SOUND AT HEART AND RIGHT IN HAND:

MOBILE'S ROAD TO SECESSION

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Ling-Pei Lu

Certificate of Approval:

_____	_____
Kenneth W. Noe	Anthony Gene Carey, Chair
Professor	Associate Professor
History	History
_____	_____
Patience Essah	Bert Hitchcock
Associate Professor	Professor
History	English

_____

Stephen L. McFarland
Acting Dean
Graduate School

SOUND AT HEART AND RIGHT IN HAND:

MOBILE'S ROAD TO SECESSION

Ling-Pei Lu

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SOUND AT HEART AND RIGHT IN HAND:

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Ling-Pei Lu

Signature of Author

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Date of Graduation

VITA

Ling-Pei Lu, son of Yi-Chun and Ruei-Yuan (Wu) Lu, was born on November 10, 1968 in Taipei, Taiwan, Republic of China. He completed Bachelor of Arts in History at Tamkang University, Taipei, Taiwan in June 1992. After serving as a second lieutenant in the R.O.C. Army Infantry, he continued his academic interests by enrolling in Tamkang University in September 1993 and was awarded a Master of Arts degree in American Studies in January 1996. He came to the United States and entered the Graduate School at Auburn University in September 1998 to pursue doctoral studies in American History. He married Chiu-Hui (Chien) on April 19, 1997 and they have two children, Belinda Lyrone (2002) and Bryce Lyhung (2006), both were born in Auburn, Alabama.

DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

SOUND AT HEART AND RIGHT IN HAND:

MOBILE'S ROAD TO SECESSION

Ling-Pei Lu

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This study traces Mobilians' road from moderation to secessionism and analyzes the factors that influenced their decision-making. Mobile's commercial path of development differentiated it from most of the rest of a rural and agricultural state. In politics, Mobile's long tradition of close two-party competition differed markedly from state politics, in which the

Democratic party held a dominant position.

Differences did not, however, really separate Mobile from Alabama. Mobile was a cotton city, inextricably linked to its hinterlands, which grew the fleecy staple upon which nearly all of the city's commerce revolved. Economic factors also pushed white Mobilians toward a stout defense of slavery and southern rights. As white citizens understood the matter, Mobile lived on cotton, and cotton lived on slavery; their prosperity and their world depended upon maintaining and expanding cotton production and the institution of slavery.

Resolutely pursuing a moderate course, Mobilians long hoped for a resolution of sectional conflict that would allow the city to prosper within the Union. Their decision-making was logical, not hysterical. In 1860-61, a large majority of Mobile voters saw secession as a win-win proposition, which would simultaneously preserve profits and political autonomy against the grave threat of northern Republican assaults on slavery and southern rights.

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Finally, I want to dedicate this dissertation to my wife Chiu-Hui, who was always there cheering me on and gave me infinite love and patience through the journey. Unquestionably, she deserves to be awarded a degree of PHT (Push Husband Through).

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLES, ILLUSTRATIONS, AND MAPS

ILLUSTRATION PAGE

MAP PAGE

INTRODUCTION

As we entered the mouth of the Bay of Mobile we saw between thirty and forty vessels riding at anchor below . . . On reaching the city we also found the wharves crowded with steamers and vessels of small burden. I was surprised at the peculiar beauty of the place, for it consisted of streets well laid out at right angles, with excellent sidewalks . . .[1]

George William Featherstonhaugh, 1844

In the Bay, a fleet of from sixty to a hundred cotton ships carrying the flags of Great Britain, Bremen, France, Sweden, Denmark, await to take on board this vast amount of cotton, . . . Cotton is, therefore, the circulating blood that gives life to the city.[2]

Joseph Holt Ingraham, 1860

George William Featherstonhaugh, a British geologist, and Joseph Holt Ingraham, a Maine native and Episcopal priest, vividly described the twin pillars upon which antebellum Mobile rested: trade

[1] George William Featherstonhaugh, Excursion Through the Slave States, From Washington on the Potomac, To the Frontier of Mexico; With Sketches of Popular Manners and Geological Notices (New York, Harper, 1844), 142.

[2] Joseph Holt Ingraham, The Sunny South; or, The Southerner at Home Embracing Five Years' Experience of a Northern Governess in the Land of the Sugar and the Cotton (Philadelphia: G. C. Evans, 1860), 507.

and cotton. Alabama's only port was one of the nation's three largest cotton ports in 1860, behind only New York and New Orleans. As the state's commercial center and largest city, Mobile differed considerably from the rest of overwhelmingly rural and agricultural Alabama. Its prosperity attracted people from all around the Atlantic World. In Mobile resided the largest number of northerners and foreigners in the state, and both "Yankees" and immigrants made huge contributions to Mobil's growth. Although slavery was the foundation of the cotton trade, Mobile itself had a comparatively smaller slave population than the rest of Alabama. Democrats dominated Alabama state politics, but in Mobile the Whigs long held sway, and the city featured a competitive two-party system until the Democrats emerged finally triumphant in 1857. Mobile's commercial partnership with the North, its cosmopolitan population, its low ratio of slaves, and its two-party political system all helped encourage political moderation through most of the antebellum period. In the end, however, Mobilians backed immediate secession even amidst

the most prosperous period in the city's history.

The secession movement has been studied in different southern cities, such as Charleston, Richmond, New Orleans, Montgomery, and Tuscaloosa.[3] Mobile's journey from political moderation to radicalism, in contrast, has been understudied due to the lack of primary sources. Generally, works on antebellum Mobile can be separated into three main categories. The first are general histories.[4] The second is comprised of studies of Mobile within the context of urban history. Harriet Amos Doss's Cotton City: Urban Development in Antebellum Mobile (1985), an excellent work, is by far the most extensive published study.[5] The last category of works

[3] See Henry Glenmore Ecton, "Southern Cities and the Secession Crisis" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Chicago, 1986); Jerry C. Oldshue, "The Secession Movement in Tuscaloosa County" (M.A. Thesis, University of Alabama, 1961).

[4] See Caldwell Delaney, The Story of Mobile (Mobile, Alabama: Haunted Book Shop, 1981), Craighead's Mobile: Being the Fugitive Writings of Erwin S. Craighead and Frank Craighead (Mobile: Haunted Bookshop, 1968); Clark S. Whistler, Remember Mobile (Mobile, Alabama, 1948).

[5] For unpublished works, Alan Smith Thompson's "Mobile, Alabama, 1850-1861: Economic, Political, Physical, and Population Characteristics" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Alabama, 1979) provides the most detailed statistics on Mobile's demography, economy, society, and politics.

are military histories, which focus on the Confederacy, and especially on the defense of Mobile and the battle of Mobile Bay in 1864.[6] None of these various works concentrates on examining the causes of Mobile's support for immediate secession.

The main goal of this dissertation is to explore the dynamics behind Mobile's secession, and to explain why people in such a cotton city, which was less southern than its hinterlands and known for its political moderation, and which had a long and close commercial connection with the North, ultimately embraced "the most ultra-secessionists doctrines," as William Howard Russell, the London Times correspondent, labeled them.[7] The dissertation consists of five chapters, this introduction, and a conclusion. The first chapter traces the early development of sectionalism in America

[6] See Chester G. Hearn, Mobile Bay and the Mobile Campaign: the Last Great Battles of the Civil War (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, 1993); Arthur W. Bergeron, Jr., Confederate Mobile (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1991); C. C. Andrews, History of the Campaign of Mobile: Including the Coo□perative Operations of Gen. Wilson's Cavalry in Alabama (Range, Alabama : Barney E. Tyree, c1985).

[7] Eugene H. Berwanger, ed., My Diary, North and South (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2001), 138.

and compares historians' diverse interpretations of sectionalism and secession.

Chapter two examines the forces that shaped white Mobilians' decision-making during the sectional crisis of the 1850s and the secession movement of 1860-61. It discusses the economic relationships between antebellum Alabama and Mobile, contending that although Alabama and Mobile were obviously different, cotton tied the city to the state, and vice versa.

Chapter three explores Mobile's characteristic political moderation, which was not incompatible with a stout defense of southern rights and slavery. As John Forsyth, the editor of Mobile Register, proclaimed, on southern rights white Mobilians were "sound at heart and right in hand." Like most southerners, Mobilians argued that the South had a right to control all significant questions related to slavery. Southern rights, which they believed were either sanctioned by the Constitution or inherent in the sovereignty of the states, could not legitimately be violated by the federal government

or northern states.

Chapter four looks closely at Mobile's road to secession. The main argument is that Mobilians' decision for immediate secession resulted more from a persistent effort to defend slavery and southern rights than from a reaction against predominant northern economic influence in the city.[8] Secession came during the most prosperous period in the city's history. Mobilians confidently expected further growth and prosperity in a southern Confederacy, despite the severing of economic ties with the North.

William H. Chase of Florida asserted in early 1861 that the cotton states would benefits from secession. He declared that a "free market would be opened to general commerce," foreign articles would "flow freely through the rivers and railways" to southern ports, and the cotton states would certainly maintain their "normal

[8] Harriet Amos Doss and Arthur W. Bergeron stress the important roles of trade imbalance and northern economic influence played in Mobile's secession. See Harriet Amos Doss, Cotton City: Urban Development in Antebellum Mobile (Tuscaloosa, Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1985), 222-39; Arthur W. Bergeron, Confederate Mobile (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1991), 6.

condition of peace with the commercial and manufacturing nations of the world."[9] Mobilians shared Chase's optimism.

The final chapter and conclusion contend that Mobilians seceded to protect slavery, a common southern interest, which sustained Mobile's cotton business and energized the city. Contrary to Chase's pre-war predictions, Mobile suffered greatly during the Confederacy's travails, and growers began shipping cotton elsewhere to market in the post-bellum. The prosperity created by cotton and slavery proved more fragile and fleeting than white Mobilians ever imagined.

[9] See William H. Chase, "The Secession of the Cotton States: Its Status, Its Advantages, and Its Power," DeBow's Review 30 (January 1861): 93, 95.

CHAPTER 1

THE NORTH AND SOUTH: FROM SECTIONALISM TO SECESSION

Sectional stress is the most serious internal threat to national integration. As political scientist V. O. Key argues that national unity is usually threatened when “sectional cohesion tightens and the lines of cleavage between sections deepen.” Sectionalism not only divides a nation into two or more cohesive regions, but also leads citizens in each region to “look upon the ‘outsider’ as an ‘alien’ – a feeling not unlike that of the people of one nation toward those of another.” Yet according to Key, sectional polarization does not necessarily lead to war. In the United States, leaders have usually manufactured “a formula for the maintenance of national unity. Only once did American politicians

fail in this endeavor."[1]

Antebellum United States history thus provides a single significant example of constant and intense sectional conflict that preceded national disintegration. Regional differentiation has been common throughout American history, dating back to the colonial period. Although historians differ over whether all the thirteen colonies converged into a common "American culture" before the American Revolution, they basically agree that the colonies had forged at least four distinct colonial cultures in the areas of New England, the Middle Colonies, the Chesapeake, and the Lower South during the last decades of the colonial period.[2]

The early prototype of regionalism continued developing during the Revolution, the formation of a new national government

[1] V. O. Key, Politics, Parties and Pressure Groups (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1964), 233.

[2] See Jack P. Greene, Pursuits of Happiness: The Social Development of Early Modern British Colonies and the Formation of American Culture (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988), and David Hackett Fischer, Albion's Seed: Four British Folkways in America (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989).

in 1776, and the creation of the Constitution of 1787. During the American Revolution, North and South differed over the policy of non-exportation and the use of African American soliders. As early as the Confederation period, North and South bound themselves at odds over the taxation of imports and exports as well as other matters. For example, while New Englanders insisted on the right to fish on Newfoundland's Grand Banks, southerners were more anxious to secure navigation rights at the mouth of the Mississippi.[3]

The Constitution, ratified in 1788, represented a series of conflicts and compromises among different interest groups and regions. As James Madison observed, differences and disputes during the Constitutional Convention were principlly derived from "the division between the Northern and Southern."[4] Madison foresaw that the major threat to the new government would lay in "the great southern

[3] John Richard Alden, The First South (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1961). Alden stresses the significance of sectional conflicts in the period between 1775 and 1789.

[4] William J. Cooper and Thomas E. Terrill, The American South: A History (New York: The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc. 1996), 102.

and northern interests of the continent being opposed to each other."[5] George Washington likewise worried that geographical discriminations would disturb the nation's unity. In his Farewell Address of 1796, Washington encouraged Americans to strive for national unity. The Union, he opined, "must always exalt the just pride of patriotism more than any appellation derived from local discriminations."[6]

People in the antebellum America had long perceived the different characteristics of northerners and southerners and saw them as the reasons for sectional incompatibility. Thomas Jefferson contended in 1785 that the major distinctions between northerners and southerners were that northerners were "cool, sober, laborious, . . . jealous of their own liberties, and just to others." Southerners, on the other hand, were "fiery, voluptuary,

[5] Fulmer Mood, "The Origin, Evolution, and Application of the Sectional Concept, 1750-1900," in Merrill Jensen, ed., Regionalism in America (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1952), 32-34.

[6] The Farewell Address, in the Papers of George Washington. Online, University of Virginia. Available: http://gwpapers.virginia.edu/

indolent, . . . zealous for their own liberties, but trampling on those of others."[7]

John C. Calhoun later asserted that the North and South were not only two different worlds, but also accommodated two different peoples, making unity ultimately impossible. In a letter to his daughter Anna Maria in 1838, Calhoun argued:

> We cannot and ought not to live together as we are at present, exposed to the continual attacks and assaults of the other portion of the Union . . . We must remember, it is the most difficult process in the world to make two people of one; and that there is no example of it.[8]

James Stirling, a British traveler, similarly argued northerners and southerners were two peoples. According to him, the North was originally Puritan and Plebeian; the South was Cavalier

[7] Quoted in Cooper and Terrill, The American South, 97.

[8] John C. Calhoun to Anna Maria Calhoun, January 25, 1838, in "Correspondence of John C. Calhoun," ed. by J. Franklin Jameson, Annual Report of the American Historical Association for the Year 1899 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1900), II: 391.

and Patrician. Northern society had "the industrial energy and political independence of a self-governing yeomanry." People in the North were "men of moderate means, men of the middle class, who came out on terms of equality, they were essentially democratic." In the South, in contrast, "the rich are too proud to work, and the poor are too subservient to be free."[9]

Frederick Law Olmsted, a Connecticut native, depicted the differences between northern and southern societies during his travels in the South from 1852 to 1854. He considered the North more prosperous than the South, and he observed that the whole South remained almost in a frontier condition, in which "the natural resources of the land were strangely unused, or were used with poor economy."[10] Southerners, Olmsted thought, disdained labor; they were concerned with the end and impatient with the means. In

[9] James Stirling, Letters from the Slave States (London: J. W. Parker, 1857), 60-65.

[10] Frederick Law Olmsted, The Cotton Kingdom: A Traveler's Observations on Cotton and Slavery in the American Slave States, edited by Arthur M. Schlesinger, Sr. and Lawrence N. Powell (New York: Random House, Inc., 1984), 8, 554, 561.

comparison, northerners enjoyed life less, but found happiness in work and progress.[11] Moreover, while observing the Kansas-Nebraska excitement in Texas in 1854, Olmsted commented that the North and South held different conceptions of nationalism. Southern patriotism was limited and selfish; northern patriotism was "much more generous and national in its application."[12]

Daniel Robinson Hundley, an Alabamian from Madison County who practiced law in Chicago prior to the Civil War, contended that southerners considered public interests first, while Yankees focused on pursuing their own personal interests. Hundley stated:

> The Southern Yankee . . . stimulated the Southern Gentleman to activity and enterprise. Certainly there is a vast difference between the motives which have instigated the two, the latter being influenced by public spirit and patriotic pride, while the former has only sought to make money and to

[11] Ibid., 556, 616, 620.

[12] Frederick Law Olmsted, "A Tour in the Southwest," New York Daily Times, May 13, 1854.

advance his private interests.[13]

Unequal economic progress in North and South intensified sectionalism. The "market revolution" of the early nineteenth century accelerated sectional differentiation. A more industrialized North differed from the agricultural southern slave states, in which cotton was the chief commercial crop. By 1840, the contrast between the agricultural South and the more commercial and industrial North was considerably greater than it had been twenty years earlier. The North employed more people in commerce, manufacturing and trades, invested more in manufacturing, and produced more value in many segments of industry than the South (see Table 1). Divergent economic paths undoubtedly contributed to disputes over tariffs, internal improvements, and the national bank.[14]

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[13] Daniel Robinson Hundley, Social Relations in Our Southern States (New York: Henry B. Price, 1860), 156-57.

[14] While the primary contest over these issues was a partisan one, between Whigs and Democrats, northerners generally were more favorable toward protective tariffs, federal aid to internal improvements, and a national

TABLE 1: Contrasting North and South, 1840 and 1860.

	1840	
	NORTH	SOUTH
Values Produced in Agriculture	50%	50%
Values Produced in Commerce	82%	18%
Values Produced in Manufacture	69%	31%
	1860	
	NORTH	SOUTH
Manufacturing Establishments	78%	22%
Capital Invested in Manufacturing	84%	16%
Annual Value of Products in Manufacturing	85%	15%

SOURCE: Excerpted and computed from Douglas C. North and Robert Paul Thomas, ed., The Growth of American Economy to 1860 (Columbia, South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 1968), 238-39; Historical Census Browser, Retrieved on January 20, 2005 from the University of Virginia, Geospatial and Statistical Data Center: http://fisher.lib.virginia.edu/collections/stats/histcensus/index.html. Percentage calculated by author.

bank than were southerners. See David M. Potter, The Impending Crisis, 1848-1861, completed and edited by Don E. Fehrenbacher (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, Inc., 1976), 32-33.

The South's population growth also lagged behind the North's. The South attracted fewer foreign immigrants; the census of 1830 showed there were 10,326 aliens in the South and 97,506 in the North. In 1850, the South accommodated 14 percent of the total foreign-born population; in 1860, only 13 percent of immigrants lived in the South.[15] The South's proportion of the nation's population shrank from 43 percent in 1840 to 39 percent in 1860 (see Table 2). The Confederate states ultimately accounted for only 29 percent of the total population of the nation (see Table 3).

[15] Emory Q. Hawk, Economic History of the South (New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1934), 217.

TABLE 2: Population Distribution by Regions, 1840-1860.

	NORTH *		SOUTH **		TOTAL U.S. POPULATION
	POPULATION	% OF TOTAL POPULATION	POPULATION	% OF TOTAL POPULATION	
1840	9,728,959	57%	7,290,719	43%	17,019,678
1850	13,441,183	58%	9,612,969	42%	23,054,152
1860	18,943,451	61%	12,240,293	39%	31,183,744

* North (includes the West): California, Connecticut, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont and Wisconsin; ** South: Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia. The geographical division principally follows the general definition provided by Historical Statistics of the United States: Colonial Times to 1970 (Washington: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 1975), II: 7.

SOURCE: Compiled from Historical Census Browser. Percentage calculated by author.

TABLE 3: Population Comparison between Seceding States and Non-Seceding States and Territories, 1860.

THIRTEEN SECEDING STATES			NON-SECEDING STATES AND TERRITORIES		
STATES	POPULATION	%	STATES	POPULATION	%
Virginia	1,596,318	14%	New York	3,880,735	20%
Tennessee	1,109,801	10%	Pennsylvania	2,906,215	15%
Georgia	1,057,286	9%	Ohio	2,339,511	12%
North Carolina	992,622	9%	Illinois	1,711,951	9%
Alabama	964,201	8%	Indiana	1,350,428	7%
Mississippi	791,305	7%	Massachusetts	1,231,066	6%
Louisiana	708,002	6%	Michigan	749,113	4%
South Carolina	703,708	6%	Wisconsin	775,881	4%
Texas	604,215	5%	Iowa	674,913	3%
Arkansas	435,450	4%	Maine	628,279	3%
Florida	140,424	1%	Maryland	687,049	3%
			New Jersey	672,035	3%
			California	379,994	2%
			Connecticut	460,147	2%
			New Hampshire	326,073	2%
			Vermont	315,098	2%
			Delaware	112,216	1%
			Kansas (territory)	107,206	1%
			Minnesota	172,023	1%
			Rhode Island	174,620	1%
			Oregon	52,465	0.3%
			Nebraska (territory)	28,841	0.1%
			Nevada (territory)	6,857	0.03%
TOTAL	9,103,332		TOTAL	22,080,412	
PERCENTAGE	29%		PERCENTAGE	71%	

SOURCE: Ibid. Percentage calculated by author.

Its smaller population placed the South in a minority position in national politics. The North held the majority of seats in the House of Representatives in each decennial census from 1820 (58 percent) to 1860 (63 percent); the southern apportionment noticeably decreased from 1820 (42 percent) to 1860 (35 percent) (see Table 4). The North had a majority in the Electoral College. In 1860, there were eighteen free states, with thirty-six votes in the Senate, compared to fifteen slave states, with thirty votes in the Senate.

DeBow's Review declared in 1860 that the numerical power of the North in the Union doubled that of the South. The imbalance of power in both branches of Congress and the Electoral College underscored that southerners were losing their political power in the Union. DeBow's Review expressed southerners' anxiety by questioning "what hope of safety in the Union can remain to the South?"[16]

[16] DeBow's Review 29 (October 1860): 448-65.

TABLE 4: Apportionment of the House of Representatives, 1820-1860.

	1820		1830		1840		1850		1860	
	APP.	%	APP.	%	APP.	%	APP.	%	APP.	%
NORTH	123	58	141	59	135	61	142	61	152	63
SOUTH	90	42	99	41	88	39	90	38	85	35
TOTAL SEATS	213		240		223		234		241	

SOURCE: Kenneth C. Martis and Gregory A. Elmes, eds., The Historical Atlas of States Power in Congress, 1790-1990 (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Inc., 1993), 6-7.

Like contemporaries, historians offer varying analyses of the magnitude and nature of sectional rifts. Charles A. Beard (1874–1948) famously highlights the role of unbalanced economic development in promoting antagonism between North and South. Beard contends that as sectional differences widened over time, northern industrial interests sought to subordinate the agricultural South and its political leaders to their own need for tariffs, a national railway, and rapid frontier settlement. The “irrepressible conflict” between regions pitted northern businessmen against southern

planters and farmers.[17] As David Potter points out, however, Beard struggles to explain why economic diversity created conflict rather than complementarity. Many economically diverse nations have existed; far fewer have fought civil wars over such differences.[18]

Beard's economic interpretation of the Civil War was challenged by Avery Craven and James Randall, who focus more on political factors. They argue that the North and the South did not have major differences that were irreconcilable. To them, the Civil War was a political failure; it was a "repressible conflict" brought by a "blundering generation" of the 1850s politicians who failed to

[17] Charles A. Beard, The Rise of American Civilization (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1927), II: Ch. 1 and 2. The "irrepressible conflict" was first used by William Henry Seward in an eloquent speech delivered on October 25, 1858 in Rochester, New York. In the speech, Seward regarded the civil war as inevitable and argued that "to expect the Democratic Party to resist slavery and favor freedom, is as unreasonable as to look for protestant missionaries to the catholic propaganda of Rome." See New York History Net: http://www.nyhistory.com/central/conflict.htm

[18] Potter, The Impending Crisis, 33-34. Potter challenges most notions of Southern distinctiveness. He contends that the persistence of a "folk culture" in the South was the major feature distinguishing the South from the rest of the nation, and that that difference, in itself, was hardly sufficient to impel secession.

make compromise.[19]

Beard, Craven, and Randall disagree on whether sectional differences on economy, society, and politics caused the war. On the other hand, the differences between the North and South are also under debating among historians. James M. McPherson reveals that North and South were, respectively, "gesellschaft" and "gemeinschaft" societies. Northern society was impersonal, bureaucratic, urbanizing, commercial, industrializing, mobile, and rootless, while the South emphasized tradition, rural life, tightly knit communities, and a hierarchical social structure.[20] The societies had significantly different degrees of urbanization and industrialization, as well as contrasting labor forces, educational

[19] Avery O. Craven, The Coming of the Civil War (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1957), 2-3; James G. Randall, "The Blundering Generation," The Mississippi Valley Historical Review 27 (June 1940): 3-28.

[20] The gesellschaft and gemeinschaft are two ideal types of social organizations that were systematically elaborated by German sociologist Ferdinand Tönnies in his work Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft (1887; Community and Society), see Encyclopedia Britannica Online: http://search.eb.com/; James M. McPherson, "Antebellum Southern Exceptionalism: A New Look at an Old Question," Civil War History 50 (December 2004): 423-27.

systems, and even attitudes toward change.

Edward Pessen, in contrast, contends that similarities between North and South outweighed differences. For example, the economic gap between enslaved black and free white workers was narrower than most people thought. Small groups of rich men occupied the highest social plateau, and vertical mobility and social hierarchy existed in both societies. Officeholders, North and South, were mostly lawyers, merchants, and large property owners.[21]

According to David Potter, Americans in the 1840s showed a great degree of homogeneity and cohesion. Not only were 90 percent of Americans native born, but also most Americans adhered to evangelical Protestant Christianity, nationalism, and republicanism. Potter argues that cultural differences, while present, were insufficient to explain prolonged and bitter sectional conflicts. Although internal divisions existed in America, Potter does not see the creation of southern nationalism as the major force behind

[21] Edward Pessen, "How Different from Each Other Were the Antebellum North and South?" American Historical Review 85 (December 1980): 1119-49.

southern separatism. To him, the Civil War had more impact on the rise of southern nationalism, than "southern nationalism did to produce the war."[22]

Potter's statements on the relationship between southern nationalism and the Civil War are later challenged by John McCardell, who emphasizes southern sectionalism in the 1830s and 1840s transformed into southern nationalism in the 1850s, and helped southerners convince that they were incompatible with the hostile North and needed to separate from the Union. Although southern nationalism was not merely a defense of slavery, McCardell argues, southern nationalists in the 1850s used to take advantage of this for white supremacy and southern unity.[23]

In another approach, Michael F. Holt analyzes how longstanding sectional differences actually erupted into unmanageable conflict in the 1850s. Holt contends that the breakdown

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[22] Potter, The Impending Crisis, 8-17, 469.

[23] John McCardell, The Idea of a Southern Nation: Southern Nationalist and Southern Nationalism, 1830-1860 (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1979), 4-9, 49-90.

of two-party competition in the 1850s, which eliminated partisan checks on sectional divisions, dramatically increased hostility between the North and South and brought the disruption of the Union. Holt admires the second party system, for it worked "superbly" by minimizing interparty and intraparty disagreements among Whigs and Democrats on sectional and slavery issues during the 1830s and 1840s.[24] The second party system successfully diverted "sectional conflict to peaceful channels," Holt argues, and kept ambitious politicians from "taking too extreme a stand on sectional matters."[25] In the 1850s, however, voters lost their loyalty to parties, because they perceived no differences between the Whigs and Democrats. In reaction, politicians sharpened sectional polarization to excite

[24] The Whig Party was established in the winter between 1833 and 1834 by Henry Clay and other politicians who opposed to the policies of President Andrew Jackson, especially his removal of the deposits from the Bank of the United States without the consent of Congress. The party was named after the English antimonarchist party. See Michael F. Holt, The Rise and Fall of the American Whig Party: Jacksonian Politics and the Onset of the Civil War (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 19-30.

[25] Michael F. Holt, The Political Crisis of the 1850s (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc. 1978), 8.

voters, and conflict escalated out of control.

All of the above interpretations recognize but also unduly circumscribe the role of slavery in causing confrontation between the North and South. As early as the mid-1830s, John W. Womack, planter and politician of Eutaw, Green County, Alabama, predicted that slavery "will ultimately bring about a dissolution of the Union of the States."[26] Ultimately it was the uncontrollable antagonism over slavery that made the peaceful coexistence of the North and South impossible. Peter Kolchin argues that slavery preoccupied white southerners and defined their "interests and their way of life." They identified defenders of slavery as defenders of the South. The chief objective of southern politics became the defense of slavery; politics was a means of securing southerners' right to "shape their own destiny."[27]

Growing from the early colonial period, the slave population

[26] John W. Womack to Jacob Lewis, August 30, 1835, Marcus Joseph Wright Papers, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.
[27] Peter Kolchin, American Slavery: 1619-1877 (New York: Hill and Wang, 1993), 182, 198-99.

of the United States reached 3,953,760 in 1860. The northern slave population reached its highest point in 1770 at about 47,735, and then dramatically dropped to only 64 in 1860. The immense demand for slave labor to grow cotton meanwhile swelled the slave population of the Deep South (see Table 5 and 6).

TABLE 5: Slave Population, 1680-1860.

	1680	1700	1720	1750	1770	1790
NORTH*	1,895	5,206	14,081	30,172	47,735	40,420
SOUTH**	5,076	23,752	55,962	216,476	422,132	676,601
TOTAL	6,971	28,958	70,043	246,648	469,867	717,021
GROWTH %	--	315%	142%	252%	91%	53%

	1810	1820	1830	1840	1850	1860
NORTH	27,081	19,108	3,568	1,113	236	64
SOUTH	1,165,405	1,519,017	1,983,860	2,486,326	3,200,364	3,953,696
TOTAL	1,192,486	1,538,125	1,987,428	2,487,439	3,200,600	3,953,760
GROWTH %	66%	29%	29%	25%	29%	24%

* North (includes West): California, Colorado, Connecticut, Dakota, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Utah, Vermont, Washington, and Wisconsin. ** South: Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia.

SOURCE: Historical Statistics of the United States, II: 1168; Joseph C. G. Kennedy, Population of the United States in 1860: Compiled from the Original Returns of the Eighth Census, Under the Direction of the Secretary of the Interior (New York: Norman Ross Publ., 1990), 598-604; Ira Berlin, Generations of Captivity: a History of African-American Slaves (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2003), Table 1. Percentage calculated by author.

TABLE 6: Slave Distribution in Southern States, 1850 and 1860.

1850	POPULATION	1860	POPULATION
Virginia	472,528	Virginia	490,865
South Carolina	384,984	Georgia	462,198
Georgia	381,682	Mississippi	436,631
Alabama	342,844	Alabama	435,080
Mississippi	309,878	South Carolina	402,406
North Carolina	288,548	Louisiana	331,726
Louisiana	244,809	North Carolina	331,059
Tennessee	239,459	Tennessee	275,719
Kentucky	210,981	Kentucky	225,483
Maryland	90,368	Texas	182,566
Missouri	87,422	Missouri	114,931
Texas	58,161	Arkansas	111,115
Arkansas	47,100	Maryland	87,189
Florida	39,310	Florida	61,745
Delaware	2,290	Delaware	1,798
TOTAL	3,200,364	TOTAL	3,950,511

SOURCE: Ibid.

Slavery, hardly challenged - except by slaves themselves -in either America or Europe before 1760, came under increasing assault around the turn of nineteenth century. After 1818, slavery in the United States was basically limited to the states south of Pennsylvania and the Ohio River. Slavery thus continued to shape southern society and southern distinctiveness; it was an indispensable part of their civilization. Eugene D. Genovese emphasizes that southern society rested on "the relationship of master to slave."[28] The existence of slavery made the South a pre-capitalist society, which directed most of its profits to slaves and land instead of generating a transformation of production such as that which revolutionized the North. Genovese suggests that secession was driven by a slaveholding ruling class, which aimed at political independence as a solution for economic and social problems.[29]

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[28] Eugene Genovese, The Political Economy of Slavery: Studies in the Economy & Society of the Slave South (New York: Pantheon Books, 1965), 13-36, 243-70.
[29] Ibid., 101.

In Mississippi, slavery forged the conceptions of masculine honor combined with the distaste for political parties. According to Christopher Olsen, this slavery-shaped political culture made the South different. To Olsen, most Mississippi whites took Lincoln's election as a personal insult to their state and region. In essence, Olsen suggests that the crisis of secession was resulted from Republican's "attack on southerners themselves – and on their slave-based culture;" it was an ultimate "clash between antagonistic societies" led southern secession.[30]

Southerners insisted on maintaining the slavery, convincing it represented the right of property, which was granted by government. James Huston contends that the dispute over property rights that emerged from slavery caused sectional conflicts. Southerners were benefited from the peculiar institution and they searched for "absolute guarantee" of property rights in slaves. Huston contends

[30] Christopher J. Olsen, Political Culture and Secession in Mississippi: Masculinity, Honor, and the Antiparty Tradition, 1830-1860 (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 8-9, 11, 15, 194-95.

that northerners opposed slavery largely for economic reasons, viewing slavery as "a ruinous competitor to their system of free village labor." Northerners declined the South's insistence on the property rights in slaves because the growing slavery system would extend into the North and destroy their society.[31]

Southerners' determination to protect slavery from the perceived threat of the northern antislavery movement revealed one of the fundamental reasons why they left the Union. As William Cooper argues, slavery had become "the fulcrum of southern politics;" the major goal of southern political parties was the protection of slavery.[32] Kenneth Greenberg also suggests that southern statesmen tended to be slaveholders, the whole southern political life, which rooted in the master-slave relationship, aimed to "avoid becoming an enslaver or a slave." When southerners viewed the North as alien

[31] James L. Huston, Calculating the Value of the Union: Slavery, Property Rights, and the Economic Origins of the Civil War (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), xiv, 65-66.

[32] William J. Cooper, The South and the Politics of Slavery, 1828-1856 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1978), xi, 59-60, 69.

and threatened to enslave the South, separation from the Union became the only option.[33]

And for Alabamians, J. Mills Thornton demonstrates that slaveholders and non-slaveholders alike considered slavery to be an "essential bulwark of freedom." Alabamians treasured autonomy and local control; the defense of slavery was, therefore, part of the defense of white freedom and republicanism.[34] James S. Buckingham, an English writer and former Parliament member, observed in 1839 that no one "can open his lips without imminent personal danger, unless it is to defend and uphold the system."[35] A racist, proslavery orthodoxy welded Alabama whites together and encouraged a zealous political defense of slavery. Facing the decreasing of the availability of cotton land caused by soil exhaustion, slaveholders strengthened their insistence on slavery expansion, which William

[33] Kenneth S. Greenberg, Masters and Statesmen: the Political Culture of American Slavery (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), 124-46.
[34] J. Mills Thornton, III, Politics and Power in a Slave Society: Alabama, 1800-1860 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana University Press, 1978), xviii.
[35] James S. Buckingham, The Slaves States of America (London: Fisher, Son, & Co., 1842), 183.

Barney sees as the major impetus behind secession.[36]

Alabamians' devotion to republicanism was found in South Carolina upcountry areas as well. Lacy K. Ford argues that the isolated upcountry yeomen were influenced by a republican philosophy of personal independence, which he calls country republicanism. They feared that the growing political power of "northern mercantile and manufacturing interests" would injure their subsistence economy and impair their personal independence. Lincoln's election strengthened their conviction that secession was the essential approach to defend their republican values and the traditional autonomy of their households. They became secessionists to avoid becoming dependent proletarians.[37]

Abolitionists enjoyed little support in the South, and their relentless attacks on slavery raised southern hackles. As George

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[36] William L. Barney, The Secessionist Impulse: Alabama and Mississippi in 1860 (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press 1974), 4-20, 189-230, 313-14.

[37] Lacy K. Ford, Origins of Southern Radicalism: The South Carolina Upcountry, 1800-1860 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 122, 372.

M. Fredrickson suggests, the concept of "Herrenvolk Democracy" influenced southern whites' determination to block any northern anti-slavery assaults.[38] To allow northern politicians and voters to dictate national policy on slavery or exclude slavery from common territories would have meant accepting "that southerners were second-class citizens."[39]

Some historians see secession as more than a conflict between North and South; it was also a confrontation between master and slave. Work on South Carolina outlines an additional theme that impacted the consciousness of Alabama whites. Racial fear, dread of insurrections, peaked in the period after John Brown's raid and never substantially subsided prior to the organization of the Confederacy. Whites in urban areas, such as Mobile, knew enough of the history of Denmark Vesey in Charleston and Gabriel in Richmond to give them reason to question their own safety. Lincoln's election fueled

[38] George M. Fredrickson, The Black Image in the White Mind: The Debate on Afro-American Character and Destiny, 1817-1914 (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), 61.

[39] Thornton, Politics and Power in a Slave Society, xx.

inchoate anxieties, and, as Steven Channing said of South Carolina, made secession "a revolution of passion, and the passion was fear."[40]

Such a racial fear was found in the Boarder states as well. In Virginia, in which William Link views as "a 'slave society' rather then a 'society with slaves,'" slavery was less stable and easy be regulated in the 1850s due to many slaves were either hired out or exported to new areas and lived more independently than ever before. During the impending sectional conflicts, the anxieties of Virginia's slaveholders, the largest group than any other state in the Union, were increasingly fueled by a series of slave resistances and reached to climax by the Lincoln's election in 1860.[41]

Northern aggressions, the collapse of party politics, racial fears, and a determination to sustain slavery and maintain republicanism all helped propel Alabamians and Mobilians down the road to secession. Mobile, the only port and largest city in Alabama,

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[40] Steven A. Channing, Crisis of Fear: Secession of South Carolina (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1974), 286, 293.

[41] William A. Link, Roots of Secession: Slavery and Politics in Antebellum Virginia (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 3, 50.

a state dominated by agriculture, had a multi-ethnic population, a low proportion of slaves, and a highly commercial atmosphere. The city was in some ways less southern than its hinterlands, and its citizens maintained a long and close commercial connection with the North. Nevertheless, Mobilians eventually backed immediate secession and merged their fortunes with that of the Confederacy. This dissertation provides a careful examination of many of the factors that linked Mobile to the North and weighs the importance of these connections in shaping Mobilians' decision-making during the sectional crisis of the 1850s and the secession movement of 1860-61.

The dissertation argues that Mobilians' support for secession was not simply a function of massive resistance to northern economic predominance, although the city had its grievances against the North. White Mobilians fundamentally valued what they perceived to be southern rights in the territories and in the Union. They fought, in what they considered moderate fashion, for these rights for many

years, decades really, before they recognized an irresolvable conflict between their rights and interests and the intentions of a menacing northern Republican party. Mobile endorsed secession during one of the most prosperous periods in its history. Mobilians were confident that secession would breed further progress, that a severing of northern connections would open opportunities even as it provoked short-term anxieties. As long as slavery and cotton were secure, as they predicted that they would be in a new Confederacy, Mobilians thought that their futures would be also.

CHAPTER 2

THE ECONOMY AND PEOPLE OF A COSMOPOLITAN COTTON PORT: MOBILE, THE STATE OF ALABAMA, AND THE ATLANTIC WORLD

Agriculture dominated antebellum Alabama. Cotton particularly fueled the state's expansion after 1819.[1] In 1824, Niles Register correctly anticipated that Alabama would become the greatest cotton state in the Union.[2] Between 1820 and 1830, cotton production increased from 75,000 to 163,000 bales. In 1828, Captain Basil Hall, a British naval officer, traveler and writer, heard the cry of "Cotton! Cotton! Cotton!" throughout his trip from Montgomery to Mobile.[3] Alabama led the nation in cotton production in 1849,

[1] Cotton was, of course, grown in Alabama much earlier. Bernard Romans (1720-1784), one of the pioneering cartographers of the American southeast, found crude machines for separating the lint from the seed in the Mobile district in 1772. Bernard Romans, A Concise Natural History of East and West Florida (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1999), 211-212.

[2] Niles Register, XXVI: 282.

[3] Basil Hall, Travels in North America in the Years 1827 and 1828 (Edinburgh:

then dropped into second place in 1859, behind Mississippi. Alabama on the eve of the Civil War grew almost 22 percent of the nation's cotton (see Table 7).

Most of Alabama's cotton was produced in the Black Belt, a physical region of dark, calcareous soils in the central and southern part of the state. By 1859, eleven Black Belt counties -- Macon, Montgomery, Lowndes, Autauga, Dallas, Wilcox, Perry, Green, Sumter, Marengo and Pickens -- paid two-thirds of the state's taxes.[4] From 1817 to 1860, those counties sent 13,355,588 bales of cotton, over 98 percent of its production, to Mobile for shipment (see Table 8).[5]

Cadell and Company, 1829), III: 308-10.

[4] Minnie Clare Boyd, Alabama in the Fifties: A Social Study (New York: Columbia University Press, 1931), 12.

[5] Weymouth T. Jordan, Antebellum Alabama: Town and Country (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1987), 6.

TABLE 7: United States Cotton Production, Percentage Share of Individual Southern State, 1821-1859.

STATE	1821	1826	1833	1834	1839	1849	1859
Alabama	11.3	13.6	14.8	18.6	14.8	22.9	21.7
Arkansas	--	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.8	2.6	0.8
Florida	--	0.6	3.4	4.4	1.6	1.8	1.5
Georgia	25.4	22.7	20	16.4	20.7	20	15.4
Louisiana	5.7	11.5	12.5	13.5	19.5	7.2	15.4
Mississippi	5.7	6	15.9	18.6	24.3	19.7	26.4
North Carolina	5.7	3.1	2.3	2.1	6.5	3	3.2
South Carolina	28.2	21.2	16.7	14.3	7.8	12.2	6.9
Tennessee	11.3	13.6	11.3	9.8	3.5	7.8	6.5
Texas	--	--	--	--	--	2.3	1
All other States	6.7	7.6	3.0	2.2	0.5	0.2	1.2

SOURCE: Stuart Bruchey, ed., Cotton and the Growth of the American Economy: 1790-1860, Sources and Readings (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1967), Table 3, D.

TABLE 8: Cotton Production of South Alabama, 1818-1860.

YEAR	BALES	GROWTH/REDUCTION RATE	YEAR	BALES	GROWTH/REDUCTION RATE
1818	7,000	--	1840	445,725	77%
1819	10,000	43%	1841	317,642	-29%
1820	16,000	60%	1842	318,315	0.2%
1821	25,390	59%	1843	481,714	51%
1822	45,423	79%	1844	467,990	-3%
1823	49,061	8%	1845	517,196	11%
1824	44,924	-8%	1846	421,966	-18%
1825	58,283	30%	1847	323,462	-23%
1826	74,379	28%	1848	440,336	36%
1827	89,779	21%	1849	518,706	18%
1828	71,155	-21%	1850	350,297	-32%
1829	80,339	13%	1851	451,697	29%
1830	102,684	28%	1852	549,772	22%
1831	113,075	10%	1853	546,514	-1%
1832	125,605	11%	1854	538,110	-2%
1833	129,366	3%	1855	454,595	-16%
1834	147,513	14%	1856	659,738	45%
1835	197,847	34%	1857	503,177	-24%
1836	237,590	20%	1858	522,843	4%
1837	232,685	-2%	1859	704,406	35%
1838	309,807	33%	1860	843,012	20%
1839	251,742	-19%			

SOURCE: DeBow's Review 7 (November 1849): 446; 29 (November 1860): 666; Mobile Register, October 3, 1836. Percentage calculated by author.

So prevalent was cotton that James Stirling, an English visitor, observed that even small farmers "who are too poor to own slaves, produce, with the help of their families, two, three, or five bales per annum."[6] Some saw over-concentration on cotton as a problem. Henry Watson, a Connecticut Yankee who relocated to Greensboro, Greene County, in the mid 1830s, reported that everybody in Alabama expected to make a fortune raising cotton.[7] Charles Mackay, a Scottish writer, visited Alabama in 1858 and likewise was surprised that the state "grows but little corn, raises but little pork, and carries no manufactures" because of the dominant influence of cotton production. Mackay contended that the dependence on cotton forced Alabamians to exchange cotton for "every other commodity and thing which the free man's luxuries and his slaves' necessities require."[8]

Some Alabamians perceived links between soil exhaustion and

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[6] James Stirling, Letters from the Slave States (London: J.W. Parker, 1857), 175.

[7] William Pratt Dale, "A Connecticut Yankee in Antebellum Alabama," Alabama Review 4 (January 1953): 59-70.

[8] Charles Mackay, Life and Liberty in America (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1859), 185.

overproduction of cotton. Connecticut-born Mobile mayor Charles Carter Langdon in an address before the Mobile Agricultural and Horticultural Society in 1854, criticized Alabama planters who raised cotton until the soil finally wore out. Langdon claimed that planters' indifference to the preservation and improvement of the soil and the extension and diversification of products would hurt the state; exhausted lands would cause loss of population and erode Alabama's wealth.[9]

Clement Comer Clay (1789-1866) used his county of Madison, the site of Huntsville, as an example:

> Our small planters, after taking the cream off their lands, unable to restore them by rest, manures, or otherwise, are going further west and south, in search of other virgin lands, which they may and will despoil and impoverish in like manner. Our wealthier planters, with greater means and no more skill, are buying out their poorer neighbors, extending their plantations, and adding to their slave force. . . In 1825

[9] American Cotton Planter 2 (September 1854): 257-63.

Madison county cast about 3,000 votes; now she cannot cast exceeding 2,300.[10]

Antebellum Alabama's underdeveloped industries in contrast played a minor economic role. According to the census of 1860, only 0.8 percent of Alabamians were employed in manufacturing. Alabama's investments in manufacturing and its total value of products in manufacturing also were low, ranking twenty-third and the twenty-fifth in the nation, respectively.[11] DeBow's Review claimed that Alabama's manufactures were "doing comparatively nothing."[12]

Cotton mills were antebellum Alabama's most active industrial enterprises. In 1860, the state had fourteen cotton factories producing articles valued at $1,040,147.[13] Of all the manufacturing

[10] The speech delivered before the Chunnennuggee Horticultural Society of Alabama, DeBow's Review 19 (December 1855): 727.

[11] The Eighth U.S. Census in 1860.

[12] DeBow's Review 18 (January 1855): 25.

[13] Minnie Clare Boyd, Alabama in the Fifties: A Social Study (New York: Columbia University Press, 1931), 53. There were other textile mills developed in Alabama. The Swift Mill Creek mill near Autaugaville had 3,500 spindles and 100 looms in 1849; the Martin Weakly and Company in Florence was running 23,000 spindles in 1858; the Bell Factory in Huntsville, the

villages, Prattville, in Autauga County, was the most prominent. Owned by Daniel Pratt, Alabama's first industrialist, the Prattville Manufacturing Company ran 2,682 spindles in 1850. In 1860, Pratt's gin factory manufactured about one-fourth of the total value of cotton gin production in Alabama.[14] DeBow's Review admired Pratt's accomplishments, arguing that "no place in Alabama is so well adapted to manufacturing purposes as Prattville. The site could easily support a population of 6,000 inhabitants."[15]

In addition to the textile industry, several establishments in Alabama engaged in the manufacturing of wool, lumber, ships, and iron, and the mining of coal.[16] Selma Manufacturing Company, owned

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Globe Factory in Florence and the Dectaur Factory operated 5,500 spindles in 1850. In addition, there were other mills like the Marks and Bennett in Tallassee Falls and Jones M. Gunn's mill in Dallas County. William Warren Rogers, Robert David Ward, Leah Rawls Atkins, and Wayne Flynt, Alabama: the History of a Deep South State (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1994), 176-77.

[14] Weymouth T. Jordan, Antebellum Alabama: Town and Country (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1987), 152.

[15] DeBow's Review 10 (February 1851): 225-28.

[16] In 1850, there were eight bloomeries, two on Talladega Creek, and the others on the upper waters of the Cahaba. The 1860 census indicated that four establishments engaged in manufacturing of pig iron and capitalized

by J. P. Perham, which had a capital of $22,000 and eight acres of land, manufactured all kinds of ironwork. The company had "a beautiful steam-engine, a furnace for melting iron, six turning-lathes for wood and iron, one iron planer, circular saws, upright drills, and every kind of machinery for carrying on successfully the above kind of business."[17]

Alabama's lack of industrialization fostered dependence on the North. For example, the state relied on northern-built steamboats to ply its rivers. From 1818 to 1860, of 289 steamboats operating on Alabama's major rivers, only 16 percent were built in Alabama, mostly in Mobile.[18] Northern factories, mostly around Pittsburgh, built over 70 percent (see Table 9).

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at $225,000. There were two establishments manufacturing bar, sheet and railroad iron, with a capital investment of $33,000. Regarding to coal mining, the 1860 statistics for coal mined show four establishments, with a capital of $285,000, and fifty-four mines, producing 10,200 tons of bituminous coal annually, which is almost a 240 percent increase over 1850. The Eighth U.S. Census in 1860, "Manufacturing," Introduction, XII.

[17] DeBow's Review 11 (July 1851): 82.

[18] One of the famous state-made steamboats was the *Warrior*, whose captain was Alabamian James T. May. See the Alabama Beacon, September 18, 1857.

TABLE 9: Origins of Alabama Steamboats, 1818-1860.

	BUILDING LOCATION	QUANTITY	PERCENTAGE	TONNAGE	PERCENTAGE
NORTH	Connecticut	2	1%	322	1%
	Indiana	67	23%	16,823	31%
	Massachusetts	1	0.3%	242	0.4%
	New Jersey	1	0.3%	272	0.5%
	New York	3	1%	487	1%
	Ohio	53	18%	9,876	18%
	Pennsylvania	77	27%	12,032	22%
	Wisconsin	1	0.3%	65	0.1%
	TOTAL	205	71%	40,119	74%
SOUTH	Alabama	47	16%	7,598	14%
	Delaware	2	1%	659	1%
	Florida	4	1%	619	1%
	Georgia	4	1%	658	1%
	Kentucky	18	6%	3,685	7%
	Louisiana	2	1%	122	0.2%
	Mississippi	2	1%	115	0.2%
	Tennessee	2	1%	223	0.4%
	Virginia	1	0.3%	270	0.5%
	Washington D.C.	1	0.3%	246	0.5%
	TOTAL	83	29%	14,195	26%
FOREIGN	Scotland	1	0.3%	184	0.3%
	GRAND TOTAL	289		54,498	

SOURCE: Compiled and calculated from Josiah H. Scruggs, Jr. ed., Alabama Steamboats, 1819-1869 (Mobile: Mobile Public Library, 1953).

A theme of opportunities gone begging pervaded wishful discussion of Alabama's industrial development. The Huntsville Advocate warned that southerners' economic reliance on the North would encourage aggression. The Mobile Advertiser meanwhile called for the South to develop its own manufacturing, because factories were "one of the main pillars of southern independence." The South needed to "diversify our labor, build up factories and forges, if we desire real independence."[19] Alabama's industrial promoters praised its abundant natural resources, which DeBow's Review admired:

> No state in the Union possesses to a greater degree materials for a proud independence, than does Alabama. . . . Experience has told us, that the more we depend upon the North the less are our chances for a successful competition. . . . How long, with all the advantages which God has given her, shall Alabama remain in the background, with her countless millions of

[19] Mobile Advertiser, May 11, 23; October 3, 1850.

wealth buried beneath her soil?[20]

The Mobile-based Alabama Planter likewise contended that the Warrior River possessed all the necessary elements for industrialization:

> the coal is there, the water-power is there, the timber is there; and we think, the iron is there. . . . The facilities for collecting them together . . . are almost or quite unsurpassed. The towns of Tuscaloosa, Eutaw, Erie, Demopolis, Moscow, and others, would furnish the means of dispersing the products of such a town throughout this large tract of fertile country.[21]

Mobile's relatively significant manufacturing development and its booming commercial sector distinguished the city from the rest of Alabama. By 1860, Mobile led the state in annual expenditures for labor and raw material in manufacturing, in population employed

[20] DeBow's Review 14 (January 1853): 67-68.

[21] Quoted from DeBow's Review 11 (July 1851): 82.

in manufacturing, in the value of products in manufacturing, and in the number of foreign-born residents (see Table 10).[22] Mobile County had a total population of 41,131 in 1860, of which 29,258 (over 71 percent) were residents of the city of Mobile. Mobile was then the largest city in Alabama, twenty-seventh largest in the country, and the third largest port in the United States (see Table 11).

[22] In 1850, the three largest occupational sectors in Mobile were industrial service (35 percent), dealing (20 percent), and manufacturing (13 percent). In 1860, the top three sectors were industrial service (34 percent), manufacturing (17 percent), and dealing (14 percent). See Alan Smith Thompson, "Mobile, Alabama, 1850-1861: Economic, Political, Physical, and Population Characteristics" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Alabama, 1979), 270.

TABLE 10: Primary Statistics of Mobile County in 1860.

RANK		POPULATION	RANK		ANNUAL COST OF LABOR IN MANUFACTURING	RANK		ANNUAL COST OF RAW MATERIAL IN MANUFACTURING
1	Mobile	41,131	1	Mobile	665,926	1	Mobile	280,356
2	Montgomery	35,904	2	Baldwin	457,357	2	Dallas	140,772
3	Dallas	33,625	3	Pickens	423,771	3	Baldwin	135,204
4	Marengo	31,171	4	Madison	362,020	4	Madison	125,964
5	Greene	30,859	5	Lauderdale	313,391	5	Autauga	120,864
6	Barbour	30,812	6	Tuscaloosa	291,602	6	Tuscaloosa	106,584
7	Perry	27,724	7	Talladega	267,530	7	Lauderdale	99,480
8	Lowndes	27,716	8	Autauga	266,199	8	Coosa	92,232
9	Macon	26,802	9	Dallas	210,116	9	Montgomery	78,564
10	Russell	26,592	10	Lowndes	159,133	10	Barbour	77,580
TOTAL IN ALABAMA		964,201	TOTAL IN ALABAMA		5,489,963	TOTAL IN ALABAMA		2,132,940

RANK		PEOPLE EMPLOYED IN MANUFACTURING	RANK		VALUE OF PRODUCTS IN MANUFACTURING	RANK		FOREIGN BORN POPULATION
1	Mobile	724	1	Mobile	1,500,916	1	Mobile	7,734
2	Baldwin	648	2	Madison	725,488	2	Montgomery	677
3	Lauderdale	647	3	Autauga	696,170	3	Baldwin	427
4	Autauga	521	4	Baldwin	661,145	4	Dallas	315

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

TABLE 10 CONTINUED

RANK		PEOPLE EMPLOYED IN MANUFACTURING	RANK		VALUE OF PRODUCTS IN MANUFACTURING	RANK		FOREIGN BORN POPULATION
5	Tuscaloosa	428	5	Lauderdale	562,317	5	Barbour	209
6	Dallas	427	6	Pickens	539,060	6	Greene	172
7	Madison	392	7	Tuscaloosa	515,323	7	Marshall	162
8	Coosa	380	8	Dallas	492,444	8	Lauderdale	149
9	Barbour	241	9	Talladega	420,450	9	Jackson	147
10	Shelby	241	10	Coosa	308,097	10	Madison	145
TOTAL IN ALABAMA		7,889	TOTAL IN ALABAMA		10,588,571	TOTAL IN ALABAMA		12,352

SOURCE: Compiled and calculated from Historical Census Browser. Retrieved on February 12, 2005 from the University of Virginia, Geospatial and Statistical Data Center: http://fisher.lib.virginia.edu/collections/stats/histcensus/index.html..

TABLE 11: Largest Cities in the United States, 1850 and 1860.

1850			1860		
RANK	CITY	POPULATION	RANK	CITY	POPULATION
1	New York, NY	515,547	1	New York, NY	813,669
2	Baltimore, MD	169,054	2	Philadelphia, PA	565,529
3	Boston, MA	136,881	3	Brooklyn, NY	266,661
4	Philadelphia, PA	121,376	4	Baltimore, MD	212,418
5	New Orleans, LA	116,375	5	Boston, MA	177,840
6	Cincinnati, OH	115,435	6	New Orleans, LA	168,675
7	Brooklyn, NY	96,838	7	Cincinnati, OH	161,044
8	St. Louis, MO	77,860	8	St. Louis, MO	160,773
9	Spring Garden, PA	58,894	9	Chicago, IL	112,172
10	Albany, NY	50,763	10	Buffalo, NY	81,129
11	Northern Liberties, PA	47,223	11	Newark, NJ	71,941
12	Kensington, PA	46,774	12	Louisville, KY	68,033
13	Pittsburgh, PA	46,601	13	Albany, NY	62,367
14	Louisville, KY	43,194	14	Washington, DC	61,122
15	Charleston, SC	42,985	15	San Francisco, CA	56,802
16	Buffalo, NY	42,261	16	Providence, RI	50,666
17	Providence, RI	41,513	17	Pittsburgh, PA	49,221
18	Washington, DC	40,001	18	Rochester, NY	48,204
19	Newark, NJ	38,894	19	Detroit, MI	45,619
20	Southwark, PA	38,799	20	Milwaukee, WI	45,246
21	Rochester, NY	36,403	21	Cleveland, OH	43,417
22	Lowell, MA	33,383	22	Charleston, SC	40,522
23	Williamsburgh, NY	30,780	23	New Haven, CT	39,267
24	Chicago, IL	29,963	24	Troy, NY	39,235
25	Troy, NY	28,785	25	Richmond, VA	37,910
26	Richmond, VA	27,570	26	Lowell, MA	36,827
27	Moyamensing, PA	26,979	27	Mobile, AL *	29,258
28	Syracuse, NY	22,271	28	Jersey , NJ	29,226
29	Allegheny, PA	21,262	29	Allegheny, PA	28,702
30	Detroit, MI	21,019	30	Syracuse, NY	28,119
31	Portland, ME	20,815	31	Hartford, CT	26,917
32	Mobile, AL *	20,515	32	Portland, ME	26,341
33	New Haven, CT	20,345	33	Cambridge, MA	26,060
34	Salem, MA	20,264	34	Roxbury, MA	25,137
35	Milwaukee, WI	20,061	35	Charlestown, MA	25,065

SOURCE: Excerpted from Campbell Gibson, ed., Population of the 100 Largest Cities and Other Urban Places in the United States: 1790 to 1990 (Washington, D.C.: Population Division, U. S. Bureau of the Census, 1998), Table 8, 9.

Mobile had a long history as a port. First explored by the Spanish as early as 1519, Mobile colonized by French in 1711, when Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne de Bienville established Fort Louis and a town twenty-seven miles above the Mobile River's mouth at the present site of Mobile. The town ceded to the British in 1763, to the Spanish in 1799, and seized by the United States in 1813 as part of the Mississippi Territory.[23] On January 20, 1814, Mobile incorporated as a town (see Map 1). In December 1819, the legislature of the new state of Alabama provided a charter for Mobile's city government, which was headed by a seven-member board of aldermen. The aldermen elected a mayor from among their ranks. Addin Lewis, a native of

[23] William Garrott Brown, The Lower South in American History (New York: Macmillan, 1903), 20; Alexander McKinstry, The Code of Ordinances of the City of Mobile, 1858 (Mobile: S. H. Goetzel and Company, 1858), 288-290.

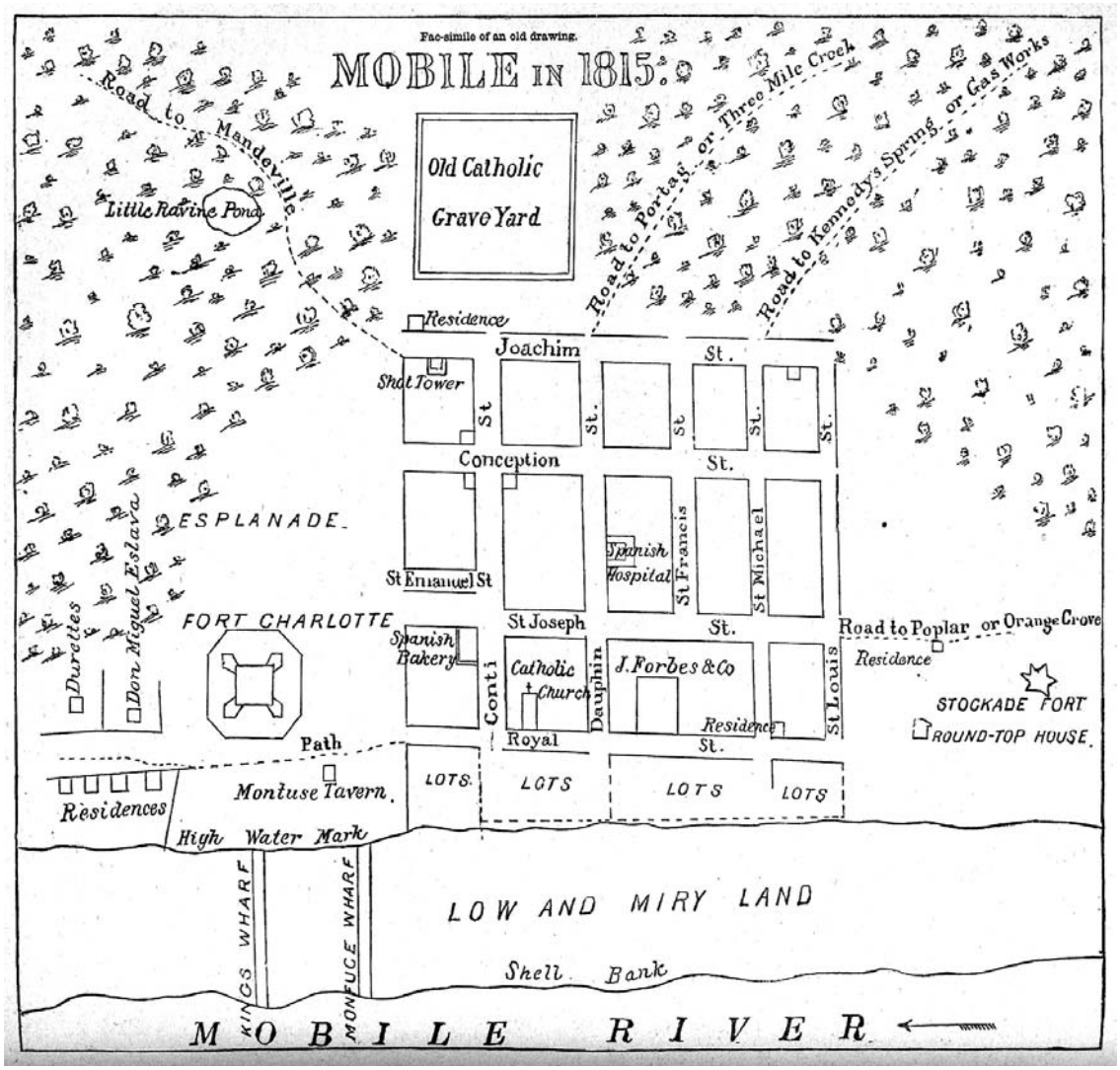
Connecticut, became the first mayor of Mobile in 1820.[24]

As early as 1726, Bienville had commented that Mobile was "well situated."[25] Alabama's river system, composed of the Tombigbee, the Black Warrior, the Cahaba, the Alabama, the Coosa, and the Tallapoosa rivers, linked Mobile and cotton-producing areas in central and southern Alabama and southeastern Mississippi. Its location at the mouth of Mobile River, where it empties into Mobile Bay, made the city a hub for cotton exports and a receiving point for manufactured goods and planters' annual supplies (see Map 2 and Illustration 1).

[24] Besides collector of customs and mayor of Mobile, Lewis was the postmaster of Mobile and the president of the Bank of Mobile, which was first chartered on November 20, 1818. DeBow's Review 28 (September 1860): 309-11.

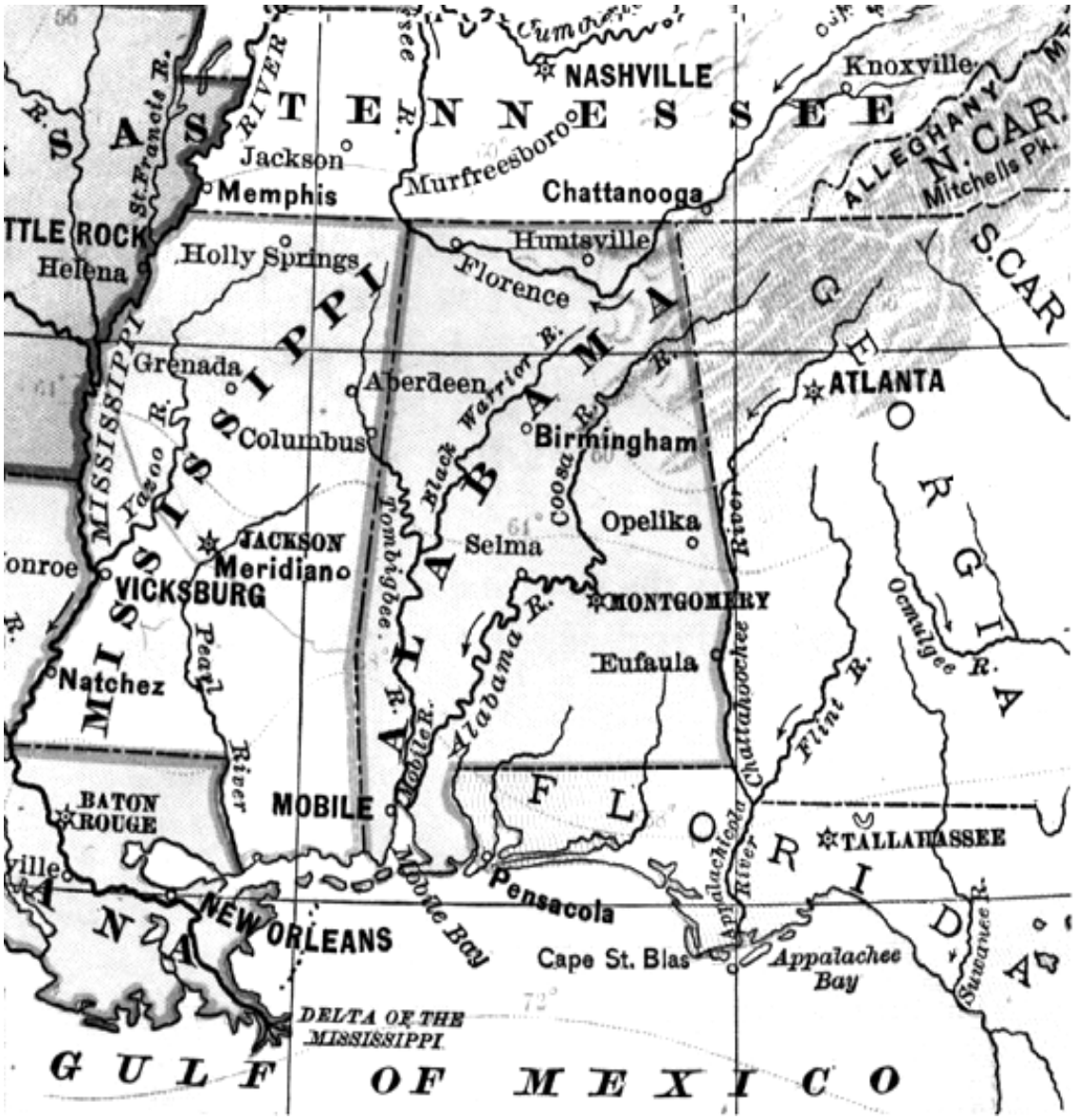
[25] Mississippi Provincial Archives, 1704-1743, French Dominion, Collected, Edited, and Translated by Dunbar Rowland and A. G. Sanders (Jackson, Mississippi: Press of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, 1932), III: 504.

MAP 1: Mobile in 1815.



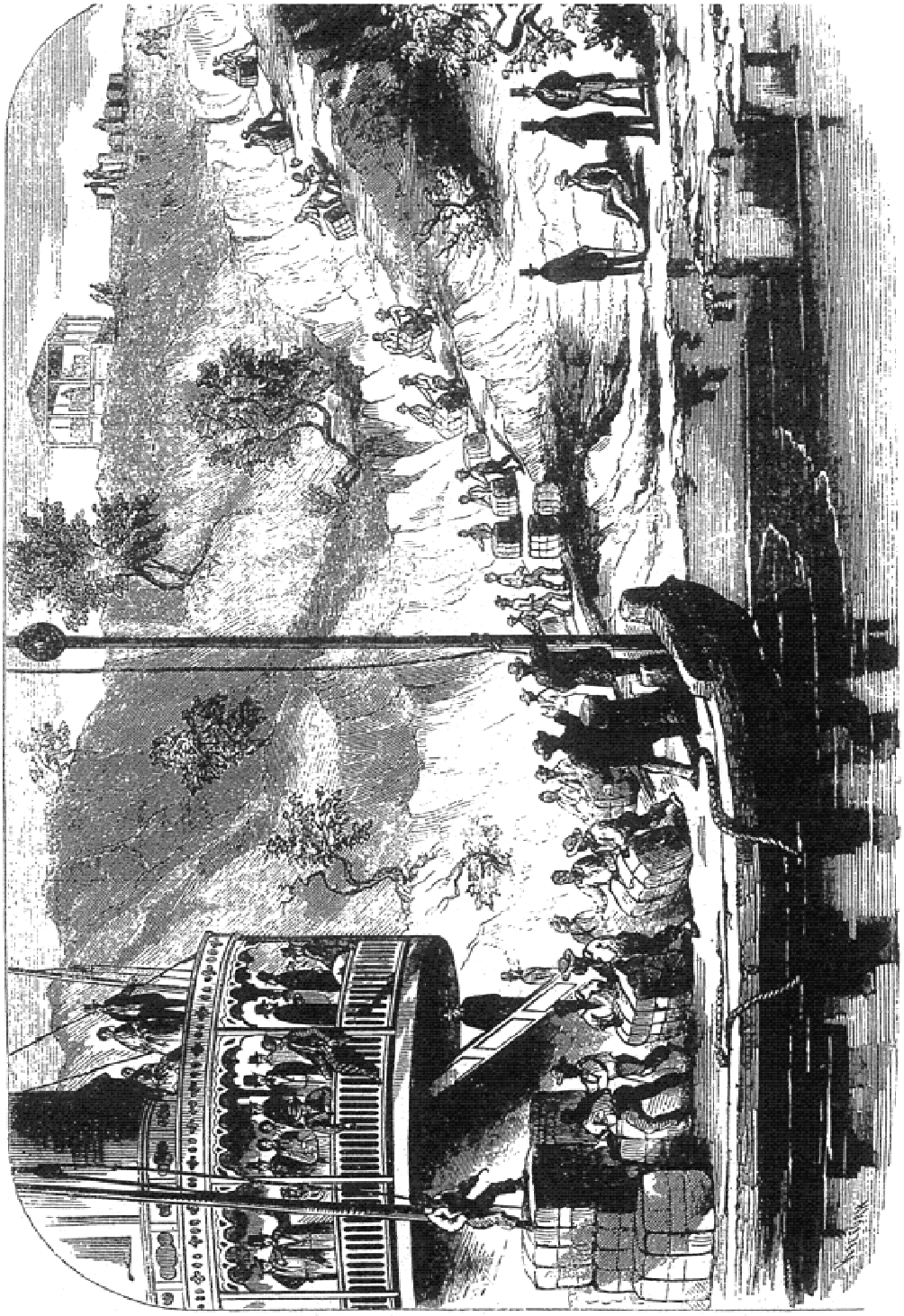
SOURCE: Perry-Castañeda Library, Map Collection, U.S. Historical City Maps, The University of Texas at Austin. www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/historic_us_cities.html (July 25, 2004).

MAP 2: Alabama Waterways, 1897.



SOURCE: Excerpted and Revised from “South Central United States, 1897,” Alabama Digital Map Library. http://www.rootsweb.com/~usgenweb/maps/alabama/ (December 16, 2005).

ILLUSTRATION 1: Cotton Loading on the Alabama River.



SOURCE: Ballou’s Pictorial Drawing-Room Companion 13 (November 28 1857).

As part of the United States, Mobile developed rapidly. In 1818, 280 ships entered Mobile. Niles Weekly Register described a port crowded with vessels; Mobile could hardly accommodate the influx of strangers. The newspaper predicted that Mobile would be soon become "a place of much trade."[26] Travelers frequently praised Mobile as a "commercial emporium," a "metropolis of Alabama," and a "tolerably large and handsome town." Thomas Hamilton, a Scottish writer, traveling from New Orleans to Mobile in April 1831, described Mobile as a "place of trade, and of nothing else;" its "quays were crowded with shipping, and in amount of exports it is inferior to only to New Orleans."[27] English naturalist Philip Henry Gosse landed in Mobile in 1838, contended that Mobile was "well situated for commerce; and a flourishing trade exists in cotton, the staple of the State, with Liverpool, London, Havre, and the ports of the

[26] Niles Weekly Register 14 (June 7 1817): 240; 13 (January 17 1818): 343.
[27] Thomas Hamilton, Men and Manners in America (New York: Augustus M. Kelley Pub., 1968), I: 240.

northern United States."[28]

Samuel Myers, a member of a well-known family in Norfolk, Virginia, favorably compared Mobile to New Orleans:

> I think there is no doubt the both New Orleans & Mobile hold out great encouragement to youthful enterprise, but I give preference to the latter myself. It is destined in a few years to be among the most considerable places on this continent. Five years ago, it did not export 5,000 bales of cotton, the export of that article this year will in all probability be 100,000 bales. It is the outlet of the whole state of Alabama – one of the largest & richest – cheap living withal & not the habits of ruinous extravagance which prevail in Orleans.[29]

Mobilians traded in many items, including lumber, tar, pitch, crude turpentine, beeswax, hides, tallow, and indigo, but cotton was king. Cotton accounted for up to 99 percent of the total value of

[28] Philip Henry Gosse, Letters from Alabama: Chiefly Relating to Natural History (London: Morgan and Chase, 1859), 26.

[29] Bertram Wallace Korn, The Jews of Mobile, Alabama, 1763-1841 (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 1970), 17.

exports from antebellum Mobile. In 1860, Mobile's total exports were valued at about $38,600,000; cotton alone accounted for $38,000,000. Lumber ranked second among Mobile's exports, accounting for $179,864, or 0.6 percent of the value.[30] Mobile's cotton went mostly to England and France (see Table 12). In addition to the foreign cotton trade, 19 percent of the cotton exported from Mobile in 1860 was used domestically. The coastwise cotton trade focused on New Orleans (34 percent), Boston (27 percent), New York (20 percent), Providence (13 percent), and Philadelphia (3 percent) (see Table 13).

[30] Stuart Bruchey, ed., Cotton and the Growth of the American Economy: 1790-1860, Sources and Readings (New York, Harcourt, Brace & World, 1967), Table M; United States Department of the Treasury, Report of the Secretary of the Treasury, Transmitting a Report from the Register of the Treasury, of the Commerce and Navigation of the United States for the Year Ending June 30, 1859 (Washington, D.C.: William A. Harris, 1859), 307-46. In 1859, the total value of exports from Mobile was $28,933,662, and the cotton was accounted for $28,743,248, over 99 percent. The top five export products from Mobile in 1859 were cotton, lumber, meats, grains, and wax.

TABLE 12: Cotton Exports from Mobile, 1840-1860.

	FOREIGN								U. S.		GRAND TOTAL
	BRITAIN		FRANCE		OTHERS		TOTAL		COASTWISE		
	AMOUNT	%	AMOUNT	%	AMOUNT	%	AMOUNT	%	AMOUNT	%	
1840	257,985	59%	80,528	18%	14,965	3%	353,478	81%	85,394	19%	438,872
1841	149,854	47%	57,204	18%	9,181	3%	216,239	68%	103,637	32%	319,876
1842	185,411	58%	49,544	16%	6,919	2%	241,874	76%	77,167	24%	319,041
1843	285,029	59%	53,645	11%	26,903	6%	365,577	76%	113,668	24%	479,245
1844	204,242	44%	49,611	11%	15,885	3%	269,738	58%	195,714	42%	465,452
1845	269,037	52%	68,789	13%	52,811	10%	390,637	75%	130,601	25%	521,238
1846	206,772	50%	66,821	16%	26,824	6%	300,417	72%	115,164	28%	415,581
1847	131,156	43%	39,293	13%	19,784	6%	190,233	62%	116,674	38%	306,907
1848	228,329	52%	61,812	14%	29,070	7%	319,211	73%	120,350	27%	439,561
1849	290,836	54%	63,290	12%	44,525	8%	398,651	74%	140,993	26%	539,644
1850	162,189	47%	39,973	12%	11,927	3%	214,089	62%	128,953	38%	343,042
1851	250,118	57%	46,005	11%	26,373	6%	322,496	74%	113,880	26%	436,376
1852	307,513	53%	95,917	17%	27,048	5%	430,478	75%	144,626	25%	575,104
1853	240,048	44%	87,824	16%	20,810	4%	348,682	64%	195,280	36%	543,962
1854	231,185	48%	76,786	16%	27,392	6%	335,363	70%	144,714	30%	480,077
1855	215,248	47%	111,090	24%	13,973	3%	340,311	75%	113,124	25%	453,435
1856	351,690	52%	96,262	14%	37,083	5%	485,035	71%	196,286	29%	681,321
1857	211,231	43%	84,840	17%	18,918	4%	314,989	64%	174,055	36%	489,044
1858	265,464	52%	89,887	17%	31,681	6%	387,032	75%	128,013	25%	515,045
1859	351,384	51%	105,770	15%	57,781	8%	514,935	74%	179,854	26%	694,789
1860	445,663	54%	148,918	18%	64,900	8%	659,481	81%	158,332	19%	817,813

NOTE: " % " indicates to grand total, calculated by author.
"___" indicates the corrected amount which DeBow's Review had miscalculated.

SOURCE: DeBow's Review 20 (April 1856): 446; 29 (November 1860): 666.

TABLE 13: Mobile Coastwise Cotton Trade and Major Destinations, 1850-1860.

	NEW YORK	BOSTON	PROVIDENCE	PHILADELPHIA	BALTIMORE	NEW ORLEANS	OTHER PORTS	TOTAL IN EACH DESTINATION
1850	42,290 (33%)	25,648 (20%)	14,602 (11%)	2,380 (2%)	3,191 (2%)	39,755 (31%)	1,081 (0.8%)	128,947
1851	27,851 (24%)	32,630 (29%)	5,997 (5%)	2,751 (2%)	2,077 (2%)	42,524 (37%)	250 (0.2%)	114,080
1852	63,206 (37%)	42,105 (25%)	21,456 (13%)	4,335 (3%)	3,276 (2%)	37,248 (22%)	--	171,626
1853	45,396 (23%)	49,187 (25%)	25,183 (13%)	9,768 (5%)	2,826 (1%)	62,319 (32%)	601 (0.3%)	195,280
1854	35,319 (24%)	43,188 (30%)	23,390 (16%)	5,267 (4%)	3,921 (3%)	30,758 (21%)	2,871 (2%)	144,714
1855	31,356 (28%)	26,936 (24%)	15,910 (14%)	2,113 (2%)	2,922 (3%)	32,087 (28%)	1,800 (1.6%)	113,124
1856	28,492 (15%)	65,307 (33%)	17,672 (9%)	2,975 (2%)	4,548 (2%)	73,707 (38%)	3,585 (1.8%)	196,286
1857	28,736 (17%)	47,412 (27%)	22,932 (13%)	6,531 (4%)	5,898 (3%)	60,036 (34%)	2,510 (1.4%)	174,055
1858	15,277 (12%)	25,438 (20%)	12,097 (9%)	2,377 (2%)	2,220 (2%)	67,453 (53%)	3,151 (2.5%)	128,013
1859	10,153 (6%)	51,338 (29%)	33,364 (19%)	4,154 (2%)	3,821 (2%)	73,372 (41%)	2,992 (1.7%)	179,194
1860	11,581 (7%)	44,116 (28%)	27,884 (18%)	6,753 (4%)	4,838 (3%)	62,635 (40%)	525 (0.3%)	158,332
TOTAL	339,657 (20%)	453,305 (27%)	220,487 (13%)	49,404 (3%)	39,538 (2%)	581,894 (34%)	19,366 (1.1%)	1,703,651

SOURCE: Ibid. Percentage calculated by author.

Visitors rhapsodized over Mobile's cotton trade. The British geographer George William Featherstonhaugh came to Mobile in January 1835 and wrote the following description:

> As we entered the mouth of the Bay of Mobile we saw between thirty and forty vessels riding at anchor below . . . . Many of these vessels were three-masted, and their number betokened great commercial activity at this point of export for the productive cotton-lands of the States of Mississippi and Alabama.[31]

Lady Emmeline Stuart Wortley noted in 1849 that the city was "not only the principal outlet of the commerce of the State of Alabama . . . , but also the largest cotton market in the Union."[32] Joseph Holt Ingraham, a Maine native and Episcopal priest at Jackson,

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[31] Featherstonhaugh was employed by the War Department of the United States between 1834 and 1835. George William Featherstonhaugh, Excursion through the Slave States, from Washington on the Potomac to the Frontier of Mexico; with Sketches of Popular Manners and Geological Notices (New York: Negro Universities Press, 1968), 142.

[32] Emmeline Stuart-Wortley, Travels in the United States, etc., During 1849 and 1850 (New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1851), 132.

Mississippi, also remarked upon Mobile's cotton trade. In 1855 he described several dozen cotton ships from Britain, Bremen (a city in today's northern Germany), France, Sweden and Demark waiting to weigh anchor. Cotton, Ingraham noted, was the "circulating blood that gives life to the city." Cotton interested everyone, "from the princely merchant, to whom the globe with its ports is a chessboard on which he is ever making his intelligent moves, to the poor cobbler, whose round lapstone is his world."[33] Another British traveler, Hiram Fuller, who visited the city in 1858, commented that Mobilians "think cotton, eat cotton, drink cotton, and dream cotton. They marry cotton wives, and unto them are born cotton children."[34]

Cotton tied Mobile to its hinterlands, to the North, and to England. Cotton from Mobile usually went to New York before being transferred to Europe, and European imports likewise came through

[33] Joseph Holt Ingraham, The Sunny South; or, The Southerner at Home Embracing Five Years' Experience of a Northern Governess in the Land of the Sugar and the Cotton (Philadelphia: G. C. Evans, 1860), 507.
[34] Hiram Fuller, Belle Brittan on a Tour at Newport, and Here and There (New York: Derby & Jackson, 1858), 112.

New York for transshipment to Mobile. As a cotton-producing state, Alabama's role in the Atlantic economy was chiefly as a raw material supplier, instead of a consumer. Consequently, Mobile's exports vastly exceeded its imports throughout antebellum period. From 1821 to 1860, the average ratio between export and import value at Mobile Port was 19:1. The only year that exportation and importation nearly reached balance was in 1823. The gap climbed to a peak of 45:1 in 1851, before dropping to 37:1 in 1860 (see Table 14). Mobile's export-import imbalance was the most disproportionate of all major ports in the nation (see Table 15).

TABLE 14: Export-Import Value and Ratio of Mobile Port, 1821-60.

YEAR	EXPORT	IMPORT	RATIO	YEAR	EXPORT	IMPORT	RATIO
1821	108,960	--	--	1841	10,981,271	530,819	21:1
1822	209,748	36,421	6:1	1842	9,965,675	363,871	27:1
1823	202,387	125,770	2:1	1843	11,157,460	360,655	31:1
1824	460,727	91,604	5:1	1844	9,907,654	442,818	22:1
1825	692,635	113,411	6:1	1845	10,538,228	473,491	22:1
1826	1,527,112	179,554	9:1	1846	5,260,317	259,607	20:1
1827	1,376,364	201,909	7:1	1847	9,054,580	390,161	23:1
1828	1,182,539	171,909	7:1	1848	11,927,749	419,396	28:1
1829	1,693,958	233,720	7:1	1849	12,823,725	657,147	20:1
1830	2,294,594	144,823	16:1	1850	10,544,858	865,362	12:1
1831	2,413,894	224,435	11:1	1851	18,528,824	413,446	45:1
1832	2,736,387	306,845	9:1	1852	17,385,704	588,382	30:1
1833	4,527,961	265,918	17:1	1853	16,786,913	809,562	21:1
1834	5,670,797	395,361	14:1	1854	13,911,612	725,610	19:1
1835	7,574,692	525,955	14:1	1855	14,270,565	619,764	23:1
1836	11,184,166	651,618	17:1	1856	23,734,170	793,514	30:1
1837	9,658,808	609,385	16:1	1857	20,576,229	709,090	29:1
1838	9,688,244	524,548	19:1	1858	21,022,149	606,942	35:1
1839	10,338,159	895,201	12:1	1859	28,933,662	788,164	37:1
1840	12,854,694	574,651	22:1	1860	38,670,183	1,050,310	37:1

SOURCE: Harriet E. Amos Doss, Cotton City: Urban Development in Antebellum Mobile (University, Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1985), 23. Ratio calculated by author.

TABLE 15: Values of Domestic Exports and Imports of Major U.S. Ports, 1860.

PORT	VALUE OF EXPORT	VALUE OF IMPORT	RATIO
Boston	13,500,000	39,300,000	0.3:1
Philadelphia	5,500,000	14,600,000	0.4:1
New York	120,600,000	233,600,000	0.5:1
San Francisco	7,300,000	9,500,000	0.8:1
Baltimore	8,800,000	9,700,000	0.9:1
Portland	1,900,000	1,200,000	1.6:1
New Orleans	107,800,000	22,900,000	4.7:1
Charleston	21,100,000	1,500,000	14.1:1
Savannah	18,300,000	700,000	26.1:1
Mobile	38,600,000	1,000,000	38.6:1

SOURCE: Robert Greenhalgh Albion, The Rise of New York Port, 1815-1860 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1970), 400-401. Ratio calculated by author.

Mobile functioned mostly as Alabama's "depot for the storage and transshipment of cotton bales," as DeBow's Review commented. Business boomed from October through March and slacked off dramatically during the summer. A visitor in May 1840 described the city as "a pleasant one in summer, but unfortunately . . . it is dirty and about the wharves very filthy and stinking. Added to this so

many of the inhabitants leave there in the summer, because of lack of business and fear of fever epidemics.[35] Mobile's filthiness similarly astonished Dr. Albert C. Koch, a German paleontologist who arrived in 1845. As soon as he left the steamboat, "an atmosphere of horrible odors met us, permeating all the dirty streets which were bordered on both sides with green gutters . . . The city was already quite empty, because whoever can leave it in the summer flees before the threatening destruction."[36]

The collapse of trade during the off-season stunted Mobile's growth. Mobile's efforts to counteract its summer doldrums by expanding transportation made it the states' leader in internal improvements.[37] The city lobbied regularly for river and harbor

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[35] William H. Willis, "A Southern Traveler's Diary in 1840," in Publications of Southern History Association, VIII: 136-37.

[36] Albert C. Koch, Journey Through a Part of the United States of North America in the Years 1844 to 1846, translated and edited by Ernst A. Stadler (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1972), 109.

[37] The channel of Mobile harbor had been periodically filled with sand. English naturalist Philip Henry Gosse observed that "the shallowness of the water in the bay is, however, a drawback, as vessels above a hundred tons burden cannot come to the town, but are compelled to lie at fifteen or twenty miles' distance, causing great delay in unloading and shipping

improvements, and it backed the Mobile and Ohio Railroad, which linked Mobile to Cairo, Illinois, and St. Louis, Missouri. Mobilians were convinced that the line would promote the city's cotton trade, open fresh commercial connections, and make the city more competitive with New Orleans.[38] The project was proposed in a public meeting in Mobile on January 11, 1847. The Alabama legislature approved the charter of the Mobile and Ohio Railroad Company on February 3, 1848.

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goods." Gosse, Letters from Alabama, 26; Alma B. Weber, "Mobile Harbor: Problems of Internal Improvement During the Antebellum Years," Journal of the Alabama Academy of Science, XXXVIII (January 1967): 23-31. Congress passed a bill, which was proposed by Senator Edward Lloyd (1779-1834) from Maryland, on March 6, 1826 for removing obstructions and deepening the channel of the Harbor of Mobile. See Senate 81, 19th Congress, 1st Session (1826). The term of internal improvement used loosely in the 1780s to refer to all kinds of "programs to encourage security, prosperity, and enlightenment among the people of the new United States." John Lauritz Larson, Internal Improvement: National Public Works and the Promise of Popular Government in the Early United States (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 3.

[38] DeBow's Review had great expectations for the project, arguing that "there is no route for a railroad in the Union to compare with this." The magazine pointed out that the new railroad would command the trade of eight counties in Alabama, twenty counties in Mississippi, thirteen counties in Tennessee, and four counties in Kentucky. Those forty-five counties had a total population of 410,927 in 1840. The 440 miles in length of railroad ran through the richest portions of these three of the most productive states by without crossing navigable rivers or mountains. DeBow's Review 3 (April 1847): 333, 336.

To aid construction, Mobilians in 1852 approved a special railroad tax, two percent per year on each $100 of real estate within the city for five years. The northern and southern ends of the Mobile and Ohio were connected in the spring of 1861.[39]

Mobile was more diverse demographically than the rest of the state. The city attracted more northern and foreign-born people, and accommodated more free people of color than any other region of the state (see Table 16). The census of 1850 indicated that there were 4,952 northern-born persons in Alabama, 1,731 of which resided

[39] Grace Lewis Miller, "The Mobile and Ohio Railroad in Antebellum Times," Alabama Historical Quarterly 7 (Spring 1945): 37-59; Robert S. Cotterill, "Southern Railroads, 1850-1860," Mississippi Valley Historical Review 10 (March 1924): 396; Thomas McAdory Owen, History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography (Chicago: The S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1921), IV: 1015-16. Governor John A. Winston opposed the state lending any of its funds of building of railroads, or "any other system of internal improvement, which may tend to develop the resources or affect the social relations of the different sections of the state." However, he did not oppose the building of railroads and public improvements by private capital, so far as these individual enterprises could "take warning from the revolutions and failures of the past, and to consider well their practicability and utility . . . before engaging in their construction." Winston was convinced that the state should limit its activities to the actual business of government. See Governor Winston's inaugural address delivered on December 20, 1853. Daily Advertiser and State Gazette, December 21, 1853.

in the city of Mobile. By 1860, Mobile's northern -born population had grown to 2,202. New Yorkers formed the largest group of northern emigrants. In 1860, native New Yorkers accounted for over 43 percent of the northern-born population of Mobile. They also comprised over 40 percent of all merchants in the city (see Table 17). Mobile's cotton trade connections and dreams of wealth brought many New Yorkers to the city. As soon as Alabama was organized for statehood, New Yorkers and others came "swarming to Mobile . . . to exploit the commercial potential that had been left virtually underdeveloped by the former inhabitants."[40] Throughout the antebellum period, northern-born persons comprised one-third of all urban leaders of Mobile.[41]

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[40] Harriet Amos Doss, "Birds of Passage in a Cotton Port: Northerners and Foreigners Among the Urban Leaders of Mobile, 1820-1860," in Robert C. McMath, ed., Class, Conflict, and Consensus: Antebellum Southern Community Studies (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1982), 235.

[41] According to Amos Doss's classification, the urban leaders refer to those of holding leadership positions in city government, legislature, business institutions, such as local banks and insurance companies, Mobile and Ohio Railroad Company, Mobile Chamber of Commerce, and chief voluntary associations. Ibid., 236, 244.

TABLE 16: Demographic Structure in the City of Mobile, 1850 and 1860.

1850				
PLACE OF BIRTH AND RACIAL GROUP	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL WHITE POPULATION	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL FREE POPULATION	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL POPULATION
South	7,009	54%	51%	34%
North	1,731	13%	13%	8%
Foreign	4,257	33%	31%	21%
Free Colored	715	--	5%	4%
Slaves	6,803	--	--	33%
TOTAL WHITE POPULATION	12,997	--	--	63%
TOTAL FREE POPULATION	13,712	--	--	67%
TOTAL POPULATION	20,515	--	--	--

1860				
PLACE OF BIRTH AND RACIAL GROUP	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL WHITE POPULATION	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL FREE POPULATION	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL POPULATION
South	11,591	56%	54%	40%
North	2,202	11%	10%	8%
Foreign	7,061	34%	33%	24%
Free Colored	817	--	4%	3%
Slaves	7,587	--	--	26%
TOTAL WHITE POPULATION	20,854	--	--	71%
TOTAL FREE POPULATION	21,671	--	--	74%
TOTAL POPULATION	29,258	--	--	--

SOURCE: The Seventh U.S. Census in 1850: Mortality, II: 34, 38-39 and Population, I: 422; The Eighth U.S. Census in 1860, Population, I: XXXI, 9. Percentage calculated by author.

TABLE 17: Native Northerners in the City of Mobile, 1850 and 1860.

1850			1860				
PLACE OF BIRTH	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL FOREIGN POPULATION IN MOBILE	PLACE OF BIRTH	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL FOREIGN POPULATION IN MOBILE	NO. OF MERCHANTS	PERCENTAGE OF ALL MERCHANTS IN MOBILE
New York	701	40.3%	New York	940	42.7%	59	40.7%
Massachusetts	289	16.6%	Pennsylvania	345	15.7%	14	9.7%
Pennsylvania	237	13.6%	Massachusetts	320	14.5%	24	16.6%
Connecticut	139	8%	Connecticut	133	6%	22	15.2%
Maine	100	5.7%	Maine	128	5.8%	6	4.1%
Ohio	86	4.9%	Ohio	94	4.3%	5	3.4%
New Jersey	73	4.2%	New Jersey	91	4.1%	7	4.8%
New Hampshire	39	2.2%	New Hampshire	57	2.6%	4	2.8%
Vermont	32	1.8%	Rhode Island	49	2.2%	1	0.7%
Rhode Island	24	1.4%	Vermont	24	1.1%	3	2.1%
Indiana	14	0.8%	Michigan	14	0.6%	0	0
Delaware	5	0.3%	Delaware	3	0.1%	0	0
Illinois	1	0.1%	Illinois	2	0.1%	0	0
Michigan	--	--	Indiana	1	0.05%	0	0
Wisconsin	--	--	Wisconsin	1	0.05%	0	0
TOTAL	1,740	100%	TOTAL	2,202		145	100%

SOURCE: The Seventh and Eighth U.S. Census in 1850 and 1860. Percentage calculated by author.

Many of the other northerners were likewise cotton brokers, cotton factors, and merchants. Henry Lee Reynolds of Norwich, Connecticut, a merchant and cotton factor, partnered with William A. Witherspoon in Witherspoon & Company, which dealt in hardware, iron, nails, stoves, cutlery, tools, and household furnishings.[42] Thomas and William Hallett relocated to Mobile from New York in 1814 and 1817, respectively, and rose to prominence as retailers, serving as directors of the Bank of Mobile. In 1836, William Hallett became president of the bank, a position he occupied until his death in 1860. Another New Yorker, Charles D. Dickey, moved to Mobile in the late 1840s, working as a cotton buyer for Brown Brothers and Company of New York. By the mid-1850s, Dickey was a director of two insurance companies and an officer in the Mobile Chamber of Commerce.[43]

Over 36 percent of Mobile's northern-born urban leaders were businessmen. Among forty-three antebellum officers of the Chamber

[42] Henry Lee Reynolds Papers, Southern Historical Collection, Manuscripts Department, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.
[43] Amos Doss, "Birds of Passage in a Cotton Port," 241.

of Commerce whose places of birth are known, eighteen (42 percent) were northern-born. Northerners occupied twenty-one (40 percent) of fifty-three bank directorships in the city.[44] Northerners also played leading roles in the Mobile and Ohio Railroad. The first president of the company was Sidney Smith, a commission merchant from Massachusetts. Northerners composed a substantial portion of the board of directors (see Table 18).

[44] Ibid., 244.

TABLE 18: Nativities of the Board of Directors of the Mobile and Ohio Railroad Company, 1849-1852, 1854-1856, 1859, and 1861.

1849		1850		1851	
DIRECTOR'S NAME	PLACE OF BIRTH	DIRECTOR'S NAME	PLACE OF BIRTH	DIRECTOR'S NAME	PLACE OF BIRTH
John Bloodgood	NY	John Bloodgood	NY	John Bloodgood	NY
Francis Clark	NY	John A. Campbell	GA	John A. Campbell	GA
Jonathan Emanuel	ENG	Francis Clark	NY	Francis Clark	NY
S. Griffiths Fisher	--	Jonathan Emanuel	ENG	Jonathan Emanuel	ENG
Andrew W. Gordon	CONN	Charles Gascoigne	NY	Charles Gascoigne	NY
Charles LeBaron	LA	Charles LeBaron	LA	John C. Hodges	--
Sidney Smith	MA	Sidney Smith	MA	Sidney Smith	MA
George N. Stewart	PA	George N. Stewart	PA	George N. Stewart	PA
David Stodder	SCO	David Stodder	SCO	David Stodder	SCO
Moses Waring	CONN	Moses Waring	CONN	Moses Waring	CONN
J. M. Cunningham *		J. M. Cunningham *		J. M. Cunningham *	
Benjamin E. Gray **		Benjamin E. Grey **		Benjamin E. Grey **	
W. H. Long ***		J. W. Campbell ***		J. W. Campbell ***	

1852		1854		1855	
DIRECTOR'S NAME	PLACE OF BIRTH	DIRECTOR'S NAME	PLACE OF BIRTH	DIRECTOR'S NAME	PLACE OF BIRTH
John Bloodgood	NY	Francis Clark	NY	Francis Clark	NY
John A. Campbell	GA	Jonathan Emanuel	ENG	R. Lee Fearn	VA
Francis Clark	NY	R. Lee Fearn	VA	Charles Gascoigne	NY
Jonathan Emanuel	ENG	Hillary Foster	--	Duke W. Goodman	SC
Charles Gascoigne	NY	Duke W. Goodman	--	W. J. Ledyard	NY
John C. Hodges	--	H. A. Schroeder	--	Sidney Smith	MA
Sidney Smith	MA	Sidney Smith	MA	David Stodder	SCO
George N. Stewart	PA	David Stodder	SCO	J. J. Walker	--
David Stodder	SCO	Newton St. John	NY	Charles Walsh	NY
Moses Waring	CONN	Charles Walsh	NY	Moses Waring	CONN
J. W. Campbell ***		Moses Waring	CONN	James Whitfield	--
Benjamin E. Grey **		Milton Brown ***		W. W. Robie *	
James Whitfield *		James Whitfield *		Milton Brown ***	

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

TABLE 18 CONTINUED

1856		1859		1861	
DIRECTOR'S NAME	PLACE OF BIRTH	DIRECTOR'S NAME	PLACE OF BIRTH	DIRECTOR'S NAME	PLACE OF BIRTH
Francis Clark	NY	John Bloodgood	NY	R. A. Baker	--
R. Lee Fearn	VA	Jonathan Emanuel	ENG	M. H. Bloodgood	NY
Charles Gascoigne	NY	Charles P. Gage	NH	Jonathan Emanuel	ENG
Duke W. Goodman	SC	Duke W. Goodman	SC	C. K. Foote	--
William J. Ledyard	NY	William Jones	VA	Charles P. Gage	NH
Sidney Smith	MA	F. S. Lyon	--	Duke W. Goodman	SC
David Stodder	SCO	J. C. Rupert	--	William Jones	--
J. J. Walker	--	Eli Abbott *		J. C. Rupert	--
Charles Walsh	NY	J. M. Cunningham *		J. M. Cunningham *	
Moses Waring	CONN	J. J. McRae *		J. J. McRae *	
James Whitfield	--	George H. Young *		James Whitfield *	
W. W. Robie *		Benjamin E. Gray **		C. W. Williams *	
Milton Brown ***		Milton Brown ***		Milton Brown ***	

NOTE: * Represents the State of Mississippi
** Represents the State of Kentucky
*** Represents the State of Tennessee

SOURCE: Proceedings of the First Annual Meeting of the Stockholders of the Mobile and Ohio Rail Road Company, with an Appendix (Mobile: Dade, Thompson & Co. Printers, 1849); Proceedings of the Second Annual Meeting of the Stockholders of the Mobile and Ohio Rail Road Company, held in Mobile, February 5, 1850: with an Appendix (Mobile: Thompson & Harris, 1850); Proceedings of the Third Annual Meeting of the Stockholders of the Mobile and Ohio Rail Road Company, held in Mobile, February 3, 1851: with an Appendix (Mobile: Dade, Thompson & Co. Printers, 1851); Proceedings of the Fourth Annual Meeting of the Stockholders of the Mobile and Ohio Rail Road Company, held in Mobile, February 17, 1852: with an Appendix (Mobile: Dade, Thompson & Co. Printers, 1852); Proceedings of the Sixth Annual Meeting of the Stockholders of the Mobile and Ohio Rail Road Company, held in

Mobile, March 6, 1854: with an Appendix (Mobile: Dade, Thompson & Co. Printers, 1854); Mobile Directory and Commercial Supplement for 1855-1856 (Mobile: Strickland & Co., 1855); General Directory for the City and County of Mobile, for 1856 (Mobile: Farrow, Stokes & Dennett, Book and Job Printers, 1856); Directory for the City of Mobile, 1859 (Mobile: Farrow & Dennett, 1859); Directory for the City of Mobile, for 1861 (Mobile: Farrow & Dennett, 1861).

Northerners exerted influence in municipal government as well. Of the 105 northern-born urban leaders investigated by Harriet Amos Doss, 54 percent of them served as common councilmen.[45] From 1820 to 1861, of ten city mayors whose birth places are known, four were from the North (see Table 19).[46] The first mayor of Mobile, Addin Lewis, was a Connecticut native, who came to Mobile in 1803 and served as the first customs collector of the United States for the port of

[45] Harriet Amos Doss, Cotton City: Urban Development in Antebellum Mobile (Tuscaloosa, Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1985), 246.

[46] According to the city's 1819 charter, it was governed by a seven-member board of elected aldermen. The aldermen elected a mayor from among their ranks until 1826, when the charter was revised to allow for his popular election. In the wake of the city's financial difficulties of 1837-1838, the general assembly passed an amendment on January 31, 1839 to establish a board of common council and granted the council the authority to approve or disapprove all ordinances and resolutions of the mayor and board of aldermen dealing with financial matters. See Foster, ed. al., A Guide to the Mobile Municipal Archives, 1.

Mobile (1813-1829), postmaster (1818-1824), president of the Bank of Mobile (1818), and mayor (1820-1822). When Lewis retired from civic affairs in 1829, the Mobile Register paid tribute to him as "one of their oldest and most respected citizens."[47]

[47] Mobile Register, May 4, 1829.

TABLE 19: Nativities of the Mayors of Mobile, 1822-1861.

YEAR	MAYOR'S NAME	PLACE OF BIRTH	YEAR	MAYOR'S NAME	PLACE OF BIRTH
1820-22	Addin Lewis	CONN	1840-41	Edward Hall	PA
1823	John Elliott	--	1842-45	Charles A. Hoppin	--
1824-26	Samuel Garrow	--	1846-47	Blanton McAlpine	GA
1827-30	John F. Everett	GA	1848	J. W. L. Childers	--
1831-34	John Stockings, Jr.	--	1849-51	Charles C. Langdon	CONN
1835-36	John F. Everett	GA	1852	Joseph Seawell	NC
1837	George W. Owen	VA	1853-55	Charles C. Langdon	CONN
1838	George Walton	--	1856-61	Jones M. Withers	AL
1839	Henry Chamberlain	ME	1861	John Forsyth	GA

SOURCE: Clifton Dale Foster, Tracey J. Berezansky, and E. Frank Roberts, ed. al., A Guide to the Mobile Municipal Archives (Mobile, Alabama: Mobile Municipal Archives, 1986), 94.

Northerners also led the public school movement in Mobile. Between 1826 and 1860, 37 percent of northern-born leaders were elected to the board of school commissioners. The first superintendent of education in Mobile was Willis G. Clark, a New Yorker and editor of the Mobile Advertiser. Mobile's first public school system - also the state's first - established by northerners

in 1852. The first elected president of the new school board in 1852 was Thaddeus Sanford, a Connecticut native who removed to Mobile in 1822 from New York. Sanford was also the editor and proprietor of the Democratic Mobile Register for twenty-six years. In 1833 he was elected president of the Bank of Mobile, and in 1853 he was appointed collector of the Mobile Port by President Pierce, holding that office throughout James Buchanan's administration. The vice president of the school board was Gustavus Horton, a cotton commission merchant from Massachusetts. Horton succeeded to the presidency of the education board in 1856 and became the mayor of Mobile during Reconstruction.[48]

Mobile's second demographic feature was its significant number of foreign-born persons. Foreigners made Mobile's population "more cosmopolitan than that of any city in the South, save perhaps, New Orleans."[49] William Howard Russell, a war

[48] Amos Doss, Cotton City, 246; Owen, History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography, III: 845-46; IV: 1501-02.

[49] Thomas Cooper DeLeon, Four Years in Rebel Capitals: an Inside View of

correspondent of the London Times, was astonished by the city's cosmopolitan air as he arrived on May 11, 1861:

> I looked out on the quay of Mobile, fringed by tall warehouses with shops at the basement; with names French, German, Irish, Swiss, Italian, Scotch, Spanish, English, and Jewish; and I thought what manner of city is this? . . . A throng of mulattoes, quadroons, Mestizos, in striking and pretty costumes, gabbling in Spanish, Italian, and French, a *lingua franca*. The most foreign looking city in the States, a very turbulent, noisy, parti-colored "Marseilles"! [50]

In 1850, of 7,638 foreigners living in the state of Alabama, 4,086 of them (53 percent) lived in the city of Mobile, where they comprised 30 percent of the free population. The foreign-born population of Alabama increased to 12,352 in 1860; 57 percent of them resided in the city of Mobile. They formed 33 percent of the city's

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Life in the Southern Confederacy, from Birth to Death, ed., E. B. Long (New York: Collier Books, 1962), 72.

[50] Sir William Howard Russell, "Recollections of the Civil War - III," The North American Review 166 (April 1898): 491-92.

free population, 25 percent of the city's total population, and 34 percent of the white population.[51] Most immigrants were from Ireland, Germany, England, France, and Scotland, in that order. By 1860, 47 percent of the foreign-born in the city were Irish, but Germans were the most rapidly growing group between 1850 and 1860 (see Table 20). In 1860, at least fifteen foreign consuls resided in Mobile, representing Austria, Belgium, France, Great Britain, Hamburg, Mexico, Russia, Portugal, Netherlands, Sardinia, Spain, Sweden, Norway, Switzerland, and Tuscany.[52] Advertisements often aimed at foreigners. A. Castaned, a druggist on Government Street, boasted that his clerks spoke English, French, Spanish, and Italian. Miss Walker's Ladies Book Exchange and Variety Store sold many kinds of books, magazines and papers imported from France, Germany, Spain, and Italy.[53]

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[51] Mobile County accommodated 7,733 foreigners in 1860. The Seventh U.S. Census in 1850, Mortality; The Eighth U.S. Census in 1860, Population, 10.

[52] Mobile Directory and Commercial Supplement for 1855-1856 (Mobile: Strickland & Co., 1855), 121; Directory for the City of Mobile, for 1861 (Mobile: Farrow & Dennett, 1861), Appendix, 18.

[53] Ibid.

TABLE 20: Nativity of the Foreign-born Residents in the City of Mobile, 1850 and 1860.

NATIONS	1850		1860		GROWTH PERCENTAGE 1850-1860
	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE OF FOREIGN POPULATION	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE OF FOREIGN POPULATION	
Ireland	2,009	49%	3,307	47%	65%
Germany	513	13%	1,276	18%	149%
England	547	13%	663	9%	21%
France	303	7%	538	8%	78%
Scotland	205	5%	318	5%	55%
Other	509	12%	959	14%	88%
TOTAL	4,086		7,061		

SOURCE: Thompson, “Mobile, Alabama, 1850-1861,” 154. Percentage calculated by author.

Foreign immigrants were not as numerous among Mobile’s urban leaders as northerners; only 13 percent and 10 percent ever served as Aldermen and Common Councilmen, compared to northern-born leaders’ 44 percent and 54 percent. The foreign-born group’s wealth was also far behind that of the northern- and southern-born groups.[54]

[54] For those foreign-born whose real estate wealth information were recorded in the 1860 census, over half (51 percent) held wealth under $2,000, more than northern-born group’s 26 percent and southern-born group’s 35 percent.

By 1860, the foreign-born, mostly Irish and Germans, constituted half of the free male labor force in the city. When John S. C. Abbott, a Maine native and writer, visited Mobile in December 1859, he was surprised to see how skilled Irish and German free laborers drove slave laborers from the wharves and streets. Abbott also noticed that Irish and Germans performed almost all street maintenance.[55] The majority of Irish earned their livelihood by manual labor, as draymen, cab drivers, brick masons, stonecutters, carpenters, and domestic servants. Most of the chambermaids, porters, and runners in hotels were Irish-born. The largest and the most prominent hotel in Mobile, the Battle House, had at least seventy Irish employees in 1860. Many Germans worked as skilled artisans, and the French worked as cooks, bakers, confectionaries, and

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The foreign-born also had the highest portion, 57 percent, of people whose personal estate wealth were under $2,000, higher than northern-born's 26 percent and southern-born's 28 percent. Thompson, "Mobile, Alabama, 1850-1861," 291-92.

[55] John S. C. Abbott, South and North: or, Impressions Received During a Trip to Cuba and the South (New York: Abbey & Abbot, 1860), 94, 112-13.

proprietors of specialty shops.[56]

There were success stories among immigrants. German-born Augustus Stikes was listed as a clerk in the 1850 census with $1,000 worth of real estate. By 1860, he was a custom house inspector and possessed $6,100 in real estate. Scotsman James Bruce was listed also as a clerk with $1,500 in 1850. In 1860, he was a merchant whose properties amounted to $45,000. Dutchman George Fink advanced from laborer to chicken peddler and increased his property from $700 in 18650 to $12,000 in 1860.[57] Jonathan Emanuel, an English cotton merchant, moved to Mobile in the 1820s. Before he became the president of the Mobile Insurance Company in 1856, Emanuel served on the boards of the Bank of Mobile, the Mobile and Ohio Railroad Company, and was an officer of the Chamber of Commerce. Emanuel was also elected to the common council (1840, 1844, 1846, and 1852) and

[56] The Eighth U.S. Census in 1860.

[57] The Seventh and Eighth U.S. Census in 1850 and 1860; Mobile City Directory, 1850, 1861.

the board of school commissioners (1843-47).[58]

Albert Stein was one of the most highly regarded foreign-born persons in Mobile. Born in Düsseldorf, Germany, Stein was first employed by Napoleon as a hydraulic engineer. He came to Cincinnati in 1817 and founded the water works for that city. Prior to moving to Mobile in 1840, Stein had established water systems in Lynchburg, Richmond, Nashville, and New Orleans. Mobile's water works were first purchased by Henry Hitchcock, a Connecticut-born attorney and real estate developer. Hitchcock died of yellow fever in 1839, and contracted with Stein to provide water to the city for a period of twenty years. Stein built a pumping plant near the foot of Spring Hill, on Three Mile Creek, seven miles west of the city. The plant pumped water to an elevated tank located at the present site of Lyons Park at Spring Hill Avenue and Catherine Street, two miles west of downtown. From the elevated tank, pipelines distributed water to downtown area. Stein's construction was Mobile's only public water

[58] Amos Doss, Cotton City, 50-51.

system until 1886.[59]

Another prominent immigrant, George Davis, an English Jew, came first to Tuscaloosa and then moved to Mobile in late 1823 or early 1824. Till his death on April 1, 1852 at age of eighty-two, Davis engaged in various businesses. He conducted an inn, ran a store, and operated a livery stable. He speculated in real estate and was local agent for a New Orleans Jewish slave dealer, Levy Jacobs. When Davis died in 1852, the Mobile Register eulogized a unique character:

> a quick shrill voice, a flexible manner, ready wit, and free and exhaustless humor, made his sales attractive as well as effective . . . his heart was generous and liberal, and he rendered aid to the full extent of his abilities, to the needy and meritorious . . . he will long be remembered by all who knew him, as one of the most singular personages of this city.[60]

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[59] Joseph F. Riccio and Conard A. Gazzier, History of Water Supply of the Mobile Area, Alabama (Tuscaloosa: Geological Survey of Alabama, Division of Water Resources, 1973), 16-17. For the detailed agreement between Stein and the city government of Mobile, see Alexander McKinstry, The Code of Ordinances of the City of Mobile, with the Charter and an Appendix (Mobile: S. H. Goetzel, 1859), 395-400.

[60] Korn, The Jews of Mobile, Alabama, 23, 34.

Another unusually important group in Mobile was free people of color. A free African American community had existed in Mobile long before Alabama became a state. Samuel Haines noted in 1817 that "the inhabitants of Mobile are of various descriptions: about five hundred are people of color, of every shade, who are generally free and possessed of real estate, etc. The balance are whites, of a heterogeneous character."[61] Of 2,690 free people of color in Alabama in 1860, almost half lived in Mobile County, mostly in the city (see Table 21, 22). Free people of color worked at skilled or semi-skilled jobs as carpenters, bricklayers, blacksmiths, cooks, cotton samplers, draymen, cigar makers, barbers, and shopkeepers. A few owned slaves as well.[62] Free people of color included both Creoles and free blacks.

[61] William H. Brantley, Jr., "Henry Hitchcock of Mobile, 1816-1839," Alabama Review 4 (January 1952): 4.

[62] According to the federal censuses, in 1850, there were forty-eight free colored slaveowners, including thirty-five free blacks, owned 204 slaves. In 1860, thirty-three free colored persons possessed 163 slaves. See Carter Godwin Woodson, Free Negro Owners of Slaves in the United States in 1830, Together with Absentee Ownership of Slaves in the United States in 1830 (Westport, Connecticut: Negro Universities Press, 1924); Christopher Andrew Nordmann, "Free Negroes in Mobile County, Alabama" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Alabama, 1990), 240.

Creoles were the older and more prosperous group, the offspring of early settlers, mostly French and Spanish, who had liaisons with black women, slave and free. In many instances, white fathers not only freed their black “wives,” but also made provisions to manumit their nonwhite children.

TABLE 21: Free Colored Population in the Southern States, 1860.

STATE	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE (SOUTH)	PERCENTAGE (NATION)
Maryland	83,942	33.47%	17.61%
Virginia	58,042	23.14%	12.17%
North Carolina	30,463	12.15%	6.39%
Delaware	19,829	7.91%	4.16%
Louisiana	18,647	7.44%	3.91%
Kentucky	10,684	4.26%	2.24%
South Carolina	9,914	3.95%	2.08%
Tennessee	7,300	2.91%	1.53%
Missouri	3,572	1.42%	0.75%
Georgia	3,500	1.40%	0.73%
Alabama	2,690	1.07%	0.56%
Florida	932	0.37%	0.20%
Mississippi	773	0.31%	0.16%
Texas	355	0.14%	0.07%
Arkansas	144	0.06%	0.03%

TOTAL FREE COLORED POPULATION IN SOUTH: 250,787

TOTAL FREE COLORED POPULATION IN NATION: 476,748

SOURCE: Compiled and calculated from the Historical Census Browser.

TABLE 22: Distribution of Mobile County's Free Colored Population, 1830-1860.

YEAR	MOBILE COUNTY			
	URBAN AREA		RURAL AREA	
	NUMBER	COUNTY PERCENTAGE	NUMBER	COUNTY PERCENTAGE
1830	174	32%	372	68%
1840	246	3%	541	69%
1850	227	24%	715	76%
1860	378	32%	817	68%

SOURCE: Ibid.; Richard C. Wade, Slavery in the Cities: the South, 1820-1860 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), 326. Percentage calculated by author.

The Chastangs, for example, were one of the largest and most prominent Creole families in antebellum Mobile.[63] Two white members of the Chastang family, brothers John and Joseph, settled in Mobile in 1760. Joseph Chastang owned a female slave named Louison and her four children, and they paid for their freedom on August 9, 1780.

[63] In addition to the Chastangs, many last names of Mobile's free colored people give indication of French and Spanish influence: Toulmin, Dubroca, Boundroup, Laland, Franier, Andre, Durand, Molet, Laurendine, Sauvage, Durett, Gagurez, and Lopez. James Benson Sellers, Slavery in Alabama (Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 1950), 385.

Thereafter, Louison lived openly as a concubine of John Chastang in a relationship that lasted at least twenty years and produced ten children. John Chastang died in 1805. In his will, he left his real estate and dwellings to Louison, and reaffirmed Louison and her children's status, declaring that "if under the laws of this territory there exists in me any title or color of title to her or them or any of them as slaves, that they . . . shall be . . . fully and completely free and emancipated."[64]

Slaves became free in a variety of ways, including manumission by the state legislature, self-purchase, and testamentary manumissions.[65] Masters sometimes rewarded slaves with freedom for their "faithful service and other good cause." Seaborn Travis freed Caroline, who had rendered "long faithful and meritorious services." Phillip Munch freed a slave who had "served him with zeal and

[64] Nordmann, "Free Negroes in Mobile County, Alabama, 3-8.

[65] In March 1840 a white man purchased a female slave for $750, the slave later purchased her freedom with $750 which she earned while in her master's service. Sellers, Slavery in Alabama, 10-11.

fidelity."[66]

Slaves were also manumitted by popular subscription. The most prominent case was the manumission of Pierre Chastang. During the Indian wars in the Alabama Territory, Pierre carried provisions to troops. In the 1819 yellow fever epidemic, Pierre provided assistance to the sick in the city. To reward his good deeds, merchants took up a subscription to pay for Pierre's freedom. The Alabama Planter lauded Pierre as a "highly esteemed or respected" member of the community.[67]

Mobile, in short, was unlike the rest of Alabama and most of the rest of South in that its population included large numbers of northerners, foreigners, and free colored persons. But its extensive connections to rural areas in the cotton trade helped link it economically and socially to the interior, and its reliance on slavery further shaped the city's southern identity.

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[66] Nordmann, "Free Negroes in Mobile County, Alabama," 41-42.

[67] Amos Doss, Cotton City, 90-91; Nordmann, "Free Negroes in Mobile County, Alabama," 44-47; Alabama Planter, August 28, 1848.

Mobile was an early slaveholding center on the Gulf Coast. In March 1721, the ship *Africane* arrived at Mobile with 120 slaves. Later in the same year, the *Marie* and *Neride* arrived and brought 338 and 238 slaves.[68] Slaves were put ashore at Mobile, transferred to small boats, and sent to inland settlements via the Mobile, Alabama, and Tombigbee Rivers.[69] In the antebellum period, dealers shipped slaves from upper southern states like Maryland and Virginia to Mobile, where local residents and planters from southwestern Alabama and southeastern Mississippi came to purchase. The slave market in Mobile was on the present west side of Royal Street, between St. Louis and St. Francis streets.[70] The number of slaves in Mobile increased

[68] Albert James Pickett, History of Alabama, and Incidentally of Georgia and Mississippi, from the Earliest Period (Charleston: Walker and James, 1851), 258-59.

[69] The last slave ship entered Mobile port was the *Clotilde* with 103 slaves from Guinea on July 9, 1860. This illegal importation of slaves was conducted by three brothers Tim, Jim, and Burns Meaher, natives of Maine but residents of Mobile. One of the slaves on *Clotilde*, Cudjo Lewis (or Kazoola) lived until 1935. About the *Clotilde* and Cudjo Lewis's story, see Zora Neale Hurston, "Cudjo's Own Story of the Last African Slaves," Journal of Negro History 12 (October 1927): 648-63. Hurston's article was mainly based on her personal interviews of Cudjo Lewis.

[70] Sellers, Slavery in Alabama, 154.

every decade between 1820 and 1860, climbing from 836 to 7,587. Due to the more rapid increase of the white population, however, slaves declined as a part of the population from a peak of 37 percent in 1830 to 26 percent in 1860 (see Table 23).

TABLE 23: Slave Population in the City of Mobile, 1820-1860.

YEAR	TOTAL CITY POPULATION	SLAVE POPULATION				PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL POPULATION
		MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	GROWTH PERCENTAGE	
1820	2,672	--	--	836	--	31%
1830	3,194	611 (52%)	564 (48%)	1,175	41%	37%
1840	12,672	1,901 (49%)	1,968 (51%)	3,869	229%	31%
1850	20,515	3,212 (47%)	3,591 (53%)	6,803	76%	33%
1860	29,258	3,871 (51%)	3,716 (49%)	7,587	12%	26%

SOURCE: Wade, Slavery in the Cities, 326; The Fifth U.S. Census in 1830, 100-101; The Sixth U.S. Census in 1840, 244-45; The Seventh U.S. Census in 1850, 422; The Eighth U.S. Census in 1860, Population, 9. Percentage calculated by author.

Mobile's slave percentage was higher than that of the New Orleans's, but lower than other southern cities such as Charleston, Richmond, and Savannah (see Table 24). Slaves in Mobile worked as blacksmiths, bricklayers, carpenters, cooks, craftsmen, draymen, gardeners, laborers, wagon drivers, weavers, personal servants, steamboat hands, stevedores, and dock laborers.[71] Slave hiring was widespread. For example, the Yuille family hired slaves to work in

[71] Mobile Register, January 15, October 19, November 16, 1836.

their bakery. William P. Hammond's Alabama Cotton Press and Warehouse employed 108 slaves in 1857. Allan Ryland, a local brick maker, had 61 slave workers in his plant in 1860.[72]

TABLE 24: Slave Population in Charleston, New Orleans, Richmond, and Savannah, 1850, 1860.

		CHARLESTON	NEW ORLEANS	RICHMOND	SAVANNAH
1850	Total Population	42,985	116,375	27,570	15,312
	Slave Population	19,532	17,011	9,927	6,231
	Percentage	45%	15%	36%	41%
1860	Total Population	40,522	168,675	37,910	22,292
	Slave Population	13,909	13,385	11,699	7,712
	Percentage	34%	8%	31%	35%

SOURCE: Wade, Slavery in the Cities, 325-27. Percentage calculated by author.

[72] Thompson, "Mobile, Alabama, 1850-1861," 257.

Slaveholders in Mobile were not limited to southern-born citizens, many northern- and foreign-born Mobilians were also used to be masters. In 1850, the average number of slaves owned by southern-born slaveowners was six. Northern-born owners held five on average, and foreign-born masters owned an average of four.[73] Several prominent northern-born citizens such as Thaddeus Sanford; Gustavus Horton, a cotton broker; Henry Chamberlain, a Massachusetts born attorney; William Dunn, a Connecticut native and president of Firemen's Insurance Company; and William Rix, a Vermont merchant, owned slaves. Foreign-born people such as Jonathan Emanuel, an England born merchant and director of Mobile and Ohio Railroad Company; B. S. Skaats, a foundry owner and an alderman; and Albert Stein, a German born hydraulic engineer, were slaveowners. William Hammond, the Scottish owner of Factor's Press, was the largest slave owner in 1857, with 108 slaves.[74] Northern- and foreign-born

[73] The Seventh U.S. Census in 1850, Schedule 1, Free Population, City of Mobile, Alabama; Schedule 2, Slave Population, City of Mobile, Alabama.
[74] The Eighth U.S. Census in 1860, Slave Population, City of Mobile, Alabama.

Mobilians' willingness of holding slaves illustrated their gradual assimilation with the southern society and culture, the tendency that they were southernized.[75]

Cotton built antebellum Mobile and held the key to its fortunes. The cotton trade attracted a diverse population, which distinguished Mobile from the rest of state. Nonetheless, urban, commercial, cosmopolitan Mobile shared many interests and values with rural Alabama, with the hinterland upon which the city depended. The cotton trade also helped tie Mobilians together. Northern-born, foreign-born, and southern-born free citizens relied on cotton for their livelihood, and slaves within the city furnished both labor

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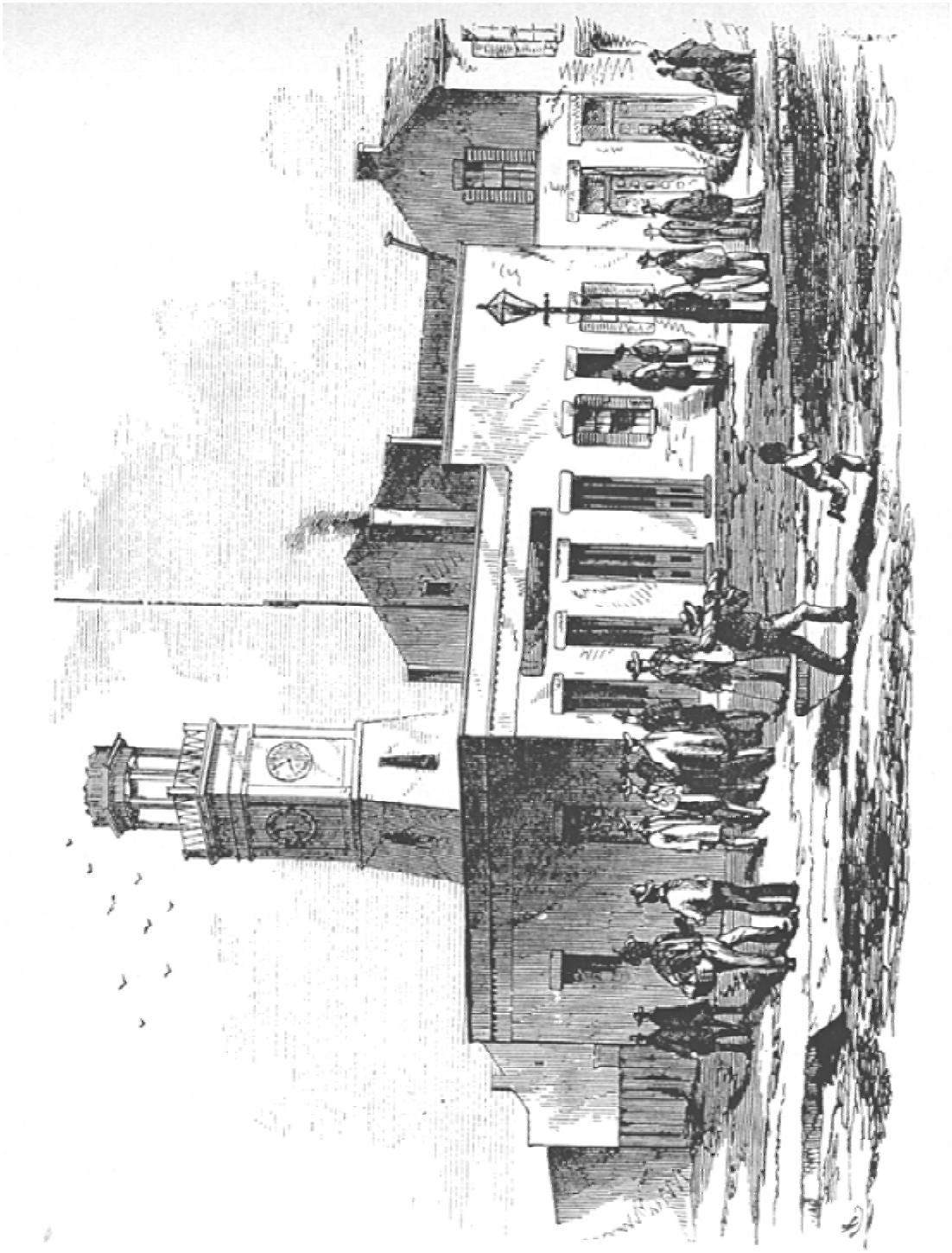
Thompson, "Mobile, Alabama, 1850-1861," Appendix 4.

[75] In 1850, the average numbers of slaves owned by foreign-born, northern-born, and southern-born Mobilians were 4, 5, and 6, respectively. Amos Doss contends that non southern-born Mobilians owning slaves were "just enough to illustrate a commitment to the peculiar institution." However, since there were no distinct differences of average slave holding among these three ethnic groups, a practical purpose of using slave laborers should be one of the motivations behind non southern-born Mobilians' slaveholding. Amos Doss, "Birds of Passage in a Cotton Port," 250; Census of 1850, Schedule 1, Free Population, City of Mobile, Alabama; Schedule 2, Slave Population, City of Mobile, Alabama.

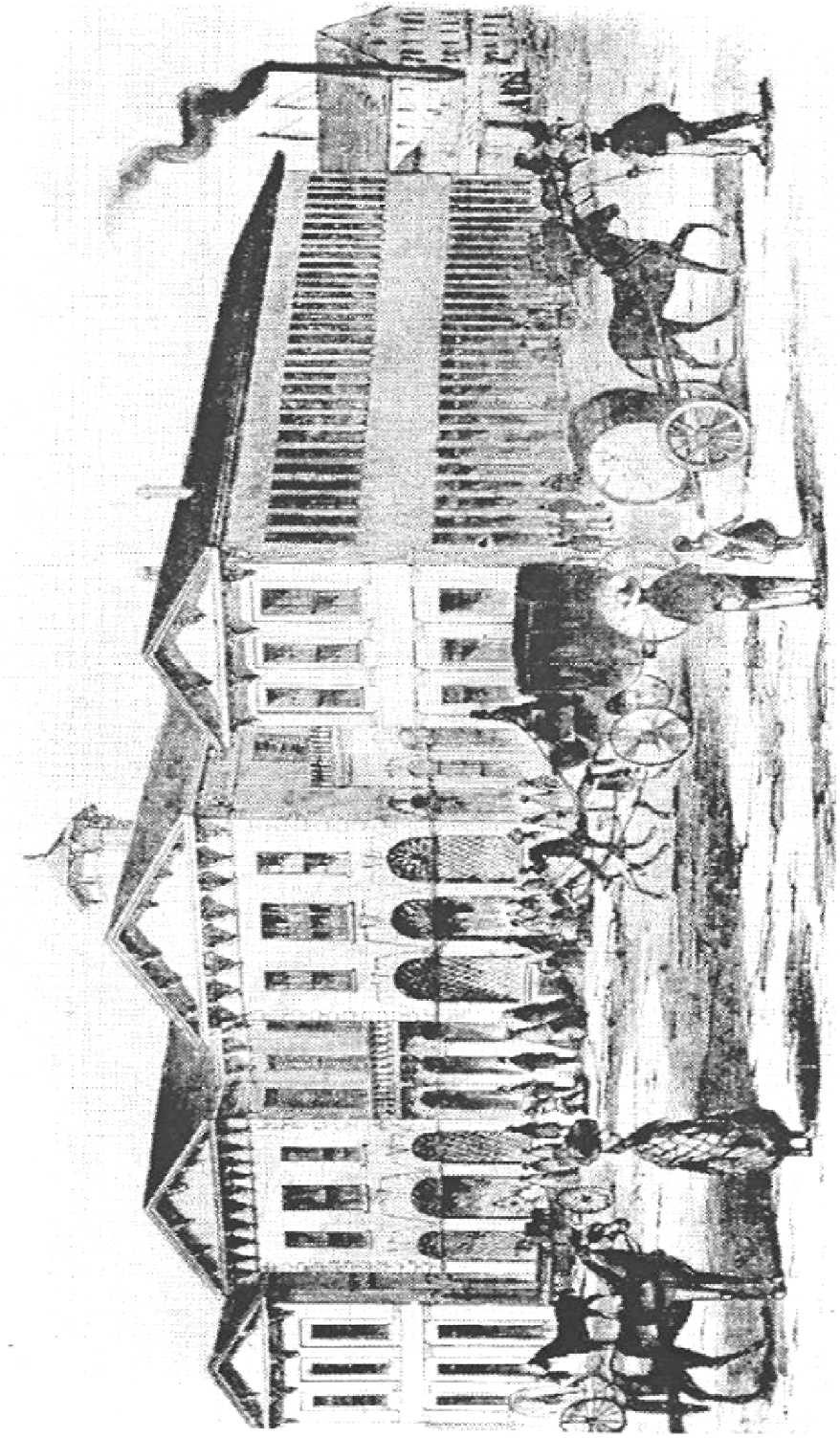
and common interests for white masters. Sectional conflicts would exert great pressure on the city during the 1850s and test the strength of community bands and of links to the state. Mobilians would have to weigh their interests and choose sides in the developing contest between North and South. Mobile's diversity and its dependence on northern trade and finance made the prospect of alienation from the North especially troubling, but most free Mobilians defined their identities and cast their fate with the South as the sectional crisis deepened.

ILLUSTRATION 2: Watch and Bell Tower, Mobile, 1857.



SOURCE: Ballou's Pictorial Drawing-Room Companion 12 (June 27 1857).

ILLUSTRATION 3: City Hall and New Market, Mobile, 1857.



SOURCE: Ibid.

CHAPTER 3

CONSENSUS AND DIVISION:

LOCAL, STATE, AND NATIONAL POLITICS IN MOBILE

Mobile's commercially oriented cotton economy both distinguished it from and bound it to the rest of Alabama, which was dominated by agriculture. Politics revealed similar commonalities and divergences. Two-party politics played a significant role in the Mobile's development, while the Democratic party dominated state politics. Mobilians both reacted to and helped shape larger political developments as sectional crises unfolded.

The Whig party's weakness in Alabama prevented long-term, close, two-party competition. Alabama Whigs were powerful only in the large slaveholding areas of the southern Black Belt and the Tennessee Valley. Manufacturing, commercial, and professional

areas and wealthier counties also tended to be the Whig.[1] But this coalition was a minority, which never won the presidential vote of the state and struggled in statewide races (see Table 25). Throughout the antebellum period, only nine Alabama Whigs, all from central and southern counties, were elected to the House of Representatives (see Table 26).

[1] Thomas B. Alexander et al., "Who were Alabama Whigs?" Alabama Review 16 (January 1963): 5-19. Whig supporters were not solely large-scale planters. Covington County, with 26 percent of slave population in 1830 and 15 percent in 1840, and 13 percent in 1850, registered Whig majorities in every presidential election between 1836 and 1856, except 1852. In contrast, Madison County, in the highlands, had a slave density of 50 percent in 1830, 52 percent in 1840, and 54 percent in 1850, was one of Democratic stronghold in Alabama, which gave Democrat huge victories in every election. Clanton W. Williams, ed., "Presidential Elections and Related Data for Antebellum Alabama," Alabama Review 1 (October 1948): 290-91; 2 (January 1949): 64-71.

TABLE 25: Percentages of the Whig/Know-Nothing and Democrats in Presidential Elections in Alabama, 1836-1856.

	PARTIES	TOTAL VOTES	PERCENTAGE
1836	Democratic	21,226	55%
	Whig	17,045	45%
1840	Democratic	33,995	55%
	Whig	28,284	45%
1844	Democratic	35,978	59%
	Whig	25,320	41%
1848	Democratic	31,173	51%
	Whig	30,481	49%
1852	Democratic	26,881	61%
	Whig	15,061	34%
1856	Democratic	46,739	62%
	Know-Nothing	28,552	38%

NOTE: The 1852 presidential election also included the Southern Rights party, which carried 2,197, or 5 percent of votes.

SOURCE: Clanton W. Williams, ed., "Presidential Elections and Related Data for Antebellum Alabama," Alabama Review 1 (October 1948): 290-91; 2 (January 1949): 70-71; W. Dean Burnham, Presidential Ballots, 1836-1892 (New York: Arno Press, 1976), 260-74. Percentage calculated by author.

TABLE 26: Whig Representatives from Antebellum Alabama.

NAME	COUNTY	BIRTH-DEATH	CONGRESS (YEAR)
1. Francis Strother Lyon	Marengo	1800-1882	24 (1835-1836)
			25 (1837-1838)
2. George Whitfield Crabb	Tuscaloosa	1804-1846	25 (1837-1838)
			26 (1839-1840)
3. Joab Lawlert	Talladega	1796-1838	25 (1837-1838)
4. James Dellet	Monroe	1788-1848	26 (1839-1840)
			28 (1843-1844)
5. Henry Washington Hilliard	Montgomery	1808-1892	29 (1845-1846)
			30 (1847-1848)
			31 (1849-1850)
6. John Gayle	Mobile	1792-1859	30 (1847-1848)
7. William Jeffreys Alston	Marengo	1800-1876	31 (1849-1850)

SOURCE: Excerpted and Compiled from Biographical Directory of the United States Congress, 1774 – Present: http://bioguide.congress.gov/biosearch/biosearch.asp

Instead of being dominated by the Democratic party, Mobile offered substantial support to the commercially-oriented Whig party. Henry W. Conner observed in 1849 that the Democratic party held sway

in the state of Alabama except in Mobile.[2] In the 1840s, the Whig party won three presidential elections in Mobile County and averaged 54 percent of the votes. In the 1850s, Mobile County turned to the Democratic party, voting for Franklin Pierce and Selma native William Rufus King in 1852, and James Buchanan and John C. Breckinridge in 1856. Although the Whig party in Mobile ran second to the Democrats throughout the 1850s, the party averaged 46 percent of the total votes (see Table 27).

[2] Henry W. Conner to John C. Calhoun, January 12, 1849, in Franklin Jameson, ed., Annual Report of the American Historical Association for the Year 1899, "Correspondence of John C. Calhoun" (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1900), II: 1189.

TABLE 27: Presidential Returns in Mobile County, State of Alabama, and the United States, 1840-1860.

		MOBILE COUNTY	ALABAMA	UNITED STATES
YEAR	PARTIES	TOTAL VOTE AND PERCENTAGE	TOTAL VOTE AND PERCENTAGE	TOTAL VOTE AND PERCENTAGE
1840	Democratic	1,121 (43%)	33,995 (55%)	1,130,033 (47%)
	Whig	1,481 (57%)	28,284 (45%)	1,275,612 (53%)
1844	Democratic	1,347 (49%)	35,978 (59%)	1,339,368 (50%)
	Whig	1,403 (51%)	25,320 (41%)	1,300,687 (48%)
	Liberty	--	--	62,103 (2%)
1848	Democratic	1,073 (45%)	31,173 (51%)	1,222,674 (42%)
	Whig	1,319 (55%)	30,481 (49%)	1,362,101 (47%)
	Free Soil	--	--	291,616 (10%)
	Liberty	--	--	2,733 (0.1%)
AVG.	DEMOCRATIC	46%	55%	46%
	WHIG	54%	45%	49%
1852	Democratic	1,380 (53%)	26,881 (61%)	1,609,038 (51%)
	Whig	1,123 (43%)	15,061 (34%)	1,386,629 (44%)
	Free Soil	--	--	156,297 (5%)
	Southern Rights	94 (4%)	2,197 (5%)	--
1856	Democratic	1,838 (51%)	46,739 (62%)	1,832,955 (45%)
	Know-Nothing	1,771 (49%)	28,552 (38%)	1,339,932 (33%)
	Republican	--	--	871,731 (22%)
AVG.	DEMOCRATIC	52%	62%	48%
	WHIG/KNOW-NOTHING	46%	36%	39%
1860	Republican	--	--	1,865,593 (40%)
	Democratic	1,823 (37%)	13,612 (15%)	1,382,713 (29%)
	Southern Democratic	1,541 (31%)	48,669 (54%)	848,356 (18%)
	Constitutional Union	1,629 (33%)	27,835 (31%)	592,906 (13%)

SOURCE: Williams, "Presidential Elections and Related Data for Antebellum Alabama," 290-91; Burnham, Presidential Ballots, 260-74; Lewy Dorman, Party Politics in Alabama: From 1850 Through 1860 (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1995), 52. Percentage calculated by author.

The Whigs continued to fare well, however, in local elections in the 1850s. Except for 1852, the Whig party controlled both the Board of Aldermen and the Common Council from 1850 to 1857. Of the 287 city aldermen and councilmen elected from 1850 to 1860, 56 percent were Whigs and Know-Nothings and 34 percent were Democrats. Members with Whig and Know-Nothing background in the Common Council alone comprised 71 percent of the total.[3]

Prominent Mobile Whigs included John J. Walker, the Mobile Customs House director; Dr. Henry S. Levert, director of the United States Marine Hospital in Mobile; John Gayle (1792-1859), two-term Alabama governor (1831-1833, 1833-1835), U.S. Congressman (1847-1848), and federal judge for the Southern judicial District

[3] The percentages were calculated from the data in Thompson, "Mobile, Alabama, 1850-1861," 141, Table 15.

of Alabama (1849-1859); and Charles Langdon, three-term mayor (1849, 1850, and 1852) and state Representative (1855, 1861). William Giles Jones (1849, 1857), Elihu Lockwood (1849), and William B. H. Howard (1855) were all Whig state Representatives from Mobile. Other leading Whigs included Charles LeBaron, T. B. Stallsworth, and William Sayre.[4]

Mobile's Whiggishness distinguished it from the state of Alabama, but free Mobilians shared many of the political values of rural constituencies. In particular, cotton, slavery, and southern rights were major themes in Mobile politics. Defense of perceived southern rights figured prominently from the beginning in Alabama. Just after statehood, during 1820, Alabama senators John William Walker and William Rufus King stood for southern interests and voted

[4] Owen, History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography, III: 852, 944-47; IV: 1008-1011; W. Brewer, Alabama: Her History, Resources, War Record, and Public Men: from 1540 to 1872 (Baltimore, Maryland: Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc., 1995, 2000), 397-99, 412-17; William Garrett, Reminiscences of Public Men in Alabama, for Thirty Years (Atlanta, Georgia: Plantation Publishing Company's Press, 1872). William Sayre was also one of the founders of the First Presbyterian Church of Montgomery.

consistently with pro-slavery southern colleagues on every issue.[5]

At the same time, Alabamians cherished the Union, and Alabama's response to the Nullification Crisis revealed anger over protective tariffs but a determination to preserve the Union. Opponents of nullification, such as Governor John Murphy, successfully argued that state nullification of federal laws meant the destruction of constitutional liberty and the harmony of the Union.[6] Resolution of the state's claims to Indian lands cemented allegiance to state rights while increasing confidence in the good will of the federal government under President Andrew Jackson.[7]

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[5] Hugh C. Bailey, "Alabama Political Leaders and the Missouri Compromise," Alabama Review 9 (April 1856): 120-134.

[6] Niles' Register, XXXV: 275-77. Quoted in Theodore Henley Jack, Sectionalism and Party Politics in Alabama, 1819-1842 (Menasha, Wisconsin: George Banta Publishing Company, 1919), 25. James M. Calhoun (1805-1877) and Dixon Hall Lewis (1802-1848) mobilized Alabamians supporting nullification. The early States' Rights leaders also included John Elmore in the Montgomery area, and John A. Campbell, Joseph Lesesne, and Percy Walker in Mobile. Henry Mayer, "A Leaven of Disunion: The Growth of the Secessionist Faction in Alabama, 1847-1851," Alabama Review 22 (April 1969): 85.

[7] Charles J. Kappler, ed., Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1904), II: 341-43.

In the 1840s, state and southern rights waxed in importance within the Democratic party, as when Reuben Chapman of Madison County, won the gubernatorial election in May 1847 and Dixon Hall Lewis was elected as Senator. Lewis's victory was partly attributable to his opponent William Rufus King's close affiliation with Northern politicians. In a letter to John C. Calhoun on December 20, 1847, John Archibald Campbell (1811-1889) of Mobile, who later became an associate justice of the Supreme Court, argued that King's pro-northern position cost him:

> You have heard before this of Mr. Lewis's election and Col. King's defeat. As Col. King was bound up with the Northern democrats of a very doubtful order, and he was the candidate of the Hunkers here, this was a work very well done.[8]

[8] "Correspondence of John C. Calhoun," ed. by J. Franklin Jameson, Annual Report of the American Historical Association for the Year 1899 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1900), II: 1152.

Alabama's intense southern rights sentiments were inseparable from whites' investment in and allegiance to slavery.[9] By 1860, Alabama had 435,083 slaves, which accounted for over 45 percent of the state's population, and 29 percent of them were owned by large planters.[10] Nearly 45 percent of the state's black population lived in the Black Belt counties (see Table 28). Alabama law treated slaves as property rather than as persons with civil rights. The first article of the 1833 Alabama slave code forbade the General Assembly to emancipate slaves. The 1852 slave code

[9] Sellers, Slavery in Alabama, 7; William Warren Rogers, Robert David Ward, Leah Rawls Atkins, and Wayne Flynt, Alabama: the History of a Deep South State (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1994), 94.

[10] The Eighth U.S. Census in 1860. The large planters indicate those who owned at least fifty slaves. The large planters of antebellum Alabama were also persons with great wealth. In 1860, they comprised about 0.3 percent of the total white population of the state, but held 30 percent of state's slaves and owned 28 percent of the total wealth of Alabama. The largest slave owner in Alabama in 1860 was Jerre E. Brown, from Sumter County and owned 540 slaves. Joseph Karl Menn, "The Large Slaveholders of the Deep South, 1860" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Texas, 1964), 505-14. In addition to agriculture, slave labor was used in many Alabama industries. For example, the Bell Factory, a cotton and woolen mill in Huntsville, used slave labor to operate looms and spindles. William L. Goold, a Scottish miner, employed slaves to mine coal at his Hewell's Mines. Rogers, Alabama, 106-107.

reaffirmed slaves' status as property.[11] Maintaining the value of property in slaves was critical to the state's economy and to the prosperity of Mobile.

Proslavery views predominated in public discourse. Convinced that the black was not a member of the same species as the white man, Governor Arthur P. Bagby contended in 1840 that the "Negro class" was best adapted to servitude.[12] Frederick Augustus Ross, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in Huntsville, asserted that slavery was ordained of God, and denied that slaveholding was sinful. Inequality was a fact of nature, Ross contended, the holding of slaves was the "highest and noblest responsibility ever given by him [God] to individual private men on the face of the earth." Inferiors

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[11] John G. Aikin, ed., A Digest of the Laws of the State of Alabama: Containing All the Statutes of a Public and General Nature, in Force at the Close of the Session of the General Assembly, in January, 1833 to which are Prefixed, the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution of the United States, the Act to Enable the People of Alabama to Form a Constitution and State Government, &c., and the Constitution of the State of Alabama; with an Appendix, and a Copious Index (Philadelphia: A. Towar, 1833), 391-399; Sellers, Slavery in Alabama, 224.

[12] Sellers, Slavery in Alabama, 333.

rendered service to superiors because God "sanctioned the relation of master and slave as those of husband and wife, and parent and child."[13] Proslavery arguments naturalized hierarchy and buttressed white determination to defend the institution.

[13] Frederick A. Ross, Slavery Ordained of God (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co., 1857), 45, 67.

TABLE 28: Slave Population in Alabama Counties, 1820-1860.

	1820 (PERCENTAGE)	SLAVE RANK	1830 (PERCENTAGE)	SLAVE RANK	1840 (PERCENTAGE)	SLAVE RANK	1850 (PERCENTAGE)	SLAVE RANK	1860 (PERCENTAGE)	SLAVE RANK
Autauga	1,647 (43)	12	5,990 (50)	7	8,109 (57)	10	8,730 (58)	16	9,607 (57)	17
Baldwin	1,001 (58)	16	1,263 (54)	26	1,707 (58)	35	2,218 (50)	38	3,714 (49)	34
Barbour	--	--	--	--	5,548 (46)	20	10,780 (46)	13	16,150 (52)	10
Bibb	746 (20)	21	1,192 (19)	27	2,023 (24)	32	2,861 (29)	33	3,842 (32)	33
Blount	175 (7)	27	330 (8)	34	344 (6)	47	426 (6)	50	666 (6)	50
Butler	569 (41)	23	1,739 (31)	21	2,470 (28)	28	3,639 (34)	31	6,818 (38)	25
Calhoun/ Benton	--	--	--	--	2,894 (20)	27	3,763 (22)	30	4,342 (20)	32
Chambers	--	--	--	--	7,141 (41)	13	11,158 (47)	11	11,849 (51)	14
Cherokee	--	--	--	--	1,112 (13)	39	1,691 (12)	39	3,002 (16)	38
Choctaw	--	--	--	--	--	--	3,769 (45)	29	7,094 (51)	24
Clarke	2,035 (35)	8	3,672 (49)	14	4,395 (51)	24	4,876 (50)	24	7,436 (49)	23
Coffee	--	--	--	--	--	--	557 (9)	47	1,417 (15)	46
Conecuh	1,931 (34)	9	3,618 (49)	15	3,817 (47)	25	4,394 (47)	25	4,882 (43)	30
Coosa	--	--	--	--	2,125 (30)	30	4,120 (28)	26	5,212 (27)	29
Covington	--	--	396 (26)	33	371 (15)	46	480 (13)	49	821 (13)	49
Dale	--	--	269 (13)	35	580 (8)	44	757 (12)	46	1,809 (15)	43
Dallas	2,677 (45)	5	7,160 (51)	3	17,208 (68)	1	22,258 (75)	1	25,760 (77)	1
DeKalb	--	--	--	--	340 (6)	48	506 (6)	48	848 (8)	48

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TABLE 28 CONTINUED

	1820 (PERCENTAGE)	SLAVE RANK	1830 (PERCENTAGE)	SLAVE RANK	1840 (PERCENTAGE)	SLAVE RANK	1850 (PERCENTAGE)	SLAVE RANK	1860 (PERCENTAGE)	SLAVE RANK
Greene	1,691 (37)	10	7,420 (49)	2	16,431 (68)	2	22,127 (70)	2	23,598 (76)	4
Henry	626 (24)	22	1,009 (25)	30	1,084 (19)	40	2,242 (25)	37	4,433 (30)	31
Jackson	539 (6)	25	1,264 (10)	25	1,816 (12)	34	2,292 (16)	35	3,405 (19)	37
Jefferson	--	--	1,707 (24.9)	22	1,636 (22.94)	36	2,267 (25)	36	2,649 (23)	39
Lauderdale	1,378 (28)	14	3,795 (32)	13	4,969 (34)	22	6,015 (35)	23	6,737 (39)	27
Lawrence	2,941 (34)	3	6,556 (44)	5	6,145 (46)	17	6,852 (45)	21	6,788 (49)	26
Limestone	2,919 (30)	4	6,689 (45)	4	6,840 (48)	14	8,063 (49)	18	8,085 (53)	22
Lowndes	--	--	4,388 (47)	10	12,569 (64)	6	14,649 (67)	7	19,340 (70)	5
Macon	--	--	--	--	5,851 (52)	19	15,596 (58)	5	18,176 (68)	7
Madison	8,622 (49)	1	13,977 (50)	1	13,265 (51)	5	14,326 (54)	8	14,573 (55)	12
Marengo	866 (30)	18	3,138 (41)	17	11,902 (69)	7	20,693 (74)	3	24,409 (78)	2
Marion	--	--	600 (15)	31	753 (13)	43	908 (12)	44	1,283 (11)	47
Marshall	--	--	--	--	841 (11)	42	868 (10)	45	1,821 (16)	42
Mobile	836 (31)	20	2,281 (36)	19	6,191 (33)	16	9,356 (34)	15	11,376 (28)	15
Monroe	3,794 (43)	2	3,541 (40)	16	5,292 (50)	21	6,325 (53)	22	8,705 (56)	20
Montgomery	2,655 (40)	6	6,450 (51)	6	15,486 (63)	4	19,427 (65)	4	23,710 (66)	3
Morgan/ Cotaco	858 (17)	19	2,894 (32)	18	3,216 (33)	26	3,437 (34)	32	3,706 (33)	35
Perry	988 (27)	17	4,318 (38)	11	10,343 (54)	8	13,917 (62)	9	18,206 (66)	6
Pickens	--	--	1,631 (25)	23	7,764 (45)	11	10,534 (49)	14	12,191 (55)	13

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TABLE 28 CONTINUED

	1820 (PERCENTAGE)	SLAVE RANK	1830 (PERCENTAGE)	SLAVE RANK	1840 (PERCENTAGE)	SLAVE RANK	1850 (PERCENTAGE)	SLAVE RANK	1860 (PERCENTAGE)	SLAVE RANK
Pike	--	--	1,878 (26)	20	2,111 (21)	31	3,794 (24)	28	8,785 (36)	19
Randolph	--	--	--	--	526 (11)	45	936 (8)	43	1,904 (9)	41
Russell	--	--	--	--	7,266 (54)	12	11,111 (57)	12	15,638 (59)	11
Shelby	405 (17)	26	1,139 (20)	29	1,616 (26)	37	2,376 (25)	34	3,622 (29)	36
St. Clair	553 (13)	24	1,154 (19)	28	1,125 (20)	38	1,321 (19)	41	1,768 (16)	44
Sumter	--	--	--	--	15,920 (53)	3	14,831 (67)	6	18,091 (75)	8
Talladega	--	--	--	--	4,898 (39)	23	6,971 (37)	20	8,865 (38)	18
Tallapoosa	--	--	--	--	2,013 (31)	33	4,073 (26)	27	6,672 (28)	28
Tuscaloosa	2,335 (28)	7	4,793 (35)	9	6,554 (40)	15	7,477 (41)	19	10,145 (44)	16
Walker	--	--	168 (8)	36	211 (5)	49	266 (5)	51	519 (7)	51
Washington	1,631 (40)	13	1,532 (44)	24	2,434 (46)	29	1,496 (55)	40	2,494 (53)	40
Wilcox	1,354 (46)	15	4,090 (43)	12	9,294 (61)	9	11,835 (68)	10	17,797 (72)	9
Winston/ Hancock	--	--	--	--	--	--	62 (4)	52	122 (3)	52
TOTAL	47,439		117,541		253,532		342,844		435,080	
% OF STATE POPULATION	33%		38%		43%		44%		45%	

SOURCE: Compiled and calculated from Historical Census Browser. Retrieved on November 10, 2004 from the University of Virginia, Geospatial and Statistical Data Center: http://fisher.lib.virginia.edu/collections/stats/histcensus/index.html..

Slavery in the territories emerged as the focal point of sectional debate during the 1844. In 1846, David Wilmot, a Democratic Congressman form Pennsylvania, introduced an amendment in the House of Representatives providing for the prohibition of slavery in any territory that might be acquired in the Mexican War.[14] The Wilmot Proviso failed to pass, but provoked great bitterness. The Huntsville Democrat suggested that the Proviso exposed fundamental differences between North and South, but the editor hoped that a compromise could be reached to share the territory "from a common acquisition gained by common sacrifice and burden."[15] Others were not so moderate. On September 29, 1846, an anti-Proviso meeting

[14] Wilmot's original proposal was: "That, as an express and fundamental condition to the acquisition of any territory from the Republic of Mexico by the United States, by virtue of any treaty which may be negotiated between them, and to the use by the Executive of the moneys herein appropriated, neither slavery nor involuntary servitude shall ever exist in any part of said territory except for crime, whereof the party shall first be duly convicted." See The Congressional Globe, House of Representatives, 29th Congress, 1st Session, Wednesday, August 12, 1846. Number 77, p. 1217. http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/ampage?collId=llcg&fileName=016/llcg016.db&recNum=1248

[15] Huntsville Democrat, September 8, 1846.

in Russellville, Franklin County, demanded assurances that northern men recognized southern rights:

> That it is the opinion of this meeting that the South should speak out on this question of usurpation, that the people should require pledges from all seeking their votes for high offices, that our rights in the Southern States should be protected, and that we should not vote for any man as President who would withhold such pledges.[16]

The Democratic state convention held at Montgomery on May 3 and 4, 1847, adopted the "Alabama Platform," a series of resolutions proposed by William L. Yancey. The platform declared that neither Congress nor a territorial government had the right to interfere with slavery in a territory. The platform further contended that the Democrats of Alabama would not support a candidate for the presidency who differed with them on territorial questions.[17] The Alabama

[16] Southern Advocate, October 16, 1846.

[17] The 9th and 14th were stated as follow:

9. *Resolved*, That the treaty of cession should contain a clause securing

platform gained endorsements from conventions or legislatures in Florida, Virginia, Georgia, and Alabama. Northern Democrats, however, refused to support the platform's positions, and it was defeated at the Democratic National Convention in 1848 by a vote of 36 to 246.[18]

In 1849, concern over the prospective admission of California sparked a resistance movement in Alabama. Believing that the exclusion of slavery from California territory would violate the equality of the states, Alabamians asserted that the Constitution sanctioned slavery, and that the right to maintain or abolish slavery should be reserved to individual states. Governor Chapman stated

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an entry into those Territories to all citizens of the United States together with their property of every description and that the same should remain protected by the United States while the Territories are under its authority.

14. *Resolved,* That these resolutions be considered as instructions to our delegates to the Baltimore Convention to guide them in their votes in that body; and that they vote for no men for President and Vice-President who will not unequivocally avow themselves to be opposed to either of the forms of restricting slavery which are described in these resolutions.

The full resolutions were reprinted in Mobile Register, February 21, 1848.

[18] Clarence Phillips Denman, The Secession Movement in Alabama (Montgomery: Alabama State Department of Archives and History, 1933), 11-12.

that although Alabama supported the Union, she would not permit "any action of the federal government, nor its departments, nor of any unauthorized assembly in the territories or elsewhere" to violate the equality of the state of Alabama and the rights of her people.[19]

Senator Henry Clay's comprehensive compromise measures resolved immediate issues but did not quell resentment in Alabama.[20] As passed in September 1850, the Compromise admitted California as a free state; enacted a stricter Fugitive Slave Law; abolished the slave trade in the District of Columbia; divided the territory east of California into the territories of Utah and New Mexico; and persuaded Texas to yield in its boundary dispute with New Mexico in return for compensation by the federal government (see Map 3).

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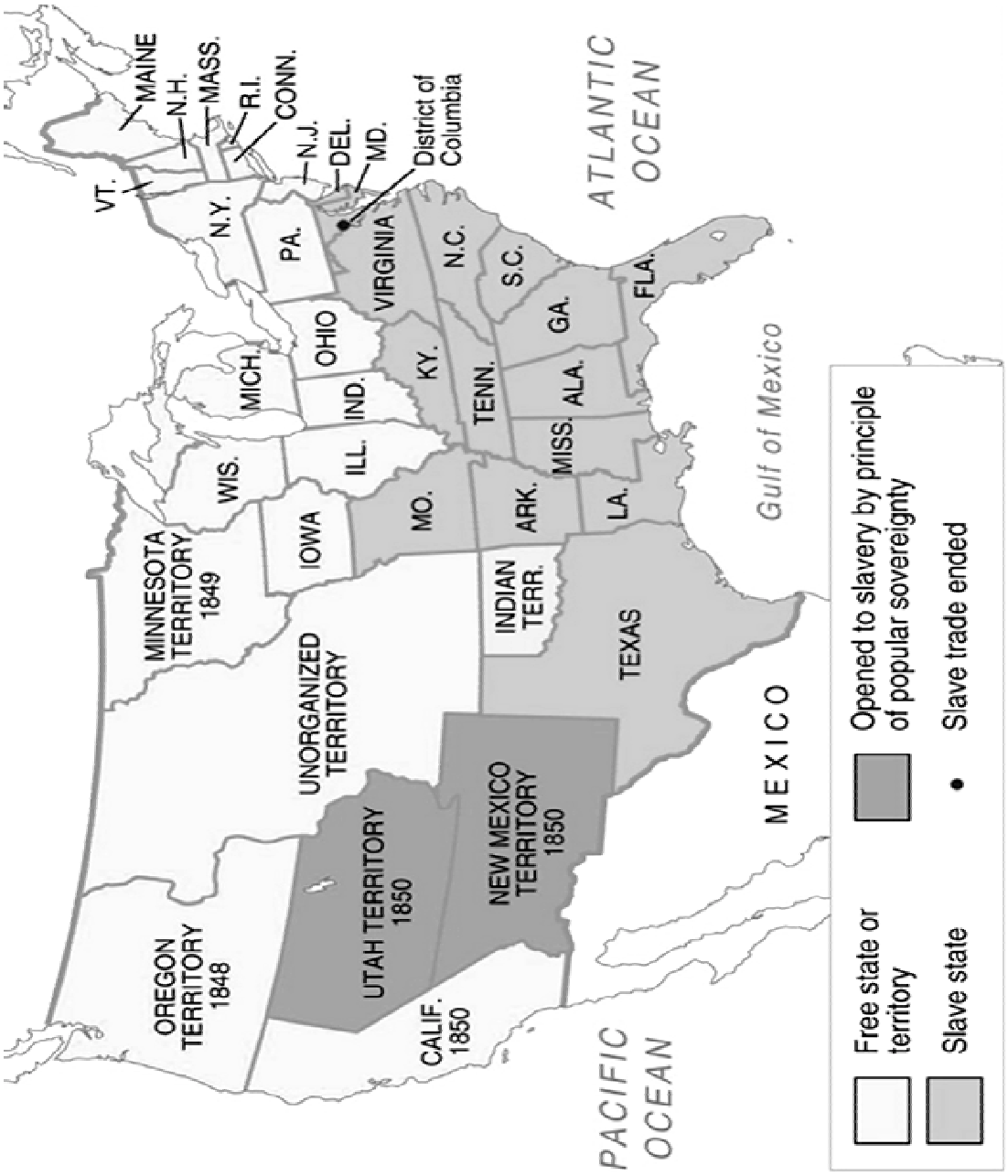
[19] Chapman's speech to the Alabama legislature on November 13, 1849, Ibid., 19.

[20] Clay's measures can be found at Congressional Globe, Senate, 31st Congress, 1st Session, p. 115-26. http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/D?hlaw:6:./temp/~ammem_6dji::

MAP 3: The Compromise of 1850.



SOURCE: James L. Roark, et al., The American Promise: A History of the United States (Bedford/St. Martin's, 2003), Chapter 13, Map 13.2.

The Compromise of 1850 temporarily destroyed old party lines in Alabama. Whigs and conservative Democrats stood for the Union and accepted the Compromise as a fair resolution of the controversy. Many Democratic party regulars did not totally reject the Compromise, but they contended that they would favor secession if southern rights were not protected. Yancey and his Southern Rights followers did denounce the Compromise, asserting that it was a "great fraud on the South," and that Congress had "boldly tendered" the issue of "submission or secession."[21] The Mobile Register complained that the Compromise called on the South "to concede everything . . . leaving us the shadow of what we are contending for."[22]

The controversy over the Compromise of 1850 helped Mobilians' clarify definitions of southern rights and their attitudes on the future of slavery. Theresa Pulszky, who traveled to Mobile in the early 1850s, stated that Mobilians, like other southerners, mentioned slavery and explained pro-slavery positions to foreigners

[21] Montgomery Advertiser and State Gazette, October 9, 1850.

[22] Mobile Register, February 5, 1850.

at first contact.[23] Even candidates for minor local offices trumpeted pro-slavery credentials. For example, James R. Kennedy, a candidate for the city clerk, was poor and unemployed, but still fully qualified for office, because he was a native Mississippian, from "the largest slaveholding county thereof and perhaps the largest in the United States." Kennedy assured voters that he was sound on slavery and Southern rights.[24]

Mobile's urban setting heightened the need for slave control and raised fears of insurrection. Slaves were not allowed to use any "rude, violent or blasphemous language, or carry club, or any description of weapons." Free persons were forbidden to buy from or sell to any slave, or to associate with any slave. The law defined four or more slaves associated together as an unlawful assembly. If any slave absented himself for twenty-four hour without a written

[23] Francis and Theresa Pulszky, White, Red, Black; Sketches of Society in the United States during the Visit of Their Guest (New York: Negro Universities Press, 1968), III: 4-5.

[24] Mobile Register, December 23, 1850.

pass, he became a runway subject to arrest.[25] Maine writer John S. C. Abbott commented that Mobile was a "dangerous place," where threats to proper subordination linked on every corner. A slave might gain "knowledge of human rights, by working with others who receive wages when he receives none; who can come and go at their pleasure, when he, from the cradle to the grave, must obey a master's imperious will."[26]

The intermingling of free and slave labors made questions of white loyalty to slavery critical in maintaining control. Regardless of nativity and political identity, prominent city leaders, such as Charles Langdon, Thaddeus Sanford, John Forsyth, James Archibald Campbell, and Josiah C. Nott, were all pro-slavery. Langdon (see Illustration 4) was born in Connecticut; he came to Alabama in 1825 with his brother, and he moved to Mobile in 1834 to work in the cotton commission business. Slavery, in Langdon's

[25] Alexander McKinstry, ed., Code of Ordinance of the City of Mobile (Mobile: S. H. Goetzel & Co., 1859), 171-74.
[26] Abbott, South and North, 112.

opinion was in "perfect harmony with the economy of nature."[27] The Bible sanctioned slavery, and the institution contained no more evil than any other work of fallen man. Langdon supported free black colorization in Africa, claiming that free blacks "are morally, socially, and politically enslaved . . . they belong to a degraded caste, from which nothing can release them but emigration."[28]

[27] Mobile Advertiser, April 26, 1850.

[28] Ibid., April 21, 1851.

ILLUSTRATION 4: Charles Carter Langdon.

SOURCE: Reprinted from Alabama Constitutional Officers, Alabama Department of Archives & History.
http://www.archives.state.al.us/conoff/langdon.html

For James Campbell, the jurist and Supreme Court justice, slavery in the South was not unique. The institution had been sanctioned and had existed since the ancient world. A slaveholder

who owned at least fourteen slaves in 1846 and continued to purchase and sell slaves while he was an associate on the United States Supreme Court,[29] Campbell denied that the federal government had any authority to abolish slavery, believing that such an action would lead to the dissolution of the Union. However, Campbell was pessimistic about the future of slavery. He foresaw that white southerners would have to free their slaves and switch their economy from agriculture to manufacturing and commerce.[30]

Campbell was known for his moderation and for his strong backing of the Compromise of 1850. To oppose the northern antislavery movement and to solidify southerners, Campbell founded the Mobile chapter of the Southern Rights Association in 1850, claiming that the association was not disunionist but designed to defend southern institutions and to show southerners' determination

[29] Robert Saunders, Jr., John Archibald Campbell, Southern Moderate, 1811-1889 (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1997), 66-67.
[30] John Archibald Campbell, "Slavery in the United States," Southern Quarterly Review 12 (July 1847): 94-95; "Slavery among the Romans," 14 (October 1848): 425.

to make "the interest and honor of the South . . . paramount to all other considerations."[31] No hothead, Campbell contended that if secession ever came, it should be based on "the voice of the people, after a considerate and enlightened view of all the circumstance that surround it." It was not "a measure to be approached in a light, angry, or capricious temper."[32]

John Forsyth (see Illustration 5), who had succeeded Sanford in 1853 as owner and editor of Mobile Register, believed that slavery need not provoke sectional conflicts.[33] Forsyth believed that although northerners and southerners were naturally different, they should be mutually respectful of each other's institutions. Slavery,

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[31] John Archibald Campbell, Substance of the Remarks of John A. Campbell, at the Organization of the Southern Rights Association (Mobile: Dade, Thompson, 1850). Quoted from Saunders, John Archibald Campbell, 94.

[32] Ibid., 95.

[33] John Forsyth, son of John Forsyth, Sr. (1780-1841), who was former U.S. Representative and a Senator, Minister to Spain, attorney of general and Governor of Georgia, and Secretary of State, was born in Augusta, Georgia in 1812. Forsyth was the owner and editor of Mobile Register from 1853 to 1877, United States minister to Mexico from 1856 to 1858, a member of the Alabama House of Representatives from 1859 to 1860, and as mayor of Mobile from 1860 to 1861.

Forsyth contended, was "the nursing mother of the prosperity of the North," the "back-bone" of northern commerce and British manufacturing.[34] No department of the federal government had the authority, Forsyth stressed, to harm slavery in the states or to bar it from the territories. The territories were "the common property of each and all the States." Slaveholders had the right "to be protected in the enjoyment of this species of property while there."[35] Slavery in the South was superior to the northern free labor system, which was "a false system, . . . poverty and labor pay all the taxes, and capital enjoys all the profits." To Forsyth, labor was disfranchised in the North, a situation which contradicted the fundamental principle of republican institutions. Since labor was capital in the South, slaveowners had humanitarian and financial incentives to keep their chattels "carefully and tenderly guarded."[36]

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[34] DeBow's Review 17 (October 1854): 365.

[35] Mobile Register, November 6, 1857.

[36] Ibid., November 18, 1857.

ILLUSTRATION 5: John Forsyth.

SOURCE: Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper 11 (April 13 1861).

Josiah Nott, another prominent city leader and noted proslavery writer, had little faith in the long-term future of the Union. In a speech delivered to the Southern Rights Association in

Mobile in 1850, Nott emotionally declared that the South had "no friends, no sympathizers, no protectors on earth." He recommended that the South stand ready to "protect herself, and to carve an outlet for her Negroes with the sword, from the territory which has been plundered from her." Nott foresaw that secession would end in blood.[37]

Mobile's mayoral election in 1850 exemplified southern rights enthusiasm in Alabama. The Whig pro-Union candidate, Langdon, running for the second term as mayor, was almost defeated by Southern Rights and Georgia-born opponent Joseph Sewell, winning by only 12 votes out of 1,906 cast.[38] Langdon had hardily won the 1849 election.[39]

On February 10, 1851, ninety-seven delegates, mostly

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[37] Josiah Nott, An Essay on the Natural History of Mankind, Viewed in Connection with Negro Slavery: Delivered Before the Southern Rights Association, 14th December, 1850 (Mobile, 1851). Quoted from Reginald Horsman, Josiah Nott of Mobile: Southerner, Physician, and Racial Theorist (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1987), 125-26.

[38] Mobile Advertiser, December 4, 1849, 1850.

[39] In 1849 mayoral election, Langdon received 1,037 votes, carrying 59 percent of total votes.

Democrats from Black Belt counties, assembled at Montgomery and organized a Southern Rights party. The convention stressed the necessity of forming a new southern party, advocated resistance to northern encroachments, and urged preparation for secession:

> We would not now declare that Alabama should secede at any particular time, but simply that it is her duty to prepare for secession; and that if any other Southern state secedes, good faith to such State requires that we should sustain her by all means within our power and should likewise secede.[40]

The "Montgomery Platform" insisted on the right of secession, but did not call for immediate secession. As Yancey said later, Southern Rights men preferred to organize as an "honest minority, based on a true remedy, than to aid in putting in a majority that will give us no remedy."[41]

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[40] The Huntsville Democrat, April 10, 1851.

[41] Spirit of the South, June 3, 1851. Southern Rights clubs were organized in only three north Alabama counties – Madison, Lauderdale, and Franklin. Huntsville Democrat, February 20, 1851.

The Montgomery Platform did not muster majority support. The Mobile Register correctly predicted that Alabamians would condemn "ultra and quixotic schemes." No county embrace secession, and the Southern Rights party frizzled in 1851 and 1852. A disgruntled Montgomery Advertiser argued that the defeat of the Southern Rights party in state elections meant that southerners were "determined to submit and we are determined to offer no further opposition to it."[42]

Prosperity helped kill secessionism. Cotton prices had rebounded from 7.5 cents a pound in 1849 to 12.3 cents a pound in 1850.[43] Former South Carolina Governor James Henry Hammond, when visiting Mobile in December 1850, straightforwardly pointed out that secession campaigns stood little chance with the high price of cotton.[44] Even the leading secessionist newspaper, Spirit of the South, doubted whether secessionism stood a chance, because "there is plenty to live on, because we are out of debt, and cotton brings

[42] Montgomery Advertiser, October 16, 1851.

[43] Harold D. Woodman, ed., Slavery and the Southern Economy: Sources and Readings (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1966), 6.

[44] Mobile Register, December 4, 1850.

a good price, many are in so good a humor and so well satisfied . . . as to shut their eyes . . . in the consoling reflection that the future cannot hurt them."[45] The Montgomery Alabama Journal claimed that disunion would hurt pocketbooks:

> disunion will not give us a better price for cotton . . . will not increase the value of slave property . . . will not render them more secure . . . will not diminish taxation but will be likely under the best . . . state of affairs to double taxation, diminish the price of our staples and reduce the value of slaves and land fifty cent.[46]

Economic prosperity and the results of 1851 and 1852 campaigns forced Yancey and other Southern Rights secessionists to accept that attachments to the Union "could not be broken by asking men to join an independent secessionist organization."[47] After 1851, many Southern Rights men adopted a conservative strategy and stayed within

[45] Spirit of the South, October 22, 1850.
[46] Alabama Journal, July 23, 1850.
[47] Mayer, "A Leaven of Disunion," 114-15.

the Democratic Party as a political faction to pursue their goals. Over time, the Southern rights faction became the mainstream within the Democratic Party. In 1853, Democratic nominee John Anthony Winston, a planter born in Madison County and a strong Southern rights advocate, became the first Alabama governor born in the state. The Southern Rights faction also carried three seats in the congressional elections, and the legislature selected Benjamin Fitzpatrick for a United States Senate seat.[48]

Heightened sectional animosity during and after 1854 boosted Southern Rights stock within the Alabama Democratic Party. The Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854 received almost unanimous support from the Alabama Congressional delegation.[49] Alabamians welcomed the

[48] The Southern rights faction: Philip Phillips (Montgomery District), Sampson Willis Harris (Wetumpka), and James Ferguson Dowdell (Talladega). The Union faction: William Russell Smith (Tuscaloosa), George Smith Houston (Florence), and Williamson R. W. Cobb (Huntsville). Dorman, Party Politics in Alabama, 87-91; Biographical Directory of the United States Congress.

[49] Kansas-Nebraska Act was approved by the Congress on May 30, 1854. The act authorized the creation of Kansas and Nebraska, west of the states of Missouri and Iowa and divided by the 40th parallel. It allowed people in the territories of Kansas and Nebraska to decide for themselves whether or not to allow slavery within their borders, and repealed a provision of

repeal of the “unjust restriction of 1820” and favored the opening of territories to slavery.[50]

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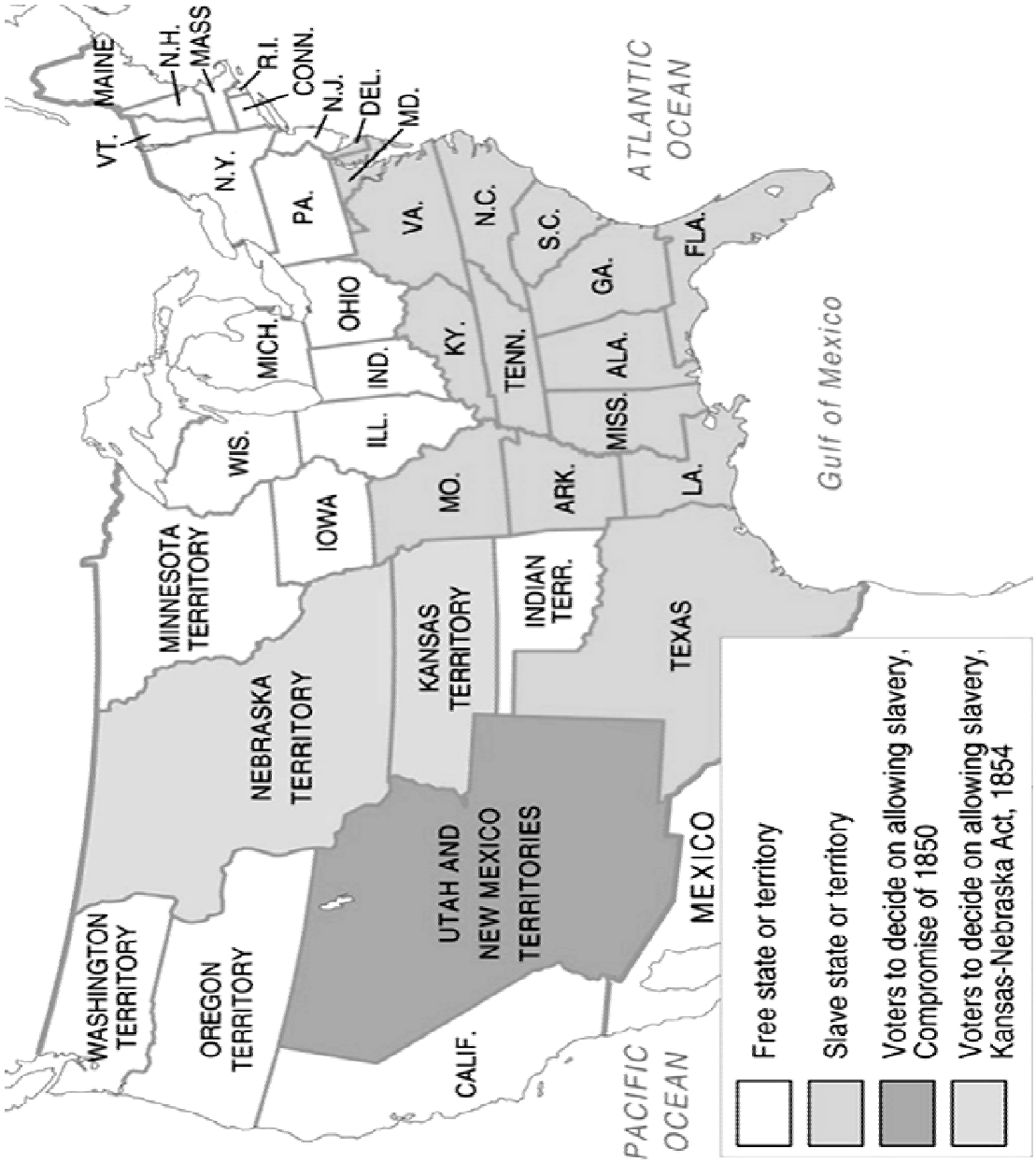
the Missouri Compromise in 1820 that had prohibited slavery in the territories north of 36° 30'. See 33rd Congress, 1st Session, in the United States Statutes at Large, A Century of Lawmaking for a New Nation: U.S. Congressional Documents and Debates, 1774-1875. http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/ampage?collId=llsl&fileName=010/llsl010.db&recNum=298; Alabama Beacon, June 2, 1854; Montgomery Advertiser and State Gazette, January 14, 1856.

[50] Mobile Register, May 28, 1854.

MAP 4: The Kansas-Nebraska Act, 1854.



SOURCE: Roark, et al., The American Promise, Chapter 13, Map 13.3.

In Mobile, Forsyth warned that the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act made the "abstractions of the slavery debate" at once "momentously practical." Northerners clearly were prepared to "precipitate an abolition population from New England upon the [Kansas] territory with a view to shape future destinies."[51] The South had to chose "between losing its vast stake in this new region of settlement, or meet the movements of its enemies by counteracting action." He called for southerners to raise money to send emigrants "whose strong arms and firm hearts" would protect "our rights, interests, and power."[52]

The 1856 presidential election took place in the midst of Kansas's civil war and centered on the slavery issue. The Republican Party's platform called on Congress to "prohibit in the Territories those twin relics of barbarism -- Polygamy, and Slavery." Alabama Democrats, in contrast, instructed their national convention delegates to seek "recognition and approval of the principle of

[51] Ibid., November 6, 1855.

[52] Ibid.

non-intervention by Congress upon the subject of slavery in the territories." Alabama delegates supported James Buchanan, believing him "safe" on slavery.[53]

The election reaffirmed the Democratic party domination in Alabama. Buchanan carried forty counties and received 62 percent of the vote cast, in contrast to Fillmore's nine counties and 38 percent (see Table 29).[54] Most important, the election directly led to the disintegration of the Whig Party and left the Democrats in charge of a one-party state for the following four years. Lack of effective opposition, however, bred intraparty warfare over southern rights among radical and moderate Alabama Democrats.

The United States in 1857 was, as Kenneth Stampp writes, "a nation on the brink." Sectional agitation had raised tempers, but

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[53] Kirk H. Porter and Donald Bruce Johnson, National Party Platforms, 1840-1956 (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1956), 27-28. Z. L. Nabers to Clement Claiborne Clay, Jr. on June 11, 1856, and Clay to his father Clay Sr. on June 7, 1856 in Clement Claiborne Clay Papers, the Manuscript Department of the William R. Perkins Library, Duke University.

[54] Three counties, Blount, Butler, and Choctaw, had no election returns. Williams, "Presidential Elections and Related Data for Antebellum Alabama," 70-71.

most white Alabamians remained moderate and looked to the national Democratic Party to defend Southern rights.[55] In the 1857 gubernatorial election, Andrew Barry Moore of Perry County, who was considered a moderate on the slavery issue and pro-Union, easily won the election over other active Southern Rights candidates.[56] Governor Moore was reelected in 1859 by a vote of 47,293 over William F. Samford's 18,070. Samford was the candidate of Yancey's faction

[55] In responding to the rise of the Republican and the Kansas question, Senator Clement C. Clay, Jr. addressed in the senate in 1856 accused claimed the Republicans and free-soilers' measures to restrict the expansion of slavery were the conspiracy of total abolition. At the end of his speech, Clay warned that "whenever Black Republicanism shall take possession of this Government, and weigh in its balances, and against its avarice and ambition, the honor and the rights of the South, she will not stoop to impetrate justice or pause to expostulate, but will boldly throw her sword into the scale and assert her natural privilege of self defense." Congressional Globe, Senate, 34th Congress, 1st Session, April 28, 1856, p. 481-90. In November 1855, a meeting regarding to Kansas was held in Barbour County. The meeting denounced the Massachusetts Immigrant Aid societies for "flooding the Kansas territory with settlers hostile to southern institutions." The meeting also urged the Alabama legislature to finance a state slaveholders' expedition to Kansas to check the "abolitionist menace." The Dallas Gazette editor C. E. Haynes called the Barbour County "the truest southern county in the South." The Dallas Gazette, November 2, 7, 1855.

[56] All candidates were Democrats, in addition to Moore, they were Judge John E. Moore (Florence), John Cochran (Eufaula), William F. Samford (Russell), and David Hubbard (Lawrence).

and was known as “one of the most aggressive secessionists in the state.”[57] He carried only two counties, Covington and Macon, and his largest vote came from eastern Black Belt counties (see Table 30).

[57] Dorman, Party Politics in Alabama, 144.

TABLE 29: Presidential Election Returns in Alabama, 1856.

	JAMES BUCHANAN (DEMOCRAT)	MILLARD FILLMORE (AMERICAN PARTY)	TOTAL VOTE	DEMOCRAT MAJORITY PERCENTAGE	WHIG MAJORITY PERCENTAGE	RANK IN DEMOCRAT	RANK IN DEMOCRAT (1852)	RANK IN WHIG	RANK IN WHIG (1852)	SLAVE RANK IN 1850
Autauga	621	475	1,096	57		29	40			16
Baldwin	144	219	363		60		33	3		38
Barbour	1,445	857	2,302	63		22				13
Benton (1)	1,687	443	2,130	79		6	2			30
Bibb	539	479	1,018	53		36	29			33
Blount	770	37	807	95			4			50
Butler	777	792	1,569	50						31
Chambers	1,141	967	2,108	54		34			4	11
Cherokee	1,537	455	1,992	77		12	14			39
Choctaw	643	404	1,047	61			28			29
Clarke	754	222	976	77		11	9			24
Coffee	703	301	1,004	70		21	23			47
Conecuh	425	408	833	51		39	31			25
Coosa	1,167	802	1,969	59		26	21			26
Covington	304	288	592	--	49		19	1		49
Dale	945	419	1,364	69		15	22			46
Dallas	831	676	1,507	55		33	42			1
DeKalb	900	130	1,030	87		5	13			48
Fayette	799	440	1,239	64		20	7			42
Franklin	1,056	711	1,767	60		25	20			17
Greene (2)	694	784	1,478	--	53			6	1	2
Hancock (1)	221	14	235	94		2	6			52

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TABLE 29 CONTINUED

	JAMES BUCHANAN (DEMOCRAT)	MILLARD FILLMORE (WHIG)	TOTAL VOTE	DEMOCRAT MAJORITY PERCENTAGE	WHIG MAJORITY PERCENTAGE	RANK IN DEMOCRAT	RANK IN DEMOCRAT (1852)	RANK IN WHIG	RANK IN WHIG (1852)	SLAVE RANK IN 1850
Henry	966	471	1,437	67		18	41			37
Jackson	1,790	97	1,887	95		1	1			35
Jefferson	697	196	893	78		9	15			36
Lauderdale	1,141	555	1,696	67		17	24			23
Lawrence	699	631	1,330	53		37	35			21
Limestone	790	281	1,071	74		14	16			18
Lowndes	699	703	1,402	--	50			8		7
Macon (2)	1,039	1,239	2,278	--	54			5	5	5
Madison	1,476	401	1,877	79		7	12			8
Marengo	789	567	1,356	58		27	37			3
Marion	700	198	898	78		10	11			44
Marshall	883	89	972	91		3	8			45
Mobile	1,838	1,771	3,609	51		40	36			15
Monroe	604	469	1,073	56		30			7	22
Montgomery (2)	1,100	1,158	2,258	--	51			7	2	4
Morgan	808	222	1,030	78		8	17			32
Perry	808	824	1,632	--	50		26	9		9
Pickens	1,037	669	1,706	61		24	30			14
Pike	1,262	1,178	2,440	52		38	27			28
Randolph	1,460	683	2,143	68		16	5			43
Russell	994	855	1,849	54		35	34			12
Shelby	818	83	901	91		4	3			34

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TABLE 29 CONTINUED

	JAMES BUCHANAN (DEMOCRAT)	MILLARD FILLMORE (WHIG)	TOTAL VOTE	DEMOCRAT MAJORITY PERCENTAGE	WHIG MAJORITY PERCENTAGE	RANK IN DEMOCRAT	RANK IN DEMOCRAT (1852)	RANK IN WHIG	RANK IN WHIG (1852)	SLAVE RANK IN 1850
St. Clair	787	468	1,255	63		23			6	41
Sumter	703	532	1,235	57		28	38			6
Talladega	1,134	896	2,030	56		32	25			20
Tallapoosa	1,478	1,276	2,754	--	46		18	2		27
Tuscaloosa (2)	680	973	1,653	--	59			4	3	19
Walker	449	146	595	75		13	10			51
Washington	194	152	346	56		31	32			40
Wilcox	813	446	1,259	65		19	39			10
ALABAMA	46,739	28,552	75,291	62	38					

NOTE: (1): In 1858, both Benton and Hancock counties were renamed Calhoun and Winston Counties. (2): Greene, Macon, Montgomery, and Tuscaloosa counties also voted for the Whig in 1852 presidential election.

SOURCE: Williams, “Presidential Elections and Related Data for Antebellum Alabama,” 70-71; Burnham, Presidential Ballots, 260-74; Historical Census Browser.

TABLE 30: Gubernatorial Election in Alabama, 1859.

	ANDREW BARRY MOORE (DEMOCRAT)	WILLIAM F. SAMFORD (SOUTHERN RIGHTS)		ANDREW BARRY MOORE (DEMOCRAT)	WILLIAM F. SAMFORD (SOUTHERN RIGHTS)
Autauga	668	486	Lawrence	783	122
Baldwin	284	111	Limestone	747	114
Barbour	948	708	Lowndes	786	620
Calhoun	2,291	155	Macon	1,043	1,126
Bibb	847	133	Madison	1,511	29
Blount	--	--	Marengo	815	289
Butler	899	685	Marion	921	129
Chambers	1,040	978	Marshall	--	--
Cherokee	1,776	155	Mobile	2,047	1,290
Choctaw	--	--	Monroe	599	261
Clarke	912	106	Montgomery	1,225	1,117
Coffee	715	298	Morgan	1,061	171
Conecuh	534	267	Perry	1,170	93
Coosa	1,311	864	Pickens	1,267	139
Covington	291	294	Pike	1,388	895
Dale	--	--	Randolph	1,423	493
Dallas	913	283	Russell	960	897
DeKalb	--	--	Shelby	--	--
Fayette	1,059	357	St. Clair	1,164	161
Franklin	1,524	284	Sumter	625	125
Greene	979	30	Talladega	1,380	529
Hancock	266	91	Tallapoosa	1,647	1,306
Henry	643	533	Tuscaloosa	1,185	456
Jackson	1,948	76	Walker	420	229
Jackson	1,948	76	Walker	420	229
Jefferson	1,060	280	Washington	230	40
Lauderdale	1,174	83	Wilcox	814	182
TOTAL	MOORE: 47,293 SAMFORD: 18,070				

SOURCE: Montgomery Advertiser, August 24, 1859.

Election results from 1856 through 1859 demonstrated that Alabamians favored occupying strong Southern Rights ground within the national Democratic Party, which most viewed as the likeliest vehicle for protecting Southern rights against Republican onslaughts.[58]

Events of 1859 though eroded faith in the normal political process. As Congressman Jabez Lamar Monroe Curry of Talladega County noticed in May, secessionist opinions were commonly held, especially in South Alabama, where "nearly all seem to regard it [disunion] as

[58] These seven Representatives were: David Clopton (Mobile District), Williamson Robert Winfield Cobb (Huntsville District), Jabez Lamar Monroe Curry (Talladega District), George Smith Houston (Florence District), Sydenham Moore (Tuscaloosa District), James Lawrence Pugh (Eufaula District), and James Adams Stallworth (Mobile District). Cobb, Houston and Stallworth were not Southern rights advocates. Cobb represented his district from 1847 to 1860. He was not a strong Unionist, but his greatest opposition in every election being from the Southern Rights Democrats. Houston ran as a Unionist candidate for Congress in 1850 and was opposed to secession. Ibid., 24, 151; Owen, History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography, III, IV; Dorman, Party Politics in Alabama, 149.

but a question of time."[59] John Brown's raid on Harpers Ferry on October 16 hardened Southern rights sentiments by confirming white Alabamians fears of widespread Northern plot against slavery and heightening anxieties about slave insurrections.

Several state newspapers reported that one of John Brown's followers, John Henry Kagi, marked on his map several counties in the Alabama Black Belt where he had traveled and slaves were expected to revolt.[60] Asserting that Kagi's activities proved that there were Republican agents scattered throughout Alabama, editors urged close questioning of slaves to determine whether they had communicated with "Republican free soil emissaries." Slaves acting suspiciously should be "whipped, ducked, tarred, feathered, ridden upon a rail and then hanged to a tree."

In the wake of Brown's raid, Alabamians braced for the worst.

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[59] Roy Franklin Nichols, The Disruption of American Democracy (New York: Macmillan Co., 1948), 256.

[60] Russell, Macon, Lowndes, Autauga, Dallas, Wilcox, and Monroe counties were marked on Kagi's map. Alabama Beacon, November 24, 1859; The Weekly Confederation, October 27, 1859.

Governor Moore requested that the state legislature appropriate $200,000 to strengthen state militia. Many Alabamians were convinced that the entire North had been abolitionized, that attempts at compromise would be futile, and that "on our own arms must we rely to preserve slavery secure and profitable." The lower House passed a resolution condemning northerners for condoning "a crusade against our institutions, which in their estimations justifies and sanctifies, murder, arson, and rebellion."[61] Acknowledging that the Republicans were steadily advancing to power, on January 24, 1860, Governor Moore approved a joint resolution that empowered the governor to call a convention to "determine and do whatever in the opinion of the convention the rights, interest and honor of the State of Alabama required to be done for their protection."[62] The resolution passed 75 to 2 in the lower House and unanimously in the

[61] Marshall J. Rachleff, "Racial Fear and Political Factionalism: a Study of the Secession Movement in Alabama, 1819-1861" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Massachusetts, 1974), 284-85.

[62] William H. Brantly, Jr., "Alabama Secedes," Alabama Review 17 (July 1954): 168.

Senate.

The presidential election of 1860, which historian David M. Potter calls "a campaign like none other in American history," fueled secessionist sentiment. Northern Democrat Stephen A. Douglas received little support, and Southern Democrat John C. Breckinridge carried forty-two counties, nearly sweeping those in which slavery was weakest.[63] Breckinridge carried counties with high and low slave

[63] Douglas was born in Brandon, Vermont, in 1813, and was admitted to the bar in 1834 and commenced practice in Jacksonville, Morgan County, Illinois. After holding various state and local offices Douglas became a U.S. Representative in 1843, and from 1847 until his death in 1861 was a U.S. Senator. In dealing with slavery, Douglas was opposed by the south because he supported popular sovereignty, the doctrine which residents of each new territory were allowed to determine whether it would accept or reject the slavery, instead of explicitly supporting slavery. As he pointed out in the winter 1859, "Whenever a territory has a climate, soil and production, making it the interest of the inhabitants to encourage slave property, they will pass a slave code, and give it encouragement. Whenever the climate, soil and production preclude the possibility of slavery being profitable, they will not permit it. You come right back to the principle of dollars and cents. I do not care where the migration in the southern country comes from . . ." Breckinridge was born in Kentucky in 1821. He was admitted to the bar in 1840 and began practice in Lexington, Kentucky. From 1851 to 1854, Breckinridge was elected as a U.S. Representative for the Democratic Party, and elected Vice President of the United States in 1856 on with James Buchanan as President. To Breckinridge, either the federal or local government had no authority to restrict slavery in any area while

populations in the Black Belt and northern regions (see Table 31). Breckinridge's main strength was among the yeoman farmers who owned few or no slaves but had "fantastic party loyalty" shaped by the charisma of Andrew Jackson.[64] John C. Bell of the Constitutional Union Party and Douglas each carried only five counties.[65] Bell's votes were mostly from the old Whig counties of the Black Belt; Douglas's strength was in the Mobile area and in the Tennessee Valley. Although Breckinridge was accused by the Bell and Douglas groups of

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it was in territorial status. Breckinridge approved the right to secession, but he opposed immediate secession. See David W. Bartlett, Presidential Candidates: Containing Sketches, Biographical, Personal and Political, of Prominent Candidates for the Presidency in 1860 (New York: A. B. Burdick, 1859), 93, 336-45; Biographical Directory of the United States Congress, 1774-Present, http://bioguide.congress.gov/biosearch/biosearch.asp.

[64] William L. Barney, The Secession Impulse: Alabama and Mississippi in 1860 (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1974), 142.

[65] Douglas carried Lauderdale, Lawrence, Madison, Marshall, and Mobile counties. Bell was born in Tennessee in 1797. A prominent Whig, Bell served as a U.S. Representative from 1827 to 1841 and was speaker in 1834. From 1847 to 1859, he served as a Senator. Bell admitted the right of Congress to regulate slavery in the territories, supported the Compromise of 1850, objected to the Kansas-Nebraska Bill, and opposed the admission of Kansas under the Lecompton Constitution, which was passed in 1857 and supported the existence of slavery in the territories and protected rights of slaveholders. Bartlett, Presidential Candidates, 150-60; Biographical Directory of the United States Congress.

being a dangerous disunionist, his insistence that the Constitution both sanctioned secession and protected slavery in territories matched the opinions of most Alabama voters.

TABLE 31: Presidential Election Returns in Alabama, 1860.

	JOHN BELL	JOHN C. BRECKINRIDGE	STEPHEN A. DOUGLAS	TOTAL VOTE	BELL PERCENTAGE	BRECKINRIDGE PERCENTAGE	DOUGLAS PERCENTAGE	1860 SLAVE PERCENTAGE	1860 SLAVE RANK
Autauga	256	611	394	1,261	20	48	31	57	17
Baldwin	248	129	81	458	54	28	18	49	34
Barbour	644	1,715	9	2,368	27	72	0	52	10
Bibb	582	613	156	1,351	43	45	12	32	33
Blount	51	546	443	1,040	5	53	43	6	50
Butler	1,079	918	111	2,108	51	44	5	38	25
Calhoun	364	2,347	54	2,765	13	85	2	20	32
Chambers	918	1,017	157	2,092	44	49	8	51	14
Cherokee	527	1,706	223	2,456	21	69	9	16	38
Choctaw	472	542	158	1,172	40	46	13	51	24
Clarke	255	952	77	1,284	20	74	6	49	23
Coffee	394	878	2	1,274	31	69	0	15	46
Conecuh	338	348	205	891	38	39	23	43	30
Coosa	706	930	844	2,480	28	38	34	27	29
Covington	416	404	12	832	50	49	1	13	49
Dale	277	1,280	5	1,562	18	82	0	15	43
Dallas	620	833	339	1,792	35	46	19	77	1
DeKalb	204	849	202	1,255	16	68	16	8	48
Fayette	359	1,299	37	1,695	21	77	2	13	45
Franklin	715	902	460	2,077	34	43	22	46	21
Greene	765	696	157	1,618	47	43	10	76	4
Henry	317	1,109	0	1,426	22	78	0	30	31
Jackson	130	1,760	565	2,455	5	72	23	19	37

TABLE 31 CONTINUED

	JOHN BELL	JOHN C. BRECKINRIDGE	STEPHEN A. DOUGLAS	TOTAL VOTE	BELL PERCENTAGE	BRECKINRIDGE PERCENTAGE	DOUGLAS PERCENTAGE	1860 SLAVE PERCENTAGE	1860 SLAVE RANK
Jefferson	245	831	77	1,153	21	72	7	23	39
Lauderdale	444	706	790	1,940	23	36	41	39	27
Lawrence	525	370	576	1,471	36	25	39	49	26
Limestone	368	522	325	1,215	30	43	27	53	22
Lowndes	592	1,007	57	1,656	36	61	3	70	5
Macon	1,210	1,184	46	2,440	50	49	2	68	7
Madison	400	591	1,300	2,291	17	26	57	55	12
Marengo	512	838	63	1,413	36	59	4	78	2
Marion	197	986	62	1,245	16	79	5	11	47
Marshall	165	441	763	1,369	12	32	56	16	42
Mobile	1,629	1,541	1,823	4,993	33	31	37	28	15
Monroe	447	530	222	1,199	37	44	19	56	20
Montgomery	1,034	1,555	133	2,722	38	57	5	66	3
Morgan	144	549	545	1,238	12	44	44	33	35
Perry	791	982	99	1,872	42	52	5	66	6
Pickens	619	1,211	16	1,846	34	66	1	55	13
Pike	1,227	1,581	84	2,892	42	55	3	36	19
Randolph	537	1,734	343	2,614	21	66	13	9	41
Russell	854	993	53	1,900	45	52	3	59	11
Shelby	570	853	186	1,609	35	53	12	29	36
St. Clair	174	963	240	1,377	13	70	17	16	44
Sumter	473	682	136	1,291	37	53	11	75	8
Talladega	1,091	1,307	74	2,472	44	53	3	38	18

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TABLE 31 CONTINUED

	JOHN BELL	JOHN C. BRECKINRIDGE	STEPHEN A. DOUGLAS	TOTAL VOTE	BELL PERCENTAGE	BRECKINRIDGE PERCENTAGE	DOUGLAS PERCENTAGE	1860 SLAVE PERCENTAGE	1860 SLAVE RANK
Tallapoosa	1,274	1,451	298	3,023	42	48	10	28	28
Tuscaloosa	1,023	1,219	23	2,265	45	54	1	44	16
Walker	103	446	303	852	12	52	36	7	51
Washington	155	176	24	355	44	50	7	53	40
Wilcox	355	833	113	1,301	27	64	9	72	9
Winston	40	203	147	390	10	52	38	3	52
TOTAL	27,835	48,669	13,612	90,116	31	54	15		

" ___ " marks elected.

SOURCE: Williams, "Presidential Elections and Related Data for Antebellum Alabama," 72-73; Burnham, Presidential Ballots, 260-74; Historical Census Browser; Southern Advocate, November 14, 1860; Montgomery Weekly Post, November 28, 1860.

From the time of Lincoln's election, fervor for immediate secession eroded conditional Unionism. Mobile mayor Jones M. Withers proclaimed that southerners were "in the midst of a revolution, and are invoking the sovereignty of our State against

wrong and oppression."[66] James Webb, a planter from Greene County and a Bell elector, contended that Lincoln's victory meant that the South's future would be full of "eternal discord and of angry crimination and recrimination;" secession was "not only inevitable but desirable."[67] The Troy Advertiser, a pro-Douglas newspaper, claimed that Alabamians were ready for secession at once, "before Lincoln's election we were against disunion . . . but now the die is cast . . . our only salvation is in secession."[68] Another Douglas supporter and former governor John A. Winston of Madison County also proclaimed with rage that "we should go into the convention and take steps for a separation."[69]

On December 6, 1860, Governor Moore issued a proclamation calling a state convention to meet in Montgomery on January 7, 1861. He designated December 24 as the day for the election of delegates. In the election, immediate secessionists won 56 percent of the total

[66] Mobile Advertiser, December 9, 1860.

[67] Rachleff, "Racial Fear and Political Factionalism," 347.

[68] Florence Gazette, November 16, 1860.

[69] Montgomery Advertiser, December 5, 1860.

votes, and voting patterns followed the traditional sectional division within the state. North Alabama elected cooperationist candidates, and South Alabama supported immediate secessionists. One North Alabama county, Calhoun, went to the secessionists, and one South Alabama county, Conecuh, voted for the cooperationists (see Table 32).[70]

In Mobile, immediate secession candidates John Bragg, Edmund S. Dargan, H. G. Humphries, and George A. Ketchum easily won all seven wards in the city, carrying 67 percent of the total vote (see Table

[70] In general, the secessionists were younger, wealthier, and owned more slaves than their opponents. Among 100 delegates elected, 54 were Secessionists and averaged forty-three years of age; forty-six were Cooperationists and forty-five years of age. The entire body was forty-four years. Occupationally, planters and lawyers ranked first and second as occupational groups. Among thirty-eight planters, twenty were Cooperationists. In the lawyer's group, twenty-two out of thirty-two were Secessionists. Both Secessionist and Cooperationist groups were substantial property holders. The Secessionists held an average of $60,523 in personal property, more than Cooperationists' $26,304. Moreover, of the one hundred members, seventy-nine were slaveholders in 1860. The Secessionists held thirty-three slaves each, twice as many as Cooperationists' sixteen. See Ralph A. Wooster, "The Alabama Secession Convention," Alabama Review 12 (January 1959): 69-75.

33).[71] Of the five Alabama counties that had voted for Douglas in the 1860 presidential election, Mobile was the only one to support immediate secession. Mobilians remained determined to defend Southern rights regardless of its close commercial connections with the North.

[71] Both Bragg and Dargan were lawyers and born in North Carolina. Humphries, a cotton factor, was born in South Carolina, and Ketchum, a physician, was born in Georgia. Dargan and Ketchum were also holding slaves. Wooster, "The Alabama Secession Convention." The election turnout is from Dorman, Party Politics in Alabama, 194.

TABLE 32: Election of Delegates to the Secession Convention and the Personal Data of the Delegates.

	SECESSIONIST VOTE	COOPERATIONIST VOTE	1860 ELECTION VOTE	1860 SLAVE RANK	NUMBER OF DELEGATES	AVERAGE OF AGE	AVERAGE OF PERSONAL PROPERTY
Autauga	S		Breckinridge	17	1	64	34,265
Baldwin	S		Bell	34	1	42	103,000
Barbour	S		Breckinridge	10	3	37	59,667
Bibb	S		Breckinridge	33	1	38	12,000
Blount		C	Breckinridge	50	2	37	350
Butler	S		Bell	25	2	52	3,000
Calhoun	S		Breckinridge	32	3	45	46,667
Chambers	S		Breckinridge	14	2	38	37,000
Cherokee		C	Breckinridge	38	4	42	8,031
Choctaw	S		Breckinridge	24	2	60	77,500
Clarke	S		Breckinridge	23	1	40	40,000
Coffee	S		Breckinridge	46	1	46	--
Conecuh		C	Breckinridge	30	1	70	55,000
Coosa		C	Breckinridge	29	3	55	51,667
Covington	S		Bell	49	1	30	--
Dale	S		Breckinridge	43	2	49	11,500
Dallas	S		Breckinridge	1	2	46	28,250
DeKalb		C	Breckinridge	48	2	46	16,500
Fayette		C	Breckinridge	45	2	46	7,750
Franklin		C	Breckinridge	21	2	34	29,000
Greene	S		Bell	4	2	37	25,200
Henry	S		Breckinridge	31	2	41	104,924
Jackson		C	Breckinridge	37	3	45	7,467
Jefferson		C	Breckinridge	39	1	49	3,350
Lauderdale		C	Douglas	27	2	48	30,859
Lawrence		C	Douglas	26	2	33	24,280
Limestone		C	Breckinridge	22	2	48	18,790
Lowndes	S		Breckinridge	5	2	48	120,425
Macon	S		Bell	7	3	46	4,000

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TABLE 32 CONTINUED

	SECESSIONIST VOTE	COOPERATIONIST VOTE	1860 ELECTION VOTE	1860 SLAVE RANK	NUMBER OF DELEGATES	AVERAGE OF AGE	AVERAGE OF PERSONAL PROPERTY
Madison		C	Douglas	12	2	40	25,000
Marengo	S		Breckinridge	2	1	42	50,000
Marion		C	Breckinridge	47	2	38	2,000
Marshall		C	Douglas	42	2	45	47,315
Mobile	S		Douglas	15	4	43	52,500
Monroe	S		Breckinridge	20	1	52	187,750
Montgomery	S		Breckinridge	3	2	44	175,000
Morgan		C	Breckinridge	35	1	47	10,000
Perry	S		Breckinridge	6	2	43	37,595
Pickens	S		Breckinridge	13	2	37	24,298
Pike	S		Breckinridge	19	3	34	34,878
Randolph		C	Breckinridge	41	3	41	10,000
Russell	S		Breckinridge	11	2	56	53,000
Shelby		C	Breckinridge	36	2	48	42,750
St. Clair	S		Breckinridge	44	1	26	2,000
Sumter	S		Breckinridge	8	1	33	50,000
Talladega		C	Breckinridge	18	3	42	22,650
Tallapoosa		C	Breckinridge	28	3	53	28,800
Tuscaloosa		C	Breckinridge	16	2	52	152,500
Walker		C	Breckinridge	51	1	59	13,000
Washington	S		Breckinridge	40	1	48	33,500
Wilcox	S		Breckinridge	9	1	38	200,000
Winston		C	Breckinridge	52	1	--	--
	29 (56%)	23 (44%)			100 (Total)	44 (Avg.)	$42,234 (Avg.)

SOURCE: The Secession Movement in Alabama, 161-66; Dorman, Party Politics in Alabama, 194-95; Williams, "Presidential Elections and Related Data for Antebellum Alabama," 72-73; Ralph A. Wooster, "The Alabama Secession Convention," Alabama Review 2 (January 1959): 69-75; Historical Census Browser.

TABLE 33: Mobile's Election for Delegates to the State Convention, December 24, 1860.

		CITY WARDS							
		1ST	2ND	3RD	4TH	5TH	6TH	7TH	TOTAL
*Bragg	VOTE	485	316	430	358	114	357	107	2,167
	%	19%	19%	17%	15%	13%	19%	16%	17%
*Dargan	VOTE	462	305	426	358	142	361	103	2,157
	%	18%	18%	17%	15%	16%	19%	15%	17%
*Ketchum	VOTE	477	298	437	342	115	364	105	2,138
	%	18%	17%	18%	15%	13%	19%	16%	17%
*Humphries	VOTE	454	226	395	320	132	347	103	1,977
	%	17%	13%	16%	14%	15%	18%	15%	16%
Smith	VOTE	195	185	225	253	76	120	68	1,122
	%	7%	11%	9%	11%	9%	6%	10%	9%
Winston	VOTE	195	144	206	253	97	166	61	1,122
	%	7%	8%	8%	11%	11%	9%	9%	9%
Dunn	VOTE	170	135	173	234	95	108	61	976
	%	7%	8%	7%	10%	11%	6%	9%	8%
Goode	VOTE	163	96	170	233	95	105	64	926
	%	6%	6%	7%	10%	11%	5%	10%	7%
TOTAL		2,601	1,705	2,462	2,351	866	1,928	672	12,585

" * " marks elected.

SOURCE: Mobile Advertiser, December 25, 1860. Percentage calculated by author.

The elected delegates assembled at Montgomery on Monday, January 7, 1861. On January 11, after long debate, the convention 61-39 to adopt an ordinance of secession.[72] The ordinance asserted:

> the election of Abraham Lincoln and Hannibal Hamlin . . . by a sectional party, avowedly hostile to the domestic institutions and to the peace and security of the people of the State of Alabama . . . is a political wrong of so insulting and menacing a character as to justify the people of the State of Alabama in the adoption of prompt and decided measures for their future peace and security, therefore . . . the State of Alabama now withdraws . . . from . . . henceforth ceases to be one of said United States . . . and of right ought to be a Sovereign and Independent State.[73]

[72] The detailed debates in the convention can be found in William Russell Smith, The History and Debates of the Convention of the People of Alabama: Begun and Held in the City of Montgomery, on the Seventh Day of January, 1861: in which is Preserved the Speeches of the Secret Sessions, and Many Valuable State Papers (Spartanburg, South Carolina: Reprint Co., 1975).
[73] Ibid., 76, 77.

News of Alabama's secession ignited popular enthusiasm in Mobile. Excited Mobilians welcomed secession, and a large demonstration "brought almost the entire population of the city into the streets." The crowd celebrated around a "secession pole" erected at the end of Government Street and hoisted the new southern flag, while the Mobile Cadets and the Independent Rifles marched through the streets.[74]

Mobilians hardly appeared worried that secession would destroy their society and prosperity. Although Mobile's two-party politics distinguished the city from the rest of Alabama, Mobilians shared a commitment to the preservation of Southern rights and institution of slavery. The citizens of a city built on cotton and slavery could not remain in a Union whose rulers were avowedly hostile to slavery. Even close commercial ties to the North could not outweigh the power of sectional interests in Mobile during the secession crisis. The cosmopolitan city with booming international commerce cast its fate

[74] Delaney, Remember Mobile, 193.

with the new Confederacy.

CHAPTER 4

MOBILE'S MODERATE ROAD TO SECESSION

Throughout the antebellum period, Mobile's multi-ethnic background, comparatively low proportion of slaves, overwhelmingly mercantile atmosphere, close commercial ties with the North, and competition between Whigs and Democrats all fostered moderation and blunted radicalism. Mobile's commerce was in many ways a model of intersectional and international cooperation, and sectional antagonisms played a minor role in Mobile politics before the 1850s. Contests between Whigs and Democrats seldom pivoted on sectional issues, and anti-Northern sentiments were uncommon even during times of economic distress.

The national economic depression in 1837 caused hundreds of banks to close, depreciated the currency, and badly disrupted Mobile's economy. Except for the Bank of Mobile, the panic

devastated local banks, such as the Planter and Merchant Bank and the Mobile Branch of the Alabama State Bank.[1] By 1850, the depression had reduced the city's taxable property valuations by 64 percent, the value of slaves by 49 percent, and real estate values by 69 percent (see Table 34). Decreased tax revenue hindered the city's ability to manage its obligations. On June 11, 1839, for example, the city government was forced to offer twenty-year leases on parts of the city square to raise revenue to apply to public debts.[2]

[1] Amos Doss, Cotton City, 123.

[2] The leasing area was north of Dauphin, south of St. Francis, west of St. Joseph and east of Conception streets. See Interesting Transcriptions and Cataloging Notes from 38 Volumes of Minutes and Similar Records of the City of Mobile from 1820 to 1911, Prepared from Original Data by the Municipal and Court Records Project of the Works Progress Administration, 1938, VIII: 475. Abbreviated as City Minutes and Records.

TABLE 34: Taxable Property Values in Mobile, 1837-1850.

	SLAVES		REAL ESTATE		GRAND TOTAL*	
	TOTAL VALUE (% OF 1837)	GROWTH/REDUCE RATE (ANNUAL)	TOTAL VALUE (% OF 1837)	GROWTH/REDUCE RATE (ANNUAL)	TOTAL VALUE (% OF 1837)	GROWTH/REDUCE RATE (ANNUAL)
1837	2,721,300 (--)	--	27,482,961 (--)	--	33,062,191 (--)	--
1838	1,461,200 (54%)	-46%	20,407,435 (74%)	-26%	24,121,920 (73%)	-27%
1839	1,225,050 (45%)	-16%	21,098,915 (77%)	3%	24,480,315 (74%)	1%
1840	1,078,020 (40%)	-12%	13,441,783 (49%)	-36%	16,398,623 (50%)	-33%
1841	1,568,900 (58%)	46%	17,601,950 (64%)	31%	21,468,450 (65%)	31%
1842	1,667,375 (61%)	6%	16,138,643 (59%)	-8%	20,283,838 (61%)	-6%
1843	1,471,750 (54%)	-12%	14,773,470 (54%)	-8%	17,921,770 (54%)	-12%
1844	1,705,845 (63%)	16%	14,053,056 (51%)	-5%	18,098,877 (55%)	1%
1845	1,428,620 (52%)	-16%	12,622,085 (46%)	-10%	16,503,325 (50%)	-9%
1846	1,697,650 (62%)	19%	12,854,650 (47%)	2%	16,745,345 (51%)	1%
1847	1,323,480 (49%)	-22%	8,638,250 (31%)	-33%	11,776,730 (36%)	-30%
1848	1,544,350 (57%)	17%	8,943,810 (33%)	4%	12,431,560 (38%)	6%
1849	1,600,850 (59%)	4%	9,300,930 (34%)	4%	12,629,700 (38%)	2%
1850	1,345,850 (49%)	-6%	9,300,930 (31%)	-8%	12,629,700 (36%)	-5%
AVG.		-2%		-7%		-6%

* In addition to slave and real estate values, the value of Grand Total includes merchandize, horses, and carriages.

SOURCE: The Industrial Resources, etc. of the Southern and Western States . . . . (New Orleans: DeBow's Review, 1853), II: 80. Percentage calculated by author.

Some Mobilians, to be sure, blamed northerners for the city's troubles. Joseph W. Lesesne, a South Carolina native and the chancellor of the Alabama state court for the southern division, complained to John C. Calhoun that northern domination impoverished southerners and retarded progress:

> Our whole commerce except a small fraction is in the hands of Northern men. Take Mobile as an example – 7/8 of our Bank Stock is owned by Northern men . . . Our wholesale and retail business . . . is in the hands of men who invest their profits at the North. The commercial privileges extended by the Constitution has wholly deprived us of a mercantile class . . . and the most certain means for the accumulation of wealth.[3]

[3] Joseph W. Lesesne to John C. Calhoun, September 12, 1847, in Franklin Jameson, ed., Annual Report of the American Historical Association for the Year 1899, "Correspondence of John C. Calhoun" (Washington: Government

Mobile's political bodies nonetheless focused on city issues rather than sectional posturing. Of 766 resolutions, agendas, and petitions discussed or adopted by the municipal legislature between 1837 and 1850, none referred to sectional controversies nor blamed the North for economic woes. Over sixty percent of the items focused on civil and engineering construction, public safety, finance and taxation, personnel, laws and regulations, and water works. Stabilizing and promoting the city's economy was the highest priority (see Table 35).

Despite economic disruption and currency devaluation, Mobilians retained confidence in the national and international cotton trade and treasured Mobile's position as a major cotton port. During the depression years, Mobile's cotton exports still averaged 8 percent annual growth; foreign exports alone averaged 12 percent annual growth (see Table 36). Even in the worst of times, in short, continued economic and commercial links to the North buoyed Mobile

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Printing Office, 1900), II: 1133-34.

and encouraged consistent moderation on national political matters.

TABLE 35: The Classification of Resolutions, Agendas, Petitions, and Issues of Mobile Municipal Legislature, 1837-1850.

	CONSTRUCTION AND RENOVATION	PUBLIC SAFETY AND SECURITY	CITY FINANCE, TAXATION, AND PROPERTY	MUNICIPAL PERSONNEL AND GENERAL AFFAIR	LAW, ORDER, AND REGULATION	WATER WORKS	BUSINESS AND COMMERCIAL ACTIVITY	CITY HOSPITAL AND RELIEF	HEALTH AND SANITARY	FREE COLORS AND BLACK SLAVES	CRIME REPORT AND INVESTIGATION	CELEBRATION, INVITATION, AND MOURNING	NAVIGATION, HARBOR, AND WHARF	EDUCATION	ELECTION	RAILROAD	CHURCH AND RELIGION	TOTAL (BY YEAR)
1837	9	2	1	1	2	1	5	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	25
1838	3	0	2	0	2	0	2	1	2	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	15
1839	14	18	10	22	5	8	1	22	5	0	2	4	2	0	9	2	1	12
1840	13	19	19	15	16	18	10	1	6	11	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	13
1841	7	8	5	3	4	3	9	5	6	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	53
1842	3	2	2	3	4	10	1	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	32
1843	1	1	5	0	2	0	6	2	1	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	2	23
1844	34	6	4	3	4	2	5	0	14	2	1	0	2	5	2	0	0	84
1845	6	3	11	5	5	13	5	4	4	10	4	3	0	0	0	0	1	74
1846	3	14	4	0	7	2	3	1	1	2	15	0	0	8	0	0	0	60
1847	4	3	2	3	2	0	2	2	4	4	0	3	1	0	0	0	0	30
1848	8	6	5	6	7	0	4	2	0	9	0	2	12	4	0	2	0	67
1849	0	2	0	1	1	0	0	3	0	1	0	2	3	0	0	3	0	16
1850	15	1	5	5	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	30
TOTAL	120	85	75	67	61	58	53	49	44	42	26	21	21	17	15	8	4	766
%	16	11	10	9	8	8	7	6	6	6	3	3	3	2	2	1	0.5	

SOURCE: Compiled from Interesting Transcriptions and Cataloging Notes from 38 Volumes of Minutes and Similar Records of the City of Mobile from 1820 to 1911. Prepared from Original Data by the Municipal and Court Records Project of the Works Progress Administration, 1938, III-X. Abbreviated as City Minutes and Records; Interesting Transcriptions from the City Documents of the City of Mobile for 1815 to 1859. Prepared from Original Data by the Municipal and Court Records Project of the Works Progress Administration, 1939. Part I. Abbreviated as City Documents.

TABLE 36: Growth and Reduction Rates of Cotton Exportation in Mobile, 1837-1860.

YEAR	FOREIGN EXPORTS		NORTHERN EXPORTS**		GRAND TOTAL***	
	AMOUNT(*)	GROWTH/ REDUCTION RATE	AMOUNT	GROWTH/ REDUCTION RATE	AMOUNT	GROWTH/ REDUCTION RATE
1837	172,124 (75%)	--	45,921 (20%)	--	230,772	--
1838	224,115 (72%)	30%	57,639 (19%)	26%	309,991	34%
1839	149,942 (60%)	-33%	80,196 (32%)	39%	249,645	-19%
1840	353,478 (81%)	136%	63,840 (15%)	-20%	438,872	76%
1841	216,239 (68%)	-39%	90,253 (28%)	41%	319,876	-27%
1842	241,874 (76%)	12%	68,090 (21%)	-25%	319,041	-0.3%
1843	365,577 (76%)	51%	94,002 (20%)	38%	479,245	50%
1844	269,738 (58%)	-26%	138,949 (30%)	48%	465,452	-3%
1845	390,637 (75%)	45%	111,020 (21%)	-20%	521,238	12%
1846	300,417 (72%)	-23%	95,888 (23%)	-14%	415,581	-20%
1847	190,233 (62%)	-37%	94,401 (31%)	-2%	306,907	-26%
1848	319,211 (73%)	68%	98,989 (23%)	5%	439,561	43%
1849	398,651 (74%)	25%	99,859 (19%)	1%	539,644	23%
1850	214,089 (62%)	-46%	84,920 (25%)	-36%	343,042	-15%
AVG.		12%		8%		8%
1851	322,496 (74%)	51%	69,229 (21%)	-18%	436,376	27%
1852	430,478 (75%)	33%	131,102 (30%)	89%	575,104	32%
1853	348,682 (64%)	-19%	129,534 (37%)	-1%	543,962	-5%
1854	335,363 (70%)	-4%	107,164 (32%)	-17%	480,077	-12%
1855	340,311 (75%)	1%	76,315 (22%)	-29%	453,435	-6%
1856	485,035 (71%)	43%	114,446 (24%)	50%	681,321	50%
1857	314,989 (64%)	-35%	105,611 (34%)	-8%	489,044	-28%
1858	387,032 (75%)	23%	55,189 (14%)	-48%	515,045	5%
1859	514,935 (74%)	33%	99,009 (19%)	79%	694,789	35%
1860	659,481 (81%)	28%	90,334 (14%)	-9%	817,813	18%
AVG.		15%		9%		12%

NOTE: * Percentage to grand total.
** The northern destinations include New York, Boston, Providence and Philadelphia.
*** The grand total was the sum of foreign and all of U.S. domestic, including northern and coastwise, cotton trade.

SOURCE: DeBow's Review 20 (April 1856): 446. Percentage calculated by author.

Mobile's economy began to recover in the 1850s. Construction of the Mobile and Ohio Railroad and improvement of the channel of the Harbor of Mobile both stimulated prosperity.[4] Between 1851 and 1860, Mobile's cotton exports climbed 12 percent annually. Mobile's population leaped 43 percent from 1850 to 1860. The foreign-born population increased 66 percent during the decade (see Table 37).

[4] In 1859, the net earnings of the Mobile and Ohio Railroad Company were $651,610. From 1856 to 1859, the city government of Mobile had totally collected $263,988 of railroad tax from the company. See Proceedings of the Twelfth Annual Meeting of the Stockholders of the Mobile and Ohio Rail Road Company, Held in the City of Mobile, Monday, February 20, 1860 (Mobile: J. Y. Thompson, 1860).

TABLE 37: Growth of Population in Mobile City, 1850-1860.

ETHNIC GROUPS	1850	1860	GROWTH RATE
Foreign	4,257	7,061	66%
South	7,009	11,591	65%
North	1,731	2,202	27%
Free Colored	715	817	14%
Slaves	6,803	7,587	12%

SOURCE: The Seventh and Eighth U.S. Census in 1850 and 1860.

Another major indication of Mobile's economic recovery in the 1850s was the revival of the value of taxable property. Although valuations never returned to the high 1837 levels, between 1851 and 1860, the total value of taxable property in Mobile went up by an average rate of 12 percent a year. The values of slaves and real estate grew by 16 percent and 5 percent annually, respectively.[5]

Mobile's economic recovery coincided with an intensification of sectional conflict, which revolved around determining the status of slavery in western territories, most notably the area of the

[5] Calculated from the data in Amos Doss, Cotton City, 129.

Mexican Cession and the newly created Kansas territory. Disputes over slavery in the territories raised issues of southern identity, sparked concerns over the safety of slavery, and promoted declarations of states' rights among Mobilians. Pressures from the sectional conflict transformed Mobile politics during the 1850s. In essence, growing sectional antagonism outside of the city placed interests in conflict and forced Mobilians to choose priorities and allegiances.

The city's two major newspapers, the Mobile Register and Mobile Advertiser, became key forums for discussion of sectionalism, slavery, and southern rights. The editors of both newspapers, Thaddeus Sanford of the Register and Charles Langdon of the Advertiser, were from Connecticut and relocated to Alabama in the early 1820s. Despite ongoing political hostilities between the two men, their newspapers presented a united front on essentials of slavery, race, and southern rights. On April 30, 1850, for example, the Register published a report that a young black girl in Boston,

Sarah Roberts, had been barred from a public school. The Register claimed that such discrimination showed that northerners, especially abolitionists, were hypocrites, who attacked slavery yet scorned and degraded blacks. The Register concluded that northerners "preach amalgamation, and the obliteration of caste, to the South, but they will suffer martyrdom before they will practice it."[6]

The city's newspapers generally contended that slavery was a local and state matter, although they also asserted that the institution enjoyed important protections under the federal Constitution. When the Constitution was formed, the Register opined, each state "was entitled to, and enjoyed complete sovereignty within its own boundaries, as an independent nation." The territories were the common property of the states. For the Register, neither Congress nor any other power had any right to enact a law that would prohibit southern slaveholders from emigrating to the new

[6] Mobile Register, April 30, 1850.

territories with their slave property.[7] The Advertiser, criticizing the Wilmot Proviso as an "undoubted violation of the Constitution," argued that slavery was recognized by the Bible and the Constitution; Congress had no power either to abolish or restrict slavery in any part of the nation. Slavery was, in Langdon's opinion, a matter "exclusively of state legislation."[8]

The Advertiser contended that natural inequality, manifested in "intellect, disposition, propensity, taste, and complexion," reflected a grand design: some people were born to command and others born to obey.[9] Africans and descendants of Africans had no rightful place in America except as slaves. Langdon supported the plan of assisting free blacks emigrating to Africa, claiming that free blacks "are morally, socially, and politically enslaved . . . they belong to a degraded caste, from which nothing can release them but

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[7] Ibid., March 28, 1850.

[8] Charles Carter Langdon, Reply to the Twenty-Seven (Mobile: Benjamin, 1850), 7, 9-10.

[9] Mobile Advertiser, April 26, 1850.

emigration."[10]

Agreement on essentials still left plenty of room for sharp contests over strategy and tactics. Indeed, party conflict in Mobile played a significant role in promoting moderation and maintaining party alliances with the North. In the fight over the Nashville Convention, for example, the Register supported the movement, asserting that northerners were most likely to take heed if southerners spoke in a united voice.[11] The Register opposed the admission of California as a free state and Henry Clay's compromise package. Sanford feared that the South's growing minority status within the Union would lead to degradation and ruin if southerners did not make a stand against the "unscrupulous despot, king

[10] Mobile Advertiser, April 21, 1851.

[11] Nine southern states, Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia, sent their delegation to the first session of Nashville Convention on June 3. Neither Arkansas nor Texas attended the second session on November 11. The state of Alabama elected total forty-four delegates to both sessions of the convention. For more details about the convention, see Thelma Jennings, The Nashville Convention: Southern Movement for Unity, 1848-1851 (Memphis, Tennessee: Memphis State University Press, 1980).

numbers."[12]

Langdon, in contrast, denounced the Nashville Convention as a secessionist vehicle, which was "not only unnecessary and inexpedient, but fraught with danger to our institutions and mischief to the country."[13] He glimpsed a conspiracy planned by South Carolinian secessionists, who intended to persuade the people that the Constitution no longer protected southern rights, and that they could find security only by taking "the mode and measure of the redress in their own hands.[14] He had little difficulty unearthing quotations from South Carolina newspapers to support that allegation that the Palmetto State was the fount of secessionism.[15] Like other South Carolina experiments, Langdon argued, the Nashville Convention was "ill-timed" and ought to be canceled.[16]

In reaction, the Register stressed that the planned Nashville

[12] Mobile Register, March 19, 1850.
[13] Mobile Advertiser, April 3, 1850.
[14] Langdon, Reply to the Twenty-Seven, 13.
[15] Ibid, 14-15.
[16] Mobile Advertiser, April 18, 1850.

Convention was designed to counteract northern aggressions, to defend the constitution, and to maintain the Union. The convention was not a conspiracy of a minority, but "a fair expression of the popular will." Any movement naturally needed leaders, and South Carolina or Mississippi could not be blamed for stepping forward. When "a hundred or a thousand minds are thinking of the same thing," the Register observed, "one must speak first before all can act."[17]

In responding to Langdon's objections to the convention, the Register openly questioned his loyalty to the South, claiming that Langdon was "making light of the northern action, and discountenancing every southern movement that even look like ultimate resistance to aggression." The Register blamed Langdon for giving "encouragement to our enemies to persist in their designs."[18] The newspaper charged that the Advertiser was so "untrue to the South upon the great question" that it was practically "a Free Soil paper."[19]

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[17] Mobile Register, February 28, March 4, March 28, 1850.

[18] Ibid., April 1, 1850.

[19] Ibid., April 4, 1850.

The Register stressed that the Nashville Convention must be held; it was identified with the rights of the South, and most Mobilians were "sound at heart and right in hand" in defending Southern rights.

The Register urged Mobilians to attend a meeting on April 20 to show their support for the proposed Nashville Convention and to "avert these evils, to protect our section of the Union against such dire calamities, and to devise and recommend measures by which our rights may be maintained." The Register declared that:

> let Mobile, the cotton city, utter a voice that shall convince the enemies of slavery in Congress and out of it, that the people of Alabama are sound to the core, and will not tamely acquiesce in the destruction of their rights, the degradation of their characters, and the virtual conversion of the Constitutional Union into a great consolidated, and unrestricted imperial tyranny . . .[20]

[20] Ibid., April 16, 18, 1850.

The meeting was successful. The Register claimed that at least three hundred Mobilians "of both political parties, and of every class of business" attended the convention, forming a "homogeneous mass without difference of opinion upon the great question of resistance to northern aggressions." Of four chief speakers, Philip Phillips and John A. Campbell were Democrats; William D. Dunn and William G. Jones were Whigs.[21] Because the Court House could not accommodate the huge crowd, the meeting was held in front of it, "the officers and speakers taking the portico, and the living mass spreading themselves in front."[22]

[21] Phillips was born in Charleston, South Carolina and moved to Mobile in 1835. He was a lawyer and elected to Alabama legislature in 1844 and Congress in 1852. Campbell was born in Georgia and moved to Mobile in 1837. He was elected to the state legislature in 1842 and appointed associate justice of the Supreme Court by President Pierce in 1853, an office he held until 1861. Dunn was born in Nashville, Tennessee. He came to Mobile in 1832 practicing law, and was elected to state legislature in 1842. Jones, a Virginian, moved to Alabama from Virginia in 1834. Before moving to Mobile in 1843, Jones stayed at Demopolis, Marengo County, and Erie and Eutaw, Greene County. Jones was elected to the state legislature in 1849 and 1857. Owen, History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography, III: 293-94, 523, 944-47; IV: 1358-29.

[22] Mobile Register, April 20, 1850.

Of the 204 attendees whose birth places can be identified, 60 percent were southern-born, 27 percent were northern-born, and 12 percent were foreign-born.[23] In the southern-born group, South Carolinians composed the largest group (25), followed by Alabamians (23), Georgians (20), and Virginians (20). Among northern-born attendees, New Yorkers were the largest group (26), trailed by Massachusetts (8) and Pennsylvania (8). For the foreign-born group, the Irish were the largest group (11), accompanied by Englishmen (6) and Germans (3). That more native New Yorkers than native Alabamians rallied to support the Nashville Convention indicated the breadth of the city's southern rights contingent. Northern-born attendees were, incidentally, the oldest group in the meeting.

Of the 235 members for whom occupational information is known, half were from the business class, including cotton factors and

[23] There were 264 names printed on the meeting notice which was published in the Mobile Register on April 16. Of these, 204 persons' birthplaces could be identified from either the censuses or city directories; 123 attendees were southern born citizens, 56 attendees were northern-born, and 25 were foreign born.

merchants. Nearly 52 percent of the business-class attendees were southern-born. The second largest occupational group was the professional-intellectual class, with 33 percent of attendees, which included lawyers, judges, physicians, druggists, engineers, clerks, and city government staff. The meeting also attracted many people such as butchers, carpenters, farmers, and laborers, but this group accounted for only 17 percent of total attendees (see Table 38). Not surprisingly, commercial and professional men dominated the list of attendees out of all proportion to their numbers in the city as a whole, yet substantial numbers of working-class Mobilians turned out as well.

TABLE 38: The Birth Place and Occupational Backgrounds of Attendees of Democratic Assembly in Mobile on f April 20, 1850.

	PLACE OF BIRTH BACKGROUND				OCCUPATIONAL BACKGROUND		
	AREA	NO.	% OF TOTAL		OCCUPATION	NO.	% OF TOTAL
SOUTH	Alabama	23	11%	BUSINESS CLASS	Cotton Broker	3	1%
	Florida	1	0.5%		Cotton Factor	14	6%
	Georgia	20	10%		Merchant	98	42%
	Kentucky	2	1%		Shop Owner	6	3%
	Louisiana	4	2%				
	Maryland	6	3%				
	Mississippi	8	4%				
	North Carolina	11	5%				
	South Carolina	25	12%				
	Tennessee	2	1%				
	Texas	1	0.5%				
	Virginia	20	10%				
	TOTAL	123	60%		TOTAL	121	52%
	AVG. OF AGE	38					
NORTH	Connecticut	5	2%	PROFESSIONAL CLASS	City Government Staff	5	2%
	Illinois	1	0.5%		Clerk	26	11%
	Maine	4	2%		Dentist and Physician	8	3%
	Massachusetts	8	4%		Druggist	8	3%
	New Hampshire	2	1%		Editor and Journalist	2	1%
	New Jersey	1	0.5%		Engineer and Machinist	3	1%
	New York	26	13%		Judge and Lawyer	24	10%
	Pennsylvania	8	4%		Congressman	1	0.4%
	Vermont	1	0.5%		Teacher	1	0.4%
	TOTAL	56	28%		TOTAL	78	33%
	AVG. OF AGE	41					

SOURCE: The Seventh and Eighth U.S. Census in 1850 and 1860; Mobile Directory and Register, for 1844 (Mobile: Dade and Thompson, 1844); Rowan's Mobile Directory and Commercial Supplement, for 1850-51 (Mobile: Strickland & Benjamin, 1851); Directory for the City of Mobile, 1859 (Mobile: Farrow & Dennett, 1859).

The assembly, while originally designed simply to support the Nashville Convention, ended up featuring substantial debate over the proper attitude to adopt toward the movement. One speaker, Dunn, opposed the Nashville Convention, calling it "unwise and inexpedient." The other three, Phillips, Campbell, and Jones, supported the Convention. Phillips tried to stake out middle ground in his speech, stressing the importance of "moderation, concession and concert of action" in support of the Convention.[24] He sponsored a resolution that disclaimed any disunionist purpose and stressed four points. First, Mobilians were willing to follow the Constitution but insisted on its guarantees. Second, the exclusion of slavery from the new territories was a violation of southern rights. Third, Mobilians regarded the Nashville Convention as the best means

[24] Mobile Register, April 20, 1850.

of consolidating southern sentiment to "arrest" hostilities and prevent the" dissolution of the Government." Fourth, a united southern front would either secure justice for the South or place the blame for the disruption of the Union where it belonged, on the heads of northern fanatics. The Register declared that, by adopting Phillips's resolutions, Mobilians had "spoken in a voice which must be heeded . . . spoken for the Union . . . spoken for the covenanted rights of the South."[25]

Opponents of the Convention were not mollified by Phillips's resolutions. Only the "superior management and death-like energy" of Convention enthusiasts had drummed up a meeting in the first place, Langdon alleged, and most Mobilians saw no need for a Convention.[26] Langdon urged Mobilians to back Henry Clay's plan in Congress, claiming that the compromise plan would be pass because "the public voice is loud and decided in favor of a settlement." Langdon warned city leaders to support Clay's measures, or they would "have a fearful

[25] Ibid.

[26] Mobile Advertiser, April 20, 1850.

account to settle with their constituents."[27]

As it turned out, it was Langdon's political career that was at risk. Running as a Whig in 1849, Langdon had won the mayoral election with 59 percent of the vote.[28] In the 1850 mayoral campaign, however, Langdon's detractors questioned his loyalty to the South. The Democratic Party called Langdon's arguments the "feeble voice of the traitor in [our] midst," and declared that the Advertiser "stood cheek by jowl with the Free Soil Papers of the North."[29] The Mobile Herald, a southern rights newspaper, likewise flayed Langdon for hiding behind "hypocritical guise of meekness;" compromisers such as Langdon were really "the greatest enemies to the South."[30]

Langdon attracted Whig critics as well. On March 25, a group of Whigs who ingeniously called themselves "the Twenty Seven" openly criticized Langdon for cowering in the face of northern aggression.

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[27] Ibid., May 26, 1850.

[28] Ibid., December 4, 1849.

[29] Thornton, Politics and Power in a Slave Society, 193; Mobile Register, April 4, 1850.

[30] Mobile Advertiser, April 24, 1850.

These Whigs reminded Langdon that the southern Whig Party was "sound to the core on the slavery question" and was willing to go "as far as the farthest in defense of southern rights and institutions." They urged Langdon to make known his opinions and views "favorable to the rights and interests of the slaveholding states."[31]

Of the twenty-six members of "the Twenty Seven" whose occupations are known, one was a physician and the rest were from the business class. In addition, of twenty-one whose birthplaces are known, only two were northern. Most interestingly, thirteen of these Whigs also attended the pro-Nashville Convention assembly of April 20 (see Table 39). Here was a core of southern rights Whigs determined not to take a back seat to Democrats in advocating southern rights.

[31] Ibid., March 25, 1850.

TABLE 39: General Information of the “Twenty Seven” in 1850.

NAME	AGE	OCCUPATION	BIRTH PLACE
Adams, Thomas	33	Merchant	Virginia
Burks, William	53	Merchant	Georgia
* Cummins, John O.	--	Merchant	--
Dade, Robert D.	30	Merchant	North Carolina
* Dent, Dennis	45	Cotton Factor	Maryland
* Foster, Hillary	--	Merchant	South Carolina
Herndon, Edward	51	Merchant	Virginia
Humphreys, H. G.	--	Merchant	--
Jewett, John F.	36	Merchant	--
Kirksey, F. M.	34	Merchant	Alabama
Lang, John H.	32	--	Mississippi
* Lawler, Levi W.	35	Cotton Factor	Alabama
* LeBaron, Charles	46	Merchant	Louisiana
Malone, J. B.	40	Cotton Factor	Louisiana
* Marshall, W. T.	32	Merchant	Georgia
* Minge, C. H.	30	Merchant	Virginia
* Nevill, William H.	35	Merchant	South Carolina
* Pratt, William H.	--	Merchant	--
* Ross, W. H.	31	Merchant	Alabama
Secor, J. S.	47	Store Owner	New York
Shepherd, James V.	33	Merchant	Virginia
Sheppard, J. Y.	--	Merchant	--
* Smith, R. W.	33	Merchant	Virginia
* Sorley, James	--	Merchant	--
* Stallsworth, T. B.	35	Merchant	South Carolina
Taylor, R.	31	Merchant	Alabama
Woodcock, John H.	55	Physician	Pennsylvania

NOTE: " * " indicates those who attended the pro-Nashville Convention held by the Register at Court House on April 20.

SOURCE: Owen, History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography, III: 480, 800; IV: 1016, 1467-68, 1592-95; The Seventh and Eighth U.S. Census in 1850 and 1860; Mobile City Directory, 1844, 1851, 1855, 1859.

Langdon's replies clarified that he supported slavery. He opposed both the Wilmot Proviso and the Missouri Compromise, because he believed that Congress had no power to legislate on the subject of slavery. If southerners ever conceded that power, Langdon warned, they would "place the South wholly at the mercy of the North." To oppose the Nashville Convention was not heresy; reasonable men differed on the best way to protect southern rights, and Langdon judged that commotion and ultimatums were more likely to injure than to secure southern rights. Langdon could not resist chiding Whigs, especially who had been guided by "their fears rather than their judgment" in lending aid to the Nashville Convention movement.[32]

On October 8, a month after the Compromise of 1850 became law,

[32] Langdon, Reply to the Twenty-Seven, 7, 46.

Langdon and the Advertiser led a grand rally to show Mobilians' support of the Compromise. The Mobile Herald dismissed the rally as merely composed of small taxpayers, poor folks, foreigners, Jews, and Yankees. In fact it attracted two thousand people, including businessmen, clerks, bookkeepers, municipal officials, and even thirteen Councilmen and Aldermen.[33] The Advertiser declared that the pro-Compromise meeting was "the largest meeting ever held in this city on a question where there was any division of sentiment," and that the public response settled the question "irrevocably against the agitators." The Advertiser pronounced that the city of Mobile would "stand by the union as it is, and the Constitution as it is, and there she will stand."[34]

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[33] The Mobile Advertiser encouraged people who supported the Compromise to publish their names in the newspaper. On October 6, 684 names of citizens appeared in the Advertiser. The majority of signers came from Mobile's commercial and professional interest. The largest occupation was businessmen. Twenty-six municipal officials' names appeared on the newspaper list, including seven Councilmen and six Aldermen. Mobile Advertiser, October 8, 1850; James H. Beam, Jr., "Mobile and the Southern Question: Public Debate over the Slavery Controversy of 1850" (M.A. Thesis, University of South Alabama, 1994), 60-61.

[34] Mobile Advertiser, October 29, 1850.

Langdon's pro-Compromise stance cost him in the mayoral election in early December 1850, but he still emerged triumphant with 959 votes (50.3 percent) to 947 votes (49.7 percent) for his Southern Rights opponent, Joseph Sewell. The narrow margin, hardly a mandate, reflected a city divided between confrontational and conciliatory approaches to resolving sectional friction over slavery issues. Three days after the election, John A. Cuthbert, an Illinois-born lawyer, lambasted Langdon and defined the extreme secessionist end of the spectrum of opinion. Cuthbert contended:

> That our union with the northern states brings no benefits to the Southern States; that it perpetually drains away the wealth of the South to enrich the North. . . . the only danger of war between the North and the South will be found in those . . . northern abolitionists – dangers which would soon cease to exist . . . if a large part of the Southern State should withdraw together, their secession would be peaceful . . . the Southern Confederacy . . . would be strong enough to

maintain its rights against the world.[35]

Langdon's narrow victory also signaled the Whigs' decreasing influence in Mobile. Whigs elected to the Board of Aldermen dropped from eleven in 1850, to eight in 1851, and then to five in 1852. On the Common Council, the Whigs had seven seats in both 1850 and 1851, but no Whigs were elected in 1852. Put the other way, between 1850 and 1852 the number of Democrats increased from three to nine on the Board of Alderman and from zero to seven on the Common Council (see Table 40).

[35] Mobile Register, December 7, 1850.

TABLE 40: Political Composition of the Legislatures of the City of Mobile, 1850-1860.

	BOARD OF ALDERMAN							COMMON COUNCIL						
	WHIGS/KNOW-NOTHINGS	PERCENTAGE	DEMOCRATS	PERCENTAGE	NOT KNOWN	PERCENTAGE	TOTAL	WHIGS/KNOW-NOTHINGS	PERCENTAGE	DEMOCRATS	PERCENTAGE	NOT KNOWN	PERCENTAGE	TOTAL
1850	11	79%	3	21%	--	--	14	7	100%	0	0%	--	--	7
1851	8	57%	6	43%	--	--	14	7	100%	0	0%	--	--	7
1852	5	36%	9	64%	--	--	14	0	0%	7	100%	--	--	7
1853	13	62%	8	38%	--	--	21	5	71%	2	29%	--	--	7
1854	13	62%	8	38%	--	--	21	6	86%	1	14%	--	--	7
1855	14	67%	7	33%	--	--	21	6	86%	1	14%	--	--	7
1856	14	67%	6	29%	1	4%	21	7	100%	0	0%	--	--	7
1857	11	52%	4	19%	6	29%	21	7	100%	0	0%	--	--	7
1858	9	43%	8	38%	4	19%	21	7	100%	0	0%	--	--	7
1859	4	19%	9	43%	8	38%	21	2	29%	1	14%	4	57%	7
1860	3	14%	14	67%	4	19%	21	1	14%	3	43%	3	43%	7
TOTAL	105	50%	82	39%	23	11%	210	55	71%	15	19%	7	9%	77

" __ " represents the Know-Nothing Party.

SOURCE: Thompson, "Mobile, Alabama, 1850-1861," 141, Table 15. Percentage calculated by author.

The heaviest burden Mobile Whigs carried, and one that increasingly broke them down in local elections, was their national fellowship with resolutely antislavery northern Whigs, who had among other things opposed the Compromise of 1850 because they thought that it conceded too much to slavery and the South. In 1851, when Langdon ran for the House of Representative in Mobile District, he faced Southern Rights Democrat John Bragg, a North Carolinian whose two younger brothers, Thomas and Braxton, later became a Governor of North Carolina (1855-59) and a Confederate general (1861), respectively.[36] Langdon's pro-Compromise Whiggery tainted him, and Bragg carried six counties of eight, easily winning the election by 58 percent to 42 percent. The Whig vote dropped 10 percent from the last congressional election in 1849 (see Table 41).

[36] John Bragg was born in Warren County, North Carolina on January 14, 1806 and was graduated from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 1824. Before relocating to Mobile to practice law in 1836, Bragg was the member of the State House of Commons of North Carolina from 1830 to 1834. Bragg died in Mobile on August 10, 1878. Biographical Directory of the United States Congress, 1771-Present, http://bioguide.congress.gov/scripts/biodisplay.pl?index=B000758

TABLE 41: Congressional Elections in Mobile District, 1851.

FIRST CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT		
COUNTIES	CHARLES LANGDON (WHIG)	JOHN BRAGG (DEMOCRAT)
Baldwin	207	211
Butler	395	653
Choctaw	--	--
Clarke	161	718
Conecuh	433	377
Dallas	--	--
Marengo	662	637
Mobile	1,225	1,678
Monroe	400	572
Washington	366	526
Wilcox	--	--
TOTAL	3,849	5,372
PERCENTAGE	42%	58%

SOURCE: Excerpted from Dorman, Party Politics in Alabama, 178.

Between 1853 and 1857, Whigs briefly rallied before collapsing entirely. In 1853, they regained a majority on the Board of Aldermen and Common Council, and Langdon was elected to a third term as mayor. However, Whig success was limited to local races and

short-lived. Although the Whig Party had carried 54 percent of votes in presidential elections in the 1840s (see Table 1), the party and later the Know-Nothings, or American party, lost both the 1852 and 1856 presidential elections, in which the Democrats carried an average of 52 percent of the votes. In general, Mobile voters still might trust Whigs to run city affairs, but they increasingly looked to Democrats to represent them at the state and national levels.

The Know-Nothings initially looked like a promising vehicle for Whigs, and Mobile's multi-ethnic demographic structure made the city potentially fertile ground for Know-Nothingism.[37] J. Mills Thornton suggests that Know-Nothingism was "a gift from heaven" to

[37] Mobile Register, December 11, 1855. Percy Walker was born in Huntsville and received his medical diploma from the University of Pennsylvania in 1835. He moved to Mobile and then studied law after 1837 and was admitted to the bar. Before becoming a Congressman in 1855, Walker served as State's attorney for the sixth judicial district and as a member of the State house of representatives in 1839, 1847, and 1853. See Owen, History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography, IV: 1718. In the 1856 presidential election, the American Party candidate, Millard Fillmore, received 1,771 votes (49 percent) in Mobile County. Buchanan, the Democratic candidate, carried 1,838 votes (51 percent). See Dorman, Party Politics in Alabama, 177.

Mobile's Whig leaders.[38] According to Circuit Court, City Court, County Court, and Criminal Court records, 3,536 immigrants became naturalized citizens in Mobile between 1840 and 1860 (see Table 42). Analyzing those foreigners naturalized between 1856 and 1857, the peak of the Know-Nothing Party in Mobile, most of them had lived in Mobile for periods ranging from two to twenty years.[39] Despite unpleasantness and violence, immigrants continued to arrive in Mobile and to seek naturalization. In fact, the naturalization rate reached its highest point in Mobile history during the Democratic domination in Mobile from 1858 to 1860 (see Table 43).

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[38] Thornton, Politics and Power in a Slave Society, 354.

[39] For example, Lewis Hyde, an Irish, and Herman Kleinder, a Germany, naturalized on December 2, 1856 and May 29, 1857, respectively, after living in Mobile for two years. William Ross, a Scottish, and Alexander Short, an Irish, naturalized on February 23, 1856 and February 18, 1857, respectively, after residing in Mobile for twenty years. According to the naturalization records in 1856 and 1857, five-year was the most common length of residence for naturalized immigrants. King and Barlow, Naturalization Records, Mobile, Alabama, 1833-1906; An Indexed Catalogue of Minutes Entries Concerning Naturalization in the Courts of Mobile County, Alabama. Prepared from the Original Records by the Municipal and Court Records Project of the Works Progress Administration (Mobile: Mobile Municipal Archives), 79, 210-11.

TABLE 42: Top Ten Areas of Naturalization in Mobile County, 1840-1860.

	IRELAND	GERMANY *	ENGLAND	FRANCE	SWEDEN	ITALY **	AUSTRIA	SCOTLAND	SPAIN	DENMARK	OTHERS ***	TOTAL
1840	136	15	35	15	7	6	6	3	4	5	7	239
1841	18	0	1	1	3	1	0	0	0	0	3	27
1842	103	22	3	7	6	1	1	3	4	1	3	154
1843	79	11	3	2	3	1	2	1	2	4	6	114
1844	95	12	8	8	1	0	1	3	0	3	0	131
1845	93	25	13	22	10	11	10	1	3	3	10	201
1846	60	10	17	4	2	1	0	2	1	0	9	106
1847	38	19	13	16	6	6	4	1	2	2	6	113
1848	43	26	17	11	3	4	0	5	3	5	20	137
1849	62	28	24	8	7	5	2	8	6	5	9	164
1850	57	37	18	7	5	2	2	4	1	1	25	159
1851	38	24	3	4	2	1	0	0	1	1	6	80
1852	62	37	29	6	3	2	5	2	2	3	40	191
1853	58	33	19	5	3	6	2	1	3	3	17	150
1854	47	15	13	1	4	1	3	6	0	1	12	103
1855	80	53	20	18	6	3	5	5	1	1	64	256
1856	85	32	33	5	10	7	9	5	2	2	18	208
1857	98	52	17	11	4	1	5	4	0	0	14	206
1858	136	71	29	41	5	18	5	10	18	3	19	355
1859	38	10	6	7	3	2	3	3	3	2	9	86
1860	200	75	10	20	3	6	7	2	11	7	15	356
TOTAL	1,626	607	331	219	96	85	72	69	67	52	312	3,536
%	46%	17%	9%	6%	3%	2%	2%	2%	2%	1%	9%	

NOTE: * Includes Bavaria, Hanover, Prussia, and Saxony.
** Includes Corsica, Sardinia, and Sicily.
*** Includes Canada, Greece, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Switzerland, and those unknown.

SOURCE: Compiled and calculated from Clinton P. King and Meriem A. Barlow, eds., Naturalization Records, Mobile, Alabama, 1833-1906 (Baltimore: Gateway Press, Inc., 1986).

TABLE 43: The Naturalization Growth/Reduction Rate in Mobile, 1840-1860.

THE 1840S		THE 1850S AND THE YEAR OF 1860			
	ANNUAL GROWTH/REDUCTION RATE		ANNUAL GROWTH/REDUCTION RATE		ANNUAL GROWTH/REDUCTION RATE
1840	-89%	1850	-4%	1858	70%
1841	470%	1851	-49%	1859	-75%
1842	-26%	1852	139%	1860	310%
1843	15%	1853	-22%		
1844	53%	1854	-31%		
1845	-47%	1855	149%		
1846	7%	1856	-20%		
1847	21%	1857	-0.5%		
1848	20%				
1849	-89%				
AVERAGE	47%	AVERAGE	20%	AVERAGE	103%

SOURCE: Calculated from Ibid. and An Indexed Catalogue of Minutes Entries Concerning Naturalization in the Courts of Mobile County, Alabama. Prepared from the Original Records by the Municipal and Court Records Project of the Works Progress Administration (Mobile: Mobile Municipal Archives), 8-215.

Despite sharp controversies, most notably the clash over the Catholic Sisters of Charity and administration of the city hospital, Know-Nothings failed to supplant slavery-oriented issues with nativist and anti-Catholic concerns.[40] The Know-Nothing organization withered quickly under the pro-Southern fire of state and local Democrats. Democrats depicted Know-Nothingism as essentially an adjunct of the Republican party, which was simultaneously organizing in the North. According to Democrats, both Republicans and Know-Nothing in the North were abolitionist and anti-southern—not fit associates for any self-respecting southern white man.[41] In Mobile, the Know-Nothings not only were labeled a non-southern party, but also charged with working to "divide and weaken the South in its vital struggle with the power of

[40] The details of the Sisters of Charity controversy can be found in City Minutes and Records, X: 41-43, XIII: 81, XIX: 196, 199 and City Documents, 92, 262, 269.

[41] Thornton, Politics and Power in a Slave Society, 356-57. For the rise and fall of the Alabama Know-Nothing Party, see Jeff Frederick, "Unintended Consequence: The Rise and Fall of the Know-Nothing Party in Alabama," Alabama Review 55 (January 2002): 3-33.

Abolitionism."[42]

The defection of Know-Knowing party mayor Jones Mitchell Withers in 1856 underscored the party's vulnerability on slavery issues. Withers was the first Alabama-born mayor of Mobile (see Illustration 6).[43] In his resignation letter, Withers stressed the primacy of Southern rights and the protection of slavery and reasserted a major principle of the Compromise of 1850, that "Congress has no power to legislate upon the question of slavery in the states where it exists." He branded the Know-Knowing in Alabama as soft on slavery, claiming that it was influenced by Black Republican and abolitionists in Congress. Withers decided to withdraw from the Know-Knowing party to cleanse himself of the

[42] Mobile Register, December 15, 1855.

[43] Withers was born in Huntsville, Madison County, in 1814 and graduated from the United States Military Academy at West Point in 1835. Withers left the military in 1836 and was admitted to practice law in 1838. In 1841, Withers moved to Mobile and worked as both a lawyer and a commission merchant; he was elected mayor in 1855. W. Brewer, Alabama: Her History, Resources, War Record, and Public Men: From 1540 to 1872 (Baltimore, Maryland: Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc., 1995), 417.

pollution.[44] Obviously, the public withdrawal from the party of the Know-Nothings most prominent city official damaged the credibility of the organization.

[44] "Slavery-Issue Resignation of Mayor Withers," March 30, 1856 in City Documents, Part II, 345-47. Withers rejoined the Democratic Party and was elected as mayor for another term until 1861. In addition to regarding the American Party as a non-southern party, the Democrats feared the party could endanger the Democratic chances in the 1856 presidential election. John Forsyth, editor of Mobile Register, believed that the existence of American Party in the South and Mobile would limit the development of the Democrats. Questioning "where the need of two parties aiming at one end and animated by the same purpose?" Forsyth argued that the American Party could not "by any possibility elect its candidate before the people. The best and worst it can do is to defeat the Democratic nominee and elect the abolition candidate." Mobile Register, February 13, 15, 1856.

ILLUSTRATION 6: Jones Mitchell Withers

SOURCE: The Generals of the American Civil War, Confederate Generals. http://www.generalsandbrevets.com/sgw/withers.htm

In its first and last presidential campaign in 1856, the Know-Knowing party carried 49 percent of the city vote, 38 percent of state vote, and 22 percent of the national vote. The

Know-Nothing's defeat marked a return to Democratic ascendancy in Mobile. Within the context of intensified sectional agitation, Mobilians, like most white southerners, were deeply interested in asserting southern rights within the Union, and they saw the national Democratic party as most likely to protect those rights. Upon slavery depended the plantations and cotton that fueled Mobile's prosperity, and seeking security for slavery was paramount for the city's free residents.

The decline of the anti-Democratic forces in Mobile after 1857 reflected the development of southern consciousness and the pervasiveness of the sectional issues at all levels of politics.[45] Mobilians consistently supported Democrats of a moderate, nationalist stripe, as defined in Alabama. That is, they backed men who promised to use the national Democratic party to uphold

[45] Anthony Gene Carey, "Too Southern to be Americans: Proslavery Politics and the Failure of the Know-Nothing Party in Georgia, 1854-1856" Civil War History 41 (March 1995): 32; Proceedings of the Democratic and Anti-Know Nothing Party in Caucus; or the Guillotine at Work, at the Capital During the Session of 1855-56 (Montgomery: Barrett & Wimbish, Book and Job Printers, 1855).

southerners' interpretation of their rights in the territories and on other slavery-related matters. In the 1857 gubernatorial election, Mobilians supported Andrew Barry Moore, a moderate on the issues of slavery and secession, over other pro-Southern Rights candidates. In 1859, over 61 percent of Mobilians voted for Moore's reelection.[46] In the 1857 and 1859 Congressional elections, James Adams Stallworth, a lawyer, former member of Alabama State House of Representatives, and pro-Buchanan administration politician, carried 57 percent and 55 percent of votes in Mobile County. Finally, in 1859, the four state representatives elected from Mobile County, John Forsyth, Percy Walker, Alexander B. Meek, and G. Y. Overall were all moderate Democrats. Forsyth, a well-known Stephen Douglas supporter, polled the largest vote in the election.[47]

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[46] The candidates in the 1857 election were Moore, Judge John E. Moore, John Cochran, William F. Samford, and David Hubbard. The 1859 election was a race between Moore and Samford of the Southern Rights Party.

[47] Mobile Register, August 7, 1859. Percy Walker was elected as Congressman of American Party in 1855, but he broke with the party and became a Democrat. Alexander B. Meek was a lawyer and born in Columbia, South Carolina. Meek was an elector on the Buchanan ticket in 1856 and speaker in the state House from 1859 to 1861. Gibson Y. Overall was born in 1825 in Virginia. He moved

William Strickland discovered, though, that moderation was not incompatible with vigilantism in the defense of slavery. In 1856, Strickland, an English-born merchant and book seller, whose book stock was the largest in the city and reportedly was one of the largest in the South, found himself charged with stocking and selling abolitionist literature, such as The Key to Uncle Tom's Cabin, Autographs of Freedom, and My Bondage and Freedom. Strickland proclaimed his innocence, explaining that the abolitionist books "were accidentally in his store, and were sold to parties who purposely sought to entrap the vendors." The examining committee, which included Josiah Nott, John Bragg, and Henry S. Levert, was unconvinced. It declared that Strickland and his partner, Edwin Upson of Connecticut, were "dangerous persons in a slaveholding community, and ought to be ejected from it." The committee suggested that Strickland and Upson leave the city as soon as possible, because

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to Mobile in 1848 and became a lawyer. In 1860, foreign-born whites composed 62 percent of the free labor force in Mobile. Prominent Mobilians' pro-slavery stance was discussed in Chapter 3.

their safety could not be guaranteed.[48]

Many other Mobilians publicly backed the verdict, affirming that tough actions and keen vigilance were necessary to stamp out any antislavery smolderings. The Mobile Tribune opined:

> The lesson, we trust, will have its proper effect, for it is not possible that other men can escape so easily. The best fate of any man found guilty in this way hereafter, will, doubtless, be a summary hanging; and we shall applaud the executioners, if the guilt be indisputable.[49]

Strickland's plight made the front pages of the New York Daily Times, where he reiterated his innocence and claimed that Mobile's newspapers refused to print his defense. Strickland called his banishment from Mobile an "extreme injustice" and "tyrannous

[48] New York Daily Times, September 30, 1856; Mobile Register, August 23, 1856.

[49] Caldwell Delaney, A Mobile Sextet: Papers Read Before the Alabama Historical Association, 1952-1971 (Mobile: The Haunted Book Shop, 1981), 166.

conduct."[50]

Mobile's commitment to the South was also strengthened after the national wide economic depression in 1857, which hurt the South less than other regions of the country and had only a temporary influence on Mobile's economy. Total exports from Mobile in 1857 dropped 13 percent, and the cotton exportation dropped 28 percent. However, taxable property grew 16 percent, which was the second highest jump during the 1850s (see Table 44). For Mobilians and southerners, the relatively light impact of the Panic of 1857 reaffirmed the superiority of their economic system.

[50] New York Daily Times, January 5, 1857.

TABLE 44: Taxable Property, Total Exportation, and Cotton Exportation in Mobile, 1850-1860.

	TAXABLE PROPERTY *		TOTAL EXPORTATION		COTTON EXPORTATION	
	VALUE	ANNUAL RATE	VALUE	ANNUAL RATE	BALES	ANNUAL RATE
1850	11,980,055	-5%	10,544,858	-18%	343,042	-36%
1851	17,670,295	47%	18,528,824	76%	436,376	27%
1852	16,420,612	-7%	17,385,704	-6%	575,104	32%
1853	--	--	16,786,913	-3%	543,962	-5%
1854	17,794,575	--	13,911,612	-17%	480,077	-12%
1855	17,651,970	-1%	14,270,565	3%	453,435	-6%
1856	19,208,695	9%	23,734,170	66%	681,321	50%
1857	22,271,034	16%	20,576,229	-13%	489,044	-28%
1858	24,455,242	10%	21,022,149	2%	515,045	5%
1859	26,756,505	9%	28,933,662	38%	694,789	35%
1860	29,163,222	9%	38,670,183	34%	817,813	18%

* Taxable property includes real estate, slaves, merchandise, horses and carriages, steamboats, plank and shell roads, and machinery used in manufacturing, stocks, furniture, plate, frames, watches, clock, and jewelry.

SOURCE: Amos Doss, Cotton City, 23, 129; DeBow's Review, 20 (April 1856): 446; 29 (November 1860): 666. Percentage calculated by author.

The New York Daily Times observed in March 1859 that the South was "in a highly prosperous condition – perhaps never more so."[51] From 1858 to 1860, Mobile enjoyed the most prosperous era in its history. Immigrants poured into the city to seek work on the bustling wharves, as cotton exports, total exports, and taxable property values in Mobile all reached their zenith. Kate Cumming, a Scottish-born woman who volunteered for nursing service with the Confederate armies during the Civil War, described Mobile in 1860 as an "abode of wealth and luxury."[52] She noted that "the superb villas, the palatial mansions lining its noble streets, the elegant country seats that adorn the suburbs . . . are occupied almost exclusively by merchants."[53] DeBow's Review added that Mobilians were chasing "commercial and financial speculations with the greatest avidity." From the Mobile and Ohio Railroad to the

[51] New York Daily Times, March 25, 1859.

[52] Kate Cumming, Gleanings from Southland: Sketches of Life and Manners of the People of the South, Before, During and After the War of Secession: with Extracts from the Author's Journal and Epitome of the New South (Birmingham, Alabama: Roberts & Son, 1895), 17.

[53] Horsman, Josiah Nott of Mobile, 256.

luxurious Battle House hotel, Mobile's institutions were first-rate.[54]

Prosperity rested on booming cotton markets. Mobile grew even more reliant on foreign markets for cotton during the final antebellum years. From 1858 to 1860, while the Democrats ruled the city, Mobile exported an average of 77 percent of its cotton to Europe, a greater share than in the 1850-1852 or 1853-1857 periods (see Table 45).[55] Aspirations for continued expansion and greater direct trade with Europe found expression in the 1859 Southern Commercial Convention, held at Vicksburg, Mississippi, in which 56 percent of delegates were from Mobile.[56]

[54] DeBow's Review 26 (February 1859): 232.

[55] The Whig ruled Mobile from 1850 to 1852. The period from 1853 to 1857 was close competition between the Whigs, or know-Nothings, and Democrats.

[56] The convention was held on May 9, 1859. Of sixty-two total delegates, the city of Mobile sent thirty-five. Mobile Register, May 3, 1859; Vicki Vaughn Johnson, The Men and the Vision of the Southern Commercial Conventions, 1845-1871 (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1992), 27.

TABLE 45: The Percentage of the Distribution of Mobile's Cotton Exportation, Foreign and Domestic, 1840-1860.

	FOREIGN	DOMESTIC		FOREIGN	DOMESTIC		FOREIGN	DOMESTIC		FOREIGN	DOMESTIC
1840	81%	19%	1850	62%	38%	1853	64%	36%	1858	75%	25%
1841	68%	32%	1851	74%	26%	1854	70%	30%	1859	74%	26%
1842	76%	24%	1852	75%	25%	1855	75%	25%	1860	81%	19%
1843	76%	24%				1856	71%	29%			
1844	58%	42%				1857	64%	36%			
1845	75%	25%									
1846	72%	28%									
1847	62%	38%									
1848	73%	27%									
1849	74%	26%									
AVG.	72%	29%	AVG.	70%	30%	AVG.	69%	31%	AVG.	77%	23%

SOURCE: Compiled and calculated from DeBow's Review 20 (April 1856): 446; 29 (November 1860): 666.

Commercial dependence and Black Republicanism were clouds on Mobile's horizon. The Mobile Register declared that the Democratic party was "the repository of the rights of the South,"[57] the only

[57] Mobile Register, August 3, 1859.

organization capable of keeping the South from becoming to the North what a "tail is to the comet."[58] John Forsyth provided the most trenchant analysis of the situation. He suggested that the South had environmental and institutional advantages over the North in relation to commercial and industrial development. Yet, the North not only "manages all our business for us, fiscal as well as industries," but also "ships our cotton, negotiates for its sale, and reaps the reward of that profitable transaction." The South lagged, Forsyth was convinced, because the federal government had been "a harsh and unkind mother to the sister confederates of the South and West." The South itself possessed "all the elements of complete commercial independence and empire." He urged Mobilians to break "the chain of commercial thralldom" that connected the South to New York, and make Mobile more than a commercial outpost of New York.[59]

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[58] Ibid., November 15, 1859.

[59] Forsyth's speech to the Franklin Society of Mobile in 1854. See DeBow's Review 17 (October 1854): 261-378.

Northerners also, Forsyth complained, bit the hands that fed them. They exploited southern resources and made large profits, yet they criticized southern institutions and refused to invest in southern development. Forsyth denounced these northerners as "vampires which suck our blood-moths which eat our substance, they rob our orchards of their fruit, and carry it away to least our enemies . . . they are not only obstacles upon our prosperity, but the most dangerous foes to our institutions."[60]

Forsyth alternated between pride and panic in asserting Mobile's achievements and prospects. Even as he lamented dependence on the North, he confidently declared that "there is not a city or town north of Mason & Dixon's line, in which life, property, and character are more secure than in Mobile."[61] And maybe, after all, it was the North that depended on southern efforts and southern stability. If that were so, Forsyth recognized, then secession would benefit the South:

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[60] Mobile Register, February 7, 1858.

[61] Ibid.

> Out of the Union, she becomes a fair heiress, having every nation on earth for her suitors. It would be no one's interest to attack us, every one's to court our friendship. Our structures of wealth are inexhaustible; the bases of our prosperity rest not on the prosperity of others, but theirs upon them.[62]

Warming to the subject, Forsyth conjured an image of glories yet to come:

> I have no more doubt that the effect of separation would be to transfer the energies of industry, population, commerce, and wealth from the North to the South, than I have that it is to the Union with us, the wealth-producing States, that the North owes its great progress in material prosperity . . . The Union broken, we should have what has been so long the dream of the South – direct trade and commercial independence. Then, our Southern cities that have so long languished in the shade . . . will spring into life and energy, and become the *entrepôt* of a great commerce.[63]

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[62] Ibid., November 15, 1859.

[63] Robert Royal Russel, Economic Aspects of Southern Sectionalism, 1840-1861

Daniel Perrin Bestor, a Connecticut native who eventually became the mayor of Mobile in 1877, shared Forsyth's confidence. In a letter written to his brother, Thomas, Bestor contended that:

> New England will suffer most, because the South is her market. . . The South will suffer greatly, but has this advantage, that her market is mostly abroad. All of us will sink into second and third rate nations. . . Suppose the southerner were wrong, they propose only to defend themselves, . . . The world can not conquer the South.[64]

Neither Forsyth nor Bestor, to be sure, was a secessionist. Bestor called sectionalism "wickedness." Forsyth supported the national Democratic Party, which he believed would both protect Southern rights and promote national unity. But even as moderate men, they projected an aggressiveness and a confidence in southern institutions that boded ill for the long-term existence of the Union,

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(New York: Russell & Russell Inc., 1960), 197.

[64] Sidney Adair Smith and C. Carter Smith, Jr., eds., Mobile: 1861-1865; Notes and a Bibliography (Chicago: Wyvern Press of S. F. E., Inc., 1964), 1-2.

unless the North continuously acquiesced in southern demands. The price of Union, for Forsyth, clearly was the continuance in power of the national Democracy.[65]

Mobilians' conviction that their prosperity could be facilitated and promoted only within a secure southern rights framework was reflected in the 1860 presidential election and later secession convention election. During the presidential campaign, Mobilians were not only attracted by the moderate Douglas wing of the Democratic Party, but also stood firm on the bottom line of southern rights. The correspondence of Kate Cumming exemplified this tension or ambivalence. Both Stephen Douglas and William Yancey fascinated Cumming. After attending Douglas's November 4 speech in Mobile, she reported that "we all felt that he was the man to save the country, and for the time were ready to give him our votes."[66] Yet, after hearing Yancey, who "made it all very delightful," she could not help but wonder whether he was right, that the South "would

[65] Mobile Register, December 6, 1857.

[66] Cumming, Gleanings from Southland, 20.

be much better separated."[67]

The majority of Mobilians' votes went to Douglas and John Bell. Douglas, supported by the Mobile Register, received 38 percent of the city's vote and 37 percent of the county's.[68] Constitutional Unionist Bell, a former Whig supported by the Mobile Advertiser, carried 33 percent of the total votes in both city and county. Southern Democrat Breckinridge polled 29 percent of the city's vote and 31 percent of the county's (see Table 46).

[67] Ibid.

[68] Mobile Register, June 14, 1860.

TABLE 46: 1860 Presidential Returns in the City of Mobile.

CITY WARDS	BELL		DOUGLAS		BRECKINRIDGE		TOTAL
	VOTE	%	VOTE	%	VOTE	%	
1st	250	42%	170	28%	183	30%	603
2nd	231	38%	122	20%	255	42%	608
3rd	182	33%	238	43%	138	25%	558
4th	301	33%	440	48%	178	19%	919
5th	88	23%	176	45%	123	32%	387
6th	268	32%	337	41%	226	27%	831
7th	86	30%	101	35%	101	35%	288
CITY TOTAL	1,406	33%	1,584	38%	1,204	29%	4,194
COUNTY TOTAL	1,629	33%	1,823	37%	1,541	31%	4,993

SOURCE: Compiled and calculated from Mobile Daily Advertiser, November 8, 1860; Clanton W. Williams, ed., "Presidential Elections and Related Data for Antebellum Alabama," Alabama Review 1 (October 1948): 72-73.

Douglas and Bell carried total 73 percent of votes in the second, third, and fourth wards, in which business firms and wealthy residents were concentrated.[69] In general, cotton-related business groups, such as cotton factors, brokers, and buyers, and

[69] Regarding the residential patterns and the distribution of Mobile's business firms in each ward. See Thompson, "Mobile, Alabama, 1850-1861," 196-97, 200, 202-03.

northern-born and non-slaveholding merchants and the middle class were more likely to be attracted by Douglass and Bell.[70] As for the foreign-born, William Howard Russell, the London Times correspondent, pointed out that the Irish proprietors and mercantile classes were the most ardent supporters of slavery.[71]

Lincoln's election disappointed Mobilians, but it did not make them desperate. The victory of Lincoln and the Republican Party only heightened Mobilians' determination to defend their future. The Montgomery Advertiser observed that Mobilians' secessionist feelings were aroused soon after Lincoln's election, and that "no city in the South is more largely interested in the success of this movement."[72] Within this context, Mobilians frequently discussed frequently how to make means serve goals. In public meetings held in November and December, Mobilians announced that although they were

[70] William L. Barney, The Secessionist Impulse: Alabama and Mississippi in 1860 (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1974), 74-75.
[71] William Howard Russell, My Diary, North and South, ed. Eugene H. Berwanger (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2001), 138.
[72] Montgomery Advertiser, November 21, 1860.

concerned about “hasty and inconsiderate action on the part of the state of Alabama,” they were more worried about reacting to the overthrow of the Constitution by Republicans, about preserving the equality of the states, and about avoiding submission to the North.[73]

In an “Anti-Submission” meeting held on November 15, the right of secession was widely discussed. Most delegates welcomed resolutions introduced by former House Representative Percy Walker, which declared that Lincoln’s election was “a virtual overthrow of the Constitution.” Alabamians had the right to secede and should “immediately withdraw from the Union.” On December 1, another convention called for the people of Mobile to secede from the Union because the election had been carried “by a sectional party . . . upon avowed principles of antagonism to the rights, interests and honor of our section.”[74]

To Justice John Campbell, Lincoln’s victory was “a calamity to the country,” which undermined the South’s in the federal

[73] Mobile Advertiser, December 14, 1860.

[74] Ibid., November 16, December 4, 1860.

government. However, Campbell opposed secession unless Republicans committed "deliberate, plain and palpable violations of the Constitution." Campbell argued that Lincoln would have to conciliate the South, and that it could remain powerful in the Union if it "had wise counsels among our representatives and people."[75]

Only a minority of Mobilians shared Campbell's opinions. William Barney argues that after hopes of compromise waned, southern conservatives tried to prevent anarchy and insure a smooth transition of power to protect properties and interests.[76] Both major newspapers in Mobile projected such attitudes. The Mobile Advertiser suggested that since the North could not tolerate slavery and sectional reconciliation seemed impossible, the North might gladly consent to separation.[77] When news of Lincoln's victory reached to John Forsyth's office on the night of November 6, Forsyth soon showed Douglas, who had arrived in Mobile on November 5 from

[75] "Papers of Hon. John A. Campbell," Southern Historical Society Papers 42 (October 1917): 6, 23.

[76] Barney, The Secessionist Impulse, 241.

[77] Mobile Advertiser, December 14, 20, 23.

Montgomery, an editorial that Forsyth had already prepared, which called for a state secession convention.[78] To Forsyth, disunion was now inevitable, but care was needed to avoid endangering the stability and unity of southern society. The Mobile Register saw two options. First, the South might balkanize, and became "as pitiful as the South American republics." Such an outcome was likely if "frenzied appeals will take the place of reason, demagogues usurp the seats of statesmanship, and secret leagues supersede constituted authority." The second option was to follow the path of the Founders and plan carefully so that "a firm foundation [was] laid for a new edifice." With wise statesmanship, "the worse evils attending so important a change will be essentially lessened, perhaps wholly removed, and the transition effected without vital injury to any of our important interests."[79]

Both the Advertiser and Register sustained their longstanding

[78] Douglas did not agree with Forsyth's opinions and left Mobile for New Orleans on November 7. See Robert W. Johannsen, Stephen A. Douglas (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973), 803.

[79] Barney, The Secessionist Impulse, 241-42.

roles as defenders of southern interests. Although they were notably fuzzy on details, they consistently urged citizens to put "the South first." South Carolina's secession on December 20, 1860 strengthened the immediate secessionist cause in Mobile. When the news reached the city, there were "one hundred guns fired and bells rung, the streets were jammed with cheering crowed. . . Bands played, and a military parade got under way."[80] The Mobile Evening News described the whole city as illuminated all night in honor of "the gallant stand" taken by South Carolina:

> Most of the public buildings, the guardhouse, towers, the armory and the more prominent edifices on Royal Street were brilliantly illuminated. . . The fronts of the Mercury, Advertiser and Register offices were also lighted up, as also the telegraph office and other buildings on Royal. . . the display . . . spoke loudly for the force, earnestness and general character of the spontaneous patriotic sympathy which responded to the action of South Carolina.[81]

[80] Caldwell Delaney, Remember Mobile (Mobile: Alabama, 1948), 193.

[81] Mobile Advertiser, December 22, 1860.

The New York Times also reported that Mobilians celebrated South Carolina's secession by:

> firing of a hundred guns, the cheers of the people, and a military parade. There is great rejoicing. The bells are now ringing merrily, and the people are out in the streets by hundred, testifying their joy at the triumph of secession. Many impromptu speeches are being made, and the greatest excitement everywhere exists.[82]

Forced, as they saw it, to choose between the Union and the safety of slavery, most Mobilians opted for immediate secession. Disruption of the Union and the trade with the North might yield disaster or prosperity greater than any yet enjoyed; their simply was no way of predicting the outcome. The secessionist majority did feel certain, however, that continuing in the Union under a Republican administration would mean the end of slavery and the commercial cotton economy as they knew it — the foundations of

[82] New York Times, December 22, 1860.

Mobile's prosperity would be destroyed. In a speech delivered in the state secession convention on January 11, 1861, Edmund S. Dargan, one of Mobile's four secessionist delegates, explained his stance:

> I feel impelled . . . to vote for this Ordinance [of secession] by an overruling necessity. . . Alabama must make her selection, either to secede from the Union, and assume the position of a sovereign, independent State, or she must submit to a system of policy on the part of the Federal Government that, in a short time, will compel her to abolish African Slavery. . . If the destruction of slavery entailed on us poverty alone, I could bear it . . . if the relation of master and slave be dissolved, and our slaves turned loose amongst us without restraint . . . we ourselves would become demoralized and degraded. . . and thus would we not only be reduced to poverty, but what is still worse, we should be driven to crime, to the commission of sin.[83]

[83] William R. Smith, The History and Debates of the Convention of the People of Alabama (Montgomery, Alabama: White, Pfister, & Co, 1861; reprint Spartanburg, South Carolina: Reprint Company Publishers, 1975), 93-94.

Excitement mounted in Mobile once secession was a fact and the new government began organizing itself. In May 1861, William Howard Russell arrived to find citizens were "busy in drilling, marching, and drum-beating, and the Confederate flag flew from every spire and steeple." Russell talked to "military officers, . . . journalists, politicians, professional men, merchants, and not one of them had a word but of hate and execration for the North. The British and German settlers are quite as vehement as the natives in upholding States' Right." Mobilians who had opposed secession had now "bowed their heads to the majesty of the majority." Russell saw Mobilians' choice of secession as courageous, because they disregarded "the intimate commercial relations between Mobile and the great northern cities" by embracing "the most ultra-secessionists doctrines."[84]

For Mobilians, revolution amidst unprecedented prosperity was not a difficult choice, and they made in hopes of paving the way

[84] Russell, My Diary, North and South, 136-38.

toward an even bright future. Connections to the cotton-growing hinterlands and sympathies for the cause of southern rights ultimately outweighed commercial ties to the North in determining the city's allegiance. The outcome was hardly surprising, as Mobilians of both parties had vowed their loyalty to the South for decades, never more vehemently than during the turbulent 1850s. So it was that urban, cosmopolitan, and commercial Mobile cast its lot with the state of Alabama in the Confederate States of America.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Before Mobilians voted for state secession convention delegates, the New York Times optimistically predicted that a cooperationist majority in the city "will be against secession." In reality, Mobilians supported immediate secession by a two-to-one margin.[1] By June 1863, another New York newspaper labeled Mobile as "the rebel stronghold of the South" and described citizens' enthusiastic preparations for the defense of the city.[2]

Antebellum Mobile developed with the dynamic force of commerce and trade. As Alabama became one of the largest cotton-producing states, Mobile became one of the nation's three major cotton ports. Cotton accounted for 98 percent to 99 percent

[1] New York Times, November 12, December 7, 1860.

[2] New York Herald, June 4, 1863.

of Mobile's total value of exports. Cotton to Mobile, as Priest Joseph Holt Ingraham observed, was like the "circulating blood that gives life to the city."

Mobile's chief cotton market was in Europe, but Mobile functioned to large extent as a secondary cotton transit port of New York. Close commercial connections with the North were a primary source of the society's political moderation. The city's prosperity also attracted a diverse population, by far the most diverse in Alabama, which encompassed a broad range of political backgrounds and sentiments. The city sustained a vibrant two-party political system from the 1830s through the mid-1850s, and close competition promoted moderation as parties sought electoral majorities. The Whigs were far stronger in Mobile than they were in Alabama as a whole. The moderate, commercially-oriented nationalism of Whigs such as Henry Clay had a tremendous influence on the political mindset of the city.

The tensions of the 1850s, though, increasingly brought

Mobilians' most cherished interests and beliefs into conflict. The unprecedented prosperity of the last antebellum decade gave Mobilians more to protect than ever before. The defense of southern rights came to dominate politics, and the Whigs crippled by the freesoilism of their northern wing expired in Mobile and Alabama. If the maintenance of close ties to the North and persistence in political moderation meant submission to northern domination, as more and more Mobilians came to fear that they might, then hard choices would have to be made. Forced in 1860-1861 to pick a course, a substantial majority of Mobilians chose immediate secession in the hopes of safeguarding slavery from Republican fanaticism and in the belief that their commerce could flourish under the flag of a new southern nation. The breakdown of the two-party system in Mobile in the late 1850s reduced the likelihood of resistance to the mobilization efforts of immediate secessionists, led overwhelming by Democrats.

Mobilians, no matter southern-born natives or northern- and

foreign-born residents who were obviously southernized, seceded to protect slavery. As one English visitor, Reverend George Lewis, put it, "the South will yield all as soon as make the smallest concession to this injured race."[3] Theresa Pulszky, another traveler, commented that slavery was so "thoroughly interwoven with their life and habits" that Mobilians could not contemplate a world without it.[4] Time and again, city leaders of all persuasions asserted the centrality of slavery to the city's economy and society. Believing that their rights under the Constitution included the right to carry slaves unmolested into the common territories and, more broadly, the right of the South to control all significant questions related to slavery, Mobilians could not abide living with their peculiar institution under a cloud of Republican condemnation. In the end, the same interests and ideologies that had supported moderation in

[3] George Lewis, Impressions of America and the American Churches: from Journal of the Rev. G. Lewis (New York: Negro Universities Press, 1968), 169.

[4] Francis and Theresa Pulszky, White, Red, Black; Sketches of Society in the United States during the Visit of Their Guest (New York: Negro Universities Press, 1968), III: 4.

the past pointed Mobilians toward secession in 1861. Fundamentally, the shifting of political ground through the 1850s had made immediate secession a moderate, that is, a majority position in Mobile and in Alabama by 1861.[5]

As an unwanted Civil War began, Mobilians still enjoyed profits from the cotton exports. Early on, the purchasing and exportation of cotton at Mobile were managed by the Confederate government.[6] The Union blockade and Confederate restrictions, however, soon choked off Mobile's trade.[7] Federal occupation of the city, Confederate defeat, and Emancipation ushered in a post-war era in which Mobile struggled, unsuccessfully, to regain its former

[5] Mobile Advertiser, December 21, 1860; Philip S. Foner, Business & Slavery: the New York Merchants & the Irrepressible Conflict (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1941), 218; Thomas H. O'Connor, Lords of the Loom, the Cotton Whigs and the Coming of the Civil War (New York, Scribner, 1968), 158.

[6] Don H. Doyle, New Men, New Cities, New South: Atlanta, Nashville, Charleston, Mobile, 1860-1910 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 66.

[7] Henry M. McKiven, Jr., "Secession, War, and Reconstruction, 1850-1874," in Michael V. R. Thomason, Mobile: the New History of Alabama's First City (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2001), 105.

prominence and prosperity, and African Americans in Mobile and across the South worked to forge a better life in freedom. With railroad expansion, the cotton trade likely would have turned significantly away from Mobile in any case, but as it happened, white Mobilians who strove to safeguard an economy and world based on slavery and cotton ended up losing both.[8]

[8] DeBow's Review 1 (April 1866): 423; Barbara Joan Davis, "A Comparative Analysis of the Economic Structure of Mobile County, Alabama, Before and After the Civil War, 1860 and 1870" (M.A. Thesis, University of Alabama, 1963), 6, 51.

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