

1850. Resistance to Fugitive Slave Laws in Upstate New York

Source: North Star Country: Upstate New York And The Crusade For African American Freedom, Milton C. Sernett. Syracuse University Press.

An abolitionist broadside dated October 10, 1850. Subsequent to the Cazenovia Fugitive Slave Convention, North Star Country abolitionists rallied their supporters in a series of protest meetings designed to condemn the Fugitive Slave Law signed by President Millard Fillmore on September 18, 1850. Here is a broadside that was inserted in the Madison County Whig of October 23, 1850, calling for “noble men and women” to gather under the “banners of the good old Liberty Party” and reminding the public that William L. Chaplin, the general agent of the New York State Anti-Slavery Society, was still imprisoned on the charge of aiding runaways. Courtesy of Hugh C. Humphreys

5000 Men & Women Wanted To attend the Meeting in Canastota, Wednesday, Oct. 23d, 10 a.m.
Cazenovia, Friday, Oct. 25th, Hamilton, Wednesday, Oct. 30th, Peterboro, Friday, Nov. 1st

None but real Men and Women are wanted. The shawn Men and Women who can stick to the Whig and Democratic partners are not wanted. These parties made the accursed law, under which oppressors and kindappers are now chasing down the poor among us, to make slaves of them. Hence, there is no hope of good from persons, who can stick to these Devil - prompted parties.

We want such men and women to attend these Meetings, as would rather suffer imprisonment and death than tolerate the execution of this man stealing law. We want such, as would be glad to see William L Chaplimn now lying in a Maryland prison on account of his merciful feelings to the enslaved made Governor of the State of New York. We want, in a word, such noble men and women as need to gather under the banners of the good old Liberty Party.

Let us, then, get together again to speak the truth And to sing the truth. Those were good times, when we came together to hear warmhearted speeches for the slave, and to hear Otis Simmons' daughters, and Rhoda Clinck and Miss Cook etc, etc...sing

“Come join the Abolitionists.”

“What mean ye, that ye bruise and bind”

“The Yankee Girl”

“There's a good time coming, boys”