

December 19, 1857
Washington

My good friend:

Yours of the 18th is in this morning. I have not heard anything from Mr. Avery.

Douglas talks and acts well. He is frankly cultivating the good will of Republicans in conversation. There is something of a pause in the fierceness of the fireaters. He is not certain but Walker looks to some reconciliation, though that is not probable and I think there will be no reconciliation. A little time is necessary and further development to make the permanent position of men certain. It looks to me as if the events were at hand and the blow struck that will make the democratic party a purely Southern pro-slavery party. When reduced to this it must die out. The Democratic party has been for a few years like a kaleidoscope presenting a new formation with every jostle blacker and blacker. The exact position in which Kansas may be presented to us is not yet certain.

I will inquire about the Crimean commissioners report on Monday. I have not heard anything of it. I will, of course, send you one if I can get it.

I have made Mr. Fisks acquaintance and like him. He tells me he will go to New York for Christmas. I have not made any inquiries for rooms for you as I understood you to prefer that I should not, but that Mr. Fisk would do it. I am at Willards and think I shall stay here - certainly through the winter. There are not yet many visitors in Washington less than I have ever known except men looking for office.

We shall have the result in Kansas early in January, and I think that will be an interesting month here.

Yours truly
Preston King

John Bigelow - Esq.

My love to all your family. I wrote to T.F. Meagher to consult with you about his affairs.

Washington, March 1860

My dear friend:

Yours of the 2nd and 3rd of January and 2nd of February received. I have delayed day by day for some ten days writing expecting every day to know the result of consultation which was going on by correspondence ~~after~~ WITH Members of the national committee to determine whether the day for the Chicago convention was to be changed or not. We have at last the decision of the committee changing the time first appointed and fixing the sixteenth day of May for the Chicago Convention. I inclose printed notice cut from the Evening Journal. I had talked freely with Governor Seward about you telling him of your engagement of passage and the subsequent changes of days of sailing of Araso. We both concluded if you started on the 29th of May you would be in time if necessary for you to go to Chicago. I think Governor Seward would like to have you in the convention and I think for many reasons it would be well for you to be a delegate - so that although it would abridge your stay in England if you find it consistent with what you require for your English visit to come home in May in time for the Chicago convention on the 10th come. If your arrangements and engagements are such that you cannot come in either contingency decide at once what you cannot and what you can do - and write at once to Mr. Shultz and to John A. G. Gray who, I know, is desirous you should be a delegate so that if you are to be home in time to go you may be made a delegate at the State Convention, and if you are not to be home that your friends may know it and so that there may be no debate or uncertainty at Syracuse as to when you will be home. I think doubt or uncertainty of your coming or staying would be worse than certainty that you could not get home in time. I wrote to Mr. Meed suggesting that a full or more than full proportion of the delegates should be good and sound men of Democratic antecedents and mentioning your arrangements and my expectations that you would be home in time for the June day.

I do not see much change in the book for candidates for President on either side. I think Seward is growing stronger as the day for nominations approaches, and you know I have thought for a long time that the condition of public affairs and the state of parties would produce his nomination and I think the current of events more and more indicate the election of the Republican candidate.

On the Democratic side there is no more reasonable public indication of what is to be done at Charleston than if that convention was not to be held till next year. I think the personal savor among the Democratic rivals is unabated. Douglas is drumming with all his might but his opponents seem very determined. The democracy are no longer the unterrified and I am sure I do not know and cannot guess with any confidence what they will do. I do not think Wise (?) has ever had any chance to be taken up as the candidate.

Faulkner of the Harpers Ferry district was appointed as you will have seen to France, and was here when I got your letter respecting Mr. G. H. CLARK ~~Black~~, but for two days only and I could not get to see him or I would have spoken to him of Mr. ~~Clark~~ and his position. He went home and packed up and started at once for Paris. I knew Mr. Faulkner and could have talked with him if I could have seen him lest a letter might do more harm than good as the Harper's Ferry fire was then not in Virginia. I think it is cooling down since the Virginia state convention to choose their delegates to Charleston.

Washington, March 1860

My dear friend:

Yours of the 2nd and 3rd of January and 2nd of February received. I have delayed day by day for some ten days writing expecting every day to know the result of consultation which was going on by correspondence ~~after~~ WITH Members of the national committee to determine whether the day for the Chicago convention was to be changed or not. We have at last the decision of the committee changing the time first appointed and fixing the sixteenth day of May for the Chicago Convention. I inclose printed notice cut from the Evening Journal. I had talked freely with Governor Seward about you telling him of your engagement of passage and the subsequent changes of days of sailing of Araso. We both concluded if you started on the 29th of May you would be in time if necessary for you to go to Chicago. I think Governor Seward would like to have you in the convention and I think for many reasons it would be well for you to be a delegate - so that although it would abridge your stay in England if you find it consistent with what you require for your English visit to come home in May in time for the Chicago convention on the 10th come. If your arrangements and engagements are such that you cannot come in either contingency decide at once what you cannot and what you can do - and write at once to Mr. Shultz and to John A. G. Gray who, I know, is desirous you should be a delegate so that if you are to be home in time to go you may be made a delegate at the State Convention, and if you are not to be home that your friends may know it and so that there may be no debate or uncertainty at Syracuse as to when you will be home. I think doubt or uncertainty of your coming or staying would be worse than certainty that you could not get home in time. I wrote to Mr. Meed suggesting that a full or more than full proportion of the delegates should be good and sound men of Democratic antecedents and mentioning your arrangements and my expectations that you would be home in time for the June day.

I do not see much change in the book for candidates for President on either side. I think Seward is growing stronger as the day for nominations approaches, and you know I have thought for a long time that the condition of public affairs and the state of parties would produce his nomination and I think the current of events more and more indicate the election of the Republican candidate.

On the Democratic side there is no more reasonable public indication of what is to be done at Charleston than if that convention was not to be held till next year. I think the personal savor among the Democratic rivals is unabated. Douglas is drumming with all his might but his opponents seem very determined. The democracy are no longer the untterrified and I am sure I do not know and cannot guess with any confidence what they will do. I do not think Wise (?) has ever had any chance to be taken up as the candidate.

Faulkner of the Harpers Ferry district was appointed as you will have seen to France, and was here when I got your letter respecting Mr. G. H. CLARK ~~Black~~, but for two days only and I could not get to see him or I would have spoken to him of Mr. ~~Black~~ and his position. He went home and Picked up and started at once for Paris. I knew Mr. Faulkner and could have talked with him if I could have seen him lest a letter might do more harm than good as the Harper's Ferry fire? was then not in Virginia. I think it is cooling down since the Virginia state convention to choose their delegates to Charleston.

I do not think the speakers election has had any effect on the question of who should be candidate for President.

Hopes and expectations of Missouri have undoubtedly influenced the Blairs respecting Bates. They are, of course, ~~sound~~ ^{sound} on principle themselves and will cordially support the Republican nominee. I dined at Montgomery Blairs on the 22nd of February with old Mr. & Mrs. Blair. They desire to be remembered by you and Mrs. Bigelow. I had a letter from our friend Gideon Welles yesterday. He says that they will have a hard fight in Connecticut at their April election but that we ought to succeed. He is not quite reconciled to making Seward the candidate but he does not see where to look for one. We are entering the bustle of preparation for the presidential campaign here. Seward made a strong and good speech in the Senate yesterday. With my kindest remembrance to Mrs. Bigelow and the little ones.

Mr. John Bigelow

Yours truly,
Preston King

Preston King, senator, was born in Ogdensburg, N. Y., Oct. 14, 1806. He was graduated from Union College with honors in 1827, was admitted to the bar a few years later, and achieved a large practice in St. Lawrence county. His taste early inclined him to political life, and in 1830 he established and edited the "St. Lawrence Republican," in which he strongly supported the administration of Andrew Jackson. The following year he was appointed postmaster of Ogdensburg, but resigned in 1834 to take his seat in the assembly, and served through four terms. From 1843 until 1847 he was a member of congress, and served also from 1849 until 1853. Though he was a zealous democrat, and had almost reached the leadership of his party, he left it in 1854 and joined the republicans, who nominated him for secretary of state the next year. He supported Fremont in 1856, and in 1857 was elected to the U. S. senate, serving until 1863, and doing important work as chairman of the committee on revolutionary pensions, also as chairman of the national republican committee. In the debate on the naval appropriation bill in 1861 he strongly advocated the adoption of measures to provide for the defence of the country by war, if necessary, and upheld President Lincoln in all the acts of his administration. Senator King removed to New York city, in 1863, and resumed his practice. In 1864 he was a presidential elector, and the same year a delegate to the Baltimore convention, where he exerted a powerful influence in favor of Andrew Johnson as vice-president. When Mr. Johnson became president he made Mr. King collector of the port of New York. He assumed his duties in the summer of 1865, but the responsibilities of the office and some financial difficulties unbalanced his mind, and he deliberately committed suicide by jumping from a ferry-boat in the Hudson river, Nov. 12, 1865. Mr. King was highly esteemed by the public for his integrity, the conscientious discharge of public duties, and above all for his purity of character.

The N. C. of A. B. Vol. II. Page 93.

¹⁸²⁷
KING, Preston, a Representative and a Senator from New York; born in Ogdensburg, N. Y., October 14, 1806; pursued classical studies, and was graduated from Union College in 1827; studied law, was admitted to the bar, and commenced practice in St. Lawrence County, N. Y.; established the St. Lawrence Republican in 1830; postmaster of Ogdensburg 1831-1834; member of the State assembly 1835-1838; elected as a Democrat to the Twenty-eighth and Twenty-ninth Congresses (March 4, 1843-March 3, 1847); elected to the Thirty-first and Thirty-second Congresses (March 4, 1849-March 3, 1853); elected as a Republican to the United States Senate, and served from March 4, 1857, to March 3, 1863; resumed the practice of law; delegate to the Republican National Convention at Baltimore in 1864; presidential elector on the Republican ticket of Lincoln and Johnson in 1864; appointed collector of the port of New York August 15, 1865; drowned from a ferryboat in New York Harbor, N. Y., November 12, 1865; interment in the City Cemetery, Ogdensburg, N. Y.

Congressional Biographical Dictionary p. 1170

Old Houses of The North Country



WHERE PRESTON KING RESIDED

—Photo and Caption by David F. Lane
UC52a74827 King-p-000 C6

This large, three-story native stone mansion now operated as a tourist home by Mrs. Marie E. Bridges at 602 State street, corner of Jay street, in Ogdensburg, bears a bronze plaque upon the front which reads: "This house was built 1800, was the home of Preston King, member of assembly 1835-1838, member of congress 1843-1853, U. S. Senator 1857-1863, Presidential Elector 1865, Collector of Port of New York 1865."

A founder of the Republican party in 1856, a political lieutenant of Gov. Silas Wright and President Martin Van Buren, he was responsible for nominating Andrew Johnson running mate of Abraham Lincoln. An outstanding figure of his time in the federal government, Preston King is one of the great men in national history.

He was born in Ogdensburg Oct. 14, 1806, son of John and Margaret Galloway King. Preston was but a small child when his father, one of the earliest Ogdensburg residents, representative of the land-owning firm of Ogden & Ford, died. John King's prominence is indicated by the fact that in 1802 he was the first Fourth of July orator in Ogdensburg. When he died, he left a small trust fund for his son, with Louis Hasbrouck as guardian.

Preston King attended the Ogdensburg public schools, St. Lawrence Academy in Potsdam, was graduated from Union college with highest honors in 1827, studied law with Louis Hasbrouck and Judge John Fine, became editor of the St. Lawrence Republican, a Jacksonian newspaper in 1830, was appointed postmaster in 1832, was village trustee in 1833-1834, became involved in the Patriot War and its Windmill affair in 1838 and then moved to state and national prominence. He never married. Subject to spells of melancholia he ballasted himself with 25 pounds of gunshot and jumped off a Hoboken ferry boat to his death on Nov. 12, 1865 a few months after becoming collector of the port.

St. Lawrence county records would seem to disprove the building of this house in 1800, for on Sept. 9, 1825 George Parish sold a part of the site to Hezekiah Wright, who deeded it to Adaline Denny June 26, 1828 and June

25, 1829 she bought the balance of the site from Parish. References show she married Elizur Goodrich Smith, who later, with other members of the family, disposed of this place to James W. Ripley. Ripley and wife, Sarah, sold to Robert J. Marvin Sept. 22, 1853. On Oct. 23, 1853 Marvin and wife, Achsah, conveyed the south part to Amaziah B. James and the north part with house to Rawlings Webster. It was long known as the Webster house.

On Sept. 11, 1854 James sold his part to Simeon Smith who with wife, Jane, deeded to Preston King Dec. 27, 1859. On Feb. 2, 1860 King bought the Webster part. Preston King died without lineal descendants. Mrs. Martha Galloway, aunt of Preston King, deeded her interest in the property to her daughter, Margaret Webster, wife of Rawlings Webster Nov. 27, 1865. Margaret deeded it back to her mother, Aug. 22, 1866 and on Dec. 24, 1866 a partition suit was started resulting in sale to Mrs. Webster June 12, 1867. Mrs. Webster sold to Jane Smith July 15, 1876 and Dec. 22, Mrs. Smith sold to W. Allan Newell as trustee of Jane Elizabeth Smith and Margaret Janet Bridges. As such trustee Mr. Newell transferred to Jane Elizabeth Smith on Sept. 25, 1914. On Oct. 14, 1914 Mrs. Smith transferred to Mrs. Marie E. Bridges who conveyed a joint interest in it to her daughter, Mrs. Margaret Carlisle, Aug. 18, 1948.

Mrs. Carlisle, the former Margaret J. Bridges, graduated from St. Lawrence university in 1926 and June 6, 1928 married Richard W. Carlisle, graduate of M. I. T. and nephew of Maclyn Arbuckle, great American actor. Mrs. Carlisle's father was the late Capt. Harry W. Bridges, U. S. A. She comes from proud old Ogdensburg stock on both sides including Dr. Zina B. Bridges, one time mayor, and Dr. Elisha H. Bridges, who were members of her Bridges family.

Mrs. Jane Elizabeth Smith, born in Ogdensburg Oct. 15, 1818 married Simeon Smith, 40 years paymaster in the U. S. Army. Mrs. Smith, aunt of Mrs. Marie E. Bridges, lived to be over 104 years old and for some time resided in this house with Mrs. Bridges. The house is a distinguished north country mansion.

~~waiting for
reply from FAW~~

Sunday Evening
August 14th 1949

Mr Fred A. Wyatt
Alumni Secretary
Union College

Dear Sir —

It is upon the suggestion of Mr. J. E. Hilmon of
Orangeburg that I am writing you, in the hope that you
can give me so assistance. At the present time I am
working on a study of Preston King and from Mr Hilmon
I understand you possess at the College several letters of
King and various items concerning him, both with reference
to his college days and to his political career. I would like
to have copies, if this is convenient, of these letters — several
were to John Bigelow, I believe — and I also would
appreciate to learn so much of his college days as I can.
Things such as his general scholastic record, the actual
dates of attendance, who were the individuals who sponsored
him through college, the cost of college attendance in those
days — he graduated in 1827, I believe — and any and
everything else would be gratefully received.

I trust this won't give you too much trouble, but
should the volume of material be so great as to make my
request unreasonable, I will make arrangements to visit
you sometime this winter and make my own notes. Very
appreciative of whatever help you can give me, I am

Yours truly
Ernest P. Muller

31 East 702 Street
Orangeburg, New York.

January 17, 1949

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Gilmour:

On behalf of the Graduate Council we want to thank you for giving this splendid portrait of our distinguished alumnus, Preston King, of the class of 1827 to the college. Mr. Van de Car and I arrived safely on Friday evening with our precious cargo, and it is now reposing in the Alumni Office. I am taking the portrait to the Administrative Meeting on Tuesday so that all members of the staff may have an opportunity to see this unusual item, and there we will discuss its permanent location. An appropriate plate will be put on the frame. Your kindness is much appreciated.

We enjoyed our brief visit with you, Mr. Gilmour, and are only sorry that time prevented our remaining longer. We are sorry to have missed you, Mrs. Gilmour, and hope that your travels will bring you both in our direction soon. Remember, the latch string is always out to you here in our home in South College

With kindest regards, I am

Sincerely yours,

Frederic A. Wyatt
Director of Alumni Relations

P.S.

Margaret was terribly pleased with the Hale House courtyard painting, and I am running around making arrangements to have it framed so that it may be hung in our study. Thank you for everything.

Mr. and Mrs. James E. Gilmour
230 Caroline Street
Ogdensburg, New York

December 6, 1948

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Gilmour:

At our administrative meeting it was the unanimous opinion of all present that we should accept your kind offer of the portrait of Preston King of the class of 1837.

The Council is anxious to get pictures and other material on early alumni. When our librarian, Mr. Webb, read your letter, he evinced real interest in the King letters in the Ogdensburgh library.

Some time in January I plan to be up your way on a round of association meetings. As I shall be travelling by motor, perhaps it would be best for me to pick up the King picture at that time. Your suggestions on this will be appreciated.

Your thanks to you both, and with best wishes for the Holidays, I am

Sincerely yours,

Frederic A. Wyatt
Alumni Secretary

Mr. and Mrs. James E. Gilmour

230 Caroline St., Ogdensburgh, N.Y.

cc: - Pres. Davidson
Webb
Brown
Hennelly

Caw

ok for GC.

November 11, 1948

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Gilmour:

We were pleased to get your nice letter of November the sixth relative to the picture of Preston King of our class of 1827. I am sharing your letter with the President; Joseph R. Brown '03, the Chairman of our Committee on Historical Records; and Helmer L. Webb, our Librarian. Your suggestion appeals to me very much, and I am confident that it will meet with an enthusiastic response on all sides. Before taking action, however, I will discuss the matter further with these gentlemen.

Thanking you for your generosity, and looking forward to hearing from you again, as always, I am

Sincerely yours,

Frederic A. Wyatt
Director of Alumni Relations

Mr. and Mrs. James E. Gilmour
220 Caroline Street
Ogdensburg, New York

ed A Wyall:
as Fred:-

CC
E. Kennedy 11-6-48

11/30/77 ^{adm} _{needed}

Among the many old and new pictures at our house is one which has hung in the lower hall for probably three quarters of a century - This picture was given to my wife's great grandfather (Judge Smith Stillwell) by the man in the picture. The picture is quite unusual. It is in a dark oval or walnut frame.

leaf circles then the picture. The picture is of plaster of Paris - (or whatever they used in those days) The picture was so sealed that it is still clean and white. The gold leaf looks new and the frame is in perfect condition.



The picture is of a local Man
PRESTON KING

He graduated from Union in 1827

Career. N.Y. Assembly

U.S. Congress

U.S. Senator 1857.

Collector Port of NY 1845

You no doubt have his history in your library.

in our Old Library there are some 70 letters that Mr King wrote to John Bigelow (Union 1835). These letters, for reason unknown to me came back to the King family.

Now - Mrs Gilmore would be glad to give this picture to Union College as a gift from:-

JAMES E. GILMORE 1906

JOHN H. GILMORE 1938

PROVIDING - Union College - have made a suitable identification Plate and agree to hang the picture in a suitable place and keep it hung in a suitable place permanently.

Sincerely,

J. E. Gilmore

Gertrude W. Gilmore

To Mr Frederic A Wyall,
Union College.
Schenectady. N.Y.

PRESTON KING, B. A., '27.

Born, Ogdensburg, N. Y., October 14, 1806. Prepared for college, Ogdensburg. Student, Union College, 1823-'27. Lawyer, Ogdensburg. Founder "The St. Lawrence Republican," 1830. Postmaster, Ogdensburg, 1833. Member New York State Assembly, 1834-'37. United States House of Representatives, 1843-'47 and 1849-'53. United States Senate, 1857-'63. Delegate to Republican National Convention, Baltimore, Md., 1864. Collector of Customs, Port of New York, 1865.

Died, New York, N. Y., November 13, 1865.

From: Kappa Alpha in Union College
1825-1913

17 Preston King, B.A., '27. Born, Ogdensburg, N. Y., October 14, 1806. Prepared at Ogdensburg. Union College, 1823-'27. Lawyer, Ogdensburg. Founder "The St. Lawrence Republican," 1830. Postmaster, Ogdensburg, 1833. Member New York State Assembly, 1834-'37. U. S. House of Representatives, 1843-'47 and 1849-'53. U. S. Senate, 1857-'63. Delegate to Republican National Convention, Baltimore, Md., 1864. Collector of Customs, Port of New York, 1865. *Died, New York, N. Y., November 12, 1865.* Kappa Alpha cat. 1941

The Ogdensburg Republican says of him:--"He was in all respects an amiable, whole-souled, honorable man. No man public or private ever possessed more of the affection, confidence and esteem of the people of Lawrence County, and in his strange and awful death he will be mourned by hundreds of thousands in all sections of this great country who remember nothing of him to his discredit."

New England Historical and Genealogical Register. p. 170
Vol. 20 1866

A Worthy
Son

Perhaps the most satisfactory letters as a whole in John Bigelow's *Retrospections of an Active Life* are those from PRESTON KING, United States Senator 1827 from New York from 1857 to 1863. They are remarkable for exalted patriotism and for self-effacement and freedom from personal rancor; they are in striking contrast to those from another strong defender of the Union who would have been a more potent defender had he been less conscious, or at least less expressive of his own virtue and more charitable toward his fellow men. Preston King hated a cause; he shows no sign of having hated any man. He was one of the staunchest and ablest supporters of Abraham Lincoln whom, in some respects, he strongly resembled. We are not surprised at the genial sagacity of the man when we meet him for the first time face to face in the third volume of the *Retrospections*. John Bigelow regarded him as "one of the wisest and most faithful friends" he had ever had; and other witnesses worthy of greatest credit bear agreeing testimony to his highmindedness and single devotion to the right. Though he was active in politics, and in practical politics too, for full thirty years, no shadow of suspicion ever darkened his fair name. Gideon Welles, by no means an indiscriminate praiser of his contemporaries, thought that Preston King had done more than any other one man to give the free-soil movement effect in party cohesion, in party measures and in action. Preston King was a graduate of Union College of the class of 1827. IRA

Imothy Feb 1912

17. Preston King, '27

died November 12, 1965 (College Record)

UKSLaf1827King-P-0014

PRESTON KING

King, Hon. Preston, New York, Nov. 13, aged 59 years. He was the son of John and Margaret King. His father was a clerk of the late Judge Nathan Ford, early settler and one of the leading spirits of St. Lawrence County, N. Y., and was born in Ogdensburg, in that State, Oct. 14, 1806. He graduated at Union College under Dr. Nott, quite young studied law at Ogdensburg, and was admitted to the St. Lawrence Court of Common Pleas in 1830. In the same year he founded the "St. Lawrence Republican, of which he continued editor and proprietor until 1833. From 1835 to 1838 he represented St. Lawrence County in the State Assembly; and from 1849 to 1853 his district in Congress.

He took a leading part in the free soil movement in 1848, and when, some seven years later, this party assumed the name of Republican, he became its candidate for Secretary of State, and led the campaign with surprising vigor.

Two years afterwards, he was elected to the U. S. Senate in the place of Hon. Hamilton Fish, and there initiated some of the most important measures which preceded and accompanied the early stages of our great civil war-- ever battling manfully for the principles of that party of which he was one of the original founders. He contributed materially by his unceasing activity in 1860 to the election of Mr. Lincoln as President, and exerted a strong influence with the administration during the whole progress of the war. He ever showed himself an honest and consistent opponent of slavery and aggression.

In 1863 he was succeeded in the U. S. Senate by Gov. Morgan, and the next year was chosen Elector at Large of the State of New York. On the reception of the news of the assassination of Mr. Lincoln, he immediately repaired to Washington, and was called on by Mr. Johnson to assist in arranging the policy of the new administration. His appointment soon after, as Collector of the Port of New York, was unsolicited on his part; the office was uncongenial to his noble spirit; beneath its onerous burden his mental frame gave way, and he sought refuge from his pressing cares by leaping from the Hoboken Ferry boat into the "remorseless tide to rise no more." Mr. King was one of the commissioners, appointed under an act of the legislature of the State in 1855, for the preservation of the harbor of New York, a position of great responsibility as the report of 1857 will show; and it is not a little remarkable that he should have found in the waters of that beautiful harbor over which he so long exercised control, a burial under such peculiar circumstances of public and private sadness.

The opinions of the community among whom, and by whose generous confidence he achieved distinction, are most kindly to his personal merit and fame. The citizens of Ogdensburg, Nov. 19, passed a series of resolutions expressive of the universal and heartfelt sorrow at the loss of their fellow citizen, in which they say:--"While to the nation he was known as a sagacious and incorruptible statesman, whose inflexible adherence to the great principles of liberty inspired universal respect and confidence, he was also known to us, his neighbors, as the kind and devoted friend, the wise counsellor and the honest, upright, public spirited and urbane gentleman."

Died November 13, 1866, aged 59 years.

He was the son of John (erroneously, Hon. Rufus, in our last number) and Margaret (Galloway) King. His father was a clerk of the late Judge Nathan Ford, early settler and one of the leading spirits of St. Lawrence County, N.Y., and was born in Ogdensburg, in that State, October 14, 1806.

He graduated at Union College under Dr. Nott, quite young studied law at Ogdensburg, and was admitted to the St. Lawrence Court of Common Pleas in 1830. In the same year he founded the St. Lawrence Republican, of which he continued editor and proprietor until 1833. From 1835 to 1838 he represented St. Lawrence County in the State Assembly; and from 1849 to 1853 his district in Congress.

He took a leading part in the free-soil movement in 1848, and when, some seven years later, this party assumed the name of Republican, he became its candidate for Secretary of State, and led the campaign with surprising vigor.

Three years afterwards he was elected to the U.S. Senate in place of Hamilton Fish, and there initiated some of the most important measures which preceded and accompanied the early stages of our great civil war--ever battling manfully for the principles of that party, of which he was one of the original founders. He contributed materially by his unceasing activity, in 1860, to the election of Mr. Lincoln, as President, and exerted a strong influence with the administration during the whole progress of the war. He ever showed himself an honest and consistent opponent of slavery.

In 1863 he was succeeded in the U.S. Senate by Gov. Morgan, and the next year was chosen Elector at Large of the State of New York. On the reception of the news of the assassination of Mr. Lincoln, he immediately repaired to Washington, and was called on by Mr. Johnson to assist in arranging the policy of the new administration. His appointment, soon after, as Collector of the Port of New York, was unsolicited on his part; the office was uncongenial to his noble spirit; beneath its onerous burden his mental frame gave way, and he sought refuge from his pressing cares by leaping from the Hoboken Ferry boat into the "remorseless tide to rise no more."

Mr. King was one of the commissioners, appointed under an act of the Legislature of the State in 1855, for the preservation of the harbor of New York, a position of real responsibility as the report of 1857 will show, and it is not a little remarkable that he should have found in the waters of that beautiful harbor over which he so long exercised control, a burial under such peculiar circumstances of public and private sadness.

The opinions of the community among whom, and by whose generous confidence he had achieved distinction, are most kindly of his personal merit and fame. The citizens of Ogdensburg, November 19, passed a series of resolutions expressive of the universal and heartfelt sorrow at the loss of their fellow citizen, in which they say:- "While to the

nation he was known as a sagacious and incorruptible statesman, whose inflexible adherence to the great principles of liberty inspired universal respect and confidence, he was also known to us, his neighbors, as the kind and devoted friend, the wise counsellor and the honest, upright, public spirited and urbane gentleman."

The Ogdensburg Republican says of him:-"He was in all respects an amiable, whole-souled, honorable man. No man public or private ever possessed more of the affecting confidence and esteem of the people of St. Lawrence County, and in this strange and awful death he will be mourned by hundreds of thousands in all sections of this great country, who remember nothing of him to his discredit."

New England Hist. & Gen. Register
vol. 20 p. 171
1866.

Was a member of the bar of this county, though he never engaged in active practice. He was born in Ogdensburg, October 14, 1806. He was a graduate of Union College, and studied law with Judge John Fine. In 1832 he was appointed Postmaster of Ogdensburg, and in 1834 was elected to the Assembly where he served several terms. He was an ardent Democrat, and was led to take an active part in the hopeless effort of the so-called "Patriots," who invaded Canada. In 1854 he was elected to Congress and twice consecutively was re-elected. He became one of the prominent founders of the Republican party and in 1855 was elected by the new organization to the office of Secretary of State. In 1857 he was elected to the United States Senate, where he held high rank. He was defeated for re-election through the Greeley movement. He was a delegate to the Baltimore Convention in 1864, and in 1865 was appointed Collector of the Port of New York.

He died by his own hand while insane, Nov. 12, 1865.

In all his varied public career Mr. King exhibited eminent qualifications and fully sustained his high character as a man.

Hist. of St. Lawrence Co., N.Y.
p. 260
Gates Curtis, Editor
D. Mason & Co.
Syracuse
1894.

PRESTON KING FOR PRESIDENT.

To the Editor of the N. Y. Tribune

Sir: But a short time, comparatively speaking, intervenes until the assembling of the Chicago Convention; and as the action of this Convention will be potent in deciding the next Presidential contest, it becomes necessary that it should act with a full appreciation of the responsibilities devolving upon it. No one can doubt that upon the platform there constructed, and the candidates there nominated, depends the success or defeat of the Republican party in November next. There are men in the Republican Party that can be elected over any Democrat; there are others who cannot.

There are several things which must be taken into consideration in making the selection of the Republican standard-bearer, to omit any of which would be fatal to success:

I. No man should be selected unless a consistent and reliable Republican, as it would be folly to ignore the wishes of the North for the purpose of conciliating a portion of the South, that cannot cast an electoral vote.

II. He must be comparatively free from any mingling with the Know-Nothing imbroglio.

III. He must be able to present an unexceptionable record.

IV. He must be personally popular.

V. He must be a man of great firmness, and a Union man, who will crush out any incipient measures for a dissolution of the Union.

VI. He must be an economist.

These are secondary considerations, which are necessary in the candidate, in addition to the primary ones, of honesty, capacity, and fidelity.

There are numerous Republicans possessing all these qualifications and who could be elected; but some could be elected easier than others. As one of the people, let me suggest a ticket which, if nominated, could be elected over any Democrat aided by the "Union Party". Let us have as our candidates, Preston King of New York, for President; and Edward Stanley or some other good man, for Vice-President.

Mr. King has always been, as he is now, in favor of free territory; his record is unexceptionable; his integrity above suspicion; he is not now, and never has been a politician; his firmness and devotion to the Union are also unquestionable.

With reference to the platform to be adopted, let the following suggestions receive the consideration of the Republican Party:

I. Slavery is a local institution, and is prohibited wherever not established.

II. The Constitution permits States Alone to establish Slavery, and not Territories, and hence Slavery in the Territories is illegal.

III. Congress should provide laws to carry out this construction whenever necessary.

IV. That the General Government should obtain a suitable locality, outside of the United States, for the purpose of planting a negro colony, and offer "free Homes," a free passage, and other inducements to such free negroes as may wish to emigrate thither, and for such slaves as may be manumitted. (This is to secure liberty to negroes, not to abridge it.)

V. That the public lands should be made free to actual settlers.

VI. That the Army should be reduced to 3,000 men.

VII. Provision should be made for calling out volunteers in case of Indian difficulties.

VII

VIII. Our Navy should be placed on an effective footing, and Navy-Yard nuisances should be abolished.

IX. A thorough Postal reform should be effected.

X. An equitable Tariff, which will encourage American interest, ought to be enacted.

These principles will find favor, not only in the North, but in the South. With the sentiment of the moderate portion of this latter section I am well acquainted. What they demand is a practicable plan for the abolition of Slavery, and they will at once move in the Matter. We do not wish the General Government to interfere with Slavery in the States, but simply to aid those who ask assistance.

Cincinnati, Ohio, Feb. 21, 1860

New York Tribune, New York Saturday, March 17, 1860.

Class of 1827
PRESTON KING

During 1837 and 1838 what was known as the "Patriot War" broke out on the Canadian frontier, Citizens of St. Lawrence, Jefferson, Erie, Chautauqua, and other counties, under the auspices of Preston King, and other influential men, enrolled themselves in the "Patriot Army," to be commanded by a son of Colonel Solomon Van Rensselaer, who, in the war of 1812, led the assault on Queenstown Heights, where he was badly wounded. Canada was to be invaded from two points, namely, Fort Schlosser, on the Niagara River, and Ogdensburg, on the St. Lawrence. The steamboat Caroline, while at anchor in our waters, was captured by the British, set on fire and adrift, to go over the Falls. The force, which crossed from a point near Ogdensburg, landing at Windmill Point, near Prescott, encountered a superior force, and were, after a brief resistance, beaten and dispersed, some escaping in their boats, while others were taken prisoners, and, after trial and conviction, transported to Van Dieman's Land. This failure, alike signal and mortifying, resulting in the banishment for life of several young men of intelligence and character, so preyed upon the sensitive and peculiar mind of PRESTON KING, as to occasion deep sorrow for several months, terminating in a mental aberration requiring treatment at an asylum in New England, from which, however, he in a few months recovered. I had known Preston King as a member of the Assembly for four successive years, commencing in 1835. He was a Democrat from principle and from prejudice. He had grown up hostile, not only to canals, but to improvements of every description; the world, he said, was good enough for him as it stood, and would progress quite fast enough without the aid of legislation. He considered the Whig as the Federal party with another name. If he was sometimes forced to admit that the Democratic party could, and possibly had erred, yet at the same time he insisted that the Whig party could not, and never had done any good thing. In truth, I think I never knew a more dogged, obstinate, and uncompromising Democrat than Preston King; and yet, while as wide apart as the poles, politically, and during his first year in the Assembly looking daggers at each other, we gradually relaxed, and long before his legislative career closed we became warm personal friends, and ceased to differ so widely in our estimate of public men, and in our views upon some of the public questions of the day.

Mr. King was transferred by his constituents from the State to the national capital, where he was soon disturbed by the aggressive spirit and encroaching designs of slavery. Nor was he long in making up his mind that, with all his devotion to and affection for the Democratic party, he could not go with that party in its avowed purpose of extending slavery into the territory acquired from Mexico. In 1846 he united with General Brinckerhoff of Ohio, Hamlin of Maine, and Wilmot of Pennsylvania, in favor of a proviso to be attached to bills appropriating money to organize the territory obtained from Mexico, excluding "slavery or involuntary servitude except for crime." This, while it did not yet separate him from the Democratic party, was followed by his opposition to the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850, and to the efforts of the Pierce and Buchanan administrations to extend slavery into Kansas and Nebraska. In 1855 he took an active part in the inauguration of the Republican party.

In 1856, when John A. King was nominated for governor, there was an understanding between leading Republicans that the United States Senator, to be chosen by the legislature in the following February, should come from the Democratic section of the party. Even before the legislature met, it being known

that there was a large Republican majority in both branches, an active canvass for senator commenced. Prominent among the aspirants were the late James S. Wadsworth, Ward Hunt, and David Dudley Field. Soon after the legislature convened Mr. Wadsworth and one or two other gentlemen withdrew in favor of Mr. Field, who personally pressed his claim with characteristic earnestness. Some days before the legislative caucus was to be held, Messrs. Wadsworth, Ward Hunt, and one or two other friends of Mr. Field called to confer with me on the subject. I admitted that it was distinctly understood at our State convention that the United States senator was to be a man of Democratic antecedents. But when they urged Mr. Field as the candidate, I replied that there was a pretty general understanding in the State convention that Preston King should be the senator. In this they differed widely from my impressions, saying that, so far as they knew, there was no such understanding or expectation. They then proposed that inasmuch as the senator was conceded to their section of the party. I objected to this as a step calculated to prevent homogeneity between the two sections in the new party. But at their earnest request I yielded to their view. Meantime Mr. King remained at his residence in Ogdensburg, taking no part personally in the canvass. The Democratic Republican members were confidentially invited to indicate their wishes in relation to senator. At that meeting, after free discussion, when the result of a ballot was announced the friends of Mr. Field were found to be in a minority! As I had confidently believed all along, there was quiet but determined sentiment in favor of Preston King, who more than any other Democratic member of the Republican party had contributed to its rise and progress, and who, during his services in the House of Representatives, had done so much to resist the aggressions of the slave power. His election to the United States Senate was therefore a just recognition of his services and patriotism. During the eventful six years which ensued, and through an ordeal which tested both the strength of the government and the courage and fidelity of its representatives, Preston King was fearless and faithful. He never, however, appeared as a debater, nor has he left any written evidence of the remarkable wisdom he always displayed in council. His judgment upon questions of government policy, his advice in political emergencies, and his knowledge of men, might be and was safely trusted. His term expired in 1863.

I reached Washington the day after Mr. Lincoln was assassinated, and found Governor Seward and his son Frederick in what was supposed to be a dying condition. Vice-President Johnson became president. He had served in Congress with Preston King, between whom and himself common sentiments and warm friendship existed. I asked Mr. King by telegraph to come immediately to Washington. On his arrival two days afterwards he stopped at the Kirkwood House, where the Vice-President lodged, and where, but for an accident, he too would have been assassinated. There I was introduced to the new President, breakfasting with him and Mr. King. As was hoped, Mr. Johnson received Mr. King warmly, and consulted him freely and fully in reference to the important and responsible duties which had been so suddenly devolved upon him. All looked right and promised well. Mr. Lincoln's general policy and views were to be adopted, and subject to such modifications as circumstances required to be carried out. President Johnson's administration was to be what Mr. Lincoln's had been, inflexibly and unchangeably Republican. The war was to be prosecuted and vigorously for the maintenance of the government and the preservation of the Union. "Treason" was pronounced "a crime", and "traitors" were to "be punished". When these essential objects had been secured, and the new administration fairly under way, Preston King returned to his home in St. Lawrence. I then firmly believed, and strangely as things happened afterwards I now believe, that Mr. Johnson entered upon his duties as President with a sincere and honest intention to serve out Mr. Lincoln's term adhering to his principles and policy as nearly as Mr. Lincoln himself would have done, had his life been spared.

In 1865 Governor Seard informed me that a successor to Mr. Barney as collector of the port of New York was wanted. Several names had been suggested. The relative fitness and claims of each having been discussed, the subject was laid over for further consideration. When the matter came up again I suggested the name of Preston King, first because he was imminently worthy of the office, and next, because it was not quite certain that among the city candidates the best man would be selected. Governor Seward heartily approved of this suggestion, and Mr. King's name was sent to the Senate without his knowledge. His appointment equally surprised and alarmed him. When I met him in New York, so strongly was he impressed with the idea of his unfitness for the duties of the office, that he expressed an earnest desire that we should consent to his declining it. But yielding to the solicitation of friends he accepted and entered upon the duties of his office with apparent cheerfulness. He, however, attempted too much. He thought it incumbent upon him to sanction nothing and sign nothing which he did not personally examine and understand. That involved too much labor and thought for any man, the more especially with one of his sensitive organization. He became nervously apprehensive that by some fault or misfortune his bondsmen might suffer. I discovered in conversation with him that he was ill at ease, and that he judged more wisely than his friends in distrusting his fitness for the onerous duties of collector. Finally, becoming anxious about his health, I yielded to his frequently expressed desire to resign, after which he recovered his spirits and we talked pleasantly until twelve o'clock at night, when I left him with the understanding that he was to forward his resignation to Washington the next day. Unhappily that conclusion had been reached too late. The strain upon his excitable temperament had been too severe. He rose before sunrise, and saying to his attendant (a relative) that he would take a walk before breakfast, left the Astor House unaccompanied. On his way to the Jersey City ferry he purchased a bag containing several pounds of shot, with which he went on board the ferry-boat, and when about half way over to Jersey City he deliberately walked overboard and immediately disappeared.

From: Life of Thurlow Weed including His Autobiography and A Memoir
Barnes Vol. I Part II pp. 471-475

CLASS OF 1827

PRESTON KING

Born in Ogdensburg, New York, October 14, 1806

Drowned in the Hudson River, November 12, 1865.

Was graduated at Union College in 1827, and after his admission to the bar began the practice of law in St. Lawrence county. He early became active politically as a Jacksonian democrat, and in 1830 founded the Saint Lawrence Republican at Ogdensburg. He held the office of postmaster of that town, and from 1834 to 1837 he served as a member of assembly. He was a democratic representative in congress from 1849 to 1853, but afterward became identified with the newly-organized republican party. He was an unsuccessful candidate for the secretary of state of New York in 1855. In 1857 he was chosen senator of the United States. During the session of the senate early in 1861, before the inauguration of Lincoln, Senator King made a notable speech declaring his belief that the sections would never be reconciled if to that end it was necessary to render "ignominious submission to traitors," and announcing his readiness to "provide means for the defence of the country by war." He retired upon the completion of his term, in 1863, returning to his professional practice in the City of New York. He took an active part in obtaining the nomination of his friend, Andrew Johnson, for the vice-presidency by the republican national convention of 1864, and by President Johnson's appointment he later became collector of the port of New York. He ended his life--his mind being deranged by troubles--by jumping from a Jersey City ferry-boat.

History of the Bench and Bar of New York Vol. 1 p. 388
New York History Co.
1897.

*Civil War
Record*

PRESTON KING, LL.D., CLASS OF 1827.

United States Senator from New York State.

PRESTON KING, Esq., 1827, of Ogdensburgh, N.Y., was a member of the Adelpic Society.
Adelpic Catalogue 1830 (Died: 1866)

History Of St. Lawrence County

By WILLIAM E. SAWYER
Professor of History, Clarkson College of Technology, Potsdam,
New York

Chapter 5, Preston King, re-
rence River remained largely
in the handicraft stage. Hence,
unemployment regularly accom-
panied the winter months. The
Panic and Depression of 1837
struck the North Country a
severe blow. Where scores had
hitherto been idle during the
winter, now hundreds neither
toiled nor spun. Therefore, idle-
ness combined with a precarious
existence, gave rein to radical-
ism. Thus it was not difficult for
men to be fired with a promise
to aid those whom they believed
to be oppressed. But love of ad-
venture was their dominating
motive. Besides winning glory
and renown, many youths of St.
Lawrence County in 1837-1838
looked upon filibustering as a
useful means of gaining a liveli-
hood during the winter, and per-
haps of securing good land in
Canada. A report which gives
the names of prisoners captured
at Prescott in 1838 shows that
practically every man taken was
a laborer, dependent for the
most part upon seasonal employ-
ment. The majority of the men
placed in confinement were also
made to their hope of self-ag-
grandizement by promises of a
wage of \$8 a month, a bounty of
\$80, and 160 acres of land in Up-
per Canada.

PART I

RADICAL JACKSONIAN

(Continued from last Sunday)

It was Daniel Webster who
once said: "God grants liberty
only to those who love it, and
are always ready to guard and
defend it." Sel-
dom does there
appear upon the
annals of history
a man whose
entire life de-
lineates such a
passion for free-
dom that he
will sacrifice
everything for
it. Ogdensburg,
New York.

Dr. Sawyer
boasts of such a
legacy of Preston King, nineteen-
th century American statesman.



Mr. King was born in Og-
densburg on October 14, 1806, the
son of John King and Margaret
Galloway King. His father died
soon after the birth of Preston.
The boy was bequeathed a mod-
est competence with the under-
standing that Louis Hasbrouck
was to serve as his guardian.
After attending the public
schools of Ogdensburg, the youth
was sent to St. Lawrence Acad-
emy in Potsdam, New York, for
the purpose of preparing for col-
lege.

In 1823, the young man entered
Union College at Schenectady.
It is interesting to note that a
little over a century later a dis-
tinguished son of Potsdam was
to carry Union College to great
heights. His name was Dixon
Ryan Fox, scholar, historian, ad-
ministrator. Young Preston King
was graduated from that institu-
tion with highest honors in 1827.

After completing his college
course, Mr. King pursued the
study of law in Ogdensburg with
his guardian and under the su-
pervision of Judge Fine. Preston
was duly licensed as an attor-
ney, but he never practiced his
profession as such.

In 1830, he purchased a news-
paper called the St. Lawrence
Republican. In that journal Mr.
King ardently espoused the prin-
ciples of the Democratic Party
of Andrew Jackson.

One year later, Mr. King was
appointed postmaster of Ogdens-
burg. He held that position for
many years. Politics seemed to
be his chief interest from an
early age. From 1835 to 1836,
he represented Ogdensburg in
the New York State Assembly.
His radical Jacksonian ideas
soon placed him with a definite
group in the legislature. Pres-
ton King opposed corporate
monopolies. He favored hard
money and he was hostile to the
movements to finance internal
improvements at government
expense. To him all evidence of
the Whig Party at Albany were
nothing except manifestations of
Federalism and aristocracy
which he loathed.

In 1837, President Jackson
turned the White House over to
Martin Van Buren of New York
with the blessings of the Demo-
cratic Party everywhere. Pres-
ton King in the New York State
Assembly referred to Van Bur-
en's inaugural address as a "ban-
ner in the sky". King urged the
people of the Empire State to
stand by the doctrines of the
new president. Mr. King worked
very hard to carry out the prin-
ciples of Jackson and Van Bur-
en. One result of these efforts
was the repeal by the Assembly
of the restraining law upon the
private banks of discount and
deposit.

His ardent love of democracy
mistakenly induced him in 1837-
1838 to try to get Canada freed
from Great Britain. The so-
called "Patriot War" was being
fought along the St. Lawrence
River. Like most wars, this one
was unjustifiable and complex.
It was unjustifiable because the
alleged purpose for which it was
being fought was a mockery of
patriotism. The vast majority of
Canadians had no desire to be
independent of Great Britain. A
very small minority of their pop-
ulation by demanding freedom
encouraged idealists, Anglo-
phobes, militarists, and adven-
turers to prepare to wage war
against British officials on the
Canadian side of the St. Law-
rence River.

St. Lawrence County at the
end of the third decade of the
19th century was a region settled
by small tradesmen and farm-
ers. Jacksonian Democrats and
religious fanatics. Here was an
area not yet linked by rail to the
main centers of American popu-
lation. Production along the
American side of the St. Law-

rence River remained largely
in the handicraft stage. Hence,
unemployment regularly accom-
panied the winter months. The
Panic and Depression of 1837
struck the North Country a
severe blow. Where scores had
hitherto been idle during the
winter, now hundreds neither
toiled nor spun. Therefore, idle-
ness combined with a precarious
existence, gave rein to radical-
ism. Thus it was not difficult for
men to be fired with a promise
to aid those whom they believed
to be oppressed. But love of ad-
venture was their dominating
motive. Besides winning glory
and renown, many youths of St.
Lawrence County in 1837-1838
looked upon filibustering as a
useful means of gaining a liveli-
hood during the winter, and per-
haps of securing good land in
Canada. A report which gives
the names of prisoners captured
at Prescott in 1838 shows that
practically every man taken was
a laborer, dependent for the
most part upon seasonal employ-
ment. The majority of the men
placed in confinement were also
made to their hope of self-ag-
grandizement by promises of a
wage of \$8 a month, a bounty of
\$80, and 160 acres of land in Up-
per Canada.

During the month of Novem-
ber in 1838 such a group of mis-
guided "patriots" took posses-
sion of an old windmill near
Prescott, Ontario, across the St.
Lawrence River from Ogdens-
burg, New York. Several British
contingents had been summoned.
The conflict was being closely
watched from the American
shore. It was evident that the
brave but misguided "patriots"
would be driven from the "wind-
mill."

On the morning of November
15, 1838, an interested American
colonel invited Preston King and
several other influential citizens
of Ogdensburg to go with him to
the British officer in charge of
the offensive against the "pa-
triot" in the "windmill." The
Americans planned to ask the
British commanding officer to
prevent the shedding of blood.
The idea was to remove the in-
surrectionists to the United
States under a truce. The
Americans visited the Prescott
headquarters of her majesty's
troops. They were politely re-
ceived by the officer in charge.
The American colonel and the
British commandant went into
conference. The request was de-
nied.

However, an intimation was
dropped, either from inadver-
tence or design, that since the
British ships were under repair,
there could be no means of in-
terference from the Canadian
side during the early part of the
night. The American colonel
thought about exploiting the op-
portunity. He consulted a few
Ogdensburg citizens on the sub-
ject. From them he learned that
early in the evening (Nov. 15,
1838) the steamer Paul Pry
would be at the service of a par-
ty of volunteers who might safe-
ly approach the "windmill" and
rescue the men. This delicate
and responsible task was entrusted
to Preston King, the postmas-
ter at Ogdensburg, who was se-
lected as possessing the requi-
site qualifications for the duty.

All that afternoon (Nov. 15,
1838) Ogdensburg was filled
with excited people. Gossip had
it that the British were prepar-
ing to close in on the "patriots"
at the "windmill" from all sides.
Escape seemed impossible. Mr.
King was very excited. He went
up and down the streets of Og-
densburg calling for volunteers
to go with him at the risk of
their lives to rescue the "pa-
triot" from their horrible situ-
ation. The needed volunteers
came forward.

About midnight the rescue
party started out from Ogdens-
burg on the steamer Paul Pry.
They moved down the river to
within a few rods of the opposite
shore and anchored. Among the
volunteers was a man associated
with the "patriots." He was said
to be an officer of their organi-
zation and to know their pas-
swords. For these reasons he was
recommended as a suitable per-
son to open the communications
with them. He was carried
ashore in a small rowboat to
state the objective of the mis-
sion.

A general mix-up followed. In
some way the "patriots" con-
fined in the "windmill" were
wrongly informed that they were
about to receive reinforcements
of men and supplies. Hence, they
stubbornly decided to maintain
their position until assistance
could arrive. The rowboat con-
taining the "patriot" leader did
not return to the steamer. Mr.
King then took a small boat and
rowed to the "windmill." He
made known the nature of the
mission and stated the folly of
expecting reinforcements which
there was no reason to antici-
pate. Thereupon, he earnestly

explored the men to avail them-
selves of the only chance of es-
cape that would be offered.

The delusive hope and divided
councils arising from the "prom-
ise" of reinforcements created
uncertainty in the minds of the
"patriots" toward availing them-
selves of the opportunity to re-
tire from their position. Mr.
King was thus reluctantly com-
pelled to withdraw from the
"windmill" without having ac-
complished his purpose further
than to bring off six or seven
men, one of whom had been
wounded in the thigh by a mus-
ketball.

During the time that the
American ship lay near the
"windmill," firing along the line
by the British ramparts was
continued. Occasionally a can-
non ball came whizzing over the
Paul Pry merely to drop into the
river beyond. This action ren-
dered the men on board very im-
patient. As soon as Mr. King
came back from his conference
at the "windmill," the volun-
teers insisted upon the return of
the steamer to Ogdensburg.
Preston was very nervous and
gloomy as he consented to leave
for home, he never forgot this
failure.

The steamer Paul Pry had
scarcely returned to Ogdensburg
when a British armed steamer
was seen going down the river.
All chance of passing between
the American shore and the
"windmill" was cut off. The
"patriots" at the "windmill"
finally surrendered and were
courtmarshalled for insurrection.

Preston King too was to pay
for his failure. Accused by his
political enemies of influencing
Americans to invade British ter-
ritory and of not relieving the
"patriots" from their terrible
position at the "windmill," he
became despondent. Temporar-
ily insane, he had to be confined
in an asylum at Hartford, Con-
necticut, for three months.
(To Be Continued)

2-27-44

Ogdensburg

History Of St. Lawrence County

By WILLIAM E. SAWYER
Professor of History, Clarkson College of Technology, Potsdam, New York

PRESTON KING—CHAMPION OF LIBERTY

By Dr. William E. Sawyer
Associate Professor of American History, Clarkson College of Technology, Potsdam, N. Y.

(With special acknowledgement to Ogdensburg Public Library)

PART II

Free Soiler

(Continued from last Sunday)

After a complete recovery from his mental illness, Preston King was elected to Congress in 1842. From 1843 to 1853, he represented the North Country in the national House of Representatives. In Washington, he was always referred to as the "fat, sunny, and clever" gentleman from St. Lawrence County.

Among his colleagues at the capitol was a Senator from New York, Mr. King and Senator Wright and ex-President Van Buren not only had great prestige in the District of Columbia; they had even more authority at the New York state capitol, where they controlled the political situation through a machine known as the Albany Regency. Early in the

eighteen forties, the Democratic Party in New York State split into two groups known as the Hunkers and the Barnburners. The Hunkers were supposed to be "hunker" for public office. The Barnburners favored reforms. They got their name from a fictitious Dutchman who burned his barn in order to kill the rats. The Barnburner leaders were in the main the Jacksonian radicals of the Albany Regency led by Martin Van Buren, Silas Wright, and Preston King.

Mr. King was one of the most effective exponents of the Barnburner position. In 1844, he and his political machine proposed Silas Wright for Governor and James K. Polk for President. Among the leaders who helped Preston King to manage the campaign were Clinton Roosevelt and Walt Whitman. The Barnburners were successful in the election.

Back in the national House of Representatives, Preston King distinguished himself as a fearless and able advocate of "free speech, free labor, free men, and free soil." He opposed the annexation of Texas because it would become a slave state.

Representative King is said to have been one of the authors of the Wilmot Proviso of 1846. His characteristic modesty may have encouraged another man to introduce the document. Slavery was to be forever barred from all territories which the United States might acquire from Mexico. Although the Wilmot Proviso failed in the United States Senate, it provided a rallying principle for the Northerners, who opposed the Mexican War as a campaign of aggression waged for the expansion of slavery. In February, 1847, Mr. King reintroduced the Wilmot Proviso. It again failed to pass the Southern dominated U.S. Senate.

"The time has come," spoke Mr. King, "when this republic should declare by law that it will not be made an instrument for the extension of slavery. . . . If slavery is not excluded by law, the presence of the slave will exclude the laboring white man."

In 1848, Preston King made a rousing speech to open the Utica convention of the Barnburners (the Jacksonian reform wing of the Democratic Party). Van Buren was then candidate for President, but the National Democratic Party refused to support him. It preferred Lewis Cass. The result was the formation of the Free Soil Party which nominated Van Buren for President at Buffalo, New York. The Free Soilers went before the people with a platform stating that there should be "no more slave states and no more slave territory." Their slogan was "Free Soil, Free Speech, Free Labor, and Free Men." Preston King was elected to the National House of Representatives on the Free Soil ticket. He seems to have lost faith in the party of Jefferson and Jackson. On August 24, 1850, he wrote: "The democratic party cannot in my opinion live without . . . fixed principles."

A new fugitive slave law was passed as a result of the Compromise of 1850. Preston King violently opposed it from the beginning. During the Presidential Election of 1852, he found it very difficult to square his belief in freedom with loyalty to



Dr. Sawyer

the Democratic Party. The latter now seemed to be the instrument of the slave interests. Mr. King prepared to set another Free Soil boom in motion by promoting Thomas Hart Benton for President, but nothing came of the plan.

John Bigelow suggested that Mr. King return to St. Lawrence County and become a state senator. Mr. King's reply to Mr. Bigelow is evidence of greatness. Mr. King wrote: "Your recommendation to me to come to the Senate at Albany is made in terms as if you had forgotten that Senators were chosen by the electors in each district. There are others in this district who . . . would like the place and I have no disposition to be a competitor with friends in this district . . ."

There were even greater problems in Washington. The slavery interests seemed to be paramount. And yet Mr. King appeared to be confident. His letters admonished his friends never to lose faith in the "Barnburner" cause. On September 17, 1854, he wrote: "Let every man do that which is right in his own eyes, and we shall get a better development of the public will than in any other way now obtainable." The Kansas - Nebraska Bill, however, made to many concessions to the South. Preston King was angry. He could endure the Democratic Party no longer.

When in 1854 the Barnburners (Democratic Reformers), following the lead of John Van Buren surrendered the control of the New York State Democratic Party to the Hunkers (conservative vested interests) and abandoned free soil doctrines, Mr. King became one of the prominent founders of the new Republican Party. One year later, he was the Republican candidate for Secretary of State in New York. The new party was not yet strong enough to carry an election.

In 1856, Preston King urged a Benton-Seward ticket in order to divide honors between anti-Nebraska Democrats and anti-Nebraska Whigs. He thought that he had an unbeatable Republican slate. At the first national convention of the new party (held at Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, on February 22, 1856) "jovial and cool Preston" was seen in a leading role. Upon discovering that he could not deliver the votes to Benton and Seward, he accepted the nomination of John C. Fremont as the first Republican candidate for the Presidency. After the Democrats had carried the election of 1856, Mr. King wrote: "St. Lawrence . . . and . . . all the country counties have done nobly. New England, Ohio and the Free West have done nobly. There is much to gratify, yet I deeply regret . . . Fremont is not elected. We must never despair of the Republic. The Slave Holding Oligarchy and the Bogus democratic party have in my opinion won the last victory they will obtain from the people of this Union. I fully believe Mr. Buchanan will be the last pro-slavery President this country will ever see."

In 1857, the New York State Assembly chose Preston King for the United States Senate to succeed Hamilton Fish. In the

his teens. Assisting in the initiation of the Civil War, he was always ready to battle manfully for the principles of the party of which he was one of the founders.

Senator King not only denounced President Buchanan as being "false to his sacred trust," he also condemned the Democratic Party as traitors. On December 19, 1857, he wrote: "the democratic party has been for a few years like a kaleidoscope presenting a new formation with every jostle—black and blacker. Several months later, he continued: "The administration of the war and navy Departments have been shown to be corrupt. The Post Office Department profligate and bankrupt. The President feeble and unsound."

Preston King was sure that political freedom is the only basis for good government. On October 27, 1858, he wrote: "The first . . . thing to be done in public affairs is to settle the contest between freedom and slavery, so that both powers shall see and understand that freedom is the strongest and best, and must prevail in giving character and direction to the administration of Government."

To make sure that the United States might escape from the control of the slavery interests, Preston King, as early as 1858, urged that William Seward be made President of the United States. Seward with respect to the sanctioning of slavery by the federal constitution had urged a "higher law"—the moral law of God. Mr. King appeared to be very confident on April 11, 1859, when he wrote: "On our side there is very strong confidence in the success of the Republican Party in 1860 and there is no sign that this confidence of success will produce any . . . rivalry for the Republican nomination. The general expectation is Governor Seward will be our candidate." On March 8, 1860, King's letter to Mr. Bigelow revealed a similar frame of thinking when he wrote: "Though nothing in the future is absolutely certain, my confidence is very strong that Mr. Seward will be nominated and elected." Two months later, he added: "I see nothing to change

of the wicked."

Abraham Lincoln was the eventual Republican nominee for President in 1860. Concerning this fact Mr. King wrote: "We are all disappointed in the nomination of Seward. But still are in good fighting trim." Apparently, Preston was not heartbroken that his man had lost. For on July 25, 1860, he wrote: "I do not see how the adversary can beat Lincoln. Still my advice is to keep our forces in fighting trim everywhere and give the largest majorities we can. These will contribute to keep the adversary quiet after he is beaten."

Prejudice against the opposition may be seen in the King Correspondence. On April 11, 1859, Preston wrote: "I think . . . the positions of Douglas are so unsound as well as inconsistent that he can never be sustained by the Country." One month later, he wrote of Douglas: "He has no scruples upon principles." Nevertheless, Mr. King was too clever a politician to allow antipathy to curtail his efforts. On July 25, 1860, he wrote: "I feel no doubt about the safety of New York. But there as everywhere we should rely upon our own strength for success and not upon the divisions of the wicked."

UCStaH1827King-p-5028

82.4

3-6-49

ADVANCE-NEWS Ogdensburg N.Y.

History Of St. Lawrence County

By WILLIAM E. SAWYER

Professor of History, Clarkson College of Technology, Potsdam, New York

PRESTON KING—CHAMPION OF LIBERTY

PART III

The Coming of the Civil War (Continued from last Sunday)

Preston King thought Abraham Lincoln weak and unequal to the slavery crisis, but he had faith that God would resolve the issue. On January 30, 1861, Mr. King wrote: "We must do our whole duty and have faith in the wise Providence that overrules the affairs of men and nations. I am happy in the faith that defies despair." Two weeks later his trust in the Almighty was manifested when he said: "The Lord will take care of all these things."



Dr. Sawyer

Despite his faith in the ultimate triumph of freedom through the grace of God, he viewed secession with alarm. Many years before 1861, he had often advocated states rights in preference to extreme centralization in government; but he always refused to compromise with the slavery interests. He frequently spoke plainly and to the point: "What in the hell is the difference between democratic principles this year and last year? What has democracy to do with compromise, with conciliation? I say never. I desire peace, but I would amply provide means for the defense of the country by war, if necessary."

As Chairman of the National Committee of the Republican Party after 1860, Preston King played a large part in affairs in and around the White House. In 1861, in a congressional speech on a naval appropriations bill, Senator King demanded adequate national defense. He spoke thus: "I tell these gentlemen this treason must come to an end—peacefully. I hope; but never... peacefully by the ignominious submission of the people of this country to traitors—never. I desire peace, but I would amply provide means for the defense of the country by war, if necessary."

Senator King ardently supported President Lincoln's policies, and expressed the same religious devotion to the cause of liberty and union. On July 24, 1861, Preston King wrote to John Bigelow concerning the tragedy at Bull Run: "Be not cast down. The disaster at Manassas is very sad and we mourn. But there is no cause for discouragement. The Republic will live and triumph over treason. God reigns and his power is over all." A week later, he added: "We may well look to Him who never fails to execute His will. For He only can know what shall be our destiny because He maketh it through." On September 28, 1861, Mr. King said: "Do not allow yourself to despair of the Republic. We shall with the guidance of a good Providence go safely through the terrible storm that still rages with unabated force." And then, within a fortnight he added: "Do not be annoyed by those who hope or despair that the Republic is lost. It will surely live."

Faith in God was one thing. But meanwhile the inexorable dynamic of politics kept erupting. Horace Greeley in his New York Tribune, the Farmers' Bible, was carrying on a one man crusade to force Secretary of State William Seward from Lincoln's cabinet. Preston King in the United States Senate firmly sustained his New York friend. Mr. King thereby incurred the unrelenting hostility of the versatile and erratic Greeley. This episode accounts for King's defeat for re-election in 1863. Mr. King's tactics in the New York Legislature supported by Thurlow Weed, were generally successful. Preston could not win against such maneuvers.

To appraise Mr. King as United States Senator one must mention his firmness, courage and unhesitating faith in the triumph of right. His modest manner enabled him to render far more efficient service to his country through wise and prudent counsel than many other men who commanded more public attention by display and bombast. It was during the Civil War that the Tweed Ring was beginning to rob the City of New York of more than one hundred million dollars. Mr. King was characteristically optimistic about this brigandage. He said: "The evil will correct itself. After the people have disgraced themselves and loaded themselves with taxes and debt, they will finally rouse to a sense of shame and retrieve the city from

In 1864, the Republican Union Party thought that the Civil War could be ended sooner if a Southern Democrat were chosen as Lincoln's running mate in the election of that year. Since Preston King had been a friend of Andrew Johnson for more than twenty years, he was especially influential in promoting the Tennessee tailor as vice-presidential nominee. Mr. King also cast his vote for Lincoln and Johnson as one of the New York presidential electors in the electoral college vote of 1864.

President Lincoln had served less than six weeks of his second term when he was assassinated. Preston King was in New York enroute to Ogdensburg, having witnessed the Second Inaugural, when he learned the tragic news. He immediately returned to Washington. From the day of Andrew Johnson's accession to the Presidency, Mr. King was called upon to assist in arranging the policies of the new administration. Concerning the new chief executive, Mr. King wrote on June 1, 1865: "Have no doubts or apprehensions of Andrew Johnson. He is an honest, true and strong man full of devotion to his country and the pure principles upon which the Republic must stand."

Not only did Mr. King have confidence in the new President, he also expressed gratitude in the eternal diary. On June 1, 1865, he wrote: "The Rebellion and Slavery have gone down together and both are extinguished... for ever. May God grant that we may become a better people and grow more and more worthy of His protection and His blessing."

Two months before his death, Mr. King wrote a letter in which he expressed a sensible and optimistic appraisal of American national responsibility. He said: "I have no apprehensions respecting our foreign relations. I have no doubt we will act as a powerful nation conscious of its strength to defend its honor and its interests... I do not think there is any such threat of war as will unnecessarily deprive us of the peace so desirable for our country, but we have no reason to fear war if it shall be necessary to preserve our rights or our honor... The President is sensible and brave and wise. Neither resentments nor fears should disturb the judgment or the action of a nation. We are moving on towards the settlement of all our national troubles and difficulties as rapidly as we can expect."

On August 15, 1865, Preston King accepted the office of Collector of the Port of New York. This appointment was made without his application. There had been a general sentiment among the leaders of the Republican Union Party that he was clearly entitled to a position of honor and appreciable emolument. It was a peculiar characteristic in Mr. King's political life, however, that he was always more ambitious of those positions which conferred reputation than of those contributing profit. Therefore he was never at home in the Customs Office. He had once been a commissioner on harbor improvement in the city of New York, but to be Collector of the Port was quite another job. It was only upon the earnest insistence of Republican political Thurlow Weed that the position was accepted.

An invasion of office seekers and the fear that he might fail to perform his duties satisfactorily caused him another mental aberration. During the last two weeks of his life he acted very strangely. The Honorable S. N. Sherman, when calling upon Mr. King in early November, 1865, noticed this peculiarity and suggested that he would be willing to accompany his host to Ogdensburg for the annual election. While at home in Ogdensburg he told his friends that he intended to resign the Collectorship on account of his health. He was pressed to abide by his decision and to remain in the North Country, until he was completely well. An engagement, however, required his presence in New York. After that he would return home to rest. A male relative returned to New York with him.

About one o'clock on Tuesday, November 14, 1865, R. G. Pettibone of Ogdensburg received a telegram from New York, inquiring if Mr. King was in Ogdensburg. An immediate answer was requested. Since there was no evidence of Mr. King being at home, anxiety became tense. At three thirty o'clock that same day, Mr. Pettibone received a second dispatch saying that the "Hand of God has fallen heavily upon us." To understand what had happened, one must return to the New York scene. Early on the cold Monday morning of November 13, 1865, Preston King arose to make

plans. The employees of the House heard him scurrying about in his room. They little realized that he was in an acute stage of mental breakdown. Around eight o'clock, on pretense of taking a short walk he passed from the Astor House into Barclay Street. Then he walked to a hardware store at 190 West St. He purchased twenty five pounds of gunshot which he enclosed in two bags. Then he proceeded to suspend these bags from his neck by means of a strong cord. Carefully buttoning his overcoat over the bags of gunshot, he boarded a horsecar which took him to the Hoboken New Jersey, ferry terminal. He then purchased a ticket and stepped on the boat.

When the ferry boat was a short distance from the slip, he carefully removed his black silk felt hat and laid it on the deck, methodically blew his nose, circumspectly unfastened the guard chain, deliberately passed by it, slowly refastened it. Thereupon, quietly, feet downward, he jumped into the Hudson River. His body immediately disappeared. Several days later, the remains were found and sent to Ogdensburg, New York, where his neighbors buried him in a ceremony befitting a great man.

Silas Wright once said that Preston King would "use more effort, with less appearance, to bring all to one point and that a safe and sound one, than any man I know." While deeply agitated, Mr. King usually remained outwardly calm and cheerful. He was not an orator. But he could express more solid sense in a clause or two than would serve an orator for an extended speech.

His peculiar gift lay in influencing others in an unassuming manner. Unambitious as well as modest, few people gave him credit for all that he accomplished. His equality, self-possession, and common sense were to make him one of the most useful men in Congress for two decades. He indulged in none of the more dazzling acts by which public men are wont to court popularity. His were the democratic and homely virtues. To Preston King more than to any other man may be ascribed the merit of boldly meeting the arrogant slaveholding oligarchy, and organizing the party which eventually overthrew them. Indeed, Daniel Webster was right when he said: "Liberty and Union, now and forever, one and inseparable."

At the State convention in September, 1855, Preston King was nominated for secretary of state of New York, and the ticket was to "be given to the people of the State as the 'Republican Ticket.'" v. 2 p. 214

The Legislature of 1857 elected King as U.S. Senator over Ward Hunt (Union '28) by 65 votes to 17. "King had resisted the aggressions of the slave power, and in the formation of the Republican party his fearless fidelity to the corner-stone principle made him doubly welcome in council." v. 2 p. 243 & 245

In 1860 Thurlow Weed "held that suggestions of compromise which the South ~~could~~ accept might be proposed without dishonour to the victors in the last election, and, in several carefully written editorials in the Evening Journal, he argued in favor of restoring the old line of the Missouri Compromise, and of substituting for the fugitive slave act, payment for rescued slaves by the counties in which the violation of law occurred." v. 2 p. 336-7

Preston King, the junior United States Senator from New York, clearly voicing the sentiment of the majority of his party in Congress and out of it, bitterly opposed such a policy. "It cannot be done," he wrote Weed, on December 7, "You must abandon your position. It will prove distasteful to the majority of those whom you have hitherto led. You and Seward should be among the foremost to brandish the lance and shout for joy." v. 2 p. 339

Political History of the State of New York
DeAlva Stanwood Alexander
Henry Holt & Company
New York 1906.

John Calvin Toll, 1799, and Preston King, 1827, have been brought to mind by recent gifts. Textbooks belonging to the former have been presented to the college by his great grandson Dudley T. Hill, '07. James El Gilmour '06 and John Gilmour '38 have presented a plâtre- of-paris portrait of Preston King, U. S. Senator from New York, and two letters from him to John Biglow, 1835, Ambassador to France.

Appreciation is due to all who contribute such valued items to the archives of their college.

U. A. 4149
UCSLA f1827 King-P-0030

The people of New York felt profound interest in the conflict between slavery and freedom, and the fearless stand of Preston King of St. Lawrence in supporting the Wilmot Proviso, excluding "slavery and involuntary servitude" from the territory obtained from Mexico, had added fuel to the flame. King was a radical from principle and from prejudice. For four successive years he had been a member of the Assembly. In his bitterness he denounced the Whig party as the old Federalist party under another name. He was now, at the age of forty, serving his second term in Congress. But, obstinate and uncompromising as was his Democracy, the aggressive spirit and encroaching designs of slavery had so deeply disturbed him that he refused to go with his party in its avowed purpose of extending slavery into free or newly acquired territory. (Year-1845)

v. 2 p. 102

The fearless stand of Preston King in supporting the Wilmot Proviso took root among the Radicals, as Seward prophesied and the exclusion of slavery from territory obtained from Mexico, became the dominant issue in the State. Because of their approval of this principle the Radicals were called "Barnburners." v.2 p.126 (1847)

The convention of the Softs followed on September 6, (1854). ...the delegates balked on the cunningly worded resolution declaring the repeal of the Missouri Compromise inexpedient and unnecessary, yet rejoicing that it would benefit the territories and forbidding any attempt to undo it. It put the stamp of Nebraska upon the proceedings, and the deathlike stillness which greeted its reading shook the nerves of the superstitious as an unfavorable omen. Immediately, a short substitute was offered, unqualifiedly disapproving the repeal as a violation of legislative good faith and of the spirit of Christian civilization; and when Preston King took the floor in its favor the deafening applause disclosed the fact that the anti-Nebraskans had the enthusiasm if not the numbers. As the champion of the Wilmot Proviso concluded, the assembly resembled the Buffalo convention of 1848 at the moment of its declaration for free soil, free speech, free labour and free men. But the roll call changed the scene. Of the 2 394 delegates, 245 voted to lay the substitute on the table.

This result was a profound surprise.....But despite the shock, Preston King did not hesitate. He might be broken, but he could not be beat. Rising with dignity he withdrew from the convention, followed by a hundred others who ceased to act further with it.

v.2 p. 196-7

CLASS OF 1827.

PRESTON KING

Was a member of the Bar of this county (St. Lawrence), though he never engaged in active practice. He was born in Ogdensburg, October 14, 1806. He was a graduate of Union College and studied law with Judge John Fine. In 1832 he was appointed Postmaster of Ogdensburg, and in 1834 was elected to the Assembly, where he served several terms. He was an ardent Democrat and was led to take an active part in the hopeless effort of the so-called "Patriot's (War) who invaded Canada. In 1845 he was elected to Congress and twice consecutively was re-elected. He became one of the prominent founders of the Republican Party and in 1855 was elected by the new organization to the office of Secretary of State. In 1857 he was elected to the United States Senate, where he held high rank. He was defeated for re-election through the Greeley movement. He was a delegate to the Baltimore Convention in 1864, and in 1865 was appointed Collector of the Port of New York.

He died by his own hand while insane, November 12, 1865. In all of his varied public career Mr. King exhibited eminent qualifications and fully sustained his high character as a man.

FROM Our County and Its People: A Memorial Record of
St. Lawrence County, N. Y.
Edited by Gates Curtis
D. Mason & Co.
Syracuse 1894.

Paper 100 Years Old 1827

OGDENSBURG, N. Y., Oct. 4 (AP).—
"The Ogdensburg Republican Journal,"
commemorating its 100th anniversary,
today published a centennial edition of
sixty pages. Founded in 1830 by Pres-
ton King, "The Republican" was merged

ER 5, 1930

with "The Daily Journal," founded in
1855. Formerly a morning edition, "The
Republican Journal" went into the eve-
ning field again in 1929. The paper is
a member of the Gannett group. Frank-
lin H. Little is publisher and Charles
S. Cantwell, managing editor.

Oct. 5, 1931.

APR
6

CC: James E. Gilmour

January 17, 1949

Dear Joe:

I had a nice talk with James E. Gilmour '06 at Ogdensburg, and we picked up the Preston King portrait which is now in the Alumni Office. Mr. Gilmour is checking further the references to Mr. King in the Ogdensburg Free Library and is, I believe, making arrangements to have references to the college copied for our files. I know you will be glad to see this portrait. It is a welcome addition to our collection.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely yours,

Frederic A. Wyatt
Director of Alumni Relations

Mr. Joseph R. Brown, Jr.
27 West Erie Street
Albany, New York

405Lat1827King-p-0033

December 21, 1948

Dear Joe:

Thank you for your note together with your letter of the ninth to President Davidson. You will be pleased to know that I have had a communication from the Gilmours, and we are to pick up the King portrait when we are in northern New York in January. At that time I will check on the Preston King letters also.

With holiday greetings, and thanking you for all you are doing for this good old college, I am

Sincerely yours,

Frederic A. Wyatt
Director of Alumni Relations

Mr. Joseph R. Brown, Jr.

CC: Joseph R. Brown, Jr.

January 5, 1949

Dear Mr. Gilmour:

The preliminary cards for our northern New York circuit have already been mailed. As you can see, we will be operating on a fairly tight schedule, and, in view of the uncertainty of the weather, we are seeking your advice as to how we can best arrange to get together to pick up the Preston King portrait.

Mr. Joseph R. Brown, Jr., '03, whom you will remember, is the chairman of our committee on historical records, and he advises us that if the Preston King letters in the Ogdensburg Library have reference to the college, we should make every effort to have them copied. Would it be asking too much to have you investigate this situation and advise us?

Hoping to hear from you soon, and with best wishes, I am

Sincerely yours,

Frederic A. Wyatt
Director of Alumni Relations

Mr. James E. Gilmour
220 Caroline Street
Ogdensburg, New York

GRADUATE COUNCIL
UNION COLLEGE

Schenectady 8, New York

RECEIVED

JAN 27 1946

F. A. WYATT
Secretary

January 24, 1949

COMPTROLLER

2 Mr Wyatt

Dear Tony:

May we proceed with plans to have an appropriate plaque made for the Preston King portrait? It should probably read "Preston King, 1827; United States Senator, 1857-1863; Collector, Port of New York, 1865. Gift of James E. Gilmour '06, John H. Gilmour '38."

Mr. Webb has looked over the plaster of Paris portrait carefully, and we both agree that it should be cleaned. Would your office like to take care of these arrangements, or do you prefer to have us do so?

I want to be able to report to the Gilmours that the picture has been hung here in the Alumni Office as soon as possible. Your advice in this matter will be appreciated.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely yours,

F. A. Wyatt

Frederic A. Wyatt
Director of Alumni Relations

Would be very glad to have you do this.

Mr. Anthony Hoadley
Comptroller
Administration Building

209

FEB - 1 1949

ucslaf1827King-p-0035

W. Bilmour
Joseph R. Brown, Jr.

January 20, 1949

My dear Mrs. Clark:

On behalf of the Graduate Council here at Union College, I want to thank you for the two letters written by our distinguished alumnus, Preston King, of the class of 1827, which you have turned over to the college. We are delighted to have them, and they make a valuable contribution to our collection of King memorabilia here.

We are discussing with the Chairman of our Committee on Historical Records the possibility of copying other communications which you have on file.

Thanking you again, I am

Sincerely yours,

Frederic A. Wyatt
Director of Alumni Relations

Mrs. Phylliss Forbes Clark
Ogdensburg Public Library
Ogdensburg
New York

January 20, 1949

Dear Mr. Gilmour:

Thank you very much for your nice letter of the 18th. I hope the enclosed cover the situation fully.

We are glad that your grandson is coming along so nicely.

More later re other letters after Joe Brown has seen these.

Thanks again. With best wishes, I am

Sincerely yours,

Frederic A. Wyatt
Director of Alumni Relations

Mr. James E. Gilmour
220 Caroline Street
Ogdensburg
New York

Ogdenburg NY
220 Caroline ST
Jan 18-49

JAN 19 1949

Mr Frederic A W Yail.
Union College,
Schenectady. NY

Dear Fred:

I have your letter of 1-17 to Mrs G
and myself and am pleased you returned
safely after your strenuous trip. I was, however,
dissatisfied that your call here was so very
brief. Glad that the (impression) picture of Union
was pleasing - perhaps it will look better in a frame.
You know a painter never sees much beauty in
his own works. Our Grandson is coming along in
fine shape and I think Mrs. G. will be able to leave
here tomorrow or Thursday

Regarding Sen King - correspondence with
John Bigelow (1835 Union) I was very kindly permitted
to select two letters to forward to you. None of
the letters appeared (thru a quick scanning) to refer
to Union - So I selected two typical letters,
(with the kind permission of the Librarian) and am
enclosing them in this letter. The complete files
were ~~tended~~ over about 10 years ending late 1862

The letters are all of a Political nature - so
I selected one written in 1857 and in 1860.

I have permission to have more letters
typed - (all we desire in fact) if you feel that
the expense would be justified - Perhaps the
two samples will be all you desire.

Now here is what I wish you would do
right away. Send a letter to:-

(Mrs Phyllis Forbes Clark,
Ogdensburg Public Library,
Ogdensburg, New York)

and express your appreciation for her kindness
in giving Vassar College these two letters etc --

Then list as follows (in a separate note:-
Collections of:-

Letters from Preston King to Mr John Bigelow

VIA:-

From Washington ^{DC} Dec 19-1857

From Washington DC. March 1-1860.

(Latter note is to be placed in Files of library)

Sincerely,

J E Gilman

P.S. Oh yes

September 1, 1949

Dear Mr. Muller:

I am inclosing copies of the two letters we have from Preston King to John Bigelow. The articles we have on Mr. King are probably accessible to you elsewhere. They are:

A Political History of the State of New York by Alexander
New York Tribune, March 17, 1860
Our County and Its People by Gates Curtis
Life of Thurlow Weed by Barnes
New England Historical and Genealogical Register, Volume 20.

Preston King entered Union in May, 1823 and continued straight through to graduation in 1827. He was 16 years old when he entered. The bill books show a total of \$333.09 tuition and board for the whole college course, but there is a possibility that he skipped one term in each of two years, as there are no marks for him at that time. He was the ward of Louis Hasbrouck. King was fined for such things as lying in bed in study hours, being absent from prayers, playing cards, and "public damage." This latter item probably refers to some of the episodes between the town and campus residents. His marks varied, being high in the first and fourth years and just average in the two middle years.

As far as we can tell, the subjects taken were:

1st Year

Latin
Greek
Geography
Grammar
Composition
Arithmetic

3rd Year

Trigonometry, plane and spheric
Conic sections
Moral Philosophy
Greek

2nd Year

Greek
Logic
Algebra
Trigonometry
Composition

4th Year

Chemistry
Natural Philosophy
Philosophy of the human mind
Language or Law
Elements of Criticism by Kame

(This last subject was Dr. Eliphalet Nott's famous course, which seems to have been a survey of life and was, in later years, much praised by his students.)

Sincerely yours,

Adm. Asst.

Mr. Ernest P. Muller
31 East 702 Street
Orangeburg, N. Y.

PRESTON KING (Reference from ABRAHAM LINCOLN BY Carl Sandburg)

"The secret caucus was not yet over when Senator Preston King stepped out and hurried to Seward's house, found his old colleague sitting in the library, and remarked: "Seeing how things were going, I did not stay for the last vote, but just slipped out to tell you, for I thought you ought to know. They were pledging each other to keep the proceedings secret, but I told them I was not going to be bound."

"Seward chewed a cigar and said, 'They may do as they please about me, but they shall not put the President in a false position.' He called for pen and paper and wrote to the President: 'Sir, I hereby resign the office of Secretary of State, and beg that my resignation be accepted immediately.'"

V 1 640

"The booming bass voice of Chairman Preston King of the Credentials Committee reported its majority recommendation that the 'Radical Union' delegation from Missouri be seated. Having thus reported, King joined with Jim Lane in fighting the acceptance of the report. Kind and Lane would amend the report so as to seat both the 'Radical Union' delegates and a set of Blair delegates from Missouri."

V 111 80-1



Union College and the Civil War

FREDERICK L. BRONNER

It has been said that the Civil War was the greatest war Americans ever fought. In many ways it was also true of Union College.

Actually not as many alumni (graduates and non-graduates) fought in the Civil War as in later wars but the casualties were about equal, and so the percentage of loss to the alumni body is much greater. The exact numbers of Union men who enlisted in '61-'65 are not known but it can be safely said that the total of those in both armies, Northern and Southern, numbered about six hundred. Over seventy of these died on the battlefield or were victims of disease or wounds. The old legend which still persists in Schenectady, that the alumni were rather evenly split between the North and South, is clearly disproved by the figures of enlistment: of the six hundred who went to war, over five hundred wore the Blue, only some fifty or sixty wore the Grey!

The war was noteworthy, too, for the prominence of Union College men. The Secretary of State for the Union was William H. Seward of the Class of 1820, while at the start of the war his counterpart in the Confederacy was Robert Toombs of the class of 1828, who was later a Brigadier-General under Lee. Seward's son, Frederick W., of the class of 1849 was Assistant Secretary of State. The Commander in Chief of the Union Army from 1862-64 was Henry W. Halleck of the class of 1837. Daniel Butterfield of the class of 1844

was Chief of Staff of the Army of the Potomac at Gettysburg.

Butterfield was also a composer of bugle calls. Displeased by the regulation "Lights Out" call, he composed a new one, which eventually spread through the entire army. Today it is the official "Taps" which has been called "the one expression of tenderness the army ever allows itself."

John Bigelow of the class of 1835 was consul general at Paris and later United States minister to France. Among Civil War diplomats his work was second in importance only to Charles Francis Adams in London. Austin



Daniel Butterfield, 1844, composer of the bugle call "Taps"

Blair of the class of 1839 was the War Governor of Michigan and a tower of strength for the Union side. And both Senators from New York were Union alumni, Ira Harris, of the class of 1824 and Preston King, 1827.

Union alumni fought in all the theatres of war, under Lee and Longstreet, under Grant, Sherman, Thomas, Sheridan, and Farragut. They fought at Gettysburg, Antietam, Shiloh and Vicksburg. Some knew Andersonville and Libby Prisons. One Thomas W. Rae, of the class of 1860, was on the U.S.S. Minnesota and so had a ringside seat at the famed battle of the Merrimac and the Monitor. Another, Simeon M. Thorp, of the class of 1859, was murdered by Quantrell's guerrillas, when they raided Lawrence, Kansas, in 1863. One Holmes Colbert, of the class of 1853, was a Choctaw Indian who became Colonel of a regiment of Indians. Edward H. Ripley of the class of 1862, commanded the first brigade to enter

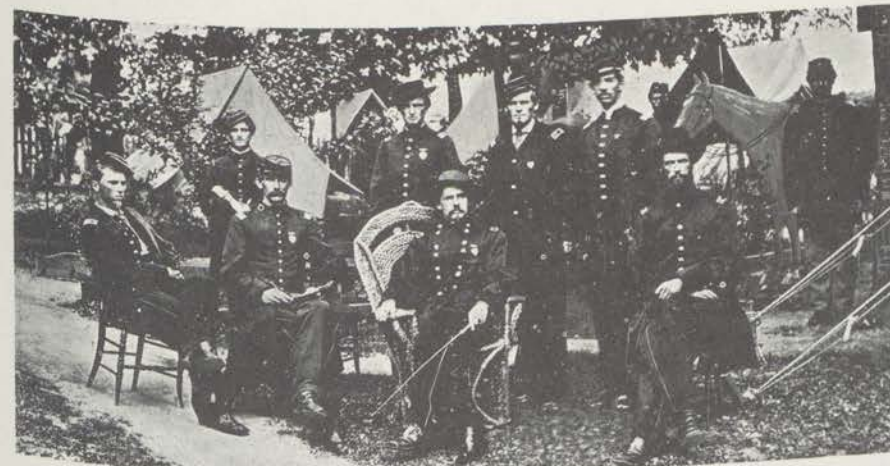


Professor Elias Peissner, colonel, 119th Regiment, New York Volunteers, killed at Chancellorsville

Richmond in 1865 and served as commandant there. And finally, there was Elias Peissner, Professor of German and Political Economy at the college, who at the age of thirty-five, enlisted, became colonel of his regiment and was killed leading it at Chancellorsville. Medals of Honor were awarded to six alumni by Congress for valor in battle.

So they fought in all sections of the country and, of course, sometimes they fought each other in the same battles and occasionally they even met and recognized each other. There was John H. Carter, C.S.A., of the class of 1859. He rode with Morgan, as did Colonel John B. Hutchinson of the class of 1860. Carter was captured by Union forces while on a raid into Ohio and he found on being taken to Camp Douglas that his classmate, David Heagle, was serving as Chaplain of the Regiment guarding the camp! Incidentally, Carter like Francis T. Chase, of the class of 1852, was from New England. Both were teaching in the South when war broke out; both elected to fight for the Confederacy. Julien H. Picot of the class of 1852 was a Captain in the 31st North Carolina, C.S.A. He was captured at Roanoke Island by troops under General J. F. Hartranft, U.S.A., of the class of 1853 who had been his friend in college. "He was shown every courtesy and was paroled in nine days."

One more example of chance encounters may be given. The Civil War has been called the first modern war, but occasionally there were instances of the older type of war - the leisurely, less ruthless, more chivalrous wars of the eighteenth century. Henry R. Schwerin of the class of 1863 was a Captain in Colonel Peissner's regiment and was wounded at the same battle of Chancellorsville and died four days later. He was a member of the Zeta Psi fraternity which was then active at the college. Apparently he was wearing his fraternity pin because he was recognized by some Zeta Psi's in the Confederate army. They cared for him until he died and then returned his



Brigadier-General Edward H. Ripley, 1862, and staff of 1st Brigade, Third Division, 24th Corps

watch, his fraternity pin, his sword and other personal effects to his family.

Union men were present at the start of the war and at the end. The firing on Fort Sumter is usually taken as the opening gun of the war. Stationed there at that time was Lieutenant George W. Snyder of the class of 1852. Apparently his conduct was exemplary because he was made a brevet Captain for his service in defense of the Fort; in fact, legend has it that at the surrender he was the last man to leave.

And the end of the war? Some would say it came at Appomatox. If so, a Union College man was there. Major Charles E. Pease of the class of 1856 carried the terms of surrender from General Grant to General Lee. But for most people the end of the war came on April 14, 1865. It will be recalled that on that date Mrs. Lincoln had planned a theatre party. She wanted to see Laura Keane in "Our American Cousin" at Ford's Theatre. General and Mrs. Grant had been invited to go but begged to be excused as did several others so Mrs. Lincoln turned to a young couple who accepted. They were Major Henry Rathbone of the class of 1857 and his fiance, Cora Harris, the daughter of Senator Ira Harris who, as has been said, belonged to the class of

1824. So Union College was doubly represented that night. As Sandburg has said, here were to be "five human beings in a narrow space, one the greatest man of his time . . . his beloved wife proud and happy; a pair of betrothed lovers with all the promise of felicity that youth, social position and wealth could give them, and [then] this young actor . . . the pet of his little world. The glitter of fame, happiness and ease was upon the entire group, but in an instant everything was to be changed." A shot rang out and Lincoln sank back never to regain consciousness. And so Henry Rathbone, Union 1857, may be remembered long after many more illustrious alumni. He was the last man to ever speak to Abraham Lincoln.

What was the effect of the War on the College? Is it true, as is often said, that the decline which was evident in the College after the Civil War was directly due to the serious dislocations brought about by the War? It is a credulous theory but it is erroneous. The Civil War did dig "deeply into the vitality of Union, as it did with many another institution But the costs of war account only in part, perhaps only in a small part, for the difficulties that lay ahead for Union College."

The Fires of Long Ago

Excerpts from the diaries of Professor Jonathan Pearson of Union College. These diaries, covering a period of many years, are preserved in the college library. Among the subjects which appear to have held special interest for Professor Pearson are the numerous fires which occurred in the town. Several are discussed in the following passages.

Sept. 24, 1834

Last night a little before 12 o'clock the whole college were aroused from their quiet slumbers by the mingled din of city bells and cries of fire, which the students were not slow in echoing. In five minutes every man of us were on our way to the scene of desolation. A more splendid and impressive spectacle could hardly be imagined than the sheet of vivid flame which, rolling majestically up the clear blue heavens, perfectly extinguished the twinkling stars in the overwhelming flood of its on light. The college, the adjacent houses, the lofty spire, distant hills and every reflective object threw back the borrowed light which darkly illumined them. From the neighborhood of the desolation the stillness of midnight was broken by working of the engines, the cracking of the fire, the loud commands of the engineer speaking through his trumpet, besides the running to & fro & confusion of the excited multitude. The conflagration originated in or near an unoccupied shop owned by a Mrs. Price and spread each way consuming a wooden home on either side together with their appropriate outbuildings. Nothing but fine efforts of the firemen aided by the activity of the citizens saved the house of Mr. Benson from destruction; it caught afire several times and was burned to a coal on one side.

Thursday, March 12, 1835

Among the vulgar, my short experience has taught me this lesson, that whoever imposes the largest tug upon their faith will be the sooner believed, & what was most against reason & common sense commends itself most readily to their credulity.

Among the multitude of facts which induce the foregoing opinions are the various rumors afloat respecting the recent fire in "Frog Alley". The most reasonable account of its origin seems to be that it kindled from a barrel of ashes carelessly placed in one of the out houses from which the flames first burst forth; but because it is a much tougher story, and likely to last longer, many are willing to believe it was the work of some incendiary. Now altho' this latter opinion be not at all improbable under the circumstances, yet when we know that there were 15 families of reckless Irishmen inhabiting the house from which the fire originated, is it more reasonable to believe that it was set by a villain than that it was the result of sheer carelessness?

Friday, March 13, 1835

Beside the above may be placed the following silly rumor which I find to be very prevalent today: viz. that we are to have another fire the first windy night, which as a stiff West breeze is blowing this evening, must accordingly happen tonight, in anticipation of such an event I am told that the watches have been set in various portions of the city for the purpose of safety. How true this is I know not, but that these stories are current and eagerly believed among the vulgar there is no doubt.

Saturday, March 14, 1835

Last evening a fire was discovered in Clute and Bailey's coal house which was unquestionably the work of an incendiary having been traced several rods from building. It was only the early hour at which it was kindled that saved us from a third conflagration equal to either of the others.

This bulletin of the Schenectady County Historical Society is published quarterly by the Society at 32 Washington Avenue, Schenectady, N. Y. Address communications to the Society.

Preston King

A.B.

1827

Preston King

1827
A.B.