

THE ORIGIN AND ORGANIZATION OF THE REPUBLICAN PARTY IN IOWA

Opposition to the further extension of slavery was the foundation upon which the Republican party originated and organized. It owes its parentage to no single individual, to no one group of men, nor to any one State. Its entrance into the political arena in 1854 was preceded by a formative period during which the seeds of opposition to the extension of slavery were ripening and bearing fruit in party organization. The repeal of the Missouri Compromise in 1854 and the resulting anarchy in the Territories of Kansas and Nebraska gave a moral momentum to the work of crystallizing the opposition to the slavery power.

The years from 1854 to 1856 were years of revolution in the political parties of the United States—years of party disintegration and organization. Although constituting one great movement, the formation of the Republican party in the various States was remarkable in that it was accomplished by the people and not by the political leaders. The various assemblages were entirely independent of each other, and those who organized them had no knowledge of what was being done in other States. At Ripon, Wisconsin, in February, 1854, a Whig, a Free Soiler, and a Democrat issued a call for a meeting of anti-slavery elements. On July 6 of the same year at Jackson, Michigan, "under the oaks," a mass meeting was held at which resolutions were passed and a full ticket was nominated. By some this meet-

ing is designated as the formal birth of the party. In Maine, Ohio, New York, Vermont, and other States similar meetings were called and held. These independent, popular uprisings of political opinion characterized the political revolution of the ante-bellum decade. In short, they were the institutional beginnings of the Republican party.

Morally, politically, and materially the State of Iowa was greatly affected by the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854. Bordered on the south by a strongly pro-slavery State and by Nebraska on the west, large numbers of Iowa citizens and their property became endangered in the Territories of Kansas and Nebraska; bitter feeling in Iowa resulted; and the issue between Democrats and Whigs grew more and more acute. Since Governor John Chambers had left office in 1845 the Democrats had had an unbroken lease of power; but the violent political agitation in 1854 gave promise of Whig success. It is at this stage that James W. Grimes, who has been called "The Father of Republicanism in Iowa," appears as a national figure in party leadership and organization. His long residence in the State, his legal reputation, his career and leadership in the Assembly, and his outspoken opposition to the extension of slavery combined to make him the logical and most available candidate to fuse and to lead to success the various elements opposed to the doctrines of Stephen A. Douglas.

The last Whig State convention in Iowa met at Iowa City on February 22, 1854. It placed James W. Grimes in nomination for Governor and adopted a plank severely condemning the Nebraska Bill. At this time the Whigs were divided into two opposing factions—the Seward Whigs

who opposed slavery, and the Silver Greys who declined to interfere with it. Besides these groups there were the Free Soilers or Free Democrats who opposed slavery, the "Hunkers" who favored the institution, and the American or Know-Nothing party demanding stringent naturalization laws for foreign immigrants.¹ On March 28, 1854, the Free Soil Convention (of which Isaac Field, of Denmark, was President) was held at Crawfordsville. Since it was known from previous elections that this party held almost the balance of power, Mr. Grimes was anxious to bring about a concentration of anti-Nebraska sentiment. The Free Soilers, accordingly, withdrew their candidate for Governor (Mr. Simeon Waters, who had been previously nominated) and adopted resolutions recommending that the members of Free Democracy rebuke the Nebraska swindle by casting their votes for Grimes.² "The standing of Mr. Grimes," said the *Iowa True Democrat*, "was known by many of the oldest and most faithful members of the convention . . . they were ready to vouch for his soundness. We therefore in conjunction with every independent in the State go in, heart and hand, to make J. W. Grimes Governor of Iowa."³

Mr. Grimes now became the champion of the anti-slavery forces and entered upon the campaign with vigor and determination. Driving from county to county, he visited nearly every section of the State from Council Bluffs to Burlington, addressing the people in speeches which moulded and gave expression to the anti-slavery sentiment

¹ Gue's *History of Iowa*, Vol. I, p. 274.

² Salter's *Life of James W. Grimes*, pp. 33, 115.

³ Quoted from the *Chicago Journal*, June 13, 1854, by Theodore Clark Smith in *Liberty and Free Soil Parties*, pp. 296-297.

of that time. During the campaign he issued a statement setting forth the political issues of the period. This paper was dated April 8, 1854, and was addressed, "To the People of Iowa." In this document are found arguments for amending the State Constitution so as to allow the introduction of banks. In it he favors the enactment of a law prohibiting the sale of intoxicating liquors, and advocates the Homestead Bill. He reviews in detail the history of the Missouri Compromise and the reasons for its violation, closing with the emphatic declaration that "with the blessing of God, I will *war and war continually* against the abandonment to slavery of a single foot of soil now consecrated to freedom."¹

In the election of August 3, 1854, Mr. Grimes received a majority of 2,123 votes over Curtis Bates, his Democratic opponent.² While this campaign and election signaled the death of the old Whig party, it meant the conception of the new Republican party. The party as an institution now existed; it needed only the machinery of organization. The energetic campaign conducted by Mr. Grimes and the result had attracted wide attention. Salmon P. Chase wrote to Mr. Grimes in September, 1854: "Allow me to congratulate you on the result in Iowa. It surpasses my hopes, and is due in a great measure to your indefatigable exertions. We all owe you a debt of gratitude. But now as much of wisdom will be needed to secure the fruits of victory and permanent ascendancy, as there was of courage, energy, and tact, to gain it. Your message will be looked for with

¹ Printed in Salter's *Life of James W. Grimes*, pp. 34-50.

² *Iowa Official Register*, 1905, p. 558.

great interest."¹ Mr. Grimes on October 3, wrote in reply: "I am astonished at my own success in this State. I fought the battle nearly alone. My colleagues on the ticket were dead weights, . . . and I had the *Burlington Hawkeye*, a professedly Whig paper, and the whole *silver-gray* interest, openly against me. . . . I triumphed over the combined powers of darkness and carried a handsome majority (ten) of the Legislature with me."²

On December 9, 1854, Mr. Grimes was inaugurated Governor of Iowa. In his message he presented a sound discussion of State issues; but the Kansas-Nebraska question was given a treatment commensurate with its vital public importance. "It [slavery] is a local institution," he declares, "and to the States that maintain it, belong its responsibilities and its perils. . . . It is both the interest and the duty of the free States to prevent the increase and the extension of the slave power, by every constitutional means. . . . Congress can pass no law establishing or protecting it in the territories. If Congress can pass no such law, much less can it delegate such authority to the territorial legislatures, over whose acts it has ever exercised supervisory and restraining power."³

Thus was sounded the doctrine which was to weld the opponents of slavery extension into the organized Republican party of Iowa. The message roused widespread attention and comment. Two weeks after the inauguration Representative Joshua R. Giddings, of Ohio, wrote to Gov-

¹ Printed in Salter's *Life of James W. Grimes*, p. 53.

² Printed in Salter's *Life of James W. Grimes*, p. 54.

³ Shambaugh's *Messages and Proclamations of the Governors of Iowa*, Vol. II, p. 13.

ernor Grimes: "The point you make is the true issue, and I wonder that our State Legislatures have not taken it long since. It is admitted by all that our issue must soon be fixed on the principle expressed in your message of total separation of the Federal Government from all participation in the support of slavery, leaving the institution entirely with the States in which it exists, while we of the free States will stand lustrated from its contagion. This issue cannot be withstood in any free State; it will overwhelm all opponents in every free State."¹

Iowa with a population of 326,500² now stood with Wisconsin, Michigan, and Ohio in the front of the anti-slavery column of States. The Kansas-Nebraska Act had become a law on May 30, 1854, and the Iowa Democrats were experiencing the evil effects of the measure upon the strength and discipline of their party. No word of comment or of endorsement of the measure is found in the resolutions of their Convention of January 24, 1855.³ On the same date Governor Grimes had approved an act contemplating the revision or amendment of the State Constitution—an act which the glaring defects of the Constitution of 1846 rendered imperative.⁴ Indeed, the failure of the Democratic party to respond to the popular demand for revision had in no small degree given heat and cohesion to the growth of Republicanism in 1854 and 1855.

Early in 1855 the anti-slavery elements were already gravitating toward a Republican organization. Governor

¹ Printed in Salter's *Life of James W. Grimes*, pp. 63, 64.

² *Iowa Historical and Comparative Census, 1836-1880*.

³ Resolutions of Democratic State Convention, Jan. 24, 1855.

⁴ Shambaugh's *History of the Constitutions of Iowa*, pp. 334, 335.

Grimes was an astute politician as well as a statesman. It was his custom to correspond regularly with some influential man in almost every county in the State, to ask his views, and incidentally to outline his own. In this way he practically dictated the platforms of his party, and often the men selected as candidates for office.¹ The correspondence of Governor Grimes and Salmon P. Chase gives interest and coloring to the party history of this period. On April 8, 1855, Governor Grimes wrote: "It seems to me that it is time to thoroughly organize the Republican party. The Know-Nothings have pretty well broken down the two old parties, and a new one, now organized, would draw largely from the foreign element that goes to make up those parties, while it will draw away one-half of the Know-Nothings at least."²

A keen and critical discussion of Republicanism and of its progress in Iowa is given in the following paragraph from an editorial in a prominent American organ:—

"Is Iowa ready for Republicanism? The question is first asked, what *is* Republicanism? It is as we understand it, simply and wholly, opposition to the extension of Slavery. Their published creed of principles demands the restoration of the Missouri Compromise, and the restriction of Slavery to its present limits. *No more Slave Territory.* It is not proposed to interfere with Slavery where it exists, but to keep it *where it is*. This we understand to be the object of the Republican movement. This being the object of the great Northern party, is Iowa ready to join it, we speak of course to the anti-Slavery men of the State. We think, that the great mass of the unprejudicial freemen of the State, are heart and

¹ Hon. Peter A. Dey, *Annals of Iowa*, July, 1905, p. 83.

² Printed in Salter's *Life of James W. Grimes*, pp. 68, 69.

soul with the cause of Republicanism. We trust that the matter will be talked over, and kept before the minds of the people by the Republican press of the State. It is a mighty movement and looks towards the consummation of a great work, making the Union what it was designed to be, a land of *freedom* and not of slavery. With such an object in view, what cannot a united North do. One thing certainly—make slavery sectional, and liberty national. Then we say, let the cry be, *no more Slave States!*"¹

The trend of sentiment of the administration party during the year 1855 furnishes an instructive background in the Republican movement.² The Democratic Convention of Muscatine County endorsed President Pierce, opposed a change in the naturalization laws, and ignored entirely the introduction of slavery into Kansas and Nebraska.³ A majority of the leading and more influential Democratic journals, however, endorsed the Kansas-Nebraska Act, arguing that the people of the Territories had a right to adopt such a State Constitution as they chose, provided it was not in violation of the Constitution of the United States. Some demanded the restoration of the Missouri Compromise, and a few threw aside all principle and urged the party to wage an exterminating war against Americanism.⁴ The editor of the Dubuque *Express and Herald*

¹ *Muscatine Journal*, Aug. 13, 1855, Vol. I, No. 32.

² "Almost, if not every, democratic journal in Iowa, professes a holy horror of the agitation of the slavery question, and have worked themselves into a virtuous indignation at the effrontery of the North in demanding a "thus far and no farther" edict to the institution of slavery. They so love the Constitution, that they oppose all appeals, demanding that it may remain as it is.—Stand by the Constitution, they say; maintain it as it is; and so have they said for years—yet they are forever amending it, even at the sacrifice of the nation's honor, as witness the repeal of the Missouri Compromise."—*Muscatine Journal*, July 12, 1855, Vol. I, No. 13.

³ *Muscatine Journal*, July 17, 18, 1855, Vol. I, Nos. 17 and 18.

⁴ *Muscatine Journal*, July 12, 1855, Vol. I, No. 13.

resented bitterly the charge that the Democrats were Slavery propagandists. He declared that the intentions of the so-called Republican party could be summed up in a few words by saying that the bond of unity among them and the only measure they advocated was opposition to the Democracy,—no other principle was inscribed on their banner.¹ At Fort Des Moines a small group of Locofocos, a discordant wing of the Democracy, held a Convention and adopted a series of eighteen resolutions in which they expressed adherence to the Kansas-Nebraska Act, favored Stephen A. Douglas for President, deprecated as dangerous to the peace and safety of the country the agitation of the slavery question, and lamented the “partial” defeat of the Democrats of Iowa in 1854, while expressing hopes for a Democratic triumph in 1856.²

The American party in Iowa reached the zenith of its power and influence in 1855; it was cheered in its efforts by its triumph in the elections of nine States in that year. Although its extreme views in regard to the naturalization of foreign immigrants made it repugnant to the great mass of anti-slavery voters of Iowa, its opposition to the Democratic party naturally caused it to drift toward a coalition with Republicanism. A Convention of the American party held a two days session at Iowa City on November 6, 1855, and invited the citizens of Iowa to unite with them in the

¹ *Dubuque Express and Herald*, Dec. 31, 1855.

² *Burlington Daily Hawk-Eye and Telegraph*, Oct. 24, 1855, No. 101. Resolution nine reads: “That among all desperate shifts for power, which a most despicable party has been forced to resort to, Know-Nothing is the most reckless and mercenary; destitute alike of reason, honor, and patriotism; and while openly professing a regard for the country and religion, it is secretly plotting treason and infidelity.”

cause for freedom.¹ This meeting was denounced in unmeasured terms by the Democratic press which saw in it nothing but a union of Know-Nothingism and the Republican doctrine of Seward, Chase, Sumner, Grimes, Greeley, and Giddings for the purpose of gaining the political supremacy in Iowa. "From present indications," declared the *Burlington Daily Iowa State Gazette*, "Americanism has swallowed up Republicanism in Iowa. At the recent Grand Council held in Iowa City the tenets of Republicanism were formally incorporated in their platform and have done away with the necessity of a distinct Republican organization. They have also absolved themselves from secrecy and opened their doors in order that all who may wish may participate in the American party. . . . Henceforth Republicans who have kept aloof from the Know-Nothings will be compelled to sneak into their organization at the eleventh hour."²

Governor Grimes was watching these political developments with keen and absorbing interest. In May, 1855, he had written to Salmon P. Chase: "I am sanguine that we shall organize a party that will carry the elections in most of the Northern States in 1856, and in all of them in 1860. I abhor the principle of the Know-Nothings, so far as I understand them, yet I think they are accomplishing a great work in breaking down the old parties. When new parties are constructed, as they shortly will be, ours will be uppermost in my opinion. I find encouragement in every move that is made by our enemies."³ Still more hopeful is

¹ *Burlington Daily Iowa State Gazette*, Nov. 18, 1855, Vol. I, No. 123.

² *Burlington Daily Iowa State Gazette*, Nov. 21, 1855, Vol. I, No. 125.

³ Printed in Salter's *Life of James W. Grimes*, p. 70.

his letter of June 17, 1855, to Mrs. Grimes: "I have been rejoicing for two days over the result of the Know-Nothing National Convention at Philadelphia. I have been afraid of that organization. I knew that it would break down in a year or two, but I was fearful that before dissolution it would give a pro-slavery tinge to the sentiment of many of its members. It has gone overboard sooner than I expected, and I can see nothing now to obstruct a perfect anti-Nebraska and anti-slavery triumph. . . . The right sentiment becomes firmer and more intense every day in this State. Strong ground was taken on the subject of slavery at the Congregational Association here. I am almost every day receiving letters, some from those who opposed my election a year ago, saying that, if I were now a candidate, it would not be necessary to canvass the State, and speak in every county as I then did. And I do not believe it would be necessary. The outrages in Kansas have opened the eyes of the people to the *intent* with which the Missouri Compromise was repealed."¹

At Muscatine the American County Convention had deprecated all legislation that was intended to extend the area or the influence of the slave power and had regarded the repeal of the Missouri Compromise as an outrage which could not be justified or excused.² Similar platforms were presented in various counties in the State. It was now suggested that, since the American party was the only live organization in the State except its great antagonist, the Democratic party, the anti-slavery forces should unite under

¹ Printed in Salter's *Life of James W. Grimes*, p. 71.

² *Muscatine Journal*, Nov. 13, 1855, Vol. I, No. 95.

the standard of the American party.¹ "We cannot see," urged the Oskaloosa *Herald*, "why a platform may not be adopted, on which nearly all, if not all opponents of the Pierce administration can stand. We should be pleased to see a Republican convention that would unite the forces of the Americans, Free Soilers, and Old Line Whigs. Such a union would ensure the defeat of Locofocoism, and we believe it can be effected to the full satisfaction of at least two-thirds of the people of Iowa."²

Commenting on the above the editor of the Burlington *Daily Iowa State Gazette* replied with stinging emphasis: "This virtually concedes the inability of any one of the factions enumerated to supplant the Democracy, but instills the vain hope that a combination of all these odious isms upon a platform upon which all democrats opposed to the administration might stand, would be able to succeed in wresting the officers from the democracy. . . . Here the ultra-abolitionist can strike hands with the ultra-secessionist of the South—here Seward and Greeley with all their horror of Know-Nothing proscription can strike hands with Marshall and Gentry who would enslave the negro and degrade the white man of foreign birth, and here the National Whig can work shoulder to shoulder with the sectional fanatics who avowedly seek the destruction of the Union."³

Now began an earnest agitation by the anti-slavery press of the State for a Convention of the friends of a Republican organization. In September, 1855, the Fairfield *Ledger*

¹ *Muscatine Journal*, Nov. 13, 1855, Vol. 1, No. 95.

² Quoted from Oskaloosa *Herald*, Dec. 14, 1855, in the Burlington *Daily Iowa State Gazette*, Dec. 18, 1855, Vol. I, No. 147.

³ Burlington *Daily Iowa State Gazette*, Dec. 18, 1855, Vol. I, No. 147.

and other papers suggested the policy of holding a State Convention of Republicans at Fairfield during the session of the Agricultural Fair at that place. However, the proposition was soon dismissed on the grounds that a more central point was desirable and that the impropriety of mixing Republicanism with the Agricultural Society would serve as a potent argument in the hands of the Democrats.¹ Many papers named Iowa City as the point which would most likely assure the best representation of general feeling and the fullest attendance. The early part of January, 1856, was suggested as a suitable time for holding the Convention; others desired to postpone it until late in the Spring; while the Burlington *Daily Hawk-Eye and Telegraph* preferred to await the action of Congress on pending questions of slavery. This would enable the Convention to have a clearer field of action and to act accordingly.² Still other journals favored the 22nd of February, partly as a medium period and partly on account of the historic associations of the day.³

All the anti-slavery forces were now prepared to respond to a summons to concerted action; from Washington had already come forth a call for a mass meeting of Republicans to be held at Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, on February 22, to take preliminary steps in the organization of a national party. Early in January, 1856, therefore, there appeared in the Mt. Pleasant *Observer* and the Burlington *Daily Hawk-Eye and Telegraph* the following call "To the Citi-

¹ *Muscatine Journal*, Sept. 17, 1855, Vol. I, No. 52.

² *Burlington Daily Hawk-Eye and Telegraph*, Dec. 7, 1855, No. 138.

³ *The Daily Gate City*, Keokuk, Dec. 22, 1855, Vol. II, No. 251.

zens of Iowa,"¹ which was widely copied by the anti-slavery press of the State:—

TO THE CITIZENS OF IOWA

Believing that a large majority of the people of Iowa are opposed to the political principles of the present Administration, and to the introduction of slavery into territory now free, and also, that made free by the Compromises of 1820; and that the party styling itself the "Democratic Party," are striving to make slavery a great *national* institution, contrary to the principles laid down in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, as taught by the fathers of the Republic; we would call upon all such free citizens to meet in Convention, at Iowa City on the 22d day of February, for the purpose of organizing a Republican party, to make common cause with a similar party already formed in several of the other States of the Union.

MANY CITIZENS.

January 3d, 1856.

Behind this call there was no convention, no chairman, no central committee. Furthermore, the authorship of this most timely and important document is a matter of doubt; but the clear, tactful style and the direct statement show the hand of Governor Grimes. No man in the State at this time possessed such a knowledge of men and affairs and such a grasp on the public confidence as did he; no one could more truly give expression to the voice of the people. It is, however, unlikely that Governor Grimes was anxious or willing to appear as the active, aggressive leader of a movement which meant the dissolution of the old party by

¹ This call may be found in the following newspapers: *Muscatine Journal*, Jan. 14, 1856, Vol. I (New Series), No. 1; *The Daily Gate City*, Keokuk, Jan. 8, 1856, Vol. II, No. 263; *Desmoine Courier* (Ottumwa), Jan 17, 1856, Vol. VII, No. 48; *Dubuque Republican*, Jan. 15, 1856, Vol. I, No. 42; *The Dubuque Daily Tribune*, Jan. 15, 1856, Vol. II, No. 254; and *Burlington Daily Hawk-Eye and Telegraph*, Jan. 11, 1856, No. 166.

which he had been elevated to the executive chair of the State.¹

For over a year political metamorphosis had been going on, and the various groups were gradually assuming a condition of more stable political equilibrium; each party could now recognize its movements and tendencies as well as those of its opponents; each party was now able to see and to judge its elements of strength, and those of decay; and each party was now proclaiming its historic achievements in resolutions, platforms, and in the utterances of men and newspapers competent to give them expression. The Know-Nothings and the Free Soilers were seeking an alliance with the Republicans in creed and in organization; while to the Democrats they were at opposite political poles. The call of January 3, 1856, was both an invitation and a stimulus to cause Iowa citizens to choose and to declare their political faith and to ally themselves with one of the political parties of the day. Speeches and editorial writings now undertook to describe the mission, the designs, and the future of each party.

“What are the avowed aims of the so-called republicans?” asked the *Burlington Daily Iowa State Gazette*. “To distract the country and imperil the Union itself by an imper-

¹ Mr. John W. Gannaway, in the October, 1903, *Iowa Journal of History and Politics*, declares that this call was written by Governor Grimes. Mr. Benjamin F. Gue, who was a delegate to the Convention which later organized the party, says in his *History of Iowa*, Vol. IV, p. 109: “In January, 1856, Governor Grimes wrote the call for the Convention which, at Iowa City on the 22nd of February, founded the Republican party of Iowa.” Hon. Peter A. Dey, of Iowa City, a personal friend of Governor Grimes and of William Penn Clarke, stated to the writer that the latter claimed the authorship of the call, having told Mr. Dey that it was one of the proud acts of his life. It is very doubtful whether conclusive proof as to the origin of the call is extant.

continent and unwarrantable interference with slavery wherever it exists, for their officious meddling is calculated to effect the system throughout all its ramifications. They openly proclaim their determination to oppose the laws of the land, in some instances passing local laws to supersede the enforcement of general ones, and all this they illustrate in their actions by seducing slaves from their owners and by protecting them against pursuit and arrest. They unblushingly deny the rights in common of one section of the Union to the territory of the country, and claim a special prerogative to colonize it with fanatics of their own stripe. . . . They would further disturb the peace of the country and endanger the Union of the States by preventing the admission of any new State, the people of which, in the exercise of a sovereign right, might present them with a Constitution authorizing slavery."¹

A calm and judicial exposition of the purposes of Republicanism is given in the *Des Moines Valley Whig*, a Republican journal of Burlington, where one reads that "The Republican party aims at nothing more than the limitation of slavery to the bounds of the Constitution, to the exclusion of the institution from territory under the control of the Federal Government, and the non-admission of any more slave States, leaving the question of slavery as it exists within the States just where they find it. . . . The Republican party does not seek the abolition of slavery wherever the authority of the Constitution prevails. It does not seek its abolition by a dissolution of the Union as Garrison seeks it. It does not seek its abolition at all, under

¹ Burlington *Daily Iowa State Gazette*, Jan. 17, 1856, Vol. I, No. 172.

the local government where it exists."¹ The *Dubuque Republican* championed the new party, declaring that "The grand object of the Republican Party is to prevent the introduction of slavery into the now Free Territory of this country, and to make Freedom National and Slavery Sectional. The grand object of the Democratic Party is to so pervert the ancient policy of the Fathers of the Republic, as to permit Slavery to spread over the entire country, and to make Slavery National and Freedom Sectional."²

The passing of Know-Nothingism from the political stage is closely associated with the origin of the Republican party. Indeed, the early growth of Republicanism was a product of various elements, not the least among which was the American party. Hence, the American movement toward Republicanism called forth a vast amount of criticism and denunciation from the Democratic press³ during the two months preceding the Convention—an event which to them would desecrate the sacredness of February 22 by a fusion of fanatic elements.⁴ The Republicans denied all political relationship and disclaimed all ties of association with the Know-Nothings and declared truthfully that Republicanism was a product of Democratic as well as of American elements.⁵ Governor Grimes had declared in emphatic terms

¹ Keokuk *Des Moines Valley Whig*, Feb. 6, 1856, Vol. X, No. 23.

² *Dubuque Republican*, Jan. 18, 1856, Vol. I, No. 45.

³ *Dubuque Express and Herald*, Jan. 17, 1856.

⁴ "We do hereby formally excommunicate all who belong to that oath bound political association, commonly known by the name of 'The Know-Nothing Party,' and do publicly declare them to be unfit political associates for true democrats and republicans."—Resolutions of Democratic State Convention of Jan. 8, 1856, as found in *Burlington Daily Iowa State Gazette*, Jan. 13, 1856, Vol. I, No. 169.

⁵ *Dubuque Republican*, Feb. 1, 1856, Vol. I, No. 57.

at Burlington that "Anti Know-Nothingism and anti-Slavery Extension must be the two great planks of the Republican organization."¹

Active preparations for the coming Convention now took place. Conventions and mass meetings were being held in almost every county of the eastern half of the State during the months of January and February. On February 9 the Republicans of Lee County met to select delegates and to perfect a local organization.² On February 18, under the leadership of John A. Parvin, the Muscatine County Republicans denounced President Pierce and Stephen A. Douglas, declaring freedom national and slavery sectional; a county central committee of five was selected; and twenty-four delegates were chosen to attend the Convention at Iowa City.³ A day later in Henry County the Republicans adopted a platform, elected eighteen delegates to attend the Convention, and formed a local organization.⁴ At Dubuque nearly two hundred citizens had signed their names to a circular calling for a mass meeting of Republicans in Dubuque on February 4.⁵ The response to the State call was remarkable in its spontaneity and enthusiasm.

A month before the meeting of the Convention a leading Whig paper wrote editorially that "Every journal of Republican sentiments in the State that we have noticed, responds heartily to the call for a State Convention at Iowa City on the 22d proximo, and from every quarter that private

¹ Quoted in *Dubuque Republican*, Feb. 1, 1856, Vol. I, No. 57.

² *The Daily Gate City*, Keokuk, January 23, 1856, Vol. II, No. 276.

³ *Muscatine Journal*, Feb. 18, 1856, Vol. I (New Series), No. 28.

⁴ *Muscatine Journal*, Feb. 19, 1856, Vol. I (New Series), No. 29.

⁵ *Dubuque Daily Tribune*, Jan. 19, 1856, Vol. II, No. 258.

expressions have come to us, there is a cordial assent to the proposition. We are rejoiced to see this unanimity and cordiality of feeling. It augurs well for united ranks, a harmonious and spirited contest, and a triumphant issue.—With such a spirit continued throughout the canvass there can be no doubt of the result.—That man is dull of apprehension indeed who does not perceive that Iowa is undoubtedly and thoroughly Republican in sentiment, and they must either lack in patriotism or indulge in reprehensible selfishness who, entertaining the same general sentiment with the majority, are willing to let subordinate questions or personal ambition disturb the harmony or hazard the success of the cause. Thankful are we that no such spirit has been manifested. Thankful must every earnest Republican be that there appears on every hand a disposition to sink every minor question in that great issue before the country; to let by-gones be by-gones, and so far as we must differ upon other points still important, to assign such points their true rank, and not permit them to mar the harmony of feeling and unity of purpose which should pervade a great party, with such important general aims in such a crisis; that no factious spirit rears its dragon head, and no personal ambition seems likely to prejudice the cause. We hope this may continue. We believe it will.”¹

Two weeks before the meeting of the Convention a leading American paper of south-eastern Iowa printed editorially these lines: “We have never known the Press of any State, more unanimous upon any matter of State policy than the anti-administration press of Iowa upon the subject of the Re-

¹ *The Daily Gate City*, Keokuk, Jan. 23, 1856, Vol. II, No. 276.

publican Convention, to be held in Iowa City on the 22d inst. In truth, taking our entire exchange list, we do not know of a single exception, and we enjoy the benefit of an exchange with almost every paper of whatever politics in this State. The *Gate City* at Keokuk; the *Argus*, Fort Madison; *Hawk Eye*, Burlington; *Gazette*, Davenport; *Republican* and *Tribune*, Dubuque; *Citizen*, Fort Des Moines; *Advertiser*, Tipton; *Register*, Marion; *Times*, Cedar Rapids; *Observer*, Mt. Pleasant; and many others whose names we cannot recall, have seconded the movement and are urging the necessity of an organization."¹

Considerable discussion arose as to the propriety of nominating a ticket at the Convention. The impression seemed quite general that it was to be a mass meeting and not an assemblage of delegates instructed to make nominations. It was further urged that the meeting was to be preliminary in its nature and should look solely to the one purpose of establishing the party as an organized body in the State. It was expected that many would attend who would not be authorized to act as delegates for the counties they represented; and, since it seemed impossible that all sections of the State would be represented, the sentiments of the people could not be known with reference to a choice of candidates.² The Keokuk *Gate City* agreed fully with the Oskaloosa *Herald*, which said: "Whether it be proper for this Convention to nominate candidates, will depend very much upon the attendance at the Convention. We are willing to leave that matter to the good sense and judgment of the dele-

¹ *Muscatine Journal*, Feb. 8, 1856, Vol. I (New Series), No. 21.

² *Muscatine Journal*, Feb. 8, 1856, Vol. I (New Series), No. 21.

gates assembled. If it is thought best after organizing the party, to postpone the nominations to a subsequent time, we shall be pleased,—perhaps indeed, that would be the better plan,—but if it is thought best to nominate a full ticket now, we say go ahead; put good men on the track and certain victory will be the result.”¹

No mention of any names as candidates for the State offices at this time is discoverable. The main qualification for citizens to be chosen as delegates to the Convention was a firm and outspoken opposition to slavery extension. The *Dubuque Daily Tribune* advised that the friends of a candidate should not press the nomination in a manner that would excite rancorous opposition, and declared that the people demanded candidates who should represent the anti-slavery ideas of the North. It even urged that personal and official qualifications be subordinated to anti-slavery convictions.² James Harlan, in a letter to Henry W. Lathrop, two weeks before the Convention, sounded in eloquent terms the anti-slavery cry and stated the creed of Republicanism. In reference to the Convention he urged the necessity of forbearance, discretion, and prudence on the part of its members.³

Large delegations began to arrive at Iowa City on Thursday, the day before the Convention, the delegates spending the day in consultation and discussion. It was agreed that a preliminary and informal gathering should be held in the evening. At this meeting the delegates could get acquainted with one another and it would perhaps enable the meeting

¹ Quoted in *The Daily Gate City*, Keokuk, Jan. 23, 1856, Vol. II, No. 276.

² *Dubuque Daily Tribune*, Feb. 15, 1856, Vol. II, No. 281.

³ Printed in *Burlington Daily Hawkeye and Telegraph*, Feb. 25, 1856, No. 204.

to agree upon a course of action to recommend to the Convention. The meeting was to be held in the Old Capitol building, a structure around which cling many convention memories. Early in the evening the delegates assembled in the Hall of Representatives and selected Col. Fitz Henry Warren, of Des Moines County, to preside over the informal meeting, which at once proceeded to business.¹

The delegates from Scott and Muscatine counties at once gave life and spirit to the discussions; for these men had come to the Convention determined that the platform to be adopted should contain an endorsement of the prohibitory liquor law then in force. Under the leadership of Hiram Price, of Davenport, the advocates of the law urged their point with great vehemence and declared that it must be granted. They were answered by the arguments that the call for the convention had not mentioned the matter at all, and that it had called the people together for the sole and simple purpose of organizing a party against the aggressions of the slave power. This, it was urged, was the only issue now before the people, and upon it alone had the Convention been empowered by the people to act. At a late hour the meeting adjourned leaving the temperance question still unsettled.²

The morning of the 22nd found about two hundred delegates at Iowa City; but during the forenoon others continued to arrive until they reached the number of about four hundred, as reported later.

The largest delegations to the Convention came, of course,

¹ *Ottumwa Demoine Courier*, Feb. 28, 1856, Vol. VIII, No. 2.

² *Dubuque Republican*, Feb. 26, 1856, Vol. I, No. 77.

from the eastern section of the State which was more thickly populated, and to which Iowa City was more accessible than to the western counties both as regards distance and means of travel. Johnson County took the lead with a delegation of fifty-four which included such men as Henry W. Lathrop, Robert S. Finkbine, Senator Samuel Workman, Representative Samuel H. McCrory, and Samuel J. Kirkwood who at this point began his long and honorable career in Iowa politics. Scott County sent twenty-six men—among them Hiram Price and Benjamin F. Gue who later became prominent in official life. Judge Williams represented Clayton County. Muscatine County had among its twenty-seven delegates, Asa Gregg, Henry O'Conner, and John A. Parvin. Marion County was represented by William M. Stone, who later became Governor of the State. From far off Audubon County came S. M. Ballard. Francis Springer, who was President of the Constitutional Convention a year later, came from Louisa County. Poweshiek County sent its foremost citizen, J. B. Grinnell.

Early in the forenoon the delegates began to pack the Hall of Representatives. It is to be regretted that more complete accounts of the proceedings do not exist. Very little except the official records as kept by the secretaries and published in newspapers of the time is discoverable. The secretaries it seems gave out official minutes to a few leading newspapers of Republican doctrine, and from these the accounts were widely copied by the anti-slavery press.¹

¹ The minutes of the Convention may be found in the following newspapers: *Muscatine Journal*, Feb. 26, 1856, Vol. I (New Series), No. 33; *The Daily Gate City*, Keokuk, Feb. 27, 1856, Vol. II, No. 306; *Dubuque Express and Herald*, Feb. 26, 1856; *Dubuque Republican*, Feb. 26, 1856, Vol. I, No. 77; and *Des Moines Courier*, Ottumwa, Feb. 28, 1856, Vol. VIII, No. 2.

Several editors were present at this Convention as delegates but their editorial comments on the proceedings are few and unimportant.¹

Philip Viele of Lee County was selected for temporary chairman and J. F. Lane, of Scott County, and N. M. Hubbard, of Linn County, were chosen as temporary secretaries. A committee of ten representing the ten judicial districts of the State was appointed to select the permanent organization. This committee recommended that the temporary organization be made permanent, and J. B. Stewart, of Polk County, and C. C. Nourse, of Van Buren County, were elected as additional secretaries. Eight vice presidents, representing various sections of the eastern part of the State, completed the list of permanent officers.² A committee on credentials of ten members representing the judicial districts was also appointed by the chair. After a prayer by the Rev. Mr. Fish, President Viele named a committee of thirty-nine, representing as many counties, to prepare a platform.³ The committee on credentials next reported the names of some four hundred delegates who were entitled to seats in the Convention and stated the ratio of representation to which each county was to be entitled. It appears moreover that there were present not a few citizens who came in their personal capacity and not as accredited delegates, and who were given seats in the Convention.

¹ J. W. Norris, of the *Des Moines Courier*, and Alfred Sanders, of *The Gazette*, Davenport, may be mentioned.

² Luke Palmer, D. S. Davis, Henry Temple, W. W. Woods, B. F. Talbot, C. R. Kelsey, J. W. Cattel, and E. H. Williams were the vice presidents selected.

³ Francis Springer, of Louisa County, Hiram Price, of Scott County, and William M. Stone, of Marion County, were among the most influential members of this committee.

Enthusiasm and business-like dispatch marked the proceedings. The business of organizing and appointing the committees occupied the morning session which was terminated by an adjournment to 1:30 when the committee on platform was to report. But on the re-assembling of the Convention the committee was not yet ready to report, and so the interim was filled by speeches from various members upon the vital issues which had caused the Convention to assemble.¹ A large proportion of the men had but lately left the ranks of the Democracy and a few had been residents of the slave States. Samuel J. Kirkwood, the miller from Coralville (near Iowa City), was induced by his former Ohio associates to give what proved to be one of the most stirring speeches of the Convention.

Meanwhile animated discussions and deep deliberations were being held in the session of the committee on resolutions. No less than twenty platforms of almost every variety were presented by its various members. The platform of the Dubuque delegation was finally agreed upon as best, and was adopted by the committee section by section until the ninth section was reached.² The committee was now forced to decide whether the platform should be composed of a single plank devoted to the question of slavery extension, or whether it should be allowed to contain other features.³ The German-American delegates from eastern Iowa desired a plank which should express an endorsement of the naturalization laws then in force. They urged this plank, moreover, as a counter check to the extreme natural-

¹ *Muscatine Journal*, Feb. 26, 1856, Vol. I (New Series), No. 33.

² *Ottumwa Demoine Courier*, Feb. 28, 1856, Vol. VIII, No. 2.

³ *Dubuque Republican*, Feb. 26, 1856, Vol. I, No. 77.

ization doctrines as held by some members who had but lately been identified with the American party. Governor Grimes, who was in Iowa City at this time but not a member of the Convention, favored the insertion of such a clause,¹ but the Know-Nothings vigorously opposed it. The temperance men also made a determined effort to secure an endorsement of the liquor law in force at that time. It was urged by the opponents of this effort that this law had nothing to do with National politics and that the prohibitory law was already a dead letter and was likely to become even worse. It was further stated that the incorporation of either one of these planks would open the way to the adoption of other clauses which would lead to endless discord and dissension. To secure the most harmonious platform upon which all could stand, the majority of the committee finally voted to restrict the platform to the issue of slavery extension and to report it thus to the Convention.²

The Convention had been anxiously and impatiently waiting for the report, but it was not until five o'clock that the committee appeared and presented it to the Convention. Hiram Price, of Scott County, at once presented a minority report, which contained the additional plank endorsing the prohibitory law, and attempted to secure its adoption by the Convention. The delegates, however, were tired from the long afternoon session, and were feeling the gnawings of hunger which no political document could satisfy. Accordingly, without any further hesitation, the Convention adjourned for supper to meet again in the evening.³

¹ Letter of James W. Grimes to Salmon P. Chase, printed in *Salter's Life of James W. Grimes*, p. 79.

² *Dubuque Republican*, Feb. 26, 1856, Vol. I, No. 77.

³ *Ottumwa Demoine Courier*, Feb. 28, 1856, Vol. VIII, No. 2.

On re-assembling a motion was again made to adopt Mr. Price's minority report. On this motion the previous question was called and the vote was ordered to be taken by counties. The report went down to overwhelming defeat, every county except Scott voting against it.¹ The majority report was then adopted. Numerous attempts were made to foist upon the platform additional planks on various subjects. These proceedings occupied nearly two hours and called forth some of the most animated and eloquent speeches of the Convention. However, the efforts to incorporate other planks were all in vain. The earnest and most influential men of the Convention were too deeply imbued with the idea which had given birth to the party and which had caused the Convention to assemble to be turned aside from their purpose. At a late hour the minority from Scott County came forward, and, amid prolonged cheering and applause, made the adoption of the platform unanimous.

This document, containing a little more than three hundred words, is devoted entirely to the question of the extension of slavery. There was no endorsement of any State administration, and local and State issues were entirely ignored. Expressing the crystallized product of the discussions of the Convention and proclaiming the basic principle of the new party, the document in full reads:—

United in common resolve to maintain Right against Wrong, and believing in the determination of a virtuous and intelligent people to sustain justice, we declare—

1. That Governments are instituted among men to secure the inalienable rights of Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness.

¹ Ottumwa *Demoine Courier*, Feb. 28, 1856, Vol. VIII, No. 2.

2. That the mission of the Republican party is to maintain the Liberties of the People, the Sovereignty of the States and the Perpetuity of the Union.

3. That under the Constitution, and by right Freedom alone is National.

4. That the Federal Government being one of limited powers derived wholly from the Constitution, its agents should construe those powers strictly, and never exercise a doubtful authority,—always inexpedient and dangerous.

5. That if this plain Jeffersonian and early policy were carried out, the Federal Government would relieve itself of all responsibility for the existence of Slavery, which Republicanism insists that it should, and means it shall do; and that regarding Slavery in the States as a local institution, beyond our reach and above our authority, but recognizing it as of vital concern to every citizen in its relation to the Nation, we will oppose its spread, and demand that all National Territory *shall be free*.

6. That the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, and the refusal of the Slave Power to abide by the principle on which that repeal was professedly based, make the National Domain the battle ground between Freedom and Slavery, and while Republicans stand on a national basis, and will ever manifest and maintain a national spirit, they will shrink from no conflict and shirk no responsibility on this issue.

7. That the Slave Power, the present national Administration and its adherents having violated this policy, and the principles on which it is based, by a disregard of law and its own profession, by an invasion of the State and personal rights, and by breaking solemn covenants, has forced upon the country the *Issue*, whether Freedom shall be limited to the Free States, and made that issue absorbing and paramount.

In addition to the above seven planks the following three resolutions were unanimously adopted:

Resolved, That the firm, consistent and patriotic course pursued

by the Republican members of the present Congress, during the arduous and protracted struggle for the speakership, meets with our cordial approval, and that we recognize in Hon. N. P. Banks, a statesman of matured abilities, a Republican of reliable character, and we hail his election as a proud triumph of those great principles of human liberty, which had their origin in the foundation of the American Government.

Resolved, That we deeply sympathize with the Free State men of Kansas in their struggles against Border Ruffianism, and that while we tender them our hearty sympathy, we will sustain them with the requisite material aid.

Resolved, That we recommend the speedy admission of their delegate to a seat in Congress, and of their State when formed into the Union.¹

The enthusiasm and large attendance present at the meeting dispelled all doubt as to the propriety of nominating a ticket at this Convention. Accordingly, after the adoption of the platform, a committee consisting of one delegate from each county represented was appointed to select nominees for State offices and for Presidential Electors and to choose delegates to attend the National Republican Convention to be held at Philadelphia on June 17, 1856. The following nominees for State offices were reported: For Secretary of State, Elijah Sells, of Muscatine County; for Auditor, John Patten, of Bremer County; for Treasurer, M. L. Morris, of Polk County; for Attorney-General, S. A. Rice, of Mahaska County. For Presidential Electors, Reuben Noble, of Clayton County, Henry O'Conner, of Muscatine County, D. F. Miller, of Lee County, and William M.

¹ The text of this platform and of these resolutions is found in the following newspapers: *Ottumwa Demoine Courier*, Feb. 28, 1856, Vol. VIII, No. 2; *The Daily Gate City*, Keokuk, Feb. 27, 1856, Vol. II, No. 306; *Muscatine Journal*, Feb. 26, 1856 (New Series), Vol. I, No. 33.

Stone, of Marion County. Francis Springer, of Louisa County, was chosen to head the committee of eight delegates to the National Convention; eight alternate delegates were also appointed. The Convention unanimously adopted the report of the committee, voting on each name separately. On the resignation of Samuel A. Rice as the nominee for Attorney-General, Henry O'Conner was nominated to fill the place.

A committee of nine, which included such men as J. B. Grinnell, William M. Stone, John A. Parvin, and Samuel J. Kirkwood, was appointed to prepare an address to the people of Iowa.¹ The following gentlemen were appointed a State Central Committee: A. J. Stevens, of Polk County, J. P. Grantham, of Henry County, W. E. Miller, of Johnson County, John Cassaday, of Poweshiek County, and S. M. Ballard, of Audubon County. A central committee for each of the two congressional districts was also named. After giving nine hearty cheers for the success of the Republican cause the Convention adjourned *sine die*.

Practically the only discordant feature resulting from the action of the Convention was due to the refusal of the request of the German-American delegates that the Convention adopt a plank endorsing the naturalization laws then in force. The silence of the platform upon this point offended a considerable number of the German citizens of the river counties. A leading Democratic journal declared that John Bittman, a German-American delegate from Scott County, had not been allowed to speak in the Convention, and that

¹ The writer in searching the newspapers of this period has been unable to discover any trace of this address or any further information concerning it. It is possible that the committee never prepared it.

the Germans had left in disgust.¹ Four days after the Convention the associated German-American press of Iowa issued a statement signed by Th. Guelich, of *Der Democrat*, at Davenport, L. Mader, of *Die Freie Presse*, at Burlington, and J. Bittman, of *Die Staats-Zeitung*, at Dubuque. "We are not satisfied," ran this protest, "with the position which the Republican Party of Iowa has assumed, because we consider it their duty to take issue not only on the endangered rights and interests of certain sections of the Union, but also on those of certain parts of its population." They declared themselves unable to endorse the candidates nominated by the Convention, and resolved to maintain an independent course until the impure elements be driven from the Republican party by whom it was still infested.² The impure elements, of course, referred to the Know-Nothings.

The following letter has an interesting bearing upon the political history of this period, and is high praise from a high source to the Republicanism of Iowa:

SPRINGFIELD, Sept. 14, 1856.

HENRY O'CONNOR, ESQ.,

Muscatine, Iowa.

DEAR SIR: Yours, inviting me to attend a mass meeting on the 23rd inst is received. It would be very pleasant to shake hands with the Fremonters of Iowa, who have led the van so splendidly in this grand charge which we hope and believe will end in a most glorious victory—All thanks, all honor to Iowa!! But Iowa is out of all danger, and it is no time for us, when the battle still rages, to pay holy-day visits to Iowa—I am sure you will excuse me for remaining in Illinois, where much hard work is still to be done—³

Yours very truly

A. LINCOLN.

¹ Dubuque *Express and Herald*, Feb. 26, 1856.

² *Muscatine Journal*, March 17, 1856, Vol. I (New Series), No. 216.

³ Reprinted from the Jan., 1903, number of the *Pennsylvania Magazine* in the *Iowa Journal of History and Politics*, Oct. 1903, p. 551.

Party amalgamation always provokes denunciation and charges of insincerity and bad faith. The strength and the popular aggressive character of the new organization created not a little apprehension among Democratic ranks, from which the Republican cause had obtained many recruits. "Abolitionism," "Native-Americanism," "Know-Nothing-Abolitionism," and "Black-Republicanism" were some of the epithets by which the new party was christened by the Democratic press. "Synonymous with Republicanism is Abolitionism," declared a Democratic editor. "They pursue the same channel—they tend to like results; and when the State Convention at Iowa City met upon the 22nd day of February last, it met merely to merge a political organization which was found inadequate to the end desired in *another* organization which was supposed might allure the very class whom it before *proscribed*, and open a door of refuge to the vagabonds of all parties, especially the Free-soil Party, who knew not where to rest the sole of their weary feet; and this new organization, courting the favor of foreign-born and pandering to the prejudice of the old Abolition faction, renounced its original name while it *retained* in a great measure its identical character."¹

With more calmness and less partisan rancor the editor of the *Pella Gazette* wrote: "Now, we consider the name of *Republican* for the new fusion party not according to the truth, and we think the cognomen *Black* is a good and unoffending addition. Is not the chief support of that party black? Is not its prominent feature sympathy with the black race, and a philanthropic desire to place that race on an equal footing

¹ *Iowa City Daily Evening Reporter*, July 21, 1856, Vol. I, No. 120.

with the whites? These Republicans are willing to let the Union slide, rather than to let the negroes to be used as bondmen in Kansas, or one more fugitive slave to be sent back."¹

Eleven days after the meeting of the Republican State Convention forty-five delegates the shattered remnant of the American party, met at Iowa City and accepted the Republican nominees for State offices, nominated presidential electors, and indorsed Fillmore and Donaldson for President and Vice President. The Republican platform was bitterly denounced because it did not favor an extension of the time required for naturalization.² Henry W. Starr, a prominent Whig of Burlington and for many years the law partner of James W. Grimes,³ deplored the lack of men and newspapers that maintained the true old Whig principles. "The Republican party (only a cognomen for the Abolition party)", he wrote, "have accomplished nothing but to block the wheels of government for nearly two months, and to embroil the feelings of the people upon questions purely abstract, and having no bearing upon the material interests of the State. They have made, and are now making, this Republic the scoff of envious despotisms."⁴

A study of the personnel of the delegates of the Convention of February 22, 1856, leads one to the conclusion that it was a movement of the common people rather than an

¹ Printed in Burlington *Daily Hawk-Eye and Telegraph*, April 9, 1856, No. 242.

² *Dubuque Republican*, March 10, 1856, Vol. I, No. 88.

³ *Iowa Journal of History and Politics*, January 1906, Vol. IV, No. 1, p. 170.

⁴ Printed in the Burlington *Daily Hawk-Eye and Telegraph*, March 14, 1856 No. 220.

assemblage of political leaders. It was an event evolved from and inspired by a sound political principle rather than by a partisan policy. "The Convention," declared the *Fairfield Ledger*, "was pronounced by persons who have been present at every political convention held at that place, to have been the largest Convention ever convened in that city. The Convention was held in Representatives Hall which was crowded to overflowing. Warm hearted enthusiastic men were there from all parts of the State and from all trades and professions. They were honest-looking intelligent men, whose every action told that they had the good of their country at heart and that they were guided in their movements by a conscientious conviction of right."¹ No record of an accredited attendance of any of the State officers is found; and, although the legislature was strongly anti-slavery the records disclose the attendance of but four Senators and eight Representatives. It was a meeting of merchants, farmers, professional men, and pioneers, many of whom at this point began their political careers.²

On February 22, 1906, the Republican party of Iowa completed a half century of organized existence. Born in a great national crisis it was baptized in the principle of freedom and organized to do battle with the thoroughly disciplined forces of slavery. From the Whigs it inherited its

¹ Printed in the *Dubuque Republican*, March 5, 1856, Vol. I, No. 84.

² "The Convention was very large. Every section of this State was well and ably represented. Never has there been in Iowa a Convention which could compare with this in intelligence, respectability and honesty. There were without doubt some ignorant, disreputable and dishonest men in the Convention, but they were in such a hopeless minority, that they were incapable of impressing upon the Convention the least mark of their own characteristics."—*Dubuque Republican*, Feb. 26, 1856, Vol. I, No. 77.

policy of broad construction and its liberal views on economic and constitutional doctrines; the Free Soilers gave to it its program of "no more slave States and no more slave Territories"; the Democrats bequeathed to it its popular methods; and its aggressive character is a legacy of the Abolitionists. In its life of fifty years it has, with one exception, furnished an unbroken line of Governors; its leaders have contributed power and prestige to the general government; it has given Iowa a noble war record and a great war Governor. The history of the Republican party of Iowa for the past fifty years has been the political history of the Commonwealth.

LOUIS PELZER

APPENDIX

I. ACCREDITED DELEGATES TO THE CONVENTION OF 1856

Following are the names of accredited delegates from the various counties as reported by the committee on credentials. In preparing this list of names several newspapers were consulted and compared. The list is incomplete, because not a few delegates arrived subsequent to the report of the committee. The fact that the names are almost never given in full in the newspaper reports, but are represented in part by initial letters, presents difficulties in the identification of some of the delegates.

Johnson County: S. Workman, S. J. Kirkwood, Bryan Dennis, N. Fellows, J. Parrot, S. H. McCrory, Francis Barnes, G. D. Woodkin, R. S. Finkbine, Dr. H. Murray, H. D. Downey, E. K. Rugg, J. C. Culbertson, H. W. Lathrop, W. E. Miller, J. W. Miller, J. W. Howard, F. H. Lee, S. J. Hess, Lyman Allen, John Porter, A. D. Packard, W. D. Ford, P. Connelly, W. Spurrier, Ed. Connelly,

Ed. Shircliff, J. N. Seydel, R. Clark, J. Sperry, J. N. Cornish, W. W. Woods, R. Lucas, S. Windrem, J. Trimble, I. N. Gerome, S. Foster, T. W. Wilson, E. Clark, A. Moon, E. E. Deforest, J. I. Burge, R. M. Hutchinson, E. C. Lyon, C. H. Berryhill, E. Morris, T. Hughes, P. Turner, W. H. Henderson, D. P. Greeley, D. A. Millington, J. R. Hartsock, H. W. Fyffe, J. M. Carleton.

Scott County: C. Leslie, J. S. Davis, J. H. Martin, E. Tichenor, H. Price, T. J. Lane, Dr. McKeehan, J. Forman, J. Collins, J. D. Patton, A. Sanders, R. Lowery, J. H. Dumont, — Olmstead, J. R. Jackson, W. Crosson, L. S. Center, H. J. Hughes, S. Saddorris, J. Quinn, W. D. Quinn, B. F. Gue, Dr. Sawyer, H. G. Neal, J. Brownville, D. Hardie, A. Brownville.

Dubuque County: G. Hill, J. Bittman, W. Smith, D. N. Lee, C. Wullwebber, R. L. Thomas, W. W. Hamilton, L. A. Thomas, W. Vandever, S. Sawyer, G. S. Mathews, W. Rebman, W. Johnson, J. A. Chapline, C. C. Flint.

Washington County: J. N. Young, S. P. Young, A. H. Patterson, J. R. Lewis, J. Dawson, J. D. McCullough, N. Littler, C. Foster, R. Dewey, N. McClure, N. P. Cooper.

Jones County: B. Peet, H. S. Kirkham.

Allamakee County: S. O. Hatch.

Winneshiek County: J. P. McKinney.

Clayton County: Judge Williams.

Delaware County: C. T. Peet, J. Wright, D. C. Crawford, W. H. Crawford.

Buchanan County: D. S. Davis, E. C. Bidwell, Wm. Logan.

Black Hawk County: W. H. Curtis.

Bremer County: T. Downing.

Butler County: J. Morton.

Cerro Gordo County: A. B. Miller.

Monroe County: C. Y. Kelsey, A. A. Ramsey, D. B. Dixon.

Madison County: J. T. Tubby.

Clark County: J. Orr.

Warren County: H. W. Maxwell.

ORIGIN OF REPUBLICAN PARTY IN IOWA 523

Appanoose County: W. Sayres.

Muscatine County: H. O'Conner, J. Butler, S. Tufts, G. C. Stone, J. A. Parvin, — Logan, — Carskadden, J. H. Pigman, J. C. Mills, G. Porter, F. M. Cummins, E. Husted, W. W. Waters, H. Q. Jennison, S. Foster, J. S. Barchtel, A. Gregg, J. Neidy, J. P. Freeman, F. Thurston, N. Taber, E. Jones, J. T. Horton, J. Mahan, S. W. Stewart, J. Hershe, F. N. Candle.

Des Moines County: F. H. Warren, A. West, L. Palmer, W. D. Gilbert, R. M. Fish, J. Putnam, J. Schull, T. Kustenmaker, L. Mader, W. Lemon.

Jefferson County: E. C. Hampton, A. R. Fulton, J. Spilman, N. R. Imel, J. Wood, W. Clark, P. Patton, R. Gaine, J. F. Wilson.

Wapello County: J. W. Caldwell, C. F. Blake, J. W. Norris, C. H. Leggett.

Mahaska County: S. A. Rice, H. Temple.

Lee County: J. D. Hoag, Philip Viele, W. Leslie, T. Cherry, J. Courtwright, I. Field, J. Shedd, E. Turner, J. B. Howell, H. Taylor, J. Leavitt.

Cedar County: E. Todd, M. Morris, E. Wright, E. T. Moody, T. James, W. Spicer, J. Bagley, S. Douel, F. Butterfield, M. Varney.

Marion County: W. M. Stone, J. M. Bagley.

Jackson County: R. Livermore, J. W. Jenkins, J. Clark, J. C. Degrush, J. P. Eddie, P. Moriarty, W. Thomas, J. Palmer, H. Todd, E. A. Wood, J. J. Tomlinson, Z. Isbel, V. Harrington, W. T. Wynhook, J. B. Booth, R. R. Roberts, J. Wilson, W. Morden, L. Irwin, J. Watson.

Linn County: H. G. Angle, R. Holmes, N. M. Hubbard, W. Corbee, J. L. Enos, W. B. Watrous, E. W. Bates, W. W. Smith, T. J. McKain, W. J. Patterson, S. D. Carpenter.

Benton County: J. C. Traer, John Shane, W. E. Mansfield, Fletcher Drummond.

Marshall County: A. L. Dunn, W. G. Smith.

Louisa County: F. Springer, J. G. Hall, J. Bronson.

Henry County: W. Bird, S. McFarland, W. W. Fluke, I. B. Shaw, R. Allen, W. P. Brazleton, A. R. Wickersham, J. P. Grantham, A. Saunders.

Van Buren County: A. H. McCrary, C. C. Nourse, W. Craig, G. C. Duffield, F. McDonald, J. Houghton, W. French, F. Hancock, J. D. Sanford.

Dallas County: J. W. Sherman.

Hardin County: J. F. Brown, T. B. Knapp, G. J. Gilbert, B. J. Talbott.

II. COMMITTEES OF THE CONVENTION OF 1856

Committee to Nominate Permanent Officers: F. H. Warren, Dr. Bidwell, A. R. Fulton, R. Holmes, H. J. Skiff, ———, ———, ———, R. Lowrey, Dr. A. Ramsey, A. B. Miller.

Committee on Credentials: A. Saunders, W. W. Hamilton, H. Temple, Dr. J. C. Traer, J. W. Sherman, ———, ———, ———, J. S. Davies, Wm. Sayers, J. P. McKinney.

Committee on Platform: C. C. Flint of Dubuque County, H. D. Downey of Johnson County, Wm. Sayers of Appanoose County, H. G. Angle of Linn County, Samuel McFarland of Henry County, Thomas Downing of Bremer County, Wm. Logan of Buchanan County, D. B. Dixon of Monroe County, F. Springer of Louisa County, S. A. Rice of Mahaska County, A. H. McCrary of Van Buren County, Zalmon Livermore of Jackson County, J. M. Thrift of Boone County, Dr. A. L. Dunn of Marshall County, H. Price of Scott County, S. P. Young of Washington County, F. H. Warren of Des Moines County, J. W. Cattell of Cedar County, J. B. Howell of Lee County, R. M. Kellogg of Poweshiek County, H. W. Maxwell of Warren County, C. H. Leggett of Wapello County, John H. Morton of Butler County, W. M. Stone of Marion County, W. M. Clark of Jefferson County, James Wright of Delaware County, J. T. Tubby of Polk County, H. Walker of Jasper County, L. O. Hatch of Allamakee County, J. Butler of Muscatine County, John Shane of Benton County, W. H. Curtis of Black Hawk County, J. P. McKinney of Winneshiek County, J. F. Brown of Hardin County,

ORIGIN OF REPUBLICAN PARTY IN IOWA 525

Judge Williams of Clayton County, J. W. Sherman of Dallas County, and A. B. Miller of Cerro Gordo County.

Committee to Prepare Address to People of Iowa: J. B. Grinnell of Poweshiek County, H. W. Lathrop of Johnson County, Alvin Sanders of Scott County, J. B. Howell of Lee County, W. M. Stone of Marion County, H. Price of Scott County, J. A. Parvin of Muscatine County, L. A. Thomas of Dubuque County, and S. J. Kirkwood of Johnson County.

III. CAMPAIGN COMMITTEES

The State Central Committee: A. J. Stevens of Polk County, J. P. Grantham of Henry County, W. E. Miller of Johnson County, John Cassady of Poweshiek, and S. M. Ballard of Audubon County.

Central Committee for the Second Congressional District: Hiram Price of Davenport, M. Mobley of Dubuque, S. D. Carpenter of Linn, S. Labee of Burlington, John A. Parvin of Muscatine.

Central Committee for the First Congressional District: Wm. Leslie of Lee County, J. R. Needham of Mahaska County, Samuel McFarland of Henry County, Lowden Miller of Pottawattamie County, J. W. Sherman of Dallas County.

IV. PRESIDENTIAL ELECTORS

Reuben Noble of Clayton, H. O'Conner of Muscatine, Daniel F. Miller of Lee, William M. Stone of Marion.

V. DELEGATES TO THE NATIONAL CONVENTION

Francis Springer of Louisa County, S. D. Carpenter of Linn County, F. H. Warren of Des Moines County, H. A. Wiltze of Dubuque County, Jos. W. Caldwell of Wapello County, J. H. B. Armstrong of Appanoose County, J. B. Howell of Lee County, L. Mayne of Van Buren County.

Alternate Delegates: Samuel Russell of Washington County, Jacob Butler of Muscatine County, Thos. Drummond of Cerro Gordo County, J. W. Jenkins of Jackson County, H. Sherman of Polk County, W. P. Brazleton of Henry County, Daniel Anderson of Monroe County, A. M. Casiday of Mahaska County.