won, the nation faced the query, should it be slave or free? The South, once apologetic toward its "peculiar institution," found new motivation in profits and new anger with abolitionists, and began to consider slavery a necessity. Slavery, like Lazarus, again commanded a national controversy. The Sentinel appeared in the first phalanx of the increased opposition. Once again man succeeded in opening Pandora's box and took another step on the inevitable road toward Civil War.

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[70] Brush, Rufus King, 142; King, in Wis. Magazine of History, 373-74.

Chapter IV

The Sentinel and Compromise, 1850 - 1853

As already alluded to, the predominant theme in the United States between 1850-1853 was the status of the territories acquired from the Mexican War. Should the new territories be slave or free? The entire nation mobilized for battle over the question. The North and West prepared to defend to the death the latter position, while the South closed ranks around the former. The new Whig Administration of Zachary Taylor tried manfully to avert disaster on this bone of contention. President Taylor urged California and New Mexico to form state constitutions and apply for admittance to the Union. In December, 1849, he urged the convening Thirty-First Congress to admit the prospective states irregardless of their constitutions' stand on slavery. However, when both of the proposed states adopted non-slavery constitutions, the die was cast and Congress faced its Rubicon.

The newly elected, well-qualified Thirty-First Congress accepted the gauntlet. Probably one of the ablest ever chosen, it uniquely served as a meeting place for two generations. The old guard of the previous era consisted of that great triumvirate: Henry Clay, Daniel Webster, and John C. Calhoun. The new men included such brilliant neophytes as

Salmon P. Chase, Stephen A. Douglas, William H. Seward, Thaddeus Stevens, Jefferson Davis, Alexander H. Stephens and Robert Toombs. With these men and others rested in the Herculean task of saving the Union. Congress, as in other times, immediately sought a compromise equitable to all sections and instinctively turned to Henry Clay to formulate it. The result of Clay's labor is known to history as the Compromise of 1850. This proposed legislation occupied Congress, the nation, and the Milwaukee Sentinel throughout nearly the entire year.[1]

Early in 1850 the Sentinel gave indication it had not changed its stand on the status of the disputed territories. Prior to this a strong opponent of the Cass doctrine of "popular sovereignty," the Sentinel reversed itself in respect to California. Editor King chastized the Southern factionists for not allowing California to enter the Union without slavery, as indicated in its constitution. Was this not the "popular sovereignty" the South upheld? If so, why refuse admission to California?[2] Understanding the Sentinel's feelings on the matter of the territories, it is simple to predict its stand on any compromise measures. The Sentinel violently opposed compromise in any form. The Sentinel's initial reaction to the proposed compromise measures stated that they "will, no doubt, give rise to an animated and

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[1] At this time William H. Watson became co-editor ;with Mr. King. Milwaukee Sentinel, January 22, 1850.

[2] Ibid., January 17, 1850.

protracted debate in both branches of Congress."[3] Next, the Sentinel proceeded to explain the compromise measures and cautioned its readers to examine them calmly. "The source from which these resolutions come; the high and patriotic motives which prompted their introduction, and the absorbing interest of the subject to which they relate, entitle them to the calm and deliberate consideration of the American People, as of their Representatives in Congress...."[4]

While Congress pondered the compromise measure, the Sentinel found time to caution the radicals of all sections against disunion:

> Southern members declare for disunion, if they do not succeed in their schemes-- and Northern ultras declare their indifferncce as to permanency of the bond between the States, so that they can but succeed in theirs. A Foote, a Butler, a Clemens, a Toombs, a Clingman...threaten that blood shall flow if their views are not carried out; while it takes a Giddings, or a Garrison, at the North, to ask the question--'What is all this worth?'...Fortunately those who effect to speak...do not represent...all the people. If Georgia has a Toombs to preach disunion, she has a King to rebuke him.... If North Carolina has her Clingman, she has too a Stanley.... If the North, too, is cursed with...Giddings and Garrison...it boasts, too...its thousands on thousands... who would rather lose their right arms than see a link of the chain of Union broken. [5]

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[3] Ibid., February 2, 1850.

[4] Ibid., February 4, 1850

[5] Ibid., February 7, 1850

As the hallowed halls of Congress echoed eloquently throughout 1850, the Sentinel kept its readers informed on both speakers and speeches. The Sentinel published Mr. Calhoun's speech and considered it "an able, tho' inconclusive argument...." The one idea which pervaded and colored the whole of it seemed to be, that the main object of the Union, and the first duty of the Federal Government, was to maintain an equilibrium between the Free and Slave States. Mr. Calhoun spoke, not for the whole South, however, but for a very limited portion of it, and, out of South Carolina, the responses to his manifesto would be few and far between.[6] On March 7, 1850, the lion-like Daniel presented his address. "The one absorbing theme of our Eastern exchanges," wrote King, "has been Mr. Webster's great speech." It had given rise to all sorts of comments, and was evidently destined to make a deep impression upon the public mind, and to exert no inconsiderable influence in the adjustment of the questions at issue between the North and the South.[7] As may be expected, Editor King bestowed most of his praise on the address of his old friend Seward. "No speech of the session, in our judgement, exceeds it in ability, or will make a deeper impression upon the public mind." King considered Seward's speech a noble effort. It was the theme of universal comment, in the Eastern press, and however men differed as to the doctrines laid down and the sentiments expressed, none could deny its strength

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[6] Ibid., March 19, 1850

[7] Ibid., March 21, 1850.

of arguments, its felicity of language and of its illustrations, its glowing patriotism, or its far reaching philanthropy.[8]

By the spring of 1850, the Sentinel began to ardently oppose the compromise measures. Henry Clay headed a committee to consider the measures. The Sentinel feared Mr. Clay's alarm for the Union and believed he would be willing to yield too much for peace. It did not believe that Mr. Webster would unite in any report contrary to his opinions expressed March 7. However, all of the Southern members of the committee favored the compromise. What they proposed was not a compromise, unless the word had lost its ancient meaning. Editor King could perceive nothing proposed for the North, to which the North had not a clear and undoubted right; but he could see a number of propositions for the South, which were contrary to reason and justice.[9] The Sentinel expressly opposed the pending Fugitive Slave Bill. "The passage of any law," wrote the editor, "would be disgraceful to the Senate." King was certain that the carrying out of its provisions would be completely impractical. He was very certain that the world was not going backwards, and that, while Turks and Tripolitans were knocking off the fetters of their slaves, the United States was not in the mind to rivet them stronger. King believed in the sanctity of the writ of Habeas Corpus

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[8] Ibid., March 27, 1850.

[9] Ibid., April 23, 1850.

and the right of trial by Jury, but this law violated both.[10] "It seems to be settled now," stated King, "that the Committee will agree upon one bill, or several bills." Suppose that they agreed upon such an arrangement, and by the strength of numbers carried it through the Senate? Suppose that a bill, or bills of such nature could be passed in the House--would any good be done? Would the agitation cease? Would not the voice of the people speak out the louder, after the passage of such acts?[11] The Sentinel's editor disliked the business that was called "compromising." Let the question be submitted to the Supreme Court. King detested the system of log-rolling by which the North was to be badgered into yielding matters of principle. Difficulties had arisen from the failure of Congress to act promptly upon the President's suggestion. King believed that plan commended itself to the good sense of both sections of the country, and should have been sustained.[12]

The Sentinel continued its harassment over the compromise plan. Repetitiously the Sentinel reminded the people the North would not obtain anything by the plan. Editor King constantly urged the adoption of the President's plan as the only practical and satisfactory solution to the vexing problems.[13] Editor King rejoiced greatly when New Mexico adopted a non-slavery

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[10] Ibid., April 30, 1850.

[11] Ibid., May 4, 1850.

[12] Ibid., May 10, 1850.

[13] Ibid., May 18, May 20 and June 5, 1850.

Constitution. "It puts a 'spoke' in the wheel of the 'Omnibus' which will," wrote King, "effectually arrest the further progress of that clumsy vehicle." It knocked the Compromise into a "cocked hat." The people had settled in a month what had puzzled the wisdom and baffled the efforts of Congress for six months.[14] The Sentinel quickly pointed out that if the Compromise failed the Union would not be dissolved, nor the country require a great deal of effort to keep it quiet. California had a right to be admitted into the Union; New Mexico and Utah were entitled to like treatment. The Texas boundary was a fair question for the Supreme Court to settle. Slavery and the slave trade in the District of Columbia was likewise susceptible to prompt and easy cure. All parties were agreed as to the propriety of abolishing the latter there, and the former would speedily follow. Such would be the issue, if the Omnibus Bill should be rejected --an infinitely "better result" than the passage of that log-rolling, treasure swindling measure.[15]

The Sentinel had its wish. The Omnibus Bill met defeat and Editor King gleefully reported the result to Milwaukeans.[16] With the passage of the advocated measuresindividually, the Sentinel considered the compromise finally settled. "Neither party has been completely successful," wrote King, "though the better tactics, and closer union of the southern members has made

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[14] Ibid., June 28, 1850.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Ibid., August 6, 1850.

an approach to success." If they had succeeded in dragooning the North into a relinquishment of the proviso, it was with the perfect assurance that slavery could never extend to those territories. If they had succeeded in obtaining the passage of the odious Fugitive Slave Bill, it was with the knowledge that its most odious features could never be enforced. Freedom had certainly gained something on the Pacific Coast, and much near the Capitol.[17] However, in spite of its general feeling of elation and success, the Sentinel continued to criticize the Fugitive Slave Bill. King entertained no doubt that this law would bring about a "Reaction." If the South had possessed common sense, they never would have proposed or passed any such obnoxious measure. Instead of allaying, it would stimulate agitation. The Free States could not and would not submit, without further struggle, to the enforcement of the Fugitive Slave law.[18] The Sentinel voiced other objections to the law. It furnished no security for, or rather put in jeopardy, the liberty of freemen; for that the law was abominated, and the Sentinel planned to use all legal and constitutional means to effect the repeal of its unjust provisions. To do otherwise would be unjust to the nation and to mankind.[19] Editor King insisted that American citizens had the right to discuss and strive to amend or repeal any or all laws which did not suit them. And,

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[17] Ibid., September 26, 1850.

[18] Ibid., October 16, 1850.

[19] Ibid., November 11, 1850.

what was there in the Fugitive Slave law that excluded it from the scope of that declaration? Hence, the Sentinel held that each, or all, of those laws were open to the action of the people, whenever they thought that they needed modification. Meantime, the people acquiesced. The law was a law of the land--King supposed it to be constitutional, and therefore had to reluctantly obey it.[20]

During the period under discussion, the Sentinel eulogized the passing of three great Americans. President Zachary Taylor was the first to meet the grim reaper. According to the Sentinel his death was "a National Calamity." In General Taylor's death the Whigs lost a favorite leader, the country a faithful servant and soldier, the Republic a Patriot President.[21] While lamenting Taylor's death the Sentinel hailed his successor, Millard Fillmore, as "a man who will pursue such a course as, in his best judgement, matured by a long experience in public affairs, will conduce to the lasting welfare of the whole country." Mr. Fillmore had called to his aid a cabinet which, for intellect, and patriotism, and statesmanship, had not been equaled through many Administrations. King did not doubt that the country was safe with him and them.[22] The Sentinel also reported the passing of Henry Clay to Milwaukeans. Editor King wrote that Clay's

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[20] Ibid., August 21, 1851.

[21] Ibid., July 11, 1850.

[22] Ibid., July 26, 1850.

name was now historic--the grand old patriot who had borne it, had gone to take his place among those who, in the ages of the past had served their country, and honored humanity.[23] The Sentinel noted the death of Daniel Webster with these words: "Mr. Webster outlived the prejudices of political opponents, and descends into the grave amidst the unaffected regrets of a whole People."[24]

As may be expected, the Sentinel became extremely vociferous about the coming presidential canvass of 1852.[25] The election assumed extreme importance, for it would serve as a popular mandate on the Compromise of 1850. Editor King realized that the election of a Democrat would signify a referendum in favor of the compromise and end the immediate agitation over slavery in the Territories. Strongly opposed to this compromise solution, King began to attack prospective Democratic candidates. The first to fall under the Sentinel's enmity was James Buchanan. King criticized Buchanan for desiring to divide California on the Missouri Compromise line. "Are they ready to give up more free territory to the tender mercies of Slavery--to doughface again, and while calling upon the North to maintain the Compromise intact, to allow the South to violate it--and help them do it?"[26] The Sentinel

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[23] Ibid., June 30, 1852.

[24] Ibid., October 26, 1852.

[25] Rufus King and Company was founded with W. H. Watson and John S. Fillmore. The company took over ownership of the paper and it was officially named the Milwaukee Sentinel--Ibid., October 13, 1851.

[26] Ibid., October 28, 1851.

criticized Douglas as desiring more sugar states and Cass as a man willing to do anything to get another nomination.[27]

After the members attending the Democratic Convention chose Franklin J. Pierce as their nominee, the Sentinel stated: "This is a finishing blow to General Cass, Mr. Buchanan and Governor Marcy, and a repetition of the experiment, successfully tried in 1844, of nominating a man, in no respect prominent, or peculiarly qualified." General Pierce was called a man of moderate abilities, fair character, and limited experience. His chief claim to distinction rested upon the part he played in the Mexican War, and it was belief in his "availability" which prompted his nomination.[28] Editor King also criticized Pierce for his apparent hostility to such Western interests as roads, rivers and harbors.[29] The Sentinel ridiculed the attempts of the Democratic organs asserting Pierce as a war hero and legislator unequalled. Suggesting the people consult the record, Editor King pointed out "that General Pierce acted his part in the Mexican war...with about the same bravery as did thousands of others, but from various accidents and illnesses, did not distinguish himself much in actual battle." The Sentinel regarded his legislative record as even less inspiring. It was "limited to an eloquent speech against giving a pension to the widow of the lamented General Harrison, and to the most strenuous and most perservering opposition to

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[27] Ibid.

[28] Ibid., June 7, 1852.

[29] Ibid., July 17, 1852.

all appropriations for Western Harbors, Rivers, Lighthouses, and Fortifications."[30] The Sentinel hailed the "Democracy" of Virginia for discovering Pierce was presidential timber. "It would be quite a triumph for the South," wrote King. "to elect a President who, during his brief Congressional career, was chiefly distinguished by being 'as invariably true to Southern Rights as Mr. Calhoun himself....'"[31]

Editor King also dragged the British "red herring" across his pages. According to him, the London Times and Manchester Examiner favored the election of Pierce. King claimed the election of Pierce would aid British manufacturers at the expense of American interests.[32] The Sentinel advised Westerners to remember 1844 when they voted for Polk on trust. Now they were again asked to accept an unknown on trust. If desiring another Polk Administration, the Sentinel advised them to vote for Pierce.[33] Editor King pounced upon the Democratic slogan that Pierce 'knows no North, no South, no East, no West' and agreed that it contained "three and a half truths." The North, and East, and West greatly needed a tariff. General Pierce was alike opposed to them all. Then again, the great mass of the patriots of the North, East, and West wished to see the great inland highways made safe for navigation, and the

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[30] Ibid., July 28, 1852.

[31] Ibid., August 11, 1852.

[32] Ibid., August 12, 1852

[33] Ibid., August 16, 1852

harbors made secure. General Pierce 'knows no North, no East, no West.' Now, as to the South, there was a South, under gallant Whig leaders. General Pierce did not know that South. There was yet another South, which bullied and swaggered and threatened to dissolve the Union. This South General Pierce knew. Truly, General Pierce knew no North, South, East or West to any good purpose. None of them, with any self-respect, could know him in November.[34]

Editor King procrastinated somewhat in swinging the Sentinel's support to any particular Whig candidate for the election of 1852. Perhaps he had not as yet been given his cue from the New York triumvirate of Weed, Seward and Greeley, or perhaps he had not yet made up his mind. At any rate, the Sentinel tempered its readers with the warning that: "It is rather too early yet to move in the Presidential canvass." However, when the proper time comes, if General Scott's name should be the watchword, it would kindle an enthusiasm only equaled by that of his gallant soldiers in the fields which he always won, and people would hasten to do honor to one who was not only the first soldier of the age, but in every respect a true American.[35] However, whatever the reason for his procrastination and temperance, it quickly disappeared. The Sentinel fervently began to support Scott. "Old 'Lundy's Lane,' with his honors thick about him--his services of 40

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[34] Ibid., October 15, 1852.

[35] Ibid., January 8, 1851.

years accumulation remembered by the people--is to be the Whig candidate, beyond a contingency." King advised Democrats to settle up the quarrel between Douglas, Marcy, Butler, Buchanan, Cass, Houston, etc., etc.--between the old Fogies and Young America--and prepare for a beating.[36] In follow-up editorials after Scott's nomination, the Sentinel emphasized such relatively inconsequential points as: "He never lost a battle--his very name is a presage of victory...."[37] The Sentinel vigorously championed Scott against the charges of unqualification hurled by Democratic opponents. King pointed out that at the age of twenty-eight, President Madison invited Scott to assume a cabinet seat. President Jackson chose Scott to lead our forces in the Black Hawk War and in the threatened Nullification crisis. President Van Buren selected Scott to remove the Cherokees, restrain the fire-eaters on the Canadian border and preserve peace between the United States and Great Britain on the North-East Boundary crisis. President Polk entrusted him with the Mexican War forces. The Sentinel also considered Scott's civil qualifications adequate. "We are quite content to submit to the American People...the disinterested judgement of Presidents Madison, Jackson, Van Buren and Polk."[38]

King urged Westerners to support the Whig candidates. The Sentinel claimed the Democratic Party ignored their interests

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[36] Ibid., April 30, 1852.

[37] Ibid., June 22, 1852.

[38] Ibid., July 15, 1852

and asked if it was not time to "discriminate between...Friends and...enemies?"[39] Editor King believed "that, by an earnest effort, our states can be carried for Scott." There was no reason to suppose that the Hunker vote would receive any increase from the Free Soil side, but there was a reasonable prospect of a large increase of the Whig vote from those who voted for Van Buren in 1848. There could be no enthusiasm got up for the 'Democratic' candidate, and there was none aroused by the mention of his name or services. Add to these, the fact that the people had been aroused to the necessity of encouragement to home industry, that the general sentiment was in favor of justice to Western lake and river commerce, and the story was told.[40] The Sentinel freely predicted victory for Scott. "The signs of the time...point unmistakeably to the success of the gallant Old Chieftain." The popular tide had set strongly and perceptibly in his favor, and it would "know no ebb" till it should have borne his bark in triumph to the Capitol.[41] To wind up his election comment, Editor King contrasted the rival candidates. The Sentinel proclaimed Scott as a man tried for forty-five years in public service and never found wanting, a man faithful to every trust in peace and war and a man equal to every emergency. On the other hand, King characterized Pierce as a man of moderate capacity, narrow views, brief public experience and undistinguished service. The Sentinel claimed that on the important

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[39] Ibid., July 10, 1852.

[40] Ibid., July 16, 1852

[41] Ibid., October 13, 1852.

questions of the day, such as slavery, internal improvements and the tariff, Scott occupied the right and Pierce the wrong side. "Bearing these in mind, how is it possible for any Western Man, for any true-hearted American, to hesitate.... How refuse to sustain Scott?"[42]

In spite of Editor King's ardent support of Scott, Franklin Pierce became the fourteenth President of the United States. The Sentinel, however, continued to caution the people about what to expect from the new President. The Sentinel predicted that a free trade policy would be adopted, that internal improvement bills would be vetoed and that there would be a war for Cuba or other foreign territory. Hardly in the traditional spirit of a good loser, the Sentinel regarded the triumph of its opponents as the triumph of every bad spirit and every bad tendency, over their opposites. It feared for the future. But the Sentinel had done what it could to prevent this. It would now stand where it had always stood, striving for the best and would lose no jot of hope that the right would yet win.[43]

Turning to the Whig side of things, the Sentinel did not believe the party annihilated by the defeat of 1852. Editor King pointed out that the party had been defeated before and gotten over it. "We were beaten in 1844," wrote the chagrined editor, "but we were victorious again in 1848." The people had chosen to make a fair trial of Locofocoism, not only in the general Government, but also in most of the State Governments. He was

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[42] Ibid., October 26, 1852.

[43] Ibid., November 6, 1852.

glad that the Whig's defeat had been thorough. King did not wish to give the party which was to rule for the next four years the opportunity of saying "we would have done differently if the Whigs had allowed us." The country had work for the Whigs to do yet. They could afford to wait for the next opportunity to do their country service. Time would allay the bickerings in their ranks, and purify the party of sundry elements. All the Whigs had to do was to wait patiently.[44]

During the period under discussion, Mr. King made one final effort to achieve local political success. In 1850, he again headed the Whig city ticket in the race for Mayor, but once more met defeat.[45]

These, then, were the dominant issues of the nation and the Milwaukee Sentinel between 1850-1853. The Democratic process had not as yet broken down. The relatively mute majority was still able to control the vociferous minority. This majority had discovered and proposed a solution to the territorial controversy. This solution, termed the Compromise of 1850, found ardent support among the Democrats of the North and South. On the other hand, the Milwaukee Sentinel

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[44] Ibid., November 24, 1852.

[45] King finished second in a three horse race. His opponents were A. J. Upham, running for re-election on the Democratic ticket and John B. Smith, the candidate of the Law and Order Party. The final tabulation was Upham 1,981, King 556 and Smith 385. Howard L. Conrad, ed., History of Milwaukee (3 vols., Chicago, 1895), I, 83.

and other Northern Whigs vehemently opposed it. However, in spite of this opposition, the Compromise passed. Not satisfied with mere legislative action, both parties sought a mandate from the people and turned hopefully to the election of 1852. The Democrats and their candidate, Franklin Pierce, unequivocably supported the Compromise. The Whigs and Winfield Scott supported the Compromise with reservations. Thus, the issue before the people seemed to be Pierce and Compromise or Scott and uncertainty. The Electorate did not procrastinate. Pierce and Compromise sustained an overwhelming victory. Moderation had, for a time, won out. The moderates of both the North and South passed the Compromise of 1850 and sustained it by their election of Pierce in 1852. They temporarily managed to avert Civil War and wistfully believed they had succeeded in settling the differences between the North and the South.

Chapter V

The Sentinel and the House Dividing, 1854-1861

For a time, immediately after the passage of the Compromise of 1850, the moderate temper of the nation continued. The apparent success of the Compromise, coupled with an increased prosperity, turned the people's attention to other issues than slavery. The politicians of both parties astutely aided this apparent lack of interest by speaking of slavery as a dead issue and excluding it from party platforms. Everyone agreed to let sleeping dogs lay. Abolition seemed to become a dirty word and the abolitionist crusade seemed to be relegated to limbo.

However, once again abolition refused to die. The publication of Uncle Tom's Cabin in 1852 opened the gates of limbo and gave new impetus to the abolitionists. The passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act in 1854 re-opened the territorial agitation over slavery extension. The moderates lost their grip on the nation's pulse. The sleeping dog awoke, snarling, and pied-piper-like began to again lead the nation down the road toward Civil War.

The portentous Kansas-Nebraska Act, sponsored by Senator Stephen A. Douglas of Illinois, proposed the creation of two new territories under the old Cass doctrine of "popular sovereignty." Once again the delicate status quo of the nation, maintained by the Compromise of 1850, was in jeopardy. Once again

the slave powers had an opportunity for further encroachment. Immediately the country divided into divergent battlecamps. On one side were the North and West aligned en masse against the proposed legislation, while on the other side the South supported it to a man. The initial mention of this impending crisis appeared in the Milwaukee Sentinel of February 6, 1854. After informing his readers of the increased excitement over the proposed act and the fact that Rhode Island and New York City had already declared against it, Editor King urged everyone to act quickly to prevent the contemplated wrong.[1] Following editorials pointed out that if this act passed there was "nothing to prevent Slavery, instead of Freedom, from becoming the badge of our Republic."[2] The people were cautioned that in spite of their wishes the contemplated act would probably pass because of executive pressure.[3] The Sentinel reminded President Pierce of his campaign promise that there would be no more agitation over slavery, and it chastised him for using the power of his Administration against the wishes of the people.[4] When the news reached Milwaukee that the Kansas-Nebraska Act had passed, the Sentinel noted: "...the iniquity has been consummated." The North was again betrayed by threats and promises, unblushing bribery and corruption, the personal solicitations of the President, and the

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[1] Milwaukee Sentinel, February 6, 1854.

[2] Ibid., February 8, 1854.

[3] Ibid., May 15, 1854.

[4] Ibid., May 19, 1854.

unwarranted use of his power. Slavery had again won a victory over freedom. If there were a spark of manhood left, it was the last victory which the slave powers would win. All through the North, the shout would go up for repeal-- not only of this law, but of all laws favoring slavery at the expense of freedom.[5]

In the ensuing struggle which followed the clarion call, the Sentinel was found in the forefront of the anti-Kansas-Nebraska Bill vanguard. Editor King's editorials continued to blame the Democrats for the re-opening of the slavery agitation. He considered the Kansas-Nebraska Act another victory in a long series of triumphs for slavery.[6] The Sentinel predicted that the next move to build up the slave power would be the purchase of a belt of land from Santa Anna, and then the conquest of Cuba would follow.[7] The Sentinel ridiculed the idea that Kansas and Nebraska were to have "popular sovereighty." King pointed out that the new territories were to be ruled by officers appointed by the President. All acts of the territorial legislatures were subject to the veto of the governor and to the revision of Congress. The legislatures could not prohibit slavery within their borders.[8]

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[5] Ibid., May 24, 1854.

[6] Ibid., May 31, June 5, 1854.

[7] Ibid., June 7, 1854.

[8] Ibid., June 9, 1854.

Throughout the years, with the gradual development of "Bloody Kansas," the Sentinel kept its readers abreast of the happenings in the disputed territory. Editor King reported on the sham election to select a Congressional delegate. He told the Milwaukee public that men imported from Missouri brought about the election of a pro-slavery delegate and it did not reflect the real will of the people.[9] Free state men were urged to join together or else Kansas would become another slave state.[10] The Sentinel accused Senator David R. Atchison of instigating the violence, bloodshed, and fraudulent elections in Kansas.[11] Editor King believed that the Kansas agitation would lead to Civil War if unchecked. "Unless Providence interfere," he editorialized, "we are on the brink of civil war." He wrote that the cloud had long been gathering. Reckless politicians who were scheming aspirants for the Presidency and traitorous demagogoues led a motly host to do the bidding of the pro-slavery powers. Under the specious plea of "squatter sovereignty," the men of the North went as peaceable men without weapons. At their very first election, organized bands of armed men from Missouri had come and overwhelmed the settlers. The Governor first appointed was indignant, but then President Pierce promptly removed Reeder and appointed Wilson Shannon, a supple tool of the slavery propagandists. Pierce thus encouraged the border ruffians to

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[9] Ibid., December 29, 1854.

[10] Ibid., January 5, 1855.

[11] Ibid., April 19, 1855.

redouble their outrages, and to move in armed bands upon devoted Kansas.[12]

Beginning in 1856, the Sentinel, if possible, increased its interest in Kansas affairs. This increased interest derived from the fact that a former employee and personal friend of Editor King now resided in the Territory. This friend, Edmund G. Ross, edited the (Topeka) Kansas Tribune and kept the Sentinel informed on Kansas events.[13] The year 1856 also found Editor King accusing President Pierce of attempting to win Southern support for re-nomination by enforcing the laws of the fraudently elected Kansas Legislature.[14] The Sentinel also chastised Pierce for using government troops to disperse the Free State Legislature at Topeka. "If we could be surprised at any extreme of outrage, or tyranny, from the present Border Ruffian Administration," he wrote, "this last high-handed act might well astound us." But, he added, it was only following out the programs marked out at the first inception of the Kansas-Nebraska iniquity. It was but part and parcel of the game to force slavery into Kansas at all hazards and in violation of every law, human or divine.[15] He brazenly blamed the civil war in Kansas upon the infamous conduct

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[12] Ibid., December 17, 1855.

[13] Edmund G. Ross was a former foreman in the Sentinel office. He was a participant in the Glover riot of 1855, but his niche in history is as Senator Ross who cast the important anti-conviction vote at the trial of Andrew Johnson. Ibid., December 31, 1856.

[14] Ibid., May 3, 1856.

[15] Ibid., July 10, 1856.

of Pierce, Atchison and their democratic supporters. "The Free State settlers," he added, "goaded to desperation, having suffered outrages innumerable, have taken up arms in earnest." The free state men were in the right, and their brethren in the North would not see them murdered, without moving to help them![16] Toward the latter part of the year the Sentinel began to see a glimmer of hope that Kansas would yet be free. Editor King believed that the determined position taken by the free states, combined with the salutary fear of utter defeat forced the Administration to change its course toward Kansas and to make a show of firmness. Large numbers of the men mustered in the far South, who went in armed bands to Kansas had left. There was thus a hope that Kansas would come out at last from her trials, uncursed by slavery.[17]

Editor King kept the Kansas controversy before the public. When the incumbent governor of the Territory, John W. Geary, resigned from office in 1857 the Sentinel pointed out that in spite of his subservience to the Slave Power, he narrowly escaped assassination for not yielding them everything. After his resignation, the Sentinel believed nothing could save Kansas from slavery.[18] According to Editor King, conditions in Kansas remained unchanged under the new governor,

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[16] Ibid., June 11, 1856.

[17] Ibid., November 20, 1856.

[18] Ibid., March 21, 1857

Robert J. Walker. The Sentinel criticized Governor Walker as an agent of President Buchanan and King was especially adamant about the troop movement on Lawrence.[19] King believed the appointment of Walker revived the hopes of the slavery group. By securing the election of a pro-slavery constitutional convention backed by a Democratic Congress and President at Washington, there seemed little hope for Kansas.[20]

In spite of the agitation over Kansas, the Sentinel did find some things to rejoice about in connection with that Territory. When the people of Kansas elected a Republican majority in both branches of the Territorial Legislature, and also a delegate of the same party to Congress, the Sentinel hailed the election as the triumph of the ballot over the bayonet. Editor King saw this election as indication that the people of Kansas had proclaimed that slavery did not and should not exist in Kansas.[21] Walker's removal was another cause for rejoicing. The Sentinel treated Walker's removal somewhat facetiously. "The Administration," King wrote satirically, "is understood to be about to offer a large reward for a Governor for Kansas." He called attention to the fact that it had tried four in succession, yet the Territory was not subdued. First came Reeder, but he could not stand Border Ruffianism. Then came Shannon, who was

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[19] Ibid., July 25, 1857.

[20] Ibid., August 22, 1857.

[21] Ibid., October 13, 1857.

willing enough, but drink was his downfall. Next followed Geary, and he made the country ring with his exposure. Last came Walker, who was willing to play into the hands of the pro-slavery party. Walker played a pro-Southern game until compelled to a show of fairness. Now Walker must be sacrificed for duty. Another Governor wanted? He must be like wax! Who wants the office? Who was ready to barter his soul, his peace of mind, his conscience, and his good name for the sake of a brief occupancy of the gubernatorial chair of Kansas?[22]

By 1858 the Kansas controversy reached new heights. A fraudently elected constitutional convention in 1857 had framed the pro-slavery Lecompton Constitution. However, the convention feared to submit this constitution to the citizens for a vote. Instead, the people of Kansas were merely allowed to vote for, or against, the further introduction of slaves. Indignant anti-slavery men refused to vote and the pro-slavery Lecompton Constitution passed. In the fall, an anti-slavery Republican Legislature re-submitted the constitution and the people rejected it. This resulted in the removal of Walker by Buchanan, who decided that Congress should admit Kansas under the pro-slavery, discredited Lecompton Constitution. This, as may be expected, angered the Sentinel and even alienated Senator Stephen A. Douglas, the originator of the act. The Sentinel, strangely, found itself supporting the popular sovereignty plea of Douglas!

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[22] Ibid., December 2, 1857.

Charged by rival newspapers with a 'change-of-heart,' the Sentinel replied it had long opposed slavery and polygamy in the Territories and that, if they had been prohibited, civil war would not be "raging in Kansas and Utah." Editor King maintained that while new territories were under the control of Congress, they should emply with the wishes of Congress, but when ready for statehood the people should decide their own law. Because Senator Douglas upheld this view, the Sentinel allied itself with him.[23] The Sentinel accused President Buchanan of using the power of his Administration to force the Lecompton Constitution through Congress. To the Sentinel it seemed inconceivable "that a great political party, claiming to be the exclusive friend of Popular Rights...Should deliberately commit itself to such a crusade." It seemed incredible that the President himself should lead off in the desperate movement, and compel all true men, by their allegiance to the party, to follow after. The people's servants were converted into the President's serfs by the wand of Federal patronage. Thanks to the efforts of these "serfs," the Lecompton swindle was to be forced through Congress, and fastened upon the necks of the people of Kansas.[24] Other editorials criticized Lecompton as "the very embodiment of fraud and villainy." Yet the Administration continued to defy public sentiment. Contemptuous of the people's will, it flagrantly violated all

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[23] Ibid., January 6, 1858

[24] Ibid., February 8, 1858.

all "Democratic" precedents and principles; it had disregarded the threat of civil war and wickedly persisted in its unholy crusade against freedom.[25]

The Anti-Lecompton forces led by Senator Douglas, the Milwaukee Sentinel, and various other Northern newspapers were strong enough to carry the day. They forced the Administration to capitulate, and a compromise measure known as the English Bill passed Congress. Under its provisions the people of Kansas would again vote on the controversial Lecompton Constitution. If they accepted it, Kansas would immediately attain statehood; if the Constitution were refused, statehood would be denied until the population reached the number needed for a congressional representative. The Sentinel did not worry over this new sop thrown to the people of Kansas to entice them into accepting slavery. "Nobody can doubt," editorialized King, "but that the people of Kansas will most emphatically reject the base offer to barter the right to adopt their own constitution for any pecuniary consideration." They had shown themselves ready to sacrifice all, and they would not countenance the most disgraceful attempt to fasten the withering curse of slavery upon their virgin soil. Yet the slave powers were in hopes that, though Kansas rejected the offer, they would be able, during the time she was kept out of the Union, to introduce slavery into the Territory. But Pierce and his Southern friends were mistaken,

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[25] Ibid., April 16, 1858

and a slave constitution could never be imposed on Kansas, while there lived afree state man.[26] Editor King blamed President Buchanan for the English Bill. "This is the fair equal settlement of the Kansas question which Mr. Buchanan has accomplished..." he noted. "This is the handiwork of the party," he added, "which boasts that it is national, not sectional, and that it holds the scales between North and South with steady and impartial hand."[27] The Sentinel had its way. The people of Kansas rejected the English Bill and, after nearly five years of agitation, the Kansas problem dropped out of the national spotlight.

In the wake of the struggle over the Kansas-Nebraska Act, the Sentinel found cause to switch its political allegiance from Whig to Republican. The exact deriviations of the Republican Party are a matter of conjecture, but opposition to the Kansas-Nebraska Act served as a cement to bind dissidents together. At any rate, by late 1854, Editor King urged all who upheld the Republican Platform and who were opposed to the Pierce Administration and the "Nebraska Iniquity," to give their undivided support "to the regular nominated Candidates of the Republican Party...."[28] The Sentinel considered Republicanism the result of the long growing

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[26] Ibid., May 14, 1858

[27] Ibid., May 18, 1858.

[28] Ibid., October 30, 1855.

and deep seated conviction that a period had to be placed to the growth of slavery. All citizens were invited to join the crusade whether of native or foreign birth.[29] According to Editor King, the dividing line between the Republican and Democratic parties could easily be discerned. The Democrats advocated nationalizing slavery, while the Republicans wanted slavery kept sectional. The former considered slavery the rule, and administered the government for its benefit; while the latter considered slavery the exception, and wanted government for the maintenance of freedom.[30]

The year 1856 found the Sentinel hailing the election of Nathaniel P. Banks of Massachusetts as Speaker of the House. According to Editor King, his election marked the first national triumph achieved by the Republican Party. "It is," wrote the editor, "the first time, in many, very many years, that the North has stood up manfully for Right and Freedom; and the first time...the South has been defeated in its grasp for more power...." Northern backbone had at last been developed, in sufficient quantities to stay the tide of Southern agression.[31] The Sentinel also turned its attention to the impending Presidential canvass in this year. Editor King heralded the nomination of John C. Fremont as the Republican candidate. "No man living has...more than Fremont,"

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[29] Ibid., August 13, 1855.

[30] Ibid., October 17, 1855.

[31] Ibid., February 5, 1856.

he stated, "exhibited that power over the minds of men, and those features of heroism, and sacrifice, coolness in danger, endurance in suffering, unsullied ambition, and purity of personal character, which mark the man for great emergencies...." John C. Fremont was the man for the times![32] The Sentinel hailed the Republican Platform as one upon which all could stand, shoulder to shoulder, "in defense of Freedom," and to repel "the assaults of the Slavery Extensionists and the enemies of Free Speech."[33] Editor King further stated that the Republican Party know neither Whig nor Democrat, Know-Nothing nor Abolitionist. It was based upon a principle and it invited the co-operation of all liberty-loving men, without regard to their past connection. There was but one issue before the American people. The question was: "Freedom or Slavery," and free territories or slave territories. Fremont stood forth as the representative of freedom, whereas Buchanan was the representative of slavery. If Buchanan were elected, we would have an Administration of equal baseness and subserviency to the Southern oligarchy as that of Pierce. But if Fremont were elected, the country would rejoice in a President who would be true to the highest interests of the Republic. Who, while protecting the South, would allow no invasion of Northern rights.[34] King emphasized that the election of Fremont would save Kansas for

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[32] Ibid., June 20, 1856.

[33] Ibid., June 21, 1856.

[34] Ibid., September 20, 1856.

freedom. The Sentinel condemned the Pierce Administration and pointed out that candidate Buchanan occupied exactly the same platform as Pierce. Therefore, if elected, his Administration would be a second edition of the Pierce dynasty.[35]

Throughout this period, the strong support for Republicans and Republican policies typically contrasted the usual biting criticism of everything Democratic. The Sentinel criticized the Pierce Administration for violating a national compact, robbing the Treasury for the Gadsden Purchase, failing to build a continental railroad, and not getting the Homestead Bill passed.[36] The people were warned about Democratic pretensions to Cuba. King cited the Ostend Manifesto as the new principle of Democratic orthodoxy.[37] The Sentinel took President Pierce to task for fulfilling the Democratic campaign pledges of 1852. River and harbor bills were vetoed, millions spent for slavery extension, the power of the Federal Government used to uphold the Fugitive Slave Act, and executive patronage used to try to force slavery upon Kansas and Nebraska. All of these were objectionable to the Sentinel and its editor.[38] King continued to vehemently criticize the Pierce Administration for its stand on slavery. "The whole power and patronage of the General Government, under

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[35] Ibid., October 18, 1856.

[36] Ibid., August 23, 1854.

[37] Ibid., March 15, 1855.

[38] Ibid., September 11, 1855.

the Pierce rule," wrote King, "has been used to the benefit and advantage of the South...." The Administration had not only repealed the Missouri Compromise, but aided the "Border Ruffians" in their Kansas crusade. Kansas had been invaded, Lawrence had been cannonaded, sacked, and pillaged; all this was done with the co-operation and under the direction of the United States Government.[39]

Prior to the Democratic nominating convention of 1856, the Sentinel began to attack James Buchanan as the most likely nominee. Editor King criticized Buchanan and the Democrats for desiring to maintain the status quo in regard to slavery.[40] Following the nomination of Buchanan, the Sentinel became more vituperative. According to Editor King, the entire South began uniting for Buchanan. He would receive their entire electoral vote and in turn would aid slavery extension and other Southern interests.[41] Democrats were accused of shirking the real issue of the campaign. All they were supposed to be interested in were personal attacks on the Republican candidate Fremont.[42] The records and philosophy of the two candidates were contrasted. "Mr. Buchanan," stated an editorial, 'is the candidate of the Slavery-extension party, the party which repealed the Missouri Compromise ...and laid open Kansas...."This same party had aided,

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[39] Ibid., May 31, 1856.

[40] Ibid., April 30, 1856.

[41] Ibid., August 21, 1856.

[42] Ibid., September 11, 1856.

abetted, and defended the Kansas murders, had upheld Franklin Pierce, extended slavery, degraded free labor, and made the Republic reproachable throughout the civilized world. John C. Frémont was the candidate of the party that upheld the theory that freedom was national and slavery sectional. This party opposed and denounced the Kansas-Nebraska Act and clung to the Constitution and Union.[43]

However, in spite of the Sentinel's support of Frémont, James Buchanan became President. The aftermath of the election found Editor King offering a variety of excuses for Frémont's defeat. "There were obstacles," the editor explained, "such as have never beset a party before." He noted that the Republican party was but two years old and that it coenstantly had to contend with old prejudices, arising from the fact that the party was composed of elements drawn from all parties. King claimed that Frémont had an army of a hundred thousand office-holders against him. He had the whole power of the slave oligarchy against him. He had the Know-Nothing organizations working against him. All these obstacles and many more were in his way. Indeed, it would have been strange if the Republican party had succeeded. "We are beaten," he wrote, "not conquered!"[44]

The Sentinel also found itself engaged in various judicial disputes during 1854-1861 era. Editor King criticized Judge John Kane of the United States District Court of

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[43] Ibid., October 21, 1856.

[44] Ibid., November 13, 1856.

Pennsylvania for his decision in the Passmore Williamson Case. According to this decision, slaves could be held in free as well as in the slave states. They were recognized as "property" by a U. S. Judge, and citizens might exercise the right of property where they pleased.[45] "There is nothing," King claimed, "in the annals of England which exceeds, and nothing in those of our own country which approaches, the outrageous tyranny of Judge Kane in the Passmore Williamson case." It seemed incredible that in a free and Christian land the abuse of authority by an unworthy judge could doom an innocent man to imprisonment. It seemed not less incredible that Judge Kane could deliberately justify his conduct on the ground that slavery had the right of transit through any and all parts of the Republic, and that slaveholders could bring their slaves with them into the free states. Liberty, thus, became a mockery if the judicial power of the Federal Government could be used to persecute, fine and imprison the opponents of slavery.[46]

A judicial dispute much more nationalistic in scope during this period revolved around the Dred Scott decision. Dred Scott, a Missouri Negro slave, sued a New Yorker named Sanford for his freedom. Since the suit involved citizens of different states, the case eventually found its way to the Supreme Court. The Court heard the case argued in the spring and winter of 1856-57. The case attracted wide attention and

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[45] Ibid., August 6, 1855.

[46] Ibid., October 22, 1855.

the entire nation awaited the decision. The final decision of the Court stated, in part, that slaves were not citizens; it abrogated the constitutionality of the Missouri Compromise, and it denied Scott his freedom.

The public outroar following the decision became exceptionally vociferous, expecially in the North. Almost immediately, most Northern newspapers condemned the Court and its decision. The Milwaukee Sentinel found itself among this group. "The late decision of the United States Supreme Court," according to Editor King, "packed with friends of the peculiar institution...is in direct conflict with...the leading legal minds of thirty years ago." Fortunately, the Northwest Ordinance had accomplished its holy work. Ohio, Michigan, Illinois, Indiana, Wisconsin, Iowa, and Minnesota were beyond the reach of slavery. Agitation over slavery would never cease until freedom was made national and slavery sectional. The infamous Dred Scott decision reversed this, and like the Kansas-Nebraska Bill, was but another victory for slavery propagandists.[47] The Sentinel attempted to lessen the impact of the Supreme Court's decision. "The decision of the United States Supreme Court, which is so much rejoiced over by the Slavery Propagadists," editorialized King, "is simply the opinions of several partizan members of that Court, travelling out of the record." It only showed the animus that governed the majority of the Court. Nothing except a

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[47] Ibid., March 14, 1857.

simple question of jurisdiction was decided. The majority of the Court had failed in their attempted nationalization of slavery, and localization of freedom.[48]

Another judicial slap taken by the Milwaukee Sentinel during this period involved Editor King in a movement for reorganization of the Supreme Court. "The notorious facts," wrote King, "that this Court, as at present organized, is not only partizan, but sectional in character that the South with little over one-third of the population...has a majority of the Judges; and that whenever any question comes before them, affecting...the 'peculiar institution,' law, precedent and right must yield to the interests of Slavery, have long since convinced the People of the Free States of the necessity of some such reform."[49]

Judicial affairs on the local scene also occupied the Sentinel during this period. Sherman Booth and John Rycraft, both of Milwaukee, were accused of violating the Fugitive Slave Act in the Glover incident. They were brought to trial. Editor King, as expected, completely sided with the defendants and reported in the Sentinel that justice went into hiding:

> The manner in which the trial has been conducted, has shocked the public sense of right, and outraged their love of fair play. The empannelling of the... juries was a mockery of justice, and if acquiesced in, establishes the right of the United States Officers...to pack a jury when ever it suits them. The leanings of the court, too, were evidently against the defendant; and mixed up with the professional zeal which animated the counsel for the prosecution, was more of personal vindictiveness...under the

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[48] Ibid., March 19, 1857.

[49] Ibid., March 2, 1858.

> Fugitive Slave Act...no other result was possible than a...conviction.... The law is a tyrannical one, and must be tyrannically enforced. It is a legitimate adjunct of the 'peculiar institution'...repugnant to every Northern sentiment and to every instinct of Humanity and Justice.... This law has been pronounced unconstitutional by the highest legal tribunal in our State. And yet...a citizen of this State must suffer fine and imprisonment under a law which a large majority of our People believe, and which our Supreme Court have pronounced unconstitutional .... The Fugitive Slave Law itself must be repealed. The Free North will not longer tolerate its infamous mockery of justice.[50]

Following their sentencing, Booth and Rycraft appealed the decision to the Wisconsin Supreme Court, and the state court overruled the Federal court. King immediately hailed the decision of the state court. Booth and Rycraft, by the fiat of the state court, were released from the fine and imprisonment to which the sentence of the Federal court had subjected them. "The great writ of Liberty has been sustained," wrote King. "The threatening surge of Slavery agression has been stayed." He claimed that the birth-right of Wisconsin had been nobly vindicated. Slavery, or involuntary servitude, except for crime, could not and would not be tolerated within her borders. Kidnapping found no favor with her Courts, no protection in her jails, and no countenance among her people. Wisconsin was and would remain a free state, would protect her own citizens, and would maintain and defend the writ of Habeas Corpus and right of trial by jury.[51]

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[50] Ibid., January 16, 1855.

[51] Ibid., February 6, 1855.

The Sentinel's acclamation, however, quickly palled. The Government again imprisoned Booth and held him in the Milwaukee Custom House. Editor King commented extensively on Booth's re-arrest and confinement. Booth's interment in a close room with iron barred windows and an armed guard was unnecessary. The fact that he was not allowed to communcate with friends and family was unforgivable. His not being allowed to read his old paper, the Free Democrat, was ridiculous. The Administration was only proving its lack of common sense by not freeing Booth. The Fugitive Slave Act, the cause of the imprisonment, had long ago been vindicated. The only possible motive for Booth's continued incarceration was personal and political spite.[52]

During this trying period in our nation's affairs, feelings were running high not only among newspapers, but even amidst congressmen. In the sedate halls of Congress, Representative Preston Brooks viciously attacked Senator Charles Sumner after his "Crime against Kansas" speech. As may be expected, the Sentinel vigorously condemned the action of Representative Brooks. "No doubt...there will be a prompt attempt made to stifle inquiry and prevent the summary punishment...such a dastardly and infamous outrage deserves," cried King. "But shall it succeed?" Could such things be done, with impunity, in the very Capitol of the Republic? Was "Border Ruffianism" to become the prevailing fashion,

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[52] Ibid., April 24, 1860.

at Washington, as in Kansas? Were Senators to be brutally assaulted and beaten almost to death, for "words spoken in debate?" Was freedom of speech to be suppressed under the very eaves of the Capitol? Was the law of force--the only law of slavery--to become the established rule of the land?[53] In another editorial, Editor King linked the Sumner-Brooks affair to "a long series of impudent and insolent conduct on the part of the more ultra Pro-Slavery men and their Northern doughface allies, towards the men of brilliant talents who have come into the arena of debate from Northern States." The editorial went on to praise Senator Sumner's great speech and recalled that his opponents were vanquished in debate and silent until the attack, after which they cheered.[54] The Sentinel termed the affair "genuine 'Border Ruffianism.'" It could be found in Missouri, or Kansas, and illustrated the striking manner, the temper and spirit of the pro-slavery propaganda. Liberty of speech was to be "crushed out" at Washington, by force of arms, lest the "peculiar institution" of the South suffer from the dissension which the Nebraska Institution had provoked. King's own idea was that if the House of Representatives would not expel Brooks, or the authorities at Washington send him to the penitentiary where he belonged, he should be treated like any

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[53] Ibid., May 24, 1856.

[54] Ibid., May 29, 1856.

other mad dog and shot at sight by the first man whom he snapped at.[55]

Still another congressional skirmish, a little closer to home for the Sentinel, involved Representative John F. Potter and Roger Pryor. Representative Pryor of Virginia challenged Representative Potter of Wisconsin to a duel. Being the challenged party, Mr. Potter, according to the code duello, had the privilege of choosing the weapons. Potter immediately chose "bowie" knives, at which point Pryor remembered a previous engagement. The Sentinel gleefully reported these facts to its readers and strongly applauded Potter's actions, defending him against all criticism. "The man who speaks of Mr. Potter as 'an uneducated, brutish fellow,' and who chants the praises of Mr. Pryor, as in all respects his superior," wrote King, "is a great fool, or a greater liar. Mr. Potter is a gentleman of high character... a man who knows his rights and will never flinch from asserting and maintaining them...." King claimed that Potter had proved himself a trump, crowding Mr. Pryor into the smallest corner that ever a representative of the "Chivalry" was forced to occupy. There was no provocation to challenge. It was the evident purpose of Mr. Pryor to fasten a quarrel upon him, expecting Potter to decline. Thus, Pryor could purchase a little more notoriety, and at a very cheap rate. But Pryor "woke up the wrong passenger" when he called out John F. Potter.[56] The Sentinel's editor defended the right of Mr.

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[55] Ibid., May 30, 1856.

[56] Ibid., April 18, 1860.

Potter to name the weapons. He selected one familiar to the chivalry. Instead of knowing that "it would be accepted by no gentleman," Potter had every reason to think that Mr. Pryor would promptly accede. Other Southern "gentlemen," quite as respectable as Mr. Pryor, have fought duels with "bowie knives," and why should not he, if so anxious for a fight? Mr. Potter had behaved with the coolness and courage of a gentleman, and his conduct met with the warmest approval among his constituents of all parties.[57]

The Sentinel continued its criticism of the Democrats after the election of 1856. Editor King stated that the Democratic party consisted of infidels, traitors, and enemies to the country. The Sentinel called particular attention to South Carolina, which had been disloyal to the Union, and faithless to the Constitution for over thirty years. There was the whole Mormon community of Utah, infidels and traitors. There was the criminal community at the "Five Points," New York, and each and all of them incontestably "Democratic."[58] Democrats were chided for not following the policies of Thomas Jefferson, who wished all men to be free. "Modern Democracy not only does what it can to rivet the fetters of the black, and perpetuate and extend the slavery of that race," wrote King, "but...dares to speak of enslaving white men."[59] The Democrats were especially chastised over Kansas. The Sentinel accused them of yielding to the Ultras of the South. King termed popular sovereignty the invention of Senator Douglas and other Northern doughfaces, in consultation

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[57] Ibid., April 19, 1860.
[58] Ibid., May 21, 1857.
[59] Ibid., August 13, 1857.

with the leaders of the Southern Democracy, with which they hoped to befool and befog the Northern people into a continuance in the ranks of the party.[60]

Editor King also found fault with the policies of President Buchanan. The Sentinel disagreed with the President's use of troops in Kansas.[61] President Buchanan had written a letter to some Connecticut clergymen explaining his Kansas policies. According to the Sentinel, this letter expressed the President's determination to enforce the bogus Missouri laws, justified the activities of the Border Ruffians, and introduced the doctrine that the Constitution carried slavery with it into all new Territory acquired by the Republic. "Thus at last," wrote the angry editor, "under the Dred Scott decision and Mr. Buchanan's official letter, Slavery is nationalized." It had overleaped the barriers erected by the founders of the Government and the framers of the Missouri Compromise, and had boldly invaded territory long since consecrated to freedom. With the aid and protection of the Federal Government, Slavery confidently hoped to make good its foothold on hitherto free soil.[62] "The most extreme of southern statesmen," Editor King added, "never contended for anything more." It conceded everything to them that the South had ever asked. The Supreme Court and the President had

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[60] Ibid., December 22, 1857.

[61] Ibid., September 8, 1857.

[62] Ibid., September 11, 1857.

united in the decree that slavery was national, that it existed of right, and was entitled to Federal protection. Anywhere our free flag waved and our free institutions extended, there slavery followed. Indeed, slavery had become the badge of our Republic.[63] The Sentinel ridiculed Buchanan as "a second Jackson." Enumerating the Administration's defeats, Editor King decided Buchanan had been tried and condemned by Congress and the country. Undoubtedly Mr. Buchanan had become satisfied of the fact, of which he was politely reminded by Senator Douglas a few weeks before, that General Jackson was dead.[64]

King hailed the impending split in Democratic ranks between the followers of Buchanan and Douglas. King rejoiced when Buchanan removed Senator Douglas from the chairmanship of the Committee on Territories. King believed Buchanan wanted to notify the Democratic party that Mr. Douglas was regarded at the White House and the Capitol as persona non grata. Mr. Douglas had insisted that Congress could not interfere with slavery in the Territories, but that the Territorial Legislature could. The Administration, the Supreme Court and Southern Democracy maintained that the Territorial Legislatures were wholly interdicted from meddling with the question of slavery, and that Congress not only could, but should, interfere. Mr. Douglas would no doubt carry with him a majority

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[63] Ibid., September 24, 1857.

[64] Ibid., April 10, 1858.

of the party at the North, but Mr. Buchanan would be sustained by the entire South.[65] During the ensuing year, the Sentinel noticed an attempt to conciliate the rival Democratic factions. "The Government organ," wrote King, "takes ground against 'Squatter Sovereignty' and 'Congressional Intervention,' but in favor of 'Popular Sovereignty' and 'Judicial Intervention.'" This was the nostrum which had been cooked up by the Government quacks to cure the ills of the Democratic party, and give them if possible, another lease of power and office. It aimed to be a compromise between the views of Mr. Douglas and those of Mr. Buchanan, but like all similar "compromises," leaned perceptibly toward the South. Congress might hesitate to pass laws for the encouragement and protection of slavery, but Judge Roger Taney and his Supreme Court would be prompt to do what Congress shrank from. Indeed, the Dred Scott decision had done it already.[66]

Democrats were also criticized for their attitude regarding John Brown. This Kansas fanatic had been captured during the abortive Harpers Ferry raid and awaited hanging. The Sentinel offered no excuse for Brown's conduct, but questioned why he was dealt with so severely when a grand jury in Charleston refused to indict men engaged in the slave trade. The men were unquestionalbly guilty of piracy under

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[65] Ibid., December 14, 1858.

[66] Ibid., May 7, 1859.

United States law, yet nothing was done to them. "Such is modern Democracy," noted King.[67] Another editorial condemned Brown in much the same way, contrasting his action against like Democratic action. "The attempt of John Brown to liberate the slaves of Virginia was a mad scheme enough," wrote the energetic editor, "but the organized efforts of the...Border Ruffians of Missouri, backed by a Democratic National Administration, to force Slavery upon the People of Kansas and the damnable means by which that nefarious project was sought to be carried out, were infinitely more atrocious than anything that John Brown has done."[68]

During this period, the Sentinel also kept up its Republican affiliations. All Republicans were urged to keep on fighting. They were reminded that the beliefs of the party had not yet been fulfilled. Free labor and free territory were still primary issues. "To-day," noted King, "the great struggle is imminent as ever; and it must continue till Freedom is victorious,--till the object of the Republican Party is secured--till slavery returns to the position in which the framers of the Constitution bound it...till slavery ceases its aggressions upon free territory, and retreats to await the sure, even if slow, progress of decay, and final overthrow."[69]

In 1858, the Sentinel called its readers' attention to

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[67] Ibid., November 16, 1859.

[68] Ibid., November 18, 1859.

[69] Ibid., August 7, 1857.

a congressional election in Illinois. The rival candidates were Stephen A. Douglas for the Democrats and Abraham Lincoln for the Republicans. Editor King stated that the race was daily becoming "more interesting." "The friends of each," stated King, "are sanguine of success, while the outside opinion appears to be that the battle will be desperately fought...and the results somewhat doubtful."[70] Mr. Lincoln had recently challenged Mr. Douglas to divide time with him, but the latter declined. No one was more at home on the stump than Douglas, and the Sentinel was a little surprised that he had not taken up the gauntlet. If the Little Giant had a match on the stump, it was Lincoln, and his knowledge of this probably had something to do with his refusal. Mr. Lincoln had no fear to meet his rival, and the papers which took his side were quite indignant at the course taken by Mr. Douglas, after the manner in which he boasted of his superiority over the Republican candidate.[71]

One of the characteristics of Republicanism throughout this period that occupied much of Editor King's time, involved the constant re-kindling of the faith among its followers. Editor King constantly reminded Republicans of the nobleness of their cause and principles, and urged them not to abandon the party. He recommended that Republicans

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[70] Ibid., July 29, 1858.

[71] Ibid.

forget the defeat of 1856 on the national level. All were reminded that their primary objective, defeating the Democrats, had not yet been accomplished, and they were urged to work toward this end.[72]

Beginning in 1859, the Sentinel began campaigning for the coming Presidential election of 1860. Assuming that Senator Douglas would be the leading Democratic candidate, Editor King launched the attack against him early. "In the North he is the champion of freedom, and the fearless and bold advocate of the doctrine of 'Squatter Sovereignty,'" noted the astute editor, "while in the South he claims to be friendly to the 'peculiar institution,' and points with pride to his sleek and well fed negroes." His toadies announced that he opposed squatter sovereignty. When Judge Douglas first took ground against "Dictator" Buchanan, King believed that he had repented of the infamous slanders he had heaped upon the free state men of Kansas. However, it was for Douglas, and not for the oppressed of Kansas he cared, now that he had again been elected to the U. S. Senate, his whole course would be in keeping with his previous practices.[73] Another editorial commented on the "sharp game which the Little Giant is playing upon the Democracy of the North...." At the South, he was represented as being favorable to the most ultra doctrines of the pro-slavery party, but at the

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[72] Ibid., June 21, September 9, 1859.

[73] Ibid., June 9, 1859.

North, it was found necessary to cling to the phantom of popular sovereignty. It was impossible to serve two masters; Douglas was either humbugging the Democracy of the North or had cheated the South.[74]

In 1860, the Sentinel heralded the impending Democrtic nominating convention meeting at Charleston. Editor King believed the site selected extremely apropos considering "the entire devotion of the Democratic party to the interests of Slavery." Of course, the candidate and platform would be selected with exclusive reference to this question. Whoever the nominee for President might be, the South would find in him a reliable champion of the "peculiar institution." The prevailing indications were that Mr. Douglas would be the man. The Sentinel thought that the Administration would strain every nerve to prevent the nomination, and that a large portion of the South distrusted Douglas. However, if pledges of future good behavior would satisfy these doubters, Mr. Douglas and his friends would be prodigal of them.[75] Another editorial ridiculed the Democratic charge that the Republicans were a sectional party. Editor King called his readers' attention to the Charleston Convention where, for five days, the Democratic party "was split into two 'sectional parties,' each one vehemently insisting upon its right to dictate a platform to the other...." The fire-eaters that led the Southern

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[74] Ibid., June 13, 1859.

[75] Ibid., April 21, 1860.

Democracy realized that they could control and carry off from Douglas five or six Southern states. They assumed and maintained extensive pro-slavery ground, and intimated that if the Democratic party would not commit itself unreservedly to the encouragement and protection of slavery, they were done with it for good. If they had not obtained all that they demanded, they had at least effectually 'sectionalized' and torn in two the "National Democracy."[76]

The Sentinel continued to emphasize this split in the Democratic Party and predicted that it would be fatal to the hopes of Douglas. "There was no possibility of his succeeding, without the united vote of the South," wrote King, "and the majority of that vote is now certain to be cast against him." The editor went on to claim that the action of the extreme pro-slavery states was no surprise to him. According to Editor King this action justified the organization and action of the Republican Party. It now remained to be seen how the Northern Democracy would react. Would they diverge or would they coalesce and elect a Republican to the Presidency?[77] The Sentinel also commented on the Baltimore Convention of the Democratic Party. According to Editor King the Democratic Party dissolved at this convention and could no longer be considered a power. There were now two Democratic parties, one under Douglas and the other under Breckinridge. The former followed "Squatter Sovereignty"

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[76] Ibid., April 30, 1860.

[77] Ibid., May 2, 1860.

and had the support of the North. The latter upheld Slavery and had the support of the South. The Sentinel considered the Baltimore Convention a Southern victory since it prevented the election of Douglas. Editor King predicted a Republican victory based on this result.[78]

On the other side of the ledger the Sentinel became an early advocate of William H. Seward as the Republican Presidential candidate. Editor King praised his old friend as the strongest man available for the job and the ablest man in the Senate. King believed Seward "would make the best and safest President the Republic has had for twenty-five years."[79] King further believed that his sentiments were shared by others. "The Republicans of Wisconsin are very earnest and unanimous in favor of Governor Seward's nomination," he wrote, "and we hold that this preference should be faithfully represented in the delegation to the Chicago Convention."[80] Other editorials claimed Seward as the first choice of two out of every three Northern Republicans. The Sentinel ridiculed suggestions that Seward would not be the strongest candidate and that it would be unsafe to nominate him. King regarded these accusations as weapons of politicians trying to rid themselves of a formidable opponent.[81] In his final broadside, King reiterated his belief that Seward would be the strongest candidate, the first choice

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[78] Ibid., June 26, 1860.

[79] Ibid., November 24, 1859

[80] Ibid., February 22, 1860.

[81] Ibid., February 23, 1860.

of the Republican masses, the most acceptable candidate for Southerners, and that he would make the best President for the last twenty years. Republicans were warned of their opponent's steadfastness, and urged not to be timid. The best way to counteract their opponent's strength and at the same time call out the strength, zeal and enthusiasm of their own party, would be to nominate "that man who, of all others, is most closely identified with our cause and, if elected, will faithfully reflect our principles and wisely and honestly administer the Government. That man is William H. Seward, and with him for our Leader our triumph is certain!"[82]

However, in spite of Editor King's sentiments and certainly against his wishes, Seward failed to gain the nomination, and Abraham Lincoln of Illinois became the Republican standard bearer. The Sentinel, Republican to the core, held no animosity and, although disappointed, quickly took up the cudgels in support of Lincoln. "Next to Mr. Seward," wrote King, "Mr. Lincoln was probably the most acceptable candidate that could be presented to Wisconsin." King argued that Lincoln was a Western man, identified with the growth of the Great West, and familiar with the interests and jealous of the rights of the section. He claimed that Lincoln was personally known to many Wisconsin citizens and that he counted numerous friends among them. "His public

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[82] Ibid., May 15, 1860.

record is a clean one," wrote King: "his private character without a stain." King argued that Lincoln's principles were those of the Republican party, of which he had been a member from the start.[83] The editor praised Lincoln as a self-made man, high in moral courage and known for his integrity and ability. "It is not too much to say," concluded King, "that no man has been placed before the people of late years combining so many of the qualities which the country is actually in want of appear in the character of Abraham Lincoln."[84]

After choosing sides, the Sentinel evaluated the impending election for its readers, claiming that the issue was a plain and simple one: slavery extension or slavery restriction. King argued that the only possible way to prevent the spread of slavery was to vote for Lincoln and Hamlin. Voting for either Douglas, Breckinridge, or Bell, simply prolonged and intensified "the irrespressible conflict." "Let every man," advised the editor, "who believes that the time has come when a limit should be set to the extension of slavery, and that the interests of free, rather than slave labor, should be the chief care of the Federal Government, give his voice and vote to Abraham Lincoln."[85] Editor King outlined the various differences and issues

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[83] Ibid., May 22, 1860.

[84] Ibid.

[85] Ibid., August 1, 1860.

between the rival parties and candidates. He claimed that Breckinridge held that slavery was entitled to encouragement and protection by the Federal Government, a view opposed by Mr. Lincoln, who denied that slavery had any such claim, and who resisted the extension of that institution. Douglas stood between the two, holding that slavery was morally wrong, but admitting its right to indefinite extension. If slavery were wrong, Lincoln obviously was right. If slavery were a benefit and blessing, Mr. Breckinridge would command the approval of the people. Whereas, if slavery were a matter of indifference, about which the people ought not to concern themselves, then only would voters have an excuse for casting a vote for Mr. Douglas.[86]

The Sentinel assured its readers that Republicans would not interfere with slavery where it existed. However, they did claim the right to resist its extension. Democrats both North and South denied this right. The Bell supporters occupied a position of neutrality. Thus, the issue before the people was simple. If they believed that slavery was right, they should vote for Breckinridge or Douglas. If they were indifferent, they could support Bell. But, if they thought that slavery was wrong and that its extension should be opposed, they ought to give their suffrages to Abraham Lincoln.[87] Editor King also pointed out to his readers that,

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[86] Ibid., July 31, 1860.

[87] Ibid., August 23, 1860.

although there were four Presidential candidates, only two had any conceivable chance of winning. Mr. Bell of the American and Union parties, received praise as "a gentleman of conceded ability, unimpeachable character, and excellent political antecedents." However, he could not win. Douglas also had not the slightest chance of winning, according to the Sentinel. It is doubtful whether he could carry a single state. To vote for either of these two candidates would be useless. Thus, the election boiled down to voting for either Lincoln or Breckinridge. One of them would be elected. "The one," asserted Editor King, "represents the progressive, independent, self-reliant, free spirit of the Great West. The other is the candidate and representative of the Pro-Slavery party of the South."[88]

After the election of 1860, culminating in the elevation of Abraham Lincoln to the Presidency, the people of the United States were faced by an old bugaboo, the threat of secession. Editor King, having faced this threat periodically from the Southern extremists, urged calmness. "The People of the North," he wrote, "are not to be frightened from the just and patriotic purpose of reclaiming the administration of the Government from the hands of those who have so grossly abused and betrayed their trust." He wrote that the election of Mr. Lincoln had been fairly conducted and that no citizen of the country could find in the result a lawful cause for resistance or secession. The will of

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[88] Ibid., October 18, 1860.

the majority must rule. It would be time enough for the South to raise the standard of rebellion, when Mr. Lincoln proved himself false to the oath which he was required to take.[89] The Sentinel ventured the opinion that the whole secession scare covered an attempt to re-open the African slave trade and to obtain cheap labor.[90] King, while willing to deal mildly and justly with the South would not listen to secessionist threats and advocated a policy of Northern firmness.[91] The North would do much, almost anything, to disarm the fears, and to satisfy the doubts, and to conquer the prejudices of those Southern states. It would willingly listen to Kentucky, Missouri, Tennessee, Maryland. Nor would it turn a deaf ear even to the madmen of South Carolina, but they must abandon their secession threats and their wild talk. But priceless as was the Union to the North, and much as the North was ready to yield, the people of the free states could not be dragooned into humiliating concessions or one-sided compromises. The South must be told that they too, had reparations to make. The compromise must be mutual.[92]

The Sentinel gradually reached the conclusion that it was just a question of time until South Carolina seceded.

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[89] Ibid., November 12,1860.

[90] Ibid., December 5, 1860.

[91] Ibid., December 12, 1860.

[92] Ibid., December 13. 1860.

Nor did Editor King have much hope that she would go alone. He remained equally uncertain about where the first trial of strength between the conflicting governments would occur. However, Editor King did see some light in the ever darkening skies. "If...South Carolina, and those States which may imitate her example," he rationalized, "content themselves with the passage of their secession ordinances, reorganize and strengthen their local governments, but offer no opposition to Federal authority...there is yet hope that the storm may blow over and...that the excitement at the South may be gradually allayed; their discontents removed; and their return to the fold of the Union finally and peaceably secured. But this is only hope."[93]

Editor King used the secession of South Carolina to take one parting shot at an old enemy, President Buchanan. In the present crisis," he editorialized, "the President has not only declined to perform the plain duty for which he was made an officer, but there is reason to believe he has so paralyzed the power of the Government that it can do nothing decisive...." There could be no question as to what should be done. It was the duty of the Federal Government to maintain its position. The President seemed to think that a show of force would incite an attack, but a show of weakness would invite it. The Government under Buchanan, seemed to rely upon the forbearance of the Southern mob. There were very few who would trust South Carolina and her

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[93] Ibid., December 18, 1860.

inflamable populace.[94]

Even after the secession of South Carolina, the Sentinel could still see hope for averting Civil War. "We believe," wrote the editor, "that there is yet time and opportunity to strengthen the Southern forts, re-inforce their garrisons and support them...." This did not necessarily imply an attempt at coercion. It was but self-defense. The President, if faithful to his trust, had no alternative. Having properly garrisoned and supplied the different posts, he might safely leave it to South Carolina, or any other seceding state, to take the initiative. "We do not believe," he wrote hopefully, "that, rash and misguided as they are, the Secessionists are prepared to commence hostilities against the United States."[95]

In spite of Editor King's efforts, however, the crisis grew worse. Other Southern states followed the lead of South Carolina and seceded. The state of Virginia, alarmed at the rapidly growing tension, called for a peace conference to meet at Washington on February 4, 1861. The Sentinel, still urging moderation, adopted a questioning attitude toward this conference. "We cannot tell what the Conference may do," King noted, "nor is their action necessarily binding upon Congress, the States, or the People." It would be advisory only. What was especially needed were

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[94] Ibid., December 29, 1860.

[95] Ibid., January 10, 1861.

moderation and prudent counsels. All negotiations with the states which had ignominiously and treacherously struck the flag of the Union was out of the question. No one proposed to treat or talk with them. But the border states might be saved, and if that could be accomplished, all would yet be well. King hoped and believed that the Washington Conference would help to secure that result.[96] But, as may be seen in retrospect, Editor King was wrong. All was not well; nor would it be well for five long, bloody years.

During the 1854-1861 period, business affairs also occupied some of Mr. King's time. In 1856 the ownership of the Sentinel underwent another change. J. S. Fillmore retired from the partnership of Fillmore, Watson and King and sold his share to King.[97] The new arrangement lasted until July, 1857, when Watson also sold out to King. Thus, Rufus King became sole owner and editor of the Milwaukee Sentinel.[98] The times, however, were not advantageous for the sole ownership. The panic of 1857 depleted King's finances, and in the fall he sold the paper to T. D. Jermain and Horace Brightman, who, realizing the paper's value, came from New York to

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[96] Ibid., February 6, 1861.

[97] Gregory states it was Watson who sold out to King, but all other sources indicate it was Fillmore. Howard L. Conrad, ed., History of Milwaukee (3 vols., Chicago, 1895), II, 54; Milwaukee Sentinel, February 20, 1856.

[98] Milwaukee Sentinel, July 8, 1857.

purchase it. The owners retained Mr. King as editor.[99]

King's misfortunes continued into the following year. A State Legislature investigating committee appointed to consider bribery charges in connection with the La Crosse Railroad land grant, accused King of accepting $10,000 for supporting the bill. The accusation appeared in the Wisconsin "Black Book" of 1858, but niether King nor any others were ever prosecuted.[100]

In 1859, Mr. King, who had been identified with the Milwaukee School Board since its inception in 1846, became the first elected superintendent. His friends, noting his still impoverished finances from the panic of 1857, arranged for a remuneration of $2,000. Thus, his years of service to the schools of Milwaukee were finally rewarded. The reward, however, was short-lived, for in the next election King lost

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[99] Edward H. Brush, Rufus King and His Times (New York, 1926), 143; James S. Buck, Milwaukee Under the Carter (4 vols., Milwaukee, 1884), IV 81; Conrad, History, II, 54; John S. Gregory, ed., History of Milwaukee (4 vols., Milwaukee, 1931), II, 1,009; Charles King, "Rufus King: Soldier, Editor, and Statesman," Wisconsin Magazine of History, IV (June, 1921), 374; Jerome A. Watrous, ed., Memoirs of Milwaukee County (3 vols., Madison, 1909), I, 96.

[100] The full report stated railroad officials headed by Byron Kilbourn, paid more than $1,000,000 in bonds and stocks for "expenses incident to the land grant." According to the report $631,000 went to the Legislature, Governor and a Supreme Court Justice. The rest went to lobbyists. Assemblymen received $5,000 and Senators $10,000. "Key men" who helped line up their colleagues received more. Three Senators got $20,000 and one $25,000. Governor Coles L. Bashford, Wisconsin's first Republican Governor, received $50,000 and Supreme Court Justice Abram D. Smith "found $10,000 in bonds in his library desk in Milwaukee." Kilbourn and Moses Strong, his chief aide, kept $25,000 and Alexander Mitchell got $10,000. F. Russell Austin, The Milwaukee Story (Milwaukee, 1946), 43-44.

the position.[101]

In March of 1861, Rufus King, nearing financial rock-bottom, decided to apply for the position of postmaster in Milwaukee. Accordingly, King went to Washington, armed with letters from prominent men of the city, and he presented his case to Postmaster General Montgomery Blair. In the midst of the presentation, Blair informed King the position had already been proffered to someone else and that King himself had signed the petition! Naturally, somewhat despondent over this unexpected turn of events, King retired to the Willard Hotel for breakfast. There a friend from an adjoining table came over and offered Mr. King his hand, stating: "General King, I congratulate you with all my heart."[102] Thus did Mr. King become informed of his appointment as Minister Resident to the Papal States in Rome. The appointment had been secured by his old friend, Secretary of State Seward, who, although dining with King, had kept it from him as a surprise.[103]

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[101] His son Charles hints that his father was probably replaced because of the salary now attached to the position. He points out that before the salary the Democrats had praised the elder King's work with the school board, but after, it was suggested he had labored much too long. Austin, Milwaukee, 109; Conrad, History, I, 132; King, in Wis. Magazine of History, 374; Dumas Malone, ed., Dictionary of American Biography (16 vols., New York 1933), X, 400.

[102] King, in Wis. Magazine of History, 375-76.

[103] Austin, Milwaukee, 109; Brush, Rufus King, 143; Buck, Milwaukee, 81; Conrad, History, I, 107; King, in Wis. Magazine of History, 374; Malone, Dictionary, 400; Alan T. Nolan, The Iron Brigade (New York, 1961), 24; A. M. Thomson, A Political History of Wisconsin (Milwaukee, 1900), 301; Watrous, Memoirs, I, 98.

King readily accepted the appointment and returned to Milwaukee to sever his connection with the Sentinel and to straighten out his affairs before embarking for Rome. His friends tendered him a farewell dinner and, on April 11, 1861, after sixteen years, Rufus King resigned as editor of the Milwaukee Sentinel. The following day his valedictory editorial appeared:

> With the present number of this paper closes, for a season at least, the Editorial connection of the undersigned with the Milwaukee Sentinel. Called to another field of duty, he relinquishes, most reluctantly, a post that, for the past sixteen years, he has endeavored to fill, to the best of his ability and with an honest, earnest purpose to advance the interests, promote the welfare and maintain the honor, of the City of his home and the State of his adoption. The charge thus vacated passes to other, and doubtless, abler hands. It is the ambition and will be the constant effort of the proprietors of the Sentinel to make it more and more worthy of the flattering confidence and generous patronage which it has always received at the hands of the People of Wisconsin.
>
> Invoking the blessings of Divine Providence upon our City and State, and with fervent wishes, warmer and stronger than words can tell, for the health, happiness and prosperity of the many, many dear friends from whom he is compelled to part, it only remains for him to say, with a full heart--Farewell.
>
> Rufus King[104]

The aforementioned moderate temper of the nation culminating in the Compromise of 1850 and prevalent for a short time after, completely subsided with the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act. This act overthrew the Missouri Compromise, regarded by many Northerners as a sacred pact, and re-opened

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[104] Milwaukee Sentinel, April 12, 1861.

the agitation over slavery in the territories. It led directly to the dissolution of the Whig Party, thus breaking another link between the North and the South. Out of this wreckage arose the new Republican Party. This party consisted of men who were tired of Southern leadership, and who believed in a high protective tariff, internal improvements, and free Western land. They were opposed to the Kansas-Nebraska Act, and most important of all, considered slavery as something morally wrong that had to be checked at all costs. This new party, purely sectional, supplanted the northern Whigs and drew many northern Democrats into its ranks, but it found few adherents in the South. The defeat of the Republican Presidential candidate, John C. Frémont, in 1856, once more averted disaster. Moderation remained a strong force in the country. However, the newly elected President, James Buchanan, proved to be as consistent as a straw in a storm. The Supreme Court decision in the Dred Scott case, coupled withthe civil strife in Kansas and further strengthened by the impotency of the Chief Magistrate all served to increase the strength of the Republican Party. By 1860 the Republicans were ready. When the Kansas controversy resulted in a split among the heretofore solid Democratic ranks, a Republican victory became a foregone conclusion. The strictly sectional Republican Party succeeded in electing Abraham Lincoln to the Presidency and the South seceded. The moderates finally capitulated and turned the nation's affairs over to their more radical brethren. The Democratic process had at last collapsed under the accumulated burden of slavery, and the entire nation balanced

on the abysmal brink of Civil War. The "Irrepressible Conflict" was at hand.

Chapter VI

The Civil War

Following his farewell dinner, Rufus King, newly appointed minister to the Papal States, left with his family for New York City, the first stop on his Italian adventure. King had all his luggage aboard ship and was preparing to embark when word reached New York of the portentous happenings at Fort Sumter. Rufus King, as did others, seems to have yielded to the lure of military glory, for he immediately left for Washington.[1] Whatever his reasons, King's departure received extremely favorable praise from the New York Press. According to the New York Times, King's actions were extremely creditable and worthy of imitation by others placed in similar circumstances.[2] The New York Tribune praised King as a man who recognized his obligation and tried to fulfill it.[3]

After his arrival in Washington, King's hopes for a military commission seem to have received little initial

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[1] James S. Buck, Milwaukee Under the Charter (4 vols., Milwaukee, 1884), IV, 81; Howard L. Conrad, ed., History of Milwaukee (3 vols., Chicago, 1895), I, 107; Charles King, "Rufus King: Soldier, Editor, and Statesman," Wisconsin Magazine of History, IV (June 1921), 376; Alan T. Nolan, The Iron Brigade (New York, 1961), 24; E. B. Quiner, The Military History of Wisconsin (Chicago, 1866), 987; A. M. Thomson, A Political History of Wisconsin (Milwaukee, 1900), 301; Jerome A. Watrous, ed., Memoirs of Milwaukee County (3 vols., Madison, 1909), I, 98.

[2] New York Times, April 18, 1861.

[3] New York Tribune, April 19, 1861.

encouragement. Indications were that the government preferred that he would complete his Italian assignment. While in Washington, King received his official commission as Minister Resident of the United States at Rome from Seward. The Secretary of State also took the opportunity to brief King on salary information and diplomatic instructions.[4] After the receipt of this dispatch, King, on April 18, 1861, wrote a letter to Charles Larrabee which further reveals his intentions and thinking at this time:

> My Dear Larrabee:- Yours is just received. Good for you! I expected nothing less from a man whose heart is always right. I have shown your letter to Mr. Seward, who was greatly pleased with it.
>
> The very best thing for you to do, is join the staff of the regiment called into service from our State. The Governor will, no doubt, give you an appointment if you desire it. There is nothing in the gift of the War Department.
>
> We have "wars and rumors of wars" in plenty. Washington has been in great danger; but is, I think all safe now. Yesterday we had 3,000 troops here--800 of regulars. Three thousand more arrived this morning, and as many additional are expected to-morrow. Within a week there will be 25,000 in and around the Capital. I do not believe the "Confederate States" will undertake to attack a city so defended.
>
> I shall sail for Europe on Saturday week, unless my services are deemed necessary her. If so, I will stay until the ball is over.
>
> My notion is, that the Government will content itself with occupying Washington, Cairo, Fort Monroe, and one or two other prominent points with ample forces; blockade all the Southern ports; cut off their mail and telegraph facilities; stop all supplies now found down the Mississippi, and then let secession sweat itself out.

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[4] For complete dispatch see Leo Francis Stock, ed., United States Ministers to the Papal States: Instructions and Dispatches (Baltimore, 1933), 237.

If they want to fight, they must take the initiative, and invade the North. I don't think they will try that on.

Always Truly Yours,
Rufus King

Write me at 28 W. 14th St., New York[5]

Following the completion of this letter to Larrabee, King returned to New York, and on April 22 wrote Seward accepting his appointment and announcing his intention of sailing to Europe on the steamer Fulton on April 27.[6] Seward, in turn, on April 27 informed John P. Stockton, the incumbent Minister to Rome, that King would replace him. However, King's military aspirations finally seem to have made some headway, for in a post script to this letter Seward added: "Since the above was signed, General King has, for military reasons, received permission to delay his departure for three months."[7] Yet, conditions were still not definitely settled, for on April 29, 1861, Seward issued additional diplomatic instructions to King requesting him to assure the papal government that the United States would not interfere in the domestic affairs of the States of the Church.[8] After the receipt of the instructions, King seems

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[5]Letter, Rufus King to Charles Larrabee, April 18, 1861, Rufus King Papers (State Historical Society of Wisconsin).

[6]For complete dispatch see Stock, Ministers, 237-38.

[7]Ibid., 233.

[8]Ibid., 238.

to have bided his time, waiting for a military commission. Finally, in May, 1861, King received word of his appointment as a brigadier-general of volunteers as of May 17.[9] The new brigadier immediately left New York to return to Milwaukee and to assist in the formation of the first Wisconsin regiments there. He did not, as yet, officially resign his diplomatic post.[10] He remained in Wisconsin until August 5, when he reported for duty in Washington. From there Brigadier-General King was ordered to procede to Baltimore and to report to Major-General John Dix.[11] On the following day, August 6, 1861, King finally resigned his diplomatic post:

"Sir: Having accepted the appointment of Brigadier-General in the Volunteer Force, mustered into the service of the United States, I beg leave to tender my resignation of the office of Minister Resident at Rome, with which you honored

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[9] King's name was on the first list of general officers appointed by President Lincoln. Other, later distinguished names on the list were Thomas W. Sherman, Ulysses S. Grant, John A. McClernand, Benjamin M. Prentiss, Benjamin F. Kelley, Frederick W. Lander, Joseph Hooker, Edward D. Baker, and Franz Siegel, Roy F. Basler, ed., The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln (9 vols., New Brunswick, 1953), VIII, 594.

[10] King, in Wis. Magazine of History, 376; Quiner, Military, 987.

[11] War of the Rebellion:....Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies (4 series, 70 vols., Washington, D.C., 1880-1901), Ser. 1, LI, Part 1, 438.

me in April last."[12] While offering his resignation King suggested to Seward that Governor Alexander Randall of Wisconsin be appointed in his stead and shortly thereafter, the former Wisconsin governor received the post.[13]

On August 9, King received additional orders placing him in command of a provisional brigade composed of the Fifth and Sixth Wisconsin Regiments and the Nineteenth Indiana Regiment, the regiments were to be stationed in the vicinity of Meridan Hill, overlooking Washington.[14] On August 24 the provisional brigade was attached to the Army of the Potomac.[15]

As soon as President Lincoln's April 15 call for troops reached Wisconsin, an idea began to take shape in the minds of many leading citizens. This idea called for an all-Wisconsin brigade to defend the Union. Accordingly, Governor Randall informed Secretary of War Simon Cameron of a resolution passed by the Wisconsin General Assembly. This resolution expressed the hope that the Wisconsin volunteers might

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[12] Stock, Ministers, 239.

[13] Randall's appointment almost immediately followed King's resignation. See King, in Wis. Magazine of History, 376; Milwaukee Sentinel, August 8, 1861.

[14] O. R., Ser. 1, LI, Part 1, 443.

[15] Ibid., 455.

be formed into a brigade under the command of Brigadier-General Rufus King.[16] King's order of April 9 seems to have been an effort to fulfill this resolution. At this time General King's brigade consisted of the Second, Fifth and Sixth Wisconsin. To fulfill the brigade requirement, the Seventh Wisconsin Volunteers were organized. However, prior to their arrival, the War Department detached the Fifth from King's command. This frustrated State wishes for an all-Wisconsin brigade.[17] Thus, King's Brigade consisted of the Second, Sixth, and Seventh Wisconsin and the Nineteenth Indiana Volunteers, later joined by the Twenty-fourth Michigan Volunteers.

The Second Wisconsin Volunteer Regiment was formed in response to Lincoln's April 15 proclamation. The regiment consisted of men from the communities of Milwaukee, Madison, Racine, Oshkosh, and La Crosse. The men assembled at Camp Randall in May, 1861, for three months service. However, as the various companies arrived, their term of enlistment was changed to three years.[18] The regiment left for Washington on June 20

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[16] Ibid., Ser. 3, I, 257.

[17] Ibid., Ser. 1, LI, Part 1, 489.

[18] At the start of the war Otis was a Second Lieutenant in the Second Wisconsin and later became a Colonel. George H. Otis, The Second Wisconsin (Leaves from mounted newspaper clippings of the Sunday Telegraph. July 18-December 5, 1880), 2.

and it arrived in the nation's capital on June 29. It was immediately assigned to the brigade of Colonel William T. Sherman, and it became part of the Army of the Potomac. On July 15 the Second received orders to prepare three days cooked rations, and on July 18 it proceeded toward Centreville. Again on July 20 the regiment received orders to prepare ten days rations and to be ready to move the next day. The following day, July 21, the First Battle of Bull Run began, and the Second took part in the feint against the Stone Bridge. Later in the day they engaged the Stonewall Jackson Brigade and suffered approximately fifteen per cent casualties for the day.[19] After a brief period devoted to re-organization, the Second joined King's Brigade on August 27.[20]

The Sixth Wisconsin mustered at Camp Randall and consisted of companies from Sauk, Juneau, and Milwaukee Counties. Fully assembled by July 6, 1861, the regiment was mustered into Federal service on July 16. Later in July the Sixth left for Washington, arriving on August 9 and it was immediately assigned to King's Brigade.[21]

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[19] Nolan, Iron Brigade, 6-9; Otis, Second, 3-16; O. R., Ser. 1, II, 368-71; O. R. Ser. 1, LI, Part 1, 17.

[20] Nolan, Iron Brigade, 12; Otis, Second, 17; William D. Love, Wisconsin in the War of the Rebellion (Chicago, 1866), 289.

[21] Dawes was a Captain of Company "A" of the Sixth Wis. at the start of the war--later became a Brevet Brigadier-General. Rufus R. Dawes, Service With the Sixth Wisconsin Volunteers (Marietta, Ohio, 1890), 10-13; Nolan, Iron Brigade, 13-18.

The Nineteenth Indiana was formed in July, 1861, for an enlistment of three years. It was drawn largely from the central part of Indiana. It was trained at Camp Morton and mustered into Federal service on July 29. A week later the regiment left for Washington, arriving on August 9. It was assigned to King's Brigade the same day.[22]

The Seventh Wisconsin was mustered in the fall of 1861 to fill out King's all-Wisconsin brigade. The regiment included recruits from Rock, Grant, Columbia, and Chippewa Counties. The men were sworn into Federal service for three years and left for Washington on September 21. The Seventh arrived in Washington October 1, already attached to King's Brigade.[23]

Prior to the arrival of the Seventh, the Second and Fifth Wisconsin and the Nineteenth Indiana marched into Virginia on September 3, and began construction of the earthworks known as Fort Marcy, part of the Washington defenses. The Second also engaged in a brief reconnaissance to Lewinsville, Virginia. Outside of this brief sojourn, the regiments remained at Fort Marcy until October 1.[24] Following the arrival of the Seventh Wisconsin on October 5, King assembled the brigade and marched to Arlington Heights, Virginia. There they camped for the winter on the estate of Robert E. Lee.[25]

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[22] Nolan, Iron Brigade, 19, 22.

[23] Ibid., 24-25, 28.

[24] O. R., Ser. 1, V, 215-17.

[25] Mrs. King joined her husband at Arlington Heights and sorted out the clothing and personal property of the Lee's, intending to store them until the end of the War. Dawes, Sixth, 25; King, in Wis. Magazine of History, 372.

On October 15, 1861, General George McClellan re-organized the Army of the Potomac and King's Brigade became part of General Irvin McDowell's Division.[26] The rest of the winter passed uneventfully. On March 8, 1862, President Lincoln established the corps organization of the Army of the Potomac. King's Brigade then became part of the First Corps under General McDowell and King was promoted to division commander.[27]

Following the re-organization, the Army of the Potomac began its spring campaign, featured by McClellan's abortive peninsular campaign. The First Corps, however, did not participate in this adventure. Instead, it was assigned to the Department of the Rappahannock and detailed to protect Washington, with the provision that it would later join McClellan before Richmond.

In April, King's Division marched to Fredericksburg where his troops occupied the town and repaired railroad bridges across the Rappahannock.[28] On May 23 President Lincoln and General McDowell reviewed the troops at Fredericksburg, and it was decided the time had arrived for the First Corps to join McClellan, with King's Division leading the advance.[29] The start of General Jackson's Shenandoah Valley

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[26] Love, Wisconsin, 294; O. R., Ser. 1, V, 16; Otis, Second, 18.

[27] Dawes, Sixth, 36-37; O. R., Ser. 1, V, 18-21; O. R., Ser. 1, LI, Part 1, 551; Otis, Second, 21.

[28] Dawes, Sixth, 42-43; Love, Wisconsin, 296; Otis, Second, 22-23.

[29] Dawes, Sixth, 45; Love, Wisconsin, 297.

campaign, however, caused postponement of any advance to Richmond. Instead, King's Division was assigned to Front Royal and Catlett Station, where his troops boarded trains in an attempt to intercept Jackson. Unfortunately, adverse circumstances caused a delay at Catlett's, and the division never reached the scene of action.[30] General King re-united the division and after some uncertainty, received orders to return to Fredericksburg.[31]

On June 26, 1862, the War Department created the Army of Virginia with Major-General John Pope as Commander. Major-General John C. Frémont, in command of the First Army Corps of the Army of Virginia, requested that he be relieved from command because Pope was promoted over his head. The War Department acceded to Frémont's request and on June 27 ordered King to assume command of the First Corps of the Army of Virginia.[32] That night the officers of King's Division came to

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[30] O. R. Ser. 1, XII, Part 3, 233, 284-85, 294, 300-01; O. R., Ser. 1, LI, Part 1, 650.

[31] The delay at Catlett's was caused by a lack of transportation facilities. There was no communication of any kind with McDowell because Jackson's cavalry had cut the telegraph wires, so on June 2 King decided to move back to Haymarket. He heard from McDowell on June 5 and ordered the division to Warrenton. On June 8, the Jackson threat over, they returned to Fredericksburg. Some of the division remained at Catlett's, but reported to Fredericksburg later in the month. O. R., Ser. 1, XII, Part 3, 323, 326-27, 343, 351-52, 356, 361, 363, 365-66.

[32] Frank Moore, ed., The Rebellion Record: A Diary of American Events with Documents, Narratives, Illustrative Incidents, Poetry, etc. (12 vols., New York, 1866), V, 32-33; O. R., Ser. 1, XII, Part 1, 169; O. R. Ser., 1, XII, Part 3, 438, O. R., Ser. 1, LI, Part 1, 705.

his tent requesting him to decline the proffered appointment and remain in command of the division. King yielded to their wishes, and suggested to Washington that the appointment of General Franz Siegel to this position might strengthen the Union cause and please the thousands of German soldiers in Frémont's command. The War Department honored King's refusal and heeded his advice.[33]

In late June, 1862, the Confederate offensive under General Robert E. Lee began to drive McClellan from the gates of Richmond. Lee had immediate success and in a series of battles managed to insert the Army of Northern Virginia between Pope and McClellan. This left King's Division at Fredericksburg in a strategic position. Upon the Division devolved the job of reconnaissance for General McDowell. Throughout July, King's cavalry was busy on the road between Fredericksburg and Richmond. The division also occupied itself with railroad and communication raids in July.[34] On the 8th of August General Pope ordered King to advance to Culpeper Courthouse. This order seems to have arrived at a particularly distressing time

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[33] King, in Wis. Magazine of History, 378-79; O. R., Ser. 1, XI, Part 3, 277.

[34] O. R., Ser. 1, XII, Part 2, 47, 102; O. R., Ser. 1, XII, Part 3, 450-52, 457, 463, 487, 499.

for the commanding officer, for he had been ill for several days.[35] Nevertheless, the division began the movement on Sunday, August 10. On August 12 it reached the Cedar Mountain area and camped there for a week.[36] By August 18 it suddenly dawned on Pope that he was in trouble and he began to withdraw from the Rapidan to the Rappahannock. King's Division reached Rappahannock Station and on August 18 it encountered hostile cannon fire.[37] On August 25 Lee split his command and sent Jackson to get behind Pope. Trying to locate Jackson, Pope deployed the First Corps on a reconnaissance to Sulphur Springs on August 26. General King, still suffering from his illness, temporarily relinquished the command to General John Reynolds.[38] The reconnaissance failed to locate Jackson, who by this time had struck at Manassas. On August 27, Pope, unable to find Jackson, decided to concentrate his

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[35] King suffered from epilepsy periodically throughout his life. Haight was a Junior Corporal in one of 5 companies of Hatch's Brigade; later became a Lieutenant. Theron Haight, "King's Division: Fredericksburg to Manassas," War Papers: Commandery of the State of Wisconsin, Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States (4 vols., Milwaukee, 1896), II, 346; Dumas Malone, ed., Dictionary of American Biography (16 vols., New York, 1933), X, 395-400.

[36] Haight, in War Papers, 345-56; O. R., Ser. 1, XII, Part 3,532.

[37] Dawes, Sixth, 56-7; Haight, in War Papers, 348.

[38] Gibbon was a former artillery officer who had taken over command of the Iron Brigade and introduced the famous black hats. John Gibbon, Personal Recollections of the Civil War (New York, 1928), 46; O. R., Ser. 1, XII, Part 3, 569-70.

command at Gainesville. However, after locating Jackson the following day, Pope ordered McDowell to Manassas, hoping to trap Jackson.[39] King's Division began the move on the morning of the 28th and, as the men marched out, they noticed the commanding general, haggard and obviously ill, standing with his staff by a log fire, trying to get warm.[40] The division passed through Gainesville, and the troopers were resting in a woods beyond Gainesville when new orders arrived from Pope. By this time Pope had already reached Manassas and again could not find Jackson. This meant McDowell's movement was no longer necessary, so Pope countermanded the move on Manassas and instead ordered the First Corps to Gum Spring. A second order, countermanding the Gum Spring movement told McDowell to halt, and requested his views. Later that same afternoon, a thoroughly befuddled Pope issued still another order to McDowell. This final dispatch ordered McDowell to move toward Centreville along the Warrenton Turnpike. Pope planned to check Jackson before the latter reached Thoroughfare Gap.[41] McDowell, by this time completely baffled by Pope's bewildering orders, commanded King to begin the move toward Centreville along the Warrenton Turnpike and then he left to look for Pope. This

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[39] Dawes, Sixth, 58-59; O.R., Ser. 1, XII, Part 2, 70,71-1, 360; O. R., Ser. 1, XII, Part 3, 685-86; John Codman Ropes, The Army Under Pope (New York, 1881), 54-55, 62, 65-66, 68.

[40] Haight, in War Papers, 355.

[41] Clarence C. Buel and Robert Underwood Johnson, ed., Battles and Leaders of the Civil War (4 vols., New York, 1887), 468; O. R., Ser. 1, XII, Part 2, 360-61; Ropes, Army, 65-66,71-72.

was the last order McDowell gave that day, for in trying to find Pope he became lost and was not heard from again until the next day. This left King, still severly ill, to his own devices. He promptly got "the Pendulum Division," as the rest of the army called it, moving toward Centreville.[42]

As the division began the march toward Centreville, Hatch's Brigade led, followed by Gibbon, Doubleday, and Patrick.[43] Nearby, only approximately two miles away, waited Stonewall Jackson with nearly 25,000 men as opposed to King's 10,000.[44] Jackson allowed Hatch's Brigade to pass his position, but he attacked Gibbon. The battle quickly developed into a stand-up infantry fight at a seventy-five yeard range and it lasted approximately one to two and a half hours.[45] At the end of that time the Iron Brigade had lost approximately thirty-three per cent of its recruits.[46] After the conclusion of the day's fighting, the brigade commanders had a meeting with General King to determine their next move. The last order King received from McDowell ordered the division to Centreville where it was hoped they would encounter Jackson. Since the division

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[42] Charles King, "Gainesville, 1862," War Papers, III, 268-69.

[43] Gibbon also notes King's illness at this time. Gibbon, Personal, 51.

[44] O. R., Ser. 1, XII, Part 2, 644; O. R., Ser. 1, XII, Part 3, 580.

[45] It is extremely difficult to judge the exact length of time of the engagement. Gibbon states it lasted and hour or an hour and a half. General Taliaferro, one of Jackson's men, states two and a half. Others have different versions. Gibbon, Personal, 54-55; O. R., Ser. 1, XII, Part 2, 657.

[46] Haight, "Gainesville, Groveton and Bull Run," War Papers, II, 362; O. R. Ser. 1, XII, Part 2, 378.

had indeed already encountered Jackson, to follow this order would be ridiculous. An alternative to this would be for the division to maintain its postion, but this appeared unwise because of the heavy losses and the superiority of Jackson's forces. Another choice was to move elsewhere, hoping to find support. The logical place to move to was Manassas. King, prior to the conclusion of the battle, had a meeting with General Reynolds in which he agreed to maintain his position, and he sent a dispatch to General James Ricketts requesting his help.[47] Now at the meeting with General Patrick, Hatch, Doubleday, and Gibbon along with Captain R. C. Houston, McDowell's aid, these alternatives were discussed. Gibbon and Hatch were worried and wanted to leave. Patrick offered no suggestion, while Doubleday was moody, silent and depressed. Houston agreed with Gibbon and Hatch stating: "General King, you have got to get out of here, that's certain."[48] Finally, after much indicision and reluctance, Gibbon, the junior general officer present, took a piece of paper and by candlelight wrote out his proposal for a move to Manassas. Gibbon then passed his written proposal to the other officers and finally to King. All agreed this was the logical solution. King added something in his own hand and then signed the proposal as a dispatch to McDowell.[49] Captain Houston volunteered to

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[47] King, in War Papers, 276; O. R., Ser. 1, XII, Part 2, 393.

[48] King, in War Papers, 277-78.

[49] Gibbon, Personal, 56-57; O. R., Ser. 1, XII, Part 3, 717-18.

carry the dispatch to McDowell, although he had no idea where he was. King also sent work to Ricketts at 11:15 advising him of his intended withdrawal. At one A.M. the division began the move toward Manassas.[50] This withdrawal by King's Division allowed Jackson and Lee to unite the following day and it led to the disastrous battle of Second Bull Run.[51] On August 30 King's illness forced him to yield his command to General Hatch, although official notice of his being relieved did not arrive until September 14, 1862.[52]

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[50] King, in War Papers, 278-29.

[51] The controversy over the Second Battle of Bull Run and the part King's Division played in it will never end. Two men are generally blamed for the Northern disaster--one is the ill-fated General Fitz-John Porter and the other Rufus King. Porter was court-martialed and found guilty, but later exonerated. Rufus King never received full public vindication for his actions on the night of August 28. Pope, in writing for Century Magazine (later repeated in Battles and Leaders) stated: "The engagement of King's division was reported to me about 10 o'clock....I felt sure, and so stated, that there was no excape for Jackson.... I sent orders to McDowell (supposing him to be with his command), and also direct to General King, (underlining mine) several times during that night and once by his own staff-officer, to hold his ground at all hazards, to prevent the retreat of Jackson toward Lee; and that at daylight our whole force.... would assail him...and he would be crushed between us. To my great disappointment and surprise, however, I learned toward daybreak the next morning (the 29th) that King's division had fallen back toward Manassas Junction...."

Charles King, who served as his father's mounted orderly during the war, immediately attacked Pope's statements. Stressing the part underlined above, King complained that the casual reader would ignore the commas and assume that orders were sent to General King several times that night and once by his own staff-officer, and this was not true. Charles King insisted that no order or message of any kind, sort, or description reached General King that night from Pope or any other superior officer and no staff-officer of General King saw or heard of Pope. Charles King reports that early in 1863 when the elder King first spotted Pope's statement he wrote to Pope requesting it be rectified. Pope, undoubtedly a student of semantics, replied that the

After September 14, 1862, when the Secretary of War relieved him of his command, the military career of General King definitely began to wane. King remained on sick leave from September 19 until October 19.[53] On October 17 King received orders to report to McClellan.[54] However, on October 21, the orders were changed and King was sent, instead, to

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sentence structure proved that McDowell was the one to whom repeated orders were sent, but that he did not believe he had sent one message to King by a staff-officer. The letter closed with: "I felt always perfectly satisfied that...you had done the very best thing you could have done under the circumstances." By 1878 Pope changed his mind and said that all orders were sent to McDowell. Charles King states that Pope repeated this statement to him in July, 1887, and expressed regret that the phraseology had not been corrected in his Century article of January, 1886. As to King's falling back to Manassas, Gibbon wrote a letter to the elder King on May 7, 1863, which he authorized King to publish, and in which he admitted his part in formulating the decision. It is Charles King's opinion that his father should have demanded a Court of Inquiry, but instead he showed Pope's letter to Lincoln, Seward, and Stanton. They were satisfied, and advised King that there were political reasons for not bringing the matter to light, since it would discredit Pope. Buel, Battles and Leaders, 470-71, 495, 696-97; Gibbon, Personal, 56-57; King, in War Papers, 277-78; King, in Wis. Magazine of History, 380.

[52] O. R., Ser. 1, XII, Part 2, 367; O. R., Ser. 1, XII, Part 3, 816; O. R., Ser. 1, XIX, Part 1, 221, 241; O. R., Ser. 1, LI, Part 1, 831.

[53] George W. Cullin, ed., Biographical Register of the Officers and Graduates of the United States Military Academy (3 editions, 6 vols., Cambridge, 1891), I, 538.

[54] O. R. Ser.1, XIX, Part 1, 241.

General Dix at Fort Monroe, Virginia, for garrison duty.[55] In November King became a witness at the Court of Inquiry into the conduct of McDowell at Second Bull Run.[56] The Court exonerated McDowell, but King appeared in a bad light because the Court adopted "the testimony of General Pope as a faithful statement of the facts."[57] The Court also uncovered King's illness during Second Bull Run.[58] On November 25, 1862, the army appointed King a member of the Fitz-John Porter court-martial board, but he did not take his place until February 14, 1863, when the board found Porter guilty and discharged him.[60] General King then returned to active duty and became commander at Yorktown, Virginia, from March-July. On July 15 King became commander of the division at Fairfax Courthouse. Here he had a slight encounter with Colonel John Mosby and his raiders on July 30 and 31, but managed to drive

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[55] Ibid., 460.

[56] Complete record of hearings may be found in Ibid., Ser. 1, XII, Part 1, 36-332.

[57] This is the testimony King challenged in his 1863 letter to Pope. See footnote 51.

[58] O. R., Ser. 1, XII, Part 1, 110-17.

[59] Buel, Battles and Leaders, 696; O. R., Ser. 1, XII, Part 2, 823.

[60] For complete record of court-martial, see O. R., Ser. 1, XII, Part 2, 823-1, 133.

them off.[61] On October 17, 1863, Washington once again appointed King Minister to Rome. He submitted his military resignation, which the War Department accepted on October 20, 1863.[62] In his final message to his troops King stated:

> An order from the State Department assigns the commanding general to a different duty. It is with infinite reluctance that he takes leave of his comrades in arms. He has received at their hands all that a general could ask or expect: obedience, respect, and affection. He leaves them with the earnest hope that their efforts in behalf of the Union may be crowned with glorious success, and that once more the "flag of the free" may float in triumph over the entire Republic.
>
> The command of the division devolves upon Brigadier-General Corcoran, a gallant and experienced officer, most fit for the post assigned to him, and devoted to the good cause to which we have all pledged our lives.
>
> Rufus King, Brigadier-General, Commanding.[63]

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[61] Ibid., Ser. 1, XXVII, Part 2, 988-90; O. R. Ser. 1, XXVII, Part 3, 706.

[62] Ibid., Ser. 1, XXIX, Part 2, 344.

[63] Ibid.

Chapter VII

Minister to the Papal States

The newly appointed Minister to Rome received his appointment at a very critical time as far as the North was concerned. Ever since the outbreak of the Civil War, the South had desperately been trying to obtain European recognition of the Confederacy, while the North had been working to prevent recognition. In October, 1862, Pope Pius IX wrote his famous letter to the Archbishops of New York and New Orleans, exhorting them to exert every effort to end the civil strife in the United States.[1] The publication of the Pope's letter by the press afforded Jefferson Davis an opportunity to write the Pontiff expressing his thanks for the peace efforts.[2] A. Dudley Mann, one of the Confederate Commissioners in Europe, received instructions to personally deliver the letter to the Pontiff. Mann complied with his instructions and personally read the letter to the Pope. The Pope thanked him and promised to write a reply to President Davis which could be published. Commissioner Mann joyfully relayed this news to Richmond. Mann contended that the form of address used by the

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[1] New York Tribune, August 7, 1863.

[2] James D. Richardson, A Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Confederacy, including the Diplomatic Correspondence, 1861-65, (2 vols., Nashville, 1905), II, 602-03.

Pope--"Illustrious and Honorable Jefferson Davis, President of the Confederate States of America"--was a recognition of the Confederacy.[3]

While the North never officially replied to the Pope's letter to the Archbishops, some interest was evidently involked. Minister King, when reporting about his initial audience with the Pope, remarked that the whole tenor of the conversation had convinced him that the Pope was "undoubtedly sincere in his wish to see the United States at peace," and that motives of humanity prompted his letter to the Archbishops. Behond this the Pope "was not likely to interfere, in any way, in the domestic concerns of America."[4] Seward replied that he was gratified at King's reception, in view of the fact that the Pope's letter to Davis had been ostentatiously paraded "by the insurgents and their friends in Europe." Seward added that the South had high hopes "of the benefits likely to result from it in their favor with Catholics in this country and throughout the world."[5] Minister King immediately reassured the Government that the Pope's letter was merely a gesture of good will, free from all political design.[6] Again in March King informed Seward the Pope's

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[3]Ibid., 570-71.

[4]Leo Francis Stock, ed., United States Minister to the Papal States: Instructions and Despatches (Baltimore, 1923), 282.

[5]Ibid., 285.

[6]Ibid., 289.

letter had been written in reply to a message from Jefferson Davis and did not apply to the Confederate Government any more than to any other.[7] Seward stated that this explanation of the Davis letter completely satisfied the Government.[8] Besides the letter controversy, Minister King had to contend with Bishop Lynch and James T. Soutter, Confederate agents sent to personally press for recognition, but King assured Seward that neither one had nor would receive any official recognition from the Papal Government.[9] Still another recognition crisis originated in Canada. Seward received reports from Montreal that a man there had a Papal recognition of the Confederacy on Parchment. King checked with the Cardinal Secretary of State and reported that the rumor was untrue.[10]

Another problem which plagued Minister King throughout his Rome incumbency arose over the matter of passports. The American consul in Rome, at the time, was W. J. Stillman. Consul Stillman took great delight in compelling Southerners to take the oath of allegiance before renewing their passports.[11] Stillman did not have a very high regard for King. He considered him "a personal friend of Seward, to whom the place was promised whenever he should be tired of fighting,

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[7] Ibid., 288.

[8] Ibid., 290.

[9] Ibid., 313, 324.

[10] Ibid., 314.

[11] William James Stillman, The Autobiography of a Journalist (2 vols., Cambridge, 1901), I, 365-66.

or qualified by glory for future political contests."[12]

Stillman took a brief trip to the United States and upon his return accused King of appointing a Copperhead as Secretary of the Legation during his absence. According to Stillman, the Secretary, J. C. Hooker, requested the abolition of the visa on American passports. The indignant Stillman claimed he protested to King, but received no results. Stillman then reported the matter to Seward, but he again received no satisfaction, because of Seward's personal friendship with King.[13] In fact, Seward did order King to investigate Hooker and the charges.[14] King complied and reported that he considered Stillman entirely mistaken in his accusations.[15] The election of 1864 followed shortly after the conclusion of the Stillman-Hooker affair. Minister King made it a point to stress the significance of Lincoln's majority to the Cardinal Secretary of State, who expressed the hope that this would "hasten the return of Peace and the restoration of the Union."[16]

The end of the war, closely followed by news of Lincoln's assassination, caused the Cardinal Secretary and the Pope to express "the horror with which they regarded the bloody act...

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[12] Ibid., 366.

[13] Ibid., 371-72.

[14] Stock, Ministers, 291-92.

[15] Ibid., 296-97, 305-06, 309-11.

[16] Ibid., 325.

and of their earnest sympathy for the American Government and People in this hour of trial and affliction."[17] Minister King also expressed his personal sympathy at the great loss.[18] After Reconstruction started, King reported that the Pope rejoiced at the rapid recovery which the country had made in restoration.[19] The Cardinal Secretary, too, praised the justice of President Johnson's policy, stating that events in the United States were going on well.[20]

Probably the most significant event of Minister King's tenure in Rome was the apprehension of John H. Surratt, the last of the Lincoln assassins. This strange adventure started on April 21, 1866, when a private in the Papal Zouaves, Henry B. de St. Marie, requested an interview with Minister King. St. Marie, a Canadian by birth, reported that he had known Surratt in the United States and immediately recognized him when he joined the Zouaves. St. Marie claimed Surratt admitted his identity and demanded it be kept secret.[21] Through the ensuing months King kept up a lively correspondence with St. Marie in which the latter repeatedly stressed secrecy. He feared his life would be in jeopardy if word of the negotia-

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[17] Ibid., 337.

[18] Ibid., 335-36.

[19] Ibid., 367.

[20] Ibid., 353.

[21] Duane Koenig, "General Rufus King and the Capture of John H. Surratt," Wis. Magazine of History, XXV (September, 1941), 43.

tions leaked out.[22] King, in the meantime, alerted Washington and was directed to get a sworn statement from St. Marie. Minister King obtained the statement in which St. Marie claimed Surratt told him he was an instigator of the Lincoln shooting, acting on instructions from unnamed persons in London and New York. St. Marie went on to claim that Surratt "can get money in Rome at any time.""I believe," he added, "that he is protected by the clergy, and that the murder is a deep-laid plot, not only against the life of President Lincoln, but against the existence of the republic, as we are aware that priesthood and royalty are and always have been opposed to liberty."[23] Throughout the summer of 1866 the Surratt case kept the wires humming between Washington and Rome. In August King informally asked the Cardinal Secretary if Surratt would be turned over to the United States. No difficulty could be foreseen. On October 16, King received specific instructions to approach the problem in four steps. They were to (1) employ a confidential agent to make a photographic comparison of the suspect; (2) pay St. Marie a sum of gold for his help; and (3) ascertain whether the Papal Government would surrender the suspect on an indictment. If the preceding were not feasible, King was to enter into an extradition treaty by which Surratt could be taken. Fourthly, King was to ask that neither Surratt nor St. Marie be released

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[22] Ibid., 44.

[23] Ibid., 46.

from the Zouaves until requested by the United States.[24] King completed the first two directives, and then went to see the Cardinal Secretary where he received official assurance that Surratt would be surrendered. King reported this to Washington and requested that a United States warship be directed to Civitavecchia to take Surratt and St. Marie to America.[25] However, when he again called on the Cardinal Secretary a week later, King heard the disconcerting news that Surratt had escaped. The Papal authorities, anticipating the United States' request to take Surratt into custody, had ordered his imprisonment, but the fugitive, after a night of confinement, made a miraculous escape into the mountains.[26] King did not blame the Papal Government for the unfortunate turn of affairs since he reported to Washington: "I have," he wrote, "no reason to doubt the entire good faith of the Papal Government in the matter."[27] On November 16, King received word that Surratt had arrived, injured, at a military hospital in Sora, a few miles beyond the Italian frontier. King sent Hooker after the fugitive, but then received word that Surratt was proceeding to Naples. Immediately King alerted the American Minister to Italy, the Consul, and the Neopolitan

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[24] Ibid., 46-47.

[25] Ibid., 47-48.

[26] Ibid., 48-49.

[27] Ibid., 49.

Chief of Police. On November 13 King received word that Surratt had left Naples for Alexandria, Egypt. His ship intended to stop at Malta for supplies and the Consul there was notified. However, the game of "cops-and-robbers" continued, for the ship did not stop at Malta due to quarantine. Finally, on November 23, the chase ended at Alexandria where Consul Charles Hale took Surratt into custody when he attempted to disembark. A few days later the warship Swatara, with St. Marie already a passenger, picked up Surratt for his return to the United States.[28] His trial lasted two months and ended in a hung jury.[29]

There had always been a great deal of antipathy to the Rome ministry and in 1867 these elements banded together to try to end the legation. A rumor began to circulate that the Pope closed the American Chapel in Rome. When Minister King heard of this he immediately sent a dispatch and a cablegram to Seward emphatically denying the allegation.[30] Another lengthier dispatch fully explaining the matter and stating that Americans had received nothing but the greatest courtesy from the Papal Government followed, but neither the cablegram nor the dispatches seem to have reached the American public.[31]

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[28] Ibid., 49-50.

[29] The extensive correspondence between Washington and Rome may be found in Stock, Ministers, 359-60, 362-63, 365, 367-73, 379, 382-83, 385-401, 405, 406-13; Papers Relating to Foreign Affairs, 1866, Part II (Washington, 1867), 129-49.

[30] Stock, Ministers, 413-14, 417.

[31] Ibid., 414-16, 420-24.

At this time Secretary of State Seward and the radically-led Congress were embroiled in a battle. The Radicals, led by Charles Sumner and Thaddeus Stevens, accused Seward of attempting to remove American ministers who supported Congress against him.[32] In a petty effort to strike out at Seward, the Radicals decided to attack him through Minister King. The Chapel incident provided the perfect opening they had been seeking, and they used this to cut off all appropriations for the Rome legation.[33] Stillman also claimed credit for the abolition of the legation. He claimed Seward's refusal to recall King over the aforementioned Hooker affair led Congress to end the appropriation.[34]

Seward, while helpless to do anything about the appropriation, did advise King that the law left the Roman Mission "still existing."[35] King needed no further encouragement. He stated: "It is my present purpose to retain the post which I have the honor to hold, until recalled by the authority to which I owe my appointment. The question of "compensation" I leave to the justice of my Country."[36] Minister King managed to retain his post until August at his own expense,

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[32]Milwaukee Sentinel, February 8 and 19, 1867.

[33]Seward reported to King that "no money hereby or otherwise appropriated shall be paid for the support of an American Legation at Rome, from and after the thirtieth day of June, 1867." Stock, Ministers, 425.

[34]Stillman, Autobiography, 373-74.

[35]Stock, Ministers, 425.

[36]Ibid., 430-31.

but he finally returned to America and resigned on January 1, 1868.[37] The Government accepted his resignation on March 25.[38] King, in desperate financial straits, once again appealed to his old friend Seward. He protested the close of the legation and asked if there were any traveling expenses for a recalled minister. "If so," he wrote, "am I not entitled to it? I should not ask, but that my circumstances are such, as to make every dollar count."[39]

Following his return to the United States, Mr. King made his home at Elizabeth, New Jersey. For a time he held the position of Deputy Collector of Customs at the Port of New York, but in 1869 he had to resign due to ill health. For the rest of his life he remained an invalid. Rufus King died on October 13, 1876, and he is buried with his father and grandfather in the old churchyard of Grace Church, Jamaica, Long Island.[40]

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[37] Ibid., 434.

[38] Ibid.

[39] Ibid., 435-36.

[40] Charles King, "Rufus King: Soldier, Editor, and Statesman," Wis. Magazine of History, IV (June, 1921), 381.

Chapter VIII

Conclusions

These then were the life and times of Rufus King. Mr. King acted his life upon the stage of Nineteenth Century America. The United States, at this time, resembled a young giant, striving to take its place among the great nations of the world. As might be expected, the young, energetic country still suffered from many problems. Mr. King, like many other public spirited men before and since, considered the nation's problems his problems and attempted to facilitate their solution in his own limited way.

Mr. King had appropriate credentials to undertake such a task. He was descended from a prominent New York family. His grandfather, the elder Rufus King, fought in the Revolution, signed the Constitution, served as a United States Senator and became Minister to England. His father, Charles King, fought in the War of 1812, edited the New York American and became President of King's (now Columbia) College. One of his uncles, John A. King, served as a United States Representative and became the first Republican Governor of New York. The other, James G. King, became a well-known financier. With such a noteworthy genealogical background, it is not surprising that great things were expected of the younger

Rufus King. The young man quickly began to live up to expectations, graduating at nineteen from West Point. After a brief army career as an engineer, Mr. King resigned to begin a journalistic career. He became an associate of the New York wire-puller Thurlow Weed and through him developed a life-long friendship with William H. Seward, ended only by the latter's death. As may be expected from these associations, King became an ardent devotee of the Whig party and policy.

In 1845 the owners of a Whig paper in Milwaukee, Wisconsin Territory, asked Thurlow Weed to recommend a young, competent editor to assume control of their paper. Weed persuaded King to assume the position, and the latter arrived in Milwaukee that fall. The new editor of the Milwaukee Sentinel rapidly made the newspaper the dominant Whig organ in the Northwest. Assuming a prominent role in local affairs, the Sentinel opposed the Wisconsin Constitution of 1846 and was instrumental in its defeat. For this service, the people selected King as a delegate to the 1848 Constitutional Convention. There he inscribed his name forever in Wisconsin's history by sponsoring the passage of the anti-corporation provision of the Wisconsin Constitution.

Throughout his ensuing years as editor of the Sentinel, Mr. King championed internal improvements, a high protective tariff and the election of Taylor in 1848 and Scott in 1852. After the dissolution of the Whig Party, the Sentinel switched allegiance to the new Republican Party. Under the Republican

banner, Editor King advocated the election of Fremont in 1856 and Lincoln in 1860. During his editorship, the Sentinel bitterly opposed the Mexican War, the Compromise of 1850, the Kansas-Nebraska Act, the Democratic Party, and the "peculiar institution." With the arrival of the "Irrepressible Conflict," King gave up a diplomatic post to become a Brigadier-General of Volunteers. Although his promising military career failed to fulfill expectations, King did help in the formation of the never-forgotten Iron Brigade and became its first commander. In 1863, King relinquished his command to enter the diplomatic service as Minister to the Papal States. While in Rome, King helped to prevent official recognition of the Confederacy by the Papal Government, and he was instrumental in capturing John Surratt, the last of the Lincoln assassins. Following the abolition of the Rome legation, King returned to the United States and lived the life of a semi-invalid until his death in 1876.

It is sometimes stated that the mark of a man's lifetime is measured by what he leaves behind him. If this is true, Rufus King will not easily be forgotten. He left his mark indelibly upon the nation's, and more especially, Wisconsin's history. However, not all of the causes he espoused came true, nor did he solve all of the nation's problems. Being a Whig and later a Republican in a predominantly Democratic area, King more often than not found himself on the losing political side. The United States engaged in a war with Mexico against his wishes. Despite his attacks, the Compromise of 1850 and

the Kansas-Nebraska Act became law. The "American system," favored by King, never fully developed during his lifetime. Nevertheless, King did see Wisconsin attain statehood under a Constitution he helped formulate, his support of Taylor in 1848 and Lincoln in 1860 did aid them in attaining the Presidency, and the "peculiar institution" no longer cursed the nation. His services to both nation and state are a matter of public record. In the end, King's life, like all others, consisted of successes and failures--no more of one, than the other. However, Rufus King succeeded in fulfilling his heritage. Like his grandfather, he signed a Constitution, fought a war and served as a diplomat. Like his father, he edited a newspaper and served in the field of public education. After his death the family traditions were carried on by his descendants, especially his son Charles. Thus did Rufus King, editor, soldier and diplomat, pass across the American panorama.

> All the world's a stage,
> And all the men and women merely players:
> They have their exits and their entrances;
> And one man in his time plays many parts....
>
> --Shakespeare

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