

Paul R. Mangelinkx, "The Yarmouth Register and the Emerging Crisis over Slavery" *Historical Journal of Massachusetts* Volume 18, No. 1 (Winter 1990).

Published by: Institute for Massachusetts Studies and Westfield State University

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## **The Yarmouth Register and the Emerging Crisis Over Slavery**

**Paul R. Mangelinkx**

On December 15, 1836, under a masthead which proudly, if not somewhat self-righteously, proclaimed "Truth refines but does not obscure," the *Yarmouth Register* was born. Its emergence was due to the efforts of its founder and first editor, Nathaniel Simpkins. Its subsequent success can be attributed to Charles Swift, who as a boy of fifteen began working for the newspaper under Simpkins and rose to the position of editor only a decade later. With a firm dedication to truth, Whig principles, and service to their community, these two men guided the fledgling newspaper through one of the most tumultuous periods in American history; its pages bear witness to the mounting conflict that was evident in the antebellum era. The *Register* provides a revealing view of how one relatively isolated rural community responded as the Union was being torn apart over such issues as social reform, tariffs, a war with Mexico, and slavery.

Less than a month after the appearance of its first issue, the *Register* entered the developing national debate over slavery. Even if Nathaniel Simpkins had wanted to, he could not have easily ignored the controversial topic. Since the beginning of the decade the issue of slavery had intensified. The publication of *The Liberator* and a host of other abolitionist papers, as well as

the aggressive strategies and activities of such abolitionists as William Lloyd Garrison, Wendell Phillips, and Theodore Dwight Weld, kept the focus of public attention on the ever-divisive question as to whether slavery ought to exist in a democratic society.

The course chosen by Simpkins, and later only slightly modified by Charles Swift, was largely dictated by both editors' firm adherence to Whig Party principles. It was marked by clear, yet moderate opposition to slavery, an avoidance of any politicization of the slavery issue, and a strenuous abhorrence of and opposition to the attitudes, aims, and activities of most abolitionists.

On January 19, 1837, Simpkins used editorial space to set forth the *Register's* position. Since the Whigs saw themselves as supreme defenders of the Constitution, he was bound to recognize that even though slavery was immoral and wrong, it was still legal. He wrote: "The Constitution recognizes the right of each state to maintain slavery within its own limits." Those who sought a political solution to the slavery controversy were, therefore, wrong because "Congress has no power to compel a single planter to manumit his slaves. . . ." Since political recourse was deemed inappropriate, he argued that the nation should adopt the Whig approach, that of "moral suasion." "We may persuade him, we may point out the evils of slavery and the advantages of free labor; we may show him the inconsistencies of styling ourselves a free people while two million of our own population are only portions of a master's wealth."<sup>1</sup>

His basic argument stemmed as much from a firm belief that most southerners were unhappy with the institution of slavery and the economic and social bind it created for them, as from a deep fear of the consequences of radical abolitionism. This was supported a few months later, by the publication of a letter written by J. Hawes, who argued, based on his personal experiences, that most southerners agreed that slavery had become a burden and were anxious to see it end. Hawes proposed that southern slaveowners be compensated for freeing their slaves.<sup>2</sup>

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1. *Yarmouth Register*, January 19, 1837.

2. *Ibid.*, March 23, 1837.

The idea of growing southern disillusion with slavery was repeated for years in the *Register*, with the publication of various accounts and statistics, such as the report from an anti-slavery society in Kentucky, confidently stating that seventy-five percent of the population in that state were in favor of abolishing slavery.<sup>3</sup> Apparently the combination of economic factors and "moral suasion" was achieving its desired effect.

The final thrust of Simpkins' initial editorial statement on slavery dealt with the ugly specter of sectionalism which had reared its head at Philadelphia in 1787, in Congress in 1820 over the admission of Missouri, and which once again was threatening to divide the nation. Motivated, one suspects, by Whig Party unity as much as national unity, Simpkins sought to defuse the intensifying sectional debate. He was careful to lay the blame for the continuation of slavery not only on southern plantation owners but on northern ship-owners and sailors as well. He argued that "Slavery is no sectional stigma, but a foul blot on our own national escutcheon."<sup>4</sup>

There are a number of reasons why Simpkins and the *Register* chose such a relatively moderate course regarding slavery. The first has already been mentioned. The *Register's* close association with the Whig Party and its principles, clearly expressed in its first edition, dictated not only moderation and "moral suasion," but the staunch upholding of the Constitution and the Republic itself. In effect, they were locked into defending a system even though many felt that the existence of slavery signified that it was a flawed one. Additionally, for close to a decade the Whigs and Democrats had struggled to keep slavery out of the political arena, mostly due to its dangerously divisive power concerning not only their parties but the nation itself. By upholding the Constitution, de-politicizing slavery, and espousing moderate abolitionism, the *Register* was simply following what had been established by the Whig Party as a prudent course of action.

Second, the paper's readership undoubtedly had a significant impact on the tempering of its anti-slavery views. Even though Cape Cod was undergoing a transition during this period, its people and economy were still tied to the sea and to the

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3. *Ibid.*, June 12, 1845.

4. *Ibid.*, January 19, 1837.

commercial carrying trade. A number of Cape residents earned their livelihood working on the vessels which hauled slave-produced tobacco, cotton, and sugar to their respective markets. While most of these people were not necessarily defenders of slavery, they did have legitimate concerns regarding the impact its abolition would have on their lives. Most, therefore, were not in any hurry to see it come to an end. Furthermore, the Cape's geographic isolation bred an insularity and a natural conservatism toward any radical ideas and toward outsiders in general. This was borne out repeatedly by the actions of segments of the community toward abolitionists. The *Yarmouth Register* was fortunate to be associated with a political philosophy which advocated moderation, since it was published in a community where moderation was a welcome word. In truth, a newspaper which had adopted a Garrisonian stance would have found some readers on Cape Cod, but it would not have long survived. The *Register* chose the only prudent course it could, given the political constraints and the economic realities of establishing a legitimate, paying constituency.

A third reason the editors of the *Register* adopted a moderate anti-slavery tone undoubtedly stems from a pervasive concern that radical abolitionism would lead to the demise of the Whig Party. In October of 1842, the editors issued "A Loud Warning to Whig Abolitionists," in which they argued that radical Democrats, the "Locofocos," were using abolition to split the Whig Party. Whigs were urged to shun abolitionist activity, lest their actions and those of the opposition lead to "threat of a third party."<sup>5</sup> Within two years that threat had become a reality, with the formation of the Liberty Party, comprised largely of northern abolitionist Whigs. Two weeks prior to the 1844 election, the *Register* published an urgent appeal to all abolitionists. With a concise anti-Liberty Party argument they urged votes for the Whig candidate Henry Clay and not for James G. Birney.<sup>6</sup> Of course, when Clay lost to James K. Polk by less than forty thousand votes, the Liberty Party bore the brunt of the criticism, and the *Register's* argument was vindicated.

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5. *Ibid.*, October 13, 1842.

6. October 31, 1844.

The last and perhaps most significant reason for the *Register's* editorial position was its concern for the Union. It was bad enough that many radical abolitionists were creating increased sectional strife with their rhetoric and actions. These demonstrations raised questions as to whether the Union could endure a prolonged, heated debate over slavery. Since the debates over the Missouri Compromise, many southerners had been warning that any radical attempt to eliminate slavery would lead to secession and the dissolution of the Union. Some abolitionists, however, had also begun to question the sanctity of a Union that included the institution of slavery. "In May of 1844 the American Anti-Slavery Society, the Garrisonian organization, went on record in favor of a dissolution of the Federal Union between the free and slave states."<sup>7</sup> Garrison himself went even further by publicly burning a copy of the Constitution at a Fourth of July celebration in Framingham, a symbolic gesture to be sure, but since many Americans held the Constitution to be a sacred document, this gave the editors of the *Register* all the more reason to oppose radical abolitionism and to argue for moderation.

Given the *Register's* position on slavery, it is interesting to examine the extent to which the editors went to hasten its abolition. Politically, slavery provided the editors of the *Register* with an opportunity to attack the Democrats, if only in an indirect way. In the summer of 1844, when it was apparent that James K. Polk would be the Democratic presidential nominee, they wasted no time connecting the party's opposition to tariffs and its support of slavery. They editorialized: "James Polk is opposed to protecting all kinds of wool except the wool that grows on the heads of his Negroes."<sup>8</sup> Of course, the controversy over the annexation of Texas and the Mexican War that followed also provided significant political ammunition for the Whigs, some of which was naturally tied to the issue of slavery.

As they did for other reform groups, the editors performed their most significant function by providing timely announcements of anti-slavery meetings and rallies. They also published complete reports of such activities after the fact, as well as serving as a

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7. Ronald G. Walters, The Antislavery Appeal: American Abolitionism After 1830 (Baltimore, 1976), p. 129.

8. Yarmouth Register, July 18, 1844.

forum for the expression of views on slavery through the publication of letters to the editor. In March of 1839, an extensive report of a Brewster anti-slavery meeting appeared, including all eight resolutions that were adopted by those in attendance. From the resolutions it is clear that they were opposed to the American Colonization Society's attempts to repatriate slaves in Africa, arguing that "to remove blacks to Africa without their consent . . . violates the plainest principles of religion, morality and justice." They also strongly expressed their opposition to the use of physical force to abolish slavery, and concluded by resolving to continue their abolitionist work until "all the slaves are gone."<sup>9</sup>

For the most part, the *Register* appears to have been faithful in publishing reports, accounts, and letters which agreed as well as disagreed with its own stated policy. As an example, in the May 21, 1839 edition, a letter signed by "Howard" both substantiated and criticized the paper's position. The writer was supportive of the *Register's* attempt to avoid sectional blame, stating: "To say that slavery is the peculiar institution of the south is wrong; it is casting the whole odium of slavery on our southern brethren, when northern men are just as responsible as they." However, he went on to bitterly attack the politicians of both parties for their lack of courage and conviction concerning the abolition of slavery. Furthermore, following the standard radical abolitionist line, he argued that "the people should have the right to abolish slavery -- the people created the Constitution and the government."<sup>10</sup>

Thus, the *Register* can be applauded for its "open forum" policy regarding slavery, but there was at least one instance when Charles Swift exercised his editorial control and effectively censored news of an 1848 rally in Harwich, because he disagreed with the radical and incendiary nature of the event. Of course, when the rally turned into an ugly riot, the results were fully reported as an example of the danger that abolitionists posed to society!<sup>11</sup>

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9. Ibid., March 7, 1839.

10. Ibid., May 21, 1839.

11. Ibid., August 31, 1848.

Again, as they did with such issues as intemperance, the *Register* was most persuasive when the editors chose to include accounts of slavery and its effects on individuals. In a reprinted article, it exposed the role of northerners involved in the slave trade. It included a copy of an advertisement from an Alabama newspaper, announcing the public sale of Negroes, and it reported that two New York men, J. W. and R. Leavitt, were involved. But more importantly, in powerfully descriptive prose reminiscent of Harriet Beecher Stowe's classic description of a slave auction in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, it aroused the readers' emotions with graphic descriptions of human beings subjected to the degrading act of being inspected, bought, and sold like livestock, and most emotionally gripping, descriptions of children sold from parents and families torn apart by heartless bidders. At one particular point in the narrative, the author created an imaginary scene at the comfortable New York mansion of one of the Leavitt brothers, in which one of his young daughters asks plaintively:

Papa, do little black children cry any when they sell them, and take them away from their mothers? Or are they so used to it that they don't mind it at all. You would not let them sell me, would you Papa, for I am not black.<sup>12</sup>

Just as emotional and effective, no doubt, was an account of a slave named Pauline, who was condemned to death in New Orleans for "barbarities inflicted on her mistress." When Pauline was discovered to be pregnant, the court announced that her execution would be postponed for one year.<sup>13</sup>

Occasionally a local event arose which gave the *Register* an opportunity to further the cause against slavery. In July of 1841, the editors published a report of a Massachusetts State Supreme Judicial Court case involving a young African-American girl named Lucy Fagins, who was accused of having been an escaped slave from Richmond, Virginia. It seems that Lucy had come north with her master, a Mr. Ludlum, who was visiting his ailing father-in-law in New Bedford. During the extended stay, Lucy

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12. *Ibid.*, February 7, 1839.

13. *Ibid.*, February 27, 1845.



expressed her desire to be free and found individuals in the city to help secure her freedom. During the course of this trial, Ludlum claimed that Lucy truly desired to stay with his family as a slave, and that while in New Bedford she had been kidnapped by abolitionists. The judge personally questioned Lucy, determined her true feelings, and set her free. The *Register* concluded that it was a victory for justice and morality, and a defeat for the slave-power conspiracy.<sup>14</sup>

Unfortunately, instances where the *Register* sought to influence the thought and emotions of its readers were relatively scarce. Unlike the abolitionist newspapers, such as *The Liberator* and *The Emancipator*, which devoted much of their effort to emotionally and graphically depicting the brutality and inhumanity of slavery, the *Register* avoided that type of journalism. Since one of its professed aims was to work toward the abolition of slavery through the process of "moral suasion," the editors either missed the single most powerful means of accomplishing this task or, more likely, chose not to emulate the more radical abolitionist newspapers of the era. Naturally, this raises some questions as to how committed Simpkins and Swift were to the policy of "moral suasion," because nothing proved more morally persuasive than repeated exposure to the cruel and inhuman conditions of slavery, such as accounts of slave auctions, whippings, and the like. Thus, it appears that "moral suasion" was not one of the *Register's* significant priorities.

During the decade of the 1840s, the greatest amount of editorial effort and energy was spent denouncing radical abolitionism and its proponents. As strong supporters of the Whig Party both Simpkins and Swift were in total agreement with its philosophy regarding abolition. "Most northern Whigs saw themselves as defenders of northern rights or as defenders of the Constitution rather than as defenders of the likes of Garrison, Weld or Tappan." Indeed, most Whigs of the region called the abolitionists "crackpots," "fanatics," "amalgamationists," and "incendiaries."<sup>15</sup> This attitude is clearly seen in the pages of the *Register* during the period. As an example, Archelaus, who

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14. *Ibid.*, July 15, 1841.

15. Lewis Perry and Michael Fellman, *Antislavery Reconsidered: New Perspectives on the Abolitionists* (Baton Rouge, Louisiana, 1979), p. 113.

apparently served informally as the *Register's* Boston correspondent, wrote an account of an anti-slavery meeting which was held at Faneuil Hall. While he sympathetically reported the remarks of the aging John Quincy Adams, he had nothing but bitter criticism for the speeches of Wendell Phillips and Theodore Parker.<sup>16</sup>

More than three years earlier, in March of 1843, an editorial notice appeared regarding Lucretia Mott, who was identified as a "Quakeress and an abolitionist." Apparently she was travelling and lecturing in the south where, because "she is not inflammatory she is thus well received." The notice concluded by suggesting that "Such an abolitionist is a true missionary of good. This is the right course to take; but few men would dare to undertake it."<sup>17</sup>

One abolitionist faction which was most divisive in terms of the communities where it emerged, as well as of the abolitionist movement itself, was the one known at the time as "come-outers." When it gained strength on Cape Cod, it became one of the most significant subjects of the *Register's* editorial criticism. The basis of "come-outerism" was the "renunciation of fellowship with those who tolerated slavery."<sup>18</sup> Creating painful schisms in churches and the communities they served, the "come-outers" left the congregations of churches which refused to take a strong stand against slavery, urging others to follow rather than to condone hypocrisy. Some, however, went even further by actually disrupting religious services, demanding that startled worshippers hear their anti-slavery message and their denunciation of the church. On numerous occasions the *Register* published detailed accounts of the trials of "come-outers" who were accused of disrupting church services. The editors clearly had disdain for "come-outerism" and took comfort when the perpetrators were found guilty and punished.

In December of 1845, the *Register* printed a front-page attack on the "come-outers," written by a Reverend G. Collins. In a well-written article which tied the movement to many others in the past "who have found reasons to break from the established

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16. *Yarmouth Register*, October 1, 1846.

17. *Ibid.*, March 2, 1843.

18. Walters, *The Antislavery Appeal*, p. 47.

church," Collins criticized the abolitionist intent of the group. Their target was not slavery, Collins declared, but the church itself; there was no need to fear for the safety of the church, however, because "God will ever protect his own." Collins concluded by proclaiming that "come-outerism" "has already begun to decline and soon it will live only on the historic page."<sup>19</sup>

Without doubt, the individual who was the most frequent recipient of the *Register's* editorial criticism and hostility was the abolitionist Parker Pillsbury. As a former minister, Pillsbury was associated with "come-outerism," had participated in the disruption of church services, and was notorious for his blistering attacks on the church and the clergy for sanctioning slavery. What was most outrageous, as far as the *Register* was concerned, was that Pillsbury frequently came to Cape Cod with his radical message. It was one such speech in August of 1847, at an anti-slavery meeting in Harwich, which triggered a sharp editorial outburst from Swift. Referring to Pillsbury as a "rantipole abolitionist," the editor observed that the speeches at the rally "were of a most violent and abusive character. . . ." He concluded by suggesting that "if these men suppose that by calling hard names and indulging in low, dirty blackguardism, they are helping the cause of abolitionism, they greatly mistake the character and intelligence of our citizens."<sup>20</sup>

In February of the following year, shortly after Pillsbury had visited Hyannis where he verbally attacked both the church and clergy, he was vilified in a letter signed with the pseudonym "Philo."<sup>21</sup> The following week Pillsbury responded in a long and dignified letter defending his position and reiterating what had been the main point of his Hyannis address, that the local clergy appeared too concerned with superficial issues and with outward appearances of the church, rather than true Christian doctrine. As an example he pointed to the overly materialistic concern for building beautiful churches and meetinghouses, which were, in his estimation, too fine for the clergy they housed. In his own words, "The caskets were too rich for the jewels they contained." In a

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19. *Yarmouth Register*, December 17, 1845.

20. *Ibid.*, September 9, 1847.

21. *Ibid.*, February 24, 1848.

final jab at both the *Register* for its policy of printing unsigned letters and at "Philo," who wrote one, Pillsbury made a point of his desire to set an example, by writing, he said, "over my own signature."<sup>22</sup> Within a few months, Pillsbury was again on Cape Cod and in the press. In August of 1848, a huge rally was held in Harwich, following reports of a local mariner who had taken one hundred dollars from an African-American man in Virginia, promising to take him and a friend to the north. Then, the captain advertised the fellow as a runaway slave. In fact, the crowd that gathered to hear the Harwich seafarer called to account was so large that the meeting had to be held in a pine grove on Bank Street, just south of the center of town, because a building large enough to accommodate the crowd could not be found. As previously indicated, the *Register* refused to accept advertisements or publish notices relating to this rally, due to what Swift believed was the incendiary nature and intent of the organizers, Captain Prince Crowell of Dennis and Binie Small of Harwich. Undoubtedly, another factor was that a number of prominent Boston abolitionists were coming to Harwich to participate, including Parker Pillsbury, Stephen Foster, and Lucy Stone.

Pillsbury's role at the meeting was to present the case against the unnamed captain, which he did with his usual forceful and emotional style. He was followed by the captain himself, who freely admitted that the facts of the case were true, but who argued: "I did my duty as I saw it according to the Bible, returning to the owner what was his. I'm a member in good standing of the church."<sup>23</sup> Using that statement by the captain, Stephen Foster began a bitter attack on the Baptist church, at which point the meeting turned into a riot. Fueled by a number of the captain's friends in the audience and by a group of men who had just come from a church meeting, a physical attempt was made to defend both the captain and the church. In the ensuing melee, Pillsbury was thrown to the ground and kicked repeatedly. Two Harwich abolitionists who sought to defend him were knocked unconscious, and Foster, who was badly beaten, had his Sunday frock ripped in two by the mob. Fortunately, all were

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22. *Ibid.*, March 2, 1848.

23. *The Register* (150th Commemorative Edition, July 1986), p. 33.

rescued by the towering six-foot three-inch Prince Crowell, who was able to hold off the angry mob and spirit the men to safety.<sup>24</sup>

The following week, Swift published a report of the Harwich anti-slavery meeting which had been broken up by the mob. "S. S. Foster came out of the melee minus a coat and Mr. Pillsbury gave leg bail. The last that was seen of the colored gentleman who spoke, he was making a bee line for the woods." Swift editorialized that he would be glad when the "rabble" presently on Cape Cod for the anti-slavery convention had left town, and when order might be restored.<sup>25</sup>

Six weeks later an article, "The Harwich Mob," written by Elkanah Nickerson, appeared on page one. In what was essentially a defense of Harwich against Pillsbury and the other abolitionists, Nickerson argued that Pillsbury had overstepped the bounds of decency, by personally attacking the people of Harwich. As an example, he noted that Pillsbury had said: "The men of Harwich did not know anything but to catch mackerel and eat them, and that the women were mere cyphers, thousands of them would not make a unit." That, as far as Nickerson was concerned, was uncalled for and, therefore, Pillsbury and Foster got what they deserved. Apparently, given the coverage of the event and its aftermath by the *Register*, Swift agreed.<sup>26</sup>

Perhaps the one event involving a local individual which best represents the attitudes held by the editors of the *Register* on the controversial issue of slavery and its abolition occurred in June of 1844, when Captain Jonathan Walker of Harwich was arrested in Pensacola, Florida, and charged with attempting to bring seven slaves to the north. It seems that Walker, who had previously lived in Pensacola, had been approached by four slaves, who asked to be taken north. Since his vessel was too small for such a lengthy journey, he agreed to take them and three others to Nassau, in the Bahamas. Walker became ill en route, and the foundering ship was captured and returned to Pensacola, where Walker was arrested. Subjected to a feverish mob threatening to

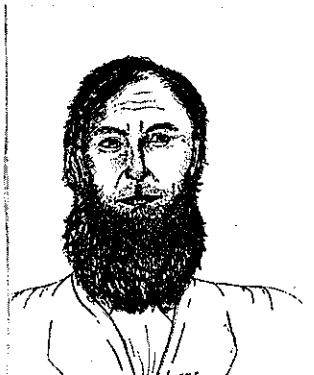
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24. Henry C. Kittredge, Cape Cod: Its People and Their History (Boston, 1968), p. 259.

25. Yarmouth Register, August 31, 1848.

26. Ibid., October 12, 1848.

lynch him, he was eventually placed in jail, with a ten thousand dollar bail set by the court. At his trial on November 14, 1844, Walker was found guilty and sentenced to spend one hour in the pillory (where he was pelted with rotten eggs by one of the aggrieved slave-owners), and to fifteen days in jail. He also was fined \$150 plus court costs, which, including the fees of a dishonest lawyer, amounted to \$1,400. Worst of all, Walker was branded on his palm with two letters: "S S," to identify him as a "slave stealer." Walker described the traumatic incident in his journal:

He then took from the fire the branding iron of a slight red heat, and applied it to the ball of my hand, and pressed it firmly, for fifteen or twenty seconds. It made a spattering noise, like a handful of salt in the fire, as the skin gave way to the hot iron.<sup>27</sup>

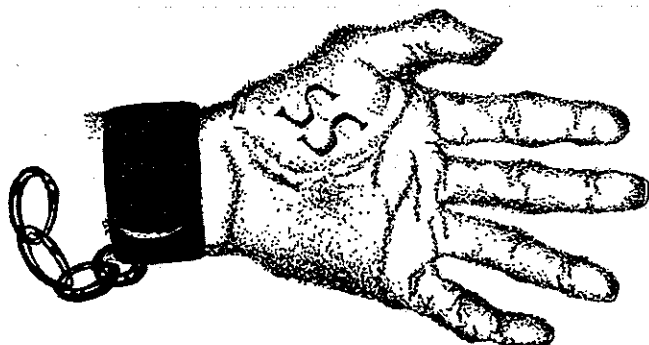


**Captain Jonathan Walker**

This act of cruel and unusual punishment hurt the cause of slavery more than it helped, for it made Walker an instant martyr in the north. John Greenleaf Whittier wrote a poem about the outrageous incident, and Walker went on the abolitionist lecture circuit, speaking nearly every day and displaying his branded

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27. The Cape Codder, March 22, 1888, section II, p. 1.

hand, which undoubtedly had a tremendous impact on the audience.



The first notice of Captain Walker's plight did not appear in the *Yarmouth Register* until August 15 of 1844, when it announced his arrest and imprisonment. The editorial comment in the same issue was noticeably cautious, stating that "However imprudently Mr. W. may have acted in thus risking himself, he certainly deserves our warmest sympathy, for if he has violated the despotic laws of the south, it does not follow that he has performed an unworthy deed." Printed beneath the editorial was a notice of a meeting to be held at the Congregational Meetinghouse in Harwich, to take into consideration the Walker case.<sup>28</sup>

Less than a month later, Joseph Mash, one of the leading abolitionists on Cape Cod, sent to the *Register* a letter written by Captain Walker, which had been reprinted from *The Emancipator*. In that letter from the Pensacola jail, Walker described his conditions as deplorable and his treatment as horrible. He was shackled and chained, suffering from repeated bouts with fever, and was unable to eat the food, which he described as disgusting. Understandably, he also expressed deep concern and anxiety over the well-being of his wife and children.<sup>29</sup> Many months passed without any further mention of Walker and his harrowing ordeal. Finally, on July 24, 1845, the *Register* announced that he had been set free, and proceeded to describe his punishment. It

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28. *Yarmouth Register*, August 15, 1844.

29. *Ibid.*, September 5, 1844.

reported his branding and then remarked that "If the slaves had been white and he had freed them from Arabs then he would have been a hero; because they were black and protected by U. S. law, he is therefore a rogue."<sup>30</sup> Several months later, another editorial was published which defended Walker and argued against those who would denounce him. The editors also sternly warned that Walker's "branded hand will give the slaveholders more trouble than did the mysterious hand to the king of Babylon."<sup>31</sup> Thereafter, Walker and his ordeal were never again mentioned.

The *Register's* response to this "local" incident is significant, because it clearly typifies its role with regard to the larger issues of slavery and the abolition movement. Unlike the less-restrained abolitionist press, which with moral indignation and harsh condemnation used the Walker case to rail against the south and its "peculiar institution," the *Register* calmly and quietly recognized that Walker was wrong, but argued for sympathy and support against the unjust treatment of an individual. Later, Walker joined forces with Garrison, Phillips, and other more radical abolitionists, attending rallies, giving speeches, and apparently attempting to live out the classic lines of Whittier's poem:

Then lift that manly right hand,  
bold ploughman of the wave!  
Its branded palm shall prophesy  
"SALVATION TO THE SLAVE."

At that point, it is not surprising that Walker became *persona non grata*, as far as the *Register* was concerned. For the *Register* and its editors were committed to moderation and "moral suasion," not to anger and agitation; to national and political unity, and not to divisiveness. That was its chosen course through the dangerous and tumultuous waters of the anti-slavery crusade.

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30. *Ibid.*, July 24, 1845.

31. *Ibid.*, September 4, 1845.