

Writing Sample

Of

Mark A. King, Ph.D., J.D.

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**Antislavery White Supremacists and the  
Mistreatment of African Americans in Indiana, 1787 to 1870**

A Dissertation Submitted

By

Mark A. King

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Doctoral Dissertation Committee:  
Director: Dr. Thomas Adams Upchurch  
Reader: Jeffrey Zvengrowski  
Reader: Nathan J. Martin

## **Chapter Five**

### **The Rise of the Antislavery White Supremacist Faction in Indiana**

The antislavery white supremacist faction was dominant in the contest for control over the territorial government. While the proslavery faction was able to create a quasi-slavery system with indentured servitude contracts, it was unable to garner support for Indiana to become a slave state upon its organization in 1816. The state constitutional convention spearheaded by antislavery white supremacists ended the debate on making Indiana a slave state, reducing the proslavery faction to an insignificant factor. However, the new state still faced the national slave question.

### **The Indiana State Constitution of 1816**

Having started the historic work of creating Indiana's first state constitution on June 10, 1816, the state organizers made quick work of it. In less than a month, the founders negotiated and created a document for congressional approval. On June 29, 1816, the state convention approved the Indiana Constitution, and Congress formally admitted Indiana into the Union on December 11, 1816. The new state constitution contained twelve articles. Article I began with a concept of equality: "We declare, that all men are born equally free and independent, and have certain natural, inherent, and unalienable rights; Among which are the enjoying and defending life and liberty, and of acquiring, possessing, and protecting property, and pursuing and obtaining happiness and safety."<sup>1</sup> This language conformed with other state constitutions and the principles of the Declaration of Independence to guide the state forward. Article I, section 2 of the Constitution stated, "That all power is inherent in the people; and all free Governments are

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<sup>1</sup> Indiana State Constitution of 1816, art. I, sec. 1.

founded on the authority, and instituted for their peace, safety and happiness.”<sup>2</sup> “That all men have a natural and inalienable right to worship Almighty God, according to the dictates of their own consciences” provides religious freedoms.<sup>3</sup> Multiple sections within Article I enshrined the Bill of Rights and the principles of a free nation. Article I, section 11 stated, “That all Courts shall be open, to every person, for an injury done to him, in his lands, goods, persons, or reputation shall have remedy by the due course of law; and right and justice administered without denial or delay.”<sup>4</sup> These lofty ideals would lead one to believe that the state would be equally open to blacks and whites. However, like the United States Constitution, *all men* did not mean black men.

It limited voting to white male American citizens, twenty-one years of age, who lived in the state for a year immediately preceding any election in which they intended to vote. This was a major victory for the antislavery white supremacists because suffrage was no longer tied to property ownership or a tax. Furthermore, proslavery forces tended to be rich and own land. Despite forming a constitution that expounded freedom and even affirmed that slavery and involuntary servitude did not exist in the state, the General Assembly would enact unequal laws for blacks. Article XI, section 7, asserted, “There shall be neither slavery nor involuntary servitude in the state, otherwise than for the punishment of crimes, whereof the party shall have been duly convicted. Nor shall any indenture of any negro or mulatto hereafter made, and executed out of the bounds of this State be of any validity within the state.” However, it would

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<sup>2</sup> Indiana State Constitution of 1816, art. I, sec. 2.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, sec. 3.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, sec. 11.

take over four years and multiple rulings by the Indiana Supreme Court to remove slavery and indentured servitude in Indiana.<sup>5</sup>

### **The New State Government**

Indiana, under the new constitution, elected Jonathan Jennings as the first governor; he led the antislavery white supremacist faction at the Constitutional Convention of 1816 and ran on the slogan “No slavery in Indiana.” Throughout his lengthy career, he kept the slavery question at the forefront. Jennings was a man of the people who owed much of his political success to making those around him happy. Jennings’s opponent in the election was Thomas Posey, the territorial governor, proslavery standard bearer, and a resident of Jeffersonville.

Although the official returns no longer exist, the election occurred on August 5, 1816; the total vote for each candidate, as given on the returns sent to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and counted in the presence of the two houses of the General Assembly, was recorded as Jennings, 5,211: Posey, 3,934. Under the 1816 Constitution, the governor served three years, and Jonathan Jennings was reelected on August 2, 1819, by a vote of 9,038 to his opponent Christopher Harrison’s 2,900. Two other candidates received votes in the 1819 election: Samuel Carr, 80, and Peter Allen, one.<sup>6</sup> Thus, during the state’s first six years, Jennings was decisively in charge of the governor’s office.

The first General Assembly met at Corydon in the winter of 1816-1817. There were twenty-nine members in the House of Representatives and ten senators during that first session, and they met annually. The 1816 Constitution called for reapportionment of the legislative districts every five years, based upon the enumeration of the state’s white male inhabitants above

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid., art. XI, sec. 7.

<sup>6</sup> Dorothy Riker and Gayle Thornbrough, *Indiana Election Returns: 1816-1851* (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Bureau, 1960), 137-138.

the age of twenty-one, leaving the legislative affairs for the state in the hands of only a few white men, whose task was to provide a new set of laws, which excluded all other races.

Indiana was unique in that the two-party system slowly developed within the state. Politics for Indiana was based more on factionalism and personality than party and remained so during the first decade of statehood. Leaders such as Jonathan Jennings had to navigate challenges and factions as they developed. Richard McCormick stated, “parties did not form over state matters, the state politics could be conducted without political parties, and that parties were formed chiefly to contest for the presidency.”<sup>7</sup> In an editorial, *The Western Sun* stated, “Political parties are forgetting their animosities and extinguishing those fierce contentions that have so long triumphed over patriotism and reason. We hail the period of their decline as the harbinger of better days.”<sup>8</sup> This mood permeated throughout the nation during the Era of Good Feelings, which would end over 1824 presidential election.<sup>9</sup>

“At the county level during these early years, where members of the General Assembly were most involved, candidates were self-nominated. They relied on personal popularity and prowess on the stump to secure election and never ran as partisans. As a result, there were no signs of party in the legislature.”<sup>10</sup> However, sectional alliances arose, usually over controversial matters. Certain instances appeared to be caused by sectionalism, such as moving the capital to Indianapolis from Corydon.<sup>11</sup> The first actual sign of partisanship began in the 1824 presidential

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<sup>7</sup> Richard P. McCormick, *The Second American Party System: Party Formation in the Jacksonian Era* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1966), 270.

<sup>8</sup> *The Western Sun*, June 14, 1817.

<sup>9</sup> Mark H. Haller, “The Rise of the Jackson Party in Maryland, 1820-1829” *The Journal of Southern History* 28, no. 3 (1962): 307.

<sup>10</sup> Justin E. Walsh, *The Centennial History of the Indiana General Assembly, 1816-1978* (Indianapolis: The Select Committee on the Centennial History of the Indiana General Assembly, 1987), 70-71.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 71.

election. Members of the 1823-1824 session “designated themselves as pro-Jackson, pro-Adams, or pro-Clay depending on which Democratic-Republican presidential nominee they preferred.”<sup>12</sup> Despite John Quincy Adams winning the election in 1824, an era of Indiana Jacksonian democracy began.

“Jacksonian democracy in Indiana was rather a spirit. It was the manifest expression of that intense feeling that the common people were supreme.”<sup>13</sup> It was a rebellion against eastern politicians who exuded the incarnation of luxury and aristocracy. Indiana Jacksonians believed Jackson was the embodiment of unsophistication and a frontiersman who fought for his existence, a man to whom they could relate.

Jacksonians equated their support for Andrew Jackson in the 1828 presidential election to the utmost patriotism. *The Western Sun and General Advertiser* printed the following editorial:

Jacksonians, do your part! — the day comes hastening apace when it is your indispensable duty to evince your gratitude to your country’s savior by thrusting upon him your votes for the highest office within the gift of free men. Let nothing prevent you from attending the polls! Every one of you come, and bring his neighbor! Lull not yourselves in the lap of security! The enemy are strong and powerful; but by a united effort they can be beaten. They are backed by the power and patronage of the government, but we by the immutable justice of our cause. Let nothing discourage you — by union and concentration the battle can be won — our numbers are sufficient but, we have none to spare.

Indianians, the third day of next November will be the only opportunity you will ever have to vote for Andrew Jackson. Then why not make use of it? Arouse from your sleep of security — the enemy are at hand flushed with the spoils of a former triumph! Arise, return the honor of your country — let it not hereafter be said that republics are ungrateful!<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Walsh, *The Centennial History*, 71.

<sup>13</sup> Adam A. Leonard, “Personal Politics in Indiana 1816 to 1840,” *Indiana Magazine of History* 19, no. 1 (March 1923): 29.

<sup>14</sup> *Western Sun and General Advertiser*, October 25, 1828, 1. The paper was previously called *The Western Sun* but changed names in 1817 after the capitol was moved from Corydon to Indianapolis and the state’s formation. Under the territorial government, the paper had been financially subsidized. The new name was meant to garner advertisement. Jess Cohen, “Elihu Stout published the first newspaper in Indiana,” *Huron Daily Tribune* (August 9, 2016).

After Jackson won the state and the election, the same paper rejoiced that a “backwoodsman” triumphed over the aristocracy.<sup>15</sup> This new era in Indiana politics would allow for the racial laws of the 1830s to pass with little opposition.

The 1830 U.S. Census reported that three slaves still lived in the state, one in each county of Decatur, Orange, and Warrick; however, a local census for Vincennes (Knox County) listed thirty-two slaves.<sup>16</sup> The number of slaves still existing in Indiana by the 1830s was under-reported. Meanwhile, the free black population had significantly increased; however, compelling evidence suggests they were still under long-term indentured servant contracts despite existing laws. The population total for Indiana in 1830 was 343,301: free black males, 1,857, and free black females, 1,772, representing approximately one percent of the population.<sup>17</sup>

The 1840 U.S. Census showed a significant increase in the total population of Indiana to 685,966 and showed three slaves still living in the state but not in the same counties. Putnam County reported one slave, and Rush County reported two, a male and a female. The black population increased to 7,168, holding at approximately one percent of the population.<sup>18</sup>

Indiana continued with growth, and the 1850 U.S. Census reported a total population of 988,416, with the black population at 11,262. The percentage of whites to blacks in Indiana continued to hover at approximately one percent.<sup>19</sup> Within the state, the census reported no

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<sup>15</sup> *Western Sun and General Advertiser*, December 27, 1828.

<sup>16</sup> 1830 Census Records, 34-35. <https://www.archives.gov/files/research/census/1790/1790censusact.pdf>. See Paul Finkelman, “Almost a Free State: The Indiana Constitution of 1816 and the Problem with Slavery,” *Indiana Magazine of History* 111, no. 1 (March 2015): 75.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 35.

<sup>18</sup> 1840 Census Records, 81-82. <https://www2.census.gov/library/publications/decennial/1840/1840v3/1840c-05.pdf>.

<sup>19</sup> There is some statistical information before 1850, but it provides more dependable information on distribution. One addition is that the 1850 census canvassers required all inhabitants to identify the state or foreign nation of their birth. Following the 1850 and 1860 censuses, the published census reports provided statewide nativity



slaves.<sup>20</sup> The 1831 law, which required blacks to have a bond to live in the state, had no impact on migration because the ratio of whites to blacks remained constant before and after the law. In 1851, however, a constitutional amendment prohibited black migration, which profoundly impacted it. According to the U.S. Census of 1860, only 166 blacks had moved to the state in the ten years.<sup>21</sup>

### **The Antislavery White Supremacist Factions' Resistance to Slavery**

On August 6, 1851, the *Indiana State Journal* reported a meeting of the “colored citizens of Indiana,” which had convened in 1842, 1847, and then again in 1851, partially to petition the legislature regarding the rights of black residents. The meeting in 1851 was to rally against the proposed 1850 Constitutional Convention’s draft constitution.<sup>22</sup>

Slavery, even in free states such as Indiana, was on the minds of the populace. The Chase letters allow insight into the opinions of one prominent citizen, whom presumably many others shared.<sup>23</sup> In these letters, Salmon P. Chase, an independent Democrat who resented his party's proslavery sentiment, expressed no confidence in the opposing party — the Whigs — in fighting slavery. Chase's views proved prophetic, of course, as the Whig Party soon disintegrated over the slavery issue. Chase himself would become a founding member of the new Republican Party thereafter and would eventually become the sixth chief justice of the U.S. Supreme Court.

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data based on this information. See Gregory S. Rose, “The Distribution of Indiana’s Ethnic and Racial Minorities in 1850,” *Indiana Magazine of History* 87, no. 3 (September 1991): 225n4.

<sup>20</sup> 1850 Census Records, 756, 782.  
<https://www2.census.gov/library/publications/decennial/1850/1850a/1850a-42.pdf>.

<sup>21</sup> Compendium of the Ninth Census, 4.  
<https://www2.census.gov/library/publications/decennial/1870/compendium/1870e-03.pdf>.

<sup>22</sup> *Indiana State Journal*, August 6, 1851.

<sup>23</sup> Salmon P Chase, Henry Clay, and Henry George, “Letters of Salmon P. Chase, Henry Clay, Henry George: Original Documents,” *Indiana Magazine of History* (1911).

In a letter to Joshua R. Giddings, an Ohio Congressman, dated February 15, 1842, Chase wrote, “The country is beginning to awake at length to the danger of slaveholding encroachments, and the time is rapidly drawing on, I trust, when the champions of freedom will have the place which of right belongs to them in the confidence and favor of a long deceived and oppressed, but now awakening public.”<sup>24</sup> He discussed uncompromising fundamental principles. “The principle must be established and acquiesced in that the government is a non-slaveholding government — that the Nation is a non-slaveholding Nation — that slavery is a custom of State law-local-not to be extended or favored, but to be confined within the States which admit and sanction it.”<sup>25</sup>

Chase continued to discuss the issues within the Whig Party, “I hardly think that the Whigs as a party are prepared to take this ground. The most they will do is to tolerate liberty. They will, in this quarter, hardly do that. They will not do it at all unless attachment to liberty is made subservient to party ends and secondary to party obligations.”<sup>26</sup> Chase discussed the issues with supporting the Whigs over the Democrats,

For such is the policy of opposition to antislavery principle, with many of the Whig party, that thousands would vote for Shannon in preference to him, while many of the Democrats who would otherwise support him, will be persuaded that the nomination is a Whig maneuver, and will fall back into their party ranks. I would prefer, for one, to go into the battle with our own strength. We may be defeated now, but at the next election parties must divide on principle, and then we must triumph.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Chase, Clay, and George, “Letters,” 123.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 123.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 124.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 125. Wilson Shannon was the Democratic candidate for governor of Ohio in 1842, he defeated the Whig incumbent Thomas Corwin by less than two thousand votes on October 11, 1842. See Charles R. Brown *Brown's Primary Government of Ohio: Including the History, Resources, and Jurisprudence of the State: Designed for Use in Common Schools* (Kalamazoo: Moore & Quale, 1875). Also, *Proceedings of the Democratic State Convention: Held in Columbus, Ohio, on the Seventh and Eighth Days of January 1842; Including an Address to the People of Ohio* (Columbus: S. & M. H. Medary, 1842).

In a postscript, Chase asked, “How would it answer for you or some other gentleman to introduce a bill for the repeal of the laws sustaining slavery in the District of Columbia?”<sup>28</sup> These letters reveal the struggle of some Democrats with a proslavery platform.

On September 14, 1843, a meeting of the “antislavery friends of Oakland” assembled in Pendleton, Indiana, for a rally, including Frederick Douglass as a guest speaker. On that day, a mob from Columbus, Indiana, threatened to disrupt the meeting. William A. White of Newcastle, Indiana, wrote about the events and published them in the famous Boston antislavery newspaper of William Lloyd Garrison, *The Liberator*, on October 13, 1843. White described Columbus as “a miserable, rum-drinking place, about 6 miles distant” from Pendleton. He portrayed Pendleton as not necessarily antislavery but willing to hear and discuss the question.

The meeting was to occur at a Baptist Church, which, upon learning of the protesters, feared for the building’s safety and withdrew its offer for its use. When the friends of Oakland arrived for the meeting, they faced an intoxicated mob of thirty people, making threats of violence. Pendleton resident Dr. Cook and a person called Bradburn attempted to address the mob, but fortunately, a rain shower diffused the situation.

The friends gathered the next day at a meeting location in the woods. Initially, eleven “mobocrats” took seats within the audience; White noticed one man secretly winking as Bradburn spoke; he gave a signal, and a giant mob formed. The audience comprised one hundred men and thirty women as the mob came looming through the woods, approximately thirty or more armed with stones and eggs and led “by a fellow in a coonskin cap, tail and all, as a representation of the great Whig party, and another barefooted man, with nothing but a dirty shirt

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<sup>28</sup> Chase, Clay, and George, “Letters,” 126.

and pantaloons on, and the former half of his shoulders, as a representation of the democracy of the country.”<sup>29</sup>

The crowd became agitated and retreated, but White implored them to remain seated, and the majority did. He recounted that the women in the audience were the “most courageous” as the mob surrounded the group. The mob threw eggs and stones even as Dr. Cook attempted to address the mob, as he had done the day before. Speaking to White, James Jackson asked, “Why we did not go to the South and preach?” He then took the stand and made what White described as “a most ridiculous spectacle, interlarding his speech with copious oaths, and ending off by saying he could not talk, but he could fight—that he had too much good blood in his veins to let us go on,” and the violence continued and escalated.<sup>30</sup> The mob was more incensed with the call for racial equality and not the abolishment of slavery since the Pendleton area was antislavery.

The mob joined in, and commenced pushing the audience back and knocking them down. Mioajah White, a warm friend, was knocked down, with another friend named Graham. Frederick Douglass who at this time, was safe among friends, not seeing me, thought I was knocked down, and seizing a club, rushed into the crowd. His weapon was immediately snatched from him, and he finding he had attracted their anger against himself, fled for his life, and ten or more the mob following, crying ‘kill the nigger, kill the damn nigger.’ I hope never to look upon so fearful a sight, as poor Frederick fleeing before these hell hounds, panting for his blood. It was a fearfully true picture of the flight of the fugitive slave, and it was fitting it should take place on the soil of this pro slavery state.<sup>31</sup>

White was struck in the head and the front but suffered no severe injury. He further said, “Frederick was taken up, and though at first he seemed to have been severely injured, he soon recovered and was able to lecture the next day.”<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> William A. White, “Letter from William A. White,” *The Liberator*, October 13, 1843. See also John L. Thomas, “Early History of Pendleton,” *The Pendleton Times*, July 22, 1915.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

The events described by White could be construed as abolitionist propaganda. The story was republished in the *Muncie Morning Star* in 1911, and a letter to the editor was published on January 16, 1911. J.H. Hicks wrote to the editor of the *Star* and stated:

In a recent issue of your paper you refer to the assault made on Mr. Douglas and others. I noticed that you say that “probably few now living remember the affair.” I wish to inform you that I was present and was an eyewitness of the whole affair. I was then a young boy and had gone to Pendleton to mill, and saw the onslaught. Douglas was knocked down and being pounded when Mr. W. A. White came to his rescue, but he was hit with a rock on the back of his head, from which I saw the blood flowing in a stream. The man who wore the coonskin cap was a Mr. David Crowl; The man who was so poorly attired was Mr. Tom Collins. He and Mr. Adams were the leaders in the attack. Messers. [*sic*] Neal Hardy, John Cook and John Mingle were the parties that rescued Douglas and took them home. I am now 83 and thought a word from me would not be amiss.<sup>33</sup>

The time and distance from the events relayed by Hicks confirm White’s recollection.

Of course, not all stories of resistance to slavery involve just white men. Stories of African American courage abound, such as that of Millie Wilkerson, who in 1839 stood up to a slaveholder who appeared on a doorstep seeking her granddaughters. The story goes:

One day around harvest time in 1839, Margaret and Susan, two of Millie Wilkerson’s teenage granddaughters showed up at her house in Cabin Creek [Randolph County, Indiana]. They were slaves in Tennessee. Margaret the oldest was barely 13. Millie Wilkerson thought quickly. She knew that the slaveholder or some slave catchers would soon track the two young girls. She gave her young grandson a horn and mounted him on a horse. She told him to ride like Thunder while blowing the horn to alert their neighbors. As expected, Thomas Stringfellow, the slaveholder from Tennessee appeared in the settlement with a posse. He was angry. But Millie Wilkerson was determined. She stood guard at the door with a corn knife, and formed the slaveholder and his posse that she would use it on anyone who tried to enter her house. Meanwhile her neighbors had come running with clubs, axes, hoes, and anything else they could find. Stringfellow and the posse realized that they were outnumbered and retreated.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> J. H. Hicks, “He Saw It,” *The Muncie Morning Star*, January 16, 1911.

<sup>34</sup> “Millie Wilkerson,” *The Indiana Department of Commerce, Tourism & Film Development Division* (1994).

This story is rare because Randolph County had a sizeable amount of black-owned farmland, mainly in Cabin Creek, Snow Hill, and Greenville.<sup>35</sup> It was a unique county within the state, which could have aroused the help of black neighbors for protection. Stringfellow attempted to sue Wilkerson and others for the value of the girls, but the court dismissed the case.<sup>36</sup>

### Indiana Quakers

Indiana Quakers, in general, opposed discriminatory legislation and attitudes toward blacks. However, in the state, it was not until the 1830s that they became pro-abolitionists, thus vocal opponents of anti-black laws, and participated in the political system. In 1831 when the bill, *An Act Concerning Free Negroes and Mulattoes, Servants and Slaves*, was being proposed to prevent blacks from moving into the state, a Quaker senator, Daniel Worth, sarcastically proposed an amendment that would require “Negroes to shew [*sic*] cause why they are black” instead of why they should give bond to live in the state.<sup>37</sup>

In the 1824 election, the strongest antislavery sentiment in Indiana was in the eastern part of the state, where Quakers supported John Quincy Adams. Adams was the only candidate not to own slaves since both Andrew Jackson and Henry Clay, his major opponents, were slave owners.<sup>38</sup> An editor, viewing the campaign as a contest between Adams and Clay, declared that for voters to prefer Clay over Adams, “they must first learn to disregard all distinction between right and wrong — between freedom and slavery — between a man polluted with the crimes of

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<sup>35</sup> “Early Black Settlements by County: Randolph County,” *Indiana Historical Society*.  
<https://indianahistory.org/research/research-materials/early-black-settlements/early-black-settlements-by-county/>

<sup>36</sup> “Wilkerson,” *Indiana Department of Commerce*.

<sup>37</sup> Walsh, *Centennial History*, 149. *An Act Concerning Free Negroes and Mulattoes, Servants and Slaves*, is discussed in Chapter Six.

<sup>38</sup> Henry Clay manumitted his slave Charlotte Dupee in 1840, but her husband, Aaron Dupee, remained until the Civil War. See William Kelly, “Slavery and Strategy in Decatur House: Charlotte Dupee’s Suit for Freedom in Early Washington, D.C.,” *The White House Historical Association*.

gaming and duelling [*sic*], and one whose moral character is ‘without spot and blemish.’”<sup>39</sup> The 1824 election was just one political contest in which the Quakers united.

The Quakers in Richmond in 1842 attempted to confront Henry Clay, who again was a candidate seeking the office of president, with a petition of over two thousand signatures; they hoped to get support for the immediate emancipation of the slaves. Henry Clay, a Whig and slave owner, had helped transport free blacks to West Africa with the American Colonization Society. He was in Richmond for the Indiana Yearly Meeting of the Society of Friends.<sup>40</sup> While the Quakers were unsuccessful, these acts showed the number of Hoosiers who opposed slavery and racial laws had become more vocal.<sup>41</sup>

On November 21, 1849, the Quakers in Wayne and Randolph counties published their opposition to Indiana race laws. The headline in an editorial that ran inside the newspaper *Palladium* in Richmond, Indiana, read “Black Laws of Indiana.”

The proximity of the time for the annual meeting of the state legislature suggests the inquiry as to what important measures will be brought before it for legislative action. Among other propositions and not the least important, will be the repeal of the black laws, which have so long disgraced our statutes. The same proposition has from time to time, been heretofore presented, but that consideration has not been given to it, which it is worthy of; And as there is a diversity of opinion among the people themselves on the subject we propose to publish so much of the statutes referred to, as we regard objectionable.<sup>42</sup>

The works of Quakers were not just confined to the political arena; they also were an integral part of the Underground Railroad and settling racially diverse communities.

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<sup>39</sup> *Public Ledger*, May 15, 1824.

<sup>40</sup> American Colonization Society was a movement that started in 1816. It was a response to Northerners’ resistance to allowing free blacks to immigrate to the North.

<sup>41</sup> Hoosiers are residents of Indiana. There are multiple theories on the origin of the term, but no definitive explanation. “What is a Hoosier?” *Indiana Historical Bureau*.

<sup>42</sup> “Editorial,” *Palladium*, November 21, 1849.

In the early 1840s, Billy Clark, John Wright, Robert Smith, Robert Brazelton, and Robert Brown (all black men) migrated from the Carolinas to find a new home in Indiana. They were not all slaves, as only Smith, Brazelton, and Brown were former slaves; it is not clear if they escaped or were set free. By 1844, the men moved to farmlands southwest of Marion, Indiana, in modern-day Grant County. These men, with the help of Quakers such as Aaron Betts, established a community despite the discriminatory laws that forbade blacks from migrating to Indiana without a bond.

These six men are credited with helping future black settlers in the area by starting a growing community for blacks and Quakers there. Most black families that migrated to the area arrived during the next ten years. One example is the Weaver family, whose name is now used for the community of black settlers in Grant County, who arrived in 1847 from North Carolina. These migrant blacks brought their religious expression, and in 1849, the Hills Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church was built in Grant County. The county and community are an example that not all areas of Indiana enforced or supported legislative enactments that would prevent blacks from integrating into communities.<sup>43</sup>

Not all Quakers, of course, supported an antislavery platform. In the fall of 1842, Quakers from the Meeting for Sufferings removed eight members for their abolitionist sympathies; this caused abolitionist Friends to separate and form the Indiana Yearly Meeting of Antislavery Friends, which grew to around two thousand. In *Moral Choices: Two Indiana Quaker Communities and the Abolitionist Movement*, the authors argued:

While the events of the separation are not in dispute, its causes are. At the time, there was no lack of explanations. Antislavery friends saw themselves upholding traditional Quaker testimony against slavery, while their opponents had abandoned it. Their opponents,

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<sup>43</sup> Jerry Miller, "People of Color: Grant County's Black Heritage," *Chronicle-Tribune Magazine* (July 9, 1978): 4.



meanwhile fond of non-Friends' applause, prosperous because of the economic ties with the South, and committed to the Whig party, looked on abolition as calculated to deprive them of the means of amassing wealth.<sup>44</sup>

### **The Underground Railroad**

Although the term "Underground Railroad" was not coined until around 1840, some antislavery whites had been helping runaway slaves escape to Canada since the 1820s.<sup>45</sup> Indiana was a prime location for conducting the railroad; it connected Kentucky, a slave state, with a direct route to Canada via Michigan. It was the center of all activities in the Midwest. The railroad was in operation by 1825; however, with the passage of the 1850 Fugitive Slave Law, the secrecy and frequency of use of the so-called railroad became more critical.

This law further increased the need for abolitionists to be careful not to get caught abetting runaways. Historian Joseph Burgess argued that at least one person in every Township participated in the Underground Railroad movement in Indiana and Quaker communities; it could have been higher. Burgess suggests that no less than two hundred and forty-four Hoosiers aided fugitive slaves and speculates that the number of slaves who made it to freedom must have been in the thousands.<sup>46</sup>

It is important to note that while Quakers and other progressive whites aided fugitives, there were a considerable number of free blacks and former slaves who helped with the Underground Railroad. Some historians advocate that "the Underground Railroad was the first

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<sup>44</sup> Thomas D. Hamm, David Dittmer, Chenda Fruchter, Ann Giordano, Janice Mathews, and Ellen Swain, "Moral Choices: Two Indiana Quaker Communities and the Abolitionist Movement," *Indiana Magazine of History* (June 1991): 120.

<sup>45</sup> The Underground Railroad was neither underground nor a railroad, but a secret network of antislavery opponents who worked covertly, over vast distances, to help escaped slaves to Canada. For a view of the Underground Railroad, see Wilbur Henry Siebert, *The Underground Railroad from Slavery to Freedom* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1898). Siebert was a history professor at Ohio State University and spent six years researching and interviewing participants of the Underground Railroad.

<sup>46</sup> Betty J. Lane, "Unground for Slaves: Railroad Without Rails," *Outdoor Indiana* (March 1968): 4.

multicultural, multiclass, multiethnic human rights movement in the United States that was dominated by people of African descent.”<sup>47</sup> However, the argument that blacks dominated the Underground Railroad is not widely accepted.

According to researchers, there were three primary routes for the Underground Railroad in Indiana. The first was the western route, which began at the river crossing near Rockport and Evansville, where one leader was Judge A. L. Robinson. Other vital spots included Petersburg in Princeton, where John W. Posey and Reverend B. McCormick (who fled to Canada to avoid being arrested by U.S. Marshalls) resided. From Princeton, the route continued through Vincennes, Terre Haute, Lafayette, and finally into South Bend, where they crossed into Niles, Michigan.<sup>48</sup>

The second route began just over the river from Brandenburg, Kentucky; after crossing, the fugitives would land in Mauckport and Morvins Landing. The route continued through Salem, Columbus, into Indianapolis, Logansport, and Plymouth; it ended in Kalamazoo, Michigan. This route afforded help from Quaker settlements at Mooresville and Marion County, where Hiram Bacon in Washington Township was the primary station master. Another Quaker community along the route was Westfield, where Levi Pennington’s depot was located.<sup>49</sup>

The final eastern route was one of the most prevalent, beginning in Madison or Lawrenceburg on the Ohio border. From Madison or Lawrenceburg, the fugitive could trek to Indianapolis and follow the central route or head to Greensburg or Richmond and transverse along the Ohio border to Michigan. The eastern path headed through Decatur, Fort Wayne, and

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<sup>47</sup> Eric R. Jackson, “Quest for Freedom: The Underground Railroad in Southwest Ohio, Northern Kentucky, and Southern Indiana,” *Traces of Indiana and Midwestern History* 27, no. 2 (2015): 39.

<sup>48</sup> Arville L. Funk, “Railroad to Freedom,” *Outdoor Indiana* (November 1964): 5-6.

<sup>49</sup> Funk, “Railroad to Freedom,” 7.

Auburn; it eventually led to Battle Creek, Michigan. It was on this eastern path that Levi Coffin would often assist the fugitive slaves.<sup>50</sup>

Coffin's autobiography discussed the number of fugitives he helped over twenty years as being in the hundreds. While he recalled many of the stories, he rarely gave dates or names. Coffin stated, "When the fugitives came to our house, they seldom gave the name, by which they had been known in slavery, or they did, we gave them another name, by which they were afterward known both at our house and in Canada."<sup>51</sup>

The stories provided by Levi Coffin have common themes that have been discussed in various works: beatings, kidnapping, and other inhumane treatment. In each of these stories, he brought to life the plight of the slaves and the closeness of his community that assisted the fugitives to escape. The Indiana Underground Railroad was successful in circumventing state and federal laws that prevented legal equality for blacks.

### **Proslavery and White Supremacist Policies and Criminal Codes**

Despite the Indiana State Constitution of 1816's prohibition on slavery and indentured servitude, the practice of selling humans within the state continued. In the *Vincennes Western Sun* on February 15, 1817, G. R. C. Sullivan and James B. McCall advertised for the estate of Henry Vanderburgh to sell to the highest bidder a "Negro woman and child" on Friday, February 28, 1817. The advertisement stated that the woman was brought into the Indiana Territory and registered at the Clerk's Office of Knox County; however, it did not state whether she was

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<sup>50</sup> Funk, "Railroad to Freedom," 7.

<sup>51</sup> Levi Coffin, *Reminiscences of Levi Coffin, The Reputed President of the Underground Railroad* (Cincinnati: Robert Clarke & Co., 1800), 139.

considered a slave or an indentured servant. It said, “for the health and qualities of the woman,” to inquire.<sup>52</sup>

In 1818, the Indiana General Assembly passed several black codes. One such law stated that no biracial or black person could testify against a white man.<sup>53</sup> Chapter V, section 59 of the new statute said: “If any white person shall have sexual intercourse, with any negro within this state, he or she so offending, shall, on conviction by presentment or indictment, if a male be fined in any sum not exceeding one hundred dollars, and if a female, be imprisoned not exceeding ten days; and it shall not hereafter be lawful for any white person to intermarry with any negro in this state,” but no penalty was listed.<sup>54</sup> The Indiana Supreme Court never ruled on this issue, and the 1818 statute did not impose a criminal punishment on interracial marriages until modifications in 1840 and 1842.

In 1840, a scandal in Indianapolis broke out, and Levi Coffin told the story in his book. According to Coffin, a man and his family moved from Massachusetts to Missouri and purchased a farm; next door was a biracial indentured servant man whose term was soon to expire. The man came to work for the white family and stayed after his indenture contract expired. He soon became entrenched in the family, which decided to move back to Massachusetts, but the father died before the journey began. Before his final breath, he asked the young man to ensure his family returned home, which he promised to do.

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<sup>52</sup> *Vincennes Western Sun*, February 15, 1817, 4.

<sup>53</sup> *Laws of the State of Indiana, Passed and Published, at the Second Session of the General Assembly, Held at Corydon, on the First Monday in December, in the Year One Thousand Eight Hundred and Seventeen* (Corydon: A. and J. Brandon, 1818), 39-40.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 94.

While returning to Massachusetts, the family arrived in Indianapolis and could not continue because of winter storms. They hoped to wait out the winter, so the young man took work inside the city and supported the family. Coffin described the biracial man:

Who was really almost white and possessed none of the Negro features, was very genuinely in his appearance and manners, and so kind and attended to them in thoughtful for their welfare, that one of the daughters became very much attached to him. He had long loved her in secret, without daring to speak, but now, finding that his love was reciprocated, saw no reason why they should not be married. The mother gave her consent and accompanied her prospective son-in-law to obtain the marriage license.<sup>55</sup>

So, the marriage was consensual and welcomed by the family; however, Coffin went on to say,

On the evening of the wedding, the news spread through the city that a Negro had married a white woman, and an infuriated mob filled the street in front of the house, and with hoots and yells proceeded to search for the man-several shades lighter than some of themselves-who dared to marry a white woman. The bridegroom escaped by a back way and fled to the woods for safety, as if they were a fugitive slave. Not finding him, the mob dragged the bride out of the house and rode her on a rail through the streets, as a demonstration of the popular indignation. The bridegroom remained concealed in the woods for a while, finding no way to communicate with his wife, and not daring to venture back to get his clothes or to say goodbye. He was in deep distress and knew not what to do.<sup>56</sup>

However, this was not to be the end, as Indianapolis citizens searched the homes of blacks for the bridegroom; fearful for his life, the man moved eastward. He sought refuge in a black settlement in Flat Rock, Henry County, then proceeded to Coffin's home. Eventually, newspapers ran the story throughout the state, and the state legislature, being in session at Indianapolis, took immediate action.<sup>57</sup> The legislature imposed heavy penalties on all who could

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<sup>55</sup> Coffin, *Reminiscences*, 155-160.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>57</sup> Coffin's story is partially verified through newspapers. The story of the marriage appeared in the *Brookville Indiana American*, February 14, 1840, 4. Which was a reprint from the *New Albany Argus* on January 15, 1840. The story reads: "But recently, at Indianapolis, a negro, seduced, a young white girl. Finding her situation, with the consent of her mother, she married the negro. Divers and sundry individuals collected, and the negro has not been heard of since. A hole cut through the ice of the canal pretty clearly accounts for his absence. The circumstances of the marriage created a considerable sensation in Indianapolis, owing to the fact that the girl was highly accomplished and bore a respectable standing in the society of that city." Calvin Fletcher completes the story, see *infra*.

be involved in such a marriage.<sup>58</sup> The motivation for the mob and the legislature was the mixing of the races and the prevention of racial equality.

Calvin Fletcher, in his diary, narrows the day the events took place to January 2, 1840, and provides details of Coffin's story. He writes:

This night a mob was assembled in consequence of the marriage of an intelligent white girl of 18 or 20 to a negro or mulatto — a family it is said originally from Massachusetts who emigrated to Missourie [*sic*] — there the father purchased a farm & the negro in question. [The father] died & the family with the [negro] set out for Massachusetts & while on the way the mother 3 daughters & the negro stopped at this place where they lived for 2 or 3 months passed. They were visited by several of our most respectable & one of the young ladies was employed to play upon the organ [in] Episcopalian Church after the death of Mrs. Morrison. It is said the young ladies are intelligent. The license was obtained from the Clerk on the application of the mother. Her story was that it was the injunction of her deceased husband to the negro to take care of his family & she consented to the marriage &c for such reasons. The parties were married at Crouders over the river 2 miles distance on New Years eve [*sic*]. Jim Johnson J.P. refused to marry them but Esqr. Weaver consented & said the ceremony & on this Eve [2 Jany.] when I was leaving my office at ½ past 9 heard the mob as they proceeded [up] the street in good order singing “a long time ago.” They proceeded over the River to Crouders. The negro man fled. They took the woman made her ride in on a horse & marched her up & down the street. Dr. Stipp undertook to interfere & he was knocked down & much injured. This affair has created much excitement. There is not an individual in the place to my knowledge who justifies the white family who have submitted to such indignity.<sup>59</sup>

Threatened and humiliated, the bride signed the divorce petition thrust upon her by the state. The legislature divorced the couple, and the lady was declared free from any disgrace. Coffin stated people blamed him for taking the young man, now called Charlie, and harboring him against the mob. Coffin hid Charlie for several months, and finally, one of Coffin's friends agreed to venture to Indianapolis to retrieve Charlie's clothing and determine how the family was

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<sup>58</sup> “Indiana Legislature,” *Indianapolis Indiana Journal*, January 18, 1840, 1; *Indianapolis Indiana Democrat*, February 25, 1840, 3.

<sup>59</sup> Emma Lou Thornbrough, ed., *The Diary of Calvin Fletcher*, Vol. II (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Bureau, 1972), 132-133.

doing. The family remained in Indianapolis until the spring, sending word to Charlie, and eventually, they met up in Cincinnati, never to be heard from again.<sup>60</sup>

The session of the 1840 General Assembly, which Coffin mentioned, adopted a stringent penal code that declared all biracial marriages void and the children illegitimate. It defined the marriages as felonies with punishment set as a fine of not less than one thousand and not over five thousand dollars and imprisonment for not less than ten years and not over twenty.<sup>61</sup> In 1842, a modification reduced imprisonment to one to ten years of hard labor, and those assisted or abetted were equally punishable. Officiants of these marriages were fined up to five hundred dollars and could no longer perform marriages. The law further changed in 1881 with a reduced maximum fine of one thousand dollars and the possibility of one to ten years imprisonment, and it remained the law until its repeal in 1965.<sup>62</sup>

### **Exclusionist: The Indiana Colonization Movement**

“I long to see the day when there will not be a Nigger in the U.S. I want them all sent away to a country by themselves and let the Whites be by themselves, to work out there [*sic*] Salvation the best they can,” declared Luman Jones in 1863.<sup>63</sup> The American Colonization Society (ACS) began in 1816. It was the product of national interest in addressing and responding to northerners’ resistance to allowing free blacks to immigrate to the North. Robert

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<sup>60</sup> Coffin, *Reminiscences*, 155-160.

<sup>61</sup> “An Act,” *Indianapolis Indiana Journal*, March 21, 1840, 4.

<sup>62</sup> Thomas P. Monahan, “Marriage Across Racial Lines in Indiana,” *Journal of Marriage and Family* 35, no. 4 (November 1973): 633.

<sup>63</sup> Luman Jones, “Letter from Luman Jones to Elizabeth Jones, November 12, 1863,” *Luman Jones Collection*, Indiana Historical Society Library.

Price, a resident of Indiana, stated, “We don’t want them up North... Let the curse stay in the south.”<sup>64</sup>

On Friday, December 13, 1816, Charles F. Mercer, a representative from Loudoun County, Virginia, in addressing the Virginia House of Delegates, proposed a resolution that passed 137 to 9 to find land to resettle the free black population. The resolution reads in part:

Whereas the General Assembly of Virginia have repeatedly sought to obtain asylum, beyond the limits of the United States for such persons of color, as had been or might be, emancipated under the laws of this Commonwealth, but have heretofore found all their efforts frustrated either by the disturbed state of other nations, or domestic causes equally unpropitious to its success;

They now avail themselves of a period when the peace has healed the wounds of humanity, and the principal nations of Europe have concurred, with the government of the United States, and abolishing the African slave trade. That the executive be requested to correspond with the president of the United States for the purpose of obtaining a territory upon the shore of the North Pacific, or at some other place not within the states or territory territorial governments of the United States, to serve as an asylum for such persons of color, as are now free, and may desire the same, and for those who may be hereafter emancipated within this Commonwealth.<sup>65</sup>

The General Assembly made the resolution in a closed-door session.

In 1817, Samuel Milroy, a member of the Indiana General Assembly, introduced a resolution calling on Congress to colonize blacks in the far west.<sup>66</sup> The Indiana General Assembly invited persons to form an auxiliary of the ACS and to attend an organizational meeting on the evening of January 20, 1820, in the Senate chambers in Corydon and resolved: “That the principle and practice of slavery, are wholly unrecognized with the free constitution of the American government, and the best feelings of the American government, and the feelings of

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<sup>64</sup> Robert J. Price, “Letter from Robert J. Price to D. Price, June 6, 1863,” *Robert J. Price Collection*, Indiana Historical Society Library.

<sup>65</sup> “Virginia House of Delegates: Friday, December 13,” *Vincennes Western Sun*, January 11, 1817, 4.

<sup>66</sup> “Preamble [and] Resolution by General Samuel Milroy offered in the Indiana Legislature, 1817 on the Subject of Colonizing Negroes,” photo static copy, *Robert Milroy Papers*, Box 2, Folder 1: *Samuel Milroy Papers*, Indiana Historical Society Library.



human nature.” This all-male society asserted that “No exertions which can properly be made for the eradication of this great evil, should be withheld; and that the use of every means which can justly be resorted to, be recommended to the citizens of this State, to check its extension and to accomplish its abolition as far as practicable.” The Society’s mission was, “to aid and assist the American Colonization Society... in its laudable and humane intentions.” Members paid the Society two dollars in annual dues and appointed officers and managers. Governor Jennings served as the Society’s president; members included some of the most prominent citizens.<sup>67</sup>

However, despite its formation in 1820 and a few motions voted upon, the Indiana Colonization Society (as the auxiliary was formally named) accomplished little during its first ten years. However, it was revived in 1829 with Supreme Court Justice Jesse L Holman becoming the Society’s president. Its stated purpose was defending colonization as a human undertaking that would allow free states to escape “a flood of suspected and unwelcome population” should the blacks ever be emancipated.<sup>68</sup>

On December 31, 1829, at the annual meeting of the Indiana Colonization Society (ICS), the organization stated that slavery was incompatible with republican institutions.<sup>69</sup> Chief Justice Isaac Blackford (who will be discussed further in Chapter Six) addressed the society in a speech delivered nine years after the decision to free slaves in the state (as will be discussed under *State v. Lasselle* in Chapter Six). Blackford described the purpose of the meeting as “not only the subject of our country’s welfare, which invites our attention; But is the sacred cause of humanity also, that assembles us together — that cause which is fondly cherished in every virtuous bosom;

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<sup>67</sup> *Corydon Indiana Gazette*, January 20, 1820, transcription, in “Extract from *Corydon Newspaper*, 1820-1838.” Indiana State Library.

<sup>68</sup> Walsh, *Centennial History*, 151.

<sup>69</sup> Donald F. Carmony, *Indiana 1816-1850: The Pioneer Era* (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Bureau, 1998), 563.

In which never appeals in vain to a generous community.”<sup>70</sup> Blackford furthermore described the purpose of the American colonization movement as:

The necessity of taking some measure to remove the free blacks from among us, has long been obvious to every reflecting man. The rights of those unfortunate people, and the increasing degeneracy of their morals, are pressing themselves more strongly, every day, upon the consideration of the public. It is very generally admitted, that the introduction of negroes into the New World, is the greatest misfortune that ever has befallen it.<sup>71</sup>

Blackford discussed the history of slavery in North America. He concluded on the history of the slave trade: “It is to the same shameful traffic, that the United States are indebted for their black population. This consisted, in 1820, of 1,538,118 slaves, and 235,557 free blacks.”<sup>72</sup>

Blackford then addressed the history of the ICS and its origins. He emphasized that the legislature of Virginia proposed over twenty years ago the colonization of Africa by the free blacks. He cited a letter from Thomas Jefferson “on the subject dated in 1811; and another from Dr. Finley, of New Jersey, in 1814. In the early part of 1816, about thirty free blacks were induced to sail from Boston, with Paul Cuffee, in order to unite their fortunes with their brethren at Sierra Leone.”<sup>73</sup> He discussed the first meeting in Washington and the attempts to get Congress to support the organization.

In 1820, the first ship, the *Elizabeth*, sailed in this noble cause, for the western coast of Africa. Beside two agents on the part of the government, and one for the society, this vessel carried with her about eighty free people of color, to commence an establishment at the expense of the United States; Which was to be not only the government agency, under the act of Congress, but the asylum of freedom, under the direction of the society.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Isaac Blackford, “Judge Blackford’s Address,” *The Papers of Isaac Newton Blackford, 1817-1882*, Indiana State Library, Article 128-129.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 129.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, 130.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, 131. Paul Cuffee was a prominent and financially successful black man in the early United States. Cuffee became a prominent member of the Society of Friends in Westport, CT, building a meetinghouse and a school. He used his commercial success to promote the advancement of Sierra Leone and encourage the resettlement of blacks to Africa. His name is spelled two ways in historical documents Cuffe and Cuffee. Michael R. Harrison, “Who was Paul Cuffe?” *Nantucket Historical Association*.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, 132.

Blackford indicated that the settlement area on the Island of Sherbro proved very unhealthy, and the agents and some colonists perished; the remaining colonists reached Sierra Leone in the spring of 1821. In the same year, the United States purchased land on the western coast of Africa for three hundred dollars and named it Liberia.

Nine years had elapsed since the *Elizabeth* set sail, and Blackford reported, although the evidence today indicates otherwise, that there had been no more difficulties for the settlers. “Its prosperity, indeed, for the seven last years, has few examples in the eventful history of colonial settlements. Large acquisitions of territory have been made, within the three or four last years. In 1827, there were eight stations, within one hundred and forty miles, under the government of the colony; and, in 1828, there were fourteen hundred inhabitants.”<sup>75</sup> His speech continued, discussing agriculture and commerce in the new colony.

Blackford told the audience that free blacks would voluntarily resettle in Liberia. He stated, “The Twelfth Annual Report of the Board of Managers, made in January last, states, that there were then nearly six hundred free persons of color, seeking a passage to Liberia; and that the owners of over two hundred slaves, had, during the previous year, offered to liberate them, provided the society could send them to the colony.”<sup>76</sup>

Blackford reported that the only problem the society faced was the ability to raise the money necessary for the voyages. “The expense of transportation across the Atlantic is great — that of taking over each individual being about twenty dollars.”<sup>77</sup> Blackford requested donations

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<sup>75</sup> Blackford, “Judge Blackford’s Address,” 134.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, 136.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, 137. In 2023 twenty dollars is equivalent to six hundred and forty U.S. Dollars.

for future relocation expenses and argued that Liberia was essential in stopping the slave trade throughout the world.

“But the society, implanting these colonies, are not limited to the abolition of slave trade, or the defusing of knowledge in a foreign land, it has other objects to accomplish, intimately connected with the prosperity of our country, and deeply affecting the future destiny of its black population.”<sup>78</sup> Blackford believed that racial separation was necessary for both blacks and whites:

There is one other effect to be produced by the operations of the Colonization Society, to which I must ask your attention before I conclude. It is the benefit that will be conferred on those free blacks of our country, who shall be sent to Africa. They are of no service here to the community, nor to themselves. Their situation may be compared to that of the fabled sufferer, who, surrounded by water in the most delicious fruit, is never permitted to partake of either. They live in a country, the favourite [*sic*] abode of liberty, without the enjoyment of her gifts. It is the privilege and the pride of an American citizen, to take a part in arranging, establishing, and improving the forms of his government. He may aspire to its highest office, or to a seat in its Legislative Halls.<sup>79</sup>

Blackford went on about the virtues and religious freedoms enjoyed by white Americans. He stated that white men and black men will never be equal because “the negroes have been too long our subject slaves — they are generally, here, and always have been, to the based — to be received as our equals. Our prejudice against them, however unjust it may be, must continue. It is as fixed and unchangeable as the popularity of their hair, or the blackness of their complexities.”<sup>80</sup> Blackford ended his speech by stating:

The degradation of the free blacks, resident within our country, is their misfortune, not their fault. It becomes us, as a civilized and Christian community, to unite in every rational plan proposed for their benefit, not interfering with the rights of others, that of the American Colonization Society — to remove them, with their consent, to their own country-is such a one. They will there commence a new life. They will there enjoy not merely the shadow, but the substance of freedom. The excellence of this plan has been

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<sup>78</sup> Blackford, “Judge Blackford’s Address,” 145.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, 145-146.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, 146.

tested by experience. Hundreds who, were the outcasts of society here are, at this time, worthy and independent citizens of Liberia.<sup>81</sup>

However, the society took few steps to cement its intention to move blacks to Liberia.

After the 1831 prohibition on blacks moving into the state, the Society again revived in 1845 but accomplished extremely little. The organization continued to exist; however, it was not until the 1850s and the establishment of Article 13 of the 1851 state constitution that persistent efforts at colonization for blacks rebounded. Ultimately, the program failed because blacks were reluctant to move to Africa despite financial incentives from the state government.<sup>82</sup>

Thus, the antislavery white supremacists were successful in defeating the proslavery forces with the help of the Quakers. The factions, however, collaborated with proslavery elements to pass laws that deemed blacks to be inferior. They continued their efforts to remove blacks from the state via the American Colonization Society and created a state fund to support their efforts. However, Chapter Six will show that legal cases from the Indiana Supreme Court create setbacks for the antislavery white supremacist's agenda despite the court being members of the faction.

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<sup>81</sup> Blackford, "Judge Blackford's Address," 198.

<sup>82</sup> Douglas R. Egerton, "Its Origin Is Not a Little Curious: A New Look at the American Colonization Society," *Journal of the Early Republic* 5, no. 4 (1985): 463–80.