

Starr Clark: Oswego County Meeting at Mexico

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OSWEGO COUNTY—MEETING AT MEXICO.

MEXICO, Jan. 23. 1838.

The Annual Meeting of the Oswego County Anti-Slavery Society was held in that place on the 18th inst.

Though the roads were very bad, and it rained the fore part of the day, still we had a large and respectable meeting. One man told me he had come 14 miles on foot to attend.

The meeting was opened by reading the latter part of the 22nd chapter of Ezekiel, and by prayer.

The Annual Report of the Secretary and Treasurer was read.

The following persons were elected officers for the coming year.

President, Rev. Ralph Robinson, of Pulaski.

Vice Presidents, T. C. Baker, of Pulaski, Alfred Wells, of Colosse, and Rev. John Eastman of Mexico.

Secretary, Starr Clark, of Mexico.

Treasurer, Seth Johnson, of New Haven.

Directors, Asa Beebe, James C. Jackson, and Orson Ames, of Mexico; Asa H. Stevens, of Pulaski, Lewis Falley, of Fulton.

An interesting letter just received from a man now in Canada, formerly called a *thing* in North Carolina, was read before the meeting.

The meeting was addressed for two hours by Alvan Stewart, Esq., on the evils of slavery and the death of the martyred Lovejoy. He was listened to with the deepest attention and gave general satisfaction.

A vote of thanks was presented to Mr. Stewart for his attendance and address. A collection was then taken up for the benefit of the cause.

Several resolutions were adopted; among them were the following, viz:

Resolved, That God is the author of man's rights; that they grow out of his moral nature, and that any government which does not acknowledge and sacredly guard these rights, fails of the great objects for which government is instituted.

The Friend of Man, Volume 2, Number 34, February 6, 1838

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Resolved, That so far from slaveholders' being guiltless on account of the entailment of the system of slavery, they are, in the light of God's truth, evidently more guilty than their predecessors, and are treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath, and the revelation of the righteous judgment of God.

Resolved, That it becomes us to transmit to our descendants, sacred and inviolable, the right of petition, and to repel at the threshold every attempt to wrest it from us, and that we consider the recent effort in both houses of Congress to accomplish this wicked object, as deserving the rebuke of every American.

Resolved, That the recent attempt in Congress to annihilate the right of petition is unconstitutional, and tends to the subversion of all our rights, and most vividly portrays the slaveholder's idea of republicanism.

Resolved, That JOHN QUINCY ADAMS, the undaunted advocate of the RIGHT OF PETITION, is entitled to a seat in the affection of every American, second to none but the father of his country.

Resolved, That the people of the state of New York are called upon by every consideration of justice, patriotism and humanity, to remove the burdens which lie upon its colored population, and to guard and protect their rights, without reference to their complexion.

Resolved, That every man is called upon to petition the legislature of this state to grant the trial by jury to persons claimed as fugitive slaves, that its blessings may be enjoyed by them equally with ourselves.

Resolved, That it is the duty of every citizen to annex his name to a petition to be forwarded to the legislature of this state, asking them to request Congress to rescind their resolution of Dec. 21st, by which all papers in any way relating to slavery should be laid on the table, without being read, referred or debated, and by which the right of petition is virtually annihilated.

Resolved, That a petition be drawn and signed by the chairman and secretary, for and in behalf of this meeting, praying the legislature of this state to call upon Congress, by a resolution, to rescind their resolution of Dec. 21st, by

and that any government which does not acknowledge and sacredly guard these rights, fails on the great objects for which government is instituted.

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which all petitions on the subject of slavery or the slave-trade should have no hearing; and also to petition the legislature to pass a law giving the right of trial by jury to all persons claimed as fugitive slaves in this state, and to pass a law by which all the disabilities under which the colored population of this state at present lie, shall be removed.

The interest in our good cause is continually increasing and members are constantly added.

Our petitions to Congress and our legislature are constantly going on.

The interest in our new Anti-Slavery Library is daily increasing—not books enough to supply the calls. We shall want more soon. Some of the strongest opposers were converted by Mr. Stewart's address.

I received another very interesting letter from a colored brother, last Saturday, now in Canada, formerly a slave. He desires Christians everywhere to pray for him.

Yours truly for the oppressed,

STARR CLARK, Sec.

Resolved, That a petition be drawn and signed by the chairman and secretary, for and in behalf of this meeting praying the legislature of this state to call upon Congress, by a resolution, to rescind their resolution of Dec. 31st, by which all petitions on the subject of slavery or the slave trade should have no hearing; and also to petition the legislature to pass a law giving the right of trial by jury to all persons claimed as fugitive slaves in this state, and to pass a law by which all the disabilities under which the colored population of this state at present lie, shall be removed.

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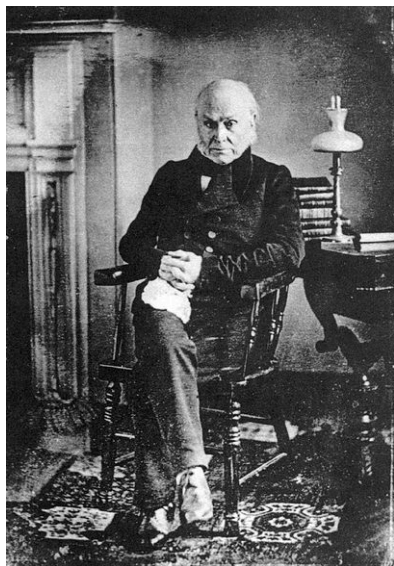


Image of John Quincy Adams. According to the Metropolitan Museum of Art web site, this is a copy of a lost daguerreotype taken by Philip Hass, possibly taken in 1843 to 1847. This image is in the public domain in its country of origin and other countries and areas where the copyright term is the author's life plus 70 years or less. (wikimedia commons)

QUESTIONS:

1. Mr. Lovejoy is mentioned in the article. Why is he considered a martyr?
2. President Adams is mentioned in the article. What was his standing on abolition? Was it popular?
3. Who was Alvan Stewart? What can you find out about him on the internet?
4. What books were written at that time that may have been placed in an Anti-Slavery Library?