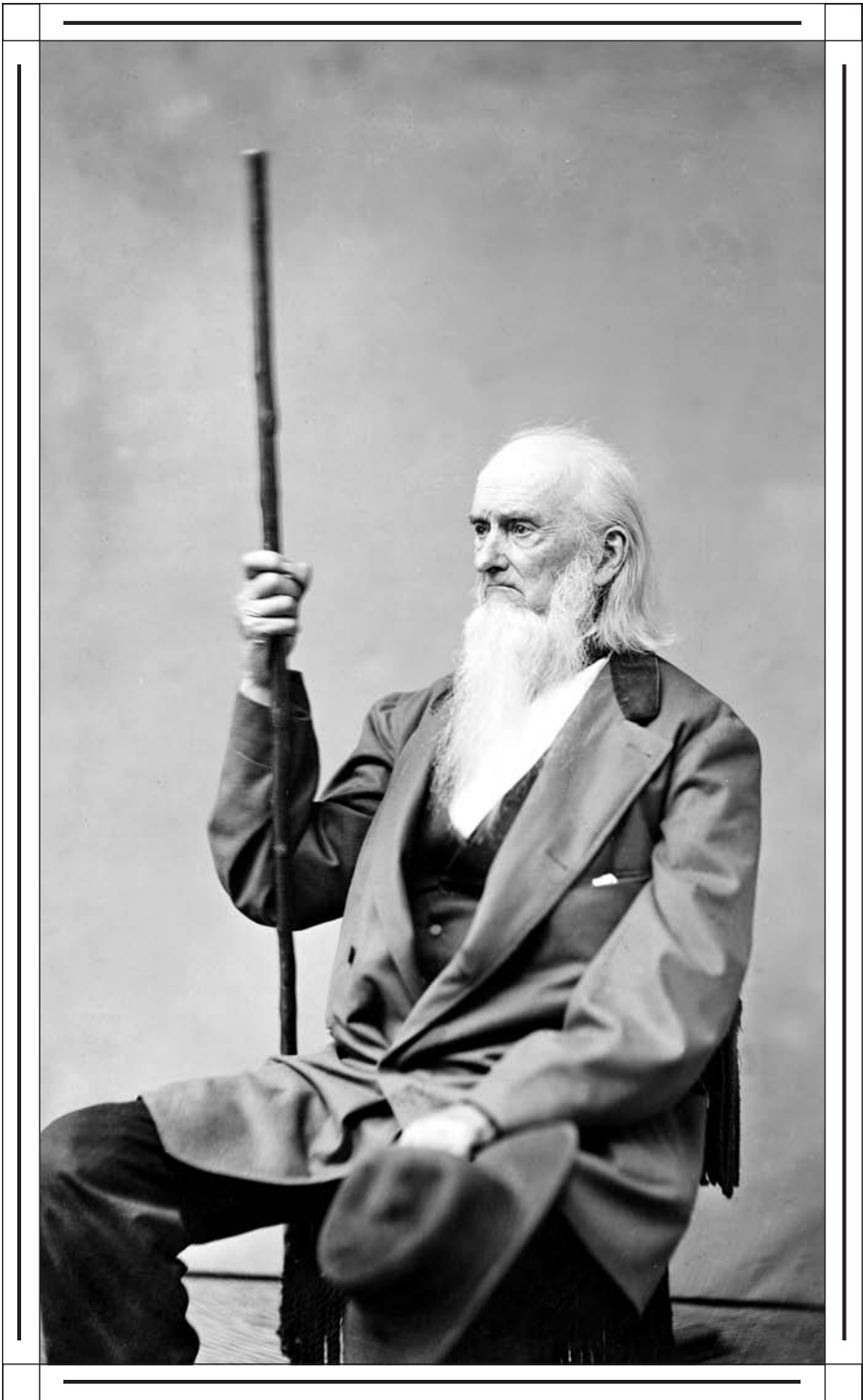


**THE INVINCIBLE  
DUFF GREEN  
WHIG OF THE WEST**



**W. Stephen Belko**

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**W. Stephen Belko**

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**TO  
MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY,  
MY PARENTS,  
MY WIFE,  
SAVANNAH TAYLOR,  
AND  
ANDREW JACKSON**



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**THE INVINCIBLE  
DUFF GREEN**



## INTRODUCTION



On a crisp Christmas Eve afternoon, 1832, the notorious editor of the *United States Telegraph*, General Duff Green, casually strolled down Washington's Pennsylvania Avenue. Suddenly, without warning, James Blair, a congressman from South Carolina, approached him from behind, raised his walking stick, and clubbed him. A huge man of three hundred and fifty pounds, Blair delivered a staggering blow that hurled the editor into the gutter. Blair again attacked with his cudgel. Though Green managed to deflect it, the second blow broke his arm severely. The South Carolinian then hurled his entire weight onto the stunned victim, breaking Green's collarbone and several ribs and dislocating his hip. The general would spend a painful holiday season recuperating in bed.

Such was the fury that Duff Green evoked from others. He had, on prior occasions, engaged in several duels and brawls, and the Blair assault would certainly not be his last physical confrontation. The attack came as a result of the passions engendered by the nullification crisis that gripped the nation during the early 1830s. Green, though he opposed the actual implementation of the doctrine, sympathized with the nullifiers of South Carolina and labeled the Union Party of that state, of which Blair was a member, as Tories. Infuriated by the slander in the columns of the *Telegraph* likening the Union Party to the American Loyalists of the Revolutionary era, Blair fumed and blustered and threatened to thrash Green. The editor ignored the threats, however, and continued the charge, provoking the congressman to carry out his assault. Green sued Blair, eventually winning three hundred and fifty dollars in damages—one dollar for each pound of his assailant.

Born in 1791, three years after the adoption of the U.S. Constitution, and passing away in 1875, two years before the purported end of Reconstruction, Duff Green led a long, eventful, and often volatile life, covering

an important span of the young nation's history, from its founding, through its near dissolution, to its bitter reunion. During these formative years of American history, Green engaged in numerous pursuits and ventures—pedagogical, military, legal, political, editorial, diplomatic, industrial, and financial. Some were successful, some were not. He took part in many of the great events that shaped the rising American republic, contributed a verse to a host of the major issues of his day, and rubbed shoulders with the foremost figures of antebellum and Civil War America, among them Andrew Jackson and Abraham Lincoln. One of Green's contemporaries put it succinctly when he suggested, as late as 1867, that Green's name was "a household word in all this country." Historians have also recognized Green's prominence in nineteenth-century America. William Freehling was correct, for example, when he suggested that "no antebellum American asked 'Who's he?' about Duff Green."<sup>1</sup>

Despite Green's prominence, surprisingly, no full-scale biography of this important figure exists; four dissertations, three master's theses, and a handful of articles are the only studies of Green to date. Yet, nearly everywhere I turned, prominent historians called for such a comprehensive study. Freehling has written, for example, "Duff Green, amazingly, still awaits his biographer." Thomas R. Hietala noted that "no biography exists of [Green]" and that his "colorful and controversial career merits an in-depth study." In the introduction of volume eleven of the *Papers of John C. Calhoun*, edited by W. Edwin Hemphill, Robert L. Meriwether, and Clyde Wilson, I read the passage, "Duff Green is possibly the most important American in the nineteenth century who lacks a full-scale biography. . . . [H]is career is more instructive and intrinsically interesting than that of scores of now better-known contemporaries."<sup>2</sup> Although prominent historians have called for a full-scale study of Green, they also epitomized the reason why such a study is needed. They simply assumed things about the man that were misleading or untrue. The real Duff Green, therefore, had to be located and uncovered.

I assumed that there was some reason for this omission: either the lack of primary materials precluded such a study, or the materials that

1. J. L. P. Smith to Asa Packer, October 18, 1867, Duff Green Papers, Southern Historical Collection, Wilson Library, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, hereafter cited as Green Papers, SHC-UNC. William W. Freehling, *The Road to Disunion: Secessionists at Bay, 1776–1854*, 385.

2. Freehling, *Disunion*, 607. W. Edwin Hemphill, Robert L. Meriwether, and Clyde Wilson, eds., *The Papers of John C. Calhoun*, 11: xxv, hereafter cited as *JCCP*.

did exist did not warrant the time and energy required to undertake the effort. I was grossly wrong on both accounts. There exists a great abundance of primary resources on Green. Indeed, the quantity is almost overwhelming. The Duff Green Papers consist of twenty-five reels in the Southern Historical Collection at the University of North Carolina and three reels in the Library of Congress. Hundreds of other letters to and from, and references about, can be found in nearly eighty other manuscript collections across the country, from the Huntington Library in California to the New York Public Library. The *U.S. Telegraph* alone encompasses sixteen reels—abundant material indeed.

The wealth of primary materials coupled with the absence of a full-scale study, however, do not alone justify writing a monograph on Green. His role in the development of Jacksonian politics and economy and his overall impact on the course of nineteenth-century America, however, beseech a study of this pivotal and misunderstood individual. Born and raised in the open and sometimes tumultuous environment of the American frontier, first Kentucky and then Missouri, Green had a rather distinguished ancestry. His forebears came to America with money and quickly acquired large landholdings in Virginia. Many of the family's males became members of the Virginia House of Burgesses, fought with distinction for American independence, claimed and settled extensive lands in the Trans-Appalachian West, helped write Kentucky's first constitution, and represented the newly admitted state on both the state and national levels. Green merely built upon this foundation, emerging in the 1820s as one of the most pivotal and widely recognized characters in nineteenth-century America.

Shortly after the War of 1812, Green quickly made a name for himself in the Missouri Territory. He became a land speculator, founded several towns, opened numerous mercantile outlets in St. Louis and other interior boomtowns, studied law and joined a distinguished firm, received an appointment by Governor William Clark as a brigadier general in the Missouri militia, served as a key member of the Missouri Constitutional Convention of 1820 and in the Missouri General Assembly, and emerged as a recognized editor after purchasing the *St. Louis Enquirer* from Thomas Hart Benton.

Following the controversial election of 1824, in which Green enthusiastically supported Andrew Jackson for president and John C. Calhoun for vice president, Jackson partisans persuaded Green to move to the nation's capital and assume the reins of the fledgling *United States Telegraph*. The paper quickly became the recognized organ of the 1828 Jackson campaign. Green also emerged as one of Jackson's chief political



advisors and an important organizer of the Democratic Party in the late 1820s and early 1830s. As such, he had a central role in the election of Andrew Jackson in 1828, in developing and publicizing the theme associating Jackson's election with the concurrent rise of the common man, and, ultimately, in the creation of the second American party system. The association with Jackson ended in 1831, when the president broke relations with Vice President Calhoun. Green, who believed Jackson to be the aggressor and Calhoun the victim, sided with the vice president and gradually lost all government patronage. The publicized final break between Jackson and Calhoun began with Green's participation in the whole sordid political affair. That break and the upheaval within the Democratic Party that followed, resulting in the second American party system, cannot be told without the direct involvement and influence of Duff Green.

Green's opposition to the popular president ultimately paid dividends when John Tyler ascended to the presidency following the death of Whig president William Henry Harrison. Giving up editorship of the *Telegraph* in 1837 in order to develop iron and coal lands in Virginia and Maryland, which, along with other lucrative business ventures, brought him considerable wealth, Green entered the diplomatic arena as America's goodwill ambassador and, for a time, the Tyler administration's official representative to England and France. He attempted to mend the rancor and bitterness undermining Anglo-American relations, and undertook an active campaign promoting free-trade policies as a means for restoring the American and international economy and healing the division between the United States and England. Green also emerged as a key player in the annexation of Texas, helping to shape the annexation policy of the Tyler administration and advising the president on Mexican-American relations. The story of Manifest Destiny must include Duff Green, for he epitomized its popularity and gave color to its character.

Green's adventures in Europe and southwestern North America accompanied his ventures in developing the American economy. Territorial expansion and economic expansion went hand-in-hand for Green. He emerged as a leading Jacksonian capitalist in the 1840s, promoting, planning, and developing extensive canal and railroad projects. Along with advancing internal improvements, he continued a family tradition, acquiring extensive landholdings throughout the United States and its territories. Green also dabbled in technological advancements, from rubber to the telegraph, and cultivated a deep interest in manufacturing, industry, and finance—areas for which he would become renowned

during and after the Civil War. In the end, Green directly influenced the Market Revolution as he had Manifest Destiny. There is no doubt, then, that a study of Green is as important as it is long overdue.

Despite the abundance of primary material, however, there is very little documentary evidence relating to Green's personal life. His own letters and writings, even his own autobiography, rarely touch on personal or family matters. The extensive collection of Green manuscripts tells little about his life away from the office and almost nothing about his daily routines, his recreational pursuits, and even his relationship with his wife and his children. Everything important in Green's life apparently centered on his professional endeavors. Few contemporaries of Green knew him outside of his public guise; modern scholars, as well, will find little that exposes the personal facets of the man.

In the final analysis, the extant evidence clearly demonstrates that Green was the quintessential Jacksonian American. He epitomized everything that came to symbolize Jacksonian politics, society, and economy: boisterous, dynamic, democratic, restless, innovative, controversial. There is little doubt that Green directly contributed to the making of Jacksonian America; in everything he did, he helped give Jacksonian America its distinctive character. This, of course, begs the question: did the man make the age, or did the age make the man? As in the age's most colorful figure, Andrew Jackson, the answer to this question is: both. The experiences of both Green and Jackson during the first two decades of the nineteenth century made them into nascent Jacksonian Democrats. By the 1820s, however, they turned their experiences into action, and thus made a direct impact on the course of Jacksonian politics, society, and economy. They directly contributed to the shaping of the unique events and issues that defined the Jacksonian era, from the 1820s and into the 1850s. In short, an age first made the men, and they then made the age.

But just what is a Jacksonian Democrat? Can we actually define one? And, for that matter, just what makes the period in question the Age of Jackson? Historians have debated these very questions over the last few decades. Some historians have defined the Jacksonian period by concentrating solely on national party politics, focusing on the major political issues of the day: the Bank War, internal improvements, nullification, campaigns and elections. Some have focused on sectional alignments and rivalries. Other historians have argued for class divisions, defining Jacksonian democracy as the struggle for power between the business class and the working class. Jacksonian revisionists of the 1960s and 1970s denied the centrality of national party politics and

national economic policies. By looking at voters, not the politicians, and employing a quantitative method of research into Jacksonian America and democracy, they argued that moral issues, such as temperance, keeping the Sabbath, Protestant-based education, and alien suffrage, determined the party identification of the American electorate. Additional studies of Jackson's day concentrate on the evolution of republicanism, ideological differences, rhetoric, party organization, regional or cultural influences, market changes, and even psychological distinctions—all in the effort to locate the meaning of Jacksonian America.<sup>3</sup>

For Duff Green, some of these interpretations and approaches would make sense; others he would outright discount. Certainly men reacted differently to the changes in American society during the 1820s and 1830s. Numerous and various factors—political, economic, ethnocultural, moral, psychological, ideological—indeed determined how one would vote and with which party one identified. Jacksonian democracy, as most periods of history, can be interpreted in monistic, dualistic, and pluralistic terms. But for this study, Jacksonian democracy is defined through the eyes of a single individual—Duff Green. What made Green a Jacksonian Democrat? What made him support Jackson and the Democracy? What turned him into a vehement opponent of Jackson? What issues, events, personalities, ideologies, and quirks made him a quintessential Jacksonian American? This study seeks to answer these questions, and help shed light on just what Jacksonian democracy is—but through the eyes of only a single individual, yet an individual who had a direct impact on the making of Jacksonian America.

The book explores the core of Green's role in the making of Jacksonian America: he directly helped elect Jackson and empower the Democratic Party, but quickly became one of Jackson's most detested apostates. Yet through his bitter divide with the Old Hero, Green continued to contribute to the character of Jacksonian democracy when no longer welcomed within the ranks of the Democracy. It sounds almost like a blatant contradiction, but a contradiction that many in Green's day shared. Only Jackson and a coterie of his followers labeled opposition to the Old Hero tantamount to opposition to the Democracy. Green, and many like him, believed otherwise. The point of contention for Green, and, therefore, the foundation for all his actions during the age of Jackson, centered upon the personal rivalry emerging between himself and the man he helped elect to the White House in 1828. But market changes in the American economy during the first half of the nine-

3. Daniel Feller, "Politics and Society: Towards a Jacksonian Synthesis," 135–61.

teenth century equally influenced Green. For Green, then, Jacksonian democracy was the combination of the dynamic, expansive, and innovative American society and economy spurred by the Market Revolution and the Transportation Revolution, coupled with the need to protect American republicanism from the recurring onslaught of executive power, conspiracies against liberty, and the corruption of those who held power. Capitalism and democracy could indeed coexist for Green. For many Democrats, however, they could not.

Despite the bitter hatred of each other after 1830, Jackson and Green had much in common. They shared similar experiences, demonstrated the same character traits, exhibited like behavior, and even pursued the same professional endeavors. During their early years, both men were lawyers, land speculators, merchants, politicians at the state level, delegates to their state constitutional conventions, generals in their territorial and state militias, veterans of the War of 1812, Indian fighters and ambassadors, haters of Henry Clay, and symbols of the West. Both men were controversial figures, to contemporaries as well as to scholars; they were temperamental, volatile, self-righteous, and determined, and each feared that conspiracies were always lurking about them. Little wonder, then, that both men had engaged in a number of duels and brawls. By the time Green and Jackson first met, in 1825, they had shared a great deal, professionally and personally. But these similarities in experiences and character traits were not all that uncanny; they were rather typical of the men who made Jacksonian America.

In choosing which figure had more of an impact on his day, however, no one can argue that Jackson far outweighed Green. But the latter figure certainly deserves more credit for influencing the events and issues of the day than historians have to date given him. The following study is of Duff Green and how he contributed—directly—to the making of Jacksonian America. It is both a story of how an age made a man and then how the man helped determine the age. It is also a story that cannot be told without the central character of the day, Andrew Jackson, and the political rivalries and partisan battles at the national level that surrounded the Old Hero. Interwoven throughout, moreover, is a story of how an individual's personality, character, and outlook can greatly influence one's actions, determine his course in life, affect those around him, and directly affect the age in which he lived. A rapidly changing society, the bitter political battles and rivalries that defined Jacksonian politics, and his personal behavior and demeanor all combined to make Green the quintessential Jacksonian American and Democrat.

## CHAPTER I



### Nascent Jacksonian

*Ancestry, Kentucky Days, and the Emergence of a Western Democrat*

The early family history of Duff Green validates the popular Turnerian notion of American settlement. The tale of his English and Scots forebears emerges as a textbook example of the fashionable, almost mythic, notion that permeates the American consciousness and perpetuates the near fictional chronicle of the planting of the American nation: the sturdy, indomitable Englishman, immigrating to the shores of Virginia in search of land and wealth, clearing the virgin forest and erecting homesteads, removing the “savage” and transplanting the rights of Englishmen, picking up and heading west, only to continue this unending and foreordained cycle of empire building. In the process, the oppressed Englishman-turned-American must struggle against great odds to overthrow the corrupt British tyranny that threatens to destroy him. His victory thus reveals the indomitable nature of his liberty, the strength of his individualism, and the inevitability of his quest westward across the American continent. These supposed inherent traits are so often recited about our colonial forebears that they dominate, even legitimize, this particular passage of American lore. Yet this colloquial version of the American experience indeed depicts the story of Duff Green’s ancestry.<sup>1</sup>

1. On Duff Green’s ancestry, from which the information in this chapter is taken, see Ben E. Green, “Genealogy of the Green Family,” Missouri Historical Society; Raleigh Travers Green, comp., *Genealogical and Historical Notes on Culpeper County, Virginia*, 61–69; “Descendants of Robert Green and Allied Families in the State of

At the age of seventeen, Green's great-grandfather, Robert Green, departed northern Ireland for the American colonies, arriving in Virginia with his Scots Quaker uncle, Sir William Duff, in 1712. Settling first in King George County, Green eventually made his permanent home near Brandy Station in Orange County, now Culpeper County. In 1732, Robert, along with his uncle and two other individuals, received a patent for 120,000 acres of land, scattered among the counties of Prince William, Augusta, Orange, Westmoreland, and King George. Green soon inherited his uncle's share of the extensive holdings, making him one of the largest landowners in colonial Virginia. His ownership of such a vast tract of land enabled him to emerge quickly as one of Orange County's leading citizens: captain of the county militia, one of the first vestrymen of St. Mark's Parish, and a member of the Virginia House of Burgesses in 1736. Before his death in 1748, he would have seven sons, all exceeding six feet in height and sporting red hair and beards. Known as the "Red Greens," in order to distinguish them from other Green families, Robert's sons would marry into the most distinguished families in Virginia—Lee, Willis, Barbour, Lewis, Henry, Price, Bayly, Marshall.<sup>2</sup>

Duff Green's grandfather, also named Duff, had married into the prominent and wealthy Willis family of Virginia, thus adding significantly to his own landholdings inherited from his father. Duff had little time to enjoy his extensive assets. He died in 1766, ten years before the War of Independence. Duff's brothers, however, would live to serve with distinction and high rank in the Patriot forces during the American Revolution. During the war, they obtained for Duff's widow, Ann, a large number of military warrants in the Kentucky district. Ann would not move to these lands until after the war had ended, accompanying her sons as they took our Duff Green's lineage from the Blue

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Virginia," 77–80, 213–15; "Willis Family," 206–13; "Ann Willis Who Married Duff Green," 206–7; "Notes and Queries," 207–8; "Genealogy," 103; Duff Green, *Facts and Suggestions, Biographical, Historical, Financial, and Political, Addressed to the People of the United States*, 6. Additional information on Green's ancestry and his years in Kentucky is found in the extensive records and holdings of the Kentucky Historical Society library and archives, hereafter cited as KHS, and the Kentucky State Library and Archives, hereafter cited as KLA.

2. There are conflicting records regarding Robert Green's birthplace. Some sources say he was born in Green's Norton in Northampton County, England, and others cite Antrim, North Ireland. Robert Green married Eleanor Duff, of Scotland. Robert Green's father, William, was an officer in the bodyguard of William III (Prince of Orange).

Ridge to the Bluegrass. She died in 1820, and a monument was erected in her honor at Old Fort Reed, near Danville—a site her grandson, Duff Green, often proudly evoked.<sup>3</sup>

Green's father, William, had also served in the American Revolution, fighting at the age of fifteen at the famous Battle of Cowpens. The Kentucky he and his brothers brought their mother to following independence was already undergoing substantial growth. The entire region encompassing the modern state of Kentucky had been a single county of Virginia, but in 1780, it was subdivided into three large counties, Lincoln being the largest. William Green first settled here in the mid-1780s, along with many of his kin. A fierce Indian war consumed Kentucky from 1781 through 1782, the bloodiest in the future state's history, but it was not enough to stem the tide of migration to the country south of the Ohio. In 1785, the total population of Kentucky most likely doubled that of all the rest of the nation's western regions combined, north and south of the Ohio. By the time William Green married Ann Marshall in the summer of 1790, the first federal census recorded 73,000 residents in Kentucky. The next year, William and Ann relocated to Woodford County, in the heart of the Bluegrass country, where on August 15, 1791, they had their first of ten children, Duff Green. The following year, Kentucky entered the Union as the fifteenth state.<sup>4</sup>

Like his own forebears, Green's father quickly emerged as a wealthy Kentucky landowner. Immediately upon settling in Woodford County, he acquired a thousand acres and a large dwelling, adjacent to the property of his wife's cousin, Humphrey Marshall. During the 1790s, Green's father would amass a sizable landed empire in the rich Bluegrass region. By the tumultuous presidential campaign between Thomas Jefferson and John Adams, William Green had acquired nearly eight thousand acres strewn throughout the valleys and along rivers and

3. Duff's father-in-law, Henry Willis, served in the House of Burgesses and was one of the founders of Fredericksburg, Virginia. Willis made his home on Marye's Heights, where, in December of 1862, Confederate forces killed nearly four thousand Union soldiers in little over a half hour. John Green (1730–1793), younger brother of Duff Green, also a veteran of the French and Indian War, was captain of the First Virginia (September 1775), promoted to major (August 1776), wounded at Mamaroneck (October 1776), promoted to lieutenant colonel (March 1777), distinguished at the battles of Brandywine and Guildford Courthouse, promoted to colonel of the Tenth Virginia (January 1778) and later the Sixth Virginia (September 1778), served until 1783, and died in Culpeper County, Virginia. William Green, Duff Green's oldest sibling, also served in the French and Indian War. James Green, another younger brother of Duff Green, served as a captain of Virginia troops during the French and Indian War and as a major in the Culpeper militia during the American Revolution.

4. Population figures from Francis S. Philbrick, *The Rise of the West, 1754–1830*, 90.

runs of the Bluegrass in Woodford, Fayette, Scott, Clark, Franklin, and Bourbon Counties; he had even acquired extensive acreage in the Green River region, south and southwest of the Bluegrass country, in Pulaski, Logan, and Warren Counties. Along with his own lands, he administered the lands of his relatives, both Green and Marshall, and hundreds of acres for nonrelatives.<sup>5</sup>

William Green's accumulation of landed wealth was anything but an aberration in 1790s Kentucky. From statehood through the first decade of the nineteenth century, the Kentucky Bluegrass region underwent a rapid process of gentrification, enticing many of Virginia's landed elite to relocate in central Kentucky. By the War of 1812, the Bluegrass mirrored Virginia's Tidewater. Alongside tobacco, Bluegrass gentry added hemp, grain, and livestock. Livestock, more than any other commodity, offered the greatest market advantage for Kentucky farmers, and William Green attempted to capitalize on this sector of the economy. Along with his first purchase of acreage, he acquired a small herd of cattle, which he doubled by 1800. Horse breeding had also become a specialty of the Bluegrass gentry, at which William Green also tried his hand, increasing the number of his horses to over a dozen by 1800. Still, William Green's pursuit of land always overshadowed the cultivation of livestock or the breeding of horses. By the War of 1812, his cattle herd never amounted to more than twenty head, and his ownership of horses wavered between nine and sixteen. Hemp, tobacco, or grain never captured Green's attention.<sup>6</sup>

Land and livestock, and hemp and tobacco, were certainly not the only "commodities" that engaged the Bluegrass gentry. Slavery had migrated from the Tidewater as well. The mixed farming that dominated the Bluegrass, however, precluded the ownership of large numbers of slaves. Slave labor was not conducive to the raising of livestock or to the cultivation of tobacco and hemp in Kentucky, and, therefore, the institution developed slowly in the Bluegrass. In 1790, for example, Kentucky ranked seventh in total slave population, wedged in between New York and New Jersey, with 17.4 percent of Kentucky heads of households owning slaves. By the turn of the century, that number had increased slightly to 25.2 percent. An unfriendly competition between free and slave labor had also developed within the Bluegrass during the 1790s, as traditional small farms gradually succumbed to the culture of the landed gentry. The proslavery forces prevailed when

5. For an excellent study of the development of Kentucky's Bluegrass region, see Stephen Aron, *How the West Was Lost: The Transformation of Kentucky from Daniel Boone to Henry Clay*.

6. Aron, *Lost*, 124–49.



Kentucky rewrote its constitution in 1799, guaranteeing the protection of the domestic institution and ensuring its place in the Bluegrass economy and society. Here again, as in land and livestock, William Green represented the emerging Bluegrass gentry. The acquisition of several slaves attended his initial purchase of land and livestock, and, again as he had with his land and livestock, doubled his number of slaves by 1800, increasing the number by 1810 to fourteen. William Green certainly appeared to be the quintessential Bluegrass gentleman—but only for a time.<sup>7</sup>

When Duff Green was about fourteen years old, sometime around 1805 or 1806, his father sold his holdings in the Bluegrass and moved the family to the eastern fringe of the Green River country, in Wayne County, along the Cumberland River. But this move was not an aberration of events unfolding in early 1800s Kentucky either. The gentrification of the Green River country soon mimicked that of the Bluegrass region, and William Green was part of this phenomenon as well. During the 1790s, nonslaveholding family farms dominated the landscape of the Green River country, and legislators from the region consistently assailed the aristocratic tendencies of the Bluegrass gentry, attempting to contain the Bluegrass system. Within the first two decades of the nineteenth century, however, the yeoman farmers yielded to the Bluegrass economy and society, and the Green River landscape quickly mirrored that of the Bluegrass. The “blueing” of the Green River region entailed a dramatic growth in the number of slaves after 1810, seeing an eightfold increase by the end of the decade. The region also witnessed a boom in tobacco cultivation. In Green River country, William Green continued his pursuit of extensive landownership, acquiring several thousand acres of river bottomland and administering thousands of more acres for other Kentuckians. By 1820, he had also increased his slave count to twenty-six, bolstered by a count of ten free blacks. As the most affluent in the Cumberland region in and around Wayne County owned about twenty slaves, Green’s father undoubtedly stood as one of the wealthiest landowners in the area.<sup>8</sup>

7. Freehling, *Road to Disunion*, 132; Aron, *Lost*, 91, 94–95, 100–101; Craig Thompson Friend, “Work and Be Rich’: Economy and Culture on the Bluegrass Farm,” in Craig Thompson Friend, ed., *The Buzzel about Kentuck: Settling the Promised Land*, 125–51.

8. Aron, *Lost*, 150–69; Harriette S. Arnow, *Seedtime on the Cumberland*, 244; Woodford County Tax Assessments, KLA, roll no. 8289; Wayne County Tax Assessments, KLA, roll no. 8269; 1820 U.S. Census.

Just why William Green moved his family from the Bluegrass to the Green River country remains unclear. But several factors may shed light on the unusual move—a move that may have been very unpopular with the teenage Duff Green, yet due to factors that may have influenced the young Green and set him on the course toward a natural affinity for Jacksonian democracy. First, the Bluegrass gentry grew more and more exclusive by the early 1800s. As one scholar has noted, the “pyramid of land and slave ownership in the Bluegrass region eliminated all but a handful of aspirants.” In William Green’s Woodford County, for example, one in twelve householders in the 1790s owned more than one thousand acres; by 1810 that number had declined to one in twenty-two. Also in Woodford County, slaveowners composed a majority of households by 1825, but only a small faction of these heads of households reached planter status. Quite possibly, William Green may have fallen through the cracks, never attaining membership in that elite planter class.<sup>9</sup>

A more dramatic factor may have caused Green’s father to leave the Bluegrass for the Green River country—he may have lost his Bluegrass landholdings through litigation. During the late 1700s and the early 1800s, Kentucky was renowned for its litigious land culture. Competing land claims and mounting animosity against land speculators resulted in a substantial proliferation of lawsuits, and even provoked a number of bloody confrontations between homesteaders and speculators. Vigilance on the part of the landowner was paramount, and knowledge of the law may have been the only factor allowing one to survive the legal process and retain his lands. As such, legislators and lawyers—all in the name of streamlining the process and reducing the litigiousness pervading Kentucky—used the courts to take large amounts of land from their competitors. William Green was not a lawyer, and he may have paid the consequences. The lack of any court records providing evidence of Green’s loss, however, brings this factor into question. Still, Green may have been forced to sell rather than face a lawsuit he felt he could not win.<sup>10</sup>

A final reason, and certainly a more cogent one, for William Green’s unusual move stems from the above two—Green was plainly on the wrong side of the fence when it came to Kentucky politics. During the 1790s and early 1800s, the gentrification of the Bluegrass—its economic

9. Aron, *Lost*, 127–28.

10. Aron, *Lost*, 58, 82, 83, 85.

and social transformation, the increasing exclusiveness of the Bluegrass aristocracy, and the legal clout employed by Kentucky elite to remove competing land claims—gave rise to a powerful political faction headed by Henry Clay. Clay epitomized the Bluegrass system, molding it, empowering it, and ensuring it as a permanent feature of the Bluegrass region. Opposing Clay in the political arena was the Marshall family of Kentucky—William Green’s in-laws. His wife’s cousin, Humphrey Marshall, was one of the preeminent statesmen in Kentucky’s formative period. The cousin of future Supreme Court chief justice John Marshall, it was Humphrey’s own services to Kentucky that defined his distinguished career and reputation. After studying law and being admitted to the Kentucky bar, he took up the practice of law in Fayette County. In 1787, county residents elected him as a delegate to the Danville Convention of 1788, which considered the separation of Kentucky from Virginia, a proposition that the young Kentuckian opposed. The next year, Marshall was again elected to another convention, this one more famous—the Virginia Convention that narrowly ratified the Constitution of the United States. Following Kentucky’s statehood, he served in the state’s house of representatives in 1793, 1807, 1808, and 1823. In 1795, the Kentucky legislature promoted Humphrey, a Federalist, to the United States Senate, where he sat continuously until the end of his term in 1801.<sup>11</sup>

The political connection between the Greens and the Marshalls proved strong. According to Duff Green, his mother and Humphrey’s wife were “intimate friends,” and Marshall’s political services were frequently mentioned. The distinguished Federalist senator and the equally prominent Republican rising star regularly battled in the political arena. This antagonistic relationship directly affected the young Green, for he learned early of the anti-Clay sentiment in his family. The two rival politicians disagreed on nearly every political issue during the 1790s, especially over the unpopular Jay Treaty of 1795, which Marshall supported as energetically as the young Clay fought it.

To make matters worse for William Green, Marshall, as the Green family lawyer, constantly faced off against Clay in the courts when the latter represented claimants to the Green family lands. Such conflict at times directly affected the young Green, for some of his schoolmates were either children of his father’s tenants or the children of those who held adverse titles still under legal proceedings. Consequently, there were frequent “collisions” upon leaving school at the end of the day. “As

11. *Biographical Directory of the American Congress, 1774–1961*, 1265.

party politics were of absorbing interest, and the political feeling was aggravated by the pending litigation," recalled Green in 1866, "the prejudice thus created had, doubtless, its influence upon the estimate which I afterwards formed of Mr. Clay's conduct and character." By the early 1820s, Green had turned his negative view of Harry of the West into an almost bitter hatred. Politics combined with constant litigation, then, may have been the reason why William Green left the Bluegrass and headed southward.<sup>12</sup>

Regardless of the motives behind William Green's move, the aforementioned factors may have had an equally significant impact on his son. The rise of the Bluegrass gentry and its political empowerment under the leadership of Clay may have shaped directly the early political development of young Duff Green, laying the foundation for a nascent Jacksonian. From his earliest political writings, Green assailed aristocracy and vehemently promoted the advance of democracy. He made this his central theme during the 1828 presidential election, and he made this the primary reason why he broke with and then opposed Jackson and Van Buren. The aristocracy stole from the common man, he consistently argued, just as Clay and his ilk may have stolen from William Green or Humphrey Marshall, or just as he believed Adams and Clay had robbed Jackson and Calhoun, and so on through the unending struggle between power and liberty in antebellum America. Throughout his political career, Green always returned to the central Republican theme of power versus liberty, always defending the latter in the wake of the former's advance. His preoccupation with this traditional struggle may have been formed in reaction to the legal and political struggles between his father and relatives on the one side and Clay and his Bluegrass gentry on the other.

The tedious and time-consuming oversight of such extensive landholdings, made even more burdensome by the pervasive litigation of the day, demanded a great deal of William Green's time and attention. Green recalled that his father was "much from home" during his childhood years, attending to his various land interests. Consequently, he

12. Green, *Facts and Suggestions*, 7; Autobiographical Fragments, Green Papers, SHC-UNC. Green states erroneously that Humphrey Marshall was the uncle of John Marshall, but corrects this in *Facts and Suggestions*. Autobiographical Fragments, Green Papers, SHC-UNC. Of course, the most obvious reason for William Green's move could be chalked up simply to the desire to seek out new territory, or to arrive eventually at a more preferred destination further west or southwest. Who knows, maybe William Green had set his sights on Tennessee, or even the lower Mississippi Valley. Wayne County indeed had more in common with east and middle Tennessee than the rest of Kentucky.

developed a very close relationship with his mother. She was, Green recalled many years later, “my companion and friend.” Her “intelligent comment” on the various lessons in history which he read to her, “and upon the events of the War of the Revolution, and her description of frontier life, did much to form my character.” Throughout his life, Green frequently employed the numerous anecdotes she regularly recited.<sup>13</sup>

As for the relationship between father and son, little is known, except that it was distant, cold, and possibly strained. Not only had his father spent little time with him, what time he was around may have been dominated with an uneasy strictness. Green recalled that his father was a devout Baptist, who regularly imparted to his son the virtues of regular church attendance. Moral instruction was standard behavior for William Green. On the day that Green permanently left home, for example, his father instructed him to avoid the evils of gambling and retold of his own life at cards and the vices that attended such behavior. Here again, William Green exhibited the seemingly contradictory duality that dominated the Bluegrass and, more especially, the Green River gentry. The gentry enjoyed drinking and gambling, whether at cards or on horses. William Green must have taken pleasure in such behavior during the 1790s. Yet the evangelical movement arrived in Kentucky around the time of Jefferson’s election, forever altering the cultural landscape of both Bluegrass and Green River country. Although the Bluegrass system coexisted uncomfortably with the evangelical invasion, the Great Revival captured the Green River country, resulting in a dramatic growth in church membership. Baptists (along with Methodists) gained the largest number of adherents from 1800 to 1801; an 1810 revival of the Great Revival merely ensconced forever the evangelical spirit on southern Kentucky.<sup>14</sup>

Green reacted harshly at first to his father’s Baptist leanings and to the evangelical movement. As a young man, he continually encountered the more liberal religious views of others and even felt relieved by the argument proffered by those around him, outside his family, that the Bible was the work of man, and that the godly punishment of sins was imaginary. For several years, the searching pilgrim became engrossed in a consuming internal spiritual struggle. Then, influenced by passages in an ancient history text, he turned directly to the Scriptures. From this he became convinced of divine revelation, of divine in-

13. Green, *Facts and Suggestions*, 7, 8; Autobiographical Fragments, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

14. Aron, *Lost*, 170–91.

spiration as revealed in the Scriptures. All at once, he admitted, “the way of life seemed opened to me, and the glory of the Redeemer was made manifest, even like the Revelation which fell upon Paul.” His parents reveled in his conversion, and Green would never doubt again.<sup>15</sup>

Because of the apparent division between father and son, Green’s only reference to his father came in his autobiography, written in 1866; nowhere in any of his writings, from his days in Kentucky and Missouri, throughout his three decades of service at the national level, to the end of the Civil War, did Green ever mention his father—and as the first son of a parent with so much economic clout as had William Green, it brings suspicion upon their relationship. For that matter, Green rarely ever mentioned or conversed in any way with his siblings—possibly a result of the strained relationship with his father. In the end, Green never inherited any of his father’s property, real or personal. But the damage apparently had already been inflicted, for Green’s own personality and demeanor—his obstinacy, his self-righteous attitude, his own strictness that will be revealed on countless occasions—may have found its origins in the relationship with his father.

The massive acquisition of land that consumed his father and resulted in strained relations with his son was not the only major influence on Green’s early development. From his earliest age, Duff Green found himself surrounded and indelibly imprinted by politics. The Marshall connection has already been mentioned, but the Green side also had a significant political impact on the young Green. Although his father appears never to have assumed any political role in Kentucky, public service had been as much a Green family pastime as landownership. Green’s great uncles, John Green and William Green, like their father, Robert, had been members of the Virginia House of Burgesses. The following generation of Greens was more conspicuous in the political realm. Willis Green, Green’s uncle, represented Jefferson County in the Virginia assembly in 1781, served as clerk of the court for Lincoln County from 1783 until 1814 and as deputy registrar of the Virginia land office for Kentucky from 1783 to 1792, attended the Danville Conventions of 1785 and 1788, was a member of the Kentucky state constitutional convention of 1792, represented Grayson County in the Kentucky legislature in 1836 and 1837, and was a Whig congressman from Kentucky during the Twenty-sixth, Twenty-seventh, and

15. Green, *Facts and Suggestions*, 8; Autobiographical Fragments, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

Twenty-eighth U.S. Congresses. Green's cousin, John Green, was a Kentucky state senator from 1826 to 1832.<sup>16</sup>

Along with land and politics, education had become a major influence on the young Green as well. At the age of six, Green first attended a neighborhood school. His instruction, however, exceeded the typical grammar schooling of the day. Early on, Green began to read the histories of Greece, Rome, and England; he read Plutarch and other "miscellaneous books." Humphrey Marshall's wife loaned numerous books from her private library to the young boy, and when he returned each book, she quizzed him on the contents. By the time his family had moved to Wayne County, he had not only studied math, geography, and grammar as taught in the country schools, but he had also read the first books of Virgil in Latin.<sup>17</sup>

Green, however, spent little time at his new home along the Cumberland. When he was fourteen, shortly after his family's move to Wayne County, Green went off to Danville to attend school. He remained there for the next eighteen months. During that year and a half, Green commenced his first career—teaching. When on vacation from his studies, he taught his siblings at home, and did so for the next four years, tutoring at the same time several other students in order to produce a meager income. He earned enough to purchase a watch, a horse, a bridle and saddle, and a "suit of Sunday clothes," and still have ten dollars cash in his pocket. Green then applied for an opening at a public academy in Elizabethtown in Hardin County. The trustees accepted him, and in 1811 he made what he assumed would be a permanent residence there. While teaching school, he augmented his income by taking in boarders on behalf of Hardin Academy. In the spring semester of 1814 alone, the young teacher received eighty dollars in boarding and tuition from three students.<sup>18</sup>

Green's quick departure from his home on the Cumberland, moreover, was another clear indication that Green and his father had split

16. On Willis Green, see Hugh A. Ridenour, *The Greens of Falls of Rough*.

17. Green, *Facts and Suggestions*, 7; Autobiographical Fragments, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

18. Green, *Facts and Suggestions*, 7; Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Daniel E. McClure Jr., *Two Centuries in Elizabethtown and Hardin County, Kentucky*; Francis T. Ingmire, comp., *Hardin County Kentucky Will Book "B", 1810–1816* (St. Louis: Ingmire Publications, 1982), 168. Green's cousin, Lewis Warner Green, son of Willis Green, had a very distinguished career in education: he studied in Europe, acquired a doctor of divinity degree, and successively served as president of Hampden-Sidney College in Virginia, Transylvania University in Kentucky, and Centre College in Danville, Kentucky. His daughter would eventually marry Vice President Adlai E. Stevenson. "Genealogy," 213.

ways. As Francois Michaux noted, as he traveled throughout Kentucky during its formative period, “so decided a preference to agriculture, that there are very few [Kentuckians] who put their children to any trade, wanting their services in the field.” Duff Green would never work in his father’s fields; he would never tend his livestock or trade in his lands. Wealthy landowning and slaveowning fathers, in addition, would have provided their sons with land, and possibly slaves, as soon as they reached majority and married. Duff Green obviously wanted none of it, leaving behind his father forever. He would rather teach than embark on the family tradition of acquiring land and slaves.<sup>19</sup>

As a teacher, Green was known as a “strict disciplinarian” who made “free use of the rod,” as Green’s bunkmate at the time recalled in later years. Demonstrating “no partiality between the rich and the poor,” Green let it be known in no uncertain terms that “order and discipline at all hazards had to be observed.” An early example of Green’s strictness, stubbornness, and demand for order and discipline, enforced by the rod, occurred during his tenure as a teacher at Hardin Academy. One of his students, John Helm, future governor of Kentucky during the Civil War and early Reconstruction years, committed a minor infraction, to which Green demanded a prompt apology. When the young Helm refused to acknowledge his transgression, Green whipped him severely. The severity of the whipping only increased as a result of Helm’s refusal to be broken and Green’s equally intense determination to break the student. Green finally halted the punishment when blood began to show through Helm’s clothing. Helm resolved to return the flogging in due time, but when the two men met again, Green was an old man and Helm a prominent Kentucky statesman. When the teacher and student saw each other, they rushed to each and embraced affectionately, all previous animosity forgotten.<sup>20</sup>

With the outbreak of the war between the United States and Great Britain in 1812, the trustees of Hardin Academy released Green so that he could enlist in the army. Thus began another career for the man who would, by his death, be recognized for his many employments and pursuits, that of a soldier defending the western frontier. Along with ten of his classmates, Green immediately joined a company of mounted volunteers raised by Kentucky congressman, and later governor of the Florida Territory (from 1822 to 1834), William P. Duvall. On August 15,

19. Quote from Aron, *Lost*, 137.

20. Samuel Haycraft, *A History of Elizabethtown, Kentuck*, 141; McClure, *Two Centuries*, 278–79.



1812—his twenty-first birthday—he was mustered into service at Jeffersonville, Indiana, under the command of General William Henry Harrison. Known as the “Yellow Jackets,” Green and his company would quickly distinguish themselves in battle.<sup>21</sup>

The young recruit never encountered a British soldier. His military service was limited to fighting the Indian menace that threatened the vast American frontier. Even before the official declaration of war between the United States and Britain, warfare engulfed the Old Northwest. In early fall of 1812, Tecumseh, the great Shawnee Indian unifier and military chieftain, launched a reign of terror against the settlers of the Indiana Territory. Numerous American settlements and frontier outposts fell under the redman’s knife. The heaviest blow was struck at Fort Harrison, about sixty miles north of Vincennes. There, Captain Zachary Taylor and a garrison of fifty men, most of whom were gravely ill, successfully repulsed a bitter and prolonged Indian attack. Before retreating, however, the raiders slaughtered all the cattle, hogs, and horses grazing in the vicinity and torched one of the blockhouses, which had contained most of the provisions for the weary American defenders. All that remained was a cornfield five miles away from the outpost.<sup>22</sup>

Green became an active participant in the conflict relating to the defense and relief of Fort Harrison in the fall and winter of 1812. His regiment of Kentucky volunteers first marched to Vincennes, where Green, commissioned as a private, assumed the role of company drillmaster. Then, in mid-September, Colonel William Russell organized a column of twelve hundred men to relieve Taylor and his besieged garrison at Fort Harrison. Thirteen days later, the regiment reached the fort and repulsed the Indian attackers. Green’s company was one of the units that marched to the rescue of Fort Harrison.<sup>23</sup>

The march to Fort Harrison, however, was very trying for Green and his fellow soldiers. An Indian war party attacked one of the wagons hauling provisions, killing the men and destroying the supplies, leav-

21. McClure, *Two Centuries*, 104, 154; Haycraft, *History*, 111; Green, *Facts and Suggestions*, 7. William P. Duvall was the archetype for Washington Irving’s literary figure “Ralph Ringwood” and James K. Paulding’s “Nimrod Wildfire.” See *Biographical Directory*, 839. Two of Duff Green’s cousins, both sons of Willis Green, also served in the War of 1812: cousin Duff Green was a surgeon with the rank of major, and John Green, who saw action at the Battle of the Thames, was a brigade major on the staff of General Calmes. “Willis Family,” 213.

22. John K. Mahon, *The War of 1812*, 67; K. Jack Bauer, *Zachary Taylor: Soldier, Planter, Statesman of the Old Southwest*, 11–12, 13–16; Alec R. Gilpin, *The War in the Old Northwest*, 137–39; A. C. Duddleston, “Fort Harrison in History,” 22–24.

23. Mahon, *War of 1812*, 67; Bauer, *Zachary Taylor*, 17; Green, *Facts and Suggestions*, 13; Autobiographical Fragments, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

ing the army with only the seven days of rations each man carried. The attack forced Colonel Russell to leave a small garrison at Fort Harrison and return to protect Vincennes. Few desired to remain at the fort, and when no one volunteered for what seemed like a suicidal task, Private Green stepped forward and tendered the services of his company. Since Green had acted without the permission of his superior officer, the headstrong private angered his company commander. Nonetheless, the unit remained to guard the outpost. Years later, after General Taylor was elected president, Green called on him, and when Green's friend attempted to introduce him, Taylor interrupted. "Oh, sir, I knew General Green long before you did." Surprised, Green replied that he did not think the president would have remembered him. "I will never forget," recalled Taylor, "that you volunteered your [company] to remain at Fort Harrison."<sup>24</sup>

While at Fort Harrison, Green took part in several scouting excursions along the Wabash River. These reconnoiters revealed that the Indians had reduced their presence in the vicinity, thereby allowing small hunting parties to replenish food supplies inside the fort. At the same time, the company commander and all the noncommissioned officers united in a request that Private Green take charge as the company orderly, an office he readily accepted. Although orderly Sergeant Green agreed to take the post on the condition that he still be allowed to participate in scouting duties, the new job requirements kept him confined to the outpost. Most likely his "promotion" was reward for his unpopular initiative in volunteering the unit for the defense of Fort Harrison.<sup>25</sup>

Despite the forays of the hunting parties, the provisions at the fort soon dwindled, both in quantity and quality. Sickness resulted, and since the garrison had little or no assurance that it would be relieved by reserve forces, the fort's commander decided to return to Vincennes. On the march back, Green, second in command, had the duty of covering the company's rear. Two of the soldiers, sick and weary, collapsed along the trail, certain they would perish there. When Green came upon them, he took their packs, forced them to continue, and assured

24. Green, *Facts and Suggestions*, 14; Bauer, *Zachary Taylor*, 17.

25. Green, *Facts and Suggestions*, 14–15; Autobiographical Fragments, Green Papers, SHC-UNC. The only record of Green's service in the War of 1812, other than his own, lists him as a surgeon's mate in Barbee's Regiment of Kentucky Militia, and gives the date of his appointment as August 10, 1812, and his date of discharge as September 22, 1812. Minnie S. Wilder, comp., *Kentucky Soldiers of the War of 1812*, 71.

them that soon, very soon, they would encounter relieving American forces. His prediction proved correct.<sup>26</sup>

While Green's company faced the hardships of defending Fort Harrison, General Harrison had decided to take the offensive by attacking Indian villages all along the Indiana frontier. In order to halt the devastating Indian raids, Harrison employed small, swift-moving units. As part of this new strategy, the ambitious Brigadier General Samuel Hopkins and a force of about two thousand—Green recollected a force of three thousand—mounted Kentucky riflemen had been dispatched to Fort Harrison, whereupon they encountered the retreating unit and incorporated into their own ranks those men still strong enough to fight, including Duff Green. Hopkins then set out to destroy the villages of the Kickapoo and the Peoria, a hundred miles away. After acquiring a horse, Green joined the force under an independent command. The expedition immediately faced significant obstacles: the guides became lost; Indians countered by setting the prairie on fire, which U.S. troops extinguished by creating a backdraft; provisions ran low; and morale plummeted. Hopkins could not convince his troops to march a step further, and when a council of his officers recommended abandonment of the mission, the distraught general could only capitulate. The dejected force returned to Fort Harrison, Green rejoined his company, and most of the Kentucky volunteers headed back to their state where they were to be discharged. Green, however, remained. He would take part in one last mission—this time, a more successful one.<sup>27</sup>

General Hopkins refused to be beaten and decided to make another attempt to destroy the Indian villages, which served as the staging areas for raids on the frontier. He assembled a motley regiment of Kentucky militiamen, Taylor's regulars, a company of rangers, and a few scouts, totaling about twelve hundred men. In November, the American force set out from Fort Harrison for Tippecanoe. They burned 40 dwellings at Prophetstown, 140 at a Kickapoo village, and 160 at a Winnebago town, and destroyed every Indian crop they could find—all without opposition. Hopkins then dispatched several detachments to plunder the remaining countryside. The only casualty came when Indians attacked one of these patrols, killing a soldier. When a force of sixty men, which included Green, went to retrieve the slain soldier, they were ambushed. Eighteen soldiers were killed (Green remem-

26. Green, *Facts and Suggestions*, 15.

27. Mahon, *War of 1812*, 68–69; Bauer, *Zachary Taylor*, 17–18; Gilpin, *Old Northwest*, 147–48; Green, *Facts and Suggestions*, 15; Haycraft, *History*, 142.

bered sixteen dead and seven wounded) and Green's horse was shot in the neck. One of the casualties was a lieutenant in Green's original company who had been given command of the force at Fort Harrison before the arrival of Hopkins.<sup>28</sup>

Upon the death of the lieutenant, Green was elected to command the company. Soon thereafter, he returned to Vincennes in charge of a detachment of sick soldiers. Bitter cold had taken its toll on the troops. Even Green experienced some frostbite. At this point he himself became gravely ill. Had it not been for the diligent care given him by the mother and sister of the future territorial and first U.S. congressman from Missouri, John Scott, he might well have perished there. He certainly thought so. One of the members of his company also nursed Green, who soon recovered fully. Upon expiration of their enlistment, Green and his companion departed Vincennes and headed back home to Kentucky.<sup>29</sup>

As Green neared home, his faithful dog Lion greeted him a full two miles down the road. Soon, his family surrounded him, and with the same joy expressed by his cherished pet, celebrated the very early return of War of 1812 veteran Duff Green. After a short visit with his kindred, Green resumed his teaching duties at Hardin Academy, while at the same time beginning the study of medicine. He purchased a set of medical volumes, a medical chest, and medical supplies, but never completed his medical training. Still, while the War of 1812 continued, Green desired to return to the field of battle. In the summer of 1814, he attempted to raise a volunteer unit of Kentucky soldiers and join the ranks of Andrew Jackson's forces in the Southern theater. The effort failed, and his desire to aid Jackson would have to wait another decade.<sup>30</sup>

Like a great many of his countrymen, defense of home and hearth from the tomahawk was not the sole reason Green entered the conflict in 1812. Ideology played a central role as well. While the banner of "Free Trade and Sailors Rights" flew from many a U.S. vessel, and the desire ran strong to once again make America independent of Great

28. Mahon, *War of 1812*, 69–70; Bauer, *Zachary Taylor*, 19–20. Gilpin, *Old Northwest*, 149–50, cites sixteen killed and three wounded, which is closer to Green's count. Green, *Facts and Suggestions*, 15; Autobiographical Fragments, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

29. Green, *Facts and Suggestions*, 15, 16; Autobiographical Fragments, Green Papers, SHC-UNC. Green completed his tour of duty with the rank of "surgeon"; see Anderson C. Quisenberry, *Kentucky in the War of 1812*, 179.

30. Green, *Facts and Suggestions*, 16; Autobiographical Fragments, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

Britain, Green believed that the war with the British was not one of conquest, but one of defense. Unlike many of his countrymen, however, he vehemently opposed the conquest of Canada. “We fight not for extended rule,” he declared, “but for the people’s rights.” As such, the United States could not in good conscience threaten the rights of the Canadian people. “Let us not take from them the rights which their government & Nature secure them,” Green contended to a friend, “but if we can, let us yield our conquest to Britain that she may know that her glory may be tarnished by an American war and that we may again have peace.” Green may not have been far off the mark in his assertions, for one of the results of the War of 1812 was the realization on the part of the United States that it would never incorporate its neighbor to the north. It would not be, however, the last time Green would call for war against Great Britain in the name of defending American honor and interest.<sup>31</sup>

Following his return to Kentucky, Green married Lucretia Maria Edwards, of Todd County, in November of 1813. The Greens would have nine children, the best known being Benjamin Green (born in Todd County), the U.S. minister to Mexico during the Tyler administration, a business partner in many of his father’s endeavors, especially railroads, and a Georgia politico during the second half of the nineteenth century. Their second daughter, Margaret, married Andrew Calhoun, the son of John C. Calhoun. Green’s marriage to Lucretia reinforced his connection to Western Democratic politics. His wife was the sister of Ninian Edwards, then territorial governor of Illinois and the first U.S. senator from that state upon its admission to the Union in 1818. Like the Marshalls and the Greens, Edwards had a distinguished career in early Kentucky politics. He was elected to the state house in 1795—before he had reached his majority—serving three terms; he also served as judge of the general court of Kentucky in 1803, judge of the circuit court in 1804, judge of the court of appeals in 1806, and chief justice of the state in 1808.<sup>32</sup>

A staunch supporter of Jefferson and his Republican Party, Edwards would have a significant impact on Green’s political development. The two men would maintain a close relationship until the latter’s death, consistently sharing the same political outlook and philosophy. In fact, it was Edwards that gave Green his start on the national political

31. Green to Capt. Leslie Combs, August 7, 1814, Duff Green Papers, Personal Miscellaneous Collection, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations; hereafter cited as NYPL.

32. *Biographical Directory of the American Congress, 1774–1961*, 850.

stage. Little wonder then, that Green was predisposed to American politics from his Kentucky days—the Greens, the Marshalls, and now the Edwards, all had preeminent political roles in the early West. They had unwittingly laid the foundations for a nascent Jacksonian, a Western Democrat and Republican, who espoused a moderate proslavery bent and a strong desire for internal improvements, cheap land, and westward expansion.

Shortly after his marriage, Green entered into the first of his many business ventures, becoming a country merchant in Elizabethtown, Kentucky. He and his wife boarded with Ben Helm, with whom Green soon formed a partnership, in which Helm headed to Philadelphia to purchase goods, while Green remained in Kentucky to operate the store. John Helm, Ben's brother, who was related by marriage to Green's new bride, underwrote the venture with a ten-thousand-dollar loan. Ben Helm invested a like sum in their business endeavor. Green, however, did not provide the enterprise with any money. His duty was to ensure a profitable and efficient management of the firm. The partnership was housed in the Helm Building in Elizabethtown until 1817, when Green sold his share of the business.<sup>33</sup>

At first, Green quickly realized a boon to his pecuniary fortunes. Owning no taxable property from his arrival in Elizabethtown until his entrance into the Helm partnership, by the end of 1814 he had purchased the Patton House (ca. 1798), better known as Lot No. 25, on North Main Street, near the public square in Elizabethtown, and he acquired four hundred acres of third-rate land on Silver Creek in Christian County and one slave. In 1815, Green acquired four hundred acres of third-rate land along Salem Creek in Livingston County, and increased his slave count to four.<sup>34</sup>

The flush times would end quickly for Green. The years immediately following the end of the War of 1812 proved trying for the novice merchants. The partnership of Helm and Green encountered a less-than-favorable financial environment. The two merchants had to deal with a marked reduction in prices for their goods, and Helm only worsened matters when he loaned out much of the business funds. Green even

33. The records of the Helm and Green partnership can be found in the manuscripts division of Western Kentucky University. The Helm Building still stands and, although remodeled many times, has an original rear section believed to be the oldest structure in Elizabethtown.

34. Green sold the Patton House to Elias Rector of Missouri in 1817. McClure, *Two Centuries*, 108; Haycraft, *History*, 138; Hardin County Tax Assessments, KSLA, roll no. 8013.

resorted to suing his partner over store financial matters. As a result, profits dwindled. State banks were also slow to resume specie payment, and thus the loss caused by the reduction of prices became for Green “a severe lesson in political economy.” Indeed, the aspiring merchant would emerge, by the 1850s, as an expert on finance, banking, currency, and debt; he would author numerous works on these subjects up to his death in 1875. Unfortunately for Green, subsequent economic downturns, especially the Panic of 1819, would continue to test his financial expertise.<sup>35</sup>

By 1816, however, a new yearning stirred the young Kentuckian. He had set his sights westward on the Missouri Territory, where bright possibilities loomed large in a highly promising region—prospects that encouraged not only Green, but many other aspiring frontiersmen in the early American republic as well. Much like his forefathers and their generation, he would pick up and head west; where his father and uncles had traversed the Appalachians, he would cross the Mississippi River. Both geographical boundaries stood as milestones of U.S. expansion. From the British Isles to Virginia, from the Old Dominion to Kentucky, and from the Bluegrass country to Missouri, Duff Green’s trek westward into newly created territories mimicked the westering path of countless Americans. Once across the Mighty Mississippi, he would continue the family tradition of acquiring large landholdings, and his role in the political development of Missouri would rival that of his forebears in Kentucky. He would rise to political prominence in the new society of the first state entirely west of the Mississippi River, just as quickly as his uncles had in the first state west of the Appalachians. In this, Duff Green did not exhibit any aberrant traits, nor did he prove an exception to the rule. He personified the always restless, ever-hopeful, westward-moving American who was certain that wealth and happiness lay just beyond the next mountain or across the next river. But one fact cannot be denied—despite his prominent ancestors, no other member of the Green family would ever attain as much notoriety and fame as would Duff Green.

Although his meteoric rise to prominence began in Missouri, the foundations of Green’s illustrious and influential career had been laid in Kentucky. By the time Green crossed the Mississippi, his political leanings and his personality and character had been fully developed.

35. Haycraft, *History*, 138; Green, *Facts and Suggestions*, 18; Autobiographical Fragments, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; *Duff Green v. John Helm*, June 1815, Hardin County Court Records, KLA.

To understand Green, then, and his contribution to Jacksonian America, one must first take into account four of his most salient personal characteristics that developed during his Kentucky days.

First, Green had a brusque, abrasive personality, which unmistakably radiates from nearly every letter, journal entry, and newspaper account. His presumptuous demeanor fostered a penchant for making enemies quickly; and his acerbic and scathing pen, coupled with his jarring comportment, resulted in numerous brawls. Contemporaries either hated or loved the man, with few in between and the vast majority in the former category. Moreover, he often embellished his own role in the unfolding events and issues of his day. That he played a central role in many consequential aspects of nineteenth-century America is true; that he well understood this and would not hesitate to remind one of that fact, amplifying his own self-importance along the way, is equally true.

Second, Green's personality spawned in him a self-righteous attitude, making him even more enemies, getting him into more fights, heightening negative opinions of him, and making it increasingly difficult for him to get along with others. He was unabashedly self-righteous, never wrong or errant in his beliefs and actions, always the bastion of truth, of virtue, and of principle. He saw himself as being consistently disinterested, the defender of the liberties of the people, and the bulwark of "true" constitutional precepts. In his mind, it was his brand of Republicanism alone that reflected the original intent of the Founding Fathers. More than anything, Green had a blinding determination, which narrowed his acceptance of differing opinions, limited his options for retreating or compromising, and only exasperated his delusional pursuit to prove his correctness. In short, his own attitude guided him fearlessly into his own blunders. The break with Jackson reveals this trait more than any other event in his life. When the immovable will of Andrew Jackson encountered the same trait in Green, the latter had to indeed move himself—right out of the ranks of the party he had helped to create and empower. That was just fine with Green, however, for he knew that *he* was right, that truth prevailed when *he* spoke, and that principle and moral impetus were revealed only in *his* actions. He was always the victim, never the assailant; he acted defensively, even when on the offensive. Considering Jackson's similar personality traits, little wonder, then, that there was no room in the White House for both Jackson and Green.

Third, Green was fiercely independent. He maintained an independent course in all his numerous endeavors, again befitting his personality



and his attitude. Contemporaries and later scholars labeled him a lackey of Calhoun and the *Telegraph* as the organ of the South Carolinian. They were mistaken. Green spent more time defending Jackson, and then assailing him after their break, than he ever did supporting Calhoun. He sided with Calhoun during the early years of Jackson's first administration because he believed that the vice president was the victim of a conspiracy spearheaded by Martin Van Buren, in which the New Yorker and his cronies in the cabinet sought to turn the president against Calhoun, removing him as a contender for the White House, and thus engineering the selection of Van Buren as Jackson's chosen successor. Along with many others who eventually turned away from Jackson, Green firmly believed that these machinations simply repeated the corrupt bargain that had brought into the White House in 1824 John Quincy Adams, a man whose reelection the Jacksonians, Green most of all, labored so hard to prevent in 1828. Moreover, Green backed presidential candidates other than Calhoun when he saw the efficacy of doing so, and any support he did provide the South Carolinian was often lukewarm at best. The relationship between the two men became strained on several occasions, especially when Calhoun returned to the ranks of the Democratic Party and supported Van Buren in 1840. This was apostasy to Green, and he had no qualms about voicing his disappointment over the choice. In short, Green consistently followed his own course of independent thinking and action, defending it when called for; he never compromised what, in his mind, were the eternal principles of Republican government and the sanctity of the liberties of the people. It is no exaggeration at all to say that his independence was responsible for most of his troubles, for independence to Green precluded any and all compromise.

Finally, when it came to slavery, Green valued moderation. He was not the extremist that many contemporaries and present scholars have portrayed him to be. He was proslavery, as a great many of his fellow Missourians were, yet he favored the work of the American Colonization Society and, after the Civil War, created a fund to aid the freedmen. The extreme proslavery views of Thomas Dew or James Henry Hammond are not to be found in Green's writings; he saw the economic efficacy of the institution, believed that blacks, if emancipated, could not coexist in the same territory as whites, defended the servile condition as a humane one when compared to that of the industrial laborer of the North, and exposed foreign threats to slavery because they would undermine the vitality of the entire nation. But he did not embrace slavery at the cost of destroying the Union, nor did he accept it as the natural, biblically sanctioned state of the Negro.

Green was also an ardent proponent and defender of states' rights, but he was not a Southern fire-eater. He favored nullification in theory, but stopped short of enacting it. He stoutly opposed South Carolina's implementation of the doctrine. He opposed secession, but, like many in the South, he chose to defend his home against an invading army. He was not a Southern sectionalist bent on destroying the Union. Green's defense of and attachment to the South simply reflected the views of the vast majority of his fellow Kentuckians and Missourians. He often criticized sectional tendencies, whether shown by the South, as in its reaction to the Tariff of 1828 during the election of that same year, or by the North, as in its unwillingness to compromise on moderating the tariff or in abolishing its source of cheap labor. If the South ever had to leave the Union, Green maintained, it would not be because they wanted to, but rather because the other, uncompromising sections forced them to leave. Indeed, his consistent defense of the South was a direct response to what he felt were aggrandizing and tyrannical movements on the part of the Northeast. He detested anyone, in whatever section of the country they lived, who sought to perpetuate his radical views at the cost of undermining the American republic and the Constitution.

Simply put, Green was a moderate and a Westerner. He was a Kentuckian and a Missourian, regardless of where he traveled outside U.S. borders or where in the Union he resided. He exhibited all the traits of a Western Democrat—a proclivity for Democratic institutions, a hatred of aristocratic tendencies and centralized executive power, a loathing for sectional tendencies, a desire for internal improvements and territorial expansion, a respect for domestic institutions and the reserved powers, and a fierce nationalism in the face of foreign threats and aggression. The political principles and philosophy Green took to Washington in 1825 had been formed in his days in Kentucky, and they would be hardened in his decade in Missouri. Little wonder, then, that when the Westerner Duff Green first met the Westerner Andrew Jackson, the nascent Jacksonian Green had already matured into a full-fledged Jacksonian Democrat. And from there, the story of Jacksonian America cannot be told without Duff Green.



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## SECTION I

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### The Making of a Jacksonian

*Missouri Years (1816–1826)*

**D**uff Green's arrival in Missouri during the summer of 1816 coincided with a tremendous wave of immigration into the territory. The termination in 1815 of the United States war with Britain launched a population explosion and an enormous economic expansion in Missouri. Created out of the 1803 Louisiana Purchase and then part of the Louisiana Territory, Missouri had become a territory in 1812. The outbreak of war that same year between Britain and the United States, accompanied by the hostility of the numerous adjacent Indian tribes, placed the American frontier communities on the defensive. The inability of the federal government to protect the territory's white settlers from Indian attacks stifled prospects for Missouri. With the end of the war in 1815, however, Missouri's fortunes improved greatly. The territory's estimated 1814 population of about 26,000 swelled to nearly 70,000 over the next six years. Moreover, movement into the interior regions of the territory increased dramatically. Numerous small but thriving settlements began to creep up the Missouri River, with names such as Gasconade, Boonville, Franklin, Arrow Rock, Boonslick, Bluffton,

and Chariton. Within the span of only a decade, American settlement had reached as far as the Grand River in western Missouri. By 1820, the population in the central expanse of the territory (recognized by contemporaries as the Boonslick country, which included roughly the counties of Chariton, Cooper, Howard, and Saline) had exceeded 20,000. It was into this relatively virgin region of Missouri that Duff Green settled his fortune and his family in 1816.<sup>1</sup>

The vast majority of American settlers flooding into Missouri after the War of 1812 came from the upper South—from Virginia and North Carolina, and from Kentucky and Tennessee. Green was typical of the westward-moving American. He simply continued the pattern of expansion established by his ancestors. His family before him had acquired large grants of land in Virginia and later in Kentucky, and Green would do the same in Missouri. His first prompting to remove to the young territory, however, came not from a Southerner, but rather, from a Westerner and a native Kentuckian—his brother-in-law and governor of the Illinois Territory, Ninian Edwards.

1. Edwin C. McReynolds, *Missouri: A History of the Crossroads State*, 51–53; William E. Foley, *A History of Missouri*, 1: 166.

## CHAPTER 2



### Land Speculator, Lawyer, Merchant, and General

#### I.

Shortly after Edwards enticed Green to seek his fortune in Missouri, Green obtained, in the fall of 1816, a contract from the surveyor general of Missouri for surveying public lands on the south side of the Missouri River west of Boonville. Green then explored up the Grand and Chariton Rivers, on the north side of the Missouri, in order to ascertain the practicability of making these rivers navigable by clearing them of logs and other debris. Once he judged the region suitable for settlement, he purchased large tracts of land and began to sell lots along the Chariton River near its confluence with the Missouri. Approximately thirty miles up the Missouri River from Franklin, and thence about seven hundred yards up the Chariton from its mouth, the town of Chariton was laid out in 1817 on land owned together by Green and another individual. Within two years the flourishing community boasted a population of nearly five hundred citizens and around fifty houses, one of which was a large brick home built by Duff Green. It was a sizable settlement for the Missouri Territory in the second decade of the nineteenth century. In 1821, the year Missouri entered the Union as the twenty-fourth state, the state legislature organized Chariton County out of segments of Howard County.<sup>1</sup>

1. Green, *Facts and Suggestions*, 18; Autobiographical Fragments, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; "Judge Applegate's Sketches of Chariton County," Lisbon Applegate Collection, Western Historical Manuscript Collection, State Historical Society of

Green did not limit his land speculation solely to the Chariton River valley. Immediately after the establishment of the town of Chariton, where he continued the sale of property, Green began to sell lots in Bluffton, a new settlement laid out by Green and Benjamin F. Edwards in the spring of 1820, located about fifty miles upriver from the mouth of the Chariton. Other Missouri lands, outside the central region of the territory, likewise enticed the budding land speculator from Chariton. Green and an unnamed partner purchased 640 acres in New Madrid County, which bordered the Mississippi River in extreme southeast Missouri. The two men proposed to establish a small town on the land, but the venture never came to fruition. Green also dabbled in the mining industry—an enterprise he would quickly drop but return to later in life. He followed up the New Madrid claims with several applications for leases of federal lead mine lands, probably in Washington County. In all, Green's adventure in Missouri lands proved very profitable.

To manage such comprehensive, and often litigious, investments, Green took up the practice of law. He joined a firm in Boonville, in Cooper County, which included Peyton R. Hayden, the first attorney admitted to the Cooper County bar, Hamilton R. Gamble, future governor of Missouri, and Abiel Leonard, George Tompkins, and John F. Ryland, all of whom were future judges of the Missouri Supreme Court. Within a short time, Green developed a rather lucrative practice as an attorney. Numerous legal documents monopolize his personal papers. The knowledge of law would serve Green well throughout his life, as he engaged in a myriad of successive business and financial ventures.<sup>2</sup>

Duff Green would be known throughout his life as a jack-of-all-trades, a dabbler in a variety of ventures—some successful, some not. During his Missouri years, this propensity gained momentum. Not only had Green been a teacher, a medical student, a soldier, and a merchant in Kentucky, he had also become a land speculator, land surveyor,

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Missouri; hereafter cited as WHMC-SHSM. Chariton was the county seat until 1829, when it was relocated to Keytesville, and the town was abandoned in 1840. David D. March, *The History of Missouri*, 1: 318; Ruby Matson Robins, ed., "The Missouri Reader, Americans in the Valley," 176. On the town of Chariton, see also Henry Calvert, "Old Chariton," 45–50. Howard County was created on January 23, 1816. Floyd C. Shoemaker, *Missouri's Struggle for Statehood, 1804–1821*, 35. On migration from the Southern states into Missouri and thence up the Missouri River, see Shoemaker, *Struggle*, 37, 45.

2. "This Week in Missouri History," WHMC-SHSM, February 8, 1996. Green's copious legal transactions are found throughout the Duff Green Papers, SHC-UNC. Cooper County was created on December 17, 1818. Shoemaker, *Statehood*, 43.

founder of towns, and a noted lawyer after removing to Missouri. The one economic pursuit he carried with him from Kentucky across the Mississippi River was that of a merchant.

Ninian Edwards again acted as the catalyst in establishing his brother-in-law's business enterprises in Missouri—albeit accidentally. The Illinois governor had advanced thirty thousand dollars to the wealthy and renowned St. Louis merchant, Rene Paul, for a partnership in his St. Louis store. The two entrepreneurs then contracted with Green, sending him to Baltimore and Philadelphia to purchase sixty thousand dollars' worth of goods for their outlet in Missouri. After Green had procured the desired merchandise and made arrangements for its shipping, he learned that Paul's brother had also secured under the partnership's name a considerable quantity of goods. The merchants in Baltimore and Philadelphia consequently refused to deliver the goods purchased by Green without some guarantee of payment. When Rene Paul failed to provide that assurance, Green himself assumed financial responsibility, with the intention of selling the products in St. Louis. Upon discovering that Paul's store was overstocked on account of his brother's purchases, Green set out to sell the goods on his own. He established stores in St. Charles, Franklin, and Chariton, and in order to make payment on the goods, he set prices so low that his stores were soon crowded with customers. The consequence was "ill feeling on the part of other merchants, who could not sell at the same prices." The disaffected merchants, however, would seek their revenge on another front. Indeed, the ire Green raised in the business community proved mild compared to the "ill feeling" he engendered over his appointment as a colonel in the Missouri Militia—a nomination vehemently opposed by the business class in St. Louis and in the interior.<sup>3</sup>

## II.

When Green first came to the central region of the Missouri Territory, he found the settlers still living in blockhouses and rudimentary stockades. Indian depredations were common along the Missouri frontier and would continue for several years to come. From 1810 until the close of the war with Great Britain, Indian raids on Missouri settlements

3. Green, *Facts and Suggestions*, 19. Green lost a considerable portion of the goods he obtained in Philadelphia when one of the boats sank in the Mississippi River, just in sight of the St. Louis landing. *U.S. Telegraph*, November 8, 1826.



were devastating; in the exchange of atrocities, the Indians came out ahead. Soon migration into Missouri came to a dead stop. Settlers found themselves in a defensive huddle in the populous areas along the Mississippi River. Indian attacks continued after the Treaty of Ghent, with the Sac, Fox, and Winnebago still on the warpath as late as 1816. The U.S. government negotiated numerous treaties with the tribes, terminating hostilities. Although sporadic Indian attacks continued several years after 1815, increased migration into the interior of Missouri checked major outbreaks of warfare. What inept military force could not accomplish, the growth in population did. After 1815, the Indian menace in Missouri was essentially quashed. Ill feelings between native and settler persisted, however, and flare-ups still commanded the attention of the territorial government. A veteran of Indian warfare, Green again found himself caught up in the conflict between the natives and white settlers. His role in Indian affairs would also once again set him against his own countrymen. While Green wished to play a direct and influential role in Indian affairs, many of his fellow citizens opposed his participation, especially some of his designs.<sup>4</sup>

When Green first arrived in the Missouri Territory, the popular gray-haired Colonel Benjamin Cooper asked him to write a letter to Missouri governor William Clark stating Cooper's intention to resign his command as a colonel in the territorial militia. Green complied. Later, after reaching St. Louis, Clark approached Green and expressed his fears that once the white population in the central counties of Missouri had reached a sufficient number, the old settlers, who had suffered much under the tomahawk, would incite an Indian war. The governor intended to appoint someone in Cooper's stead who had "the nerve to preserve peace," and, "from what he had heard of my character," Green could do the job.<sup>5</sup>

Whatever accolades Green claimed for himself—and he was never timid about doing so—Clark's reasons for choosing Green probably had little, if anything, to do with his character. His previous experience in Indian warfare carried more weight than peacemaking qualities, for if Green's character revealed anything, it was a tendency for creating, not alleviating, hostilities. In a letter to President James Monroe, written in July 1817, Clark disclosed the practical reasons for his selection

4. McReynolds, *Crossroads*, 58; Foley, *History*, 146–65.

5. Green, *Facts and Suggestions*, 18; Autobiographical Fragments, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

of Green—his exceptional abilities and political affiliation. The Missouri governor described Green as “a gentleman of fine talents” and one who “bids fair to make a Shining Character in both Civil and Military Life.” Green had a superior “acquaintance” with the territory “for some distance up the Missouri.” Having resided on that river for the past year, it “will enable him to give the most correct information of the Country and the progressive Settlements.” More important, “Mr. Green has also a full Knowledge of the Causes of party Spirit in this Territory.” Regardless of the reasoning, Governor Clark appointed Green a colonel of the territorial militia, and as expected, the selection aroused considerable opposition.<sup>6</sup>

Missouri territorial secretary Frederick Bates, and the “discontents” represented by him and his cronies, had other candidates in mind and conspired to circumvent the governor. Clark was due to leave the state on a trip, and in his absence Bates hoped to make the appointment. Fearing that Bates would appoint his own choice while he was away in Kentucky, Clark handed Green the commission before his departure. In November 1817, Green officially became colonel of the Tenth Regiment of the Missouri territorial militia.<sup>7</sup>

When the new colonel returned to central Missouri and ordered the battalion and regimental musters, he encountered hostility. Other settlers, most of whom had recently arrived in the territory, had coveted the militia appointment acquired by Green. These disappointed aspirants joined with Green’s rival merchants and denounced the appointment by Clark as an act of favoritism. Numerous candidates for the Missouri territorial legislature likewise condemned Green’s promotion for their own electioneering purposes, attacking the act that gave the territorial governor sole authority over the appointment of militia officers. Sentiment against Green’s appointment, however, soon turned into an assault on him personally. Matters had gone so far, recalled Green, that “meetings were held, a committee organized, and a regular protest against my appointment published as the basis of the canvass.” His partisan tormentors subjected his “name, actions, and character” to “unkind comments,” and they excited “so great a prejudice” against him, that Green’s agent in Franklin despondently closed that branch of his mercantile business. Green, nonetheless, “resolved to meet the crisis.”<sup>8</sup>

6. Green, *Facts and Suggestions*, 19; Governor Clark to President Monroe, July 2, 1817, in Clarence Edwin Carter, ed., *The Territorial Papers of the United States*, Vol. XV: *The Territory of Louisiana-Missouri, 1815–1821*, 287.

7. Carter, *Territorial Papers*, 15: 372.

8. Green, *Facts and Suggestions*, 19–20.

As the battalion muster was to take place in Franklin, Colonel Green, in full dress regalia, set out from Chariton to meet his accusers. When he arrived in Franklin, one of the leaders of the movement against him "made an effort to provoke a personal quarrel," to which the besieged colonel replied that he fully intended to address his opponents' protests before the regimental parade. The determined Green then rode to Fort Hempstead, relieved the lieutenant colonel after he refused to obey an order from him, and took command of the battalion. Green vividly recalled the outcome that day: after searching the line for somebody he might know, he recognized a lieutenant he had known in Kentucky.

"Can I rely on you?" inquired the colonel.

"You can, sir," came the reply.

"Can you detail a guard of twelve men on whom you can rely?"

"I can," came the second reply.

"Detail them," ordered Colonel Green.

The lieutenant performed his duty and directed the conscripted men to the front of the line, whereupon Green brought the troops to attention. He then addressed their concerns: "I am told that many persons in this battalion have united in a protest against my appointment as your colonel, and that some have pledged themselves not to obey my orders as such. The governor, in the exercise of his legitimate authority, has given me the appointment. I do not come before you now to apologize or explain, but to discharge my duty as your commanding officer, and to enforce obedience, and therefore, if any one in the ranks dares to disobey my orders I will put him under guard." Colonel Green then guided the troops through the field manual, commanded the performance of several evolutions, and then dismissed them on account of rain. The inclement weather, however, merely temporarily interrupted Green's public exhortation.<sup>9</sup>

After the shower, Green took the stump and again addressed the troops. He read aloud from the remonstrance published against him earlier and commented on it point by point. One of the principal grievances was that Green was brought in as a ringer, an outsider who gained his position to the exclusion of those who were truly Missourians. But Green easily shot holes in this argument, pointing out that while most of those who opposed him were themselves newcomers to the territory, or in some cases still lived east of the Mississippi River, he had been surveying lands in the very region he represented as an officer in the militia. Indeed, it was upon lands that Green had surveyed

9. Green, *Facts and Suggestions*, 20.

and purchased that several of the towns had sprouted and many of the newcomers had settled. Green informed the crowd that he was in the process of moving his family to the Chariton River valley, when Clark commissioned him, but that winter weather delayed him in reaching the central region. Whether they accepted his reasons or not, Green had been vigorous in his rebuttal.<sup>10</sup>

Green then turned to the personal accusations made against him. Here things threatened to escalate into fisticuffs. One of the listeners threatened to drag the colonel from the stump and “cowhide” him if he were to use his name. Rising to the challenge, Green spoke his name. The man in question had been an aspirant for the colonel’s commission. Enraged, he started through the crowd armed with a whip. Green drew his sword and stood his ground, or rather his stump, and the would-be attacker retreated. But the determined colonel merely heightened the ante.<sup>11</sup>

Colonel Green then divulged the letter that he had written for Colonel Cooper, whereupon the excited old Indian fighter approached Green and warned him: “Do not use my name, for if you do, I will drag you from that stump.” Green sternly replied to the threat. He would state the facts as they were: Cooper had indeed requested him to write a letter of resignation to Governor Clark. The new colonel then reminded the old colonel that he was the patriarch of the interior settlements, that everyone highly respected him for his many years of service to the territory, and that around him stood men who sought to flatter him to the injury of Green. “I am a young man, just entering into life—my character has been assailed by a wicked combination, and it is necessary that I should use your name in my defence.” Cooper quietly retired to the fringe of the crowd and never responded. After several exchanges of words and arguments, Green informed all present that he had no intentions of resigning his commission, even if everyone in the regiment desired that he do so. Seeking some form of a popular referendum on his command, Green asked those who supported him to stand to one side. With shouts of approval, “the whole mass moved to left”—Green’s side. “My triumph was complete,” he exulted later, “opposition to me ceased—my popularity and influence were established.” His influence in Missouri cannot be denied; the belief that opposition to his influence had waned, however, was complete self-delusion.<sup>12</sup>

10. Green, *Facts and Suggestions*, 20–21.

11. Green, *Facts and Suggestions*, 21.

12. Green, *Facts and Suggestions*, 21–22.

Again, whether or not Green attributed to himself a lofty and untarnished role in this whole affair can be debated. Of this we can be sure, however: he often magnified his own stature and assigned to himself an undefiled, almost self-righteous, course of action, something he would do for the remainder of his life. In this case, however, impartial spectators verified Green's account. In his sketches of Chariton County, Judge Lisbon Applegate recalled the events of that tense day, when Green defended himself against the charges of his accusers. Green was "one of the most distinguished men in this or any of the surrounding counties, in those early times," recounted Applegate. He came to Chariton with a colonel's commission in his pocket from Governor Clark but would not accept the office until the people had elected him as such. An election was then duly called, and Applegate confirmed Green's resolve to confront his opponents:

It was all Howard County then. A large number of voters attended. Green was to make a speech. The old Indian fighter Col. Cooper was indignant that a young man should come in and supersede [*sic*] him, who had done so much service to the country. He said that if Green dared to make a speech he would take him down and chastise him. Green heard of the threat. But mounted the stump and commenced his address. In a few minutes he saw Col. Cooper making through the crowd directly for him. Green did not notice him until he got quite near when he turned his eagle eyes on the old gentleman, laid his hand on his sword and said "old gentleman I respect your gray hair." Cooper stopped, and Green proceeded with the speech for an hour. He was elected by a large majority.<sup>13</sup>

### III.

Green's popularity and influence with the citizens of Missouri were revealed on other occasions as well. In September 1818, five Missouri militia officers in Howard County, possibly inspired by Green's handling of his colonel's commission, petitioned Secretary of War John C. Calhoun to elevate him to the rank of brigadier general in the Missouri militia, a considerable distinction for anyone on the frontier in those days. The officers contended that, as a "more effectual organization of the militia in this Territory to form a new brigade to include the militia of [Howard] County & part of St. Charles County," the president should

13. "Sketches," Lisbon Applegate Collection, WHMC-SHSM.

“deem it expedient” to appoint a brigadier general to command the proposed unit. Presuming that President Monroe would observe the “wishes and feelings” of those directly affected by his choice, the several officers of the “different corps of which the contemplated brigade are to be composed” recommended to the president the appointment of Colonel Duff Green of Chariton. Writing that Green had served with distinction during the late war with England, they went on to observe that he was a “gentleman of respectable acquirements, and fair character” who had commanded the Tenth Regiment “with credit to himself, and to the advantage and satisfaction of his subordinates.” A “patriot both in military and civil life,” Green’s appointment as a brigadier general, they concluded, “would be at once acceptable and advantageous to the brigade.” Secretary of War Calhoun agreed. Three months later, he recommended to President Monroe that Duff Green be appointed brigadier general in the militia of the Missouri Territory. Monroe assented, and Colonel Green readily accepted, thereafter becoming more popularly known as General Green.<sup>14</sup>

Indeed, Green’s discipline, efficiency, and attention to detail had never failed to impress those who dealt with him. Nonetheless, General Green—as he would be called by contemporaries for the rest of his life—was as adept at making bitter enemies as he was at winning staunch supporters. Events in Missouri would illustrate this on numerous occasions. Rarely, it seemed, did associates take a middling view of the general: they either detested him vehemently or lauded him heartily.

General Green took his militia duties seriously and worked long hours handling the numerous administrative details of his office. He devoted much of his time to Indian matters. Although collisions between white settlers and the various Indian tribes on the Missouri frontier had diminished significantly after 1815, flare-ups still occurred. Many of the clashes arose when Indian raiding parties stole settlers’ horses. The problem became serious enough that early in 1820 Green summoned the chiefs of the tribes accused and sternly warned them that he intended to hold them personally responsible for the actions of their people. If they could not prevent the younger braves from stealing horses, he would seek the election of chiefs who could.<sup>15</sup>

14. Five Militia Officers of Missouri to President Monroe, September 1818, Calhoun to Monroe, 21 December 1818, *JCCP*, 3: 176, 414.

15. Secretary of War John C. Calhoun to Missouri governor William Clark, February 10, 1820, Carter, *Territorial Papers*, 15: 586; Green, *Facts and Suggestion*, 23.

General Green promptly informed Governor Clark of the Indian depredations, and Clark in turn informed Secretary of War Calhoun. The general added that he was disgusted at the “unequal operation of the regulations” instituted by the U.S. Government in responding to Indian raids. Calhoun concurred. He, too, divulged his frustration with current Indian laws. “I have no doubt that the present policy of the government is inadequate to keep the Indian tribes on our frontier under proper restraint, and to prevent frequent collisions between them and our citizens,” wrote Calhoun. “[I]t would afford me great satisfaction to adopt in its place a more vigorous one, but the powers of this Department are limited by law, and cannot be extended without the authority of Congress.” Calhoun was in the process of seeking a fundamental change in federal Indian policy at that time, but budgetary constraints and political obstacles (Secretary of Treasury William H. Crawford and the powerful Speaker of the House Henry Clay fought Calhoun at every juncture) precluded any adjustment favorable to Green’s situation on the frontier. In the meantime, Green was spared the necessity of intervening militarily when the local Indian agent filed an official report of the depredations and the guilty party agreed to indemnify those whose horses had been stolen.<sup>16</sup>

Green believed that two things, misconduct on the part of whites and mismanagement by government agents, were responsible for most of the conflict between Indians and settlers. On many nights, Green had to get out of bed and ride out to intercept some armed mob of settlers bent on destroying an Indian village. The leaders of these vigilante groups were usually the old settlers, determined to seek revenge for some past injury inflicted upon them or their families. As general of the militia, Green found himself acting as an ambassador between cultures. The role of mediator was new to him. If peace was to come to the frontier, he would have to suppress his natural penchant for making enemies. “There was no conflict with the Indians,” he later proudly asserted, “so long as I was in command on that frontier.” Although Green deserves some credit for pacifying the frontier, the inevitable surge of white population and the consequent retreat of the Indians westward beyond Missouri was the principal reason for the cessation of hostilities.<sup>17</sup>

While serving as brigadier general of the militia, Green considered many different ways to reduce Indian-white conflicts on the Missouri frontier. He proposed that the tribes recently removed to Missouri from

16. Calhoun to Green, August 16, 1821, *JCCP*, 6: 338–39.

17. Green, *Facts and Suggestions*, 23.

Illinois should be moved again, allowing a more efficient system of tracing hostilities between the Missouri tribes and the white settlers. Another remedy pursued by the general for alleviating hostilities was the appointment of an Indian agent in Missouri to attend to the difficulties faced by the local Indian tribes, especially the Iowa and the Kickapoo. The location of the Iowa Indians on the Chariton River “has heretofore placed [them] without the immediate superintendence of any of the *regularly* appointed agents of the Government.” Green made numerous efforts to aid them, but the Indians resented their condition and the failure of the government to keep its promises. He therefore appealed to Calhoun asking the secretary of war to provide the tribe with a blacksmith and some presents, and volunteered to distribute the gifts “gratuitously until the Government think proper to authorize an Agent for that purpose.” Calhoun instructed Clark to permit Green to supply the Iowa with a blacksmith, which the governor allowed. The secretary of war, in addition, requested appropriations from Congress to employ a sub-agent for the Iowa, and if one could be hired, Green, “who appears to be a gentleman well calculated to fill it,” would receive the position.<sup>18</sup>

Green also proposed that an Indian agent be employed as a means to protect American citizens engaged in trading and trapping in the upper Missouri valley against rival British interests. The Northwest Company, Green believed, intended to prevent American traders and trappers from entering the Missouri River above the Mandan villages. The United States, therefore, should undertake additional measures to counter British efforts. To strengthen the American position on the upper Missouri, Green proposed the appointment of an Indian agent to the Sioux, Mandan, and Arikara tribes. The agent, working with the garrison of ninety-seven U.S. troops already stationed at the mouth of the Yellowstone River, who were about to be reinforced with another two hundred, should be adequate to protect U.S. interests, Green thought. Unfortunately, Congress had slashed War Department appropriations, and the secretary of war rejected the appointment of the Indian agent.<sup>19</sup>

In the meantime, Green himself had actively pursued an appointment

18. Green to Calhoun, September 14, 1820, December 9, 1821, December 4, 1822, Indian Papers, Missouri Historical Society; Green to Calhoun, September 19, 1823, Calhoun to Clark, October 20, 1823, Clark to Calhoun, December 8, 1823, Clark to Calhoun, January 11, 1824, *JCCP*, 8: 274, 320, 397, 471.

19. Green to Calhoun, January 3, 1823, Calhoun to Green, March 18, 1823, *JCCP*, 7: 403, 529.



as an Indian agent at the Fox lead mines. He also sought a position as "Agent for the U States Lead mines of the Mississippi." With the combined salaries of both agencies, he hoped to take his family with him. Calhoun desired the appointment of Green to both positions, but, again, the reduction in the appropriations of the War Department precluded any chance of covering the cost. General Green, therefore, would never represent the United States government as an Indian agent. He would, however, continue to represent Missouri in two critical capacities—as a member of Missouri's State Constitutional Convention and as a representative and senator in the Missouri General Assembly.<sup>20</sup>

#### IV.

Before Green entered the state political arena, however, he revealed his penchant for fomenting frequent quarrels—often resulting in fisticuffs—and regularly acquiring enemies. Although he refrained from creating trouble while speculating in land, he fostered a bitter enmity toward him in his mercantile ventures, and this produced outright violence against him in his legal and military capacities. One incident captured the attention of most of the territory and contributed to the lore of the rough-and-tumble life on the frontier.

A local judge, a neighbor and an acquaintance, approached Green one day and requested a favor. His nephew, an army sergeant named David Campbell (grandson of the noted General William Campbell of King's Mountain fame), had killed a riverboatman in a quarrel. Dismissed from the service shortly thereafter, Campbell came to Chariton in search of new employment. Green accommodated the judge by allowing his nephew use of a room and complete access to his law books, in order that the erratic Campbell might study law. The relationship was amicable for a while, but it soon erupted into violence.

A colonel's position in the Missouri militia had come open as a result of the creation of a new county, and Campbell, now a practicing attorney, openly sought the office. In his pursuit of the coveted rank, Campbell unwisely apprised voters that the brigadier general of the Missouri militia, Duff Green, had wished to see him gain the position. At this juncture, another individual approached Green, informed him of Campbell's machinations, and offered to oppose him if Green would proclaim

20. Clark to Calhoun, January 11, 1822, Calhoun to Edwards, May 7, 1822, Calhoun to Green, July 2, 1822, Green to Calhoun, January 3, 1823, Calhoun to Green, March 18, 1823, *JCCP*, 7: 99, 189–99, 403, 529.

the inaccuracy of the statements. The general complied by announcing to the public that Campbell was not authorized to use his name. Despite the revelation, Campbell won the election by a narrow margin. Following the victory, Campbell, heavily intoxicated and accompanied by a coterie of his supporters, "took the stump" in front of Green's home and proclaimed his victory gained despite the general's opposition. The new colonel then "avowed his unrelenting enmity."

A few days later, Green and Campbell squared off in the courtroom, the former as attorney for the defendant and the latter as representative for the plaintiff. The case in question concerned the use of a black servant by Green's client as settlement of a debt. The general lost. Prior to entering the courthouse, however, a friend had admonished Green: "Campbell threatens to take your life today. Are you armed?"

"No," replied Green.

"I thought so," remarked the friend, and handed Green a small pocket pistol.

After losing the suit, the general asked the sheriff if his client could have more time in which to make adequate payment, for the defendant expected to receive money within a few days, and if not, Green himself would cover the debt. Campbell insisted, however, that the sheriff proceed with the sale of the slave immediately. The sheriff declined, whereupon Campbell erupted in anger. Armed with "a heavy bludgeon," he swung at Green, who caught the blow on the arm. As spectators attempted to halt the altercation, Green drew the pistol, cocked the hammer, and snapped it inches from his attacker's face. It misfired. Immediately seized by a friend, Green lost his balance and tumbled to the ground, whereupon the pistol lost its priming. Campbell then broke from the grasp of his restrainers and continued the offensive. Green "shut the pan, held it in place by my thumb, and reprimed it by striking it on my knee so as to force part of the charge from the barrel into the pan." He then recovered his feet, and before Campbell could deliver a blow, fired the pistol. Campbell fell to the ground.

In the heat of the melee, Green had first thought that the ball had struck Campbell in the head. Extremely distraught, he surrendered himself to Judge Craig for prosecution. The uncle of the victim would have none of it—self-defense he judged it. Still writhing in pain from the apparent wound, Campbell likewise exonerated his shooter. "I brought this on myself," he declared. "If I should die, I am alone to blame for this." Fortunately for Green, the ball had actually struck Campbell in the chest, just above the heart. The powder charge in the pistol had been too light to penetrate his clothing, and it had merely

bounced off his chest, severely bruising him. No blood had been spilled. No life had been taken.

Although the incident frightened Green, this fracas proved to be only the first of numerous physical confrontations with his many detractors. The world of state and national politics provided Green with several opportunities to physically engage his numerous political opponents. Defending one's honor, whether it was avenging a personal affront or challenging a public insult, was an action both Andrew Jackson and Duff Green readily accepted and a trait regularly exhibited. Jackson exceeded Green, however, in the severity and the ferocity—and the actual death toll—of his brawls and duels, and the Old Hero's bloody confrontations were more renowned than General Green's. Once again, Jackson bested Green, and he would always do so. But, during the election of 1828, when it came to defending the Old Hero's proclivity for dueling and brawling, Jackson and his supporters turned to that other frontier pugilist, Duff Green, for help.<sup>21</sup>

21. On the Green-Campbell fracas, see *Autobiographical Fragments*, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

## CHAPTER 3



### Politics and Panic

#### I.

**I**n addition to his military role, Green also served Missouri in a political capacity—first as a delegate to the Missouri Constitutional Convention in 1820, then as a state representative and a state senator from Howard County. He attributed his election to both the state convention and to the Missouri General Assembly as further proof of his standing throughout the territory, and as an undeniable indication that opposition to him had ceased after his resolute defense of his colonel's commission. Green did indeed have loud political supporters, but he also had some determined enemies. His election to the Missouri Constitutional Convention can be attributed mainly to his stance on the slavery issue rather than to his popularity with the electorate, while his election to the Missouri General Assembly came only after the incumbent, who had earlier defeated Green in a popular election, died in office. Elected to fill the vacant position, the general was undeniably the second choice of the electorate. Still, in the end, the general emerged as an integral figure in Missouri politics and in the territory's evolution into a state. More important, for the course of Jacksonian America, the issues and events Missouri faced in the early 1820s—the Missouri Compromises and the Panic of 1819—gradually bred a Jacksonian Democrat. To begin the tale of this budding Jacksonian, General Duff Green's political history can only be understood against the backdrop of the great Missouri Controversy.<sup>1</sup>

1. Green, *Facts and Suggestions*, 22. On the Missouri Compromise, from both the

In November 1818, the Missouri territorial legislature petitioned Congress for admission into the Union. House Speaker Henry Clay brought the bill up for debate in February 1819. For the next twenty months, the Missouri question consumed the attention of the entire nation, for the future of slavery in the United States was in question. Slavery restriction sentiment dominated the House of Representatives, which passed a Missouri Enabling Bill in February 1819 containing the controversial and explosive Tallmadge Amendment. This measure, accepted by a narrow margin, prohibited the importation of slaves into Missouri and stipulated that all children born into slavery in Missouri, after its admission to the Union, would be freed upon reaching the age of twenty-five. The Senate rejected the House bill. At an impasse, the Fifteenth Congress adjourned, and Missouri remained a territory.<sup>2</sup>

When the Sixteenth Congress convened, the Missouri question again came to the fore of congressional debate. At this time, Maine also sought admission to the Union, and the introduction of the Maine Enabling Bill in January 1820 changed the face of the Missouri question and the issue of slavery expansion. Two Maine-Missouri bills emerged. The Senate version contained the famous Thomas Amendment, declaring that Maine would enter the Union as a free state and Missouri would be admitted as a slave, with the stipulation that slavery would thereafter be prohibited in the territory of the Louisiana Purchase above the line 36° 30'—the southern boundary of Missouri. The House bill included the Taylor Amendment restricting slavery in Missouri. Neither body would budge, and to break the deadlock, Henry Clay proposed one of his customary compromises. A joint conference committee of selected members of both branches of Congress recommended a Maine-Missouri Bill with the Thomas Amendment, that is, the Senate's version, in which the House reluctantly concurred on March 2, 1820. Here was the first Missouri Compromise. Four days later, President Monroe signed the Missouri Enabling Act, which authorized Missouri to adopt a constitution and form a state government. For the beleaguered, and quite perturbed, Missourians, however, the battle had only begun. It was in

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Missouri and the national perspective, see George Dangerfield, *The Awakening of American Nationalism, 1815–1828*, 97–140, and *The Era of Good Feelings*, 217–45; Glover Moore, *The Missouri Controversy, 1819–1821*; Shoemaker, *Statehood*, passim; Harrison A. Trexler, *Slavery in Missouri, 1804–1865*, 100–112; Perry McCandless, *A History of Missouri*, 2: 1–30; David D. March, “The Admission of Missouri,” 427–49; Walter B. Stevens, “The Travail of Missouri Statehood,” 3–35; Frank H. Hodder, “Side Lights on the Missouri Compromises,” 151–61.

2. McCandless, *History*, 1–4; Shoemaker, *Statehood*, 37–55; Floyd C. Shoemaker, “The First Constitution of Missouri,” 51–52.

this torrid public environment that Duff Green commenced his tempestuous and controversial political career.<sup>3</sup>

The congressional attempt to restrict slavery outraged Missourians, who flooded the territorial legislature as well as Congress with angry memorials and petitions defending their interests. Vitriolic editorials dominated the local newspapers, and truculent exhortations spilled out from tavern halls and onto the stump. Missourians would tolerate no interference with their domestic institutions and their inherent property rights. Although they considered themselves Westerners, and a significant majority did not even own slaves, Missourians resounded their Southern origins: the individual states, not Congress, had the constitutional power to control slavery and determine whether that institution would be allowed or prohibited.<sup>4</sup>

A fervent opponent of slavery restriction and a staunch champion of property rights, Duff Green vehemently denounced congressional efforts to restrict slavery in Missouri. He was joined by other proslavery Missourians throughout the territory who gathered in mass meetings to register their protests. At a public dinner in May 1819, in Howard County, General Green offered a notable toast upholding Missouri's property rights. In words that predated the infamous Jefferson Day dinner exchange between Calhoun and Jackson, Green rose, tipped his glass, and uttered, "The Union—It is dear to us, but liberty is dearer." The following month, he served as vice president of a public dinner in Chariton opposing restriction. Although Green owned only few slaves at various times throughout his life, using them as domestic servants, he stoutly defended slavery out of respect for the constitutional protection of property rights.<sup>5</sup>

Following congressional approval of the state's admission into the Union, Missourians went to the polls during the first week of May 1820 to elect delegates to the state constitutional convention. The electoral results demonstrated unequivocally the antirestrictionist and proslavery sentiment in Missouri. Antirestriction outnumbered restriction delegates four to one. The vast majority of the convention members, in

3. Shoemaker, *Statehood*, 57–66; McCandless, *History*, 3–5. For the contents of the Missouri Enabling Act, see Shoemaker, *Statehood*, 66–80.

4. On Missouri's attitude toward Congress and the slavery debate, see Shoemaker, *Statehood*, 81–113; McCandless, *History*, 2, 5–6; Moore, *Missouri Controversy*, 258–67; *St. Louis Enquirer*, April 7, May 12, June 2, 16, 1819, March 25, 1820; *St. Louis Gazette and Public Advertiser*, April 28, May 26, June 2, 9, August 11, September 8, 1819.

5. Shoemaker, *Statehood*, 92, 93; McCandless, *History*, 6; Moore, *Missouri Controversy*, 262–63.

addition to being proslavery, were conservative lawyers and businessmen who were the most influential men in the state. Duff Green was the archetypal delegate. He was conservative, a lawyer and a businessman, and wealthy by frontier standards. Most of all, he was proslavery. Public opinion in his county, Howard, was overwhelmingly proslavery. Not one of the county's twenty convention candidates publicly favored restriction, and none of the five delegates the Howard County electorate elected was more vocal than Green in defending slavery. He published his first political essay on the subject, vindicating the peculiar institution and denying congressional power to interfere or impose restriction. Numerous local papers printed the article, and it even appeared in the prestigious *Richmond Enquirer*.<sup>6</sup>

Green played a leading role in the deliberations of the constitutional convention. Indeed, some historians contend that the general was a principal architect of the convention's final product, the first constitution of the state of Missouri, and that he even had a more active and significant part in the actual operations of the convention than its noted and respected president, David Barton, who would become one of the two first U.S. senators from the new state. Floyd Shoemaker, a recognized historian of Missouri's struggle for statehood, maintains that Green was one of the convention's "most eminent delegates," one who possessed "preeminently superior ability" and who had a "more remarkable and distinguished career" than many of the other convention members. The general certainly had, and would continue to have, a "checkered career," but he was, nonetheless, "one of the most remarkable of those men who framed Missouri's first Constitution." He was "beyond dispute the most versatile man in the Convention; and became its greatest politician." Even more remarkable, Green was only twenty-nine at the time the convention convened—one of the three youngest members.<sup>7</sup>

The Missouri State Constitutional Convention met in the summer of 1820, from June 12 to July 19, at the Mansion House Hotel in St. Louis.

6. Shoemaker, *Statehood*, 114–34; McCandless, *History*, 8–12; Moore, *Missouri Controversy*, 265–67; McReynolds, *Missouri*, 79–81; Shoemaker, "First Constitution," 52–53; Green, *Facts and Suggestions*, 23.

7. William E. Foley, *The Genesis of Missouri: From Wilderness Outpost to Statehood*, 296; McReynolds, *Crossroads*, 82; Shoemaker, *Statehood*, 136, 147, 148, 153. On the Missouri Constitution and the Constitutional Convention, see also C. H. McClure, "Constitution Making in Missouri," 112–21; F. W. Lehmann, "The Constitution of 1820," 239–46; Shoemaker, *Statehood*, 166–92; Shoemaker, "First Constitution," 51–60; Moore, *Missouri Controversy*, 267–68; McReynolds, *Crossroads*, 80–84.

It took a mere thirty-eight days to complete their deliberations and devise the state's first constitution. The making of the constitution proved rather effortless, with few embittered debates over volatile issues. One reason for the speed at completing the document was the direct influence of other state constitutions; the delegates modeled Missouri's constitution on those of Kentucky, Alabama, and Illinois, with the first mentioned state having the main impact. That Kentucky, Green's former home, should be so influential was no coincidence. Green was following in the path of his forebears, several of whom had a direct role in composing Kentucky's first state constitution.<sup>8</sup>

The delegates opted to frame the constitution using the committee method. Accordingly, they appointed four committees composed of the convention's most prominent men. Green served on the bill of rights committee with two other influential members. During the deliberations, Green introduced three important measures, none of which the convention adopted. The first opposed the disqualification of the clergy from holding public office, and the other two favored individual responsibility of the stockholders of a state bank for the debts incurred by the institution. Green also made two speeches concerning the equal taxation of nonresident and resident landholders. The convention pursued the strictest interpretation of the conditions and provisos imposed on Missouri by Congress and thus refused to implement a constitutional provision that forever precluded the state from assessing a higher tax on nonresident landholders. Green attempted to alter this section, but the delegates defeated his amendment. In fact, only two members argued on behalf of the congressional stipulation regarding equal taxation, Green and John Scott, the future first congressman from Missouri.<sup>9</sup>

During the convention, Green demonstrated that he could put practical politics above principle, especially when a friend appealed to him

8. Shoemaker, *Statehood*, 166; McReynolds, *Crossroads*, 81, 85; McCandless, *History*, 8. On the influence of other state constitutions, see Shoemaker, "First Constitution," 54–60. The one serious debate that occurred at the convention was over representation in the lower house: delegates from St. Louis and some of the older and more populous regions demanded that the sparsely settled frontier counties be grouped together into one large, single legislative district, while such a measure was vehemently opposed by the delegates representing these frontier counties. McClure, "Constitution Making," 113. This issue had already incensed the frontier areas, for Howard and Cooper Counties had earlier protested vehemently against the small number of convention delegates allotted them by Congress. Shoemaker, *Statehood*, 71.

9. *Journal of the Missouri State Convention*, 30, 35, 43; Shoemaker, *Statehood*, 172–73, 180–83, 199; March, *History of Missouri*, 423.



to change his vote. Indeed, the convention would become his “first lesson as to the distribution of party patronage.” Several members of the convention, who were also candidates for judicial appointments under the new constitution, desired to restrict the power of the legislature by a constitutional provision ensuring that judicial salaries would never be less than three thousand dollars annually. Green voted against such a restriction on the legislature, and the delegates soon defeated the measure. The surveyor-general of Missouri then approached Green and pleaded that he switch his vote on the issue. Since the surveyor-general had been “personally kind” to him in the past, Green “was induced, against my own judgment, to reconsider the measure,” which the convention eventually adopted.<sup>10</sup>

Once the delegates completed their task, the convention itself put the constitution into immediate operation—the document was never submitted to the people for ratification—and provided for a general election of state officials. The Missouri Constitution was drafted during a time dubbed by some as the “Era of Good Feelings,” so named for the supposed lack of rivalry between any defined political parties at that time; everyone, at least publicly, assumed the label of Republican. Missouri was not immune to this trend. But like the rest of the nation, it was also not immune to localized political factions centered upon powerful interests and influential men.<sup>11</sup>

## II.

Two fluid yet identifiable political factions existed in Missouri at the time of the 1820 election. One of these “interest” groups, called the “St. Louis Clique” or the “Little Junto,” contained some of the most powerful men in the state. Despite being fewer in number than its rival faction, this conservative clique combined wealthy St. Louis businessmen, lawyers, and land speculators with old French and American fur trade interests defending Spanish land grants. A coterie of individuals sharing similar interests and residing in the frontier counties also filled the ranks of the “Little Junto.” Howard County’s Duff Green was one of these. Opposed to this clique was an anti-junto faction composed primarily of American land speculators who had recently arrived in Mis-

10. Green, *Facts and Suggestions*, 23.

11. Shoemaker, “First Constitution,” 53; McClure, “Constitution Making,” 113; McCandless, *History*, 13; McReynolds, *Crossroads*, 85, 86–87; Moore, *Missouri Controversy*, 268.

souri. In short, the two factions divided over land policy. Although neither group possessed a disciplined and structured organization nor maintained any obvious lines of membership, the 1820 state elections centered upon the shifting alliances of these two factions.<sup>12</sup>

Back in Howard County, Green became a candidate for a seat in the Missouri House of Representatives. His campaign, however, proved anything but placid, and he was decisively defeated in the August elections. Two reasons account for his electoral drubbing. First, a concerted attack by various parties raised questions about Green's conduct during the recent convention. As chairman of the printing committee, Green had as one of his duties the selection of a publisher of the constitution. He made an unwise choice in Henry and Company, who offered to print the document at five times the cost of the lowest bidder, Joseph Charless, editor of the *Missouri Gazette*. Charless published numerous editorials attacking Green for selecting the more expensive contract. The Missouri editor was not alone in his criticism. The widely read *Missouri Intelligencer* and the convention journal itself seemed to expose irregularities in Green's conduct in the affair. The charges made by Charless coupled with the questions raised by the paper and the journal proved damaging to Green's campaign. The general, nevertheless, responded immediately to the accusations in a letter "To the Voters of Howard County." He defended his committee's choice for the public printing, which the convention itself supported, and accused Charless himself of making calculated misstatements and for playing politics. In the end, his caustic and bold rejoinder was not enough to salvage his campaign.<sup>13</sup>

Green's rejection of Charless during the convention most likely stemmed from the political factionalization in Missouri. The editor of the *Missouri Gazette* was a member of the anti-junto, which made him highly unpopular with Green, who was associated with the "Little Junto." Moreover, Charless had exhibited abolitionist tendencies during the debate over slavery restriction in Missouri, also unpopular with the proslavery Green. Both factors undoubtedly played a role in Green's rejection of Charless as the printer of the new state constitution.<sup>14</sup>

The second reason behind Green's defeat at the polls was adverse voter reaction to the constitutional convention and to the St. Louis

12. McCandless, *History*, 13–16; Alan S. Weiner, "John Scott, Thomas Hart Benton, David Barton, and the Presidential Election of 1824: A Case Study in Pressure Politics," 461.

13. Shoemaker, *Statehood*, 172–73; Green, *Facts and Suggestions*, 23–24.

14. McCandless, *History*, 8, 13, 14; Weiner, "Election of 1824," 461.

Clique. In the gubernatorial race, Alexander McNair routed the Little Junto candidate, William Clark, nearly three to one, and in the race for lieutenant governor, William H. Ashley defeated Nathaniel Cook of the St. Louis Clique. Since he was connected to the St. Louis Clique and a delegate to the Missouri constitutional convention, Green's electoral defeat may have reflected this trend.<sup>15</sup>

Following the August elections of 1820, Missouri had a functioning state government. In the eyes of Congress, however, it did not. The Missouri Constitution was unacceptable, and for the territory to enter the Union officially as a full-fledged state, it had to present an acceptable one. Section 25 of Article III blatantly excluded free blacks and mulattos from the state, which, according to Congress, directly violated Article IV, Section 2 of the U.S. Constitution, that the "Citizens of each State shall be entitled to all Privileges and Immunities of Citizens in the Several States." If free blacks were citizens in Maine, they could not be denied citizenship in Missouri. Round two between an intrusive Congress and a defiant Missouri had commenced. Henry Clay again came to the rescue—of the nation more than Missouri—and formulated the "Second Missouri Compromise." Missouri's admission to the Union depended upon a promise from the state legislature that it would never construe the offensive section of its constitution in a manner that violated the U.S. Constitution. In the end, Missouri would win the bout. The legislature quickly agreed to the nonsensical request by Congress, concomitantly stating that it had no power to bind the people of the state to their pledge. The Missouri General Assembly not only ignored Congress in this instance, but it also enacted legislation in 1825 and in 1847 prohibiting free blacks and mulattos from migrating into the state. Congress never challenged Missouri's continued defiance of federal power. Nonetheless, on August 10, 1821, President Monroe announced the admission of Missouri as the twenty-fourth state—again.<sup>16</sup>

In the meantime, the legislature of Missouri "officially" convened at the Missouri Hotel in St. Louis on September 18, 1820. Missourians always believed, and rightly so, that they entered the Union in the summer of 1820, and they conducted themselves in just such a manner,

15. McReynolds, *Crossroads*, 86; McCandless, *History*, 14–16; Shoemaker, *Statehood*, 266. John Scott was elected as the first U.S. representative. Governor McNair eventually appointed men of the old order to prominent positions in the state: Edward Bates as attorney general, and John D. Cook, John Rice Jones, and Mathias Girk to the state supreme court.

16. Shoemaker, *Statehood*, 290–301; McReynolds, *Crossroads*, 87–91; McCandless, *History*, 18–21; Dangerfield, *Awakening*, 129–37.

immediately undertaking legislation putting the state government into motion. One of the first orders of business for the new legislature was the election of two U.S. senators. Political jostling for the two positions commenced immediately. David Barton and Thomas Hart Benton, respectively, polled the most votes. Barton's election was, for the most part, certain; Benton, however, had a fight on his hands. He struggled daily to procure the necessary votes from the legislators, and any support he could gain, whether from a friend, a fence sitter, or even a personal foe, was critical for his victory. Since Benton was connected with the Little Junto, members of this faction did everything within their power to support his senatorial pursuit, and to this end they needed the aid of Duff Green.<sup>17</sup>

Green's political endorsement of Benton, however, was unlikely. The general detested him. He distrusted Benton from the very moment he first met him, declaring, "I always felt a conviction that he was a dangerous, unreliable man against whose machinations I should ever be on my guard." Green claimed that Benton was "selfish," and that he was "more under the influence of animosity and friendship, and that passion and prejudice control his judgment and his conduct." Indeed, the "malevolent influence" of the future senator from Missouri, Green later reflected, "contributed so much to the disasters which have fallen upon this country." Eventually, the two men, who shared many of the same traits, turned their personal enmity into a political one during the turbulent years of the Jackson administration.<sup>18</sup>

Nonetheless, Green, still allied with the old territorial leadership, reluctantly supported Benton's nomination in the name of "party" unity. Using his influence in the frontier region, he persuaded legislators from Howard and Cooper Counties to choose Benton as the other senator. Green later claimed that he voted for Benton for various political reasons: "that he was the editor of an influential newspaper [*St. Louis Enquirer*]; that, in the division of parties [in Missouri], he sustained Gov. Clark; that he opposed the Missouri restriction; and that, upon the organization of the state government a seat in the United States Senate was allotted to him as a reward for his partisan services." In short, he yielded to party influence.<sup>19</sup>

17. On the election of Barton and Benton, see McReynolds, *Crossroads*, 117–22; McCandless, *History*, 15–18; Monas N. Squires, "A New View of the Election of Barton and Benton to the United States Senate in 1820," 460–94.

18. Green, *Facts and Suggestions*, 22.

19. McCandless, *History*, 17; March, *History of Missouri*, 437; Green, *Facts and Suggestions*, 22.

Benton's election as a U.S. senator from Missouri must not have had any political repercussions on the general back home in Howard County, for Green soon became a state representative. John Ray, the popularly elected candidate, died while in office in 1820, and the voters of Howard County sent Green in his stead. In the meantime, events in Missouri overshadowed the senatorial election as well as the second Missouri Compromise, and state representative Duff Green found himself at the forefront of a prodigious political challenge. Back in the summer of 1820, while Green and his fellow convention delegates hammered out a new state constitution, Missouri encountered a far more pressing problem—severe economic depression. The Panic of 1819 had made its way west.<sup>20</sup>

### III.

Between the end of the war in 1815 and through most of 1818, the United States experienced dramatic economic expansion, fueled by an inveterate optimism about the promise of continuing prosperity. A heavy stream of settlers flowed westward in the pursuit of new lands; cotton prices surged to record highs, resulting in the rapid expansion of cotton cultivation in the Old Southwest; and exports to Europe soared. The nation's banking structure financed the economic growth with easy credit to all; the number of state banks proliferated, likewise making extensive and lenient loans. Speculation ran rampant. The price of land in the West skyrocketed. But it would all end suddenly. European demand for American goods declined significantly; the cotton market collapsed; the price of wholesale goods dropped markedly; land prices plummeted; and to make matters worse, the Second Bank of the United States restricted credit, forcing state banks to retain specie, which, in turn, drastically curtailed lending and severely decreased the supply of money. Bankruptcies and bank failures ensued. By the latter part of 1818, the country had begun to experience the effects of its speculative orgy. Financial collapse came swiftly to the East in 1819, and soon the West would feel the equally powerful aftershock.<sup>21</sup>

20. "Sketches," Lisbon Applegate Collection, WHMC-SHSM; *Journal of the House of Representatives of the Extra-Session of the First General Assembly of the State of Missouri* (n.p., n.d.), 3.

21. On the Panic of 1819 nationwide, see Dangerfield, *Awakening*, 72–96, and *Era of Good Feelings*, 175–96; Charles G. Sellers, *The Market Revolution: Jacksonian America, 1815–1846*; Murray N. Rothbard, *The Panic of 1819: Reactions and Policies*.

By the spring of 1821, Missouri was in dire financial straits. Missourians, too, had taken part in the wholesale speculation that followed the War of 1812, and they, too, would experience the disastrous consequences. Once the flush times ended abruptly, ghost towns replaced the boomtowns along the banks of the Missouri and empty farms dominated the landscape. Clamor for relief was deafening. Thus, when Governor McNair called for a special session of the Missouri General Assembly to begin on June 4, 1821, to address the acute economic conditions throughout the state, issues surrounding the recent Second Missouri Compromise took a back seat.<sup>22</sup>

When the special session of the Missouri legislature convened in St. Charles in the summer of 1821—the official first state legislature according to Congress—Duff Green dominated the proceedings from the opening gavel, but in a manner that was less than decorous. On the first day of the session Green and another legislator, Andrew McGirk, had a heated exchange of words, which escalated into a brawl. McGirk angrily hurled a pewter inkstand at Green, whereupon the two men went at one another with bare fists. Governor McNair intervened to stop the fight, but when he grabbed hold of Green, another legislator, “Ringtail Painter” Martin Palmer stepped in and admonished McNair: “Stand back governor; you are no more in a fight than any other man. I know that much law. I am at home in this business. Give it to him, Duff! Give it to him!” Why the fight broke out is unknown. Probably it had to do with the bitter divisions between relief and anti-relief forces emerging within their legislative district—all three contestants, Green, McGirk, and Palmer represented Howard County. Certainly the altercation attests to Green’s short fuse, his readiness to back up words with fisticuffs, and his penchant for making enemies. But most of all, it revealed the frustrating effects of the financial strain and the bitter enmities surfacing between the debtor and creditor classes—Jacksonian Democracy had arrived early on the Missouri frontier, and Green was one of its first victims.<sup>23</sup>

As sentiment for relief steadily swelled in 1821, hard-pressed Missourians demanded legislative intervention to ease their economic plight.

22. On the Panic of 1819 in Missouri, see James Neal Primm, *Economic Policy in the Development of a Western State, Missouri, 1820–1860*, 1–17; Hattie M. Anderson, “Frontier Economic Problems in Missouri, 1815–1828,” 38–70, 182–203; Dorothy B. Dorsey, “The Panic of 1819 in Missouri,” 79–91; McCandless, *History*, 23–28.

23. Francis L. McCurdy, *Stump, Bar, and Pulpit: Speechmaking on the Missouri Frontier*, 111; Walter B. Stevens, “The Missouri Tavern,” 102. Green had once covered a debt of Palmer’s in order to keep him out of jail.

The consequent popular appeal to stay laws and cheap currency soon divided the state into pro-relief and anti-relief factions. Farmers, speculators, and landholders dominated the former group, while lawyers, merchants, and creditors tended to unite under the latter banner. Spirited debate between these two forces determined the course of state politics in the early 1820s. Although a lawyer, a merchant, and a creditor, Green's interests as a landholder and speculator prevailed, and he promptly embraced the pro-relief cause in Missouri.<sup>24</sup>

During the last week of May, a number of citizens from Howard and Chariton Counties, intent on forcing the state to enact relief measures, gathered at a local schoolhouse. The group adopted a series of resolutions outlining the various reasons for the economic hardships and proposed remedies for the general assembly to pass. Representative Green duly attended and voiced support for relief measures. He especially favored the group's idea of the bank plan, whereby the charter of the Bank of Missouri would be amended to allow the state to subscribe to a minimum of \$500,000 of stock. The bank would then suspend specie payments, and the legislature would make the bank notes legal tender for all debts.<sup>25</sup>

Currency was in great demand in Missouri, for the Bank of St. Louis had closed its doors as early as 1819, and the Bank of Missouri followed suit in August 1821. By the fall of 1821, Missouri was bankless and thus moneyless. In addition, large landowners had borrowed beyond their means to purchase lands and desperately needed the aid of the government. To meet the specter of a money shortage, Green immediately went to work enacting relief legislation at the special session of the general assembly. He introduced a bill for the establishment of loan offices throughout the state, which the house passed. The act divided Missouri into five districts, each with its own loan office. These loan offices could issue certificates, to a maximum of \$200,000 at 2 percent interest, with denominations ranging from fifty cents to \$10. Loans were to be made in the respective districts, in proportion to their population, and in amounts not exceeding \$1,000 per individual if secured with real estate and \$200 per individual if secured with personal property. The certificates would essentially become legal tender in the state of Missouri; the state treasury had to accept the notes in payment of taxes and debts, and public officials were to take them as their salaries. The pur-

24. On the relief-anti-relief division, see Primm, *Economic Policy*, 2-3; Dorsey, "Panic of 1819," 86.

25. Primm, *Economic Policy*, 3-4.

pose of the act was to supply the state with a circulating medium and to provide loans to landowners. Green hoped that the loan office act would alleviate financial distress in Missouri. His sympathy for the plight of Missourians earned him the sobriquet, "farmer's friend," and the praise of all who sought government intervention to ease their personal economic woes.<sup>26</sup>

Besides the loan offices, the Missouri legislature enacted several other relief measures during the special session in 1821. A rather conservative stay law allowed debtors to redeem lands sold to cover their debts. If the debtor could remit the purchase money within a span of two and one-half years, at a rate of 10 percent annually, he could reclaim his land. This law only applied to those individuals who owned real estate; the landless man suffered on. An act to abolish imprisonment for debt in particular cases and an act that exempted certain property from execution, such as family possessions, livestock, and various other forms of property, completed the relief measures enacted by the Missouri General Assembly in 1821.<sup>27</sup>

Opposition to the relief legislation surfaced immediately. The most controversial measure of the entire package was Green's loan office act. Many merchants simply refused to take the certificates as currency, and anti-relief partisans demanded the outright repudiation of the recently established loan offices. These opponents feared that if the loan offices were not abolished, specie would rapidly flee the state. Such a backlash indeed worsened the currency shortage, which merely drove proponents of the new system to appeal for an increase in the certificates. Intense argument over the relief package soon heightened the division between the pro-relief and anti-relief factions. Green refused to remain silent on the issue either. He defended the various relief measures in the *Missouri Intelligencer*.<sup>28</sup>

Green also had another opportunity to demonstrate the efficacy of his loan office act, as well as to defend the other relief measures adopted by the general assembly. In October 1821, an election was held in Howard County to fill a vacancy in the lower house of the legislature. Philip Trammell represented the pro-relief ticket, and Franklin

26. On the issue of the loan offices, see Primm, *Economic Policy*, 5–9; Dorsey, "Panic of 1819," 88–89; Anderson, "Economic Problems," 67; Lehmann, "Constitution of 1820," 239–46; March, *History of Missouri*, 448–50. A copy of the "Act For the Establishment of Loan Offices for the Relief of Debtors and Creditors" is in the Green Papers, SHC-UNC, roll 1, frames 76–85.

27. Anderson, "Economic Problems," 58–60; Dorsey, "Panic of 1819," 87.

28. Dorsey, "Panic of 1819," 88; Primm, *Economic Policy*, 6–11; March, *History of Missouri*, 450; Franklin *Missouri Intelligencer*, July 9, 1821.



attorney George Tompkins championed the anti-relief cause. Green assumed a direct and active role in Trammell's campaign, for he recognized that a victory for Trammell was a victory for the relief measures. When the votes were tallied, Trammell garnered a majority of the popular vote, thus furnishing the pro-relief forces with a mandate for further legislative measures.<sup>29</sup>

By the end of the 1821–1822 session of the general assembly, however, public opinion had begun to turn against the pro-relief sentiment. Merchants refused to accept the loan certificates, numerous newspapers and editorials had maintained a consistent barrage of anti-relief propaganda, and the courts had entered the contest by striking a sharp blow against various legislative measures. Two St. Louis Circuit Court cases, *Missouri v. William Carr Lane* and *Fulkerson v. Devore*, in February and July 1821, respectively, declared the loan offices unconstitutional. In 1830, the state supreme court and the U.S. Supreme Court followed suit. Fall elections for the general assembly only confirmed the growing hostility toward relief legislation. Where the 1820 general assembly had been dominated by pro-relief men, the legislature of 1822 opposed the measures passed the previous session. The end came quickly for the farmer-debtor group. In November 1822, the Missouri legislature prohibited further issuance of the certificates, and in December of that year, it repealed the act altogether. The era of relief legislation in Missouri had ended. The legislative career of Duff Green, however, continued—he was elected to the Missouri Senate in 1822.<sup>30</sup>

29. Primm, *Economic Policy*, 10–12; Franklin *Missouri Intelligencer*, October 16, 23, 1821.

30. Anderson, "Economic Problems," 65, 67; Dorsey, "Panic of 1819," 88–90; Lehmann, "Constitution of 1820," 242; Primm, *Economic Policy*, 13–17.

## CHAPTER 4



### New Pursuits and a New Career

#### I.

**A**n extensive landholder and speculator, Green felt the economic squeeze as much as anyone in Missouri. When tenants on his property or purchasers of his lands could not pay their debts, Green could not in turn fulfill his obligations to those he owed. The first indication of the general's financial difficulties came in the fall of 1819. In October, he placed a notice in the *Missouri Intelligencer* informing his debtors that he would take as payment "almost any article of produce," from pork, grain, tobacco, and vegetables, to lard, tallow, flax, and butter, to deerskins, furs, and linsey dress. "He owes debts," ran the notice, "they must be paid," and those who owed him "must and shall pay." Green authorized an attorney to commence lawsuits against everyone who had not settled their debts with him, his neighbors excepted, by November 1819. His debts "press on him," and he must prosecute "to save himself from being sued." Little wonder, then, that the general proposed the loan office program—he needed a way to cover his own debts, and quickly.<sup>1</sup>

Despite the relief measures he championed, Green's financial woes continued unabated throughout his stay in Missouri. He had overextended himself financially and desperately needed to find extra cash. In order to reassure his creditors that he would cover his debts, Green

1. Franklin *Missouri Intelligencer*, October 1, 1819; Notice, 93–94; "Sketches," Lisbon Applegate Collection, WHMC-SHSM.

notified them that he was seeking additional means of income. In the hope that new ventures would “raise a small sum to aid me in my present difficulties,” the resourceful Green sought some way to supplement his income.<sup>2</sup>

If Secretary of War John C. Calhoun could not help ease Green’s financial plight by securing him an appointment as an Indian agent, perhaps the South Carolinian could use his influence to get Green a contract for carrying the U.S. mail. In this endeavor, Green sought the help of his brother-in-law, Senator Ninian Edwards: “I am sure that you can procure me this contract through your influence with Mr. Calhoun. . . . If it is procured at \$7000 I shall be able to pay off all my debts and I shall then be the most popular man in this district.” Green had all the details worked out. He proposed a 176-mile line from Franklin to St. Louis at an estimated annual cost of \$6,815. Existing postal contracts paid upwards of \$65 per mile; Green offered to do it for just under \$35. If Edwards could also approach Postmaster General John McLean and convince him to increase the compensation to \$7,000 annually, it would help remedy Green’s continuing financial strains. “I need not say to you,” he reminded his brother-in-law, “that my situation requires assistance.” Green depended on this contract “to save me from other pressing necessities.” Urge the contract on the postmaster general, he begged, and do all to secure the postal contract.<sup>3</sup>

Edwards must have been an able lobbyist, for in December 1823 Green received three contracts from the federal government “for the conveyance of the mail in small stages, one trip weekly from St. Louis to Franklin . . . and thence, on horseback, to Clay court-house.” Although Green had hoped for two trips weekly, which would have earned him the desired sum of \$7,000 annually, he gladly accepted what was offered. For the two contracts covering the route from St. Louis to Franklin, he received the sum of \$2,640 per annum; for the contract of transporting the mail from Franklin to the Clay County courthouse, he obtained the yearly amount of \$1,210. The contracts would expire at the end of 1828. General Green—land speculator, merchant, lawyer, Indian fighter, war veteran, member of the state constitutional convention, and state representative and senator—was now a receiver of federal patronage as a contractor for the U.S. Post Office. Thereupon, Green established the first stage line west of the Mississippi River and be-

2. Green to Thomas Adams Smith, January 14, 1823, Thomas Adams Smith Papers, WHMC-SHSM.

3. Green to Ninian Edwards, December 10, 1823, in E. B. Washburne, ed., *The Edwards Papers; Being a Portion of the Collection of the Manuscripts of Ninian Edwards*, 212–15; Houck, *History of Missouri*, 3: 63–64.

came the first postmaster at Chariton. The postal contracts, however, did not alleviate his money problems. His financial constraints continued.<sup>4</sup>

## II.

From 1823 to 1826, when he removed permanently to the nation's capital, Green pursued various other employments to augment his income. All proved fruitless. In early 1823, President Monroe had nominated him for the post of receiver of public monies for the land office in Missouri. The U.S. Senate rejected the nomination. Although friends of the general informed him that his rejection was not a consequence of any "personal objection" to him, and that his "individual qualifications were admitted," they blamed the opposition on Secretary of the Treasury Crawford's majority in the Senate. Tennessee senator John Williams, however, informed Martin Van Buren that he had voted against this nomination "on the ground of [Green's] want of principle." When his renomination to another land office in Missouri was pressed in the Senate, Green declined on account of his desire to remove to St. Louis. Rumors even circulated widely in Missouri that Green would run for Congress—an idea that Green hinted at only once. Nothing came of this either. But Green would not give up. He would find another vocation to add to his lengthening list, that of newspaper editor.<sup>5</sup>

In December 1823, at the very time he acquired federal contracts to carry the U.S. mail and while he held a seat in the Missouri upper

4. "Transfer of Contracts, and the Cost of Transporting the Mail on Certain Routes," No. 66, in *American State Papers*, Class 7, Vol. 1, *Post Office Department*, 146–47. Later, in 1827, as the bitterly contested 1828 presidential election ensued, one of Clay's supporters criticized the postmaster general, John McLean, for unethically giving Green the postal contract: "In 1824 the mail contracts for the line from St. Louis to Franklin were taken. There were several bids. Genl. Green's was the lowest, and took the contract. He notified the P. M. Gen.; that he had taken it too low & could not comply,—the P. M. G. then let him have it at a *higher price* than two other very reputable & perfectly responsible men—more so than Genl. Green—that were desirous to get at their bids. And this too without letting them know any thing of the matter.—I have seen the correspondence between Genl. Green & the P. M. Genl.—the original letters of the P. M. G. were shewn [*sic*] to me. . . . I know this is out of your department—but how comes it that *your friends*—the friends of the [Adams administration] cannot get a contract at a fair price—And Genl. Green can get the same contract at a *higher price than they were either of them willing to give & actually bid?*" Joseph M. Street to Clay, October 16, 1827, in James F. Hopkins, Mary W. M. Hargreaves, and Robert Seager, eds. *The Papers of Henry Clay*, 6: 1153.

5. On the nomination for receiver of public monies, see Green to Rufus King, April 22, 1823, John Scott to Green, December 20, 1823, Green Papers, SHC-UNC,

house, Green purchased the *St. Louis Enquirer* with a loan of a thousand dollars. In the first issue in January of the next year, the paper notified its subscribers of the transfer of ownership. The central feature of Green's *Enquirer* was the election of 1824, and more precisely, the endorsement of the candidacy of Secretary of War John C. Calhoun.<sup>6</sup>

Five candidates vied for the presidency in 1824—Henry Clay, William H. Crawford, John C. Calhoun, John Quincy Adams, and Andrew Jackson. It was certainly one of the most distinguished fields in U.S. history. Missourians favored Clay. Not only was he a staunch advocate of Western interests, but he had played a pivotal role in gaining Missouri's admission into the Union. In 1822, the Missouri General Assembly expressed a preference for the Kentuckian, and Clay's most enthusiastic promoter in Missouri, Senator Thomas Hart Benton, tirelessly stumped the state in 1823 and 1824. Benton, editor of the *St. Louis Enquirer* until 1822, used its columns to propound the Clay message. The other state newspapers also favored Clay, which, in turn, pressed the other Missouri delegates in Congress, Senator David Barton and Representative John Scott, to get on the bandwagon. A singular exception was the contrarian Green, who defied the prevailing political wind and used the pages of the *Enquirer* to promote Calhoun.<sup>7</sup>

Green supported Calhoun because his brother-in-law, Senator Ninian

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and Green to President Monroe, October 29, 1823, James Monroe Papers, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations. In his letter to King, Green contended that his pursuit of the receivership, located in Bluffton, was induced "more by a wish to superintend in person the large interests which I own in that place having located 640 acres on which the town is laid off and being the principal proprietor than by the emoluments of the office which to me will be much reduced in the sacrifice of my practice in removing to an exterior country of my circuit." Col. John Williams to Martin Van Buren, March 22, 1831, in John S. Bassett, ed., *The Correspondence of Andrew Jackson*, 4: 229. Green later included the opposition of both Missouri senators, Benton and Barton, with that of Crawford. *U.S. Telegraph*, November 13, 1826. On the rumors of Green's bid for Congress, see B. H. Reeves to George C. Sibley, November 9, 1825, Lindenwood Collection, Missouri Historical Society. Another hint at Green's possible run for Congress can be found in the above-mentioned letter to Rufus King, where he writes regarding a letter from Missouri senator Thomas Hart Benton: "[T]he earnest manner in which [Benton] assured me by letter that Mr. Scott would not be a candidate again for Congress just before the last session, which however intended by [Benton] was certainly understood by me as a direct pledge on the part of Mr. Scott's friend that he would not oppose *me* hereafter as I did not oppose Mr. Scott then." No such letter from Benton to Green has been found.

6. *St. Louis Enquirer*, January 3, 1824; Green, *Facts and Suggestions*, 25; "Sketches," Lisbon Applegate Collection, WHMC-SHSM.

7. On the election of 1824 in Missouri, see Weiner, "Election of 1824," 469–94; McCandless, *History*, 72–76.

Edwards, was an avid supporter of the South Carolinian. Edwards and Calhoun frequently conversed by mail about the latter's presidential aspirations, exploring in particular the best means to attain that office. Sometime in 1823, Edwards introduced Green to Calhoun, whereupon the secretary of war outlined his political views and his strategy for winning the White House. The general obviously impressed Calhoun. "I have been much pleased with Gen'l Green," he informed Edwards. "He is intelligent and decisive; and must in time become important in the West. I have conversed with him freely, and he can give you full information of the state of things in this quarter." With the South Carolinian's full blessing, Green emerged in the vanguard of the Calhoun forces in Missouri. During the fall of 1823, the general pressed local newspapers to print editorials "as well as other matter which keeps up a strong feeling for Mr. Calhoun." Many papers heeded the call to action and urged Missourians to support the candidacy of the secretary of war. As of January 1824, subscribers to the *Enquirer* no longer imbibed the praises of Clay as proclaimed by Benton; now they heard a different, yet equally resounding, verse in adulation of Calhoun as sung by Green.<sup>8</sup>

The new editor of the *St. Louis Enquirer* apprised readers of the practical situation surrounding the current run for the presidency. Only Calhoun could win. No other candidate in the field had a chance. While the South Carolinian gained across the country, Green argued, Adams ebbed in the North and the East. As for the presidential hopes of Crawford, the *Enquirer* declared there were none, that Crawford's chances "are blasted," especially in the West. Clay's candidacy suffered as well, and, Green contended, his prospects "are now hopeless." The Republican Party must, therefore, unite behind a winning candidate, and that candidate was none other than John C. Calhoun.<sup>9</sup>

Moreover, Calhoun's agenda for America and his previous record as secretary of war further confirmed his superior qualifications for

8. On the Calhoun-Edwards correspondence regarding election strategy, see the letters from Calhoun to Edwards in Ninian W. Edwards, *History of Illinois, from 1778 to 1833; and Life and Times of Ninian Edwards*, 489-96. Gretchen Garst Ewing, "Duff Green, John C. Calhoun, and the Election of 1828," 127, and "Duff Green Independent Editor of a Party Press," 733; Calhoun to Edwards, September 23, 1823, Green to Edwards, December 10, 1823, *Edwards Papers*, ed. Washburne, 210, 215. Green also conferred with both Edwards and Calhoun regarding his Senate rejection to a land office in Missouri. Green to President Monroe, October 29, 1823, James Monroe Papers, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations.

9. *St. Louis Enquirer*, January 6, 27, 1824.

president. He had already outlined his political views in a tract entitled "Measures not Men," which Green republished in the *Enquirer*. The paper declared this work important for the "sound political doctrines which it inculcates." Green recited some of these doctrines in an editorial under the caption of "What the West Wants." The revision of the tariff and a system of internal improvements dominated the Western want list—measures which Calhoun clearly espoused. Moreover, the current secretary of war had demonstrated his executive skills. Green not only labeled Calhoun "the friend of domestic manufactures, commerce & internal improvements," but he was likewise the friend of the navy and the army. "Why not call him the navy candidate, the improvement candidate, or the manufacturing candidate," asserted the editor of the *Enquirer*. "Mr. Calhoun has proved himself as much the friend of each as of the army." But above all, and most critical for Missourians, Calhoun was the friend of Western interests.<sup>10</sup>

The most challenging task for Green, however, was to endorse Calhoun and, at the same time, to discredit the other candidates in a manner that did not produce a backlash against his man. Opposition to Green's advocacy of the Calhoun campaign certainly existed, and rumors abounded about the true intentions of the *Enquirer*. Articles in that newspaper, under the pseudonyms of "Philo Missourian" and "A Missourian," assailed the paper for its pro-Calhoun position. Green retorted that his paper was not secretly disguised as a friend of Adams, as these anonymous editorials claimed, for "our preference for Mr. Calhoun has never been disguised." He acknowledged that some readers were displeased with the endorsement of the secretary of war, "knowing that many of the old patrons of this paper are devoted to Mr. Clay." Nonetheless, Green had to contrast delicately Calhoun's record with those of his competitors. Comparison with Clay proved the most daunting, considering that a majority of Missourians supported the Speaker of the House.<sup>11</sup>

The *Enquirer* admitted that Clay's talents "have elevated him to a station scarcely second to any in the world, for power, respectability, and influence," and it commended his abilities and his "mental and personal endowments." The paper also recognized the Kentuckian's pivotal role in the admission of Missouri. Few could deny the positive contributions that Clay had provided to the state. In fact, the political positions of both Calhoun and Clay were nearly indistinguishable—

10. On the "Measures not Men" articles, see *Enquirer*, January 13, 20, 27, February 9, 16, March 1, 15, 1824; "What the West Wants," *Enquirer*, June 24, 1824; *Enquirer*, January 6, February 3, 1824.

11. *Enquirer*, January 27, February 9, 1824.

both were “friends of domestic manufactures and internal improvements.” The only difference between the two candidates was a practical one. Vote for Clay, admonished the *Enquirer*, and the election would be thrown into the House of Representatives.<sup>12</sup>

Comparison to the other candidates, however, proved less troublesome. Crawford, although still popular with certain parties in the West, did not have the clout to produce a backlash against Calhoun, and Adams, popular only within the upper crust of St. Louis circles, found almost no support in Missouri. Green contended that Adams had no chance to win the presidency, and although Calhoun “is as good a Republican as Mr. Adams now is,” the secretary of war “never was a Federalist, as Mr. Adams once was.” Enough said in Republican Missouri. The anti-Crawford bent of the paper, however, was quite apparent. Simply put, Calhoun was a friend of Western, and thus Missouri, interests—Crawford, the Radical, was not. Moreover, the record of the secretary of war overshadowed that of the secretary of the treasury. The “present flourishing state of the treasury,” argued Green, “is owing to the economy and accountability” of Calhoun as war secretary, rather than to Crawford as treasury secretary. Crawford preached economy; Calhoun practiced it.<sup>13</sup>

That left only one candidate—Andrew Jackson. Few could deny the popularity in the West of the hero of New Orleans. Like their fellow Western brethren, Missourians detested two peoples—the British and the Indians—and Old Hickory had been the inveterate enemy of both. So Green could say little about someone with whom he had shared so much in common, at least when it came to slaying British and Indians. The *Enquirer* merely informed readers that Jackson, if unsuccessful in his bid for the presidency, was far too principled to give his votes to anyone else but Calhoun. Ultimately, the Tennessean would promote the interest and unity of the Republican Party and thus support the South Carolinian. The paper even reminded its readers that the Old Hero had toasted Calhoun at a public dinner in Nashville, saying “John C. Calhoun: An Honest Man, the Noblest Work of God.” Green had to refrain from alienating the Jackson folks, for if fortunes were to be reversed, and Jackson was the choice, rather than Calhoun, then he would employ his editorials on behalf of Jackson. Indeed, Green had already informed Edwards that “if I find I cannot carry for Calhoun [I] will support [Jackson].”<sup>14</sup>

12. *Enquirer*, January 6, 27, February 9, 1824.

13. *Enquirer*, January 6, 20, February 3, 1824.

14. *Enquirer*, January 6, 1824; Green to Edwards, December 10, 1823, *Edwards Papers*, ed. Washburne, 215.



Another factor that emboldened Green's support of Calhoun was the personal animosity he felt toward Benton and the methods the senator employed to forward Clay in Missouri. Benton canvassed the state on Clay's behalf and approached Green in the hopes that he would support a caucus nomination of the Kentuckian. Green, however, despised the caucus system, and when Benton called for such in the Missouri legislature, he opposed the nomination. Green even went so far as to inform the Missouri senator that if he was in St. Charles, the state capital, the next day, he "would introduce a resolution for a committee to inquire why, instead of being in Washington attending to his duties as a Senator, he was in St. Charles, seeking to obtain the electoral vote of Missouri as so much capital to be disposed of by him in the political market." In his opposition to the Clay nomination, Green declared that he had "always openly denounced hypocritical & Radical politicians." This he consistently echoed in the columns of the *Enquirer*. The caucus system, in any form, was "contrary to every principle of sound policy" and "to every dictate of common sense." But here Green hit a stumbling block. The South Carolina legislature held a caucus and nominated John C. Calhoun for the presidency. The *Enquirer* regretted such a move, for it "has done Mr. Calhoun no good." Nonetheless, the paper would not withdraw its support from Calhoun, for, ultimately, the South Carolinian was "the candidate of the people."<sup>15</sup>

By March, however, Calhoun was the candidate of the people for the vice presidency, not the presidency. Seeing the political writing on the wall, or more precisely in the actions of the Pennsylvania legislature in switching its allegiance to Jackson, the secretary of war decided to run for the second spot. Green, true to his word, likewise shifted his support to Jackson, albeit a Jackson-Calhoun ticket. "[I]t would be strangely inconsistent in us," ran the *Enquirer*, "to advocate Mr. Calhoun for President now, when the people whose right he acknowledges, have nominated him for Vice-President. . . . Our preference for Gen. Jackson is now declared in the same manner and for the same reasons." For the remainder of 1824, Green openly and staunchly supported the candidacy of Andrew Jackson.<sup>16</sup>

When the votes had been tallied, Jackson won both the popular vote and the highest number of electoral delegates, but not a majority. Calhoun, with no competition, locked up the second highest office. Adams,

15. *Enquirer*, January 6, 1824; Green, *Facts and Suggestions*, 25; Green to King, April 23, 1823, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

16. *Enquirer*, May 3, 1824; Green, *Facts and Suggestions*, 25.

with the help of Clay, secured the top spot. Missouri went for Clay, and in accordance with Green's prediction, the presidential election of 1824 was thrown into the House. Clay gave his votes to Adams, not to Jackson, and cries of "corrupt bargain" immediately arose. The three Missouri representatives in Washington followed suit, supporting Adams over Jackson. Green steadfastly stood by the Old Hero, despite pressure by Missouri congressman John Scott and Illinois congressman Daniel Pope Cook to secure the influence of the *Enquirer* on behalf of Adams. The Adams-Clay faction promised unlimited patronage if the paper would endorse them. Green refused—an action that would soon yield him great dividends with the Jackson men.<sup>17</sup>

### III.

After the presidential election, Green sold his interest in the *Enquirer*. In August 1825, he purchased a newspaper in Jefferson City with Calvin Green (no relation) "devoted to the same politics that have been advocated by the said [Duff] Green as editor of the *St. Louis Enquirer*." But Green's steadfast dedication to Jackson and Calhoun, combined with his editorial skills, made him a much-desired man. The Jackson camp immediately recognized Green's loyalty and talents and urged him to move to the nation's capital and publish a pro-Jackson newspaper. In September 1825, Calhoun wrote Samuel D. Ingham and pushed the Green candidacy. "I think with you as to Genl [*sic*] Green's qualifications," asserted the new vice president, "and I have no doubt, that he ought to be encouraged. I will cheerfully do all in my power. If [Green] thinks of commencing this winter, ought he not to be prepared to act, or at least to announce his intention by the meeting of Congress?" If Green waited until Congress convened, "it would look like the movement of a party, and will be so considered, where as acting before he will avoid the imputation." Jackson, too, encouraged Green to take up residence and pen in Washington. Shortly after the election, Green went to Washington as an attorney on behalf of Missourians seeking to settle extensive claims against the federal government, resulting from Indian depredations. While there, Green became "personally acquainted" with Jackson, and on his return trip to St. Louis, he traveled in the company of the Old Hero as far as Louisville, Kentucky. Jackson, recalled Green, "then urged me to

17. Green, *Facts and Suggestions*, 25, 26.

remove to Washington and take charge of a paper opposed to the reelection of Mr. Adams.”<sup>18</sup>

Despite Jackson’s personal plea, Green remained hesitant. Decades later, in his autobiography, he outlined his reasons for staying in Missouri:

I had established the first line of stages west of the Mississippi. I had a profitable contract for carrying the mail. . . . I had a valuable business as a attorney. I was the editor and proprietor of a leading paper, giving me considerable profit, and I was investing my income in and adjoining the city of St. Louis. I had a young and interesting family, and my social and political position was second to that of no man in the state. I had refused to exchange my position for a seat in the Senate of the United States, and I did not consent to become the editor of a party paper in Washington.<sup>19</sup>

Certainly Green’s assessment of his standing in Missouri—financial, social, and political—was much embellished. That he had a valuable contract for carrying the mails, and that he had been the first to establish a stage line west of the Mississippi River cannot be challenged. That he had turned down a seat in the U.S. Senate, although unverifiable, is probably untrue, and that he was second to no one in the state in terms of social and political prestige is an outright absurdity. Few can deny that Benton, his archenemy, had far more clout, and even if Senator David Barton and Congressman Scott were vulnerable to defeat after the “corrupt bargain” fiasco, they carried far more political weight than Green in Missouri, and undoubtedly the old French fur interests in St. Louis occupied a considerably higher social position. As for Green’s assessment of his financial condition, matters tended to go against him here as well—and this may have well been the real reason for his decision to accept or decline an editorship in Washington.<sup>20</sup>

Green indeed had a thriving legal practice, and he considered his postal contracts in Missouri adequate for covering his debts. But was this enough? In February 1826, Green bought out the mail route from

18. Ewing, “Independent Editor,” 733; Fletcher M. Green, “Duff Green, Militant Journalist of the Old School,” 248; contract between Duff Green and Calvin Green, August 20, 1825, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Calhoun to Ingham, September 9, 1825, *JCCP*, 10: 41; Green, *Facts and Suggestions*, 27.

19. Green, *Facts and Suggestions*, 27.

20. Green later declared that “I was not compelled to this district [Washington, DC] to earn my bread,” yet he was still dependent upon the *U.S. Telegraph* for supporting his family. *U.S. Telegraph*, November 8, 1826.

Louisville, Kentucky, to Vincennes, Indiana—a 120-mile line, for \$2,080 annually—and returned to Washington in order to gain the postmaster general's recognition of his recent contract. The post office concurred on April 1, 1826. That very summer, Green headed back to the western country and put his new enterprise into operation. For a variety of reasons, it did not last long.<sup>21</sup>

The U.S. postmaster general John McLean informed Green of “an intimation that has lately been made, that you contemplate a permanent residence in this city.” The rumors indeed proved true. In April 1826, the same time that he had acquired the postal contract from Louisville to Vincennes, Green accepted the offer to take over a Washington newspaper devoted to opposing the Adams administration and concomitantly supporting the Jackson-Calhoun party. During that month, he provided editorial assistance to John S. Meehan, editor of the *United States Telegraph*; in May, he became full editor; and, on June 5, 1826, Meehan sold all interests in the paper, and transferred to Green the entire printing office, including types, materials, subscriptions, debts, and all that pertained to the operation of the newspaper.<sup>22</sup>

Green had been in Washington on professional business when he made his decision. According to his own version, he happened to be boarding at the same house with the editor of the *National Journal*, the mouthpiece of the Adams administration, while he had also been writing editorials for the *Telegraph*. One morning, while reading the *Journal* over breakfast, Green happened to come upon a reply to an editorial assailing him “personally with scurrilous abuse.” The editor of the *Journal*, who also happened to be seated across the table, somehow offended Green. “I arose from the table and went directly to Mr. Meehan's office and asked him for what price he would sell me his paper. He named the price, and I drew a check for the money.” Green then returned to Missouri and sold his lands in and around St. Louis, “at a great sacrifice,” and his share of the paper in Jefferson City. In July, he disposed of his postal contracts and stage lines in Missouri. “I was induced to this,” he informed McLean, “because, having determined to become the editor of a newspaper, the object of which was to expose the abuse of the patronage of the Government, I was unwilling to subject myself to the charge of sharing that patronage.” Simply put, Green

21. Green regularly advertised his St. Louis legal practice in the *Enquirer*. On the Louisville to Vincennes postal route, see *American State Papers*, Class 7, 1: 147.

22. McLean to Green, April 13, 1826, *American State Papers*, Class 7, 1: 148; Green to McLean, no date, *American State Papers*, Class 7, 1: 154. For the contract between Green and Meehan, see Green Papers, SHC-UNC, roll 1, frame 271.

sought to concentrate his resources and energies in preventing the reelection of President Adams.<sup>23</sup>

Green's rendition of his purchase of the *Telegraph* leaves much to be desired. Actually, the oars of the nascent Jacksonian ship of state were already in motion in securing Green his Washington newspaper. Clearly he did not simply draw a check for the paper; he did not have the necessary money. Help would have to come from another quarter—and it quickly did. In May 1826, John Eaton, the close friend of Jackson and the soon to be beleaguered secretary of war in Jackson's first cabinet, endorsed a loan for Green to the amount of three thousand dollars. If Green became unable to edit the *Telegraph*, however, and thus unable to pay his loan, Eaton would not be left holding the note. In one of Jackson's memorandums, the future president listed nine individuals who had pledged a total of two thousand dollars to cover Eaton: James Hamilton Jr. (\$300), George Kremer (\$300), George Pater (\$300), John S. Barbour (\$300), James K. Polk (\$100), J. C. Isacks (\$100), Samuel D. Ingham (\$150), D. H. Miller (\$150), and John Branch, William King, and Samuel Carson (\$300 combined). Obviously, faith and satisfaction in Green's abilities and loyalty extended beyond Calhoun and Edwards—beyond any doubt, Green had the financial support of some of the principal, and most noted, Jacksonian politicians.<sup>24</sup>

Green alleged that he sold his St. Louis lands at a considerable financial loss, and that he did so out of a sense of obligation to public service. Had he remained in St. Louis and continued to invest in lands in and around the city, Green believed he would have been "one of the wealthiest men in this country." But he acted instead under a sense of public duty. "I was not an adventurer, purchased by promises of plunder or patronage," he contended. "I was a devotee, sacrificing my own private interests in the effort to maintain the rights of the people, and to assert and enforce the responsibility of their public servants." The general would, throughout his life, view his political endeavors in such a noble, self-righteous manner. Probably a more accurate assessment of Green's actions was given by a fellow Missourian in a letter to the

23. Green, *Facts and Suggestions*, 27–28; Green to McLean, April 15, July 12, 1826, *American State Papers*, Class 7, 1: 148, 154.

24. "Loans to Duff Green," Jackson Memorandum, May 20, 1826, *Jackson Correspondence*, ed. Bassett, 3: 301–2. John S. Barbour was a congressman from Virginia and a cousin to James Barbour, secretary of war in the Adams administration, and Philip Pendleton Barbour, Democratic Speaker of the House during the Seventeenth Congress; James K. Polk, future Speaker of the House, was president of the United States from 1841 to 1849; Samuel D. Ingham and John Branch were Jackson's first secretary of the treasury and secretary of the navy, respectively.

Missouri secretary of state. Green “does not oppose an administration right or wrong for the purpose of obtaining office,” but “he is very in favor of the loaves and fishes and the honor of the thing.” There is indeed a fine line between self-sacrifice and self-interest—Green was motivated by a little of both.<sup>25</sup>

Certainly Green’s decision to take over the *Telegraph* emanated from his partisan desire to unseat Adams and promote the political views of Jackson and Calhoun. But his financial condition most likely had a part in the choice as well. Green realized few profits from the Louisville-to-Vincennes line. In fact, the expenses of the route exceeded the receipts. On another front, Postmaster General McLean urged Green to relinquish his postal contracts if he moved permanently to Washington. “It is evidently against good policy,” McLean admonished Green, “to place contracts in the hands of persons who reside many hundred mile from the routes.” A stage line “cannot be managed to the advantage of the contractor, or to the public benefit, unless under the immediate superintendence of the contractor.” Green sold his contract and stock in the Louisville-to-Vincennes route in September 1826.<sup>26</sup>

Whether Green relinquished his postal contracts as a result of pressure from McLean, or from lack of profits, or merely from his desire to prevent President Adams from serving a second term, remains uncertain. What is certain is that despite the many efforts to relieve his financial straits, Green could only repel creditors for so long. By the end of 1826, by which time he had removed permanently to Washington, D.C., he had lost most of his property in Missouri. His remaining lands were eventually auctioned off at a sheriff’s sale to cover his debts. He had now staked everything on the *Telegraph*—and on the election of Andrew Jackson.<sup>27</sup>

Green had sold his share of the Jefferson City newspaper, the several postal contracts, and his land in St. Louis, and, in 1826, packed up and headed east to the nation’s capital, reversing the westward movement of his ancestors. He was about to make his first appearance on the national political scene. Calhoun was right, to an extent. Duff Green would in time become important, but not solely in the West. By

25. Green, *Facts and Suggestions*, 28; T. J. Boggs to Hamilton R. Gamble, November 3, 1825, Hamilton R. Gamble Papers, MHS.

26. Green to McLean, no date, *American State Papers*, Class 7, 1: 154; McLean to Green, July 19, 25, 1826, *American State Papers*, Class 7, 1: 154, 155; Green to McLean, September 11, 1826, *American State Papers*, Class 7, 1: 150.

27. Anderson, “Economic Problems,” 67. On the sheriff’s sale of Green’s property, see the *Missouri Republican*, December 28, 1826.

the election of 1828, his name would become a household word throughout the entire country. General Duff Green and General Andrew Jackson had shared so much in common—common professional pursuits, common background, and common personalities—and now they embarked together on a common endeavor: the election of the common man. Duff Green emerged, by the election of 1828, as one of the most recognized Jacksonian Democrats. The age—or more precisely, the West—and the issues and events that dominated it—market revolutions and economic panic, expansion and slavery, and the rights of the people and the concomitant defense of American Republican values—had made Green and Jackson, made them Jacksonian Democrats. Now these men, and an extensive, talented, and determined supporting cast, influenced by a set of circumstances and a core of ideas, would make an age.

## SECTION II



### The Election of 1828

#### *Jacksonian Partisan*

**A**fter settling his affairs in Missouri, Green departed St. Louis at the end of July 1826 and began his return journey to the nation's capital, accompanied by his wife, his four children, and a few family servants. First on the new editor's agenda was an extended visit with relatives in Kentucky. As the trip to Washington would be long and arduous, the Greens looked forward to the relaxing break with their families. The homecoming, however, turned somber. The Greens learned of the death of Lucretia's mother and the severe illness of her father. Green's wife, therefore, remained in Hopkinsville to nurse her ailing father, who survived only a few weeks longer. Green continued eastward, stopping briefly in Russellville to call upon two brothers-in-law and afterward visiting his own father near Elizabethtown.

Green had another priority on his journey to Washington. He intended to take the pulse of the western country—Missouri, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Kentucky, and Tennessee—on the impending presidential election of 1828. Jackson operatives had hired Green as the editor of the *Telegraph*, the official mouthpiece of the Jackson candidacy, for a variety of reasons, chief among them being his new reputation



as a skilled and shrewd political manager. His activities in the summer and fall of 1826 clearly demonstrated his political acumen.<sup>1</sup>

The first order of business for Green was to consult with Jackson himself. He turned southward and proceeded to Nashville. Members of the Nashville Committee, the central advisory and planning board for the Jackson campaign, met with the Missourian upon his arrival in the Tennessee capital to discuss strategy for the 1828 presidential campaign. After meeting with the Nashville Committee, Green spent the day with Jackson at the Hermitage, again discussing campaign matters. When talk ended, Jackson rode with Green to the plantation gate. Taking his new editor's hand, the Old Hero thanked him and expressed his gratitude that he had decided to take the reins of the *Telegraph*. Jackson reiterated his promise of friendship, affirmed his personal regard, and encouraged Green to think about their impending war against the Adams administration. "Truth is mighty," Jackson concluded, "and will prevail."<sup>2</sup>

The prevailing truth of which Jackson spoke concerned the previous presidential election. The Old Hero had garnered the highest number of both popular and electoral votes, but not enough to secure the necessary majority. For the second time in U.S. history, the presidential contest had been thrown into the House of Representatives, where the outcome had been uncertain. Many of its members could not stomach the prospect of the Tennessee frontiersman succeeding the Virginia Dynasty. Chief among these had been Henry Clay, whose fourth-place showing in the 1824 election had temporarily ended his own presidential aspirations. Clay had preferred Adams as the lesser of two evils. When the Speaker of the House had announced his support of the New Englander, going against the feelings of the vast numbers of his fellow Westerners, rumors had spread of a possible political bargain between the two. Clay had indeed met with Adams several weeks prior to the House selection of the president, where both men discussed the political situation confronting them. Although neither individual entered into an explicit deal, some kind of understanding evidently had been reached.

When the day arrived to choose the sixth president of the United States, Clay, ignoring the official instructions of the Kentucky legislature, had given his state's single vote to Adams. The Kentuckian had

1. *U.S. Telegraph*, September 26, 1826; Green, *Facts and Suggestions*, 28.

2. Green, *Facts and Suggestions*, 29; Green to Edwards, September 6, 1826, *Edwards Papers*, ed. Washburne, 256.

also been instrumental in securing the vote of Ohio, which Clay had won in 1824, but which, like Kentucky, preferred Jackson to Adams. Illinois and Missouri, behind the lead of Representatives Daniel Cook and John Scott respectively, had followed Clay and, despite their states' overwhelming preference for Jackson over Adams, had voted for the latter. On the first ballot, Adams had been chosen president, thirteen states to Jackson's seven and William H. Crawford's four. Jackson supporters had been stunned. The subsequent action of the newly elected president in appointing Henry Clay secretary of state had outraged Jacksonians.<sup>3</sup>

Rumors of a corrupt bargain had suddenly turned into an absolute truth for the Jacksonians. Charges of "management, intrigue, and bargain" had immediately been made against the new administration. But the deal between "Blifil and Black George," as John Randolph had cynically charged in the Senate, had been more than just bitter feelings over losing the presidential election. Adams and Clay, dubbed the Coalition by their opponents, had directly and purposefully thwarted the expressed will of the people. The *people*, not just Jackson, had been cheated. With the single act of choosing a cabinet member, bolstered by several political blunders in the meantime, the Coalition had created a determined and vociferous opposition. The presidential race of 1828 thus commenced, and into the fray jumped Duff Green, as firm a believer in the corrupt bargain as Jackson himself.<sup>4</sup>

Reaching Washington in December 1826, Green reflected on what he had learned from his extensive tour of the Western states. His careful assessment of the political atmosphere in the West prompted him to reiterate Jackson's adumbration about truth prevailing when the two had stood earlier at the gates of the Hermitage. "[I] am more fully convinced," Green declared, "that the cause of the People will prevail." That "cause of the people," few doubted, was synonymous with the election of Andrew Jackson. It is the people, Green instructed his brother-in-law, Ninian Edwards, "who are now, in a voice of thunder, commanding their leaders to their posts." They have laid the foundation for sweeping Jackson into the White House, he argued, and it was

3. Both Cook and Scott were defeated for reelection in 1826 as a direct result of their support for Adams, but Adams provided them employment in his administration.

4. On the "corrupt bargain," see Robert Remini, *The Election of Andrew Jackson*, 20–29, *Andrew Jackson and the Course of American Freedom, 1822–1832*, 85–99, and *Henry Clay: Statesman*, 251–72; Merrill D. Peterson, *The Great Triumvirate: Webster, Clay, and Calhoun*, 126–30, 146–49; Samuel F. Bemis, *John Quincy Adams and the Union*, 32–53.

now the responsibility of the party managers to capitalize on this widespread sentiment and formulate a campaign strategy certain to elect the Old Hero. The “good sense” of the people had made them aware of one glaring certainty, that both they and Jackson “had been cheated.” Herein, then, lay the heart of the 1828 Jackson campaign: the political awakening of the common man and the battle cry that the corrupt coalition of Adams and Clay had deprived them of their expressed will. Every campaign tactic, every national, state, and local political maneuver and measure, and every article of propaganda of Jackson partisans was inextricably tied to this potent message. Behind the rallying cry of popular mobilization and empowerment, its formulation and dissemination, Duff Green would play a pivotal role.<sup>5</sup>

5. As he intended to make his trek east slowly, Green believed he would not reach Washington until the first of October. His journey through the Western states proved longer than expected, delaying his arrival in Washington. He finally reached the capital in December, and his family, who remained in Kentucky nursing ailing relatives, arrived in April 1827. *U.S. Telegraph*, September 26, 1826.

## CHAPTER 5



# Ideology, Party System, and Party Press

## I.

**B**oth contemporaries and scholars have associated the Age of Jackson with the rise of the common man. Historians have debated passionately the extent to which the election of Andrew Jackson advanced the cause of democracy in America. To be sure, by the early 1820s a movement was already underway in the United States extending the suffrage among white males above the age of twenty-one. Many states, primarily in the West, already practiced white manhood suffrage, or, in the case of Tennessee, had a low taxpaying qualification. Older states, however, began eliminating property qualifications and taxpaying requirements during the first quarter of the nineteenth century. By the election of 1824, only six states denied popular selection of presidential electors, and by the 1828 election, only South Carolina and Delaware continued the legislative option of choosing electors. This movement for universal manhood suffrage and the sentiment that the people, as manifested in the common man, were the fount of political power was not lost to Green. He sincerely believed in it. He actively pursued it as an inevitable progression. More important, he made it the overriding theme behind the election of Andrew Jackson.<sup>1</sup>

1. For an excellent summary of the historiographical debate over the Jacksonian era, see Daniel Feller, "Politics and Society," 135–61, and Ronald P. Formissano, "Toward a Reorientation of Jacksonian Politics: A Review of the Literature, 1959–1975," 42–65. On the extension of the suffrage, see Remini, *Election*, 51–52; Daniel Feller, *The Jacksonian Promise: America, 1815–1840*, 67–69; Harry L. Watson, 50, 52; Glyndon Van Deusen, *The Jacksonian Era, 1828–1848*, 10–11.

That the will of the people should prevail in all instances was an incontestable maxim for Green and the Jacksonians. Majority rule, frequent elections, and strict accountability of officeholders were essential Democratic tenets, they argued, all of which, were integral attributes of the unique Republican system of government established by the Founding Fathers. "The frequency and freedom of elections, together with the direct responsibility of the elected to the people," admonished the editor of the *Telegraph*, "is the most striking characteristic of our government." The people have an undeniable right "to be served by men of *their own choice*," men who would scorn "to be foisted into public stations contrary to the public will," men who were above "bargain, intrigue, and management." Civil government in this country, continued Green, was founded upon and sustained by the "opinion of *the majority*," where every officer was "a *servant*, and not a *master*." A popular government must ultimately depend for its proper administration, its continuance, and its support upon the integrity of its public servants, and "how shall their integrity be manifest, or what sufficient security shall be given for it, unless they are at all times amenable to the tribunal of *public opinion*." The only sure road to honor and office, concluded Green, was implicit obedience to the will of the people. Here was the core of Jacksonian Democratic theory, and in the pursuit of this belief, Green was indeed the quintessential Jacksonian Democrat.<sup>2</sup>

But not all was right with the Democratic system. Something had gone terribly awry. In the continual struggle between power and liberty, Green sincerely believed, the latter had succumbed to the former: the Coalition had come to office against the will of the people, and, to the detriment of their liberties, it sought to perpetuate its hold. Green, like many Jacksonians, steeped in the philosophy of Republicanism, was preoccupied with the perpetual contest between power and liberty. "There is always a struggle going on between Liberty and Power," Green regularly opined in the *Telegraph*, and below the title of his newspaper ran the motto, "Power is always stealing from the many to the few." But not only did Jacksonians fear the advance of power and loath its concomitant rape of liberty, they also recognized that power always held the upper hand; it was the aggrandizing element, while liberty was forever on the defensive. "It is in the nature of man to abuse power," Green declared. "One abuse begets another, and precedent covers all." Indeed, the election of 1828 was more than simply the replacement of one administration with another; it was a battle to overcome power

2. *U.S. Telegraph*, September 27, October 21, 1826, January 3, June 5, 1828.

and to restore the liberty of the people. All the catchwords inherent in this monumental struggle between the forces of power and the friends of liberty were present in the presidential campaign: democracy versus aristocracy and virtue versus corruption.<sup>3</sup>

The election of 1828, Green argued, was every bit a contest between democracy and aristocracy; it was a struggle against “a system which is fast tending to monarchy . . . a struggle between the honest yeomanry of the country, and an aristocracy, that with monied influence and patronage for its aid, seeks to make everything subservient to its own views, and to perpetuate *in certain families*, all the offices and honors of the government.” What Jefferson and his Republican friends faced against “John the First” in the 1790s, now extended to Jackson in his present contest with “John the second.” All the indications of the Adams’s connection with aristocracy, and with monarchy, were present. “Has not Mr. [John Quincy] Adams been educated in the love of power? Have not his opinions of the rights of rulers, been formed in the Courts of Europe, where an association of crowned heads maintain the ‘divine right of hereditary kings?’” By his very presence in such “foreign courts,” President Adams was thus more experienced in government “where the voice of the people is not consulted, and where the maxim of government is, ‘*The King can do no wrong.*’” The interests of President Adams, therefore, were clearly not those of the people of the United States; he fostered aristocracy and monarchy, where the people demanded democracy. “I mean to say,” Green summed up, “that Gen’l Jackson is the candidate of the people, and Mr. Adams the candidate of the aristocracy.”<sup>4</sup>

Not only was the contest between Jackson and Adams one between democracy and aristocracy, but it was also a struggle between virtue and corruption. Throughout the election of 1828, Green labeled Jackson a “citizen soldier and republican farmer,” the “American Cincinnatus,”

3. *U.S. Telegraph*, June 14, October 3, 21, 1826; Green to William Barry, September 8, 1827, Duff Green Papers, Library of Congress, hereafter cited as Green Papers, LC. On the connection between Republicanism and the Jacksonians, see Remini, *Course of American Freedom*, 100–101, 109, 114–42, 148, passim.

4. *U.S. Telegraph*, April 19, May 12, 19, 23, 26, July 25, September 27, November 24, 1826, April 12, 15, May 8, June 12, 15, August 2, September 5, 12, 1828; Mary W. M. Hargreaves, *The Presidency of John Quincy Adams*, 287; Green to Bogardus, September 9, 1827, Green Papers, LC; Remini, *Election*, 102–3. Green even attributed aristocratic tendencies to Mrs. Adams: “Her taste and enjoyments, depend upon an intercourse with Kings and Queens, Emperors and Empresses, and that her greatest gratification was produced by an introduction to the presence, and being under the *protection* of such *august* personages.” *U.S. Telegraph*, June 20, 1827.

the “incorruptible patriot,” a second George Washington. The Old Hero had “too much regard for the safety of the republic, to remain a passive spectator, whilst corruption and intrigue were literally going to and fro through the land like a roaring lion seeking whom they might devour.” He had captivated the people not so much by the splendor of his many military achievements as by his love of virtue. “The people will not fail,” Green declared, “to contrast the sentiments and conduct of this patriot, who, resting his future elevation on his country’s welfare, reposes, in peace and quietness, at his farm, whilst his, and that country’s adversaries, with the speed of desperation, are driving their plots and counter-plots into every corner of the country.”

The Coalition constantly impugned Jackson’s military exploits by charging him with numerous indiscretions, a proclivity for violence, and wartime actions that endangered the liberty of the people. But Green countered. The “high crimes and misdemeanors” alleged against General Jackson had all been connected with “services rendered to his country,” while those that are leveled at the Coalition, “power improperly obtained—misuse of public patronage—making the public means subservient to private ends,” were all connected with self-interests dangerous to the nation’s interests. The Old Hero had dedicated both his political and especially his military career to serving the people and their interests; he had successfully and on several occasions saved the American republic from its enemies, both foreign and domestic. He had not then, nor would he now or ever, thwart the express will of the people or endanger their liberties. Rest assured, Green argued, that when the American nation was next endangered, the Hero of New Orleans would put down his plow, don his civic or military garb, restore liberty and democracy, and then return to his farm. Neither power nor aristocracy was part of his lexicon. In short, Jackson stood for everything virtuous in the American republic.<sup>5</sup>

Corruption defined the Adams administration. There, within the confines of the Coalition, Green detected not only the advance of power and aristocracy, but of corruption as well, and no one needed any further proof than what Henry Clay called the “safe precedent.” James Madison, James Monroe, and John Quincy Adams had all held the post of secretary of state prior to attaining the presidency, and by accepting the head of the State Department, Clay believed that he was acting on behalf of a “safe precedent.” At this reasoning, Green leveled his editor-

5. *U.S. Telegraph*, October 23, 1826, October 13, November 1, 1827, August 2, 1828; Green to Bonsal, December 14, 1827, Green Papers, LC; Remini, *Election*, 107, 108.

ial guns and opened fire on what he determined a most corrupt course. "The experiment to perpetuate in the Secretary of State a succession to the presidency, cannot succeed," he warned in the columns of the *Telegraph*. "It would be a surrender of the fundamental principle of our government. The president must not be permitted to *appoint* his successor. Nothing could be more destructive to our liberties. The last election has furnished a painful warning; it exhibited a most *dangerous precedent!*" General Jackson had been elected by the people in 1824, yet Clay and his cronies used their influence against the popularly elected candidate; they had violated their representative character, ignored the will of their constituents, and, by "safe precedent," removed the election from the people. "The result was," Green maintained, "that a *minority* of the people nominated, and a *minority* of members of Congress elected Mr. Adams." It required, therefore, no argument to prove that this election was "a precedent, more dangerous to liberty" than the congressional caucus had ever been. If Adams was reelected, and then Clay to succeed him, it would simply be a "triumph of precedents over the elective franchise." Each would cover the "political transgressions of his predecessor." Who, then, would "expose the abuses of him to whom he was himself indebted for office, especially when they formed '*safe precedents*' to cover his own?" Corruption, indeed, thought Green, would spread rampantly throughout the American body politic.<sup>6</sup>

But not only was the idea of "safe precedent" a corruption of the Democratic system, it likewise revealed the corrupt nature of the men who held office under Adams, beginning with Clay himself. Did it not appear, Green suggested, that by accepting the position of secretary of state, "*the order of succession* to the Presidency" exercised a stronger bias on his mind than the influence of Republican principles? May it not be inferred, Green sardonically continued, that Clay had his eye on the presidency as the ultimate reward for his "*disinterested* effort to '*save the people from themselves*'?" Why not simply alter the Constitution "so as to provide for the succession, agreeably to this 'safe precedent,' without the formality of an election, in which the people are only the witness to a contract, in which they are considered as having no further interest than to see that the 'safe precedent' is fully complied with by the high contracting parties?" Green certainly had been reared since childhood in an environment where Clay was detested, but the Jacksonian editor despised the Kentuckian most for his perceived

6. *U.S. Telegraph*, September 27, October 3, 21, 1826.



corruption, his attachment to power at the cost of liberty, and his aristocratic tendencies that endangered democracy. Indeed, the whole Coalition, with Adams at its head, troubled Green. "The strong objection against the re-election of Mr. Adams," he concluded, "is the manner of his election. . . . The strongest recommendation of Gen. Jackson is his incorruptible integrity." For Green, the election of 1828 was all about the struggle between virtue and corruption.<sup>7</sup>

What, then, should be done to correct the Democratic system, to arrest its decline into aristocracy, corruption, and concentrated power, and to reestablish its proper course as designed by the founding generation? The answer was simple for Green. "That a frequent recurrence to first principles is essential to the preservation of liberty," he exhorted, "is a proposition not to be controverted." And this was exactly what the American people had to do. The danger of the president choosing his successor must be prevented forever. To do this, Green staunchly advocated a constitutional amendment removing from Congress the power to elect the president. "That the Constitution of the United States ought to be so altered as to vest the election of the President and Vice-President in the people, exclusively," Green contended, "has been demonstrated by the late election in the House of Representatives, by which a President has been made in opposition to their wishes." The means adopted to elevate Adams to the presidency "will bring a reproach on our Republic, unless a speedy corrective is applied." Green, however, never outlined the details of any such amendment; no mention was ever made of eliminating the electoral college or adopting a system based entirely upon the popular vote. Nonetheless, he felt so strongly that the Constitution should be amended that he made it the *sine qua non* for partisan division. "We have several times taken it upon ourselves to remind our readers that the true line of distinction between the parties now in the United States, is an opposition to, or advocacy of such an amendment to the Constitution of the United States, as will take from Congress the election of the President." Few Jacksonians disagreed with such a remedy.<sup>8</sup>

Amending the Constitution would undoubtedly prove difficult. A simpler solution was available—the election of Andrew Jackson to the presidency. Should Jackson be elected, Green asserted, it would demonstrate at once the power of the people. "It will prove that they have hurled the usurper from his purchased power, because he was elected

7. *U.S. Telegraph*, August 11, 23, 1826, June 26, 1828.

8. *U.S. Telegraph*, September 9, October 21, 1826, March 31, 1827; Green to Edwards, September 6, 1826, *Edwards Papers*, ed. Washburne, 257.

by bargain against their will.” Jackson stood for reform—reform of the abuses by the Coalition, reform to restore the Republican system, reform on behalf of the people. Only with the election of the Old Hero, Green exhorted, would the people be victorious. “By his election they will, themselves, have broken down the strong wall of precedent, and they know that he will let loose the sluices of reformation upon the Augean stables.” It requires as much energy to save the nation from the “cancer of corruption” as it did to save New Orleans. “It requires that Roman virtue.” Only with Jackson in the White House would the republic be truly safe from corruption, from aristocracy, from unadulterated power itself.<sup>9</sup>

Green had great faith in the people. He knew that they possessed the wisdom and the capabilities to elect men of substance and integrity to represent them and their interests in the public councils, as well as the conviction and determination to remove those from office who denied or ignored their express will. “You may rest assured,” Green wrote Virginia congressman John S. Barbour, “that the people are fond of their own power, and there is a strong prejudice in man against the management of the few.” The principles of the American system of government

cannot be subverted by “the powers that be”; because the great majority of the people are enlightened, and therefore the more extensively the principles of the Adams’ party are disseminated, the more certain will be the defeat of that party—because the people cannot be corrupted by the promises or hopes of patronage—and because they have discovered the rapid advances which the Adams’ party are making towards the state of things which ultimated in the reign of terror in ’98, and are determined on arresting the evil as soon as they can exercise the privilege of the elective franchise.

That General Jackson “is as truly democratic as any man in the country” could not be denied. The people, he believed, recognized this immutable truth. They would vote the Old Hero into the White House in the name of reform, in the name of democracy, and to teach errant representatives the cost of ignoring the will of the people. “Our true object,” Green wrote a friend, “is to make such an expression of public opinion in the election of General Jackson as will, by its influence upon our public men, induce all aspirants for office to look to the people

9. *U.S. Telegraph*, October 13, 1827, January 17, 1828.

instead [of to the] *leading* politicians for support.” The representatives of the people should be taught, he wrote in the *Telegraph*, that “where they lay aside the character of Agents, and assume that of Dictators, they mistake their office.” The ballot box, not “bargain, intrigue, and management,” express the will of freemen “determined to maintain their rights.” Let us correct the evil, he argued, which now wars with the fundamental principle of our government; elect Jackson and the people, liberty, democracy, and virtue, and thus remove the Coalition, power, aristocracy, and corruption.<sup>10</sup>

“The question involved in the Presidential election,” Green concluded, “is not who shall be our rulers, but how shall the government itself be administered. It is whether this government shall be a Republic, or degenerate into a Monarchy.” Where was the difference, he queried, between the American system of government and a monarchical one, when the election of the president shall be placed in Congress and deemed a “safe precedent”? Not one at all was his answer. It therefore behooved all who loved liberty and preferred a Republican to a monarchical government to swarm to the polls and elect the people’s ticket—Andrew Jackson and John C. Calhoun. This was the only remedy for the evils that had befallen the American republic. “We must rely upon our cause,” Green wrote to a friend, “it is the cause of the people and republicanism, and never let it be said that the people have despaired of the republic.” For Green, like the vast majority of Jacksonians, the election of 1828 was not just about replacing one set of men with another; it was indeed a classic struggle to save Republicanism and liberty. But rest assured, he told his readers, “the struggle between Liberty and Power will not be long or arduous. It has already commenced.” The campaign to elect the people’s candidate had begun with the imputation of “bargain, intrigue, and management.”<sup>11</sup>

## II.

No political campaign could succeed without a solid ideological foundation, but neither could it triumph without an equally sound and effective political organization. At the same time that he was a fervent believer in Jacksonian political philosophy, Green also understood the

10. Green to Barbour, October 8, 1827, Green to Bonsal, December 14, 1827, Green Papers, LC; *U.S. Telegraph*, September 9, October 3, 1826, January 20, 1827.

11. Green to William Snowden, November 16, 1827, Green Papers, LC; *U.S. Telegraph*, October 3, 1826, September 18, 1828.

importance of a unified and directed political machine. "Andrew Jackson is *the candidate of the People*," he consistently proclaimed in the *Telegraph Extra*. "But union and concert of action are necessary to success." To save Republicanism, the Jacksonians must first get elected, and to do this, it would take a strong, efficient campaign organization. Duff Green arrived on the scene in time to contribute to the rise of the Democratic Party and the creation of the second American party system. He contributed in a major way to the development of one of the most effective party organizations in U.S. history.<sup>12</sup>

What historians have called the second American party system commenced with the election of 1824. Shortly thereafter, several political groups, which for the most part gathered around contradictory national political figures, joined together and began to build a national political party supporting Andrew Jackson for president in 1828. Not since the rivalry between Federalists and Republicans, which developed during the administration of Washington and extended through Madison's presidency, had the country witnessed a genuine two-party political system of the type that was now developing between the National Republicans, headed by President John Quincy Adams, and the nascent Democratic Party that was coalescing around the candidacy of Andrew Jackson. This new party system grew directly out of the need to incorporate a dynamic and heterogeneous American society into the political process. Coupled with the expansion of the suffrage and the increasing recognition of the direct role of the common man in the process of governing, prescient politicians saw the efficacy of building a national party with a mass following, one dedicated to advancing the cause of democracy in America. No longer were political parties based upon influential figures, sectional alliances, or shared economic interests. The people had to be included; the common man must form the basis of any partisan organization, and no party realized this phenomenon better than the Jacksonian Democratic Party.<sup>13</sup>

A key politician in the creation of the Democratic Party was New York senator Martin Van Buren. Van Buren had already established a highly effective and powerful political machine in New York State, dubbed the Bucktails or the Albany Regency. A skillful and shrewd

12. *U.S. Telegraph Extra*, March 21, 1828.

13. For an excellent survey of the rise of the second American party system and the development of the Democratic Party, see Remini, *Election*; Richard P. McCormick, *The Second American Party System: Party Formation in the Jacksonian Era*; Richard Hofstadter, *The Idea of a Party System: The Rise of Legitimate Opposition in the United States, 1780-1840*.

politician, the Magician, as the New York senator was called by contemporaries, began to put together a national political party after the election of 1824, based primarily on a North–South axis with New York and Virginia at the poles. He labeled this an alliance between the “planters of the South and the plain Republicans of the North.” There was more, however, to the new party than just the Empire State and the Old Dominion. Van Buren soon enlisted the support of the Radicals, who were followers of William H. Crawford of Georgia. With the inclusion of Vice President John C. Calhoun, who brought with him the support of the Southern elite, and Missouri senator Thomas Hart Benton, once a sworn enemy of Jackson, who claimed a considerable Western constituency, the Democratic Party was complete.<sup>14</sup>

During the campaign of 1828, the Democracy proved to be an extremely potent organization. At the top of the Jackson organization was the Nashville Central Committee, comprised chiefly of Tennesseans John Eaton, John Overton, William B. Lewis, Felix Grundy, and Sam Houston. In February 1827, another influential body was created when Martin Van Buren convened a series of conferences among pro-Jackson congressmen, out of which emerged the Washington Central Committee, which kept a diligent watch on movements in the House and Senate. Twenty-four members constituted this committee with General John P. Van Ness as chairman. From these two central bodies, Jacksonians created an extensive grassroots organization in every county, ward, and precinct throughout the country. They utilized these Jackson Committees, known as “Hickory Clubs,” to campaign, raise funds, organize events, disseminate propaganda, and turn out the vote on election day—all done under the careful direction of the Nashville and Washington committees. Democrats also held state conventions to endorse national candidates, created slates to elect party supporters at the state and local level, and established committees of correspondence composed of chief politicians in every state. By the election of 1828, the Democratic Party had a commanding presence in Missouri, Illinois, Kentucky, Indiana, Ohio, Louisiana, Pennsylvania, New York, New Hampshire, Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina; a moderate influence in New Jersey and Delaware; and a significant start in Maine, Vermont, Connecticut, and Massachusetts. Although the party was weakest in the South, with Tennessee, the home state of Jackson, being essentially neglected, this region could be counted on without a

14. On Martin Van Buren and the creation of the Democratic Party, see Robert Remini, *Martin Van Buren and the Making of the Democratic Party*; Donald B. Cole, *Martin Van Buren and the American Political System*, 101–84; John Niven, *Martin Van Buren: The Romantic Age of American Politics*, 174–214.

tightly organized political machine to carry Jackson into the White House and the Democratic Party into power. All in all, it was a campaign organization with which Adams, Clay, and the National Republicans, no matter how hard they tried, could not compete. Through the whole process of creating the Democratic Party and its efficient campaign network, Duff Green played a central and critical role.<sup>15</sup>

A strong advocate of the new party system, Green used his newspaper effectively to promote Jackson and the Democracy. Popular mobilization under a partisan banner meshed with his message of popular empowerment. He informed his readers that “an attempt is now making to organize new parties in the country,” and that one of these parties—the Democratic—stood for the interests and rights of the people. Only through the unity and direction provided by an inclusive national political party could the people overcome the continued threat of “bargain, intrigue, and management.” This is what Green admired so much about Van Buren’s Bucktails in New York. “They act together under a systematic organization of party and determine their great movements by regularly organized caucuses,” he wrote to William B. Lewis. “With them *party* is everything.” Like Van Buren, Green saw that political parties were natural and even inevitable, that properly harnessed, they could serve the public interest; and also like Van Buren, he realized they could be abused—one had only to look for confirmation at the National Republicans under Adams, Clay, and Daniel Webster. Even so, Green supported a vigorous two-party system and opposed the political unanimity espoused by many of the Founding Fathers—Jefferson, Madison, Monroe. He indeed fitted well with the views of the second generation of American statesmen. So, as soon as the Democrats could establish an effective and powerful campaign machine, similar to that of the Bucktails, they could secure Jackson’s, and thus the people’s, victory in 1828. Once they had gained the superiority in campaign organization and tactics, Green knew that they could only be defeated by their own hand. “We have nothing now to fear unless we permit ourselves to divide,” he told a fellow Jackson supporter. “Let us be firm and united.” A party system indeed appealed greatly to Green.<sup>16</sup>

15. On the campaign structure and organization for the election of 1828, see Remini, *Election*, 51–165; McCormick, *Second American Party System*, passim; Florence Weston, *The Presidential Election of 1828*. On the Nashville Central Committee, see Remini, *Election*, 58–65. On the Washington Central Committee, see Remini, *Election*, 69–70.

16. *U.S. Telegraph*, August 11, 1828; Green to Lewis, September 2, 1827, Green to Bonsal, December 14, 1827, Green Papers, LC; Hofstadter, *Idea of a Party System*, 170–271.

Simply voicing approval of a party, in this case the Democracy, was one thing; actually participating in its evolution and actively forming its structure and directing its operation was another. Green vigorously pursued this latter role. He was already familiar with the members of the Nashville Central Committee; he had met with them on his move to Washington in 1826, and he continued a regular correspondence with them throughout the 1828 campaign. But his expertise in the political arena was most effectual in the nation's capital. Green was one of the twenty-four who sat on the Washington Central Committee, and, although not its chair, he was, nonetheless, its most important and active member. The Nashville Committee instructed the state and local Jackson committees to seek assistance and direction from the Washington Committee via Green. He alone had essentially become the clearinghouse for Democratic propaganda and campaign strategy. The Jacksonian's mouthpiece, therefore, was also one of the Jacksonian's chief campaign managers.<sup>17</sup>

Few political operatives in the Jackson camp expended as much time and energy in electing Jackson as did Green. Throughout the presidential campaign, he tirelessly canvassed the different sections of the nation. He traveled especially in the Northeast and the Mid-Atlantic states seeking heightened cooperation among Democratic operatives, probing state and local political leaders, and taking the electoral pulse of the common man. When not traveling through the countryside, Green maintained a steady correspondence with key politicians, Democratic managers, and other national, state, and local officeholders. His contact with the various committees of correspondence was constant throughout the campaign, and few on the receiving end could deny that the editor of the *Telegraph* pursued every means to enlist popular support for the people's candidate, Andrew Jackson. "I shall urge our friends in every quarter," he informed numerous pro-Jackson supporters throughout the states, "to hold meetings for the purpose of rousing the people to our grand effort to rescue our free institutions from the danger which impends over them."

Green asked important political figures in each state to pick up the banner of Jackson and the people, to spread the propaganda of the Coalition's "bargain, intrigue, and management," and to "appeal to the people [and] expose . . . all the means which have been thought to bear on the election." Would it not be advisable, he requested of other

17. David Wayne Moore, "Duff Green and the South, 1824-45," 1, 23; Remini, *Election*, 70, 94.

politicos, for the people in the different counties of their states to hold meetings and to recommend to the friends of Jackson in their legislatures the nomination of a Jackson electoral ticket? Green also promoted the convening of state conventions to secure additional popular support for Jackson and to present a unified front for the entire party. At one convention, he even helped prepare the "Address" to the people. All this activity at the state and local levels would guarantee a campaign oriented toward and controlled by the popular element. "The people like to keep power in their own hands," he informed a fellow editor, and by following his proposed campaign procedures "you will thus prevent your adversaries from claiming that *their's* is the people's ticket."<sup>18</sup>

Green always found time to provide political advice to close friends. In a missive to his brother-in-law, Ninian Edwards, for example, he assured the Illinois senator that, if Jackson triumphed in 1828, "*you will find him your friend.*" Await the "rising of the coming storm," Green advised Edwards, and then come out publicly against Crawford, and by so doing, the Illinoisan would reap the rewards of supporting the Old Hero. "It requires but little reflection to satisfy *my* mind," the editor continued, "that Jackson and Jackson's friends are the only persons on whom you can rely for that moral triumph which I know will be more gratifying to you and your real friends than political elevation." Edwards could not and should not take an active part in the campaign, for his current position forbade it, but there were ways in which he could identify himself with the Jackson interest in Illinois, and that course of action "*ought* not to be omitted." Jackson's prospects of success grew daily, advised Green, and now was the time to climb aboard the bandwagon.<sup>19</sup>

Healing old wounds and patching up strained relationships was another specialty of Green, the political operative. On his trip to Washington in the summer of 1826, for example, he had an additional motive for visiting with Jackson at the Hermitage. He desired to restore friendly relations between the Old Hero and General John Adair. Adair, a fellow Tennessean, had served under Jackson at the battle of New Orleans, but the two men had apparently parted ways over Jackson's supposed criticism of the Kentucky troops under Adair's command. Regardless of

18. Remini, *Election*, 65, 95; Green to Richard M. Johnson, August 10, 1828, Green to John S. Barbour, October 8, 1827, Green to Editor of *Winchester Virginian*, October 8, 1827, Green Papers, LC; Green to Calhoun, September 23, 1828, *JCCP*, 10: 423–24; Green to Jackson, June 9, 1827, *Jackson Correspondence*, ed. Bassett, 3: 361.

19. Green to Edwards, September 6, 1826, *Edwards Papers*, ed. Washburne, 256–57.



the origin of the breach, Green sought an amicable settlement between the two soldiers, for reconciliation would only bolster Jackson's political position in Tennessee. Whether or not his intervention had any impact is problematic, but Adair publicly endorsed Jackson for president in 1828.<sup>20</sup>

Of special concern to Green was the political situation in Kentucky, home of Henry Clay. Although no longer rent by the relief and anti-relief divisions that split the Republican Party in that state into the New and Old Court factions following the Panic of 1819, personal animosities between key pro-Jackson politicians remained. Here, as in Tennessee, Green actively intervened in order to secure unity within the Jackson ranks. He had already stopped on his trip to the nation's capital in 1826 to visit Kentucky figures that would prove pivotal in electing the Old Hero. Campaign stops included Louisville, Frankfort, and Lexington, not to mention several towns in which family members resided; meetings with George M. Bibb, William T. Barry, John Pope, and Richard M. Johnson resulted. But he would need to keep Kentucky at the forefront of his campaign activities.<sup>21</sup>

As the election heated up in 1827 and 1828, Green spent considerable effort in bringing Johnson and Pope—both Jackson supporters—to an understanding that would benefit all parties, especially Jackson's. At stake was a U.S. Senate seat from Kentucky. Johnson was currently one of the U.S. senators, and he expected to be returned to Washington by the Kentucky legislature. Rumors were circulating, however, that Pope sought the same position. If the two men collided, Jackson's prospects in Clay's state would be significantly undermined. Green had a plan. He wrote Pope and pleaded with him that "if you and Col. Johnson can come to a proper understanding on the subject of *his* election, I am confident that all things will be well." Local election returns in Maine and Delaware, he continued to Pope, "make it doubly important" to reelect Johnson. Clay, Green believed, desired to get into the U.S. Senate, and there, combine with Webster making a majority for

20. Green, *Facts and Suggestions*, 29. On Adair's command of Kentucky troops at the battle of New Orleans, see Robert V. Remini, *Andrew Jackson and the Course of American Empire, 1767–1821*, 273–74, and *The Battle of New Orleans: Andrew Jackson and America's First Military Victor*, 116, 132–33, 138, 158; Marquis James, *The Life of Andrew Jackson*, 242–48. On Jackson's supposed criticism of Kentucky troops at the battle of New Orleans, see Remini, *Jackson*, 288; James, *Life*, 270, 280.

21. Green, *Facts and Suggestions*, 29. Bibb was a future U.S. senator from Kentucky and secretary of the treasury in the John Tyler administration; Barry was a former lieutenant governor of Kentucky and future postmaster in the Jackson administration; Pope was a future Kentucky congressman and territorial governor of Arkansas; Johnson was future vice president of the United States.

the National Republicans. Important nominations for the U.S. Supreme Court and lower federal courts were at stake, and Johnson must be at the next session of the Senate, for he knew that body best. Pope, therefore, in the name of unity, must correspond with Johnson and make him his “fast friend.”<sup>22</sup>

Green also communicated simultaneously with Johnson on the matter. He informed the Kentucky senator that Clay intended to separate him from Pope, hoping thereby to get himself elected to the Senate. Any rumor of Pope’s desire for Johnson’s seat was a “mere ruse” concocted by the Coalition. Do not be taken by such a trap, admonished Green. Pope, moreover, was the recognized umpire between what remained of the Old and New Court parties, and Johnson’s open support of Barry, who was directly associated with the New Court faction, would keep alive the split by making Pope jealous of Johnson, Barry, and Bibb, thus strengthening the Clay party. “Rest assured,” Green wrote Johnson, “that it is important for you to conciliate Mr. Pope: there is room enough for all our friends.” Talk with Pope candidly, he advised. The Jacksonians would never forgive any disunion resulting in Clay’s promotion to the U.S. Senate. “Pope is desirous of your election,” Green assured the Kentuckian, “and if you will deal frankly and throw yourself upon him, you will derive more aid from [Pope] than any one else. . . . Take my advice—see Mr. Pope, place your election in his hands and hasten to your post of duty [in Washington].” In the final count, Kentucky sent Bibb, instead of Johnson, to the U.S. Senate; but it also sent Jackson to the White House. Johnson’s influence, however, did help carry several counties for the Hero, as did Pope’s for his county of residence. The Kentucky counties from which Green and his family hailed gave the majority of their votes to the Old Hero as well.<sup>23</sup>

Astute political manager that he was, Green constantly sniffed the prevailing political winds as he monitored the electoral developments of the presidential race. What he encountered encouraged the tireless editor. “We are to have an arduous struggle,” he wrote to Thomas Ritchie of the *Richmond Enquirer*, “but an easy victory.” Throughout the campaign of 1828, from as early as his trip to Washington in 1826, Green constantly assessed Jackson’s strength in the various sections of the

22. Green to Pope, October 12, 1828, October 20, 1828, Green Papers, LC. Pope had been a U.S. senator from Kentucky from 1807 to 1813 and was president pro tempore in 1811.

23. Green to Johnson, October 12, 1828, October 21, 1828, Green Papers, LC; Jasper B. Shannon and Ruth McQuown, *Presidential Politics in Kentucky, 1824–1948: A Compilation of Election Statistics and an Analysis of Political Behavior*, 4–6.

Union, and buttressed his analysis with numerous predictions regarding the electoral vote count of each state.<sup>24</sup>

Green never doubted that the South would overwhelmingly support the Old Hero. Jackson was, after all, that region's favorite son—born in South Carolina, longtime resident of Tennessee, wealthy planter, slave-owner, defender of the South from Indian, Spaniard, and Redcoat alike. Most of all, he was not a New Englander. Forty-eight electoral votes were at stake in Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, and the Carolinas. Few on both sides of the partisan fence doubted that these states would go to Jackson, and Green never spent much time and effort reviewing the electoral chances in this section.

New England, however, was a completely different case. As the South was certain to go for Jackson, the Northeast would almost certainly side with Adams. If all of the fifty-one electoral votes available for the picking in Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island went to the president, they would offset the Southern vote for Jackson. Yet Green still saw reason for hope in that region. The fledgling Democratic Party there was gaining strength and could be counted on. "The [Democratic] party of New England," he informed Jackson, "is arranging itself to come in a body to the support of your administration, and I have carefully noted its movements, and given my correspondents in that quarter to believe that the principles of your administration will be of the old Republican school." As for the total vote in New England, Green was split on the final outcome. Overall, he believed, the New England states would present Jackson with a "respectable minority," or "strong *minorities*." Exceptions, however, existed. "New Hampshire is rallying her strength, and I do not despair of two votes in Maine," he told Jackson and other supporters. Green assumed that a majority in the legislature of Maine was leaning toward Jackson. Vermont, or at least a part thereof, as well, could rally for the Old Hero. With all of the South's electoral votes, coupled with a scattering of votes from several of the New England states, the prospects for a Jackson victory were quite good. All that was left was the Mid-Atlantic and the Western states.<sup>25</sup>

The Mid-Atlantic region—New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Dela-

24. Green to Ritchie, September 10, 1826, Gooch Family Papers, Special Collections, University of Virginia Library.

25. Green to Jackson, August 29, 1827, Green to Richard M. Johnson, September 8, 1827, Green to Jackson, October 22, 1827, Green to Thomas Watkins, November 16, 1827, Green Papers, LC; Green to Calhoun, August 10, 1828, September 23, 1828, *JCCP*, 10: 423–24.

ware, Maryland, and Virginia—likewise carried a substantial number of electoral votes. Jackson's prospects in this section of the nation were not as bright as in the South, but they were considerably better than in New England. According to Green, the only state here certain to provide overwhelming support for Jackson was Pennsylvania. "We can give them *all* the newspapers and ten thousand *politicians* to boot," he wrote Ninian Edwards, "and beat them in Pennsylvania." Virginia, after Pennsylvania, was sure to go for Jackson as well. New Jersey was always considered "safe" by Green, nothing to fear from Delaware, and Maryland could be expected to give at least nine of its eleven electoral votes to the Old Hero. After all, Jackson had won New Jersey and Maryland in 1824. By August 1828, as the keen political operative gleaned additional information, Green had changed his mind somewhat regarding the outcome in New Jersey and Delaware. These states were now debatable, but "we think favorably" inclined, nonetheless. New York, however, was the crucial state. Even with the full support of Van Buren and the expected endorsement of Governor DeWitt Clinton, the Empire State remained a critical battleground. Jackson had to win most of the state's electoral votes to ensure an overall victory, and about this, Green was optimistic. From political operatives in New York, he learned that the Jackson ticket could expect anywhere from twenty-four to thirty of the state's thirty-six electoral votes—a significant win indeed. In the end, Green predicted that the Mid-Atlantic states would provide Jackson with more than enough votes to put him in the White House.<sup>26</sup>

"The West," Green wrote Calhoun, "is to hold the balance, and now is the critical moment." Although he believed that Adams would not garner a single vote in the Western states, he still informed the vice president that "we are looking with much anxiety to the West." Clay, after all, was from Kentucky, which he had carried in the election of 1824, along with the states of Ohio and Missouri. But Clay's majorities in both Missouri and Kentucky had begun to crumble by the end of voting in 1824. With Benton and a well-oiled Democratic machine securing Missouri's vote, the influence of Clinton in Ohio, which would "do more for Jackson than Clay could do for Adams," and Illinois and Indiana voting for the Old Hero as they did in 1824, the situation looked quite

26. Green to Edwards, May 6, 1827, *Edwards Papers*, ed. Washburne, 281; Green to Calhoun, August 10, 1828, September 23, 1828, *JCCP*, 10: 413, 423–24; Green to Jackson, August 29, 1827, October 22, 1827, Green to Johnson, September 8, 1827, Green to William Ingalls, September 14, 1828, Green to Thomas Watkins, November 16, 1827, Green Papers, LC.

sanguine for Jackson. "I have now traveled through Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, and Kentucky," Green wrote Thomas Ritchie on his trip to Washington in 1826, "and have no doubt as to the result of the presidential election in these states." Although he had "always known" Illinois and Missouri were among the "most doubtful states," he informed Edwards, "I am induced to believe that the results will give both to Jackson. . . it will be impossible to convince the people of other States that both these States are not for Gen'l. Jackson." As the election season approached, Green was comfortable enough to declare Missouri, Illinois, and Indiana as "safe." In Ohio, "we will succeed by a large majority, unless the best informed men are much deceived." Even Kentucky, Green felt, would go for Jackson and not Clay's candidate. The West would surely elect the Old Hero.<sup>27</sup>

By early March 1827, Green offered his first prediction of the final vote of the electoral college: 196 for Jackson and 65 for Adams. By the end of October 1828—election time—his predicted majority for Jackson had increased substantially to 207, while Adams's vote had declined to 54. Of the 207 total, 145 were certain: New York (24), Maryland (4), and all of Pennsylvania, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee, Indiana, Illinois, and Missouri; 62, however, were possible: Maine, New Hampshire, New York (6), New Jersey, Maryland (4), Ohio, Kentucky, and Louisiana. In the meantime, Green and the Democrats had a campaign to run. Predictions meant little if the party failed to maintain its carefully constructed campaign machine.<sup>28</sup>

Jackson and his closest advisors noticed—and greatly appreciated—all of Green's tireless work on behalf of the Democratic Party. They obviously had great faith in the editor and trusted his advice when it came to the inner workings of the presidential campaign. His exertions as a key political manager for Jackson and the Democratic Party were important to their success, but it was his talents and skills as a newspaper editor that Jacksonians valued most. In this arena, not in the organization and operation of a campaign, Green proved to be the most valuable—and the most effective—weapon of the Democrats.

27. Green to Calhoun, August 10, 1828, September 23, 1828, *JCCP*, 10: 423–24; Green to Thomas Watkins, November 16, 1827, Green to William Ingalls, September 14, 1828, Green Papers, LC; Green to Ritchie, September 10, 1826, Gooch Family Papers, Special Collections, University of Virginia Library; Green to Edwards, May 6, 1827, *Edwards Papers*, ed. Washburne, 281.

28. *U.S. Telegraph*, March 2, 1827, October 28, 1828.

## III.

A national political party based upon popular mobilization and mass participation, and bolstered by accompanying inventive campaign techniques, was not the only innovation contrived by Jacksonian Democrats during the campaign of 1828. Arguably their most important accomplishment was the establishment of an extensive, nationwide system of newspapers, made up of local, state, and national press, which served as instruments for disseminating political propaganda. Together with the committees of correspondence and the Nashville and Washington Central Committees, newspapers were the primary means of mobilizing the people on behalf of Andrew Jackson. Jacksonian newspapers, following the lead of the campaign organization, kept the populace informed on their version of the most pertinent issues before the country and promoted their candidate while simultaneously denouncing the Adams administration and the National Republicans.<sup>29</sup>

Jacksonians realized early in 1828 the necessity of a unified newspaper network. The Adams-Clay coalition already had two national newspapers in operation, both based in Washington—the *National Intelligencer*, edited by Gales and Seaton, and the *National Journal*, edited by Peter Force—and two other widely circulated papers outside the nation's capital—the *Richmond Whig*, edited by John H. Pleasants, and the *Democratic Press*, edited by John Binns. It was imperative that the Jacksonians establish their own national press, and so early in 1826, they set up the *United States Telegraph*.

But the first editor of the *Telegraph*, John S. Meehan, did not have the requisite skill and passion to sustain an effective and hard-hitting paper. The young editor of the *St. Louis Enquirer*, however, did have what the Jacksonians needed. Although Green's move to Washington in 1826 to take over the *Telegraph* was underwritten by the loans of Eaton and other Jackson supporters, not all Jackson partisans initially supported the editor. Van Buren wanted a new Washington-based newspaper. He approached Calhoun about bringing in Thomas Ritchie to replace Green. The Magician was trying to draw the Crawford men, of which Ritchie was one, into the Jackson camp. He was well aware, moreover, that Crawfordites detested Calhoun, and he believed that Green was tied more to the South Carolinian than Jackson. It might be

29. On the importance of newspapers in the 1828 election, see Remini, *Election*, 76–80; Culver Smith, "Propaganda Technique in the Jackson Campaign of 1828," 44–66.

just enough to ward off the Radicals under Crawford. The New Yorker was not aware, however, that the Nashville Committee had already financially backed the *Telegraph* under the editorship of Green. In addition, Calhoun defended Green and told Van Buren that the new editor was more than competent to attack the Coalition and defend the Old Hero. Van Buren reluctantly backed off, and Green remained the primary mouthpiece throughout the Jackson campaign.<sup>30</sup>

Green was indeed the man for the job. He took over the *Telegraph* in 1826 and used the paper for the next two years as a tool to build the Jackson party. As the top man in the Jacksonian press organization, he spearheaded the expansion of party newspapers throughout the nation. As early as September 1826, for example, Green directly aided in establishing a pro-Jackson paper in Jefferson City, Missouri, and promoted other new avowedly Jacksonian presses in Louisville, Danville, Mt. Sterling, and Paris, Kentucky. He continued this endeavor for the succeeding years of the 1828 presidential campaign. Numerous small towns and counties requested his help in obtaining capable editors to take charge of local presses. The Nashville Central Committee, as well as other Jackson supporters nationwide, funneled a considerable amount of campaign propaganda through Green. The editor printed the material in the *Telegraph*, which would, in short time, find its way into state and local papers. It was taxing work indeed. Green's responsibilities as editor of the *Telegraph* consumed most of his time and energy. "The multiplied duties of my office," he informed Jackson, "have kept me so much engaged." Yet by the end of the election in 1828, his successful management had turned the *Telegraph* into one of the most widely circulated newspapers in the nation.<sup>31</sup>

Turning Meehan's fledgling *Telegraph* into one of the most widely read—and notorious—papers in the United States was no mean accomplishment. When Green assumed control of the newspaper, he immediately sought ways to increase circulation. Having chosen not to raise the price of the paper, he must necessarily expand the subscription list in order to make a profit. He purchased the *Alexandria Herald* and added its equipment and subscribers to that of the *Telegraph*. He

30. Culver Smith, *The Press, Politics, and Patronage: The American Government's Use of Newspapers, 1789–1875*, 61; Niven, *Van Buren*, 181–82; Cole, *Van Buren*, 149; Remini, *Van Buren*, 118; Niven, *Calhoun*, 119–20.

31. Smith, *Press, Politics, and Patronage*, 61, 66; Green to Jackson, July 8, 1827, *Jackson Correspondence*, 3: 371; Green to Ritchie, September 10, 1826, Gooch Family Papers, Special Collections, University of Virginia Library; Green to [unknown], April 10, 1828, William Duncan to Green, September 12, 1828, Green Papers, LC.

then hired agents in various cities throughout the country in order to increase sales and advertisements. From the start, Green continually encountered problems collecting fees from subscribers, and, as subscriptions were the backbone of the paper and advertisements were relatively inexpensive, he had to enlist assistance in order to increase the paper's revenue. He hired agents in Maryland, Delaware, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Pennsylvania, and New York to help collect fees, acquire new subscribers, and sell commercial advertisements.<sup>32</sup>

But the most important of Green's various methods of distribution was the active involvement of national, state, and local Democratic politicians. Calhoun proposed offsetting the high costs of operating a party press by having congressmen assume financial responsibility for the distribution of the *Telegraph* within their respective districts. Soon, more issues of the paper were circulating by means of the franking privilege than by any combination of subscription lists and agents. The friends of Adams accused numerous Democratic congressmen of abusing this privilege. Kentucky representative Tom Moore, for example, gained the nickname "Free Tom Moore" for his active part in circulating the *Telegraph*. Over sixteen hundred packages of Green's paper were counted at one time in the Maysville, Kentucky, post office—all with Moore's frank. Not to be outdone, Green enlisted the support of pro-Jackson state legislatures, such as Pennsylvania's, in circulating his paper to their constituents. The Democratic Party as well joined the call for extensive distribution. The various committees of correspondence subscribed to the *Telegraph* and saw to its convenient placement in their counties. They needed Green's medium both as a tool for popular mobilization and as a blueprint for disseminating campaign propaganda.<sup>33</sup>

The National Republicans accused Democrats in Congress of creating a special fund, dubbed "secret service" money, specifically for establishing pro-Jackson presses throughout the country, and that as much as \$25,000 went directly to the *Telegraph* to aid in its extensive distribution. Green constantly denied ever taking any such funds and argued that his costs were adequately covered by public subscriptions. He did, however, need outside money to keep the presses running; subscription revenues were not nearly enough. Green had to take out several loans

32. Ewing, "Independent Editor," 736, 737; Kenneth L. Smith, "Duff Green and the *United States Telegraph*," 44.

33. Remini, *Election*, 78, 81, 84; Smith, "Propaganda Techniques," 63–64; Green to Bonsal, December 14, 1827, Green Papers, LC.



from Democratic loyalists. In the summer of 1828, for example, he went to Boston to seek private funds, accepting an \$11,000 loan from Massachusetts Jacksonians.<sup>34</sup>

Green certainly had other advantages in expanding the circulation of the *Telegraph*. For one, the rapid expansion of postal routes during the 1820s allowed for a greater distribution into areas once harder to reach. Green understood the value of using the mails; he had, after all, held several mail contracts himself. Another resource for increasing circulation was other newspaper editors. It was common practice for this profession to provide a free exchange of their papers among themselves. Excerpts from other newspapers filled a considerable amount of a paper's space, and, therefore, Green's writing reached an audience that did not subscribe to the *Telegraph*. By the end of 1826, the *Telegraph* had an exchange list of 163 newspapers.<sup>35</sup>

One final tool used to reach additional readers was the establishment of a weekly paper to bolster the daily *Telegraph*. From the first of March 1827 to mid-October 1828, Green published the *Telegraph Extra*, a paper dedicated solely to the election of 1828. Again, as in the *Telegraph*, Democratic congressmen, politicians, and committees of correspondence actively enlisted subscribers for the weekly. The *Extra* conveyed valuable campaign information and propaganda to party operatives, especially when it came to defending Jackson against the charges of the Coalition press. Aside from editorials written by Green, the *Extra* also incorporated letters, speeches, and segments of both opposition and friendly papers. Eventually, he published about twenty thousand copies of the weekly at one dollar per copy.<sup>36</sup>

As much as Green appreciated the active involvement of state and national legislators and party supporters in enlisting subscribers to the *Telegraph*, he still liked to think that his own personal clout as a recognized editor could secure new readers as well. He saw every encounter with his fellow man as a means of gaining a new adherent to the party press. In one of his usual bouts with vanity, Green proudly recalled an instance when his notoriety alone earned him a new subscriber.

While en route to the Hermitage in the summer of 1826, Green stopped

34. Remini, *Election*, 81.

35. Ewing, "Independent Editor," 737; Smith, "Propaganda Techniques," 47; Smith, "Green and Telegraph," 42.

36. Ewing, "Independent Editor," 738; Smith, "Propaganda Techniques," 62. For an excellent description of the outlay, structure, and price of both the *Telegraph* and the *Telegraph Extra*, see Smith, "Green and Telegraph," 36–42.

in Russellville, Kentucky, for a short visit with two brothers-in-law. It was here that Green discovered that his reputation had preceded him. The morning he left Russellville, his carriage stopped to take on another passenger.

"Duff Green has come to town," stated the stranger, unaware of the identity of the man seated across from him.

"Ah," retorted Green, "what of him?"

"Why, he is going to Washington to abuse Mr. Clay!"

Seeing that his traveling companion was disposed to comment freely on the politics of the day, especially his views on the new editor of the *Telegraph*, Green encouraged him to continue his discourse. The general remained uncharacteristically polite to the stranger as he spouted a rather anti-Jackson bent. Obviously amused with the whole situation, Green chose not to reveal his true identity until he disembarked at Nashville. When the coach finally stopped in the Tennessee capital, a member of the Jackson Nashville Committee welcomed Green, whereupon the stranger revealed his surprise.

"I owe you an apology," he told Green.

"For what?" responded the general.

"I did not know who you were, or I never would have talked to you as I did today."

"I am aware of that, and therefore your comments gave me no offence," Green graciously replied.

"You are not the man I thought you were," the stranger continued, "and you must send me your paper, and I will do all that I can to aid you."<sup>37</sup>

Despite such encounters, as few as they were, Green depended upon party operatives and supporters for the success of the *Telegraph*. They, likewise, needed the editorial skill and spirit of Green for their success in electing Andrew Jackson to the White House. Both elements, in the end, recognized their mutual dependence, and together they proved successful. "I have now about 500 more subscribers than the *National Intelligencer*," Green informed Richard M. Johnson in 1827, "and my list is daily increasing." By the end of the election of 1828, the *Telegraph* boasted a subscription list of around twenty thousand. Moreover, the daily paper had surpassed all other newspapers in circulation volume.<sup>38</sup>

The success of the *Telegraph* also provided Green with a substantial

37. Green, *Facts and Suggestions*, 28–29.

38. Smith, "Green and Telegraph," 42; Green to Johnson, September 8, 1827, Green Papers, LC.

pecuniary boost, although he would continually have problems with debt. One of the primary reasons for taking over the *Telegraph* was to help cover debts that he had incurred back in Missouri. By the end of 1827, the financial aspects of the paper looked quite good. The paper had an estimated value of \$50,000 and an annual income of \$10,000. On the debit side, the paper had debts amounting to \$10,000, with outstanding subscriptions totaling \$18,000. Prospects for Green's pocketbook improved when he reflected on the extensive and valuable patronage that would come to him if Jackson was elected president. The expected income from a Senate printing contract alone would raise his income another \$6,000. Financially, he was in good shape.<sup>39</sup>

With the increased circulation also came the need for additional labor to meet the heavier workload. In the summer of 1827, when circulation of the *Telegraph* surpassed that of the *Intelligencer*, Green had to move into a larger building. He also found it necessary to hire an associate editor. In the fall of 1827, Green brought on Russell Jarvis of Boston. The contract between the two individuals entailed Jarvis paying Green \$5,000 upon signing, and an additional \$3,000 paid twelve and eighteen months thereafter. Jarvis, in turn, would receive part interest in the paper and a share in all the profits. Green and Jarvis, aided at times by Henry Lee, son of the famous Revolutionary War general Lighthorse Harry Lee and brother of Robert E. Lee, split the duties of writing editorials, although Green maintained full control of the paper's editorial policy. In January 1828, Jarvis officially began his duties at the *Telegraph*.<sup>40</sup>

Trouble arose between Green and Jarvis over the perceived duties of each man, the financial aspects of the paper, and editorial policy. To worsen matters, both individuals had volatile tempers. Jarvis accused Green of unequal treatment; Green retorted with charges of Jarvis's attempts to dominate the paper and his lack of political acumen. In the meantime, Jarvis attacked two men over the purchase of a lithograph and even assaulted the president's son, John Adams Jr., on the street. Green had had enough. The dissolution of the partnership, however, was anything but amicable or easy. An arbitration board, composed of Jacksonians Hugh Lawson White, James A. Hamilton, and Levi Woodbury, was appointed to settle the dispute. The details of the dissolution were as follows: Green paid Jarvis \$3,000 up front, another \$5,000 in October, and an additional amount of \$2,600 at a later date; the \$3,000

39. Ewing, "Independent Editor," 737.

40. Ewing, "Independent Editor," 737; Smith, *Press, Politics, and Patronage*, 66.

payments Jarvis had to pay Green according to their initial contract were canceled. Green was to keep the *Telegraph* and all the incidentals of the business, including presses, subscriptions, and labor. "I have dissolved my partnership with Jarvis," Green informed Calhoun. "It will be announced about the 15th of November. Our object is to prevent speculations on the subject." Jarvis, however, disapproved of the arbitration board's recommended settlement, and consequently he sued in federal court. The federal court ruled in favor of the arbitration board. Years later, the two men still harbored deep animosity toward each other.<sup>41</sup>

Although Green maintained control of the *Telegraph*, much to the satisfaction of the Jackson camp, the payment stipulations ordered by the arbitration board undermined the financial viability of the paper. Again, the situation forced Green to take out several loans, one for \$5,000 from Dr. William Ingalls of Boston and another one for \$3,500 from James A. Hamilton of New York; he also had to renew existing loans, including a \$3,000 loan from the Bank of the United States, which was increased by another \$6,000. Moreover, Green was left without an associate editor, and to remedy this, in September 1828 he offered Amos Kendall, editor of the Frankfort, Kentucky, *Argus of Western America*, an editorial position with the *Telegraph*. Kendall refused, desiring to remain in Kentucky and finding Green's financial operations "perfectly wild" and his management of the paper "imprudent."<sup>42</sup>

Regardless of what some thought of his abilities to run a newspaper, the vast majority of Americans, whether Democrat or National Republican, recognized Green's consummate skill at employing invective, innuendo, and outright insult to great political advantage. Calhoun was not off the mark when he told Van Buren that the editor of the *Telegraph* was more than competent to assail the Coalition and defend the Democrats. Green's aggressive style of writing shocked much of Washington society. Not even the newspaper war of the 1790s nor the election of 1800 could match his intense editorial onslaught. The Coalition and its presses could find no greater enemy, and the Jacksonians could not have had a more skilled and vocal defender. Nathan Sargent, in his

41. Ewing, "Independent Editor," 738; Smith, "Green and Telegraph," 48–51; Green to Calhoun, August 10, 1828, *JCCP*, 10: 413. For the legal haggling between Green and Jarvis in their contest to dissolve the partnership, see Green to Jarvis, July 1, 10, 12, 16, 19, August 7, October 25, 1828, Green to Richard M. Johnson, August 10, 1828, Green to Ingalls, September 14, 1828, Green Papers, LC.

42. Ewing, "Independent Editor," 738, 739; Smith, "Green and Telegraph," 51–52; Green to Kendall, September 17, 1828, Green to Pope, October 12, 1828, Green to Johnson, October 12, 1828, Green Papers, LC.

late-nineteenth-century work, *Public Men and Events*, described Green's writing manner most fittingly:

General Green opened his batteries with a vigor and clamor heretofore unprecedented in this country, to rouse public opinion and set it against the Administration, and especially against Mr. Adams and Mr. Clay. Charges of the grossest corruption and extravagance were made in so bold, positive, and confident a manner, and in such thundering tones, and these charges so oft repeated, that the people of the United States, not then accustomed to hearing such allegations against the highest officers of the government, and not knowing that all this was done for political effect,—that there was not a grain of truth to a pound of falsehood in them,—were astounded, and some even convinced.

Within a short time of taking over the *Telegraph*, Green's editorial style quickly gained him the sobriquet of "Rough Green." No moniker could have been more fitting.<sup>43</sup>

Green did, at times, go too far in attacking the Adams administration and its friends, going even to the point of issuing outright lies. "The 'Telegraph'," Sargent again reflected, "daily teemed with falsehoods uttered with the most positive assertion, as if they were gospel truths. . . . To contradict them was useless, as the contradiction could never overtake the falsehood, and this no one knew better than the editor himself." For example, when the editor of an anti-administration newspaper, who was himself considered by many to be an inherent liar, stated that he knew for a fact that Adams had been initiated a Mason, the Bucktails of New York disregarded the assertion. Green, however, not only printed the editor's lie, but also went so far as to say that the editor had witnessed the initiation firsthand. In another example of embellishment, he claimed in the *Telegraph* that Clay had misappropriated \$20,000 to Transylvania University from an estate of which he was the executor. This was well known to be an unadulterated lie; even Jacksonians in Kentucky refused to print it. When called on to do so, Green could seemingly go to any length to impugn his opponents.<sup>44</sup>

43. Ewing, "Independent Editor," 734, 735; Nathan Sargent, *Public Men and Events from the Commencement of Mr. Monroe's Administration, in 1817, to the close of Mr. Fillmore's Administration, in 1853*, 1: 110.

44. Sargent, *Public Men and Events*, 1: 111; Remini, *Election*, 139; Peterson, *Great Triumvirate*, 146, 163.

Opposition presses regularly disparaged and denounced Green for his transgressions with the pen. The pro-Adams *Courier* suggested that Green “could teach lying tricks to the Devil himself,” and the Washington-based paper *We the People* dubbed Green’s paper the “Tel-lie-graph,” a title which caught on quickly with other Coalition presses. Numerous other insults were directed Green’s way: “common-sewer print,” “wretched driveller,” “mendicant of his party,” “calumniator,” “poltroon,” “liar,” and “scoundrel.” Pro-Adams editor Hezekiah Niles asserted that “if Duff Green is *encouraged* in his present course, he will be of more use to us than any other. . . . The lies are so gross . . . that every body cries out shame.” In the overall picture, “Rough Green” was indeed one of the milder disparagements. Yet throughout all of this, the pro-Jackson press regularly defended its chief editor.<sup>45</sup>

But the term “Rough Green” epitomized more than just his biting sarcasm, untruths, and penetrating editorial aspersions. The *Tele-graph*’s editor continued his frontier proclivity for backing up words with fisticuffs. One such example gained widespread attention in the newspapers and in Washington circles. Green accused Edward Vernon Sparhawk, a reporter with the *National Intelligencer*, of purposefully and malignantly misquoting an article in the *Telegraph*—an ironic accusation for Green—and warned Sparhawk not to make the mistake again. The *Intelligencer* reporter, however, ignored the threat and continued, in Green’s view, to abuse his articles. Green had had enough. On January 25, 1828, he confronted Sparhawk in a Senate chamber, and, following a few choice words, attacked him. According to the *Intelligencer*’s rendition of the assault, Green, “armed with a bludgeon,” pulled Sparhawk’s hair and “gouged his eyes.” The *Telegraph*, to the contrary, denied that Green was armed or that he had “gouged his eyes.” But Green proudly admitted that Sparhawk’s “nose was wrung, and his ears, both of them, pulled.” Although he had physically assaulted him, Green argued that he intended no bodily injury to Sparhawk; he merely sought “to disgrace him.” Sparhawk immediately presented a memorial to the Senate, seeking justice from that body for the attack made upon his person. Despite Green’s physical attack on Sparhawk and his continued threats on other opponents, Jacksonian congressmen refused to censure his actions or restrict his presence in the halls of Congress. Whether on the street or in print, the editor of

45. Green, “Militant Journalist,” 249–50; Smith, “Propaganda Technique,” 57; Smith, *Press, Politics, and Patronage*, 66; Hezekiah Niles to John Bailey, May 2, 1827, Misc. Mss. Bailey, New-York Historical Society; Smith, “Green and Telegraph,” 102–8.

the *Telegraph* was far too potent a weapon to remove from battle, no matter how controversial he might be.<sup>46</sup>

Naturally, Green did not see his editorial behavior in the same light as did his opponents. "I have endeavored to make my paper the organ of correct principles," he wrote to Jackson, "and have carefully avoided the falsehood which characterises our opponents." He could indeed be unabashedly self-righteous in his political pursuits. Green never perceived his insults, distortions, and lies, as many throughout the country saw them, as gross violations and unforgivable transgressions. To him, they were legitimate means for ridding the nation of the most vile of administrations. "As to politics," he again wrote the Old Hero, "I fear that I often do wrong. I shall however draw largely upon the forbearance and forgiveness of my political friends. They must substitute the will for the Deed and if I do err place it to any thing else than a want of zeal in the cause or attachment to you." Indeed, he had to say the things he did if the people were to prove victorious. Besides, they were being said about his candidate as well, and something—anything—had to be done to combat it.<sup>47</sup>

46. Green, "Militant Journalist," 251; Remini, *Election*, 159; Green to Calhoun, January 30, 1828, *JCCP*, 10: 342. On Green's account of the altercation with Sparhawk, see *U.S. Telegraph*, February 1, 11, 1828; Smith, "Green and Telegraph," 69–70.

47. Green to Jackson, June 9, 1827, July 18, 1827, *Jackson Correspondence*, ed. Bassett, 3: 362, 375.

## CHAPTER 6



### Defense of Jackson, Attack on the Coalition, and the Corrupt Bargain

#### I.

Green's toughest challenge during the election of 1828 was not working to create and build a strong party machine, nor was it his tireless labor to establish and sustain an effective party press. His most difficult and consuming exertions came in defending his candidate, Andrew Jackson, from countless and consistent attacks by the Coalition and their allied presses. No other task consumed more time and energy or called for more creativity. Any perusal of the pages of the *Telegraph* clearly demonstrates the considerable effort its editor made justifying or exonerating Jackson's past actions. These attacks touched nearly every facet of the Old Hero's career, character, and personal life. "General Jackson has been assailed," Green wrote in the *Telegraph*, "in the most wanton and inhuman manner—the slanders have been carried into the bosom of his family—the laurels which he gathered in defending his country, they have sought to pluck from his brows—in short, the Billingsgate calendar has been exhausted, and he has been made alternately, a cut throat, adulterer, negro buyer, and cock fighter." As the opposition left nothing to spare in their attacks upon Jackson, the editor of the *Telegraph* likewise spared nothing in repudiating the numerous charges and slanders. Fortunately for Jackson and the Democratic Party, no better man could be found for such a task than Duff Green.<sup>1</sup>

1. Green, "Militant Journalist," 249; *U.S. Telegraph*, November 1, 1827. For a good summary of the sundry attacks upon Jackson's career, character, and life, see Remini, *Election*, 151–62.



The primary target of the Coalition press was Jackson's military career. By the time Green assumed control of the *Telegraph*, the opposition had already unleashed a barrage of attacks upon the various military exploits of the Tennessee general. Few could comprehend attacking what appeared to be a quite brilliant record—New Orleans, Horseshoe Bend, the Seminole campaign. Yet question, rail, and slander his actions they did, and did so regularly. Jackson, they insisted, was far too intemperate to hold the highest office in the country; his proclivity for violence and his volatile temper threatened his ability to lead. He had participated in numerous duels, street brawls, cock fights, and acts of military brutality. If elected, Jackson would most certainly act as a military chieftain, not a Republican statesman.

Green viewed this charge as a mere ploy to incite the Old Hero, to put him in a position where he revealed his temper. "The partisans of the Coalition have charged that General Jackson is rash, impetuous, and passionate," he asserted. "Could they excite him to some rash act, by their vile abuse, it would be sweeter than honey to their palates. This is their last and expiring hope. Upon this all their hopes of future greatness—of successions—of 'safe precedents'—of power and patronage depend." It was, moreover, impossible to have a military regime in the United States, Green argued, since the U.S. government maintained a small standing army, a disinclination to expand it, a strong unwillingness to raise taxes to augment it, and an armed citizenry to preclude its growth. But the most absurd part of the Coalition's cry of "military chieftain" was their disregard of Jackson's strong Republican sympathies. Green responded that the "malignant insinuation against the patriotism of General Jackson, which Mr. Clay has couched under the phrase '*Military chieftain*,' is happily refuted by the whole tenor of the General's life." One could now find the Old Hero "laying aside the implements and the garb of the soldier, and resuming those of the farmer, happy in the affections of his fellow-citizens, and in the exercise of all the virtues which adorn our nature—Are these the characteristic traits of a '*Military chieftain*'?" Jackson never publicly exposed his quick temper during the campaign. He did not have to. To prove their point, the Coalition proffered several examples of Jackson's tendency toward wanton acts of military despotism.<sup>2</sup>

One of the more damning charges came with the release of the "Coffin Hand Bill." John Binns, editor of the pro-administration *Democratic*

2. *U.S. Telegraph*, August 23, September 27, 1826, April 9, 1827, June 16, 1828. See also the issues of August 23, 1826, September 17, 1827, January 15, April 12, October 4, 1828; Green to Thomas Jefferson Randolph, May 17, 1827, Thomas Jefferson Randolph Papers, University of Virginia.

*Press*, created a handbill entitled “Some Account of Some of the Bloody Deeds of GENERAL JACKSON,” or “The Death of Jacob Ebb, David Morrow, John Harris, Henry Lewis, David Hunt, and Edward Lindsey—six militiamen, who were condemned to die, the sentence approved by Major General Jackson, and his order the whole six shot.” Sporting six black coffins, the document accused Jackson of brutally executing six militiamen for desertion during the Creek War, when all they wanted to do was to return to their homes following the expiration of their enlistments. The Nashville Committee responded on behalf of Jackson, stating that the men in question intended to mutiny; they broke into a storehouse, stole supplies, burned the structure, and deserted. Green printed the committee’s address in the *Telegraph*, and for his own part, devoted numerous issues to defending Jackson’s orders and the executions, which occurred, he reminded readers, when the Old Hero was defending New Orleans from British invasion.<sup>3</sup>

The Coalition also attempted to steal away from Jackson the triumph of the victory at New Orleans. They contended that the general had returned to his home in Tennessee when the invasion occurred, that then secretary of war James Monroe had to order him to return to New Orleans, and thus Monroe, not Jackson, could be credited for defeating the British. Jackson’s use of martial law and the jailing of a New Orleans judge were posited as further evidence of his disposition toward military despotism. Green, Jackson, and their supporters found this charge most insulting, for it not only maligned the general’s courage, bravery, and skill in repulsing a better trained, better armed, and larger force, but it also impugned the Republican character of the Old Hero. “If it be criminal,” Green wrote, “that Jackson, in a time of awful peril, should have used *energetic measures* to save an all important portion of the Union, to prevent a city from being sacked, and preserve beauty from a lawless soldiery” it should be noted that “in the estimation of the great body of his countrymen *it was a virtue*.” When his country called, while he peacefully reposed at the Hermitage, he “obeyed the voice of duty, and interposed his protecting arm between the myrmidons of rapacity and the intended victims of their cupidity and sensuality.” When hostilities had ended, he returned to his plow.<sup>4</sup>

3. Remini, *Jackson*, 122–23; Remini, *Election*, 153–56. On the six militiamen issue, see *U.S. Telegraph*, May 28, November 24, 1827, January 21, February 29, March 4, 5, 25, April 25, 28, July 22, 1828, and *Telegraph Extra*, March 21, April 12, 30, August 23, 1828.

4. Remini, *Election*, 159–60; Remini, *Jackson*, 118; *U.S. Telegraph*, August 23, 1826, November 1, 1827. See also the issues of June 22, August 11, 20, 24, 1826, March 10, 1827, and *Telegraph Extra*, October 4, 1828.

Much of the campaign commotion surrounding Jackson's actions at New Orleans emanated from Adams's cabinet members, Secretary of the Navy Samuel Southard and Secretary of War James Barbour. Even former president Monroe was implicated. At an after-dinner party with friends in June 1826, as the wine flowed freely, a Jackson supporter suggested that the Old Hero's performance at the battle of New Orleans proved his fitness for the presidency, to which Southard, among others in attendance, took issue. The navy secretary argued that much of the victory could be claimed by then-war-secretary James Monroe, for he had arranged for the city's defense and had informed General Jackson of its imminent threat of British invasion. Jackson surely would have faced even greater odds if not for the action of Monroe, Southard maintained. Soon, these statements were embellished, reshaped, and delivered to the ear of Jackson himself, who, despising any insult to his military exploits, commenced a rather heated correspondence—although tempered a great deal by the Nashville Committee—with Southard. Jackson stated that Monroe helped little in the defense of New Orleans; Southard claimed that he had never intended to impugn Jackson's reputation, but, rather, to vindicate Monroe's. Jackson then permanently terminated the correspondence. At this juncture, Green took over. He printed the final letter written by Jackson, which publicly humiliated Southard. Matters did not end there. The editor hammered away at Southard in several articles in the *Telegraph*, calling him a slanderer of Jackson and an outright liar.<sup>5</sup>

Behind closed doors, both Jackson and Green questioned Monroe's role in the whole sordid affair. That the ex-president and the Old Hero did not get along was no secret. But how far had the Virginian gone in supporting Adams? When it was revealed that Monroe had allowed Southard access to War Department records regarding the defense of New Orleans, the answer seemed plain enough. Opposition papers, moreover, picked up on the Jackson-Southard exchange, publishing the correspondence and using official documents to impugn Jackson's military reputation. Green was livid. He charged Southard, Monroe, and Barbour of partiality in allowing the opposition access to War Department documents, and he accused the ex-president of secretly supporting the Coalition. "I suspect Mr. Monroe is apprised that you have discovered his treachery to you," he wrote Jackson, "and is desirous to lend the influence of his name to promote the reelection of Mr. Adams. I am told that numerous documents in relation to the Campaign of 1814–15 have

5. Michael Birkner, *Samuel Southard: Jeffersonian Whig*, 82–86; Remini, *Jackson*, 121–22; *U.S. Telegraph*, June 29, July 7, 11, 1827.

been furnished him from the War Department and that [Monroe] and Southard have been in active correspondence." Later, in July 1828, Green wrote Peter B. Porter, who had replaced Barbour as secretary of war, and demanded inspection and copies of the same records. Neither Barbour nor Porter ever complied with the demands, both insulted by the tone of Green's communiqué. In any event, Monroe's perceived treachery—"for I can call it by no other name"—should be exposed. The matter, however, fizzled from here, save for intermittent yet careful insinuations by Green that Monroe was an Adams supporter.<sup>6</sup>

But the opposition found other ways to disparage Jackson's military career. Jackson's several eventful, and many would say unlawful, incursions into Spanish Florida came under close scrutiny. The first episode occurred during the War of 1812, following his successful campaign against the Creeks in the spring of 1814 and before he headed south to defend New Orleans later that same year. In the meantime, he invaded "neutral" Florida and captured Pensacola, which he later evacuated. The second, and more controversial, incident came in early 1818 after Old Hickory had assumed command of the first Seminole campaign. Following the War of 1812, the Seminoles continually crossed the Florida border into Georgia and Alabama, massacring settlers and stealing property. The Monroe administration called upon Jackson and a respectable force of troops to halt the Indian forays into the United States. Whether that meant crossing the Florida border, invading foreign soil, capturing Pensacola, attacking several forts and towns, punishing the guilty Indians, and court-martialing and then executing two British citizens, one an army officer, for apparent incitement of Indian depredations—all of which Jackson had done—was a matter hotly contested between Jackson and the Monroe administration. General Jackson repeatedly stated that he had explicit permission to do such, while Monroe's cabinet, especially Secretary of War Calhoun and Secretary of the Treasury Crawford, argued that he had grossly transgressed his orders. They called for a congressional reprimand. Secretary of State John Quincy Adams, ironically, and a vast portion of the nation voiced their approval of Jackson's actions. The latter won the day. Friends of the Adams administration, however, resurrected both events during the 1828 campaign. Jackson's deeds in Florida, they contended, offered additional proof of his militaristic inclination.<sup>7</sup>

6. Allan Nevins, ed., *The Diary of John Quincy Adams, 1794–1845: American Political, Social and Intellectual Life from Washington to Polk*, July 25, 1828, 383; Green to Jackson, July 8, 1827, *Jackson Correspondence*, ed. Bassett, 3: 372.

7. Remini, *Course of American Empire*, 234–45, 344–77; Remini, *Election*, 160–61.

As with the charges regarding New Orleans and the six militiamen, Green immediately countered in his usual fervent style. Jackson's conduct in both instances, he argued, was absolutely necessary considering the state of affairs along the U.S.-Florida border. Florida, the editor reasoned, was not neutral territory, for it had harbored "our enemies" and was either "too weak or unwilling to restrain [the Seminoles] from depredating upon life and property." Jackson, therefore, had not invaded neutral territory, and the "established usage of nations" proved as much. Moreover, Green asserted, "if the execution of two men [Britons Robert Ambrister and Alexander Arbuthnot] who incited the savages to dye their tomahawks in the blood of our unoffending & helpless women and children, be construed into murder by the sympathizing bosoms of [the Coalition]—[Jackson's] countrymen view it in a very different light, and have passed their verdict on the same." Again, Green referred to the patriotic ardor and Republican spirit of Old Hickory. "Whilst his country was at peace, he was found at his farm, earning the honest bread of industry, respected by his neighbors, and enjoying their unlimited confidence." When war threatened the country with desolation, however, "we find him in the field, promptly obeying the dictates of patriotism, leading his gallant fellow-citizens, against a savage enemy, whose fell tomahawk was sparing neither old age, nor sex, nor infantile innocence." Green certainly had a way with words that captured the attention and fired the nationalistic spirit of the common man; he was indeed Jackson's most able, zealous, and tireless spin doctor.<sup>8</sup>

In no way were opposition attacks on Jackson restricted to his military career; they equally impugned his education (or lack thereof), his loyalty, and his personal life. A favorite slander against the Old Hero was poking fun at his atrocious spelling, which the opposition contended was a sign of the general's illiteracy. By frontier standards, Jackson was well educated. Nearly everyone at that time misspelled words, but he did have regular bouts with spelling. Green, as usual, dismissed the charge. So what if the general omitted some letters or failed to cross t's and dot i's in his correspondence, "such omissions are common to the best writers . . . It arises from the rapidity with which some men think. If Gen. Jackson's mind could not travel faster than his pen, he would truly, be unfit for president." People, moreover, should examine the spelling and grammar of the "*literary* gentlemen of the *literary* cabinet."<sup>9</sup>

8. *U.S. Telegraph*, August 23, 1826, December 14, 1826, November 1, 1827.

9. *U.S. Telegraph*, March 8, April 12, 23, 1828; *Telegraph Extra*, April 26, 1828.

But the slanders kept coming, and Green kept rebuffing. The Coalition labeled Jackson a Negro trader, to which the editor frankly declared that “we do not believe that the buying or selling of slaves, *legally* such, forms a just objection to any candidate for office.” To up the ante, he charged Clay with buying a black freeman and placing him in bondage. The opposition alleged that Jackson had participated in the Burr conspiracy, that he had been an unqualified legislator, and that he was a blasphemer. They even went to such gross extremes as to claim that Jackson’s mother was a common prostitute brought to America by British soldiers, that she married a mulatto, who fathered several of her children, one of whom was Andrew Jackson, and that his older brother was sold as a slave in South Carolina. Green even had to warn readers of the Coalition’s “hellish project” to start rumors that the general had died. Little, in short, was *not* said about Jackson. But the severest slander made upon his personal life, one that Jackson never forgave, was questioning the legality and morality of his marriage to Rachel.<sup>10</sup>

Although rumors about Jackson’s marriage had been floating around Washington, the issue actually exploded onto the national scene in 1827, when the editor of the *Cincinnati Gazette*, John Hammond, an ardent supporter of Adams, charged Jackson, in a highly provocative article, of prevailing upon Rachel Robards to desert her husband and to live with him instead in the character of a wife. When pro-Jackson papers in Ohio cried foul, Hammond seemed to have the facts to support his story. He argued that Lewis Robards, husband of Rachel, obtained a statute from the Virginia legislature that granted him a divorce if a jury ruled that his wife was guilty of adultery and desertion. In the summer of 1790, a jury ruled accordingly. Hammond backed his accusation with extensive—albeit greatly distorted—research, which he published in a small pamphlet entitled *Truth’s Advocate and Monthly Anti-Jackson*. What did the Democrats now think of their Republican hero, the Coalition howled? How could Jackson rail against the corruption of the Adams administration when he had himself acted immorally? Was this the kind of “virtue” that Jacksonians rewarded? Certainly Hammond had taken the real facts of Jackson’s marriage and embellished them considerably, but few, including Jackson’s closest advisors, could deny that they were awfully close to the truth.

The circumstances surrounding Jackson’s marriage to Rachel were far less irregular than the opposition press asserted. The two had first

10. *U.S. Telegraph*, October 15, 1828; *Telegraph Extra*, July 19, September 13, October 11, 1828; Remini, *Election*, 153.

met when Rachel, already in an unhappy marriage, was living with her mother in Tennessee, as threats of Indian attacks necessitated close habitation within the settlement. In 1788, Rachel's mother took on Jackson, a newcomer, as a boarder, primarily for the added protection. Lewis, jealous of Jackson's presence, continued to harass and fight with Rachel. No longer able to tolerate the abuse, Rachel fled her husband, and traveled to Natchez with Jackson and Revolutionary War hero John Stark. In August of 1791, believing that Lewis had obtained a divorce, Rachel and Andrew married. Soon, however, the two would learn, to their horror, that Lewis had *not* divorced Rachel. By law, then, she was considered a bigamist. In 1793, a jury dissolved the first marriage, and Rachel and Jackson exchanged vows the second time. Despite the "official" adultery and bigamy, which the Coalition exploited, the Jacksons were innocent of any illegal or immoral conduct. Yet it would return to haunt them in the election of 1828.

The Jackson campaign lurched from the scandalous charges. Local presses were unprepared to meet the attack, and so it devolved on the Nashville Committee and Duff Green to control the damage. Under the direct scrutiny and guidance of Jackson, Lewis and Overton promptly prepared a complete account of the real facts of Jackson's marriage, replete with numerous documents, affidavits, and "official" witnesses exonerating the general of any wrongdoing. The committee released the statement to the press in 1827. Green published the statement, bolstering it with his own editorials expanding upon the controversy. Such testimonials, he declared, clearly proved the "innocence of a much injured and most amiable woman, and the inhuman and infamous vandalism which her reputation has been assailed." But his true talent was in taking the fight straight into the enemy's camp, and as much as Hammond could distort the truth, Green could exceed him. Yet, he never employed a single fact, for his deadly weapon was innuendo and hidden accusations.<sup>11</sup>

"No person," Green asserted, "not even those whose imprudence and inordinate ambition have brought down upon themselves the weight of retributive justice, feels greater regret than we do, at the improper introduction of female character into the political discussions of the day." Ever since the general's name had been placed before the country as a candidate for the presidency, he continued, corrupt forces have assailed his character in every possible form; slanders have been levied

11. Remini, *Election*, 151–53; Remini, *Jackson*, 118–21; *Telegraph Extra*, March 28, 1828.

against him, equaled only by those once flung against Jefferson in the election of 1800. "It now appears that his enemies, not content with slandering his public character, have determined to assail his life, which is to be discoloured with all the falsehood of party rage; and that with a view to political effect, his wife is to come in for her share of slanderous abuse." Yet Green was certain that "none of those who, with us, are laboring in the great cause of the people," would ever permit themselves to be drawn into a "just recrimination . . . materials for which are abundant, and at hand." Such was Green's customary use of insinuation: not he nor the friends of Jackson would stoop to the reprehensible level that Hammond did, and strike at womanhood, yet he subtly hinted that they very well could. Beware, he warned the Coalition, for he would vindicate Rachel. In the end, Green stooped to attacking the female character, but not in any way that would incriminate the Jacksonians. He was indeed a master of innuendo.<sup>12</sup>

In June 1827, Green printed an editorial in which he implied that he could indeed carry the war into the enemy's camp. "We had the temerity," he explained, "here under the nose of the president [Adams], to hint at some family matters which HE had no desire to see in print. And why?—because he knew they were true. They are not, like the falsehoods published of Mrs. Jackson, capable of disproof." The family matters to which Green referred concerned rumors, untrue at that, of the incestuous relationship between Adams and his wife. He never proffered any proof of his allegation; instead, he dangled it before the reader's nose, only to jerk it back and suggest that he would not reveal the juicy details because he had frightened the Coalition into ending their attack on Rachel:

It was not our desire to point the finger of scorn at the *incestuous person*; nor to bring the female character of this country into public discussion. It was not our desire to trace the *love* adventures of the Chief Magistrate, nor to disclose the manner, *nor the time*, at which *he*, his brother-in-law, and his father-in-law before him, led their *blushing* brides to the hymenial altar; but we gave notice that we knew something about those matters; when lo! the Tacticians of the [*National*] *Journal* were called to order; they were instructed not to provoke further notice; and, if possible, to avoid the threatened exposure. . . . We repeat that it was this—our threat, which operated upon the Tacticians of the *Journal*, and would have disgorged the

12. *U.S. Telegraph*, March 8, June 20, 1827. See also issues of March 26, April 9, 1827, and *Telegraph Extra*, March 28, 1828.



vile slander upon Mrs. Jackson from their columns if it could have been done. They have seen the effect which its publication has had upon the people, and it is the fear of exposure on their part, and the powerful action of public sentiment in favor of Mrs. Jackson, which has driven them to repentance. . . . We say to those men—beware how you touch upon this subject. *We say beware.*

Only if the opposition rekindled their slanders on Jackson's wife, ignoring Green's warnings, would he expose the "leprosy which preyed upon the household" of Adams. He again stated that he would be justified in carrying the war into the enemy's ranks, but for now he refrained—refrained because he had taken the higher road. The friends of Jackson had no desire to assail the peace of any female; they had no desire to wage war upon the female character, and, "as we did not provoke the present discussion, we desire that it shall cease when those under the control of the President consent to it." Green had set a forbearance upon this subject, but that forbearance had its limits. "We say to them, beware how they provoke us."<sup>13</sup>

Green took great pride in his attack on the Adams marriage, so much so that he wrote Jackson and told him that Rachel had been vindicated in the eyes of the public regarding the slanders made by the opposition. "I saw the necessity of bringing home the matter to Mr. Adams' own family and by threats of retaliation drove the [Coalition press] to condemn itself." He gloated in his assault on Adams and the apparent vindication it provided Rachel. "The effect here was like electricity," he continued to Jackson. "The whole Adams corps were thrown into consternation—soon they had no doubt that I would execute my threat and I was denounced in the most bitter terms for assailing *female* character by those very men who had rolled the slanders on Mrs. J. under their tongues as the sweetest morsel that had been dressed up by [the Coalition press] during the whole campaign."<sup>14</sup>

Jackson approved of Green's actions, but also warned him of his lack of patience for those who brought females into the slanderous fray of the campaign. There was indeed a limit to political combat. Tread carefully, he admonished his chief editor. Jackson suggested they must remain on the defensive, and if the Coalition should continue its "systematic course of slander," then it would be necessary "to throw a fire brand into their camp" by a statement of a few facts; but female character "never should be introduced by my friends, unless a continuation

13. *U.S. Telegraph*, June 16, 18, 20, 1827.

14. Green to Jackson, July 8, 1827, *Jackson Correspondence*, ed. Bassett, 3: 372.

of attack should continue to be made against Mrs. J. and then only, by way of *just retaliation* upon the *known guilty*. My great wish is, that it may be altogether *avoided*, if *possible*, by my friends. I *never war against females* and it is only the base and cowardly that do—your course has hitherto been, approved by my friends, and must continue to be approved, so long as you adopt truth and principle for your guide, never departing from either.” Green made no more insinuations against the Adams marriage, but he often departed from Jackson’s directed course of truth and principle. Both sides, pro-Adams and pro-Jackson, moved on to other slanders and diatribes.<sup>15</sup>

Despite the intense scrutinization and outright defamation of Jackson’s life, career, and character, the Coalition failed to derail the Jackson campaign. The editor of the *Telegraph* had a direct role in this fact. Behind every charge, slander, and assault, was Duff Green, ever ready himself to protect the reputation of his candidate and to concomitantly assail the character and conduct of his opponents. He never tired of defending Jackson and the party from the onslaught of the Coalition; he performed admirably in vindicating the Old Hero, his military and political career, and his personal life. But it was in Green’s bitter denunciations and diatribes against the Adams administration, its supporters, and its press that the editor was clearly at his pinnacle.

## II.

Throughout the campaign of 1828, the most consistent charge levied against the Adams administration was that of Corrupt Bargain. The slogan of “intrigue, bargain, and management” emanated from all quarters of the Jackson camp. They believed that every slander, insinuation, and denunciation employed by the Coalition was merely a tactic to attract attention away from the stench of bargain. The attacks on Jackson’s military exploits, his character, and his wife, Jacksonians argued, were all done to cover the corruption and the hunger for power inherent to Adams, Clay, and their cohorts. Green took every opportunity, whether in his private correspondence, through his political directives, or within the pages of the *Telegraph*, to keep the charge before the public. It did not matter that there was little or no proof of the deal between Adams and Clay; the simple appearance of misconduct was all

15. Jackson to Green, August 13, 1827, *Jackson Correspondence*, ed. Bassett, 3: 377.

that was needed. The election of the president had been taken away from the people and handed to the minions of power, aristocracy, and corruption. This was all that needed to be restated. But Jackson went too far in trying to push the issue of the corrupt bargain, too far even for Green. The general thought he had the proof, and he urged Green to expose it. In so doing, the Old Hero undermined his most potent campaign charge. It took Green to save it.

Jackson recalled, just after the election of 1824 and before the House convened to select the president, an incident where James Buchanan, a congressman from Pennsylvania, approached him and stated that the Clay people were prepared to shift their votes to Jackson, thus giving him the presidency, if he would remove Adams from the State Department. Apparently, the Clay contingent heard rumors that Jackson, if elected president, would proscribe them from cabinet posts. Through the medium of Philip S. Markley, the Clay men voiced their fears to Buchanan, who first approached Eaton and then Jackson himself. Neither Jackson nor Eaton would stoop to make such a promise. "The old Roman, the incorruptible Jackson," Green later applauded, "knew that such a declaration, by him, would be construed into a pledge, on his part, to appoint Mr. Clay, and he refused. He preferred his own honor, and his country's glory to the charms of office, and sooner than make his pledge he gave up his high pretensions." Only later, when the House chose Adams as president, who then appointed Clay as secretary of state, did the impact of Buchanan's initial approach make complete sense—proof that Clay had intended to bargain away the will of the people, a deal that Adams would make. It made great political ammunition—as long as no one pursued any actual fact of Clay's supposed intentions to bargain with the Old Hero. Green knew that the rumor in itself was powerful campaign material, enough to elect Jackson in 1828.<sup>16</sup>

So far, the Buchanan approach remained hidden from public view, but not for long. Jackson desired to take the issue to its logical conclusion. He wanted actual proof, so, in the fall of 1826, the Old Hero instructed Rough Green to investigate the matter. The editor immediately wrote Buchanan about his talk with Jackson. That Green did so privately demonstrated his acute political acumen, for accusing a fellow party member of impropriety could have serious repercussions on the Jackson campaign.

16. Eaton to Green, August 16, 1826, Green Papers, LC; Remini, *Election*, 22; *U.S. Telegraph*, August 13, 1827.

You will discover from the *Journal* and *Telegraph* that Mr. Clay & myself are at issue. The part taken by you on the occasion referred to, is known to me; and a due regard to your feelings has heretofore restrained me from using your name before the public. The time however is now approaching when it will become the duty of every man to do all in his power to expose the bargain which placed the Coalition in power. Will you, upon receipt of this, write to me and explain the causes which induced you to see Gen'l. Jackson upon the subject of the vote of Mr. Clay & his friends a few days before it was known that they had conclusively determined to vote for Mr. Adams; also advise me of the manner in which you would prefer that subject to be brought before the public.<sup>17</sup>

Buchanan promptly replied. "It will be sufficient . . . for your purpose to know," he informed Green, "that I had no authority from Mr. Clay or his friends to propose any terms to General Jackson, in relation to their votes, nor did I make any such proposition." Whoever told Green of his approach to Jackson, he continued, was entirely mistaken. Buchanan admonished "against bringing that conversation before the people," through the medium of the *Telegraph* or any other newspaper. "I am clearly of the opinion that whoever shall attempt to prove by direct evidence any corrupt bargain between Mr. C and Mr. A will fail; for if it existed, the parties to it will forever conceal it from light." Green accepted Buchanan's story and recommended against pursuing this particular avenue; Jackson, however, disagreed.<sup>18</sup>

Other "evidence" of Adams's intention to bargain for the presidency surfaced about this time, of which Green took full advantage. In January 1827, Green reported in the *Telegraph* a conversation between George Strother, a Clay supporter, and William H. Crawford, in which the latter claimed that Adams, through the intermediation of Tobias Watkins, offered him any cabinet post he so desired if he were to back the New Englander for the presidency. The contents of the conversation had been revealed in a public speech by a Virginia legislator, William Smyth, and Green obviously found it worthy of publication. Strother, however, was "much mortified" to see his name connected with such a charge against Clay. He promptly informed the secretary

17. Remini, *Election*, 65; Green to Buchanan, October 12, 1826, in John Bassett Moore, ed., *The Works of James Buchanan, Comprising His Speeches, State Papers, and Private Correspondence*, 1: 217, hereafter cited as *Works of Buchanan*; Philip S. Klein, *President James Buchanan: A Biography*, 56.

18. Buchanan to Green, October 16, 1826, *Works of Buchanan*, 1: 218–20; Klein, *Buchanan*, 57; Remini, *Election*, 65.

of state that the version printed in the *Telegraph* was “an outrage upon my feelings totally unauthorized,” and that the conversation was “highly colored by Green.” Yet nothing further was ever made of the Strother-Crawford dialogue.<sup>19</sup>

Jackson, however, continued to retell the tale of a certain congressman, remaining nameless for the moment, who had approached him shortly after the election of 1824 with an offer to make a deal with Clay. A Virginian, Carter Beverly, hearing of Jackson’s account, published the story in a North Carolina newspaper. The Old Hero verified Beverly’s account in a public letter in June 1827. Green, quite possibly foreseeing potential disaster for the Jackson campaign, wrote to Jackson and outlined the course he hoped the investigation, certain to arise out of Beverly’s letter, would take. “It is my intention,” he informed the general, “to lay before the public the facts and circumstances demonstrating the corrupt understanding between Mr. Clay and Adams, and if possible to provoke an appeal on the part of Mr. Clay to the House at its next session.” Green thought this would be far better than leaving the subject where it now was or permitting Jackson to be brought before the public via opposition newspapers as the vehement accuser of Clay. Such would appear quite unrepugnant and highly political. Someone else must assume that role. “Many reasons urge my mind upon this course,” he continued to Jackson. “If we succeed in getting an impartial or an independent Speaker, he can organise a committee which will draw to light much hidden matter and compel witnesses to testify who cannot otherwise be brought to disclose what they know.” Buchanan, Green was well aware, would not make a statement against Markley, the person through whom Clay operated on the Pennsylvanian. Only a friendly congressional committee could force Buchanan’s revelation. Green indeed published a lengthy article in the *Telegraph* regarding the corrupt bargain and Clay’s role in it. He never mentioned his sources, however, for he knew they contained no persuasive proof. Two weeks later, Green printed the Beverly letter in the *Telegraph*.<sup>20</sup>

In the meantime, the Beverly letter had an incendiary effect. Clay, among numerous other congressmen and supporters, demanded that Jackson reveal his source. The Old Hero had no qualms doing such. “James Buchanan,” he quickly divulged. Eaton confirmed the Pennsylvanian as well. Buchanan had no choice but to make a public state-

19. *U.S. Telegraph*, January 20, 1827; George F. Strother to Clay, February 10, 1827, in *Papers of Clay*, ed. Seager, 6: 182–83.

20. Remini, *Election*, 65–66; Green to Jackson, June 9, 1827, *Jackson Correspondence*, ed. Bassett, 3: 361; *U.S. Telegraph*, July 2, 19, 1827.

ment on the entire matter. In a letter to a Pennsylvania newspaper, in August 1827, he tried, simultaneously, to repeat what he had told Green earlier, that he was not a messenger on behalf of Clay, and yet refrain from calling Jackson a liar. He failed miserably. The Adams administration felt completely exonerated of any wrongdoing; Jacksonians, nonetheless, argued that Buchanan's statement proved the bargain. The truth of the matter, however, was closer to the Coalition's assessment. Jackson indeed lost some support in Pennsylvania.<sup>21</sup>

Green, as usual, defended Jackson's take on the Buchanan affair. "Let any man look at the important crisis that has arisen," he reasoned in the *Telegraph*. "See everything placed before him. See Andrew Jackson rise superior to this temptation, and preferring his own honor, his own approving conscience to the presidency; and we cannot doubt that that transaction and that conversation [with Buchanan] made a lasting and deep impression on his mind." But he knew that Buchanan's statement hurt the campaign, yet he had to respond in favor of Jackson. In several August issues of the *Telegraph*, he published Buchanan's first—and private—letter, danced around this account, implicated Markley, used Eaton as further collaboration of Jackson's version, and could only conclude by stating that Buchanan was simply an "unsuspecting tool" of Clay. There was only so much he could do. Jackson, however, approved of Green's efforts. "The manner you have treated the Beverly business," he informed Green, "is proper and one which I approve." Moreover, the Old Hero agreed with Green's earlier counsel regarding a House investigation. "Mr. Clay must throw himself on some tribunal clothed with power to investigate this matter and to coerce the attendance of witnesses and examine upon oath, or sink in the estimation of all the honest and virtuous portion of society."<sup>22</sup>

By the end of August 1827, however, Rough Green realized that the issue should not proceed. No possible good could come to the party by pursuing factual evidence that favored the opposition, and in a carefully composed, and very political, confidential missive to Jackson, he outlined his reasons for letting the matter rest as it stood. The editor admitted that Buchanan's first letter had given him "some nights of care and days of toil." "I fear that B's letter will fall short of your expectations," he wrote. "My purpose was to compel Mr. Clay to adopt

21. Remini, *Election*, 65–66; Klein, *Buchanan*, 58–59. On July 16, 1827, Green published in the *Telegraph* Clay's appeal to Jackson regarding the accusations contained in the Beverly letter.

22. *U.S. Telegraph*, August 13, 15, 17, 20, 1827; Jackson to Green, August 13, 1827, *Jackson Correspondence*, ed. Bassett, 3: 377.

Mr. Buchanan's letter and *his* justification, and to induce him to believe that the weak point in his case." Such never happened, however. Green suggested that Jackson's public letter following the Beverly publication was quite sufficient, that the public seemed satisfied with it, and that he should not respond to Clay's retorts.

In a complete reversal of his earlier advice to Jackson, he thought it quite unwise to force a House investigation of the matter. "My own opinion is that it will not be prudent to drive Clay to the House. If we were to go there, and we were to prove the bargain, we would gain nothing; for we would not convince ten men more by the most positive proof, than we are now convinced [*sic*] on the facts now before the public. In the mean time [Clay] might enlist the public sympathy, which is a most powerful agent; and so adroit is Clay in making up a false issue, that we may find it difficult to keep them to the question."

Careful not to insult the Old Hero, nor to incite him to rebuke his change of mind or to question his loyalty to the cause, Green appealed to Jackson's sense of virtue and integrity. Your actions regarding the entire corrupt bargain affair, he told Jackson, "will stand as a striking illustration of the force of truth, and will mark the difference between a great and persecuted man who rises above the excitement intentionally thrown before him to provoke him to intense [actions], and the '*Demagogue*' . . . condemned by his own conscious endeavor to escape the just sentence of the people by falsehood and detraction."

Green concluded by saying that, in his opinion, the question of the presidency was already settled, and that they should "look to that line of policy and that temperament of public opinion which should enable you to do justice to your own feelings, and to introduce those salutary improvements in the administration of the government, so loudly called for by public opinion. An air of confidence and tone of victory may lead to a supineness on the part of our friends; but we have a powerful stimulus in the activity of despair which pervades the ranks of our enemies." Green indeed possessed considerable political acumen. He knew how to assess the political winds and change accordingly. His final advice to Jackson clearly demonstrated his political savvy. It was time to renew the previous approach of simple insinuations of impropriety; damn the facts.<sup>23</sup>

Green also understood the irreparable damage that would occur by attacking the veracity of one of their most active and valuable party

23. Green to Jackson, August 29, 1827, Green Papers, LC. Green also argued against driving Clay to the House in a letter to Calhoun. Green to Calhoun, September 5, 1827, Green Papers, LC.

supporters. Never did the editor call Buchanan an outright fabricator, nor did he accuse him, as many Jacksonians and even Adams supporters had, of desiring to join the ranks of the Coalition. During the imbroglio, Buchanan informed Green that he “felt hurt” at the publication of his private letter, nor could he approve of the reasons Green provided for doing so. But he expressed pleasure over Green’s overall treatment of him in the *Telegraph*, especially the editor’s public avowal that the Pennsylvanian would never enter the ranks of the Adams camp. Green, in fact, was glad that Buchanan emerged from the fracas relatively unscathed. “Buchanan is much pleased,” he intimated to Richard M. Johnson, “to suppose that he has escaped so well from the explosion. I fear that he has thought too much of James Buchanan, and has trimmed too near the wind’s eye. But he is a good fellow, and I rejoice, for his sake, that things have taken the turn they have.” Jackson, however, would never again trust the meddling Pennsylvanian.<sup>24</sup>

In the end, Green glossed over the issue as best he could. If the facts were not there, certainly the appearance of impropriety remained. This was all that the editor needed, and upon this he concentrated his fire. Jackson’s refusal to bargain for the presidency, moreover, simply demonstrated his virtuous character. “This dignified course and elevated virtue have given him new claims to the confidence of the American people,” ran the *Telegraph*. “Had he been more ambitious than virtuous, he would have been, at this moment, at the head of the government. It is that virtue for which he is so much distinguished, that has since attracted, with such force, the affectionate and spontaneous attention of his fellow citizens towards him in his retirement.” Local Jacksonian papers followed Green’s lead and hammered away at the corruption of the Adams administration and the Republican virtue of Old Hickory. The stratagem worked. A majority of the American electorate still saw Jackson as the “incorruptible Roman,” while associating Adams and Clay with defying the popular will to advance their own power and interests. Despite the lack of any categorical proof, Green would not let the “intrigue, bargain, and management” charge die, and by so doing, helped perpetuate a most effectual and damning campaign message, one from which the Coalition could not recover.<sup>25</sup>

24. Buchanan to Green, August 17, 1827, *Works of Buchanan*, 1: 270–71; Green to Johnson, September 8, 1827, Green Papers, LC; Remini, *Election*, 66; Klein, *Buchanan*, 59.

25. *U.S. Telegraph*, February 6, 1827. See also the issues of December 21, 1827, January 2, June 26, October 8, 16, November 17, 1828. In the November 7, 1827, issue, Green called the corrupt bargain treason.



## III.

The Jacksonian press, and Green in particular, matched, and in many instances surpassed, the slanders, lies, and gross accusations spouted by the administration papers. Although he handled the Buchanan affair with relative moderation, Green still found a myriad of ways to assail the Coalition, some of them accurate, some of them fabricated, yet all of them partisan. Through the use of quips, quotes, anecdotes, jokes, insinuation, and outright slander, the *Telegraph* quickly gained its infamous reputation as the “tel-lie-graph.” The paper’s editor continually pounded the opposition in every way possible, and while the Coalition and its presses castigated the constant assault, the Jacksonian papers defended their primary organ, even incorporating much of the *Telegraph*’s material. The election of 1828 was indeed one of the dirtiest campaigns ever in American history, and “Rough Green” played a major role in making it such.

Keeping with his prevalent theme of corruption versus virtue, power versus liberty, and aristocracy versus democracy, Green assailed the Adams administration for a cardinal violation of Republicanism, one as old as the English Civil War—its abuse of executive patronage. The current administration, he declared, had come into power against the will of the people through a most unnatural union—through the combination of the president and the secretary of state—and in order to “maintain themselves against the public voice, Mr. Adams and *his* Secretary of State rely upon a most dangerous and corrupt use of the patronage of the government.” Executive patronage guaranteed the abandonment of the “republican simplicity” of the American system of government. General Jackson and his friends, Green assured his readers, believed in exercising the patronage in trust, for the people, and solely on behalf of the public welfare. Indeed, the crux of Jackson’s campaign was his promise to eliminate the corruption eating away at the executive branch.

Adams, Clay, and company, however, believed that executive patronage “should be used to reward *their* friends,” and to be bestowed “upon those who cordially aim in maintaining *their* political views.” Just take a look at the administration’s appointments, Green suggested. “It seems to be pretty well understood that the inquiry is not, Is he honest? Is he capable?—Mr. Jefferson’s qualifications—But how much power and influence will be gained to the Coalition by the appointment?” But this was just half of it, the “BARGAIN side of it.” Not only did appointments consist of “seduction,” but “proscription” as well: Jackson and

anyone who dared to support the president were eliminated from the government *en masse*. Could one have imagined ten years ago, he queried, that the Hero of New Orleans and all who approved of him would be proscribed from office? "Suppose the prediction to have gone one step farther, and not only painted the exclusion of the men who had hazarded everything in the war [of 1812], but had also added that, in the same short period of ten years, the men who would be most in favor with the executive power of the country, were those who had been most decidedly opposed to the war, and who had given countenance and support to the Hartford Convention?" How reprehensible indeed! Green never broached the topic that the members of the Hartford Convention of 1814 attempted to reduce significantly the power of the presidency. Such, however, is the nature of politics, and Green knew that. But, still, it made for great campaign material.<sup>26</sup>

Without any proof of the corruption inherent in abusing executive powers, Green pointed to the ill-fated Panama mission. Indeed, the proposed appointment of U.S. representatives to the Pan-American Congress in Panama in 1826 became Green's first sustained attack upon the Adams administration after taking over the reins of the *Telegraph*. The "operation of Executive patronage" was clearly manifested in the selection of John Sergeant and Richard Anderson as the official U.S. emissaries to the congress. But neither individual, Green revealed, had yet departed the country for the intended mission. The United States was not even represented at the Panama Congress, although Congress had appropriated \$40,000 for the purpose. "We presume it is now in session," ran the *Telegraph*, "and yet our Minister and his Secretary remain at their homes, contented with honor reflected upon them by their commissions, and comforted by a large salary to sustain them whilst they are awaiting orders." What a colossal misuse of public revenue!

Apart from being a blatant abuse of executive privilege, moreover, Green argued that the proposed Panama mission was an excessive expenditure indicative of the waste and extravagance of the Adams administration. "*Forty thousand dollars* were voted by Congress for this purpose, and what benefit is the country likely to derive from this immense expenditure?—From all appearances the money will be squandered, without effecting any part of the object for which it was ostensibly appropriated. So much for the unnecessary parade of a republican government, whose example ought to be the safe guide of

26. *U.S. Telegraph*, June 10, 15, 21, October 3, 1826, February 28, 1827; Remini, *Election*, 73–74.

other republics." Green believed, ultimately, that the true purpose of the Panama mission was to divert attention from the furor rising out of the charge of "bargain, intrigue, and management." In the end, it proved little more than an unadulterated abuse of executive patronage and hinted at the Coalition's hidden agenda of removing the election of the president from the people. These movements, therefore, required the special attention of the people. "The patronage of the Executive departments," Green concluded, "is exercised for the purpose of defeating their wishes at the next presidential election. . . . The design is to bring the election into the House of Representatives, if possible; and, by securing in that body a sufficient number of members friendly to the Coalition, again to set at defiance the principles of republicanism, by perpetuating the rule of a *minority*."<sup>27</sup>

Other administration programs and policies did not escape the attention of "Rough Green's" vitriolic pen either. The editor, like many in the South and West, objected to the president's handling of the Creek controversy in Georgia. Adams had initially signed a treaty with the Creek Nation in 1825, giving Georgia 4.7 million acres of land. But, after investigating the matter further, he declared that the treaty had been fraudulently negotiated, withdrew it, and signed the less avaricious Treaty of Washington in 1826. The Georgia legislature denounced the new treaty, mobilized the state militia, and informed Adams that they would observe the first treaty, by force if necessary. Although Adams eventually caved in to Georgia's threat, Green warned the nation, during the showdown between the president and Georgia, that Adams would enforce the Washington Treaty "at the point of the bayonet." The president would thus "constitute himself into a dictator, charged with the power of declaring war, and a war, too, against our own citizens." Never mind that the opposition labeled Jackson a military chieftain. The assaults on the policies of the Adams administration certainly did not end here. Green claimed that Adams "grossly neglected" U.S. commercial interests in the West Indies, further verified by the eventual loss of that trade due directly to the failure of the government to secure a treaty with Great Britain; alleged that the administration's public land policy was hostile to the Western states; and charged that the Adams administration had spent more money than any previous president. Green stated that all these policies were "a

27. *U.S. Telegraph*, October 5, 6, 1826; see also the issues of October 31, December 19, 1826, January 1, 1827. On the Panama mission, see Hargreaves, *Presidency*, 147-62.

mine under those in power which will soon explode” and thus form the “pretext upon which some will desert over” to the Jackson ranks.<sup>28</sup>

One of the more creative tools Green employed to assail the Adams administration was the “Black List.” In the January 15, 1827, edition of the *Telegraph*, there appeared an article entitled “BLACK LIST, *Anti-Republican Administration Doctrines. Let the People look to these Outrages.*” The list contained seventeen various tenets “professed” by the Coalition, beginning with “That the few should govern the many,” and ending with “That those who support men by name for public offices should be denounced as the devotees of *men*, instead of *principle*; while it is obvious that it is *principle* identified with *men* which invites to their support.” The remainder ranged from removing representatives from the will of their constituents, to “safe precedent,” to a broad interpretation of the Constitution, to sectional division, to the election of the president by the House of Representatives, among others. Under each numbered charge, Green provided at least one reference supporting it.<sup>29</sup>

When not attacking the policies of the Adams administration, the *Telegraph* editor leveled his guns at Adams and Clay themselves. He consistently attacked Adams’s character, from pointing to the president’s moral depravity when he had a billiards table purchased for the White House, to his monarchical education and pretensions, to his association with Masonry (a charge he brought out only after Jackson had been castigated for his membership in the Masonic order). Even Adams’s religion came under question. Had the avowed Unitarian president renounced his denomination and become a Presbyterian for political purposes? Green maintained that he had. To bolster the “Black List,” moreover, he followed up the January 15 article with one entitled “ADDITIONAL REASONS *Why John Q. Adams should not be re-elected President of the United States,*” listing nineteen various indictments against Adams himself that precluded him from a second term as president. The charges ranged from his monarchical tendencies to his Federalist inclinations to his activities while a senator, minister to Russia, and peace commissioner to Ghent. Throughout the entire

28. *U.S. Telegraph*, February 7, 1827; see also the issue of March 17, 1827. On the Georgia-Creek controversy, see Hargreaves, *Presidency*, 203–5. *U.S. Telegraph*, April 12, 1828. On the loss of the colonial trade, see Hargreaves, *Presidency*, 91–112. *U.S. Telegraph*, May 12, 1828. On the public lands policy of the Adams administration, see Hargreaves, *Presidency*, 189–208. *U.S. Telegraph*, October 2, 1828; Green to Edwards, December 29, 1826, *Edwards Papers*, ed. Washburne, 266.

29. *U.S. Telegraph*, January 15, 1827.

campaign, the *Telegraph* missed few opportunities to impugn Adams and his administration.<sup>30</sup>

Clay, however, was the editor's favorite target. Indeed, the Kentuckian had been an abhorrence since Green's childhood days, as his family had locked horns with him in political combat. Green chastised Clay for constantly touring the nation in search of votes, questioned the source of his income and accused him of maintaining an opulent and unrepugnant lifestyle, and, of course, pointed to his active part in the corrupt bargain. This latter charge was repeated almost daily in the columns of the *Telegraph*. Dubbing Clay as the "lynxeyed Machiavellian who rules the cabinet of *curiosities*," Green lambasted the secretary of state for his constant political scheming: the "great political Judas Iscariot, who can cut, shuffle, trump, revoke, brag, stand, throw up, misdeal, stack, and all with equal facility for any purpose, knows every card in this game of interests, and is working to loo [*sic*] them all and take the pool of the next election." Green also sarcastically referred to Clay as "the *man of accidents*," for he "accidentally" appeared at numerous political events, dinners, hearings, and so on, thus revealing his hand in whatever affair was occurring and attempting to capitalize politically. "Wheresoever his presence may be necessary for any political purpose, there he always happens to be, whether it be in the Senate Chamber, the Representative Hall, or in States a thousand miles apart." Wherever the Adams administration stumbled, Green blamed Clay; whenever an issue arose, certain to benefit the people and the country, Green declared Clay its avowed enemy. Facts meant little, and rumors proved guilt. Indeed, no other member of the opposition received as much abuse in the pages of the *Telegraph* as the secretary of state.<sup>31</sup>

Supporters of the administration were not immune to attack either. Webster was another favorite mark. Green constantly condemned the sectional prejudice of the New Englander, his determination to advance Massachusetts and its manufacturing interests to the detriment of the national interest, and his growing political ambition, which would stop at nothing in the pursuit of power. Indeed, Green sardonically mused, "Mr. Webster must therefore be an impassable barrier in the way of Mr. Clay's advancement, should they ever be brought into the field as

30. *U.S. Telegraph*, October 30, 1826, January 15, 1827, August 6, 12, September 23, October 10, 1828; *Telegraph Extra*, March 21, July 12, October 18, 1828. Calhoun also rejected Calvinism and drifted toward Unitarianism, but Green obviously did not condemn him for it as he did Adams. Niven, *Calhoun*, 104.

31. *U.S. Telegraph*, February 5, 1827, June 26, July 2, 1828. For additional attacks on Clay, see the issues of June 5, 1826, February 14, August 2, September 8, October 5, November 4, December 16, 1827, February 16, May 28, June 26, October 14, 1828.

competitors.” The editor even brought the chief justice of the Supreme Court, that arch-Federalist himself, John Marshall, in for a healthy dose of berating.<sup>32</sup>

Green associated National Republicans with the former Federalist Party, which was rather ironic considering that one of the more influential family members during his youth, Humphrey Marshall, was an ardent Federalist. But times had changed since, and Green had early joined the ranks of the Republican Party. Nonetheless, the Jacksonian editor detested Federalists, even to a degree that defied explanation. Agreeing with Isaac Hill, editor of the pro-Jackson *New Hampshire Patriot*, he vehemently argued against incorporating Federalists into the Republican-principled Jacksonian party; to do so, would introduce “aristocratic spies and deserters” into the ranks of the Democratic Party. Green hoped that Jackson, as president, would “repair the fence where Mr. Monroe broke it down.” The election of Adams by “bargain, intrigue, and management,” he informed his readers, “has not only placed ‘Rufus King & Co.’ in power, but it has also raised up a party who contend for Ultra Federal principles.” Who actually were the friends and supporters of the Adams administration? Were not the leaders and advocates of the Hartford Convention, from Harrison Gray Otis to Webster, who “holds the bond, and controls the *Northern Federal Party*,” arrayed for Adams? Had not Webster himself guaranteed, with Adams’s own blessing, that “*Federalists should be remembered in the distribution of offices*” if they voted for Adams in the House election of the president in 1824. “This proves all that has been alleged, relating to a bargain between Mr. Adams and some leading Federalists through Mr. Webster, for the benefit of the Federal Party.”

Quite possibly, Green’s experience and hardship during the War of 1812, while New England Federalists chose to sit out the war and even flirt with the enemy, inspired his deep hatred of the Federalist Party; or, it could have been their spirited opposition to the admission of Missouri as a slave state, while he enthusiastically opposed restriction in any form. Nonetheless, Green was the consummate politician, and he realized that much of Jackson’s support in Delaware and Maryland would have to come from “Patriotic Federalists” if the Old Hero was to win their electoral votes. He would have to tread carefully.<sup>33</sup>

32. *U.S. Telegraph*, September 20, 1826, January 3, April 5, May 12, 1828; *Telegraph Extra*, April 19, 1828.

33. *U.S. Telegraph*, January 20, March 22, April 5, May 5, 1827, November 26, 1828; Green to Jackson, June 9, 1827, *Jackson Correspondence*, ed. Bassett, 3: 361; Smith, *Press, Politics, and Patronage*, 85; Remini, *Election*, 107.

Beyond any doubt, one obvious reason for Green's aversion to Federalists was what he perceived to be their monarchical tendencies. Again, the struggle between monarchy and democracy was a general theme of the election of 1828. Much of Green's campaign propaganda focused upon this distinction. So enamored with the charge of monarchy was he that he devoted several chapters to the subject in his autobiography, *Facts and Suggestions*. That the fount of monarchy in America can be traced back to the Federalists of the 1790s, Green argued, cannot be doubted. The elder John Adams and Alexander Hamilton were the representative men of that party, and to prove this point, he quoted both men extensively. Hamilton revealed his monarchical leanings in his infamous speech during the Constitutional Convention, although at the time of the 1828 election, only several men living knew that secret; Adams exhibited his monarchical proclivities on countless occasions, from his various political writings, to his policies as president of the United States. John Quincy Adams merely followed in their steps, asserted Green. His pretended conversion to a Jeffersonian Republican was a complete fraud, and using several instances as proof positive, Green declared that no one could doubt "his thirst for power, or his fellowship with the monarchists." Green would carry this preoccupation with Federalists to his grave. In the meantime, his preoccupation must be with securing the election of Andrew Jackson and John C. Calhoun.<sup>34</sup>

34. Green, *Facts and Suggestions*, 34–41.

## CHAPTER 7



### The Calhoun Factor

#### I.

Not only did Green expend considerable time and energy in defending Jackson from Coalition charges and slanders, but he also had to defend another key Jacksonian, the other half of the presidential ticket, John C. Calhoun. Scholars have debated at length on the relationship between Green and Calhoun. Many argue that Green was Calhoun's lackey, that he was merely a tool for the advancement of the presidential aspirations of the South Carolinian, and that the *Telegraph* was Calhoun's organ, not Jackson's, not the Democratic Party's. These historians assert that Green steadfastly promoted Calhoun's personal ambitions and political ideology, and that he did so at all costs to his own reputation and career. Such an assessment of Green still commands the attention of most writers of the Jacksonian era. A close study of the evidence, however, raises questions about the accuracy of this interpretation.<sup>1</sup>

1. For chronological purposes of this study, scholars who contend that Green was Calhoun's lackey, up to the election of 1828, include Remini, *Martin Van Buren*, 118; Niven, *Calhoun*, 119, 131; Ewing, "Independent Editor," 736, and "Election of 1828," 128–29; William Freehling, *Prelude to Civil War: The Nullification Controversy in South Carolina, 1816–1836*, 142. As for Green's supposed attachment to Calhoun, other historians will make the same charge against Green when addressing the break between Jackson and Calhoun, the Tyler administration, and the slavery and sectionalism issue. These authors will be addressed when discussing the relative topics. For scholars who argue that Green was not the dupe of Calhoun, see Woodard, "Sectionalism, Politics, and Foreign Policy," 9–10; Phelps, "Duff Green," iv, 38; Introduction, *JCCP*, 2: xxvii.



Green was not a dupe of Calhoun; he consistently demonstrated his independent thinking and course of action, which, many times, conflicted with those of the vice president. In fact, Green maintained a closer relationship with Jackson during the campaign of 1828, corresponded with the Tennessean more, spent more time defending the Old Hero than the vice president, and identified more closely with the political views and goals of the general than those of the South Carolinian. After the break between Jackson and Calhoun, which will be addressed in ensuing chapters, Green sided with the South Carolinian because he perceived his actions to be more principled than Jackson's, and yet he consistently maintained his independence and conducted his paper according to his own beliefs, even, at times, to the detriment of Calhoun's ambitions and political views. In short, Green was his own man and not anyone else's.

Contemporaries of Green, especially the opposition press, incited further by some Jacksonians who voiced the same concerns, publicly pointed to the editor's apparent disregard of Jackson and the outright promotion of Calhoun. Such, however, was clearly not the case, and Green argued as much in the *Telegraph*, affirming his deep and undivided devotion to the cause of Jackson. First, Green assured his readers that Calhoun was not, nor should he be, considered a candidate for the presidency. That was just a ruse concocted by the Coalition. "Many of the partisans of the Administration are industrious in circulating a report that Mr. Calhoun will be a candidate for the presidency in opposition to Mr. Adams. The object of all this is plain. It is twofold: to weaken General Jackson and Mr. Calhoun, by sowing distrust among their friends, and to divert the public eye from those who really are candidates to one who is not expected to be." The opposition merely gave Calhoun far more prominence than he ever sought to obtain. The editor steadfastly informed the public that "MR. CALHOUN WILL NOT BE A CANDIDATE IN OPPOSITION TO GENERAL JACKSON."<sup>2</sup>

## II.

Green indeed had an extenuating circumstance which justified his defense of Calhoun—the vice president came under the Coalition's most severe and continuing attack just when Green had assumed control of the *Telegraph*. Throughout the spring and summer months of 1826, the opposition press gave far more attention to the actions of

2. *U.S. Telegraph*, April 24, May 4, June 20, 1826.

Calhoun than they ever had to the career and character of Jackson. “We have not yet seen any attacks upon the fame of General Jackson, that required notice,” Green wrote in the *Telegraph*, “and therefore considered ourselves at liberty to turn our attention, for a season, in a different direction.” Green responded unequivocally to these attacks; never did he promote the cause of Calhoun at the expense of the Old Hero. He explained numerous times that he was not bringing forth Calhoun as a candidate, but that he was defending the rights of the people, their party, and their several candidates. “This is nearly the amount and the occasion of our meddling with the name or the office of the Vice-President. The course which this paper will pursue in reference to the great struggle between Liberty and Power, need not, at this day, be defined. The Editor of the *Telegraph* has expressed his determination, in unequivocal terms, to support the candidate of the people; and he stands ready, to the utmost of his ability, to vindicate the reputation and the claims of the HERO OF NEW ORLEANS.” Green, in fact, provided equal time in the columns of the *Telegraph* for defending the Old Hero. But he could not ignore the assaults made on the vice president, for it clearly undermined the candidacy of Jackson and the prospects of the whole party. Green’s defense of Calhoun, therefore, was based on two overriding considerations: the maintenance of party unity and the advancement of the party’s message of popular empowerment, democracy, and majority rule.<sup>3</sup>

“It cannot have escaped the notice of the most superficial observer,” Green asserted, “that the most systematic and persevering attempts have been making, for some time past, to destroy the character of the Vice President; from the commencement of the last session of Congress—indeed, from the moment Mr. Calhoun took his seat in the chair of the Senate—no opportunity to misrepresent his conduct, to impeach his motives, and to deprive him altogether of the public confidence, has been lost.” As the Federalists of the administration of the first president Adams assaulted then-vice-president Thomas Jefferson, so, too, have the Coalition under the second president Adams fervidly assailed Calhoun. Yet has the vice president done anything to forfeit public confidence? Has he parted with his integrity? “No,” declared the editor. “No such charge is even now made against him. But he has fallen under the heavy displeasure of the men in power.” The reason behind Calhoun’s “heavy displeasure” with the Adams administration centered on the issue of freedom of debate in the U.S. Senate.<sup>4</sup>

3. *U.S. Telegraph*, June 20, 1826.

4. *U.S. Telegraph*, April 29, December 30, 1826.

During the first session of the Nineteenth Congress, responding in anger to the election of Adams over the people's choice of Jackson, the eccentric but persuasive Virginia senator John Randolph attacked the Adams administration in a long, outrageous, and quite devastating speech. He denounced the bargain between Adams and Clay through a reference to Henry Fielding's novel *Tom Jones*: that he had been "defeated, horse, foot, and dragoons—cut up—and clean broke down, by the coalition of Blifil and Black-George—by the combination, unheard of until then, of the Puritan and the blackleg." The oration was electrifying, eventually resulting in a harmless duel between Randolph and Clay. Jacksonian senators were amused by the tirade. The administration, however, was not, and it soon directed its fury at the vice president for not calling the Virginian to order. To be sure, Calhoun found little humor in Randolph's diatribe. The South Carolinian preferred strict decorum. A serious student of parliamentary debate and highly cognizant of Senate rules, the vice president believed that it was not his duty as chair of the Senate, but rather another senator's responsibility, to call a fellow senator to order. The controversy soon spilled into print, pitting Calhoun, writing as "Onslow," against Adams, writing under the pseudonym of "Patrick Henry." For Calhoun, Green, and the Jacksonians, the question of freedom of debate in the Senate was just another case of the struggle between liberty and power.<sup>5</sup>

Through the pages of the *Telegraph*, Green defended Calhoun's decision not to call Randolph to order. The scheme of preventing the freedom of debate in the Senate, he expounded, was to hold the vice president solely responsible for any attacks made upon the administration in its chambers and to disregard outright the duties of presiding over that body. "From the time of the reign of terror down to the present day, there has been no example of abuse so unmeasured, or falsehood so unblushing, as have been heaped upon [Calhoun], for inflexibly resisting every attempt at an unconstitutional restraint of the freedom of debate through his instrumentality."

Then, the editor turned his attention to what he, and many others, perceived to be the heart of the matter: the Coalition's determination to augment their power at the price of the people's liberty. "There is no sign more certain of the existence of some wicked design against the liberties of the people than when the minions of power attempt to raise a hue and cry against the freedom of debate, that great engine of liberty against the machinations of corruption and monarchy." There

5. Remini, *Clay*, 292–93; Niven, *Calhoun*, 116–17.

could be no more doubt, moreover, that the Coalition had recognized that their means of assuming power could never bear the scrutiny of public debate and that to ensure the continuation of their sway, they must quell that debate at all costs. The cherished freedom of discussion, “like the freedom of the press in ’98, is attacked under the pretext of restraining its licentiousness—an attack in every respect like that of the Sedition Law, and in its tendency even more dangerous to LIBERTY. If there be any one thing more essential to the preservation of free institutions, it is the perfect freedom of parliamentary discussion.” It would be only a matter of time, Green presumed, before the administration would attempt to suppress all meetings of the people for political purposes. Combined with the abuse of the executive patronage, the suspension of public debate was intended to once again throw the election of the president into the House of Representatives and away from the reach of the people.<sup>6</sup>

### III.

Certainly Calhoun came under fire for other matters, to which Green promptly replied, just as he did for Jackson or any other of the numerous Democrats besieged by the Coalition and its presses. But by the end of spring 1827, a new and considerably more dire situation emerged which concerned Calhoun and the vice presidency itself, one which threatened party unity and undermined the theme of restoring the popular will. Rumors began circulating that Calhoun would be removed from the presidential ticket and replaced with New York governor DeWitt Clinton. Green believed that such a move would adversely affect Jackson’s chances for securing the White House in 1828, and he took great pains to quell any movement that would upset the harmony of the party. In doing so, he was not saving the career and ambitions of Calhoun, but fighting to preserve the united front of the Jacksonian alliance.

When several Democrats began to openly call for Clinton’s replacement of Calhoun, in early 1827, Green took the matter seriously. This was not just some whimsical fancy on the part of campaign operatives; they meant business. Green informed Richard M. Johnson of small, yet

6. *U.S. Telegraph*, June 13, 14, October 4, 1826. On Calhoun and the freedom of debate issue in the U.S. Senate, see also the issues of April 15, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, May 5, June 12, 16, 1826.

significant, anti-Calhoun parties in nearly every state desiring to see Clinton as a candidate for vice president. Writing to Calhoun, the editor declared that the South Carolinian indeed had much to fear from the growing affinity for the New York governor. “[Thomas] Ritchie has been to the North, [and] has seen Clinton,” he notified Calhoun, “and you may see that the Virginia Advocate, published in Charlottesville, is bringing forward Clinton.” Former Maryland governor Thomas Randolph, moreover, authored the review of the Address of the Adams Maryland Convention, in which Clinton was mentioned “with so much regard.” From what Green had gleaned from Randolph and another editor, he became “well convinced that a concerted movement is now in progress to bring out Clinton” on the Jacksonian ticket.<sup>7</sup>

How the editor approached the issue revealed his keen political acumen and his prowess as head of the party press. Green first used the columns of the *Telegraph* to proffer numerous reasons why the party should not adopt Clinton and reject Calhoun. Failing to head off the move toward Clinton, he commenced an extensive and exhaustive letter-writing campaign addressed to close advisors of Jackson, such as William B. Lewis and William T. Barry, and to various political operatives at state levels. In both the *Telegraph* and in his correspondence, Green maintained a consistent argument regarding the serious issue of the vice presidency.

Taking up Clinton as the vice presidential candidate, Green argued, was fraught with danger on numerous accounts. First, the only possible reason for adopting Clinton was his influence in securing the vote of New York. But bargaining for Clinton’s support, by rejecting Calhoun, whose region was already firmly in the Jackson camp, directly undermined the Democrat’s campaign against the “corrupt bargain” of Adams and Clay. Supporting Clinton as the candidate for the vice presidency, he argued, would itself connote “bargain, intrigue, and management.” “Those who support Andrew Jackson, because he was too pure to make terms with Henry Clay,” ran the *Telegraph*, “can never make terms to purchase the vote of New York.” The election of Jackson was not dependent upon the vote of New York, and, therefore, that being the sole reason for adopting Clinton as a candidate in the first place, the party would not take up Clinton on that account.<sup>8</sup>

7. Green to Calhoun, September 5, 1827, Green to Johnson, September 8, 1827, Green Papers, LC.

8. Green to Edwards, September 6, 1826, *Edwards Papers*, ed. Washburne, 257; *U.S. Telegraph*, January 29, 30, September 10, 22, October 1, 9, 13, 22, December 6, 1827, February 18, 1828; Green to Lewis, September 2, 1827, Green to Bogardus,

Certainly the vote of New York was critical for Jackson's election, and on that account, Green refrained from impugning the role of the Empire State. But the electoral votes of that state provided a second reason for not taking up Clinton—it would alienate Martin Van Buren. Clinton and Van Buren, the two titans in New York politics, had long battled for political supremacy in that state. "If we were to take up either Clinton or Van Buren," he wrote to Edwards, "it would throw the conflicting interest upon the opposing scale and might preponderate against us; as it is, the position now assumed by Clinton will compel him to join Van Buren in support of Jackson." As long as Clinton remained off the ticket, Green surmised, Van Buren would not defect, and the two could come to an amicable settlement favoring the candidacy of the Old Hero. In addition, Van Buren could possibly carry twenty-four of New York's electoral votes, while Clinton could only garner six. The loss of the Magician, therefore, was far more detrimental to Jackson's campaign than the adoption of Clinton.<sup>9</sup>

Green proffered a third consideration for not upsetting the Jackson-Calhoun ticket—it would play directly into the campaign strategy of the National Republicans. The Coalition, Green charged, purposefully intended to drive a wedge into the unity of the Jacksonian alliance, thereby ensuring the electoral success of Adams in 1828 and of Clay in 1832. They had begun to assail the New Yorkers, after all, not because the Democrats were bringing them forward as candidates, as some Jacksonians had suggested, but because the Coalition sought to infuse conflict within the Jackson camp. "To sow division in our ranks; *divide et impere*, is the maxim of the Coalition," Green declared. Do not become the victim of their electioneering ruse, he admonished.<sup>10</sup>

But the most cogent reason for not courting Clinton was that his loyalty to the principles of the Democracy was questionable. "Let me ask you," Green demanded, "to point to one single act done by Gov. Clinton, or one of his prominent friends, to promote the election of Gen. Jackson, or to counteract one single movement of the Coalition." Clinton operatives in Ohio, New Jersey, and New York, Green believed, had refused to bring the presidential contest into the midterm congressional elections, as the true friends of Jackson had done, and although

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September 9, 1827, Green to Swartwout, October 9, 1827, Green to Worden Pope, January 4, 1828, Green Papers, LC.

9. Green to Edwards, December 29, 1826, *Edwards Papers*, ed. Washburne, 266; Green to Lewis, September 2, 1827, Green Papers, LC.

10. *U.S. Telegraph*, March 20, 26, 1827; Green to Barry, September 8, 1827, Green Papers, LC.

the Clintonians denounced Clay, they did nothing to support the Old Hero. Green even charged Clinton with outright disloyalty to Jackson by intending, on his tour through the Eastern, Western, and Southern states, to “prevent [their] committal for Gen. Jackson.” Even more damning, and quite possibly the complete fabrication of Green, reports from the northeast had reached the editor indicating a project whereby the Clintonians planned to prevail upon Adams to withdraw from the presidential race and bring Clinton himself forward in opposition to the Old Hero.<sup>11</sup>

The governor’s past was equally objectionable. During the War of 1812, Green reminded the party faithful, Clinton and his friends deserted to the Federalists and favored the New Yorker over Republican president James Madison. If Clinton were the candidate for vice president on the Jackson ticket, Green predicted, “he will have the Hartford Convention so thick about his ears that he will be lost in the mire.” Both Jackson and Calhoun had supported wholeheartedly the effort to defeat Great Britain, while Clinton “collaborated with the ‘peace ticket.’” What a tragedy, then, that Clinton would be preferred over those who had remained so loyal to the Jeffersonian school, of whom Jackson, Calhoun, and Van Buren were their legacy.

The only true and just course, then, was to keep the ticket as it existed—Jackson for president and Calhoun for vice president. The South Carolinian was the only choice and rightfully so. As a practical consideration, the Jackson campaign had far more to fear from any movement that might disaffect Calhoun than it would from Clinton. “Gen. Jackson is under no obligation to Mr. Clinton,” Green asserted. But the Old Hero was bound to Calhoun “by every tie that can bind his high and lofty mind.” In the purchase of Clinton’s support, Jackson “would obtain nothing, whilst he might lose the confidence and with it the affections of the chivalry of the South, and the sinew of his present support in Congress.” Moreover, Calhoun had a greater following than Clinton in the Mid-Atlantic and Western states. By shunning the South Carolinian in favor of Clinton, Jackson’s chances of reaching the White House would be considerably undermined, if not made outright impossible.<sup>12</sup>

But more important, like the Old Hero, Calhoun was the people’s candidate. In fact, he had actually garnered the greatest number of the

11. Green to Lewis, September 2, 1827, Green Papers, LC.

12. Green to Lewis, September 2, 1827, Green to Bogardus, September 9, 1827, Green to Swartwout, October 9, 1827, Green to Wordon Pope, January 4, 1828, Green Papers, LC.

popular vote in the election of 1824, and had handily won the vice presidency with more popular and electoral votes than even Jackson himself. Calhoun was among the first, Green maintained, "to rear the standard in behalf of the violated rights of the people." In the current contest between the forces of power and the friends of liberty, the South Carolinian had consistently sided with the latter; he espoused the party's central theme of reforming the Democratic system and he desired to restore public virtue to the people's government. Calhoun was so steeped in Republicanism and so disinterested that he would step down as a candidate if it served the good of the party. Fortunately, the great mass of the Democracy recognized his preeminent role as guardian of the people's rights and interests. "There are many reasons which identify Mr. Calhoun with General Jackson," Green concluded, "but none more strongly than that he is the candidate of the people."<sup>13</sup>

Party unity was Green's ultimate goal in securing Calhoun's place on the Democratic ticket. No other consideration entered his mind than the success of the Jackson party. The issue of the vice presidency would be either the rock upon which to anchor the strength of their cause, or upon which to dash all hopes of defeating the Coalition. "As to our party as a party," Green wrote a Jackson supporter, "our only fear is that it may become too strong to retain its principles. Our adversaries have all along practised upon the belief that we could be divided and the point of difficulty has been the Vice Presidency." In all his correspondence to party faithful, Green exhorted that they must preserve their ranks on this subject. "All that is necessary to secure a common triumph," he told Johnson, "is union of action." Clinton had no room in the Democratic Party if his sole purpose was to sow the seeds of division. Jackson and Calhoun, Green declared, were the Republican candidates, and they must be supported as such. No attempt to interfere with the nomination of both individuals could succeed. "I conclude by saying that our party understands the game of our adversaries & will guard against any movement which they may make. Union is our watchword."<sup>14</sup>

It behooved every loyal Democrat, then, to stand by Calhoun as the

13. *U.S. Telegraph*, September 10, 22, October 1, 9, 13, 22, December 6, 1827; Green to Swartwout, October 9, 1827, Green to William Snowden, November 16, 1827, Green to Bonsal, December 14, 1827, Green to Presley Edwards, December 18, 1827, Green to Elijah Hayward, no date, Green Papers, LC.

14. Green to Calhoun, September 5, 1827, Green to Johnson, September 8, 1827, Green to editor of the *Winchester Virginian*, October 8, 1827, Green to Swartwout, October 9, 1827, Green to Presley Edwards, December 18, 1827, Green to Ingalls, January 19, 1828, Green to Wilkins, no date, Green Papers, LC.



only choice for vice president. Every effort must be taken throughout the states to nominate Calhoun in conjunction with Jackson. In order to guarantee a united front against the Coalition, Green urged party operatives nationwide, but his Western friends most of all, to push actively and vocally for such, whether by way of county conventions or through the action of the state legislatures. Fortunately for all parties involved, no one would have to undertake an exhaustive campaign on behalf of Calhoun. Providential intervention solved the problem for the Jacksonians—Clinton died in February 1828.<sup>15</sup>

Green obviously did not publicly rejoice at the New Yorker's death, although he may have indeed sighed with relief. The editor honored Clinton as he did every other prominent individual who passed away during his tenure at the *Telegraph*. In the February 18, 1828, issue of the paper, in which he announced the death of the governor, Green bordered the columns in black. Shortly thereafter, however, he also headed the editorial section of the *Telegraph* with a large and bold endorsement:

### NATIONAL REPUBLICAN TICKET

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FOR PRESIDENT,

ANDREW JACKSON.

FOR VICE PRESIDENT,

JOHN C. CALHOUN.

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There was no doubt who would be on the presidential ticket at this juncture. Still, Green wisely kept the heading there until the end of the election.<sup>16</sup>

15. *U.S. Telegraph*, September 10, 22, October 1, 9, 13, 22, December 6, 1827, February 18, 1828; Green to Lewis, September 2, 1827, Green to Calhoun, September 5, 1827, Green to Johnson, September 8, 1827, Green to Barry, September 8, 1827, Green to Bogardus, September 9, 1827, Green to John Barbour, October 8, 1827, Green to Swartwout, October 9, 1827, Green to Presley Edwards, December 18, 1827, Green Papers, LC.

16. *U.S. Telegraph*, February 18, 1828. The vice presidential issue did not completely expire with the death of Clinton, as Green had to address the issue on a

Green's conduct during the Clinton ordeal demonstrated his editorial as much as his political skills. Despite a proclivity for an acerbic and stringent pen, Rough Green had no place in this particular struggle. The editor had to proceed with the utmost caution; he had to carefully address the issue in order to refrain from insulting or alienating Clinton and his friends. They were far too valuable to the Jackson campaign to forfeit their support. That the vote of New York was important, and everything must be done to obtain it, Green did not disagree, but not to the extent of undermining the campaign in the end. He refused to assail Clinton unnecessarily; no invective, such as that leveled at the Coalition, was ever used. Refraining from malicious charges also indicated Green's dedication to sustaining party unity. "My own opinion is," he told Calhoun, "that it will be wrong to assail Clinton in advance, but that it is all important to preserve our ranks upon this subject."<sup>17</sup>

Nonetheless, Green employed his mastery of innuendo in the Clinton affair. At the same time that he attributed ulterior and selfish motives to the New York governor, he quickly denied such considerations in the following breath. Why should Clinton desire to be vice president anyway, queried Green, and in his classic style of imputation, he proffered the only reason for the governor's pursuit of that office, while defending him at the same time. "Is it necessary to any ulterior views which he may have to a higher office? We think not. It is much more important for him to assume such a position before the American people, as will prove that he looks to the public welfare, more than to his own interests." If Clinton was indeed brought forward as a candidate for the vice presidency, then he must harbor other claims apart from delivering the votes of his state. But, Green assured, Clinton was "on the side of the people, and ranks with those who contend for the purity of elections." He would not jeopardize this reputation.<sup>18</sup>

Only once did Green's arrogant demeanor and an elevated view of his own importance enter the contest. As a warning to all who supported Clinton as Jackson's running mate, the editor declared that any

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couple of instances in February 1828. Rumors circulated that the Federalists of the Northern and Mid-Atlantic states now looked to Van Buren to replace Clinton as the vice presidential candidate. Again, Green countered, charging the rumors to Coalition machinations to divide the Jacksonians, and defending Van Buren's loyalty to the party. Green even had to quell a rumor that Crawford would be brought forward as the vice presidential candidate. *U.S. Telegraph*, December 31, 1827, February 22, 23, 1828.

17. Green to Calhoun, September 5, 1827, Green Papers, LC.

18. *U.S. Telegraph*, January 29, 30, June 12, 1827.

conflict between the *New Yorker* and himself would prevent Jackson from appointing Clinton to a cabinet position. "I shall regret any necessity which I may be under to place Gov. Clinton, or any other prominent individual toward his friends, as to prevent Gen. Jackson from exercising his free and unbiased feelings on that subject; but reluctant as I may be, I shall not hesitate." The editor may have indeed refrained from assailing Clinton outright, but certainly a little threat could not hurt the cause.<sup>19</sup>

In the end, Green's campaign regarding the issue of the vice presidency, both in the press and behind the scenes, indicated his skill as a political operative as he sought to preserve and cement party unity and strength. He did not support Calhoun because he wanted to see him elected president of the United States; he did so because he wanted to put Jackson in the White House. He understood the danger to the party of courting Clinton, and he did everything within his means to defeat it. Green's actions concerning the vice presidency also revealed his deep commitment to Republicanism and popular rule. Calhoun, and not Clinton, was the people's choice, as exhibited in his election victory—without "bargain, intrigue, and management"—in 1824. Green was a devout supporter of the Old Hero and his cause; he would do anything to promote him and nothing to undermine him. Still, contemporaries and scholars, denying the editor's fierce loyalty to the Democratic Party and its message, have failed to judge Green fairly.

19. Green to Calhoun, September 5, 1827, Green to Swartwout, October 9, 1827, Green Papers, LC.

## CHAPTER 8



### The Issues

#### *Tariff, Internal Improvements, and Slavery*

#### I.

Scholars contend that Green was not only a tool of Calhoun, but that he was also equally a pro-Southern, proslavery radical, dedicated above all else to the cause of advancing Southern interests at the expense of the rest of the nation. Again, closer examination of the evidence suggests the contrary. Green was a Westerner if anything; he shared the interests of that region more than any other. Certainly he had much in common with the South, but so, too, did he with the West. Yet, when he saw danger imperiling the national interest, he never hesitated to sound the alarm. He often chastised the South for its sectionalist bent, and he never missed the opportunity to assail the more sectional Northeast. If he sided with one section against another, it was solely because he thought he saw the transgression of power at the expense of liberty. During the campaign of 1828, he endorsed every issue—national as well as local—that Jackson himself supported, not because he was one of the Old Hero's chief political operatives or his foremost editor, but because he actually believed in those issues and took an independent approach when addressing them. In short, the nation and its interests defined Green's thought and action. His stance on the three great issues of the 1820s—internal improvements, the tariff, and slavery—reveal his Western and nationalistic bias. More important, it demonstrated his allegiance to Jacksonian principles.

Beyond doubt one of the toughest challenges Jacksonians faced during the campaign of 1828 was creating a national political party out of sharply differing and even opposing opinions, ideologies, interests, regions, socioeconomic classes, and political factions. Jackson advocated a national program, yet this very platform contained seeds of local, state, and sectional division, which worked against party unity. In order to coalesce such disparate elements, Jackson diverted all questions regarding his stance on various issues to the Nashville and Washington Central Committees, which, in turn, tailored them to fit local prejudice, hence the importance of local Jackson committees. If that course proved unfeasible, then he wrote ambiguous statements about the issues, referred others to his Senate record, or simply refused to respond on the pretense of eschewing electioneering. Green, as an essential member of the Washington Committee, actively participated in tailoring Jackson's views to meet local concerns. But his role as editor of the primary mouthpiece of the Jackson campaign was entirely another matter. He had a considerably more difficult task than the local Jackson press, for he could not reshape Jackson's preferences to conform to local prejudices in a newspaper that reached every corner of the Union. On the three great issues of the campaign—tariff, internal improvements, and slavery—Green had to tread cautiously and politically, always vigilant to refrain from alienating anyone from the ranks. That he succeeded in this endeavor attests to his skill as an editor and as a national party operative.

The tariff question had always consumed much of the country's political discourse. Since the founding of the nation, from the Jay Treaty (1795) to the Tariff of 1824, the tariff issue invariably provoked heated debate and fostered rancor among the nation's sections. The election of 1828 was no exception, for the tariff question clearly transcended any other political debate in the campaign. Jackson himself had to steer a centrist and moderate course regarding the issue so as to refrain from alienating too many of his supporters, especially those in the crucial Mid-Atlantic states. The Coalition consistently argued that the Old Hero was categorically opposed to any tariff, which would please the South but aggravate his Mid-Atlantic supporters. When asked his position on the question, the friends of Jackson stated that he sought a "judicious" tariff. Certainly the term was quite ambiguous, as it was intended to be, but that left the explaining to Green, who did his utmost to gloss over it.

"To deceive the people," he stated in the *Telegraph*, "it is now pretended that friends of General Jackson are opposed to a Tariff." Such was not true. "General Jackson is in favor of a *judicious Tariff*." But

just what *is* a judicious tariff, Green queried? Simply stated, it is a tariff that “looks to a revenue and the extinguishment of the public debt.” The Jacksonians, or so Green declared, opposed *prohibitory* duties, “because such duties will destroy our revenue, and drive the nation to internal taxes.” Would Jackson, then, avoid protecting domestic manufactures, if he opposed prohibitory duties? Again, it depended upon the situation. Jackson, argued Green, favored the protection of domestic manufactures “with a view to *national* independence.” To protect a local industry to the detriment of the whole nation was ill-advised, highly sectional, and even unconstitutional. Whenever possible, Green made it a point to color Jackson’s position on any politically charged topic with hues of the Jeffersonian school.

In the end, however, Green removed the Old Hero from the question altogether. The general was not presented as either an advocate or an opponent of the tariff, he informed his readers. “Whether the present duties shall be increased or diminished will depend upon the decision of Congress, and not upon the opinion of the President; because it is not to be presumed, that any President, upon such a question, would array himself against a majority of Congress.” The excuse that the tariff was a congressional, and not a presidential, question was quite weak. To confirm more effectively that the approval or opposition to a tariff was not the basis of Jackson’s support, Green pointed to the fact that both pro-tariff and anti-tariff men filled the ranks of the Old Hero’s party. But this was a presidential campaign, a heated one at that, and simple campaign propaganda would not suffice. The Jackson campaign would have to cautiously and skillfully maneuver through two treacherous courses concerning the tariff: the Woolens Bill of 1827 and the Tariff of 1828, better known as the Tariff of Abominations. Failure to manage these political flashpoints could end all hope of securing the presidency in the fall of 1828. Yet in such situations Green was at his best.<sup>1</sup>

In the spring of 1827, pro-administration congressmen, behind the leadership of Daniel Webster, steered the Woolens Bill through the House of Representatives. Pro-Jackson men in the Senate, however, devised a plan to defeat the bill without attracting much public attention. As Congress was scheduled to adjourn in three days, Jacksonian senators, backing the initiative of Robert Hayne of South Carolina, succeeded in tabling the measure, thanks to the tie-breaking vote of Vice President Calhoun.

1. *U.S. Telegraph*, March 27, May 11, 1827, September 10, 1828.

Although the Woolens Bill had died, the tariff issue itself would not. Protectionist forces in the Northeast, New York and Pennsylvania especially, rallied public opinion in their respective region and pushed for governmental change in the current rate schedule of the Tariff of 1824. The movement caught on quickly. In May 1827, friends of protectionism gathered in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, and outlined their grievances in a nonpartisan national convention. The Harrisburg Convention devised a memorial and a petition, replete with a revised schedule of rates on numerous products, and prepared to send both documents to the next session of Congress. The press quickly published the contents of the convention, which as quickly gained considerable support throughout the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic states. As expected, the Southern states did not attend, for they argued that the previous tariff legislation of 1816, 1820, and 1824 was not only detrimental to their interests, but also unconstitutional. They opposed the Harrisburg Convention in quite stern terms. While the National Republicans failed to use the convention as a means of uniting the Western farmer and the Northern manufacturer behind the Adams campaign, the Democrats were not lost to the damage that such an alliance would do to Jackson's presidential chances. Something had to be done to appease Southerners and yet refrain from alienating the crucial support of the Mid-Atlantic and even some of the Western states. To meet this critical challenge, Duff Green limbered up the *Telegraph's* presses.<sup>2</sup>

The editor approached the issue from two complementary angles: that the Woolens Bill was merely a campaign ruse concocted by the Coalition to divide both the Jackson forces and the various sections of the country by promoting narrow, local interests to the detriment of the South and the West and of the entire nation; and that the Jacksonians supported tariff reform only if it advanced the interests of the whole country and not just a particular section. "The secret policy at the bottom of the Woolens Bills," Green wrote in commencing his attack, "is the same that plotted the Hartford Convention." Adams, Clay, and Webster, the ringleaders of the Coalition, desired "to agitate a question, which, from its local operation, will unite a sectional interest, the control of which may keep them in their ill-gotten power." The Jacksonians, and Green chief among them, did not assail the domestic manufacturing interests behind the Harrisburg Convention. They believed that these individuals had no intention of dividing the nation; they used a time-honored method—public assembly—to voice their

2. On the Woolens Bill and the Harrisburg Convention, see Remini, *Election*, 145–48.

grievances and to seek redress from their elected representatives. They had, moreover, just cause in seeking new rates, and the Democrats would address their needs in a more proper and less divisive manner.

But the Woolens Bill was not the answer, for behind it lay the political machinations of the Coalition, who devised the legislation for their own narrow and selfish designs. "It is obvious that this bill was gotten up for political effect," Green continued. "It is intended to divide the Union into Northern and Southern interests, and to tax the South and West for the benefit of Mr. Webster and his Boston manufacturers." The Coalition hoped, by building a Northern party, to draw off New York, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey, and, in time, the Western states as well. The bill had originated with the "Aristocracy of the North," in order to increase the "great New England *Adams* interest, by amalgamating with it Mr. Clay and his Western party," and with the ultimate goal of dividing the nation into sectional animosity, which would, ultimately, "continue the line of safe precedent."<sup>3</sup>

The Jackson party, however, which had the national interest at heart, understood the purpose of the Woolens Bill and defeated it for its sectional and divisive tendency. "The true policy of every statesman," Green declared, "is to foster all the great interests of the country alike. We are of that class who would lend the protecting arm of government to aid our manufactures; but we will not do it at the expense of other interests." The contents of the bill itself were "obnoxious to very many of the most decided and consistent friends of domestic manufactures," and, apart from the political consideration of creating a sectional party division, the provisions of the bill were "regarded as injurious to the interests of other classes of manufacturers, who were as much in need of protection as the manufacturers of woolens." Jackson and his friends indeed favored domestic industry, Green maintained. Jackson's voting record in Congress demonstrated his support of such interests, and "it is known that General Jackson is so much the friend of domestic industry, that his clothing has been for years manufactured in his own family." Even the South, the largest contingent of Jackson supporters, had adopted various measures to augment domestic manufacturing. The protection of the nation's domestic manufacturing, then, was imperative to the national interest. Jacksonians understood this and, accordingly, opposed the Woolens Bill of 1827 for its sectional and narrow disposition.<sup>4</sup>

Green revealed another reason why the friends of Jackson detested

3. *U.S. Telegraph*, March 12, 26, May 11, 25, 30, 1827.

4. *U.S. Telegraph*, March 26, May 9, December 12, 1827, July 30, 1828.



the Woolens Bill. If passed, the legislation would have undermined the government's power of collecting revenue and resulted in internal taxation. According to the U.S. Constitution, Congress has no power to lay duties on exports; the revenue of the country must be derived from a duty on imports or from internal taxation. The friends of Jackson, Green argued, opposed the increase on import duties proposed under the Woolens Bill "because its professed object is to prohibit the importation of foreign woolen goods, and . . . to cut off revenue derived from them." Jacksonians, therefore, contended that it would be

oppressive and unjust to prohibit the introduction of woolen goods; because such prohibition would be partial in its operation, tending to tax the consumers of woolen goods for the benefit of the manufacturer of woolens, who are generally the large capitalists. Whilst the poorer classes, mechanics, and manufacturers, are left to compete with foreign capital, and foreign enterprise, and are burdened with the additional sum, necessarily paid by them to make up the deficiency caused in the revenue by the exclusion of foreign woolens from our market.

But, according to Green, the supporters of the Old Hero preferred the maxim that the government was to subsist upon revenue derived from imports, and that it was wrong to resort to any system of prohibitory duties.<sup>5</sup>

To prove their commitment to such a policy, and to their support of domestic manufactures and to the national interest overall, they would offer their own legislation. This legislation would "prove to the people of the Union, that Gen. Jackson looks to the interests of the Union—that he is above sectional or party feeling—and will give him additional claims to their confidence." Not to be outdone in the arena of political scheming, the Jacksonians immediately turned and did exactly what they charged the Coalition with—creating a tariff solely for the political purpose of electing a president and a party. Their plan, however, contained national, not sectional, implications. It did not merely address the manufacturing concerns of the Northeast and the Mid-Atlantic, but also included the farming interests of the West. In the end, it was a masterful and successful political maneuver. It was the Tariff of 1828, and Green was one of its primary proponents.<sup>6</sup>

5. *U.S. Telegraph*, March 27, September 13, 1827.

6. *U.S. Telegraph*, March 27, 1827. On the Tariff of 1828 in light of the presidential election, see Remini, *Election*, 171–80.

In the meantime, the Jacksonians reaped a substantial victory in their contest against the Coalition, one which would further aid their pursuit of a new tariff, and one in which Green gained an invaluable political weapon with which to pound the opposition: the midterm congressional elections ushered in a pro-Jacksonian majority in both branches of Congress. Green relished the congressional victories, constantly pointing to the inevitable and final downfall of the Coalition that would come in the fall of 1828. In December 1827, Van Buren called a caucus of Democratic congressmen, which elected Andrew Stevenson of Virginia as the new Speaker of the House. With that, the Jacksonians assumed control of the legislative committee system. Green praised the choice of Stevenson and the takeover of congressional committees. The entire legislative power of the Federal government, he declared in the paper, was now “in the hands of that party which has been denounced by those in office, (we will not say in power), as the *unprincipled* opposition.” The Democrats had won Congress, moreover, despite the “unwarrantable attempt” of the Coalition to control the elections and to beat down every candidate who opposed the reelection of Adams. “It is this, which stamps with incalculable value, the fact that we have majorities in both branches of Congress. **THEY ARE THE MAJORITIES OF THE PEOPLE.** It is the people who have taken the whole legislative power out of the hands of Messrs. Adams and Clay, and placed it under the control of those who are opposed to them—and may those to whom the people have entrusted it, not prove unworthy of the trust.” Nothing but their own blunders could keep the Jacksonians from pursuing tariff legislation that would only bolster their ranks.<sup>7</sup>

Speaker Stevenson promptly appointed Northern and Western pro-Jackson congressmen to the House Committee on Manufactures, the body responsible for drafting new tariff legislation. In February 1828, after several months of reviewing testimony, witnesses, memorials, petitions, and related documents and materials, the committee reported its bill. The result, in the words of the historian Robert Remini, was a “ghastly, lopsided, unequal bill, advantageous to the farmer but wholly inadequate to the manufacturer,” with every stipulation betraying “political preference and favoritism.” Yet, it had all the appearance of Jacksonian friendliness toward a tariff. Rumors began circulating that the sole purpose of the bill was to force Northeastern and Southern congressmen into an alliance to defeat the measure, which, then, would be attributed to the Adams administration and the National Republicans.

7. *U.S. Telegraph*, December 10, 1827; Remini, *Election*, 163–68.

The bill, however, was never intended to be defeated; Jacksonians had every intention of passing the mongrel legislation. The tariff bill provided necessary succor to every faction that the Jackson camp sought to placate, primarily in the Mid-Atlantic and Western states. These states, and not those in New England, benefited from the proposed legislation. As for the South, which detested any sort of tariff, its opposition was assumed, yet everyone knew that the South, although voting *en masse* against the bill, would still, in the end, vote overwhelmingly for Jackson as president. It was a masterful political maneuver indeed, one in which Green took great satisfaction.<sup>8</sup>

Once the committee's bill had been submitted to Congress, Green turned the tables on the Coalition. The friends of the administration, he recalled, had consistently asserted that the true distinction between the two parties was support or opposition to the tariff, and that Jackson opposed while Adams favored it. The proposed tariff legislation changed everything. "With what face, can they pretend that any question has arisen which proves that the friends of General Jackson . . . are opposed to a tariff?" He warned his readers that the Coalition would seek every avenue possible to defeat the bill, an indication that the administration, and not the Jacksonians, was the anti-tariff party.

But for those who still believed that the National Republicans favored high, protective tariffs, Green provided a logical rebuttal: Adams and Clay were resolved to defeat *any* tariff bill sponsored by the friends of Jackson; both houses of Congress were controlled by the Jacksonians, who were able to pass any legislation they so desired; the Adams administration did not wish to see the current tariff bill pass, for it will not receive credit for its passage; if the bill fails, it would be easy to charge its defeat to the opposition of the Jacksonians, since only they had the requisite numbers and could easily unite to pass the bill; however, the administration could not unite with pro-tariff Jacksonians, for if they did, they could not use the issue for electioneering purposes; partisans of the Coalition, therefore, will vote against the bill in detail, opposing duties on iron, hemp, molasses, wool, and foreign spirits; yet the tariff legislation, as proposed by the pro-Jackson Committee on Manufactures does indeed afford protection to manufactures, even more so than the Woolens Bill of the previous session; the new bill, however, also protects grain growers, hemp growers, distillers of domestic spirits, and iron manufacturers. What simple logic, Green declared. There was no trickery on the part of the Jacksonians; they did not devise the

8. Remini, *Election*, 173.

bill to be defeated by an alliance between Southerners and Easterners. "The Administration are not the exclusive friends, nor the opposition the exclusive opponents of the system," Green concluded. "General Jackson is in favor of a tariff that shall promote the prosperity of the whole nation."<sup>9</sup>

New Englanders, to the consternation of Southerners, voted for the bill in the House. In the Senate, however, they threatened to defeat it, to the delight of Southerners. At the last minute, Jacksonians Van Buren and Levi Woodbury voted for an amendment that would raise the rates on manufactured wool, thus appeasing New Englanders, who, choking down the remainder of the bill, voted for it. In May 1828, the country had a new tariff. More important, it would serve its partisan purpose, providing Jackson with considerable support from the interests protected by the new act, especially those in the hotly contested Mid-Atlantic region. Although a political maneuver on the part of the Jacksonians, the Tariff of 1828 was "national" in scope, in that it included a variety of interests, Western as well as Northern.

Despite his ultimate support of the measure for political reasons, the day after the tariff's passage in the Senate, Green was anything but jubilant. He had reservations about the immediate effects of the new act, considering that it would not take effect until September of that year. "We are apprehensive," he declared in the *Telegraph*, "that this will produce much speculation, that large importations in addition to those now ordered, will be made; and a consequent drain of specie, and pressure upon the banks will ensue." That the pecuniary distress caused by all of this "will tend to increase the excitement which we apprehend [and] will pervade the whole of the Southern States to an extent not heretofore known, cannot be doubted." He was partly right. The South indeed erupted in anger, almost to the point of violence, with threats of secession soon emanating regularly from its quarters. The Tariff of 1828 would quickly be dubbed by its more historically recognized appellation of the "Tariff of Abominations." Calhoun, exceedingly distraught over the passage of the tariff, wrote to Green about the hostile reaction of his fellow countrymen. "The excitement is deep and universal, but I trust and believe will be restrained within the bounds of moderation." In its tendency, the South Carolinian continued, "I consider it, by far the most dangerous question that has ever sprung up under our system; and mainly because its operation is so unequal among the parts.

9. *U.S. Telegraph*, February 19, 23, 27, March 29, June 27, 1828; *Telegraph Extra*, April 19, 1828.

*But I trust the good sense and virtue of the people, in which I put my trust, will find a remedy for this, as they have thus far, for all our political diseases.*" Calhoun exercised his "good sense" and "moderation" by returning home and writing, under anonymity, the *South Carolina Exposition and Protest*, which outlined the concept of nullification.<sup>10</sup>

Southern excesses would continue unabated for the remainder of the election and beyond. Northern and Western Jacksonians tried to mollify the distress exhibited so vocally by the South in order to keep the party united behind Jackson. In the end, despite their intense anger over the passage of the tariff, Southerners buckled under and voted for Jackson. They may have detested the abominable tariff, but they despised Adams considerably more. Southerners believed, moreover, that the Old Hero, their native son, was the only individual who could right the wrong. They reassured themselves that Jackson, as president, would surely remedy the gross violation of their rights and interests. Southerners also feared that their excesses might alienate the Western states, who they saw as natural allies in the struggle against the industrial North. The man through whom they operated to restore Western favor, was none other than the Westerner Duff Green, who, himself, was quite disgusted with the Southern reaction.<sup>11</sup>

The former Kentuckian and Missourian, the Westerner and Jacksonian nationalist, was not impressed with the South's response to the Tariff of 1828. It was, after all, his western region that benefited from the legislation. Moreover, Green, like Benton and other Westerners, indeed cherished a South-West alliance, albeit a defensive one, which would never promote its interests at the endangerment of the national interest. But many things were said against the West, and none more blatantly and offensive than that spoken by South Carolina congressman George McDuffie. McDuffie's speeches against the tariff, both before and after its passage, angered Green considerably. "The state of things in the South, and the conduct of our friend McDuffie," Green informed Calhoun, "has been such as to make reflection on that subject so unpleasant that I could not venture to say what I think even to you. If we lose the elections, in the West, Mr. McDuffie may take to himself the charge of destroying his party, and it will require much more labor to repair the injury which he has done than to build up a new party entire." Green feared that McDuffie would suffer much for his imprudence and for his "irreparable injury" to the West. "He might have done

10. *U.S. Telegraph*, May 14, 1828; Calhoun to Green, July 1, 1828, *JCCP*, 10: 392.

11. Remini, *Election*, 178-79.

more to unite the South in opposition to the tariff by disarming our adversaries of their factious arguments, than he has done by throwing disunion among our Western friends. . . . Should we be hard pressed during the present canvass in the West, he will have to bear all the burden of his own indiscretion.” Green continued his tirade against McDuffie:

Had he spoken of the West as intelligent and patriotic, but deluded in relation to the tariff—had he declared that the effect of the tariff would be to disable the South from purchasing the produce of Kentucky, and expressed his regret that the South would be compelled, as a matter of self-defense to divert her labor into other channels, and to furnish her own supplies of necessaries heretofore derived from the West—had he dwelt, as he might have done, upon the mutual benefits derived from the interior trade, which would be cut off by the tariff—and had he at the same time declared that the West had been forced into the support of the tariff under a belief that the people of the West demanded it, and then entered into an argument to shew that this tariff policy was calculated to tax the West for the benefit of the East; and had he demonstrated, as he could have done, that such was the kind feeling between the South and the West that the West were indebted to the South for all those provisions of the bill which tended to lessen its burden upon the West; had [he] pursued this course, he would have aided our Western friends, and have prepared the way for the future investigation of this subject in a temper promising results beneficial to the South. As it is, he has done much to rivet the system as a system upon the nation, and the day will come when he will regret what he has done.<sup>12</sup>

Green advised Calhoun not to look to the “little squad of men who collect at public dinners and cry ‘no tariff.’” He had to look to the nation and “*act for the people as they are.*” There was already far too much opposition to him, especially from pro-tariff New York, not to take action by arresting his fellow Southerners. Had he forgotten the movement to put Clinton on the presidential ticket instead of himself? The success of the tariff was due to the actions of the South, not to anything done by Clay or his Northern allies. Green even suggested that had it not been for the imprudence of the South, an anti-tariff party

12. Green to Calhoun, August 10, 1828, *JCCP*, 10: 411–12. On McDuffie’s reaction to the Tariff of 1828, see Edwin L. Green, *George McDuffie*, 83–87.

would have rallied in Maine, New Hampshire, New York City, and Boston. True, many interests within these New England areas despised the tariff as well, but no sooner had McDuffie denounced altogether the manufacturers of the North and East, drawing a line of separation at the Potomac, he made a national policy exclusively sectional. "The true policy of the South," Green finally advised Calhoun, "was to oppose the tariff on the ground of expediency, to deprecate its tendency to weaken the Union, and to exhibit in bold relief its oppressive tendencies. The people of the Union are disposed to act justly—unless they are placed in a position where artful political demagogues by seizing upon sectional and local questions, mislead their judgments by artful appeals to meaner passions." There was little doubt, then, that Green deplored sectional predilections, whether by North, South, or even West.<sup>13</sup>

Green also revealed his anger over Southern excesses by attacking a speech made by South Carolina congressman James Hamilton Jr. As in his tirade against McDuffie, the editor vented his utter dissatisfaction with the behavior of the South and with the Palmetto State especially. Green expressed his "painful emotions" when he perused the South Carolinian's "eloquent, but ill-judged" speech against the tariff and the interests that voted for it. Hamilton had done "great injustice" to the Western states, he charged, further strengthening Clay's influence in that region. Continuing Southern hostility to the tariff would only secure it more firmly as a national policy. In fact, if anything was "to do away the effect of the great moral triumph which is to follow up the election of Gen. Jackson, it is the dark cloud that hangs upon South Carolina."<sup>14</sup>

The North, as well, came under Green's fierce condemnation for its sectional tendencies. When certain groups in the South called for a convention to address the recent tariff legislation, for the purpose of seeking a concert of action against the Tariff of 1828, Northern elements charged them with treason. Yet, when pro-tariff forces had convened the Harrisburg Convention, Green continued, the South and West never denounced it as treason. Such allegations only fostered sectional animosity. Although he did not approve of the measure, Green argued that "it is not for us to condemn the call of a Convention, *calmly* to discuss this important subject," for to do so, as had the supporters of the Harrisburg Convention, would be hypocritical.<sup>15</sup>

13. Green to Calhoun, August 10, September 23, 1828, *JCCP*, 10: 412, 422–23.

14. *U.S. Telegraph*, November 7, 1828.

15. *U.S. Telegraph*, August 5, 1828; *Telegraph Extra*, July 5, 1828.

## II.

The tariff was by no means the only provocative issue in the late 1820s. The question of internal improvements also generated heated debate. Along with most Westerners, Green favored such measures, as long as they did not conflict with the reserved powers of the states. It was not the role of the national government to sponsor local projects; federal funds should finance truly national projects, ones that transcended state boundaries and benefited the national interest. Jackson shared Green's view on internal improvements. The Old Hero thought it was the job of the state, not the national government, to construct internal improvements. To finance such costly ventures, he advocated the distribution of federal government surplus to the states, who could then effect their own improvements. As articulated by Green in the *Telegraph*, Jackson's views on the subject retained an ambiguity that allowed them greater wiggle room than they had had on the "judicious tariff." Although one observer doubted that Green "knows any more about the General's opinions than the public do," it again fell to Green's lot to interpret and tailor Jackson's viewpoint on internal improvements in a way that would please as broad a section of the electorate as possible. The result was that the voters received a variety of answers on where the Old Hero stood on the question, all subtly shaded by the editor to conform to the interests and circumstances of particular sections and localities.<sup>16</sup>

As they had on the tariff question, the Coalition claimed to be the exclusive friends of internal improvements. Green never denied that Clay was the leading advocate of the American System, but to use this as the line of distinction between the two parties, he fumed, was utterly false, a damnable electioneering gambit. One had only to examine Jackson's voting record in Congress to ascertain that he supported internal improvements. The same applied no less to his supporters in the current Congress. And how could anyone question the other half of the party ticket, Calhoun, who had sponsored the Bonus Bill of 1816, which would have launched a new and comprehensive federal program of internal improvements. Green went on to point out that current internal improvements measures before Congress—extension of the Cumberland Road, construction of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, the digging

16. David Campbell to James Campbell, March 19, 1827, Campbell Family Papers, Rare Book, Manuscript, and Special Collections Library, Duke University. Green had stated in the *Telegraph* that Jackson was in favor of Congress making internal improvements, to which Campbell replied that this would never pass in Virginia.



of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal—had enjoyed as much support from Jacksonian congressmen as from those allied to Adams and Clay. Indeed, continued the editor, Jackson had gone on record recently declaring his belief that because the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal would greatly promote the national interest, “national funds may be properly invested in its construction.”<sup>17</sup>

The key difference between the rival political parties, said Green, was the kind of internal improvements each was willing to support. Both claimed to favor projects that were national in scope. But past this point the differences accentuated. Jacksonians favored projects that were truly national in scope, but which, in accordance with the Constitution, respected the reserved powers of the states. The Cumberland Road, which was destined to become the great national artery linking the West to the older settled East, was just such an improvement. Because it served the national interest, it deserved federal support. But how was such a project to be built while at the same time preserving states’ rights? The answer was simple. Once the road was completed, its control was to be turned over to the states through which it passed, on the condition that they in turn maintain it. The motives of the Jacksonians, asserted Green, were honest and unselfish. There was no trace of self-aggrandizement in their programs. The Coalition interpreted internal improvements “national in scope” very differently. The Adams administration, Green unabashedly asserted, attempted “to collect a revenue from the canal boats of the [Erie] Canal . . . to erect toll gates on the Cumberland Road, and to establish a principle which would enable the executive to increase his patronage and influence, by seizing upon the soil and placing *his* tax-gatherers on that road without the consent of the states.” This construction of the word “national,” concluded Green, was corrupt and unconstitutional, and would be stoutly opposed by the “friends of the people and of States’ Rights.”<sup>18</sup>

With that stated, it was time to return to the real lines of distinction between the two parties. Neither internal improvements nor the tariff was the true basis of division between Democrat and National Republican, argued Green. Instead, they harbored a fundamentally different philosophy about the nature of elections and the place of the franchise in the American political system. “We think,” Green maintained, “that

17. *U.S. Telegraph*, February 27, March 8, May 9, July 20, 1827; Green to Edwards, December 29, 1826, *Edwards Papers*, ed. Washburne, 267.

18. *U.S. Telegraph*, October 14, 1826, March 12, 22, 1827.

the purity of elections, and the preservation of the elective franchise, are questions of more vital importance to the country." Although the friends of Jackson did not desire "the influence of his name to be brought forward to operate on the great question of Internal Improvements," the true friends of the subject were alarmed that the weight of an unpopular and minority administration could sink the question itself and defeat its further extension. The truth upon the questions of the tariff and internal improvements, Green concluded, "is, that whilst the friends of General Jackson wish his election to depend upon his known qualifications, his integrity, his public services, and individual popularity," the Coalition, "apprised of their want of popularity, are endeavoring to identify themselves with the great questions and interests of which we speak—not because they desire to advance those interests, but because they believe those interests will advance them." To the contrary, Green hoped that consistent attention to the charge of "bargain, intrigue, and management," and Jackson's popularity and attachment to Republican principles, would steer the volatile subjects of internal improvements and the tariff away from Jackson's ambiguous stance and out of public view overall. The Coalition certainly used these two potent questions to advance their candidate, but the Jacksonians avoided them for the same purpose. To that end, Green performed admirably.<sup>19</sup>

### III.

Slavery was another issue that excited the passions of the country, and the question, essentially dormant since the Missouri Compromise, raised its ugly head in the election of 1828. Here again, as with the subject of internal improvements and the tariff, Green had to deflect the question away from Jackson and yet avoid alienating essential support. There was no question where Jackson stood on the issue; he was a planter, slaveowner, and Southerner by birth. His running mate, too, fit this profile even more. Green, however, was Western born and raised, and certainly not a planter. He did under his own admission acknowledge owning "servants," and during the election, in February 1828, a "Negro woman" had been delivered to him. But it did not matter if he owned slaves or not. He, like most Missourians, was proslavery—his record in Missouri politics and his efforts during the Missouri crisis

19. *U.S. Telegraph*, February 27, March 8, 1827.

clearly reveal this; and he, like most Westerners, saw the slavery question as one of states' rights, a system protected by the Constitution and, again as in the Missouri question, outside the interference of the national government. Green determined that it was his "business," therefore, "to prevent the agitation of that question."<sup>20</sup>

"We repeat that [slavery] is a RIGHT, and that we are prepared to defend it as such," Green declared in the *Telegraph*. "The Constitution has granted no power to interfere with the sovereign power of a state on this important subject. . . . It is a '*domestic*' question, the exclusive power over which belongs to the states alone." With this species of property, Southern states would not permit other states to interfere. "Let us alone," he admonished. Green consistently defended slavery during the 1828 presidential race, as he had while a public figure in Missouri. When many in the Northeast questioned the three-fifths clause of the Constitution, he was quick to remind them that "whilst the paupers and taxed Indians of the Northern States are fully represented, *only three-fifths* of their counter population of the South is represented." The South, as such, was "*taxed* for this proportion of its political power." There was indeed a difference between the North and the South, Green added, which benefited the servile population in the latter, rather than in the former section. In the North, the wealthy hired their servants, and so it was in their interest to reduce the price of labor; in the South, however, the wealthy owned their servants and had no interest in reducing the price of labor. Slaveowners, moreover, just like their agricultural counterparts in the West and the North, were interested in keeping up the price of the produce of the soil. It was the interest of the slaveowner, therefore, to maintain the price of labor of the free man as well as the slave. "Is it so with the manufacturer, who makes his profit by grinding the face of the poor? Let the starving weavers of England speak." In addition, if slavery were abolished, what would the nation do with the "large uncultivated mass" that had accumulated in the South? "Will New York or New England receive and embody them as citizens with free and equal rights?" Many Southerners in the 1820s and 1830s would use these same arguments when forced to defend their "peculiar" institution from the antislavery assault.<sup>21</sup>

But also like many in the South, struggling to resolve the apparent

20. Ninian Edwards to Hamilton R. Gamble, February 4, 1828, Hamilton R. Gamble Papers, Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis; Richard R. John, *Spreading the News: The American Postal System from Franklin to Morse*, 226.

21. *U.S. Telegraph*, March 27, May 19, October 16, 1826.

discrepancy between the inheritance of their domestic institution and their Republican principles, Green favored gradual emancipation and the colonization of free blacks. "As individuals," he disclosed in the *Telegraph*, "we are favorable to colonization of the free blacks," and "we are of that class who hope that much good will result from the efforts of the Colonization Society." Those who have traveled to the South and mingled with people there, Green continued, "and heard and appreciate their sentiments, know that there is a growing anxiety to be rid of the entire black population." Indeed, as the editor accurately stated, "more has been given for the purposes of emancipation, by residents of the slave-holding States, ten to one, than by residents of the free states." The emancipation of the black population must, therefore, be "a work of time." As the expiration of slavery had a gradual, yet certain, progress from North to South, if left alone, it would continue to follow that trend. But, Green admonished, do not raise the slavery question simply to agitate for political effect. To do so would only raise passions and, eventually, divide the people of the Union. "Upon this subject, we again repeat, let us alone. It is a domestic question about which our wisest and best of men, who reside here, and understand the subject in all its different bearings, better than persons at a distance possibly do, are much interested. It is a question solely for our discussion, and in which we cannot and will not permit *foreign* interference."<sup>22</sup>

Interference, however, arose, and it did so in the guise of presidential electioneering. Green, and many of the friends of Jackson with him, contended that the Coalition desired to excite the slavery question for political purposes. In order to maintain their power and to guarantee their "safe precedent," the partisans of the administration intended to rally the antislavery faction of the North into joining their ranks. By reviving the party distinctions "engendered in the discussions on the Missouri Question," the Coalition hoped to produce such an excitement that "shall divert the public mind from the 'bargain, intrigue, and management' of the late election," and to unite in an effort "to produce civil discord in our own land, in open violation of the compromise upon which the Constitution was adopted." A manumission convention convened in Baltimore, argued Green, was simply one of many examples of agitating the slavery issue for political gain. The purpose of the meeting was not "to declare that all men are born free and equal," but, rather, it was a "pitiful and barefaced attempt to rally the white man of

22. *U.S. Telegraph*, October 16, 1826, July 10, 1827.

the North against his brother of the South." The delegates never intended "to ameliorate the condition of the slave" nor "to place the freed African upon footing of equal rights," but, instead, "to determine the election by the *free white male* citizens of the several states." Even the Coalition's desire to replace Calhoun with Clinton as the vice presidential candidate smacked of arousing the slavery issue. Had not Clinton been supported in 1812 as the anti-slaveholding candidate? The friends of Jackson, however, desired to leave the issue where it rightfully belonged, with the states; they would never kindle an issue—not the tariff, internal improvements, nor slavery—simply for election purposes, certainly not one that might ultimately incite civil dissension and sectional division. In fact, the election of the Democratic ticket would quell discord, Green argued. "The anti-slave party in the North is dying away," he wrote to a friend, "and the election of General Jackson and Mr. Calhoun will put it to sleep for twenty years to come." He could not have been more accurate in his estimate, right down to the Wilmot Proviso of 1848.<sup>23</sup>

Green habitually attempted to heal the wounds of sectional division; he always deprecated the drift away from national unity. As a Westerner, steeped in Western interests, he chided both North and South for their tendency to exacerbate regional sensibilities. Green was not, as many scholars suggest, a pro-Southern radical, bent on exciting the various issues to instill sectional animosity. Certainly he had more in common with the South than the North, just as much of the West had. "The interests of the South and West," he once intimated in the *Telegraph*, "are, and ever will be, more intimately connected than those of the East and the West." Certainly he espoused states' rights, as much of the West did. His private correspondence and newspaper editorials clearly attest to this. Yet, he also believed that the interests of the whole nation were as intimately connected as South and West, and should prevail over any sectional advantage. When the *Charleston Mercury* published an editorial arguing that the Northern and the Western states had interests conflicting with those of the Southern states, Green disagreed. He replied in the *Telegraph* that "the interests of each portion of our wide extended territory are, in part, sectional, will not be denied; and that the preservation of our National Liberty depends upon a jealous adherence to *State* rights is the fundamental

23. *U.S. Telegraph*, March 12, May 19, October 13, 14, 27, November 25, December 4, 1826; Green to Worden Pope, January 4, 1828, Green Papers, LC. Calhoun also believed that the Coalition intended to incite the slavery issue for political gain. Niven, *Calhoun*, 118.

principle of the Jefferson school. But we are wont to look to Washington's farewell address for the ballast to steady the National ship in its course, and we there find his warning voice recorded."<sup>24</sup>

Green made every attempt to connect Jackson and his friends with the Union, asserting further that they showed none of the sectional prejudice he attributed to the Coalition. Great efforts had been made by the Adams administration, he stated in the *Telegraph*, "to prove that General Jackson ought not be elected President, because some of those who support his election are opposed to internal improvements and the tariff. . . . See how Messrs. Adams and Clay may desire to get up any question which shall separate the North from the South." This was proof positive that more significant national considerations weighed on the people and their candidate and that the Jackson campaign could unite and retain disparate interests and ideologies. Unlike the Coalition, which desired to operate upon public sentiment in order to create a local prejudice that would split the East and the West from the South, Jacksonians would not succumb to sectional considerations. "Now is the time to crush the demon of disunion," Green wrote a friend. "Roll the chariot wheels of Jackson's popularity over it, and it will be ages before it can again raise its head in our land." Few men had such an influential role in unveiling the nationalistic predilection of the Old Hero and his supporters. The Jacksonians would indeed reward him well for his tireless services—financially most of all.<sup>25</sup>

24. *U.S. Telegraph*, September 5, 1827.

25. *U.S. Telegraph*, March 31, September 5, 1827; Green to Snowden, November 16 1827, Green Papers, LC.

## CHAPTER 9

# Victory!

### I.

**G**reen's association with the Jackson party resulted in a substantial boost to his pecuniary situation, and not just from his income as editor of the *U.S. Telegraph*. He benefited from an additional source as well. Following the auspicious midterm elections of 1826, Green was elected Senate printer in December 1827. For decades prior, Gales and Seaton, editors of the *National Intelligencer*, had been the overwhelming choice as printer to both houses of Congress. Following the election of 1824, however, their role as public printers began to wane. They still handily won the House printing contract in the last session of the Nineteenth Congress, in February 1827, but the Senate position was another matter. Jackson supporters in the upper house felt that Gales and Seaton were staunch advocates of the Adams administration and, predictably, desired to replace them with Green. National Republicans, still in control of the lame-duck session and with the recent pro-Jackson gains in Senate seats fresh in their minds, endeavored to keep the Senate printing from the Jacksonian Green.<sup>1</sup>

Senator John M. Clayton of Delaware presented a resolution changing the existing rules of electing a printer to the Senate, established by joint resolution in 1819, from a plurality to a majority. Following the lead of Van Buren, Democrats attempted unsuccessfully to block the motion. The resolution passed. After several efforts at electing a printer

1. Ewing, "Independent Editor," 737; Smith, "Green and Telegraph," 63.

under the new system, Green had received a plurality, yet not near a majority. As a result, Senators Benton, Eaton, and Hayne contended that, under the previous legislation requiring only a plurality rather than a majority of votes, Green "had duly been elected printer to the Senate." The *Telegraph* agreed and notified readers on March 2, 1827, that Green had won the post. Amazingly, the *Intelligencer* concurred, recognizing the editor of the *Telegraph* as the new Senate printer. Coupled with the triumph of Jackson forces in the midterm elections, the paper declared that Green's election was a clear indication that Jackson would defeat Adams in the fall of 1828. "We consider that the victory is now achieved," exulted the *Telegraph*. "The question as to who is to be the next President of the United States, scarce admits of doubt." Thus, matters stood when the Nineteenth Congress adjourned on March 3, 1827.<sup>2</sup>

Green's "unofficial" election as Senate printer was quickly remedied when the first session of the Twentieth Congress convened in December 1827. Eaton introduced a resolution declaring that Green had indeed been elected printer the previous spring, as stipulated by the joint resolution of 1819. The Senate, now with a majority of Jackson men, agreed, 25 to 19, and officially made Green printer to the Senate. For the first time in the nation's history, a change in partisan power resulted in a change in the public printing. On December 4, 1827, the *Telegraph* again proudly declared Green's official victory and, to rub salt into the wounds of the minority National Republicans, listed the yeas and nays by name. Green undoubtedly looked forward to repeating this feat in the spring of 1829, when the House would choose its printer. In the meantime, it was nearing presidential election time.<sup>3</sup>

## II.

Then to the polls proclaimed the *Telegraph*! "TO THE POLLS—TO THE POLLS. The faithful sentinel must not sleep. Let no one stay at home.—Let every man go to the Polls.—Let not a vote be lost.—Let each Freeman do his duty; and all will triumph in the success of JACKSON, CALHOUN, and LIBERTY." As election dates varied considerably throughout the states, with some states even holding multiple

2. *Register of Debates*, 19th Cong., 2nd sess., 498–99, 1266–67; Smith, "Green and Telegraph," 63–64; *U.S. Telegraph*, March 2, 1827.

3. *Register of Debates*, 20th Cong., 1st sess., 2; Smith, *Press, Politics, and Patronage*, 80; Smith, "Green and Telegraph," 64–65; *U.S. Telegraph*, December 4, 1827.



election days, the *Telegraph* constantly beckoned the faithful Jackson supporters to turn out on the appropriate date. Even as election returns trickled in with triumphant results, the paper continued to muster voters. No one could rest satisfied until all the polls throughout the land had closed. Turnout meant certain victory for the Democratic ticket, and thus the nation overall. "Let all act as tho' the salvation of the Republican party rested on his vote, and all will be well. THEN TO THE POLLS, TO THE POLLS, YE SONS OF FREEDOM; prove that you are worthy of the rich inheritance left you by your fathers; AND THE REPUBLIC IS SAFE."<sup>4</sup>

Nearly 58 percent of eligible voters indeed heeded the *Telegraph's* call and handed the Old Hero 56 percent of the popular vote and 178 electoral votes to Adams's 83. Pennsylvania's returns, as usual, came in first, and as expected, Jackson won handily, securing 28 electoral votes. Green was ecstatic. "All Hail Pennsylvania—Again—And Again." Ohio, however, which quickly followed its neighbor to the east, brought greater euphoria for the Jacksonians, for it signaled the Old Hero's certain victory in the West. "GLORIOUS TRIUMPH IN OHIO!!!" bellowed the *Telegraph*, "THE COALITION ROUTED, BEATEN, AND DEFEATED. HUZZA FOR JACKSON, CALHOUN AND LIBERTY." As the election season rolled on, through the remainder of October and into November, the numbers continued to favor Jackson and Calhoun. Along with constant listings of the vote counts throughout the Union, the *Telegraph* rejoiced through victory poems and ditties.

Adams and Clay are Going!  
Honest Men are advancing!  
The Coalition is sinking!!!  
Jackson and Reform is coming!!!

Barely able to restrain his jubilation, Green congratulated the Old Hero on his election victory. "It will be such as never was before achieved in the country," he exulted, "and permit me to unite with the millions of free men who cheer the 'Hickory Tree.' . . . Excuse my dear Sir the overflowing of a heart which is almost too full to rejoice."<sup>5</sup>

In the end, Jackson's victory in 1828 was not as sweeping as the press made it out to be. He received a total popular vote of 647,286 to Adams's 508,064. Still, the Old Hero easily surpassed the requisite 131 electoral

4. *U.S. Telegraph*, October 20, 29, 1828.

5. *U.S. Telegraph*, October 18, 28, 1828; Remini, *Election*, 185.

votes needed to win the presidency. Jackson's total of 178 electoral votes, however, fell considerably short of Green's earlier predictions of 207 to 54. He correctly gauged Southern support, which gave its entire slate of 48 votes to its favorite son. The Western states followed suit, giving the Old Hero its total of 52. New England, as most expected, went with their native son, providing Adams with a healthy 50 electoral votes. Maine, however, furnished Jackson with 1 vote, which was close to Green's prediction of 2. He had hoped New Hampshire would rally, but the Granite State had let him down.

The crucial and much contested Mid-Atlantic region indeed proved the battleground that Green expected. Pennsylvania surprised no one when it passed 28 votes on to Jackson. Virginia, too, went over to the Old Hero, adding another 24 to his win column. New Jersey and Delaware, considered by Green on numerous instances as safe for Jackson, let him down as well. Both provided Adams with all of their combined 11 electoral votes. New Jersey had gone with Jackson in 1824, but it would not the second time around. Maryland, as Green hoped, split its vote, giving 5 to Jackson and 6 to Adams. Green was close to the mark when he assumed 4 of Maryland's votes were certain for the general; he was off, however, when he declared that another 4 to 5 were possible. New York, always considered the most crucial state in the presidential contest, split its votes as well, which was expected by all observers. Yet the Empire State did not give Jackson the predicted 24 to 30 votes; it only granted him 20, but that was enough to further bolster the electoral count for the general. Indeed, Green proffered a more realistic number in March 1827, when he forecasted 196 for Jackson and 65 for his opponent.

### III.

Although the vote for Jackson was not as much a landslide as he had predicted, Green relished the final tally—and rightly so. He had been one of Jackson's ablest and most active political managers, a valued member of the Washington Central Committee, who helped shape the innovative Democratic campaign machine that emerged in the 1820s. An astute follower of national and local politics, Green's innate talents in the political arena enabled him to contribute directly to the development of effective campaign themes and messages; he knew what the electorate wanted to hear, and he knew how to deliver the right message to the appropriate audience. He maintained a constant and extensive

correspondence with local committees and key politicians outside the nation's capital, keeping at the same time a scrupulous watch on the maneuvers and machinations of the Coalition in Congress and in the White House. As the political winds shifted, ebbed, and roared in Washington, he reacted accordingly, notifying peripheral campaign organizers and suggesting new approaches, attacks, or defenses. When affairs within the Jackson ranks tended to disrupt the campaign, he diligently worked to keep the course and steer the ship toward its final port. Indeed, Duff Green was the consummate politician who understood and staunchly supported the development of the second American party system ushered in with the elevation of Andrew Jackson to the presidency of the United States.

Not only had he played a major role as one of Jackson's chief political operatives, but his newspaper, the *U.S. Telegraph*, had also been the primary voice of the Jackson campaign. What began as a weak and fledgling organ had now turned into one of the most recognized and widely read papers in the nation. Its extensive circulation carried the Jackson message to every corner of the Union. While local pro-Jackson papers turned to the *Telegraph* for direction, regularly quoting its columns, mimicking its patterns, and continuing its attacks, administration papers acknowledged the paper as a potent opponent, the most powerful transmitter of the Jacksonian impulse, at which they continually leveled their guns. Both friend and foe found the *Telegraph* the most fervent promoter and defender of Jackson, Calhoun, and fellow Democrats, and no paper in the nation so relentlessly assailed the Adams administration—even to the point of making incredulous slanders and false accusations.

Yet the *Telegraph* was more than *the* partisan propaganda machine for the Jackson campaign. It was also *the* foremost disseminator of Jacksonian ideology. In its columns, readers continually imbibed the philosophy that represented the Age of Jackson—the rise of the common man, the advance of democracy against the evils of aristocracy, extension of the suffrage, the rule of the majority, reform of the political system, and the resuscitation of Republican government. Every issue addressed in the *Telegraph*, whether local or national, from the tariff to internal improvements to constitutional reform, conveyed these fundamental tenets. The battle between Jackson and Adams was not merely a political contest between two parties, it was also a struggle between two distinct and opposing ideologies. Newspapers were indeed a cardinal element in the creation of the second American party system for the very fact that they spread ideological and partisan propaganda. The *Telegraph* was the perfect example.

Following the election, newspapers nationwide, both Democrat and National Republican, acknowledged the critical role of the *Telegraph* in the election of 1828. Some even credited the paper with securing Jackson's victory. "The vigorous, talented, and republican course of the [*Telegraph*]," declared the *American Sentinel*, "greatly tended to disseminate the mass of political information and sound principles which have produced the recent triumph of the people in the election of Andrew Jackson." The *New York Enquirer* concurred: "The Washington Telegraph alone has breasted the storm, and, amidst difficulties and privations only known to the editor, has manfully sustained the cause of the republican party, and we are satisfied that to the tone and spirit of that paper, to its incessant labors and great circulation in the western states, the success of General Jackson is mainly attributable." Other papers in the South and West likewise praised the *Telegraph*.<sup>6</sup> The *Nashville Republican* wrote:

We are much gratified to find that the editor of the *United States Telegraph* is receiving the just rewards of his labors, in daily and flattering tributes of public applause; and that the most intelligent editors of the Republican Party, concede to him the honor of preeminent zeal, and efficiency in the late triumphant struggle of the people against the corrupt coalition. To his vigilance and industry, patriotic ardor and invincible courage, the citizens of this powerful republic, in great degree, owe the preservation of that liberty which they hold so dear.<sup>7</sup>

The *Charleston Mercury* wrote in a similar vein:

The opposition papers have long endeavored, by every species of calumny and defamation, to injure the character and destroy the influence of the *United States Telegraph*. Such a course perhaps was to have been expected of them, seeing that it was principally owing to the exertions of the *Telegraph* that the late Administration was defeated.<sup>8</sup>

Green also took satisfaction in the response of the Adams press. "Puff! Puff!! Puff!!!" cried the *Baltimore Patriot*. "Ever since the termination of the presidential election, as if compelled by a general order

6. Green, "Militant Journalist," 249, 250; Smith, "Propaganda Technique," 48; *U.S. Telegraph*, November 25, 29, 1828.

7. *U.S. Telegraph*, January 13, 1829.

8. *U.S. Telegraph*, October 17, 1829.

from Head-Quarters, the minor journals of the Jackson party have teemed with fulsome and disgusting *puffs* of the editor of the Washington Telegraph." But probably the editorial statement most appreciated by Green was not praise at all, but rather, a request. The *People's Paper* pleaded: "No, no—General Green must *not* retire from Washington. He is the very man we want there." He wanted to stay as well. At what seemed the beginning of a lucrative and fulfilling career in Washington, one in which he was almost certain to reap the desired bounty of political patronage, "Rough" Green indeed remained in Washington. With Jacksonians assuming the reins of government, he looked toward the pinnacle of his career, both as an editor and as a political operative. His fortunes would change quickly in the volatile world of national politics.<sup>9</sup>

9. *U.S. Telegraph*, December 27, 1828.

## SECTION III



### Jackson's First Administration (1829–1833)

#### *Jacksonian Apostate*

What a sight it must have been! Certainly no one in Washington had ever expected to see such a spectacle as transpired on that balmy March 4, 1829—the inauguration day for Andrew Jackson, the seventh president of the United States, and John C. Calhoun, second-term vice president. For days prior, commoners by the thousands stormed the nation's capital, filling up boardinghouses and tavern halls, all to catch a glimpse of the Hero of New Orleans, the standard-bearer of the people themselves. A crowd of fifteen thousand spectators, many viewed by Washington society to be as unruly and gritty as the new president himself, inundated the east and west slopes of Capitol Hill. When the swearing-in and the inaugural address ended, the presidential entourage and the throng of supporters surged to the White House for an open reception. Mayhem ensued. Revelers poured into the president's residence, manhandling waiters and servants in their insatiable pursuit of intoxicating beverages and a chance to shake the hand of the Old Hero. They climbed upon furniture with mud-covered boots in the hopes of catching a better glance of Jackson, stained ex-

quisite Persian rugs, tore curtains, broke fine China, and pilfered silverware as mementos of the glorious occasion. Friends quickly whisked away the president through a side door and to a nearby building. Only when someone had the presence of mind to remove the punch to the White House lawn did the commotion subside. To many, the "Reign of King Mob" had indeed commenced. For Duff Green, however, the rightful rulers of the nation had taken the reins of *their* government. Democracy had proved triumphant.

Green most likely relished the uproarious soiree. It fit his personality. Although no record exists of his attendance at the event, he did have a direct hand in it—he had helped prepare the inauguration in the first place. Shortly after Jackson's electoral victory at the end of 1828, the Washington Central Committee dispatched Green to New York to meet with party chiefs there in planning inaugural festivities. It was only fitting that he do so, for he was pivotal in getting Jackson elected, and his newspaper was now considered by many to be the official organ of the Jackson camp. Little wonder, then, that General Green, "Rough" Green, would look favorably upon the transpiring events. "To Gen. Duff Green," he was toasted that magnificent day, March 4, "the able political standard bearer of our great and victorious Jackson!" Matters appeared propitious indeed for the former Missourian!<sup>1</sup>

Certainly not all was so blissful between the election and the inauguration. No one could mistake the black attire donned by Jackson at his inaugural, an outward sign of his mourning. His most cherished companion, his wife, Rachel, had died on December 22, 1828. She had collapsed suddenly from a heart attack—a direct result, Jackson believed, of the stress she endured from the unjust accusations hurled loosely by the Adams press during the late canvass. She never wanted to go to Washington; she feared and detested the whirlwind of Washington society. Jackson could not accept her death, refusing to leave her side. He remained by her all the night and through the next day, grieving, constantly checking her pulse and heartbeat for signs of life, all for naught. In a moving ceremony, he buried Rachel in her beloved garden, her refuge from the world around. Only at the last hour, when duty had beckoned, as it had so many times before, did the new president, still grieving, depart for the nation's capital. He would never forgive his enemies. In honor of Rachel, Green lined the columns of the *Telegraph* in black. This he would do on few occasions, usually for the deaths of statesmen, such as Jefferson and Monroe. But Rachel's death

1. Remini, *Election*, 196, 199; Smith, *Press, Politics, and Patronage*, 114.

warranted tribute as well. Green, like Jackson, attributed her death solely to the Adams campaign slanders. Several lengthy articles in his paper drove home that point. Retribution would surely follow, he assured his readers.<sup>2</sup>

Of one thing Green was absolutely sure: he would reap a bountiful harvest of government patronage. Just reward, he mused, for his untiring efforts to get Jackson elected. He had already acquired the Senate's printing. Surely, the House would follow suit. On February 11, 1829, the Jackson majority in the lower assembly did just that, albeit with some hints of misgiving. Of 208 votes, Green obtained 107 to Gales and Seaton's 95; 6 votes went to other contenders. The Senate, as well, again chose him as their printer, 24 votes to Gales and Seaton's 16. Both contracts would indeed provide a rich pecuniary yield for Green over the next several years, reaching even into the hundreds of thousands of dollars.<sup>3</sup>

Certainly other Jackson supporters could expect to receive patronage in the form of lucrative posts as well, and Green wasted no time in suggesting Jackson's possible course of action regarding the removal and proscription of pro-Adams officeholders. "What a flourish here is!!" The defeated party desired to know what punishment the new president will inflict upon them, Green admitted in the *Telegraph*, to which he promptly gave an answer: "He will *wean* them." The editor expected Jackson to punish Clay first by removing him from the State Department. Other Adams cabinet officials could anticipate the same. Richard Rush (secretary of the treasury), Samuel Southard (secretary of the navy), Peter B. Porter (secretary of war), and William Wirt (attorney general) would all be ousted in the name of reform. All government employees appointed by Adams and devoutly attached to the former president, for that matter, would be replaced with "honorable men." Jackson indeed intended to reduce federal patronage by a wholesale removal of Coalition officeholders and anyone attached to the Adams campaign. Reform was, after all, a central theme of Jackson's pursuit of the presidency. New York senator William L. Marcy stated it succinctly, albeit later, in 1832: "To the victor belong the spoils." The term would stick. The "spoils system" entered the lexicon of American politics. Actually, Jackson removed a small number of federal officeholders. In his first year of office, he replaced only 9 percent of appointees and

2. For a moving narration of Rachel's death, see Remini, *Course of American Freedom*, 148–55; *U.S. Telegraph*, January 7, 12, 1829.

3. *U.S. Telegraph*, February 11, 20, 1829; *House Journal*, 20th Cong., 2nd sess., 271; *Senate Journal*, 20th Cong., 2nd sess., 113.



less than 20 percent for his entire eight-year tenure in the White House. Still, the idea of proscription of the defeated party continued, and Green made sure of that. The memory of Rachel Jackson merely inspired it more.<sup>4</sup>

In the pursuit of punishing enemies and rewarding friends, Green argued that an "honest difference of opinion, involving political principles, *never occasioned heart burnings,*" but those who had "*ransacked the country for calumnies and slanders, were to be condemned by all honorable and highminded men.*" This included anyone who engaged in assaults on Jackson's character and life, especially on his wife, and it applied to the tacticians of the pro-Adams press, especially the *National Journal*. Another equally detested sort would likewise be proscribed, those whom Green labeled "*political trimmers.*" This group "alternately slandered and defamed either party, as victory seemed to determine." Certainly other types were taboo as well, including "those who want capacity, those who hold mere sinecures, and last, not least, those who lack integrity sufficient to fit them for an association with those high minded and honorable officers of government who will surround the Tennessee farmer." To leave such destitute figures in place would not be purifying government at all. "The great watchword of our party," Green reiterated, "is *Jackson and Reform.*" The nation had placed the "honest patriot" in the executive chair to "cleanse the Augean stables." And cleanse he would, guaranteed the editor of the Jackson mouthpiece.<sup>5</sup>

Yet one political group, Green vehemently maintained, deserved complete proscription—Federalists. Few who read the *Telegraph's* editorials during the late campaign were surprised by the editor's dislike of Federalists, which went back to the War of 1812. He had blamed them for the military unpreparedness of the United States and had even accused them of outright treason at the Hartford Convention. Following the election of 1828, he made certain that the Jackson administration protested any movement bringing into its ranks "aristocratic spies and deserters," and he hoped that the new president would "repair the fence where Monroe broke it down." But many of Green's friends in Boston desired to organize a new party in New England that supported Jackson, yet included Federalists. The editor was appalled, to say the least. He warned his fellow politicians not to amalgamate with the beleaguered party, and argued that any Federalist who had supported Adams

4. *U.S. Telegraph*, November 8, 11, 1828; Remini, *Election*, 73.

5. *U.S. Telegraph*, November 24, 1828.

proved himself unworthy of any public confidence and furnished the new administration with the strongest justification for his proscription. In fact, he suggested to his friends that the time had come to take the war into the enemy's camp, into New England itself, and use every available means of federal patronage to destroy the remnants of the Federalist party.<sup>6</sup>

Most Jacksonians, however, saw the efficacy of accommodating certain groups of Federalists; success in the next several congresses necessitated such a venture. The astute political operative in Green soon agreed, yet with a caveat. Only the "young federalists," or those Federalists who had actively campaigned on behalf of Jackson and Calhoun, could join the party. Certainly rewarding the loyal republicans of New England would be a priority, followed by the "patriotic federalists" who had come out for Jackson. As for any other Federalist desiring to join the Democratic Party, they would first have to adopt openly the party's principles, not just its name, and then be subjected to a probationary period in which their trust and loyalty would be earned. After the "severe lesson" previously received at the hands of John Quincy Adams, Green informed a friend, the Democratic Party will look with jealous eyes toward any Federalist. Time only could heal the political wounds.<sup>7</sup>

Speculation over who would compose Jackson's cabinet was another favorite topic of discussion in the days leading up to the inauguration. Green felt early on that Van Buren would be offered the State Department and Samuel D. Ingham of Pennsylvania the Treasury Department. He was correct on both accounts. The editor proffered several other names as candidates for the remaining cabinet posts: Littleton Tazewell of Virginia, John Pope and William Barry of Kentucky, John McLean of Pennsylvania, Thomas Hart Benton of Missouri, and Levi Woodbury and Isaac Hill of New Hampshire. Of the list, only Barry would enter the cabinet, he as postmaster general; Woodbury would join later, in 1831, as secretary of the navy, replacing ousted John

6. Green to Leslie Combs, August 7, 1814, Personal Miscellaneous Collection, NYPL; *U.S. Telegraph*, November 3, December 5, 1828; Green to William Ingalls, December 22, 28, 1828, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Green to Updike, February 1, 1829, Green Papers, LC.

7. *U.S. Telegraph*, December 5, 1828; Green to Lyman, December 7, 14, 1828, Green to Gov. C. P. Van Ness, December 28, 1828, Green Papers, LC. Green solidly supported Federalists such as Virgil Maxcy and Roger Brooke Taney, for both men were not "Charles Street" Federalists, and had supported both the late war with England and the election of Jackson. Green to Niles, May 7, 1830, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

Branch of North Carolina, and then as secretary of the treasury, in 1834, succeeding Roger Brooke Taney of Maryland, whom Jackson elevated to the chief justiceship of the Supreme Court. Green campaigned actively on behalf of Pope, desiring his appointment as either secretary of war, which went to John Eaton of Tennessee, or attorney general, which was handed to John M. Berrien of Georgia. Not until late February did the country know the composition of Jackson's first cabinet, which Green published on the twenty-sixth of that month. The final choices surprised much of the country. Many contemporaries, and historians as well, believed that the cabinet was quite mediocre in talents. Only the *Telegraph*, of all the Washington papers, approved of Jackson's appointments.<sup>8</sup>

One crucial observation about the cabinet did not escape the attention of Green. "The contest," he intimated to John Pope, "is whether Van Buren or Mr. Calhoun shall have the controlling influence in the Cabinet." As for his own opinion, Green believed that Van Buren was "overacting his part" and that Old Hickory would form a "*Jackson Cabinet*" in the end. The editor was correct on both assessments: Jackson would indeed appoint to his cabinet whomever he so desired, yet the body would quickly emerge as a house divided between the secretary of state and the vice president. That both men were recognized as leading contenders for the White House in the immediate years to come, no one denied; that the Democratic Party would plunge into turmoil as partisans gravitated to one statesman or the other, attaching their political fortunes to either the New Yorker or the South Carolinian, was equally undeniable. As a result, within two years of taking office, the Jackson administration was in shambles, as Ingham, Branch, and Berrien followed the lead of Calhoun, angered the president over several cataclysmic political and petticoat differences, and eventually were ousted from the cabinet altogether. Barry and Eaton would side with Van Buren, who would become Jackson's favorite and his anointed successor to the vice presidency in 1832 and to the presidency four years later. It is no exaggeration to say, therefore, that the contest between Calhoun and Van Buren would determine the political history of the next decade from Jackson's inauguration in 1829 to the election of 1840. In this bitter and celebrated contest, Duff Green would play a pivotal role, even to the extent of directly in-

8. Green to Edwards, December 22, 1828, January 6, 1829, *Edwards Papers*, ed. Washburne, 377-78, 381; Green to Duncan, Green to Lyman, December 7, 1828, Green to Pope, December 11, 1828, Green Papers, LC; *U.S. Telegraph*, February 26, 1829; Niven, *Van Buren*, 235.

stigating the break between the president and the vice president. Calhoun would end up on the losing end, and Green would join him. As this section will demonstrate, Green's fall from grace was a direct result of his brazen self-righteous personality and his independent course in all matters political.<sup>9</sup>

9. Green to Pope, December 11, 1828, Green Papers, LC; Green to Edwards, January 6, 1829, *Edwards Papers*, ed. Washburne, 379–80. Green also mentioned the “rivalry” between Van Buren and Calhoun in the *Telegraph*, but denied that it would harm either the party or the country. *U.S. Telegraph*, January 19, 1829.

## CHAPTER 10



### Appointments and Patronage

#### I.

**A**lthough the final break between Jackson and Green would not come for another two years, the estrangement process commenced immediately following the inauguration. Ironically, the process started with government patronage, that is, the proscription of Federalists, the removal of Adams appointees, and the new president's numerous federal appointments of "honorable men" to replace them, all called upon so earnestly by Green. As for the Federalists, not all were proscribed from Jackson's favor. Those who had supported the Old Hero in the last election, whom Green called "patriotic" or "young" Federalists, would find a welcome home in the new administration—Louis McLane of Delaware, who later became secretary of state and treasury in Jackson's cabinet, and Roger Taney were merely two examples of enlisting Federalist manpower. Green, however, could live with that. The necessity of removing Adams supporters was beyond doubt, and the editor actively campaigned on behalf of numerous candidates who sought federal appointments in the Jackson government, replacing Coalition officeholders from local postmasters to customs officials to Indian agents. Green not only believed he had a right to nominate applicants on the basis of his recent endeavors, but he also expected his choices to be approved by Jackson. Given Green's presumptuous personality, conflict with the president, who would never tolerate such insubordination in an associate, seemed almost inevitable.

The opposition, led by Henry Clay, already detested Green for his ed-

itorial assaults on them during the recent presidential canvass, and now they had an additional reason for despising him—they believed he had the ear of the president, to the exclusion of all other advisors, and intended to use his newly acquired power to wield the weapon of federal patronage and to send their party into political oblivion. “No more successful means could be pursued to open the eyes of the people,” Clay wrote a friend, “than to make more and more evident at Washington, the fact, which I believe to exist, that Duff Green is the actual President.” The opposition leader declared Green’s actions “odious as he is rapacious and monstrous,” and some of Clay’s supporters even believed that the editor was “odious to all the cabinet,” but that they refrained from saying anything because they were afraid of him. The anti-Jacksonian press continued the assault, maintaining that the editor “has the ear of the President, and exhibits no extraordinary diffidence in making use of it,” that he had “unbounded influence” over the mind of Jackson, that the president was the “agent of Duff Green,” and that no appointment had been made without Green’s approval, “whether by signing a recommendation, or by viva voce expression of approbation.” In short, this “Notorious Dictator” simply gulled the people on one side and, on the other, deluded the chief executive. The *National Journal*, chief rival of the *Telegraph*, labeled Green “a Dictator” and “President *de facto*,” stating that he was the “power behind the throne” who possessed a “controlling influence in procuring nearly all of the removals and appointments to office.” What would the people of the nation say to their president, continued the *Journal*, for “being pinioned, like a malefactor, by Duff Green, and driven by this imprudent Dictator into measures which common clarity induces us to believe his own honest judgment revolts at?”<sup>1</sup>

## II.

Although he reprinted in the *Telegraph* many of the opposition’s opinions about his supposed influence, Green denied ever being the power behind the throne when it came to federal appointments. Still, he zealously pushed his chosen nominees upon the president. Friends in Missouri and Illinois topped the list, especially those who were in any way connected to Ninian Edwards. Even family members found a patron in Duff Green—the editor attempted to get an appointment for

1. Ewing, “Independent Editor,” 737; Smith, “Green and Telegraph,” 63.

his brother, Willis Green, as an Indian agent. Besides cohorts in the West, Green also promoted the appointment of Boston newspaper editors who had supported the Old Hero during the election, namely the editors of the *American Statesman* and the *Jackson Republican*. He even recommended the former owner of the *Telegraph*, John Meehan, as librarian to Congress. Throughout the summer and fall months of 1829, Green tirelessly proffered countless nominees for federal patronage positions within their respective states.<sup>2</sup>

But contrary to what Clay and the opposition thought, Green encountered great difficulty in getting *any* of his choices appointed, even at the state level. In fact, his record at securing government offices for his friends and supporters was disastrous to say the least. The most glaring—and embarrassing—setback came in Green's own backyard—the appointment of newspaper editors. Never before had a president appointed so many editors to federal positions as had Jackson, yet the Old Hero's choices of newsmen were not Green's. Although he was influential in securing an appointment for Isaac Hill, editor of the *Concord Patriot*, and for several men from the *Telegraph* office to minor posts, Green could not obtain appointments for several prominent Boston newsmen. During the election of 1828, the *Statesman* and the *Republican* had loaned Green considerable amounts of money, \$6,000 and \$5,000, respectively. When the *Telegraph's* editor failed to acquire patronage for the sponsors and editors of these papers, they held him directly responsible. In fact, one of the editors of the *Republican*, Colonel Henry Orne, quickly turned against him, and published a series of damning articles under the pseudonym of "Columbus." Although the editors of the *Statesman*, Nathaniel Green especially, came to Green's defense, Orne's articles had exposed Green's limitations, undeniably embarrassing him in the end.<sup>3</sup>

Several factors account for Green's failure to gain federal patronage. First, certain individuals in the West proved more powerful than Green, namely his archenemy, Missouri senator Thomas Hart Benton, who proposed other names outside the Edwards circle. Mortified when he was unable to obtain a position for Benjamin Edwards, son of Ninian Edwards and a recognized name in the West, Green sought out the president and explained the situation there. Jackson promised to appoint some of Green's friends as well. In confronting the president over

2. *Register of Debates*, 19th Cong., 2nd sess., 498–99, 1266–67; Smith, "Green and Telegraph," 63–64; *U.S. Telegraph*, March 2, 1827.

3. *Register of Debates*, 20th Cong., 1st sess., 2; Smith, *Press, Politics, and Patronage*, 80; Smith, "Green and Telegraph," 64–65; *U.S. Telegraph*, December 4, 1827.

patronage, Green revealed his growing frustration. Soon, the editor was openly complaining to cabinet members and to the president's closest advisors about many of Jackson's appointments, labeling most of them "imprudent" or favoring Clay and Crawford men. "I am well convinced," he informed Postmaster General William T. Barry, "that almost every appointment heretofore made [in] Illinois and Missouri will be calculated to do great injury to the administration." Green's flagrant criticism of the president's choices for federal posts was consistent with his combative personality, but it was certainly not wise. His brazen comportment in large measure accounts for his failure to secure more federal patronage for his friends.<sup>4</sup>

### III.

"We are utterly confounded here on Duff Green's arrogance," charged one of Calhoun's friends. The editor's outspoken criticism of Jackson's appointments and his presumptuous belief that he should have a direct hand in the spoils of office quickly alienated many within the party. "I claim a right to be heard," he impudently told Barry. "I may not speak the language of a courtier begging for favor but I speak the language of one having done something to promote the success of the present administration believing that he has some right to be heard & that his claim upon the confidence of the executive never has been forfeited by importunity." His brash demands and behavior had become so injurious to the party that Green's closest friends called upon Calhoun for aid. "If you correspond with Green," Virgil Maxcy begged the vice president, "you may be of service in disposing him to be more prudent in this respect." It seemed paradoxical that a man so adept at political campaigning and party building could, at the same time, disregard his innate political acumen when it came to dealing with those within his own party. He did not have the patience nor the skill to handle the frustrating situations he now faced, and he lacked the discretion needed to deal with another volatile temper in the president himself. Green should have observed the behavior of Calhoun and Van Buren when they encountered the same situation. Calhoun, as vice president, had no say in the composition of Jackson's cabinet, yet he refrained from interfering, for he knew that he had allies in Ingham, Branch, and Berrien. Van Buren had setbacks in the appointive process as well;

4. *U.S. Telegraph*, October 20, 29, 1828.



Jackson had already nominated several men for foreign posts without consulting the secretary of state himself, and the president's appointment of Samuel Swartwout as the collector of customs in New York City significantly threatened the Magician's power base in his state. Van Buren, however, swallowed his pride, catered to the president, mentioned his concerns delicately and respectfully, and waited out the storm. Duff Green merely created his own tempests. He failed to learn from his mistakes, continuing to test the limits of those around the president, including Jackson himself.<sup>5</sup>

Green's arrogant demeanor and heedlessly independent actions, moreover, alienated his closest allies in the cabinet. Friendship or political loyalty indeed collapsed in the wake of Green's determination to have his way, and he readily sacrificed his clarion call for unity and harmony if he thought he had been wronged or his principles impugned. One incident in particular illustrates this point. Green vehemently disagreed with the secretary of the treasury's appointment of a chief clerk within the Treasury Department, and then, when Ingham gave a small printing job to a printer in Pennsylvania, the editor exploded with indignation. He lashed out at the treasury secretary in several letters, clearly written in the harsh tones which came so easily to the editor. Green reacted against what he determined to be the continual appointment of men who had been loyal to either Crawford or Van Buren, which gave "an impression that V. B. is the favored man as Jackson's successor." Besides complaining that his friends had been neglected and his enemies promoted, the editor also took personal offense when Ingham awarded a printing contract to another printer. How could the secretary do this when he knew full well that Green had gone into considerable debt on behalf of Jackson's and the people's cause?<sup>6</sup>

Green disclosed his anger and frustration to Calhoun. He told the vice president that all the cabinet members, Ingham and Barry especially, were doing everything to "mortify & harass" him. So distraught was he over the supposed persecution that he threatened to sell his newspaper and "return to a farm, utterly abandoning all prospects of public life," rather than resorting "to fight a warfare, more bitter & vindictive for the benefit of individuals who feel no interest in my welfare and who are prepared to denounce me whenever they find it their interest to do so." By selling out his establishment, Green continued, he

5. *U.S. Telegraph*, October 18, 28, 1828; Remini, *Election*, 185.

6. Green, "Militant Journalist," 249, 250; Smith, "Propaganda Technique," 48; *U.S. Telegraph*, November 25, 29, 1828.

would allow another individual to render more efficient support to the cause of democracy and liberty, and he hoped that the editor would be treated with considerably more fairness and respect than he had received. Ironically, the only cabinet member who had shown Green even a modicum of support was Van Buren: "I have had much more kindness & confidence than I had any right to expect; whilst those from whom I expected much have done less than nothing to aid me to remove the heavy load of debt under which I labor. He, from whom I did not expect any thing, has done all in his power. His manner to others as well as to myself has been kind and he has made a favorable impression upon most of those with whom I have conversed." And in a statement that certainly sent chills through the South Carolinian, Green declared that "the influence of the Cabinet lies as we anticipated." The Magician, indeed, was a far better politician than either Green or Calhoun, as future events would reveal.<sup>7</sup>

In the meantime, the forces within the cabinet attempted to heal the wounds between Ingham and Green. That both parties had contributed to the current animosity, no one denied. Maxcy intimated to Calhoun that Green's attacks on Ingham in the *Telegraph* "appear to me altogether unjustifiable," but he suspected that Green would not desist until Ingham submitted to his will. The treasury secretary, on the other hand, thought that Green endeavored to establish control over the executive departments through intimidation; no one, not even the president or the vice president, would be spared Green's attacks if they provoked him. In the interest of restoring party unity, which Green had promoted so diligently in the recent election, Calhoun intervened to restore the friendship between the two men. Both individuals, the vice president declared, had done much for the cause and had strong claims for support. But, in the end, all of Green's friends and supporters pointed the guilty finger in his direction, believing that he was the divisive factor in the whole affair of federal appointments. Maxcy stated that although Green did have claims to attention, the editor had "interfered *too much*, and in an *ungracious manner*." Certainly both individuals proved obstinate, but when the two men kept missing each other in pursuit of their reconciliation, Green rashly decided to print several articles critical of Ingham's choices. Indeed, the editor would act brazenly on his own behalf, indicating his presumptuous attitude and his devotion to his own course.<sup>8</sup>

7. *U.S. Telegraph*, January 13, 1829.

8. *U.S. Telegraph*, October 17, 1829.

Fortunately for all involved, the contest between Ingham and Green subsided in the summer of 1829, thanks mainly to the intervention of Calhoun. Though he thanked the South Carolinian for his solicitude in the affair, Green believed that he had been wronged and that his course was the just one. "I have at all times endeavored to be prudent," he intimated to Calhoun, "preserving my independence while I promptly gave such aid to the administration as I could with propriety do." In a missive to John McLean, Green again intimated that he had caused resentment in others on account of his actions, but that he did so because he was right and they were wrong. "I have given offence," he admitted, "to several of those who have done most in professions in my behalf by the candor with which I have pointed out their errors." The fact was that Green's fierce independence fostered a self-righteous audacity in the business of federal appointments that precluded any sort of prudence or apology on his part.<sup>9</sup>

Somehow, Green realized his own limitations in obtaining patronage for his friends and supporters, but he still refused to believe that he had acted impudently. Toward the end of the year, 1829, in a letter to an officeseeker he again revealed his arrogance and his tendency to inflate his own importance. Those who had the confidence of the president, wrote the editor, "are jealous of my influence" and seek to "mortify my pride." But he would no longer permit himself "to be an applicant for favor of any kind," whether on his own behalf or on that of his friends. In fact, he would most likely injure rather than aid the cause of any aspirant for a federal post. Despite his anger and frustration over his inability to secure patronage, or, more precisely, despite his brazen and imprudent behavior that directly undermined his pursuit of the spoils of office, Green continued to defend Jackson's appointments when assailed by the opposition press and to advocate the wholesale removal of Adams's appointees. As far as the readers of the *Telegraph* could glean, Duff Green championed the president's actions as further proof of the Old Hero's campaign promise for reform. Within the next year, however, they began to wonder why he continued to act contrary to the harmony and interests of his party. Green could not see his disruptive actions for what they were. He would be ousted for them.<sup>10</sup>

9. Green to Calhoun, September 7, 1829, *JCCP*, 11: 73–75.

10. Green to James Callan, January 24, 1830, Green Papers, LC; *U.S. Telegraph*, May 10, 19, 1830.

## CHAPTER 11



### The Rise of the *Globe*

#### I.

For the remainder of 1829, and through the fall of the next year, Green put the patronage failures behind him, and began to concentrate on other important matters. As far as he was concerned, his position within the party and with the president remained solid. He could detect no movement either to reduce his role or to ostracize him from the Jackson camp. None was underfoot, not yet, at least. The editor concentrated on two objectives—maintaining party unity and endorsing Jacksonian policies. His skills as head of a party press and a political operative again came into play.

There were, to be sure, intraparty squabbles in Congress and within the states themselves. Levi Woodbury and Isaac Hill, both powerful Jacksonians from New Hampshire, for example, had crossed swords several times. Relations between the men were strained. Green wrote Woodbury and told the senator that he needed to reconcile with Hill in the interest of party unity. Nothing good could arise from their animosity, reasoned Green, nor from any other such hostilities among members of Congress. Fortunately the contest ended when Woodbury joined the Jackson cabinet in 1831, as secretary of the navy, and Hill was elected to fill the former's Senate seat.<sup>1</sup>

1. Clay to [unknown], May 23, 1829, Josiah Johnson to Clay, July 8, 1829, Clay to George Watterson, July 21, 1829, *Clay Papers*, ed. Seager, 8: 56, 74, 79; *U.S. Gazette*, April 4, 1829, from John Agg Papers, Duke University; *U.S. Telegraph*, April 21, May 14, 1829; *National Journal* quotes taken from Smith, *Press, Politics, and*

The greatest concern for Green and many others in the Democracy, however, was the apparent rivalry between Van Buren and Calhoun. Here, too, Green intervened on behalf of harmony. The editor had warned Ninian Edwards, shortly after the 1828 election, against "getting up at this time" any new organization of parties based solely on speculation as to the competing objectives of Van Buren and Calhoun. "It is particularly desirable," he informed the Illinois senator, "that the conflicting interests of our party be made to harmonize and to prevent a premature collision, [for] it is agreed on all hands that Genl. Jackson shall hold a position for re-election . . . and if so, no one can prevent his re-election." Indeed, the decision to seek a second term was the Old Hero's, and certainly no one else's. If he chose to run again, then *all* in the party must unite to support his bid. Calhoun and Van Buren would have to wait their turn.<sup>2</sup>

By the spring of 1830, however, rumors of Calhoun's intention to seek the presidency in 1832 proliferated, causing rifts in the Democracy. Green quickly denied any such pretenses on the part of the vice president. He told the newspaper editor Hezekiah Niles that no man relied more on the democratic elements of the nation than Calhoun, and that without the South Carolinian's pivotal role in the party, the country "must fall victim to the artifices of the oligarchy." Yet this did not mean that the "democracy of the country" should rally around Calhoun as a candidate for the presidency. When the prominent editor of the *New York Courier* printed an article revealing a supposed plot to injure Calhoun in the eyes of Jackson, Green chastised him for being "part of the intrigue to separate the President from his firmest and best friends." The article, he continued, proved dangerous and shortsighted. Moreover, Green himself believed that the article had the surreptitious intention of forcing him to abandon *his* support for either the vice pres-

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*Patronage*, 115, 116. The *U.S. Gazette* even argued that Green would go so far as to employ his new power to the detriment of Van Buren, injuring the New Yorker in the estimate of Jackson.

2. *U.S. Telegraph*, April 21, June 26, 1829; Green to Edwards, August 19, 1829, *Edwards Papers*, ed. Washburne, 427-28; Green to William Ingalls, December 11, 1828, Green to William S. Murphy, December 11, 1828, Green to Richard K. Cralle, December 11, 1828, Green to C. P. Van Ness, December 11, 1828, Green to James Shannon, December 11, 1828, Green to Isaac Hill, December 11, 1828, Green to J. P. Oldham, December 11, 1828, Green to Benjamin F. Edwards, December 17, 1828, Green to George Brown, December 22, 1828, Green to S. H. Kimmel, Green to H. Lane, December 28, 1828, Green to John Pope, January 25, 1829, Green to John Updike, February 1, 1829, Green to Van Buren, April 22, 1829, Green to Jackson, April 23, 1829, Green to Samuel D. Ingham, July 2, 3, 1829, Green to Willis Green, June 12, July 9, 1829, Green Papers, LC.

ident or the president. "The article is too shallow for success," he resolutely declared.<sup>3</sup>

Green attributed these false rumors—of Calhoun's possible candidacy for the presidency and of a plot to separate the president and the vice president—to two sources: the opposition, spearheaded by Clay, and the supporters of Van Buren, located mostly in Jackson's cabinet. Throughout 1830, the *Telegraph* warned its readers that the opposition desired to instill discord in the ranks of the Jackson administration, and what better way to succeed in that endeavor than by exacerbating the rivalry between Calhoun and Van Buren? Not only would this cause a split in the Democracy, but it would soon alienate one of the two men from the goodwill of the president himself. But Calhoun and Van Buren were not the only candidates mentioned for the succession. Another heavyweight contender could not be ignored. Nearly every political observer in the nation recognized the presidential aspirations of John McLean of Ohio, a sitting Supreme Court justice. Although he had served in the Adams cabinet as postmaster general, few believed that he supported the reelection of the New Englander in 1828. Jackson even kept McLean on board as postmaster general and prepared to offer him another cabinet position when the latter decided to take a seat on the Supreme Court. Green, too, early discerned the presidential ambitions of McLean, but, again, he warned party faithful not to countenance them to the detriment of party unity. The editor wrote to McLean and admonished him not to fall prey to the designs of Clay and "to save him from the fate of Burr, Clinton, and Clay himself." There was no room in the Democracy for apostates and traitors. Beware, then, warned the *Telegraph*! The opposition seeks to divide and conquer by their baseless and malignant rumors. Calhoun, Van Buren, and McLean, however, resolved to support the reelection of the Old Hero in 1832; they were full and steadfast members of the Democratic Party. Green's motto was indeed "union, harmony, and good faith."<sup>4</sup>

3. Smith, *Press, Politics, and Patronage*, 91, 118; Josiah Johnston to Clay, September 9, 1829, *Papers of Clay*, ed. Hemphill, 8: 98; Green to Nathaniel Green, September 8, 1829, Green Papers, LC; "Columbus, No. X," in Henry Orne, *The Letters of Columbus, Originally Published in the Boston Bulletin; to Which are Added Two Letters of Colonel Orne to Duff Green*, 40–48. Calhoun also helped in the appointment of Hill, as well as other newspapermen, such as Mordecai Noah of the *New York Courier*. Niven, *Calhoun*, 174.

4. Green to Edwards, August 19, 1829, *Edwards Papers*, ed. Washburne, 427–28; Smith, *Press, Politics, and Patronage*, 91, 92; Green to William Ingalls, December 11, 1828, to William B. Lewis, July 11, 1829, to Henderson, to W. Brent, July 5, 1829, to S. Hough, to McLean, July 8, 1829, to Barry, July 11, 1829, Green Papers, LC.

But the editor could not ignore the supposed machinations of Van Buren. Yes, the *New Yorker* appealed to Green's sense of honor and kindness to this point, and, yes, the *Telegraph* defended the secretary of state from attacks by the opposition press, but there was logic behind any attempt on the part of Van Burenites to separate the president and the vice president—Calhoun stood directly in the way of Van Buren's presidential aspirations. Nothing could be said in the columns of the *Telegraph*, however, for that would only publicize any rumors of discontent and intrigue within the Jackson administration. Moreover, by the spring of 1830, Green did not really accept hints of Van Buren's presumed schemes; but he did see the reason behind such madness. Writing to several party operatives, he intimated that some of Van Buren's supporters opposed the reelection of Calhoun as vice president because they supposed that the chances of Jackson living through two terms was slim at best, and they would not want to see the South Carolinian ascend to the presidency. "Such men," continued Green, "are anxious to draw Mr. Calhoun into opposition under a belief that Gen. Jackson's popularity would be so great as to run him down, & in that event, leave Mr. Van Buren master of the field." Calhoun and his friends, however, would never be drawn into opposition to Jackson, Green firmly stated; they adamantly supported the administration. The editor believed that both Jackson and Calhoun would be candidates for reelection—without any party intriguers getting in the way.<sup>5</sup>

## II.

From Jackson's inauguration through 1830, the *Telegraph* regularly defended the actions of the administration while at the same time promoting its policies. To the public eye, recalled Missouri senator Thomas Hart Benton, Green's organ was clearly "in its columns . . . the advocate and supporter of General Jackson." And why would it be otherwise? Other than his troubles with securing patronage, caused primarily by his own behavior, and the recurring rumors that Calhoun intended to run in 1832 and that Van Buren was doing everything possible to guarantee his own ascendancy, he was on good terms with the Jackson machine. In May 1830, Green printed an article entitled "What have

5. Thomas L. McKenney to George C. Sibley, August 31, 1829, Sibley Papers, Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis; Green to Barry, July 11, 1829, Green Papers, LC; Maxcy to Calhoun, May 7, 1829, *JCCP*, 11: 40; Niven, *Calhoun*, 166; Cole, *Van Buren*, 192–94, 196.

You Gained?" In this editorial, he defended Jackson's election in 1828 and enumerated what the people had gained by his victory. The country had gained a president who truly represented the people, men of integrity to fill public office, the dismissal of corrupt officeholders, economy in the public expenditures, and accountability and industry in their representatives. In other lengthy articles, he proudly compared Jackson to former president Thomas Jefferson. Few men, indeed, were as proud as Green for being part of the Jackson revolution.<sup>6</sup>

Of course the opposition naturally disagreed. They continued to hammer away at the Old Hero's actions and policies as president. Most of all, they assailed his cabinet members, dubbing them the "Traveling Cabinet" for their tendency to avoid Washington. Green quickly fired up the presses to combat the charge. The opposition leveled their most severe criticism, however, at many of Jackson's policies and programs. Again, Green defended the president and pointed to the efficacy of the Old Hero's actions.<sup>7</sup>

The editor chided "Federal prints" for their opposition to Jackson's policy of Indian removal. How could the opposition oppose such a philanthropic move? wondered Green. "Next to the reform of abuses, and the payment of the national debt," he asserted, removal of the Indian to lands in the West "will stand forth as one of the great measures of national policy, which will distinguish the administration of President JACKSON." Green, like all fellow Westerners, vehemently favored the reduction in the price of public lands. The president's policy regarding public lands, spearheaded by Benton, appealed greatly to the editor, and he promoted the administration's policy in his paper. Indeed, the question of Western lands, Green argued, indicated the "growing strength of the Western states," who would soon hold the balance of political power in order to gain "great works of internal improvements." Those great works, however, would have to be national in scope, or the president would not support them. Thus, when Jackson vetoed the Maysville Road Bill, Green rejoiced. The veto, he declared, "will be hailed by the great body of the Republican party as one of the most important acts of [Jackson's] eventful life. . . . No comment of ours can add to its force." The editor also agreed with the president's subsequent veto of a bill for government subscription of stock in the Louisville and Portland Canal and a pocket veto of another bill relating to the construction of

6. Green to Ingham, May 6, 11, July 2, 3, 1829, Green Papers, LC; Maxcy to Calhoun, July 4, 1829, *JCCP*, 11: 56–61.

7. Green to Calhoun, June 16, 1829, Maxcy to Calhoun, July 4, 1829, Calhoun to Ingham, July 26, 1829, *JCCP*, 11:52–53, 56–61, 64.



lighthouses and harbors. Green indeed found much to commend in Jackson's policies and actions and much to condemn in the opposition. He praised the midterm election victories, continued an unabated assault on the policies of Clay and the opposition, charged Webster and his New England "aristocracy" for fomenting sectional animosity, and defended Jackson's removals from and appointments to federal office. For all appearances, by the end of 1830, Green's role as party mouthpiece and political operative had not changed much from that during the election of 1828. Appearances could be misleading, however, for an undercurrent of enmity for the editor was welling up in Jackson's household.<sup>8</sup>

### III.

Months earlier, in April 1830, Jackson had already had enough of Green. By that time, according to Amos Kendall, the editor had so completely "lost the confidence of the President" that Old Hickory intended to establish "a *real* administration paper" in Washington. Jackson's disaffection with Green arose out of the ongoing nullification crisis in South Carolina and the president's opposition to the Bank of the United States—topics that will be addressed fully in separate chapters. "The disposition which Gen. Green has exhibited to identify Gen. Jackson and his friends with the nullifiers of South Carolina," Kendall surmised, "has excited anew their desire for another paper here." Writing from a steamboat at Wheeling, Virginia, Jackson cited Green's silence over the Bank issue as another reason for dumping the editor. "The truth is," Jackson informed Lewis, "[Green] has professed to me to be heart and soul, against the Bank, but his idol [Calhoun] controles him as much as the shewman does his puppits, and we must get another organ to announce the policy, and defend the administration." As long as the party organ remained in Green's hand, concluded the president, the administration "is more injured than by all the opposition."<sup>9</sup>

Others around the president could not have agreed more. William B. Lewis wrote John Overton, one of Jackson's closest confidants from Tennessee, and declared that Green looked "more to men than to principle" and that his support of Jackson "has always been with it a secondary consideration." James A. Hamilton of New York, another close

8. Maxcy to Calhoun, July 4, 1829, Calhoun to Ingham, July 26, 1829, *JCCP*, 11: 56–61, 64.

9. Green to Calhoun, September 7, 1829, *JCCP*, 11: 73–75.

confidant of the president, wrote the *Old Hero* and revealed his dissatisfaction with Green and his support for a new official organ for the administration. Dislike of Green and rumors of a new party paper were not restricted to Jacksonian operatives; it could be found in other papers and in opposition circles. The *United States Gazette* announced that there “is a great dissatisfaction with the course of Duff Green, and it is generally spoken of, and believed, here, that a new administration paper is about to be started, to run him down.” The Democratic senator from Louisiana, Josiah S. Johnston, informed Clay of a proposition made to him “to put out Duff.” “It would produce a real scism [*sic*] in the party,” said Johnston, but he would “make some sacrifice to put him down.” To make matters worse for Green, many of the individuals who had loaned him money to take over the *Telegraph* back in 1826 now called for his replacement.<sup>10</sup>

Regardless of the various reasons for dumping Green, by October 1830, Jackson and his closest advisers had made the decision to replace the beleaguered editor with one certain, in their eyes, to be more loyal to the administration. Their man was Francis P. Blair. Blair moved to Washington shortly thereafter and took over the reins of the new Jackson organ, the *Globe*. Its first issue came out on December 7, 1830. At first, the objective of the *Globe* was to complement the *Telegraph*, not to completely replace it, and so the two papers refrained from any open warfare on each other—for the time being, at least.<sup>11</sup>

#### IV.

Green was aware of Blair’s intention to move to Washington and the supposed reasons behind it. In October 1830, Blair wrote Green asking about the feasibility of establishing another newspaper in Washington.

10. Lewis’s quote taken from Remini, *Course of American Freedom*, 433 n.18; Hamilton to Jackson, July 29, 1830, *Jackson Correspondence*, ed. Bassett, 4: 168; “Letter from Washington,” No. L, May 30, 1830, in *United States Gazette*, John Agg Papers, Duke University; Josiah Johnston to Clay, November 5, 1830, *Papers of Clay*, ed. Seager, 8: 288. F. H. Pettis also wrote Clay and stated: “A new paper has sprung up here within a few days entitled the *Globe*—A Jackson member . . . stated to me that its object is to supplant Duff—that ‘he is to be killed, and they mean to have the honor of doing it themselves.’ Great honor don’t you think?” F. H. Pettis to Clay, December 16, 1830, *Papers of Clay*, ed. Seager, 8: 313.

11. Remini, *Course of American Freedom*, 293–99; Johnston to Clay, November 14, 1830, *Papers of Clay*, ed. Seager, 8: 297. On the replacement of the *Telegraph* with the *Globe*, see Smith, *Press, Politics, and Patronage*, 114–35; Remini, *Course of American Freedom*, chapter 17; William E. Smith, *The Francis Preston Blair Family in Politics*, 1: 56–76.

On the surface it appeared an innocent, even helpful, inquiry. Blair recognized the increasing volume of printing business in the capital, and, to keep some of it from falling into the hands of interests "whom I consider public enemies," he offered to take up some of the slack and to relieve Green of his daunting burden. In addition, Blair surmised, it might be "advantageous" to Green and the "interests of the great cause" if another press was created under the management of an individual "who could prove rather a coadjutator than a competitor." Blair, moreover, believed that the two editors would "not divide" in their efforts "on any great public principle." Appealing to Green's vanity, he concluded his missive by assuaging any fears the editor might have by pointing to the deep respect all had for his past and continuing work on behalf of the Jackson cause.<sup>12</sup>

Blair's letter was immediately followed by one from Kendall. Kendall, now fourth auditor of the treasury, thanks to a tie-breaking vote by Calhoun in the Senate, also assured Green that Blair had no intentions of undermining the *Telegraph*, and that he harbored only goodwill toward him and his role as party organ. But to instill some concern in Green, Kendall reminded him that his numerous enemies jeopardized his chances at being reelected printer to Congress, and without the president's support, he would certainly fail. Do not let your "enemies" establish another press, he begged; let Blair do so, for he was "a friend, personal and political," who only desired to unite with Green in support of Jackson's principles and policies. Beyond that, Kendall concluded, Blair "will come wholly unpledged to any man or men."<sup>13</sup>

Green now had two letters in his hands informing him of the intentions of other Jackson men to establish another press in Washington. His mind indeed churned over the correspondence. The editor's first reaction was to question Blair's loyalty to the president. Writing to another editor, Green stated that Blair was the one to whom Clay had made the confidential communication regarding the bargain with Adams, and through whose intervention the Kentucky legislature voted for Adams over the favored Jackson. Many of Green's friends, however, only fueled his fears by suggesting that Blair contemplated "a concentration" of the patronage of all the public offices in his new press.<sup>14</sup>

But Green most certainly questioned, above all, the motives of the

12. Green to Nathaniel Greene, November 17, 1830, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Blair's letter is printed in Smith, *Blair Family*, 1: 59.

13. Kendall's letter in Smith, *Blair Family*, 1: 59-60.

14. Green to Nathaniel Greene, November 17, 1830, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

president and his circle. What were the true intentions of Jackson and company regarding both the *Globe* and the *Telegraph*? Did they indeed seek to aid the cause of Green, or did they desire to completely replace him with another party organ? Evidence remains rather inconclusive on the subject. In his autobiography, Kendall contended that the president had no wish "to supersede the *Telegraph* as an official paper, or to deprive General Green of the printing of Congress, should he remain faithful, but to furnish an auxiliary paper." Moreover, Kendall argued that Jackson had initially opposed the creation of two newspapers out of fear that they might eventually oppose each other. By the summer of 1830, however, the president had changed his mind and desired to introduce another organ in Washington. Too many advisors close to Jackson believed that Green was not devoted to the administration, that he would undermine Jackson's reelection, and that he promoted other interests adverse to their own. Most likely, then, Blair and Kendall sought to pacify Green for the time being, hence the purpose and nature of their letters to the editor. They knew of Green's volatile temper and desired to maintain harmony in the Jackson family. Undoubtedly, all hoped that Green would remain loyal to the cause, and to that end, the *Globe* refrained from taking any action that might appear offensive to the *Telegraph*. Time only would decide the answer to the question whether Blair was foe or friend. In the meantime, as 1830 turned into 1831, Green tolerated the *Globe*, watching it carefully, studying its every word, preparing for the worst.<sup>15</sup>

## V.

Green's acumen led him to believe that the *Globe* had been established, not for any benefit of the *Telegraph*, but because certain circles around the president desired to create their own organ in order to pursue their own selfish designs. "The removal of Blair to this city," Green wrote Edwards, "was, no doubt, preparatory to a development, on the part of a portion of the President's friends, in which it was anticipated that I could not co-operate." That "development" was none other than the presidential ambitions of Secretary of State Martin Van Buren. Although he did not directly urge the establishment of the *Globe*, Van Buren clearly countenanced the action. The rivalry between him and Calhoun was no secret, and his friends believed, moreover, that Green

15. Amos Kendall, *Autobiography*, 370-74.

was devoted to the South Carolinian and opposed to the New Yorker. They were correct on one account—Green suspected a conspiracy, another corrupt bargain, to whisk Van Buren into the presidency at all costs, even to the detriment of the people's inherent right to the franchise.<sup>16</sup>

In October 1830, Green informed Edwards that the way was being paved for the elevation of Van Buren to the presidency. "That influence," he said, "has made a covert war upon me, and nothing but the power of my press and the force of my position has maintained me thus far." Could all not see that the *Globe* was established solely for the benefit and promotion of Van Buren? queried Green. Indeed, all the evidence pointed to such an assertion. As early as May 1830, the *Gazette* had declared that the "establishment of a paper to sustain Mr. Van Buren is spoken of with much confidence," and the reason assigned was dislike of Green. Louisiana senator Josiah Johnston had mentioned that plans were hatched "to put in a Van Buren man" in place of Green. Anyone, thought Green, who possessed the slightest inkling of political astuteness could see that the *Globe* was the organ, not of Jackson, but of Van Buren—an apparent indication of intrigues to advance the secretary of state by any means possible.<sup>17</sup>

The *Telegraph*, however, was *no one's* organ but the people's and the principles that supported their rights and interests. Green reiterated his independent course. He refused to be labeled a "collar press," and he even intimated that, if it ever came down to it, he would oppose Andrew Jackson himself if he abrogated the principles upon which he had been elected. But he had no intention of that, for he believed that the president would detect the intrigues of those closest to him and set them right. Green believed the Old Hero would seek a second term and that all should support his reelection. With that in mind, he firmly professed his devotion to the cause of Jackson and the Democracy. "I intend to sustain the administration," he told Edwards, "support the re-election of Gen. Jackson, and maintain such relation to Calhoun, Van Buren, and McLean that neither of them can assail me without assailing the liberty of the press and the usages and principles of the

16. Green to Edwards, January 19, 1831, *Edwards Papers*, ed. Washburne, 565. John Quincy Adams wrote in his diary that Green was understood to be in the interest of Calhoun, while the *Globe* was Van Buren's organ. Nevins, *Diary of John Quincy Adams*, 414.

17. Green to Edwards, October 8, 1830, *Edwards Papers*, ed. Washburne, 547–49; "Letter from Washington," No. L, *U.S. Gazette*, May 30, 1829, in John Agg Papers, Duke University; Johnston to Clay, November 5, 1830, *Papers of Clay*, ed. Seager, 8: 288.

Republican party.” If any of the three aforementioned contestants assailed him, “it shall be because I have refused to become a partisan.”<sup>18</sup>

Despite the machinations directed against him, Green believed that he had faithfully performed his duties as the party organ and that the Van Burenites would find it difficult to make war upon him, at least in the open. “I shall be warmly sustained by Calhoun and McLean,” he surmised, and he assured Edwards that Van Buren was far too cautious to oppose him. But what Green failed to understand was that the president himself demanded complete devotion to his will; independence would not suffice, and thus a more pliable organ—the *Globe*—was necessary. Jackson had no intention of Blair’s paper being a Van Buren organ; it was to be an administration agent. That Jackson began to distrust the vice president and that by the fall of 1830 he had decided to cut all ties with Calhoun was also true. It was only natural to assume that Green’s independence was an indication of his loyalty to the South Carolinian’s ambitions. Green never saw it that way, however. He was indeed his own man—and he would soon pay dearly for it.<sup>19</sup>

By the end of 1830, then, Green could not see the writing on the wall. Yes, he was still in “good graces” with most of the Jackson administration and its supporters, albeit tenuously; and, yes, another administration paper had been established, but neutrality and a lack of open animosity had defined their actions. Why, then, should Green fear his future? He had indeed fervidly defended Jackson’s actions and policies since his election, from the Maysville veto, to Indian removal, to cabinet appointments. On only a few occasions had he defended the vice president in his paper, and that was in response to opposition attacks, with the avowed goal of maintaining party strength. Certainly, he had a right to feel somewhat betrayed by the creation of the *Globe*, for it raised questions about his performance. As for the dissatisfaction of the president and some of his friends, simply because they believed that he had not done enough to aid the administration, one must remember that until the Maysville veto, at the end of May 1830, Jackson’s policies remained a mystery to everyone. Quite possibly, then, Green had little or no direction as to how he could best promote the administration. From the evidence at hand, it appears that opposition to Green derived more from his independence and his presumptuous behavior regarding the patronage than on his performance as editor of the *Telegraph*.

18. *U.S. Telegraph*, December 3, 1828, September 3, 1829, February 1, 1830.

19. Green to Edwards, October 8, 1830, *Edwards Papers*, ed. Washburne, 547–49.

Nonetheless, Green was still apprehensive at the end of 1830. He wrote to Calhoun and declared that the Democracy was “in more imminent peril than it ever was and that the next winter may determine its fate.” He could not have been more accurate in his assessment. By March 1831, the party would indeed be shaken to its foundation, and by an event which he would directly precipitate. As the “next winter” arrived, the self-righteous Green would cast the next die, determining thereby his and the party’s political fate for the next decade.<sup>20</sup>

20. Green to Calhoun, November 19, 1830, *JCCP*, 11: 261–62.

## CHAPTER 12



# The Jackson-Calhoun Correspondence

## I.

**T**he winter of 1831 began well for Green. In February, both the House and the Senate reelected him as their printer. This happened despite a widespread belief among many of Clay's followers, as well as some in the Democracy itself, that his reelection was next to impossible. One of Clay's supporters, for example, asserted that, in his opinion, Green would lose the printing of both houses of Congress. "Our party will go against him to a man," he wrote, "and in the House a great many Jackson men will oppose him . . . [H]e will scarcely get a vote from Pennsylvania, and many of the Jackson members from N. York will drop him." The House, however, gave the editor a solid vote—108 to Gales and Seaton's 76; the Senate followed suit, albeit with a much closer tally—24 to Gales and Seaton's 22. Many credited Green's victory in both branches, and his significant majority in the House, to the support of the Nullifiers, whom Blair had believed Green actively canvassed. There is no evidence that he did this. That Blair received only one vote in the balloting for printer was gratifying to Green, who could not have felt more vindicated.<sup>1</sup>

Again, appearances were deceptive—and Green was indeed aware of

1. F. H. Pettis to Clay, December 16, 1830, *Papers of Clay*, ed. Seager, 8: 313; Smith, *Press, Politics, and Patronage*, 151; Blair to Jackson, December 22, 1829, *Jackson Correspondence*, ed. Bassett, 6: 43; Nevins, *Diary of John Quincy Adams*, February 16, 1831, 414. Green notified his readers on February 10, 1831, of his reelection as printer to Congress. *U.S. Telegraph*, February 10, 1831.



that. The Senate had preferred several other candidates. Thomas Ritchie, Amos Kendall, Mordecai Noah, and Isaac Hill had all been invited at one time to compete against Green for the coveted contract, and they were approached by none other than Jackson's closest aides, who favored Van Buren over Calhoun and the *Globe* over the *Telegraph*. All of their choices, however, had accepted other posts. That left Green as the next best candidate, by default.<sup>2</sup>

## II.

Events were brewing, however, that would severely undermine Green's support in Congress and within administration circles, eventually leading to his outright dismissal from the graces of Jackson. The matter in question concerned actions that had been taken back in 1818, shortly after Jackson's successful, and some would say, unwarranted, invasion of Spanish Florida. That topic had been a significant point of contention between the National Republicans and the Democrats during the election of 1828, but now it had resurfaced to pit Van Buren against Calhoun, with the objective of alienating the latter figure from the goodwill of Jackson and placing the New Yorker as the forerunner for the Old Hero's succession as president. Green would take a leading role in the drama—completely to his own and the vice president's detriment.

Following Jackson's invasion of Florida in 1818, the Monroe cabinet, save for then-secretary-of-state John Quincy Adams, considered officially reprimanding the Old Hero for his seizure of the Spanish territory—an action Jackson believed had been sanctioned by President Monroe, and even Secretary of War Calhoun, all along. Nothing came of the matter, in the end, except for the United States' permanent acquisition of Spanish Florida. Since the proceedings of cabinet meetings were shrouded in secrecy, Jackson never knew that Calhoun had urged disciplinary measures be taken against him in 1819. He would find out, however, in 1830.

In April of that year, just as the Jackson administration began to look for another newspaper in Washington, William H. Crawford, secretary of the treasury under Monroe, presidential candidate in 1824, and longtime foe of Calhoun, broke his silence. He allowed Senator

2. Autobiographical Fragments, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Smith, *Press, Politics, and Patronage*, 116, 310 n.11; Kendall, *Autobiography*, 304, 307; *U.S. Telegraph*, December 8, 1828.

John Forsyth of Georgia and two of Jackson's closest aides, James Hamilton and William B. Lewis, all of whom supported Van Buren and disliked the vice president, to show the president a letter, in Crawford's hand, stating that Calhoun was the central figure pushing for his court-martial after the Florida incident. Although Jackson had heard rumors earlier of Calhoun's "betrayal," he had dismissed them as unfounded. But this was actual evidence. The president screamed "betrayal" indeed, and that was essentially the beginning of the end for the vice president.

Jackson immediately sent Crawford's damning letter to Calhoun and demanded, in quite severe tones, a reply. But Calhoun's rejoinder would have done little in the way of repairing the rupture between the two men, for Jackson had purposefully provoked it in the first place. He had little desire for amends. As ensuing chapters will reveal, Jackson was already estranged from the vice president at this point anyway, and nothing Calhoun could have done, whether deny Crawford's charges outright or reveal the truth, would have saved him in the eyes of the president. Nonetheless, the vice president chose a number of avenues in which to address the issue—all of which only further exacerbated an already volatile situation.

In a fifty-two-page answer to Jackson, Calhoun challenged the president's right to question his conduct while secretary of war, which was certainly a poorly chosen way to approach Andrew Jackson. He went on to deny that Jackson was ever given the authority by the government to invade Florida and conduct himself as he had, and he believed that Crawford's letter was merely one part to a whole conspiracy directed at himself. Jackson sent a short reply to Calhoun's lengthy rebuttal in which he terminated any future correspondence between them regarding the issue. The president would see it the other way, that the vice president had instigated a conspiracy against his administration. Both men, in the end, believed they were the victim of the other's machinations. Regardless of who was the guilty party, the break between the president and vice president was final. Green, however, would help widen the breach.<sup>3</sup>

Green believed that Calhoun had always defended Jackson's actions in regard to the Florida invasion, although, as secretary of war, Calhoun had no legal or constitutional authority to order Jackson to do the things he did. Jackson, as such, had to make the call in the field,

3. On the Jackson-Calhoun correspondence regarding the Florida affair, see Remini, *Course of American Freedom*, 240–47, 306–8.

and he had done so accordingly and legally. As for Crawford, the conniving Georgian erroneously and maliciously informed Jackson of the cabinet proceedings solely to take revenge on Calhoun for his political ascendancy over Crawford. Caught in the middle between Jackson and Calhoun, the editor defended both men. Yet, Green did not see the severity of the situation between the president and the vice president; he thought that it would subside after the two came to some sort of reconciliation. He was right—for a brief moment.<sup>4</sup>

After Jackson had decided to seek reelection, very early in 1831, many of Calhoun's supporters decided that it would be best if he and Jackson could make amends. Senators Felix Grundy of Tennessee and Richard M. Johnson of Kentucky, with the aid of Samuel Swartwout, took matters into their own hands, while Calhoun was away in South Carolina, to seek some sort of reconciliation. Jackson, as well as Van Buren, agreed. The details of the rapprochement, however, have never been known, save for one agreement, that neither Jackson nor Calhoun were ever to mention the Seminole controversy again. Restoration of civilities appeared to have been effected when Calhoun, to the surprise of all, attended a dinner party at Van Buren's. It seemed that the "happy" family had been reunited. But Calhoun and Green would blow it severely: the vice president sought vindication, and he decided to publish the entire correspondence—in the columns of "Jackson's" organ, the *U.S. Telegraph*.<sup>5</sup>

Green appeared to have no knowledge of any reconciliation between Jackson and Calhoun. In January 1831 he told Edwards that "Genl. Jackson has not withdrawn the charge of insincerity, and the Vice-President is now waiting, and will in all probability come out with a publication of self-defence." Ironically, he wrote his letter to Edwards the very day that Calhoun attended Van Buren's dinner party, January 19. Two conclusions can be drawn, therefore, that either Green and Calhoun had little correspondence with each other, or there may have been no intention on the part of Calhoun to reinstate goodwill with the president. For all appearances, the latter assumption holds more weight, for Green already knew of the decision to publish the correspondence between Jackson and Calhoun, as exhibited in his letter to Edwards. Quite possibly, Calhoun never intended to carry out the reconciliation urged by his allies.<sup>6</sup>

4. Green to Edwards, January 19, 1831, *Edwards Papers*, ed. Washburne, 566–68.

5. On the failed reconciliation between Jackson and Calhoun, see Remini, *Course of American Freedom*, 305–6; Niven, *Calhoun*, 174–75.

6. Green to Edwards, January 19, 1831, *Edwards Papers*, ed. Washburne, 566–68.

The decision to publish the correspondence, moreover, was no secret, and Green and Calhoun ensured that fact. For one, the South Carolinian had been, for some weeks since, openly collecting correspondence relative to the Seminole affair. In the gossipy atmosphere of Washington, this fact had even reached the president by the middle of January 1831. For another, Senator Grundy had approached Blair about publishing the correspondence in the *Globe*. Beyond any doubt, Blair informed the president, who also began collecting material in his defense. Finally, Green himself provided Eaton with two copies of Calhoun's address and the respective correspondence the night before its publication. The editor asked Eaton to show it to Jackson for his perusal. Grundy as well had previously approached the secretary of war with the same purpose in mind, to see if anything might be objectionable to the president. In both instances, Eaton purposefully withheld the material from the president, and Green and friends assumed that Jackson had given his assent. On February 17, 1831, Calhoun's "Address to the People of the United States" and the Jackson-Calhoun correspondence were there in the pages of the *Telegraph* for the whole world to peruse.<sup>7</sup>

### III.

Jackson was "thunderstruck" when he read the *Telegraph*. Green and Calhoun, declared the president, "are as compleatly prostrate as any two gentlemen ever were. They have cut their own throats, and destroyed themselves in a shorter space of time than any two men I ever knew." The Old Hero immediately assumed that a conspiracy had been initiated against his administration, and that Calhoun and Green were its ringleaders. Writing to Andrew Jackson Donelson, Jackson, referring to Green alone, stated that "the man has realised what I long suspected, by displaying to open day what his secretly workings were." Yet he feared that there were others in "our ranks" than Green "who had been acting the double part." The president was now convinced beyond any doubt that his former mouthpiece was not acting in good faith and that the editor would surely sacrifice the administration to the elevation

7. For Calhoun's "Address to the People of the United States" and the complete Jackson-Calhoun correspondence, which were published in the *Telegraph*, see roll 22, frames 132–203 in the Green Papers, SHC-UNC. Remini, *Course of American Freedom*, 306–8; Green to Eaton, February 16, 1831, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; *U.S. Telegraph*, February 17, 21, 23, 26, 1831; Jackson to Donelson, March 24, 1831, *Jackson Correspondence*, ed. Bassett, 4: 252–53.

of Calhoun. But rest assured, we will get along prosperously, Jackson told his longtime friend John Coffee, regardless of "all the intrigues of Duff Green, Calhoun, and Co."<sup>8</sup>

Others close to Jackson and his supporters in the states and in Congress reacted similarly. Tennessee governor William Carroll told the Old Hero that he should proceed cautiously when dealing with Green. "He is a man," opined Carroll, "in whose honor I never did confide." Tennessee senator Felix Grundy informed Eaton that Green's course "is such that every friend of Gen. J. must abandon him." A friend of Grundy's, who also supported Calhoun, declared that he had never deserted an old friend, but with Green there was no hope. "Green is bent on nothing but mischief," he told the Tennessee senator, and Calhoun must be warned not to follow "a designing set of intriguing, disappointed, broken down & unworthy men" whose headquarters were located at the *Telegraph's* office. Duff Green, Grundy's friend concluded, "has worked so much in intrigue himself that his fancy magnifies everything around him into intrigue."<sup>9</sup>

Missouri senator Thomas Hart Benton also reiterated the charge of a conspiracy on the part of Green. The staunch Jacksonian, "Old Bullion" Benton, charged the editor with designs to undermine the Jackson administration and promote Calhoun as a presidential candidate. He recalled a story that transpired sometime in the winter of 1830–1831 where Green approached another editor by the name of J. M. Duncan with the intention of enlisting his support in a scheme concerning the 1832 presidential election, in which Jackson would be prevented from being a candidate and Calhoun brought forward instead. Green then indicated that a rupture between the president and vice president was imminent, that Van Buren was behind it, and that a certain correspondence would soon be published outlining this charge. The objective was to establish pro-Calhoun papers and editors throughout the states and push for the South Carolinian's nomination. Duncan, a devout supporter of Jackson, supposedly informed the president of Green's intrigues. Of course Green later denied Benton's rendition altogether.<sup>10</sup>

8. Jackson to Charles Love, March 7, 1831, Jackson to Donelson, March 24, 1831, Jackson to John Coffee, April 24, 1831, May 26, 1831, *Jackson Correspondence*, ed. Bassett, 4: 246, 251–52, 252–53, 268–69, 285.

9. Grundy to Eaton, May 25, 1831, Grundy-McGavoke Letters, SHC-UNC; J. Gwin to Grundy, May 25, 1831, Grundy Papers, SHC-UNC; William Carroll to Jackson, September 27, 1831, *Jackson Correspondence*, ed. Bassett, 6: 509.

10. Benton, *Thirty Years' View*, 1: 128–29; Autobiographical Fragments, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

With the publication of Calhoun's "Address" and the Seminole correspondence, moreover, the peaceful coexistence between the *Globe* and the *Telegraph* came to an abrupt end. An open war of the presses ensued immediately. "When we came to this city," harked the *Globe*, "it was our ardent hope that the *Telegraph* and our humbler selves would continue to be friendly laborers in the same field. It is some weeks since that that hope has vanished." The *Globe* then unleashed a barrage of charges against the *Telegraph*. Blair, devoutly attached to the fortunes of Van Buren, accused his editorial opponent of placing the vice president's ambitions above the party and the good of the country. Many of Jackson's closest advisers, as well as the Old Hero himself, had long suspected Green of ulterior motives, of scheming on behalf of his own self-interest, of disloyalty to the very man he helped elect, of simply being devoid of any principle at all. Publication of the Jackson-Calhoun correspondence merely verified their suspicions. The *Telegraph* and its editor, therefore, had to be exposed for their nefarious designs against Jackson and the nation. Green truculently responded in his renowned way, denying any pretense on his part to undermine the Jackson administration and foist Calhoun upon the electorate. He did, however, concede that certain intrigues for the presidency existed, but not from his quarter. According to Green, it was another individual, close to the president, who was fomenting a conspiracy.<sup>11</sup>

#### IV.

Anyone who had any knowledge of the Washington political scene knew two things from reading Calhoun's "Address" and the correspondence that accompanied it: that Calhoun clearly intended to defend his conduct as secretary of war in the Monroe administration, and that he concomitantly exposed a conspiracy to destroy his political career. Although the vice president never revealed who was the ringleader of the conspiracy, there were enough hints to point to one source—Secretary of State Martin Van Buren. Even the New Yorker himself knew instantly upon reading the material that he was the one at whom the insinuation was directed. No one could deny that there existed a political competition, even an open animosity, between Calhoun and Van Buren. The heart of the contention was who would succeed Jackson as president. Whether there was an actual "conspiracy" to destroy

11. *Globe*, February 23, 1831; Smith, *Blair Family*, 72.

Calhoun's career remains debatable, but evidence certainly demonstrates an active strategy by the friends of Van Buren to see the Magician forwarded as Jackson's favorite, and the best way for doing this was to undermine Calhoun's career at every opportunity. Nonetheless, both Calhoun and Green sincerely believed the Van Buren conspiracy, and the editor employed every means to expose and to defeat it. Just as he had during the 1828 campaign, the editor used both the columns of the *Telegraph* and private correspondence to address the concerns of party members and meet the specter of party dissolution.<sup>12</sup>

Throughout the late winter and continuing into the fall of 1831, the *Telegraph* conducted a running battle with the *Globe* over the supposed conspiracy to destroy Calhoun and promote Van Buren. Responding to the *Globe's* assertions that Calhoun was guilty of intriguing against the president, Green argued that it was the secretary of state, supported by Kendall, Eaton, and Lewis, who was attempting to gain Jackson's exclusive favor by attacking the vice president. The *Globe* assailed the *Telegraph*, Green maintained, solely because his paper had refused "to commit ourselves, in a particular quarter, upon the question of [Jackson's] *SUCCESSOR*." Anyone who had not come out for Van Buren would feel the brunt of Blair's paper and face the same charges that were being leveled against Calhoun. To augment their chances of success, those around the president and allied to the secretary of state would gain the Old Hero's ear in order to turn him against those who refused to abet their schemes. "The effort of the Van Buren party," Green wrote to another editor, "is to rely on Genl. Jackson's personal popularity and bring it to bear on all competitors." These "pretended friends" of the president, as Green called them, would also use the "spoils of office" to gain the advantage. In short, Van Buren, not Calhoun, was guilty of intriguing, and the president and the people had to be made aware of these secret machinations—hence the publication of Calhoun's "Address" and the Seminole correspondence.<sup>13</sup>

12. Martin Van Buren, *The Autobiography of Martin Van Buren*, 380; Remini, *Course of American Freedom*, 308.

13. *U.S. Telegraph*, February 15, 21, 23, 25, 26, 28, March 3, April 15, July 11, 1831; Green to Eaton, February 16, 1831, Green to Ingalls, March 10, 1831, SHC-UNC; Green to editors of the *Lynchburg Jeffersonian*, April 16, 1831, in Frederick Moore, ed., "John C. Calhoun as Seen by His Political Friends: Letters of Duff Green, Dixon H. Lewis and Richard K. Cralle during the Period from 1831 to 1848," 164–65, hereafter cited as *SHA Publications*.

## V.

But Green was completely oblivious to the damage that this action had done to his and Calhoun's standing with the president. The editor had intended to expose a plot that threatened the party, the administration, and the country. Yet, all he had accomplished was to drive further the wedge between the competing factions of Van Buren and Calhoun and improve the New Yorker's standing with the president. In fact, the Old Hero believed that it was Green and Calhoun who were the conspirators, not Van Buren and company. Throughout this affair, however, Green maintained his loyalty to Jackson, believing that he would see the evils surrounding and influencing him. The editor, moreover, continually emphasized his opposition to Van Buren, not to the president himself. For Green, support of Calhoun was not opposition to Jackson; Van Buren and Clay were the enemies. "Let every one of [Calhoun's] friends unite in opposition to Clay and Van Buren," the editor informed Alexander Hamilton, son of the first secretary of the treasury during the Washington administration. "Let them give it distinctly to be understood that their support of Genl. Jackson is independent of any support of Van Buren." Green had no intention of attacking the president or undermining his administration, for the editor sincerely believed that Jackson was simply a pawn used by Van Buren and company. The president had been duped, he argued, and it was the Old Hero above all who had to be rescued from the intrigues of the secretary of state and his minions. "There are many reasons," declared the *Telegraph*, "which the public in due time will fully comprehend, which dispose us to separate the President, himself, as much as possible from the intrigues passing around him." Jackson must be separated, not from Calhoun, but from "Eaton, Kendall, Lewis, Van Buren & Co." It all seemed so simple and pure to the editor.<sup>14</sup>

Green was stunned, therefore, when the *Globe* and members of the cabinet assailed him as a traitor and intriguer. On a brisk March afternoon in Washington, Green encountered Postmaster General Barry on the way to the *Telegraph's* office. The two men quickly turned to the topic of the publication of the Seminole correspondence. Barry stated that the president and many of his advisers considered Green to be wholly in the opposition because he had written editorials impugning

14. Green to Hamilton, March 7, 1831, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; see also Green to Joseph Lescure, March 17, 1831, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; *U.S. Telegraph*, July 11, October 6, 1831.



the secretary of state and defending those who were allied with Calhoun.

"Am I to understand," Green stated, "that support or opposition to Mr. Van Buren was to be considered the test of friendship to the administration?"

"I cannot see how anyone could sustain the administration and assail one of the members of the Cabinet," Barry retorted.

"Well, then," queried the editor, "how can you reconcile the bitter attacks made upon the Vice-President with a support of the administration?"

"I am a Jackson man," came the response.

"But your organ, the *Globe*, assails Mr. Calhoun and I learn that friendship or enmity to Mr. Calhoun is to be made the test of friendship or enmity to General Jackson!" said Green.

Barry simply admonished the editor. "Mr. Calhoun has assailed Mr. Jackson by the publication of the correspondence and that if you identify yourself with Mr. Calhoun, then you must abide the consequences."<sup>15</sup>

Green was flabbergasted. How could defending Calhoun, the real friend of the president, and exposing the intrigues of Van Buren, the pretended friend of the president, be deemed traitorous by Jackson? Had not the published correspondence revealed Green's undeniable devotion to the president, by exposing the real dangers to his administration? Green knew that those who had the ear of Jackson intended to turn him against the vice president and the *Telegraph*, but the editor would take action to thwart this. In his letter to Eaton the day before publication of the correspondence, Green thought he had made that explicit. Attempts had been made, he informed Eaton, "to weaken the confidence of the president in my friendship," and believing that "an important crisis involving his fame and the dearest interest of our common country" existed, the editor hoped at once to relieve the president from all the imputations that "his enemies" would cast upon him. "I take the liberty to repeat," he concluded to Eaton, "that all the whispers and insinuations, that I am hostile to the President, are not only unfounded, but proceed from the basest and worst of motives. I have defended his character with a zeal, as ardent as my respect and confidence, were sincere and limited." And so Green published the Seminole correspondence, telling Eaton that "I trust that Genl. Jackson will place

15. Green to John Floyd, March 10, 1831, in Charles Ambler, ed., *The Life and Diary of John Floyd: Governor of Virginia, an Apostle of Secession, and the Father of the Oregon Country*, 127–28, hereafter cited as *Diary of Floyd*.

the proper construction on this proceeding.” But, again, Eaton never gave the letter nor the “Address” and correspondence to be published to Jackson. It would not have mattered anyway, for Green’s profession of faith to the administration would have been cast aside by the president as an outright canard. The Old Hero had already made up his mind on the matter at hand.<sup>16</sup>

Despite Jackson’s enmity toward him, Green continued to publicize his complete support for the president and his reelection in 1832. When the *Globe* declared that the *Telegraph* had gone into opposition to the Jackson administration, the editor responded consistently that no such thing had ever entered into his mind. “The *Telegraph* has not gone,” he proclaimed, “and it never will go over to the opposition.” Green regularly defended the election of Jackson in 1828, and reaffirmed his faith in the principles upon which the Old Hero was elected. Rumors were also widely circulated that the editor supported Calhoun as the presidential candidate in 1832. Nonsense, he replied. The *Telegraph* had never “hoisted a false flag” as to the reelection of Jackson. “As to the next presidential election,” Green told party faithful, “I am decidedly in favor of the reelection of Genl. Jackson. He has the popularity necessary to defeat the election of Mr. Clay.” The same charge was continually made in the *Telegraph*: there was never any doubt as to the paper’s support of the president. All that Green had consistently stated was that he intended to separate the president from designing men. Jackson’s battle for reform and virtue was now transformed into a struggle to save him from the corruption and intrigue of “Van Buren & Co.”—and to this end, the labors of the *Telegraph* would be directed.<sup>17</sup>

## VI.

In his defense of the president and the vice president and in his pursuit of exposing intrigues, Green believed that he was ensuring party unity and harmony. If Jackson were to succumb to the designs of Van Buren and cast out Calhoun, it would certainly benefit Clay and the opposition. “You cannot fail to foresee,” Green warned Eaton, “that the enemies of the President [will] charge him with the sacrifice of one of his most valuable friends; a charge which it becomes the duty of those

16. Green to Eaton, February 16, 1831, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

17. *U.S. Telegraph*, February 15, March 8, 18, April 15, 1831; Green to J. F. Caldwell, March 8, 1831, Green to Washington Evans, March 17, 1831, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

who are the real and sincere friends of the President to repel." He could not see, however, nor would he ever, that the very act itself of publishing the correspondence had exposed a rift in the Democracy. Nonetheless, the editor harangued against the *Globe* for its attacks on Calhoun and on the *Telegraph*, for it increased the chances of Clay's election in 1832, an event that would endanger the country. Green also intervened to heal the wounds of party division that were racking Georgia; the continuing struggle there between two powerful factions would also benefit Clay. Even the question of the succession itself was secondary to maintaining party strength. "I have always considered the question of who is President," he wrote a friend, "as one of minor consideration when compared with the greater one of the *union*, harmony and prosperity of the republican party and the country."<sup>18</sup>

Nothing could persuade Green that he had hurt the party by publishing the correspondence. In fact, he fully believed that his actions had salvaged the honor and the principles of the Democracy. That the correspondence may have injured some within the party, he wrote another editor, may be true, but "it is saying but little of the party itself to say that one of its preeminent members should not vindicate his character against the vilest aspersions lest per chance the party may suffer from the *truth*. No my dear sir—the republican party can only be maintained by its support of truth and justice." But that "truth and justice" was one-sided. Only Green knew what these two principles were and how to protect them. Little wonder, then, that Jackson and Green collided—they both had a self-righteous attitude when defending what they believed to be "truth and justice."<sup>19</sup>

Even months after the publication of the correspondence, while the shower of criticism and abhorrence rained down on him, Green expressed a will to continue serving the party. "I must take no step," he astonishingly told a party supporter, "which will impair my influence with the Jackson Party." How blind indeed he was to the recent events. As far as Jackson was concerned, the editor had *permanently* impaired his relationship with the party. Yet Green believed that he had done nothing wrong. He was mortified that his "motives and character" had been "misconceived" by others in the party, especially those within the Jackson administration itself. In seeking "truth and justice," he had refused to become "an instrument of injustice" by condoning the schemes

18. Green to Eaton, February 16, 1831, Green to Caldwell, March 8, 1831, Green to Pemberton, August 5, 1831, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; *U.S. Telegraph*, March 8, 1831.

19. Green to David Henshaw, March 8, 1831, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

of the Van Buren wing. "I am the injured party," he told Donelson. True to form, Green believed that his course was the just one; that only he had acted disinterestedly; that his actions would save the party and the Jackson administration in the end; and that they could not survive without his guiding hand of "truth and justice." "I confidently rely on the goodness of my cause," he wrote Virginia governor John Floyd, "and the justice & the sympathies of the people to protect me from eventual loss." His presumptuous outlook had once again clouded his political astuteness, and his lack of circumspection had banished him from the graces of the president. Moreover, his actions had an adverse financial consequence as well—within months after publishing the correspondence, the *Telegraph* had lost over four hundred subscribers, a number which would swell into the thousands by the end of 1831.<sup>20</sup>

## VII.

Despite his assurances of loyalty to the president, Green let it be known that he would not support Jackson at all costs, especially at the price of violating his principles, his independence, and what he thought were "truth and justice." The editor had informed Eaton, in his letter asking him to show the "Address" and correspondence to the Old Hero, that the president should already know that "as much as I respect him, there never was a time when I would sacrifice my principles to serve him, or any other man." Green had also told Barry, when the postmaster general had admonished him that assailing Van Buren and defending Calhoun was certain banishment from Jackson's graces, that he had "counted the cost" and was prepared for any contest. "That I denied the right of the President or anyone to propose any such terms," he told Barry, "but that when proposed, I was at no loss to choose." Certainly he had felt much anxiety over publishing the correspondence and the possible alienation of Jackson, but Green believed it was his duty to defend the truth. "Mine is a trying position," he intimated to Edwards. "I stand on principle, and will not desert Calhoun."<sup>21</sup>

20. Green to Cabell, April 16, 1831, June 26, 1831, *SHA Publications*, 7: 164–65, 166; Green to Ingalls, March 10, 1831, Green to Alexander Hamilton, April 2, 1831, Green to Floyd, June 21, 1831, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Green to Donelson, no date, Andrew Jackson Donelson Papers, Tennessee State Library and Archives, hereinafter cited as TSLA.

21. Green to Eaton, February 16, 1831, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Green to John Floyd, March 10, 1831, *Diary of Floyd*, 128; Green to Edwards, February 16, 1831, *Edwards Papers*, ed. Washburne, 570.

But Green also let it be known, in no equivocal terms, that he was not Calhoun's organ as well. When numerous party members began to query the editor whether or not the vice president would become a candidate against the Old Hero, he rebuked them for even entertaining the idea. He stated that "whether Mr. Calhoun will ever be a candidate or whether I may support him if he is will depend upon what I may conceive to be my duty in the case presented." Jackson's successor, moreover, should be decided only upon the merits of the candidates before the public at that time, and no speculation in the meantime would ever sway him.<sup>22</sup>

Why, then, had he taken Calhoun's side over that of Van Buren's and, eventually, of the president's? Simple, Green told the public: independence and principle. "In advocating the principles which brought Genl. Jackson into power," he told a party operative, "I never relinquished my independence as a man nor my rights as a citizen." The editor defended the vice president, not because he was his lackey, but because he saw him as the innocent victim of a conspiracy to destroy his political career and promote another by evil means. Anybody in his situation, Green maintained, would have yielded to his duty as an editor, more than to any personal interest or attachment. Of course, there was more than just his independence at stake; principle was the overriding factor in Green's decision to prefer Calhoun over Van Buren. "In defending Mr. Calhoun's character against the warfare of Mr. Van Buren's presses," he told his readers, "the *Telegraph* advocates the cause of truth and justice. It is not the cause of John C. Calhoun, but of every citizen who loves virtue." It was the cause of the "democracy of the country." The *Telegraph* still supported the same principles as it had in 1828 and had never wavered from them, nor ever would despite the cost. Green constantly reminded his readers that his paper was not Calhoun's organ. It was the "child of the *Democratic* party." Yet, the editor promised, the *Telegraph* "never has stopped to count the cost, or to calculate the profits of a faithful discharge of its duty, and its editor has no fear of losing the confidence or forfeiting the support of the democratic part by defending his own character, or that of any man, against unjust oppressions." Independence and principle, indeed, were the driving forces behind Green's every word and action.<sup>23</sup>

Nonetheless, the two powerful presses—*Globe* and *Telegraph*—con-

22. *U.S. Telegraph*, April 18, September 5, 1831; Green to Caldwell, March 8, 1831, Green to Washington Evans, March 17, 1831, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

23. Green to Joseph Lescure, March 17, 1831, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; *U.S. Telegraph*, March 8, April 20, 1831.

tinued the imputation of conspiracy to the other, and all the while the forces of Van Buren and the supporters of Calhoun formed for combat, each, like the two Washington papers, attributing intrigues, designs, and schemes to the other faction. And through it all stood the gaunt figure and the immovable presence and popularity of President Andrew Jackson. It was his blessing alone that all desired. He would give it to Van Buren. But the war of words, charges, and countercharges would merely increase throughout 1831—and behind it all was the tongue and pen of Duff Green, continually fueling the flames of discontent and believing that his course was the just one.

## CHAPTER 13



### The Eaton Affairs

#### I.

There was a reason why John Eaton did not show Green's letter and the correspondence to be published to Jackson. It was his revenge against Calhoun. The secretary of war blamed the vice president for spearheading the movement to remove him from the cabinet and to ostracize his wife from Washington society. Known as the Eaton Affair, or more popularly as the "petticoat war" or by Van Buren's appellation, the "Eaton Malaria," this unfortunate episode consumed much of the energy and attention of the president, the cabinet members, their families, and the gossipmongers of the nation's capital for the first two years of Jackson's first term. It ended with really only two victors—Andrew Jackson and Martin Van Buren. The tawdry affair led to a cabinet reorganization, with all who had appeared pro-Calhoun being ousted, leaving Van Buren the uncontested master of the field. Both rivals, Calhoun and Van Buren, saw it as a conspiracy against the other. Again, as in the Jackson-Calhoun correspondence, Duff Green played a pivotal role—to his own detriment as well as to that of Calhoun and the ousted cabinet members.<sup>1</sup>

The central character in the Eaton Affair tragedy was Margaret O'Neale, more popularly known as Peggy. She was the precocious daugh-

1. For the best account of the Eaton Affair, see John Marszalek, *The Petticoat Affair: Manners, Mutiny, and Sex in Andrew Jackson's White House*. See also Remini, *Course of American Freedom*, 203–16, 239–40, 243.

ter of the owner and keeper of a popular boardinghouse in Washington. Apart from a brief stay in New York, under the care and direction of New York governor DeWitt Clinton, Margaret O'Neale grew up in this boardinghouse atmosphere, daily absorbing and even participating in the political discourse that prevailed there. She was the favorite of all who stayed at and frequented the Franklin House; she was a welcomed reprieve from the day's harrying business. Already an outgoing girl, this political and social environment, heightened by the incessant attention paid to her, directly shaped the character and personality of Margaret.<sup>2</sup>

The boarder's fascination with Margaret merely increased as she matured into a beautiful, alluring, and sensuous young woman. Suitors were never scarce. Following a failed elopement and constant male advances, both desired and not, Margaret married John Timberlake, a purser in the U.S. Navy, in 1816. Timberlake had failed financially as a naval purser for a variety of reasons, some his own fault and others not; his subsequent business venture in Washington failed as well. Burdened with the responsibility of a wife and several children, Timberlake returned to the sea as a naval purser, in hopes that his luck would improve. While at sea, Timberlake entrusted his financial and legal affairs, as well as the general care of his family, to his very close friend, John Eaton, U.S. senator from Tennessee. Eaton's closeness with Margaret spawned rumors of infidelity, and when Timberlake committed suicide overseas—for reasons not related to the rumors about his wife—gossip only spread. Tales, insinuations, and charges about the supposed immorality of Margaret Timberlake, however, were already commonplace.<sup>3</sup>

Jacksonian society demanded women to be submissive and genteel, reserved and respectful, polished and mannered; women were not to engage in the political life that was the exclusive realm of their husbands. But Margaret was forthright and open with men; she regularly engaged in political dialogue; and she could be outright confrontational. In short, Margaret violated the fundamental traits demanded of women in nineteenth-century American society. As a consequence, the women of Washington society saw her as unchaste, loose, unfaithful, and immoral; she was, they held, too forward, too outgoing, too pushy. Genteel circles in Washington found it all too easy, then, to spread rumors of Margaret's unladylike behavior—despite the fact that rumors

2. Marszalek, *Petticoat Affair*, 24–32.

3. Marszalek, *Petticoat Affair*, 35–44.



of her promiscuity, immorality, and lewdness were completely unfounded. The alleged scandals of Margaret O'Neale Timberlake spread wildly through the nation's capital, and even if one did not believe them true, he or she still snubbed her out of fear of also being ostracized. As one historian put it best, Washington society, especially the women, refused to associate with Margaret because they saw her as a direct threat to social norms, not because she was seen as impure.<sup>4</sup>

Margaret only made matters worse when she married Eaton in January 1829, less than a year after the death of her first husband. This action clearly violated the prescribed etiquette of genteel society, intensifying the sensation surrounding the life of Margaret and reaffirming for many her unrefined status. But even more unsettling for genteel Washington was the fact that the newly elected president, Andrew Jackson, appointed Eaton as his secretary of war. Margaret Eaton was now a cabinet member's wife. Washington elite cried foul. How could such a moral reprobate enter their ranks? The snubbing of Margaret continued, despite her new status.<sup>5</sup>

As for Jackson, he, too, had resided at the Franklin House when he came to Washington as a senator from Tennessee in 1823. Like many others, he became enamored with Margaret Timberlake's ebullient personality, and the two became close friends. Eaton himself, moreover, was one of the president's closest friends and confidants, and when Margaret and John married, Jackson fully supported them. Jackson detested disloyalty; he would never abandon longtime friends. Washington society, therefore, faced more than a war against the Eatons. They confronted the indomitable will and stubborn deportment of Andrew Jackson. The Old Hero fervently defended Margaret's chastity. He saw the assault on her reputation and character as analogous to the attack on Rachel during the recent presidential election. Jackson disdained warfare on womanhood—he had told Green this during the 1828 election—and he refused to allow any attacks on his friends, especially when they were unfounded. So when the leading ladies of Washington snubbed Margaret at the Inaugural Ball, they fired the opening volley of the Jackson administration's "petticoat war."

In the late winter of 1829, a noted Presbyterian minister, Reverend Ezra Stiles Ely, a staunch supporter of Jackson in the 1828 election, asked the new president to remove Eaton as secretary of war, due to his wife's supposed indiscretions. In a letter to Jackson, Ely catalogued all the

4. Marszalek, *Petticoat Affair*, vii, viii, 55, 56, 89, 90, 101, 134–35, 182.

5. Marszalek, *Petticoat Affair*, 46–47.

sins committed by Margaret, from her infidelity to her miscarriage occurring while her husband was at sea. The letter and its contents stunned and angered the Old Hero. He immediately responded with an equally bold letter defending Margaret and denying all the allegations made by the minister. Ely backed down, but that did not stop the president from a time-consuming campaign to gather information denying all the slanders against Eaton's wife. When Margaret found out about Ely's letter, moreover, she only made matters harder on herself by going to Ely's house in Philadelphia and upbraiding him for his assaults on her, especially the miscarriage charge. She finally pried from Ely the name of another minister, John Campbell, who had informed Ely himself of many of the allegations listed in the letter to Jackson. After finding out that he had been exposed, Campbell decided to visit Jackson and repeat the allegations, mainly the miscarriage rumor. Jackson stood firm on Margaret's part against Campbell as he had against Ely. Soon thereafter, both sides, clergy and president, commenced a concerted and exhaustive effort to gather information supporting their respective positions on Eaton's wife. In the meantime, throughout the spring and summer of 1829, the women of Washington continued their blatant snubbing of Margaret.<sup>6</sup>

Jackson had had enough. On September 10, 1829, he summoned Campbell, Ely, personal secretaries Andrew Jackson Donelson and William B. Lewis, and the cabinet, except for Eaton himself. Vice President Calhoun was at his home in South Carolina. The topic of discussion was the social snubbing of Margaret Eaton. The president laid out the evidence gathered on behalf of Mrs. Eaton's innocence and, in an angry outburst, exclaimed that Margaret was "chaste as a virgin!" The Old Hero, however, could not convince the ministers or the cabinet members, save for William Barry, of either the propriety of socializing with Margaret or her moral purity. The meeting broke up without any resolution of the issue. Even Andrew Jackson could not remedy the troubles affecting his administration. In fact, he had only made matters more controversial.<sup>7</sup>

In the fall of 1829, the social season arrived in Washington. According to protocol, the president held the first formal dinner, followed by the cabinet members in order of their rank, Secretary of State Van Buren on down. The president's dinner was a dismal failure, as the atmosphere proved very cold and guests departed immediately following the

6. Marszalek, *Petticoat Affair*, 73, 77–84, 92–94, 97, 94–98, 99–100.

7. Marszalek, *Petticoat Affair*, 101–3.

meal. Jackson was distraught. Van Buren's dinners fared no better; the cabinet members attended, but their wives, excepting Mrs. Eaton and Mrs. Barry, declined. Calhoun, too, went stag. Secretaries Branch, Berrien, and Ingham subsequently held numerous social events without inviting the Eatons. The foreign diplomatic corps joined in snubbing Margaret as well. Even Jackson's own niece and nephew, Andrew and Emily Donelson, refused to socialize with Margaret. In another attempt to force Mrs. Eaton on Washington society, the president confronted the apparent ringleaders, Branch, Berrien, and Ingham. The Old Hero read them a memorandum in which he stated that he could not force their wives to socialize with Margaret, but he would not tolerate their attacks on her to the detriment of Eaton and the administration. The three cabinet members denied any conspiracy on their part against the Eatons or Jackson himself, but they could not mandate that their spouses accept Mrs. Eaton. Again, nothing had been resolved, and the snubbing continued.<sup>8</sup>

Jackson had first blamed Henry Clay and his minions for the ill treatment of Margaret Eaton. But as the first year of his administration unfolded, and he began to perceive a conspiracy against him from within his own ranks, the Old Hero shifted the blame to Branch, Berrien, and Ingham. Eventually, the entire weight of Jackson's wrath would fall on the head of Calhoun, who apparently controlled the three errant cabinet members. Indeed, the vice president's wife, Floride Calhoun, had been the first to snub Margaret Eaton. When the Eatons called on the Calhouns in January 1829—the vice president being away in South Carolina—Floride politely received them, but later made the decision not to return their call. Other Washington women followed suit. The split between the president and the vice president over the Seminole affair and the nullification issue simply convinced Jackson that Calhoun was the agent behind the conspiracy against the administration. But Calhoun was the passive victim. He and his wife were in South Carolina during most of Jackson's first two years in office. Jackson himself deserved most of the blame for exacerbating the Eaton controversy. But the Old Hero never saw it that way; he was never wrong. Margaret was innocent and the whole world must accept that fact. Nonetheless, by the end of Jackson's second year in the White House, all of Washington society was at war, and Margaret Eaton was the unwitting object of that bitter strife.<sup>9</sup>

8. Marszalek, *Petticoat Affair*, 53–54, 85–88, 108–14, 116–19, 131–32, 136, 139–46.

9. Marszalek, *Petticoat Affair*, 53–54, 73, 107, 110, 121, 122–23, 147–49, 179.

## II.

Green was caught in an awkward position as the Eaton Affair unfolded throughout 1829 and 1830. It was John Eaton, after all, who had loaned the *Missourian* a significant amount of money in order to purchase the *Telegraph* in 1826. The secretary of war had even spearheaded the movement to acquire additional loans from other Jacksonian partisans. To make matters even more uncomfortable, Green's wife, Lucretia, was one of Margaret Eaton's closest friends. "Mrs. Green and myself were on the most friendly terms," Margaret recalled in her autobiography, "and no better woman ever lived." But Mr. Green had his doubts about Mrs. Eaton; he believed the gossip about Margaret making its rounds in Washington in 1829 and into 1830. Even a month after Jackson's inauguration, during his troubles over federal appointments, Green predicted "much mischief" as a result of Margaret's presence in the nation's capital. He was certain that what he called her "furious passions" and her proclivity for vengeance would operate adversely on the new secretary of war and, quite possibly, on the Jackson administration itself. Obviously, Green failed to mention his apprehensions to his wife, for she would have none of the snubbing that the other ladies of Washington practiced regularly. Green maintained a strained neutrality for the time being.<sup>10</sup>

During the first year of Jackson's first term, Green and Eaton retained a cordial relationship, although the seeds of distrust and animosity were being sown. They had only one dispute prior to then. In the summer of 1827, while the election of 1828 was heating up, Green felt that Eaton's recent biography of the Old Hero—to be used solely as an electioneering device highlighting Jackson's public service and military exploits—omitted several important facts. He then employed Henry Lee to undertake another biography, but soon learned that the action upset Eaton. Green immediately informed Jackson that he had no desire to interfere in Eaton's work and apologized for any trouble he had caused the Old Hero, but he had contracted with Lee and must fulfill his obligation. Jackson told Green that, as far as he knew, his conduct had not hurt Eaton, and that Lee was welcome to have access to all of his correspondence. Fortunately, the affair never hindered the campaign nor the professional relationship between Green and Eaton.<sup>11</sup>

10. Margaret Eaton, *The Autobiography of Margaret Eaton*, 88–89; Maxcy to Calhoun, April 6, 1829, *JCCP*, 11: 17

11. Green to Jackson, July 18, 1827, Jackson to Green, August 13, 1827, *Jackson Correspondence*, ed. Bassett, 3: 375, 377.

The first real confrontation between Green and Eaton came during the appointment process in 1829. The editor blamed the secretary of war for thwarting his influence with the president and thus undermining his ability to secure federal positions for his friends. Green began to feel that the secretary of war was "intriguing & entirely selfish," a design he also affixed to Margaret Eaton. It was at this point, then, that the editor gradually began to question the motives and intentions of the secretary of war.<sup>12</sup>

Despite his growing distrust of Eaton and his outright dislike of Margaret, Green still approached the "Eaton Malaria" with caution, quite possibly a result of Lucretia's influence. In fact, he visited the Reverend Campbell on behalf of Eaton, telling the minister that it would be best to keep silent about his accusations against Margaret, that Eaton had accurately traced the rumors to their source, that Campbell was obliged to furnish the secretary of war with the charges the minister was prepared to make against Mrs. Eaton, and that prudence on Campbell's part would tend to allay the "unpleasant excitement" over the whole affair, which Green believed had originated in "petty jealousy and idle tittle tattle." Green even printed a large advertisement in his paper, purchased by Eaton, in which the secretary of war denounced letters in the opposition press that blamed him for Timberlake's death, announced a conspiracy against him and his wife, and warned that the author of such rumors would soon be proved a "base calumniator."<sup>13</sup>

Jackson, however, distrusted Green and his endeavors. Late in 1829, the president told a friend that when it came to defending Eaton, Green "will not only lie, but state falsehoods for the basest purpose." Most likely, Eaton himself began to drift away from Green, as indicated in his support of finding a new organ more "loyal" to the administration. Yet, even as the Old Hero and some of his closest advisers, namely Eaton and Lewis, turned against Green in 1830, the editor still included the secretary of war as one of his friends. Little did the editor know that the president, as well as Eaton, was already planning his demise.<sup>14</sup>

In July 1830, as he became more and more of a pariah to Jackson and company, Green wrote the Old Hero's nephew, Andrew Jackson Donelson, about the entire "Eaton Malaria," which for the time being had not escalated into a national farce. "I am the friend of Eaton," he told

12. Maxcy to Calhoun, May 7, 1829, *JCCP*, 11: 31.

13. Green to Campbell, October 19, 1829, Green Papers, LC; *U.S. Telegraph*, January 5, 1830.

14. Jackson to John McLemore, November 24, 1829, *Jackson Correspondence*, ed. Bassett, 4: 88.

Donelson, “and would guard against the evils inseparable from his situation.” The problem, however, was not John, but Margaret. “Does not [Eaton’s] wife rely upon Gen. Jackson’s power and popularity as the means of *forcing* her upon society?” Was not the secretary of war’s influence with the president chiefly devoted to the gratification of Margaret’s ambition? If it were not for Jackson’s sensitivity to the plight of Rachel, Green continued, the whole matter of defending Mrs. Eaton would not exist at all. Confusing Rachel with Margaret, moreover, was the proverbial case of mixing apples and oranges. “Mr. Jackson’s enemies all admitted that she had been an exemplary wife for *thirty* years,” he told Donelson. “She was a pious Christian in the quiet enjoyment of her domestic duties.” Margaret Eaton was an entirely different case: “she seeks to put every one under the ban of the president’s displeasure who does not pay court to her and denounce her enemies” and “she wishes it to be understood that her influence predominates.” Green believed that the administration, and the country as well, “rides on the balance.” Margaret, he declared, hated Calhoun more than Clay, which would destroy the unity and harmony of the Democracy. Again, the editor reiterated his deep attachment to the president; he was not a partisan of Calhoun. But if something was not done to suppress Margaret, the party would pay the price of division. “I am not the enemy of Maj. Eaton,” Green concluded. “I profess to be and am his friend. I would save him from the dangers which envelope him. I know his wife to be an extremely imprudent woman.”

Green’s assessment of the situation proved correct—party division would indeed be the outcome of the “petticoat war.” In a premonitory statement, the editor told Donelson that he, Ingham, and Branch could fall from grace as a result of Eaton’s vengeful wife. By April 1831, as the Jackson-Calhoun correspondence gripped the Washington political scene, Green’s prediction came true—Jackson demanded and secured the resignations of Ingham, Branch, and Berrien, the perceived ring-leaders of the conspiracy against Eaton and his wife. The Old Hero would reorganize his cabinet in favor of Van Buren and against Calhoun.<sup>15</sup>

### III.

Although the decision to reorganize the cabinet was Jackson’s, the actual plan for doing so originated with Van Buren. In one of his customary moments of political genius, the Little Magician proposed to

15. Green to Donelson, July 15, 1830, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

the president that both he and Eaton resign their posts. Such a move would make it much easier to secure the resignations of Ingham, Branch, and Berrien. As for his favorite, Van Buren, the president would propose him as U.S. minister to England, thereby removing the New Yorker from a hostile Washington political scene and protecting him from any attacks made by the opposition or by the partisans of Calhoun, Green included. Jackson recoiled at the idea of sacrificing his closest counselor, but, with Van Buren's cogent reasoning and consistent pressing, the Old Hero soon accepted the plan. It was quickly set in motion. On April 7 and 11, 1831, Eaton and Van Buren, respectively, tendered their resignations. Jackson then approached Ingham, Branch, and, eventually, Berrien, all of whom resigned as well. For the first time in U.S. history, a president's cabinet had been dissolved, save for a few leftovers. The nation itself was quite stunned, and the president's enemies thought for sure that it would be the end of him. By the end of summer, 1831, Jackson had appointed a new cabinet, one far more loyal and united than the previous one. Again, Van Buren emerged the victor.<sup>16</sup>

Green had always believed, as late as the fall of 1830, that the president contemplated the removal of Ingham, Branch, and Berrien. "Here is a project on foot," he wrote Edwards, "to drive Ingham and Branch out of the Cabinet. . . . Be not surprised if before the close of the next session you hear of such an explosion here as will separate friends never again to be united and shaking Genl. Jackson's popularity to its foundation." Green was correct on the first prediction, but wrong on the second. There would indeed be quite an explosion and friends would forever part, but Jackson would maintain his popularity. The editor believed that the removal of the particular cabinet officers was due directly to their attachment to Calhoun and their refusal to submit to Margaret Eaton's will. Moreover, Green realized that the "new coalition," as he called the second cabinet, "is to be upon me." But the editor was certain that the friends of the other presidential rivals, Calhoun and McLean, would rally to his support. Even the votes of Clay and the opposition, he surmised, would fall his way. "I feel strong for the crisis," Green told Edwards.<sup>17</sup>

To an extent, Green was right. Certain individuals in the "new coali-

16. On the cabinet resignations and reorganization, see Remini, *Course of American Freedom*, 310–20, and Marszalek, *Petticoat Affair*, 157–79.

17. Green to Edwards, November 8, 1830, *Edwards Papers*, ed. Washburne, 553; Green to Calhoun, November 19, 1830, *JCCP*, 11: 261–62. In January 1830, Green had heard rumors of an "entire change in the cabinet," yet he anticipated that nothing would come of it; see Green to Hamilton, January 20, 1830, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

tion” were indeed out to get him, namely, the president himself, Andrew Jackson. The Old Hero intended to silence his former mouthpiece by reshuffling his cabinet. The reorganization of the cabinet, declared Jackson, had revealed once and for all the patriotism and disinterestedness of Van Buren and Eaton, and disclosed the conspiracy directed by Green and Calhoun. “Duff Green and Calhoun are prostrated forever,” the president wrote Donelson.<sup>18</sup>

Although he had early been aware of Jackson’s desire to remove Ingham, Branch, and Berrien, Green nonetheless blamed Lewis, Eaton, Kendall, and Van Buren for the action. The president was merely a pawn of these conspirators and, as such, must be persuaded not to succumb to their evil designs. Green wrote in the *Telegraph* that “we yet hope, as does every friend of the president, that he will open his eyes to the intrigues which have produced the present unhappy state of the Republican party.” The reorganization of the cabinet was simply another manifestation of the scheme to place the Magician in the White House. To expose this adverse movement, Green printed in the *Telegraph* the correspondence between Jackson, Eaton, and Ingham regarding the latter’s resignation, and he even had the gumption to approach the president himself and tell him that he could never support the New Yorker for the presidency. The editor never mentioned Jackson’s response to his bold statement. It did not matter anyway. The president had long since determined to quell the editor. Green’s next move, moreover, only exasperated an already explosive situation—he would reveal to the public the “depraved” course of the Eatons. By the end of spring 1831, the whole country would catch the “Eaton Malaria.”<sup>19</sup>

#### IV.

Writing about the Eaton Affair years after the fact, Van Buren stated that “if no blood was spilled—which is somewhat remarkable in a quarrel upon so exciting a subject and kept on foot for two years—a sufficient quantity of ink certainly was shed upon the subject.” Indeed, at the end of May 1831, as the publication of the Jackson-Calhoun correspondence still charged the Washington political scene, Green added

18. Jackson to John Coffee, April 24, 1831, Jackson to Donelson, May 5, 1831, *Jackson Correspondence*, ed. Bassett, 4: 268–69, 276–77.

19. *U.S. Telegraph*, April 13, 22, 1831; Autobiographical Fragments, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Green to Calhoun, April 21, 1831, *JCCP*, 11: 372–73.



fuel to the fire by revealing, as he saw it, the true reason behind the cabinet resignations. "The causes of the re-organization of the cabinet and of the [Jackson-Calhoun] correspondence are one and the same," ran the *Telegraph*. "They had no relation to the public duties of either the Vice President or the late Cabinet. They were the 'circumstances of 1829.'" Few could deny that the "circumstances of 1829" referred to the movement to force Margaret Eaton on Washington society. Beginning in June, and carrying into the winter of 1831, Green unleashed a barrage of editorials lambasting the Eatons as the ultimate cause of the division within the ranks of the Jackson administration.<sup>20</sup>

The facts of the case and the essence of the story never vacillated throughout the columns of the *Telegraph*, and innuendo and outright castigation again reigned supreme as Rough Green returned to the political coliseum. The people had elected Jackson, the editor wrote, in order to restore virtue in government, to maintain the rights of the people, to guarantee their power to choose their chief magistrate, to destroy executive influence and the power of the president to appoint his successor, and to promote an honest administration of government. These same objectives were the very reason Green had supported the Old Hero as well. But they were in dire danger of being overwhelmed by an "organization of the irresponsible 'malign influence' which artfully obtained [Jackson's] confidence, and used his name and patronage to corrupt the public and private morals, and defeat the great objects for which he was elected." That "malign influence" was none other than Margaret Eaton, whose unbridled ambition and unparalleled vanity threatened the very core of the Jackson administration.<sup>21</sup>

As far back as late 1829, Green continued, an ineffectual attempt had been made to force the cabinet members to socialize with Margaret Eaton. Over the next few months the "propriety of the refusal of the dismissed Secretaries" to permit the desire of the president to control the conduct of their families became the norm. But, soon, the "maligned influence," the "Bellana," prevailed. "By constant importunity," charged the *Telegraph*, Jackson "had been induced to yield his own judgment, and put his own fame, the interests of the country, and the republican party, upon a desperate attempt to control the private interest of society." In short, the private animosity of Margaret Eaton and her hus-

20. Van Buren, *Autobiography*, 358; *U.S. Telegraph*, May 27, 1831. For editorials relating to the Eaton Affair, see *U.S. Telegraph*, June 17, 21, 24, 25, 28, July 1, 12, 13, 14, 19, 20, 22, 29, 30, August 1, 2, 6, 8, 9, 12, 13, 19, 20, 24, 30, September 20, 28, 29, October 1, 3, 6, 7, 8, 11, 12, 13, 18, 21, November 4, 8, 1831.

21. *U.S. Telegraph*, June 2, 1831.

band, not the Jackson-Calhoun correspondence nor even the intrigues of Van Buren, was directly responsible for the dissolution of the cabinet, provoked by the refusal of the dismissed cabinet members to compel their families to associate with the “malign influence.” Margaret Eaton, not Andrew Jackson, determined public patronage.

But the danger had not subsided with the dissolution of the cabinet. The same influence that “revolutionized the late Cabinet” intended to organize a new one “to confirm its power and subserve its purposes, as well of private pique as of political control.” The change of the cabinet had thus emerged as “a measure dictated by the mingled influence of mortified vanity, disappointed ambition, and revenge.” The real question before the American people, Green concluded, was whether the desire to force a reprehensible individual upon society should control the entire influence of the government. Should the refusal of cabinet officials to coerce their wives and daughters to associate with a certain person be just cause for their removal from office? Should a new cabinet be organized expressly for the purpose of controlling society by such means? Should the “whim, caprice, the mortified vanity, and *revenge*, of an individual unknown to the public” control the administration of public affairs? For Green, the answer to these great concerns was obvious—Margaret Eaton had to be exposed in order to save the republic and its chief executive.<sup>22</sup>

Green’s attack upon Margaret in the pages of the *Telegraph* was not merely a propaganda technique to hack away at Eaton, Van Buren, Lewis, or the *Globe*; nor was it the child of frustration, growing out of the editor’s mounting resentment at being slighted by the administration and its supporters. He sincerely believed what he had printed, as his private correspondence revealed. In a telling and lengthy letter to John Helm, the father of Ben Helm, Green’s first business partner in Elizabethtown, Kentucky, the editor corrected any assumptions that many throughout the nation harbored.

“Your error is in supposing that the correspondence between the President and Mr. Calhoun is the cause of the dissolution of the Cabinet,” Green wrote Helm, “when it is but one of the effects produced by the secret influence that threatens the dissolution of the Republican party, and seeks to use Gen. Jackson’s popularity, as the means of gratifying the private pique of a vain and indiscreet, if not a guilty woman.” Green reviewed the entire relationship between Eaton and his wife, how she ingratiated herself to Van Buren and Jackson, and

22. *U.S. Telegraph*, June 2, 10, 14, 25, July 20, 30, 1831.

employed her influence and vengeance against all those who refused to enlist as her partisan. "The interference of the lady in matters of public concern, her active interference in appointments, and the success of applicants who threw themselves on her indulgence," Green continued, "soon provoked inquiry and much speculation, as to her private character, and rumor was again busy with her reputation." All along, Eaton and Jackson took great pains to prove her innocence.

Although he believed Margaret to be indiscreet, Green still hoped that she was innocent of most charges, and, above all, he was anxious to relieve the president from the "consequences of her constant importunity." But the editor "had a thousand reasons" not to use his paper, as requested by Lewis and Eaton himself, as a vehicle in a crusade for hunting down all who refused to admit her innocence and "swell the ranks of flatterers." Green was indeed caught in the middle; he desired to protect Jackson, but he would not participate in a worthless and wasteful cause.

But the editor feared that Jackson was already the victim of intriguing parties. "The old man," he surmised, "has the weakness of old age and has become a pliant instrument in the hands of those about him." The president had been led into the correspondence with Calhoun, and subsequently to the dismissal of Ingham, Branch, and Berrien, solely as a result of Eaton's influence and the power of his wife. If Jackson continued to listen to the sycophants at his side, then he would certainly lose the approbation and admiration of the populace. "When it shall be made manifest to the American people that Gen'l Jackson has lent his power and patronage to sustain Mrs. Eaton, that he has removed faithful and able officers because they would not compel their wives to visit a woman of equivocal character, the action will be stronger against him than it was against his predecessor." Green concluded the letter by declaring his hope that Jackson would be reelected, that Clay would not become president, and that Calhoun, not Van Buren, would be nominated again for the vice presidency. Indeed, the letter to Helm explicates everything about how Green viewed the division wracking Jackson's administration during his first term, and what he must do to combat the evil influence. The editor refused to sacrifice his principles and he chose to maintain his independence by exposing publicly the cancer that plagued the executive branch.<sup>23</sup>

23. Green to John Helm, May 20, 1831, Green Papers, SHC-UNC. See also the letters, Green to ———, June 4, 1831, Green to Cabell, July 17, 1831, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

Green performed the task admirably. The Eaton Affair had left the quarantine of Washington society to infect all of American society. The public was stunned over the allegations. As for Margaret, she wanted “to shoot Duff Green forthwith.” Ironically, the very evening that Green fired the first salvo at the “malign influence,” Margaret was entertaining Lucretia. How the affair between Mrs. Eaton and Mrs. Green, as well as Lucretia’s reaction over the attacks, unfolded remains uncertain. But one thing was certain: the establishment of the *Globe*, the publication of the Seminole correspondence, the realignment of the cabinet, and the printed attacks on Margaret Eaton had closed the lid on Duff Green’s casket. He was on the “outs” now for good.<sup>24</sup>

## V.

The affair over Margaret would not be the only serious confrontation between John Eaton and Duff Green. In March 1830, Green and Eaton had met and discussed a proposal, initiated solely by the secretary of war himself, whereby the U.S. government would establish rations regarding the prices of beef and corn in the Western states that would eventually be sold to various Indian tribes. But, according to Green, none of the proposed contracts considered the interests of any Western state. When Eaton had joined with Sam Houston in contracting with a wealthy New York partner, the editor smelled a rat. The plan, as viewed by Green, would cost the government millions, thus defrauding both the American people and the Indians. “I should be unfaithful to the administration, to Gen’l Jackson, & to myself,” Green self-righteously told Eaton, “if I did not bring the subject before you in such shape as to guard against the consequences which I foresee will follow any such contract as you contemplate.” The contract, to which Green refused to be a part, would, in his opinion, merely enrich the few behind it and undermine public confidence in the administration.<sup>25</sup>

But fraud had not stopped with price fixing. Green also believed that Eaton, Houston, and Lewis, among others, engaged in the purchase of Choctaw lands and that they intended to reap an enormous profit from speculating with the Indians. Through the auspices of the “American Land Company,” the editor charged, Eaton would make treaties with the Indians, purchasing their current lands and providing them with

24. Eaton, *Autobiography*, 91.

25. Green to Eaton, March 19, 1830, Green Papers, LC.

large reservations of land elsewhere that had been bought at minimal prices. The editor's charges, however, began to border on the ludicrous. Back in 1829, Sam Houston stunned the nation by resigning as governor of Tennessee, leaving his new bride, and removing to the Arkansas Territory to reside with the Indians. The reasons behind this bizarre behavior were never revealed. Green believed he had the answer: Houston resigned his office, left his wife, went west of the Mississippi River, and became an Indian chief in order to facilitate the purchase of Indian lands and enrich himself, Eaton, and Lewis. When Houston had returned to Washington several years later, Green alleged, he had laid the framework for a plan to furnish the Indians with cheap rations, thus profiting himself and his cohorts with nearly four million dollars. The ultimate objective was to fund a war with Mexico for the conquest of Texas.<sup>26</sup>

Believing that such a conspiracy was actually afoot, Green appealed to the president, urging him to prevent the intended fraud. Jackson, however, "illy received" the editor and refused to countenance such outlandish allegations. But that never stopped Green, who then took the matter straight to Congress. He also publicly charged Eaton and Houston, in the pages of the *Telegraph*, with fomenting "one of the most stupendous pecuniary frauds which was ever attempted to be practised on the American people." Congress indeed commenced an investigation into the matter. Chaired by Ohio representative William Stansbery, the committee on fraud called Green and numerous other individuals to testify. This action so angered Houston that he assaulted Stansbery and published a scathing public rebuttal to Green's charges, questioning the editor's professed disinterestedness and honesty, and stating that Green was actually the architect of a plan to defraud the people and the Indians, but because he failed in that endeavor, he was "anxious to inculcate others, that he may puff and swell about 'higher motives', *disinterestedness and patriotism!* and triumph in his immaculate purity." In the end, no action was ever taken against either Eaton or Houston, and the affair ended there.<sup>27</sup>

26. Green to the *Advocate*, August 5, 1831, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Autobiographical Fragments, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Ambler, *Diary of Floyd*, 182; Green to Edwards, January 14, 1832, *Edwards Papers*, ed. Washburne, 579.

27. Autobiographical Fragments, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Ambler, *Diary of Floyd*, 182; *U.S. Telegraph*, March 26, April 3, 7, 16, 18, 19, 1832; Sam Houston, "To the Public," in Amelia W. Williams and Eugene C. Barker, eds., *The Writings of Sam Houston, 1813-1863*, 250-57. For an extensive report by Green regarding his allegations against Eaton and Houston, see *U.S. Telegraph Extra*, July 23, 1832.

## VI.

By the end of 1831, beaten down by the establishment of the *Globe*, assailed for his publication of the Jackson-Calhoun correspondence, disturbed about the cabinet reorganization, and distraught over what he perceived as a conspiracy to force Van Buren and Margaret Eaton on the country, Duff Green felt he could no longer save the president—a president, ironically, who had detested him since late 1829. To make matters worse for the editor, Jackson had already made the decision to banish Green from his ranks. Every move and every word emanating from Green, the Old Hero believed, undermined his administration and uplifted Calhoun at his expense. But Green had made his decisions and now he would pay dearly. The editor was, for all intents and purposes, cast out of the Democracy. “Calhoun and Duff Green are both sunk into insignificance,” Jackson told Van Buren, “and will be both soon into oblivion.” Others, however, were not so sure of Jackson’s assessment. “Poor Duff is nearly flat here,” Virginia senator John Tyler wrote his wife, “although I think it quite probable that he will sooner or later float to the surface again.” Yet, Green’s condition still persuaded Tyler not to attend a dinner party thrown by the Greens in late December 1831.<sup>28</sup>

As 1832 approached, a presidential election year, Green chose to maintain his independence and, as he perceived, his virtue and principle. “I am the advocate of principles and not of men,” he told a friend. Those who believed that he was the tool of Calhoun were grossly mistaken; his friendship with the South Carolinian had never determined his conduct as an editor. “The course which the few individuals who control the President have taken in making war upon [Calhoun’s] character and my position as an editor,” Green declared, “left me no alternative but to become a party to their intrigue or to defend Mr. Calhoun’s character. I did not hesitate to choose the latter alternative.” Never the victim, always the righteous: here, again, was the recurring motto of Duff Green. By the end of 1831, therefore, the editor had finally realized that he must make a decision—would he support Jackson’s reelection, and, if not, who would he support instead. When January 1832 arrived, he had made up his mind—the election of 1832 must not end with Jackson in the White House. But who should replace him?<sup>29</sup>

28. Jackson to Van Buren, December 17, 1831, *Jackson Correspondence*, ed. Bassett, 4: 384; John Tyler to Mary Tyler, December 28, 1831, in Lyon G. Tyler, ed., *The Letters and Times of the Tylers*, 1: 429.

29. Green to Samuel Martin, December 10, 1831, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

## CHAPTER 14



### The Election of 1832

#### I.

**T**hroughout the various crises in which he had been involved since Jackson had become president, Green had always defended the Old Hero. It was the evil counselors surrounding him, not the president himself, who were to blame for the division within the administration. But after the cabinet reorganization, the editor began to question his loyalty to Jackson. Could it be that the president was, after all, an active agent in destroying the political career of “Calhoun, Duff, & Co.”? Green queried. It took the editorial battle over Margaret Eaton for him to decide that the president was indeed his enemy. During the summer of 1831, while he revealed the Eaton Affair to the whole nation, Green began to criticize Jackson openly, charging the Old Hero with a variety of transgressions, conspiracies, and broken promises.

In July 1831, Green wrote a friend telling him that they could no longer look to Jackson to preserve the union and the harmony of the Democracy. That same day, he wrote Virginia congressman John S. Barbour, again accusing the president of “dividing and breaking up the Democratic Party.” Worst of all, Green continued, the Old Hero had abandoned the principles of the party and “sacrificed its first men.” This was the first time that the editor had blamed Jackson himself—not Van Buren, Eaton, Lewis, or Kendall—for destroying the party. A week later, he informed Carter Beverly: “I am no longer a Jackson man. I am for my country and its institutions. I am not the advocate for

the reelection of Andrew Jackson, if he be reelected I will acquiesce, but I have a much more important duty to perform. I am the advocate of truth & principle." Jackson certainly had cast him out years before, but now Green himself acknowledged the fact that there would be no reconciliation. The time had come to go on the offensive and attack the president for all that the editor believed to be awry in Washington.<sup>1</sup>

It took Green two full months, however, before he assailed Jackson publicly in the *Telegraph*. "That General Jackson has disappointed the expectations of his friends, and failed to accomplish the objects for which he was elected, is reasonable cause for refusing his reelection," the editor asserted, "but no dereliction on his part can diminish the weight of the objections once so forcibly and so successfully urged against Mr. Clay; and if the people were reduced to the alternative of ratifying the proceedings of the present Executive, or renouncing the principles by which they professed to be guided in their original choice of him, the considerations of prudence and dignity would induce them to prefer the former." The truth of the matter was, he continued, that the principle upon which the reelection of Jackson should be opposed, was the same as that upon which his predecessor had been defeated: Jackson desired to choose his successor, and that was nothing less than a corrupt bargain reincarnated. If anyone had ever questioned his loyalty to the president, Green now had removed all doubt.<sup>2</sup>

Here again, Green revealed his self-righteous personality. In his eyes, he could do no wrong. It was his lot to save the virtuous from depravity. "If it was important to resist the influence of executive patronage when exercised by an unpopular chief magistrate who came into power by accident," Green sanctimoniously told a friend, "it is more our duty to resist an improper exercise of it when placed in the hands of a popular chief magistrate. In that case it is our duty to see that no abuses are committed in the name of the people." Moreover, no man had the right to dictate to the people who shall be their representative. That much he had argued against Adams during the recent election. Now he had turned it against the Old Hero himself. Jackson, not Green, had violated the principles of virtue and abused power and patronage; Green, not Jackson, remained faithful to the "principles of 1828." Therefore, "we have to make war upon Jackson and Van Buren," he told James Hamilton Jr., "but it must be done in the spirit of firmness

1. Green to Miller, July 2, 1831, Green to John S. Barbour, July 2, 1831, Green to Carter Beverly, July 8, 1831, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Green to Calhoun, August 23, 1832, *JCCP*, 11: 609–10.

2. *U.S. Telegraph*, September 1, 1831.



& moderation which will carry the sober and ardent friends of the Union & of the Constitution with us. . . . I will make [Jackson] wish he had never dirtied his fingers with Van Buren yet." How ironic, then, that "Jackson the Cincinnatus" had been replaced by "Green the Cato."<sup>3</sup>

Green's recollection of his break with Jackson was even more melodramatic and indicative of his brash, self-righteous behavior. A member of Congress, whom he did not name, had died sometime in late 1831 or early 1832. Many of the members of Congress and of Jackson's cabinet, the Old Hero included, attended the obsequies at a Washington cemetery. Green went alone to the cemetery in his carriage, but instead of going to the burial, he paused and said to himself: "You must now decide whether you will unite in the support of Van Buren; if you do, you can command the public patronage and become a rich man; but it will be at the expense of your principles and your own self-respect; and if so, what will your riches be worth to you? Your sons may become dissipated spendthrifts, and your daughters the victims of unprincipled fortune hunters." He then found himself staring at Clinton's monument, and again said to himself: "If you abandon your principles and accumulate untold wealth, at last it will come to that," and he pointed to the gravestone. "I cannot surrender my own self-respect."

At that moment, the funeral having ended, Jackson, with Barry on his arm, followed by the members of Congress, came walking down the gravel path where Green was standing. The president, and the entourage behind him, halted in front of the editor. The Old Hero called out aloud.

"How do you do, General Green?" He then extended his hand to Green.

"The thought struck me," Green said to himself, "that it was time to show the world, that I have cast him off, instead of casting me off." He stood absolutely still and refused to reply to Jackson. The president then left Barry's arm, walked toward Green, and held out his hand.

"How do you do, General Green?" the Old Hero again asked.

Green put his hand to his side and stepped back.

Jackson was indeed surprised. "He could not realize that I had refused to take his hand," the editor recalled. "His look saying, 'is it possible that you refuse to take my hand?'" Green looked back at the president, "nodding, without speaking, giving him to understand, 'yes sir, and you know why!'"

Jackson then threw a look of vengeance at Green, turned away, took

3. Green to Cabell, July 17, 1831, Green to Hamilton, July 18, 1831, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; *U.S. Telegraph*, October 18, December 31, 1831.

Barry's arm, and went home. The editor, too, returned home and told his family of what he had done. No one other than Green had ever recounted that same story, despite the fact that numerous congressmen and cabinet members had witnessed it. Nonetheless, he believed it had happened that way. But Green was never wrong—or at least he had thought so. As the new year arrived, 1832, the editor was no longer in the ranks of the Democracy. No longer was he the defender and promoter of the Old Hero. He would openly oppose the president's reelection.<sup>4</sup>

## II.

The predominant theme that pervaded Green's editorials and private correspondence throughout the presidential campaign of 1832 was the menacing growth of executive power. As the chief magistrate of the nation, the editor maintained, Jackson had abused the powers of his office, accumulating an undue influence that vastly exceeded that of all his predecessors combined. During the election of 1828, the Old Hero promised to "cleanse the Augean stables," to restore virtue necessary for republicanism, to reform the system of government patronage, and to guarantee the people's right to choose their president. But, argued Green, in his first term, Jackson had abrogated all the principles and reasons for his election, and, in his four years in the White House, he had appropriated unprecedented powers. "It is impossible not to perceive," ran the *Telegraph*, "that the tendency of the whole system is to enable the executive to absorb the whole power of the Government, and, ultimately, to acquire the power to control and form public sentiment." The most odious transgressions of executive authority were the abuse of patronage, the succession of Van Buren, and the unparalleled influence the president swayed over Congress.<sup>5</sup>

In an editorial entitled "The Political State of the Country," Green argued that the nation was in a "disgraced condition" due to the president's policy of using government patronage to cement his own power and influence. He had placed individuals in office, the editor asserted, who were devoted solely to electioneering in behalf of Jackson and his programs. "Instead of using the patronage upon the high principle on

4. Autobiographical Fragments, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

5. *U.S. Telegraph*, March 20, April 11, 14, 1832; Green to Cralle, August 23, 1832, *SHA Publications*, 7: 278–80; Green to Cuthbirt, July 31, 1832, Green to Pleasants, August 21, 1832, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

which it was given to him of promoting the public good," Green wrote Edwards, "he uses it as a personal chattel, to be administered to advance his own re-election and to advance the private interests of a few dependents."<sup>6</sup>

Jackson's open and energetic advocacy of a Van Buren succession further inflamed the editor. "The attempt of Jackson to transfer the people to Van Buren," Green told a friend, "is much more flagrant than the bargain & sale of Clay and Adams." Moreover, if anyone dared to oppose the Magician for the presidency, Jackson would certainly threaten that apostate with the "pain of excommunication from *his* party." By backing Van Buren as the "anointed successor," the president had betrayed many of his ardent supporters, men, argued Green, such as Calhoun or McLean, who were more qualified and better poised politically to beat the opposition candidate.<sup>7</sup>

But the president was not the only figure to blame for supporting the succession of Van Buren. The New Yorker and his followers throughout the country were equally guilty in subverting the right of the people to choose their chief magistrate. Throughout the election of 1832, Green charged the supporters of Van Buren with an insidious plan to smuggle the Magician into the White House: they would first form a national nominating convention, use this convention to secure Van Buren's spot as the vice presidential candidate on the Jackson ticket, and, if the Old Hero won reelection, then he would resign or eventually die, thus elevating the New Yorker to the presidency. The key to this conspiracy was the Baltimore Convention. Convened by the Democratic Party from May 21 to May 23, 1832, and becoming the first nominating convention in U.S. history, the Baltimore Convention indeed chose to pair Jackson and Van Buren as the official Democratic Party ticket. Green regularly condemned the convention as a mere tool to place Van Buren on the Jackson ticket as the vice presidential candidate, with the sole intention of making the Magician the "heir apparent." The editor labeled the convention a caucus, which undermined the right of the people to choose their leaders, and charged the Jackson-Van Buren camp with creating a party machinery to further strengthen the power and ambition of the president. "It is apparent," declared the *Telegraph*, "that all the force of party machinery, and all

6. *U.S. Telegraph*, February 27, 28, March 14, 1832; Green to Edwards, January 14, 1832, *Edwards Papers*, ed. Washburne, 578-79.

7. Green to Cuthbert, July 31, 1832, Green to James Hunter, August 28, 1832, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Green to Cralle, August 23, 1832, *SHA Publications*, 7: 278; *U.S. Telegraph*, March 9, July 27, 1832.

the influence of the patronage of the government, will be directed to the controlling object of the impostors, who have conspired against the liberties of the country, and the rights and interests of the people.”<sup>8</sup>

Finally, Green asserted, there was no clearer indication of the dangerous accumulation of executive power than Jackson’s sway over members of Congress. The president waged “a warfare of extermination upon every independent representative,” and by so doing, he could get whatever he desired from Congress, whether in programs, policies, or patronage. If a member of Congress dared to voice his opinion, vote against Jackson’s agenda, or support legislation contrary to the president’s liking, the Old Hero would bring his full weight against him. “To oppose the will of the President to thwart or refuse obedience to any of *his* measures,” stated the *Telegraph*, “is cause of excommunication from *his* party, and of political degradation.” If anyone needed proof, the editor himself was a prime example of Jackson’s audacious influence. Jackson the Cato had indeed become Jackson the Augustus.<sup>9</sup>

One of Green’s consistent criticisms of the president’s abuse of power was his reliance upon the Kitchen Cabinet. In March 1832, an article appeared in the *Telegraph*, written by Mississippi senator George Poindexter, a rabid opponent of Jackson, accusing the president of having a “Kitchen Cabinet.” This group of informal advisors and close friends, composed mainly of Van Buren, Lewis, Kendall, Blair, and Isaac Hill, among others, had replaced the formal cabinet as Jackson’s chief advisory body. They had considerable influence with the president and had a preeminent role in determining Jackson’s policies, disseminating party propaganda, and appointing federal officeholders. Poindexter’s appellation was the first use of the term, and “Kitchen Cabinet” quickly became a part of American political vocabulary. This topic is important to note because many historians have consistently stated that Green was a central figure in the Kitchen Cabinet. The editor, however, was *never* a member of the Kitchen Cabinet. The term came into use *after* Green had decided to oppose the reelection of Jackson. Furthermore, the editor never wielded any remarkable influence

8. Green to James Hamilton Jr., July 18, 1831, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Green to Cralle, January 3, 1832, Green Papers, LC; *U.S. Telegraph*, February 25, March 22, April 6, May 23, 25, 26, 29, June 6, July 25, August 20, September 20, November 8, 1832; Van Buren, *Autobiography*, 399. Not all Democrats desired Van Buren on the ticket with Jackson. Other candidates included Louis McLane and Samuel Smith, both from Maryland; Philip P. Barbour and William C. Rives, both from Virginia; William Wilkins of Pennsylvania; Richard M. Johnson of Kentucky; and of course, Calhoun.

9. *U.S. Telegraph*, February 27, 28, March 14, May 30, 1832.

comparable to that of the members of the Kitchen Cabinet upon the president.

To combat what he perceived to be the unwarranted growth of presidential power, Green used all of the tools for which he was recognized: a vitriolic pen, a scathing tongue, an arrogant and self-righteous attitude, and another newspaper dedicated solely to the presidential campaign. In the summer of 1832, the editor recommenced the publication of the *Telegraph Extra*. But instead of supporting the election of Jackson, as in 1828, the *Extra* opposed the reelection of the Old Hero. The prospectus for the weekly edition, regularly printed in the daily *Telegraph*, concisely stated its purpose and objectives:

The great body of those who voted for General Jackson in 1828, voted for him from elevated and patriotic motives. He has violated almost every principle upon which his election was advocated, and almost every pledge made by himself and by his friends in his behalf. We believe that the great body of the party who voted for him are unchanged. . . . This, then, is the moment for all those who are opposed to the improper exercise of Executive patronage; to all interference of the executive in the appointment of his successor; . . . to defeat those daring and corrupt politicians who have seized upon the name and popularity of General Jackson, and who, unless they are met and defeated, will subvert the very foundations of liberty, and convert this Government into the corrupt engine of the most odious and profligate despotism.<sup>10</sup>

As Green saw it, he believed that he would be a traitor to his country if he did not do all within his power “to put the public in possession of facts” exposing the pernicious growth of Jackson’s power. Thus, he brought out the *Extra* in order “to submit facts” to his readers. “Let the consequences rest with the people,” Green told a friend regarding the weekly edition. “It is my duty to present the truth—It is their duty to make a proper use of it.” Moreover, the editor needed the additional space to combat the “false and flagrant publications” of the *Globe*. Numerous congressmen opposed to Jackson’s reelection helped Green secure subscriptions. All told, by the end of the election of 1832, Green had a subscription list of about twenty thousand and had published as many as forty thousand copies.<sup>11</sup>

10. “Prospectus of the *Telegraph Extra*,” August 23, 1832, NYHS.

11. Green to John McKim, August 27, 1832, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Green to Cralle, February 17, 1832, Green to Cralle, August 23, 1832, Green to Cralle, September 10, 1832, *SHA Publications*, 7: 270, 278–80; Green to John W. Taylor, Sep-

## III.

But if Green would not support the Jackson–Van Buren ticket, who else would he endorse for the presidency? Over the course of the 1832 election, the editor would provide a myriad of plans and schemes to derail the reelection of the Old Hero and to elect another, more worthy individual instead. Depending on the political situation at hand, Green supported various candidates, some for the vice presidency and others for the presidency. His first plan, however, was not aimed at defeating the reelection of Jackson at all, but geared toward keeping Van Buren off the ticket and nominating someone else who would thwart the ambitions of the Magician and his coterie and thus help restore virtue to the presidency. The central figure in this first plan was John C. Calhoun.

As early as the summer of 1830, Green had believed that there existed a movement to remove Calhoun from the Jackson ticket and run someone else in 1832, most likely Van Buren. Joined with the other divisive issues that had recently transpired—the establishment of the *Globe*, the Van Buren “conspiracy,” the Jackson-Calhoun correspondence, the cabinet shuffle, and the Eaton Affair—the editor perceived a concerted effort to destroy Calhoun’s political career. But the vice president, Green believed, was the victim at every turn. Calhoun, not Jackson or Van Buren, still retained and promoted the “principles of 1828”; Calhoun, not the new cabinet or the Kitchen Cabinet, could save the republic from further decline into executive despotism and away from republican virtue. To save the American republic, therefore, Green commenced a campaign to keep Calhoun on the ticket as the vice presidential candidate.<sup>12</sup>

In May 1831, Green traveled north, to New York and the New England states, to garner support for Calhoun’s nomination as the vice presidential candidate on the Jackson ticket. The editor told friends and operatives there that both he and Calhoun would support Jackson’s reelection, that the *Globe* was Van Buren’s, not the Old Hero’s, mouthpiece, and that what those close to the president perceived as attacks on Jackson were nothing more than attempts to save the Jacksonian

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tember 15, 1832, NYHS; Green to Calhoun, September 21, 1832, *JCCP*, 11: 659–60; Green to James Barbour, September 24, 1832, James Barbour Correspondence, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations.

12. Green to Calhoun, August 1, 1830, *JCCP*, 11: 210–11; *U.S. Telegraph*, April 20, 1832.

agenda that came into office in 1828. The previous month, Green had pressed the governor and the legislature of Virginia to nominate Calhoun. When he returned to Washington at the end of May, the editor continued his efforts at promoting the vice president. At a meeting in Washington, convened to adopt resolutions approving the reelection of Jackson, Green and several of his operatives attempted to procure resolutions expressing confidence in Calhoun and recommending him again for the vice presidency. Green's efforts fell on deaf ears and a hostile audience. His proposed resolutions were rejected by an overwhelming majority. William B. Lewis told Amos Kendall that Green was "very much mortified and looked 'excessively cowed.'" Another Jacksonian who had attended the event could only shake his head in disgust, reflecting that "an imprudent friend does more harm than an open enemy." Indeed, at every juncture, Green's promotion of Calhoun failed. Yet, the editor was consistently blind to that fact.<sup>13</sup>

After the break between Jackson and Calhoun, in the spring of 1831 and right at the time that Green began to openly criticize the president, the editor began to ponder a Calhoun candidacy for the presidency. The approaching Baltimore Convention and its certain nomination of Van Buren for the second spot only spurred Green toward that end. If the South Carolinian could not save the country as vice president, then he must be endorsed for the highest position, president of the United States. Back in the spring of 1830, the editor had predicted that Jackson would never seek a second term, and, therefore, Calhoun would most likely emerge as the candidate of the South and West, against Van Buren and McLean. Jackson's decision to run again and the eventual selection of Van Buren as his running mate changed the scene dramatically. When asked by a friend whether Calhoun would now be a candidate for the presidency, Green replied that if the question had been propounded to him a year earlier, he would have unhesitatingly answered in the negative. "Even now I would desire so to answer it," he continued, "but the course which the President . . . has lately pursued and the position in which Mr. Calhoun is placed leaves no alternative but to fight."<sup>14</sup>

13. Kendall to Lewis, May 17, 25, 1831, TSLA; John Floyd to Calhoun, April 16, 1831, *JCCP*, 11: 370; Ambler, *Diary of Floyd*, 135; William Barry to his daughter, May 24, 1831, "Letters," 232; J. Gwin to Felix Grundy, May 25, 1831, Grundy Papers, University of North Carolina.

14. Green to Edwards, April 27, 1830, *Edwards Papers*, ed. Washburne, 488; Green to John Forbes, May 18, 1831, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Green to Cabell, June 4, 1831, *SHA Publications*, 7: 165.

Again, in August 1831, Green rallied the Virginia legislature to nominate Calhoun for president, an act that would certainly undermine Jackson's reelection chances. He also returned to New York and New England the next month to see if there was any possibility of gaining Antimason support. This powerful political interest had its own convention scheduled for the end of September and the editor desired to secure Calhoun's nomination. Green believed that the vice president's prospects looked good, primarily because he also believed that the president's standing had been marred by the cabinet crisis and the Eaton Affair. The editor calculated "with great certainty" that New England would vote for Calhoun, and combined with the aid of New York, that the South Carolinian could also obtain all the electoral votes of Pennsylvania, North Carolina, and South Carolina, along with some votes from Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi. With such a load of electoral votes, Calhoun could be elected president even without Green's own cherished West.<sup>15</sup>

Naturally, Green's endorsement of Calhoun, either as a vice presidential or presidential candidate, only further convinced others that the editor was the tool of the South Carolinian's political ambitions, that he would promote him at all costs, and that he had never really been the firm supporter of Jackson as he had always maintained. John Coffee, for example, told Donelson that Green had "vanity enough to believe that he made Genl. Jackson president, and by the same vain reasoning he thinks he can make Mr. Calhoun president." But actually, Green lagged in his endorsement of Calhoun for president. While the editor pushed for a vice presidential candidacy, other friends and supporters of the South Carolinian argued that he should be proposed for the presidency instead.<sup>16</sup>

Green himself would counter charges that he catered to Calhoun at all costs. "It seems that you and your friends," he wrote to a political observer, "consider me the mere creature of Mr. Calhoun, acting upon his impulses and governed by his interests." During these "times of selfish subserviency to men," the editor was not surprised to find others acting under the belief that he, too, was governed by personal considerations.

15. Green to Cabell, July 17, August 7, 9, 16, 1831, Green to Cralle, September 5, 1831, *SHA Publications*, 7: 166, 167, 168–69; Charles M. Wiltse, *John C. Calhoun: Nullifier, 1829–1839*, 107; Green to Russell, July 12, 1831, Green to James Hamilton Jr., July 18, 1831, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

16. John Coffee to Donelson, June 6, 1831, Dyas Collection, Coffee Papers, Tennessee State Library and Archives, The Tennessee Historical Society; Ambler, *Diary of Floyd*, 135; Cralle to Green, June 11, 1831, *SHA Publications*, 7: 165.



But, Green continued, "I trust you will become convinced that I have not relinquished—willingly relinquished—the patronage of Jackson out of a mere personal preference for Mr. Calhoun. I have seen too much of the folly of public men to suppose that my personal interests are to be promoted more by Mr. Calhoun than by General Jackson." The editor did not deny that he felt a deep interest in vindicating the character and principles of the vice president from the unwarranted attacks made by his enemies, and that he endorsed him for the presidency, but this was not because he was "desirous to serve John C. Calhoun," but because he believed that his "*cause* is now the cause of public virtue, of truth, and of my country. It is because I see that the power and patronage of the Government is arrayed against him, and because I believe that, if these are permitted to offer up him as a sacrifice on the high ground of public virtue and of the Constitution, that I am prepared to make any sacrifice which the crisis may demand." Here, again, was another quintessential example of Green's independence and his self-righteous attitude.<sup>17</sup>

Green also publicly rebuffed charges of being Calhoun's lackey. He stated in the *Telegraph* on numerous occasions that "the reader cannot fail to see that an editor who refuses to yield up his views and his principles to the will of General Jackson . . . has too much independence to surrender them to Mr. Calhoun." In fact, he alleged, Jackson, not Calhoun, could have provided significant patronage.<sup>18</sup>

Even more indicative of Green's independence and his sanctimonious demeanor was his careless regard for uttering words or publishing editorials that tended to undermine Calhoun's support. The friends of Calhoun became dissatisfied with the editor's remarks on several occasions, simply because they felt that his statements would be attributed to the vice president. "*For this I do not care,*" he boldly retorted. "I look to a higher object, and I intend to expose and make war upon the time serving adulation of Jackson whenever I see it coming from *his friends* because I hope to act with a party who have [*sic*] a higher object than the elevation of a mere individual." The editor always believed that his purpose was to make war upon corruption, not to elevate an individual. Thus he leveled his artillery at the perceived abuses of the Jackson administration. Indeed, it appears that Green was more of an opponent of Jackson and Van Buren than he was a proponent of Calhoun. Principles, not men, was his motto.<sup>19</sup>

17. Green to Tomlinson Fort, July 20, 1832, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

18. *U.S. Telegraph*, June 28, August 31, 1832.

19. Green to John Cuthbirt, July 9, 1832, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; *U.S. Telegraph*, August 31, October 10, 1832.

During the summer of 1831, while he actively pushed a Calhoun presidential candidacy, Green gradually became irritated at the vice president for not making himself more public. "Our friend Calhoun sleepeth," he told one supporter. The editor continually wrote Calhoun, chastising him for his lethargy and warning him that his friends were prepared to look elsewhere for a candidate to face the Old Hero and the Magician. "You are rapid in conception," Green told Calhoun, "but for once in your life you are behind events." Do not let McLean replace you as the candidate of choice, he admonished the South Carolinian. Place yourself in contention now or all will be lost! But Calhoun waited until 1832 to offer himself as a candidate, and by then, it was indeed too late—not because he had waited too long to come out, but because he had made himself most unpopular with his stance on the nullification crisis then gripping the nation. When the Antimason convention chose William Wirt as its presidential nominee, Green despaired. He read the writing on the wall and realized that Calhoun's candidacy would fail. By the end of 1831, Green began to look elsewhere for someone to help wage war on Leviathan.<sup>20</sup>

#### IV.

Green's vocal opposition to Jackson and Van Buren also led many political observers to wonder if he actually supported Clay for president. Obviously such rumors and charges, prodded by the *Globe*, were electioneering antics geared toward embarrassing all those who attacked the president. But few tactics could tarnish Green more than the attempt to prove, or to at least make the appearance, that the most vocal opponent of Clay in 1828 had now changed sides and desired the Kentuckian's election to the White House. It would prove that Green was indeed out for himself, a political rogue without principle. Who could actually believe what he said during the campaign of 1832 if he had completely recanted all he had said about Clay up to that juncture? Green, however, would have none of it. He had always been the avowed enemy of Harry of the West, and he would continue to be so.

"It is well understood that no one in this country is more directly opposed, than we are, to the general policy advocated by Mr. Clay," consistently ran the *Telegraph*. The paper opposed *both* Jackson and Clay. Simply because Green continually attacked the president, it did not imply

20. Green to Calhoun, July 25, 1831, Green to S. H. Storrow, July 29, 1831, *JCCP*, 11: 413, 440–41; Niven, *Calhoun*, 177–78.

in any way any support for Clay. The editor did admit that “*our situation* is a peculiar one,” but the *Telegraph* would never endorse either of the rival candidates for the presidency. “We believe,” Green opined, “that in reference to principles and most of the leading measures of policy, their views are the same.”<sup>21</sup>

But if he refused to openly *support* Clay as a candidate, would Green reject any coalition between Calhoun and Clay in the name of defeating Jackson? Would he spurn any chance of using Clay to elect Calhoun, or anyone else for that matter? Furthermore, how could he attack Jackson and Van Buren and not indirectly aid the election chances of Clay? Certainly these questions entered the mind of the editor. As to the last query, Green realized that many of his editorials unintentionally assisted Clay. “You will perceive,” Green wrote a friend, “that in laboring to defeat the election of Genl. Jackson, I am giving Mr. Clay an incidental support which will perhaps be more valuable than openly espousing his cause.” The editor even arrogantly suggested that if Jackson should fail to be reelected and Clay elected instead, it could not be done without his indirect aid. Furthermore, Clay’s friends should recognize that fact, and if they succeed, should “avail themselves of the aid I shall . . . inadvertently afford him.” Whether that meant patronage, Green never said. Still, the editor declared that his principal object was the defeat of Jackson, not the ascendancy of Clay, and he told Calhoun as much. If Clay was indeed elected, Green stated that it would not be his fault, “because such is not my wish.” Although, at one point, he told a friend that he trusted Clay more than Van Buren.<sup>22</sup>

Although Green never consented openly to taking the field as an advocate of Clay, the Kentuckian still had an integral role in helping defeat Jackson and, quite possibly, in aiding the candidacy of Calhoun. Toward such ends, Green embarked on a mission to heal the wounds between Calhoun and Clay.

“There has been too much jealousy between Mr. Clay and Mr. Calhoun and their friends,” he told a Clay supporter. “We cannot succeed against Jackson unless we bring their friends to act together.” The editor even approached one of his archenemies, fellow editor John Pleasants, who had been a vocal supporter of Adams in 1828 and a frequent

21. *U.S. Telegraph*, January 27, March 16, April 17, May 26, 29, 1832; Green to Calhoun, August 23, 1832, *JCCP*, 11: 609–10.

22. Green to John Browne, September 8, 1832, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Green to Calhoun, August 28, 1832, *JCCP*, 11: 612–13; Green to Cralle, August 23, 1832, *SHA Publications*, 7: 278–80.

verbal pugilist with Green, asking him to help quell the animosity between Calhoun and Clay. Although the editor of the *Telegraph* said that such a project might be difficult and that he could never openly advocate Clay, he still would assail Jackson and defend Calhoun, which would clearly benefit Clay. Even more boldly, Green said that there was no reason why the friends of Calhoun in the South should prefer Jackson to Clay. In a letter to another Clay supporter, the editor tried to garner support for an anti-Jackson convention, which could unite all the opposition factions behind a single candidate, and asked if the friends of Clay would consent to such a ticket. Indeed, it appeared that Green would go so far as to form a coalition with Clay in order to defeat the Old Hero. Unfortunately for those hoping Jackson could be defeated, no such coalition ever developed between Calhoun and Clay. Calhoun would never become a viable candidate for either president or vice president. Clay would be the presidential candidate of the National Republicans.<sup>23</sup>

## V.

Green was not without hope, however. If Calhoun was out of the race altogether, and he would never consent to supporting Clay, maybe there was someone else that could save the republic from Jackson and Van Buren. In early 1832, the editor briefly thought he may have found another candidate—former Speaker of the House and Virginia congressman Philip Pendleton Barbour.

Green had deep respect for Barbour, believing that the Virginian upheld the highest principles and virtue. When rumors began floating around that Barbour may be taken up as the vice presidential candidate on the Jackson ticket, instead of Van Buren, the editor saw a glimpse of hope. Green presumed that the Virginian would never join a conspiracy to place Van Buren in the White House, and, therefore, he could be trusted in the event that Jackson, if reelected in 1832, would resign or die.<sup>24</sup>

But Green's hatred for and distrust of Jackson got the better of him, and he soon became wary of placing Barbour on the ticket. If Barbour

23. Green to J. L. Hawkins, August 27, 1831, Green to Pleasants, August 27, 1832, Green to James Hunter, August 28, 1832, Green to J. S. White, August 30, 1832, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

24. *U.S. Telegraph*, March 5, 1832; Green to Cralle, March 15, 1832, Green to Cralle, April 20, 1832, *SHA Publications*, 7: 271, 273.

would oppose the Baltimore Convention, the editor was willing to support him. But if the convention nominated the Virginian as the vice presidential candidate, he believed that Barbour could actually strengthen the Old Hero's chances of reelection by becoming a pillar keeping the Jackson party from collapsing. Quite simply, Green revolted at the idea of supporting any man who wore the livery of Jackson, which Barbour would be doing if placed on the ticket. In addition, Green liked Barbour, and he felt that if the Virginian were indeed nominated and fell under the sway of Jackson, it would dishearten the editor to oppose him. He was "tired of building up men for the purpose of opposing them hereafter."<sup>25</sup>

It was indeed Barbour himself who would force Green to make up his mind. The Virginian publicly endorsed Jackson for president, whether he was on the ticket or not. That settled it for the editor. "I support a venal flatterer of Jackson!! No never." Barbour had disgraced himself by coming out for Jackson, Green declared; the Virginian was now nothing more than a candidate of the Kitchen Cabinet. It was time to move on to someone else—again.<sup>26</sup>

## VI.

In the end, Green would find his presidential candidate. He would support William Wirt, the Antimason candidate. The editor had looked to the Antimasons, in the summer of 1831, as the key to electing Calhoun president. If that party would nominate the South Carolinian, Green surmised, it would surely put Clay out of the running and give Calhoun the boost needed to steal support from Jackson. But it would not work out as Green had hoped. In late September 1831, the Antimason convention selected William Wirt as their standard-bearer. At that moment, Green despaired of any successful Calhoun candidacy. The editor then realized that, if the contest ever came down to a race between Jackson and Clay, the only alternative for him and the friends of Calhoun was to support Wirt.<sup>27</sup>

The presidential race indeed came down to three candidates: Jackson (Democrat), Clay (National Republican), and Wirt (Antimason). Green

25. Green to Cralle, March 28, 1832, Green to Cralle, April 6, 1832, Green to Cralle, May 3, 1832, Green to Cralle, May 11, 1832, *SHA Publications*, 7: 272, 274–76.

26. Green to Cralle, August 3, 1832, *SHA Publications*, 7: 277–78; *U.S. Telegraph*, August 3, 1832.

27. Green to Cralle, September 11, 1831, *SHA Publications*, 7: 169; Green to Rush, November 4, 1831, Green to Hamilton, November 9, 1831, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

stuck to his word and actively pressed all to vote for the Antimason candidate. Two months before the election, the editor wrote Thomas Walker Gilmer of Virginia trying to get the friends of Clay to support Wirt. Outlining all the states and the probabilities of their vote, Green argued that Wirt, not Clay, could prevent the reelection of Jackson. Over the next several weeks, the editor wrote other influential Clay supporters asking them to back Wirt as the only chance of defeating Jackson the Augustus and his anointed successor. He even offered to distribute hundreds of copies of the *Telegraph Extra*, at his own expense, if the Virginia Clay Committee would endorse Wirt. Green believed that this action would surely influence other states, such as Pennsylvania, New York, and Vermont, to follow suit. Clay, he argued, could not carry these states anyway.<sup>28</sup>

Green also tried to enlist Calhoun in the ranks of Wirt supporters. "I feel confident," he told the vice president, "that if Jackson is defeated at all it will be done by Wirt." Would it not be prudent then, he asked Calhoun, to look to his true allies: "The democracy of the North are now the Antimasons. It is the only party not organized against you. Its leaders are prepared to cooperate with you to unite with them in supporting Mr. Wirt."<sup>29</sup>

Green also used the *Telegraph* on behalf of the Antimason candidate. He framed all articles with a view to conciliate the Antimason interest and to demonstrate that Wirt was the only person able to defeat Jackson. Several weeks before the polls opened around the country, Green assessed the outlook for the candidates. Of the 288 total electoral votes, the editor gave 83 each to Wirt and to Jackson, 60 to Clay, and 62 still in doubt. But he painted a rosy picture for Wirt's chances and begged all to give the Antimason candidate their vote. The future of the republic depended upon it, Green argued.<sup>30</sup>

The voters, however, believed that the American republic was best

28. Green to Gilmer, September 24, 1832, Green to James Barbour, September 26, 1832, Green to Storrow, September 26, 1832, Green to John Helm, September 26, 1832, Green to Josiah Randall, October 2, 8, 1832, Green to Pleasants, October 8, 1832, Green to John Marshall, October 8, 1832, Green to Benjamin Watkins Leigh, October 9, 1832, Green to Hamilton, October 20, 29, 1832, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Green to Calhoun, August 23, 1832, *JCCP*, 11: 609–10; Simms, *Rise of the Whigs*, 60.

29. Green to Calhoun, October 4, 9, 23, 1832, *JCCP*, 11: 666, 667–68.

30. Green to Calhoun, October 4, 1832, *JCCP*, 11: 663–65; *U.S. Telegraph*, October 15, November 12, 1832. Green gave Wirt the states of Vermont, New York, Rhode Island, and Pennsylvania; he gave Jackson the states of Maryland (3), Virginia, North Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee, and Illinois; he gave Clay the states of Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland (7), Louisiana, and Kentucky. The states that Green considered in doubt were Maine, New Hampshire, South Carolina, Ohio, Indiana, and Missouri.

served by the Old Hero. Jackson won the election of 1832 by a larger electoral vote than he had in 1828: 219 to Clay's 49 and Wirt's meager 18. The popular vote as well indicated a solid Jackson victory: the president received 54.5 percent of the popular vote; Clay garnered 37.5 percent and Wirt only 8 percent. Although it was a smaller percentage than what he had garnered in 1828, the actual number of votes for the Old Hero exceeded those he had received in the previous presidential election. There was little doubt that Jackson was the overwhelming choice of the American people. As for Green, no huzzas, no hails to any state, no victory rhymes, filled the *Telegraph* as they had back in 1828. All that the editor could say was that "enough has been received to show that General Jackson has been re-elected by an overwhelming vote." In the back of his mind, and knowing his self-righteous and virtuous assessment of himself, he must have been stunned that so many of his fellow countrymen had succumbed to the power and corruption of Jackson and Van Buren.<sup>31</sup> Little did he know that, for the supporters of Jackson and Van Buren, he had several years prior become Jackson's apostate.

31. *U.S. Telegraph*, November 12, 1832.

## SECTION IV



### Jackson's Second Administration (1833–1837)

#### *Jacksonian Adversary*

**F**or all of his political astuteness, displayed most during the election of 1828, Green lagged behind the state of affairs unfolding during Jackson's first term in office. Jackson had essentially ousted the editor by early 1830. But Green could not see that. As late as the end of that year, he thought he was in good standing with the president. Yet the *Old Hero* had already decided to replace Green six months earlier with the establishment of the *Globe*. The publication of the Jackson-Calhoun correspondence in February 1831 ensured his demise. But the editor was still hopeful that he could save Jackson from the conspirators corrupting him. Green failed to fathom the president's anger over the publication of the correspondence and that, by exposing the rift between Jackson and Calhoun, he had permanently split the president from the vice president. Again, when Green spread the Eaton malaria, he believed that it was another attempt to destroy Van Buren and his circle of evil intriguers and thus rescue the *Old Hero*. But the Eaton Affair was essentially over when the president had sided with the Eatons within the first months of taking office. Jackson had already determined to reorganize his cabinet and choose Van Buren over



Calhoun as his running mate. Again, Green failed to see these events for what they were—his gradual banishment from Jackson's ranks. In fact, he did not realize what was happening to him until nearly two years into Jackson's first term. Quite possibly, Green's heightened sense of his own worth and his self-righteous attitude prevented him from calculating political movements that threatened his standing in Washington politics. The Old Hero's reelection, then, was undoubtedly a severe blow to the editor's ego.

If Green had one thing to fear from Jackson's reelection, it was certainly his position as printer to both houses of Congress. The editor's vocal opposition to the Jackson–Van Buren ticket had made him many enemies within the ranks of the Democracy. He had already lost about three thousand *Telegraph* subscribers and had been publishing the paper at a loss of around five thousand dollars since the publication of the Jackson-Calhoun correspondence. If Clay and his congressional supporters combined with the Democrats and chose Gales and Seaton over Green, then the editor would have to sell the paper. "If they put down the *Telegraph*," Green arrogantly told a friend, "it will be very difficult to get up another *independent* press at this place and without it the country cannot be free." Nonetheless, despite his pecuniary and political losses, he believed that his prospects were never brighter. "My standing in Congress," Green wrote to Edwards, "is stronger than at any previous time." In fact, the editor had told his old friend John Helm that if Jackson was reelected, all the friends of Calhoun and McLean would support him against the administration's friends in Congress, ensuring his continuance as printer to both houses. "It may seem a paradox," Green declared to Helm, "but I am now stronger with the opposition than Gales & Seaton, and the united influence of Gen. Jackson and Mr. Van Buren cannot throw their party votes against me." He could not have been more mistaken.<sup>1</sup>

The Democratic majority in the House of Representatives indeed punished Green for his transgressions of the past two years. They gave the House printing to Gales and Seaton. The Senate chose not to follow the lead of the lower house, voting to keep Green as their printer by a solid majority: 22 votes for Green, 10 for Blair, and 9 for Gales and Seaton. Although some political observers were certain that Green would win in the Senate, reaction by the friends of the Old Hero was harsh. One

1. Green to Cralle, December 16, 1832, *SHA Publications*, 7: 283; Green to Edwards, January 14, 1832, *Edwards Papers*, ed. Washburne, 579; Green to Helm, May 20, 1831, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

Kentuckian told Blair, “who would have thought that those high-minded honourable Senators could swallow such a bitter pill as Duff Green.” Several friends of James K. Polk declared that Green was “damned and unworthy of all trust & patronage,” and that he was nothing more than a “Hell fired rascal.” Jackson himself reacted in disbelief at the actions of both houses of Congress: “Altho’, I have been re-elected by such an overwhelming majority, still, Congress has elected Gales and Seaton printers for the House of Representatives, and Green for the Senate. So you see Congress pays Gales and Seaton for abusing me for the last twelve years, and Duff Green for the last three.” The editor would go on to abuse the president for the remainder of his second term.<sup>2</sup>

Green’s opposition to Jackson and his policies would continue to gain the editor numerous enemies, and his scathing pen would arouse anger in those he verbally assailed. In the next few years he would be physically attacked for his choice of words. But resorting to fisticuffs was nothing new to the editor. Green had already had a celebrated bout with the editor of the *New York Courier*, James Watson Webb, back in the spring of 1830. The two editors had conducted a running editorial battle over several years. Green assailed Webb for fomenting discord between the president and the vice president and stated that if the “scoundrel” continued to do so, “I will riddle his blanket.” In early May of that year, Green learned that Webb was on his way to Washington to confront him. He armed himself with a small pocket pistol, completed his morning business, and proceeded to the Capitol. Along the way, he encountered James A. Hamilton, son of Alexander Hamilton, at Gadsby’s tavern and conversed for a few minutes with the New Yorker. Hamilton mistakenly told Green that Webb was already at Washington and inside Gadsby’s. The editor then went on to the Capitol, thinking Webb was at the tavern.

But Webb was on the lookout for Green at the steps of the Capitol building. Just as the *Telegraph* editor approached the west front, Webb confronted him, raised his cane, and placed himself in front of Green, blocking his path to the entrance. Green halted and drew his pistol.

2. Smith, *Press, Politics, and Patronage*, 151; *Senate Journal*, 22nd Cong., 2nd sess., 197; *U.S. Telegraph*, February 21, 1833; Mitchell King to Hugh S. Legare, March 5, 1833, Mitchell King Papers, South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina; Solomon Clark to Blair, March 20, 1833, Solomon Clark Miscellaneous Papers, Special Collections, The Filson Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky; Samuel Laughlin to Polk, January 8, 1833, Thomas Porter to Polk, December 23, 1832, in Herbert Weaver, ed., *Correspondence of James K. Polk*, 2: 10; Jackson to Hardy Cryer, February 20, 1833, *Jackson Correspondence*, ed. Bassett, 5: 19.

"Throw away your pistol," Webb demanded, "and I will give you a damned whipping."

"I do not mean to be whipped by you," Green replied, "nor will I put myself in a position to invite attack from you."

"Are you not a coward to draw a pistol on an unarmed man?" Webb responded.

"I have no time to waste with you—so you must *march* out of my path," came the answer.

"I will not."

"You *shall*," and then Green cocked and presented the pistol.

Webb jumped back against the jamb of the door and said, "I'll go back."

"Very well," Green stated, "go backward or forward as you like—but *march* out of my path."

Webb then retreated up the stairs and into the rotunda of the Capitol, looking over his shoulder the entire time.

Although nothing came of the encounter, Green called the entire affair a "ridiculous farce" and apologized to his readers for his having to recite the event in order to correct Webb's account. One observer may have stated it best, when he referred to Shakespeare: "The public might say with Iago, in relation to this quarrel

Now whether he kills Cassio  
Or Cassio him, or each do kill the other,  
Every way makes my gain."<sup>3</sup>

The election of 1832 centered on more than just the problems that separated Jackson and Calhoun and that pitted the South Carolinian against Van Buren, now the new vice president of the United States. Indeed, two powerful issues—nullification and the war on the Bank of the United States—consumed both the electorate and all the parties pursuing the White House. Both crises arose prior to the 1832 election and clearly influenced its outcome, but they would continue well into Jackson's second term. Green would take an active role in the nullification crisis and the president's war on the bank. One of the editor's principal charges against Jackson in the campaign of 1832 was the growth and abuse of executive power—a slogan Green had consistently em-

3. Green to Noah, March 24, 1830, Green Papers, LC; *U.S. Telegraph*, May 13, 1830; Green to John Mumford, May 4, 15, 1830, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Autobiographical Fragments, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Allan Nevins, ed. *The Diary of Philip Hone, 1828-1851*, 24.

ployed in his attacks on the Adams administration during the election of 1828. He would again make this a central theme in his attacks on the administration during the next few years, and nullification and the Bank War were the tocsins that fueled Green's assault on the president and his supporters. In both instances, Green solidified his opposition to Jackson and Van Buren, eventually joining the ranks of the nascent Whig Party. In just a matter of four years, from 1828 to 1832, Green had gone from rabid Jacksonian partisan, to Jackson's chief apostate, to one of the Old Hero's most vocal adversaries.

## CHAPTER 15



# The Nullification Crisis

## I.

**T**he nullification crisis began in South Carolina and with John C. Calhoun. In the midst of an agricultural depression, the Palmetto State had lost nearly seventy thousand people to emigration during the 1820s and faced losing tens of thousands more over the next few years. South Carolinians blamed the protective tariff for their economic woes. The tariff, they argued, drove up the price of manufactured goods, which, in turn, hindered the sale of foreign goods in the United States, thus reducing the sale of cotton overseas. Declining cotton prices and land exhaustion forced many South Carolinians to leave the state in search of virgin lands.<sup>1</sup>

The passage of the Tariff of Abominations in 1828 only exacerbated the situation. The legislation infuriated South Carolinians, provoking them to take a stand against what they believed was a direct assault on their economy, their institutions, and their liberty. Shortly after the tariff became law, Vice President Calhoun, determined not to forfeit his political base in his home state, returned to Fort Hill and anonymously wrote the *South Carolina Exposition and Protest*. In this treatise, geared toward checking extreme states' rights advocates, Calhoun laid out his controversial theory of nullification, whereby a state could

1. For a complete examination of the nullification crisis, see Freehling, *Prelude*, and Richard E. Ellis, *The Union at Risk: Jacksonian Democracy, States' Rights, and the Nullification Crisis*.

essentially overturn a federal law. The objective of the concept was to preserve the Union, yet concomitantly protect the minority rights of the South. The procedure of nullification followed the same model by which the original thirteen states ratified the United States Constitution in 1787–1788. If a state believed that a federal law violated the Constitution, it could call a special state convention and declare that law null and void. Two courses of action would then become possible. The federal government could repeal the law or it could pass a constitutional amendment specifically validating the disputed measure. Whatever the outcome, nullification stopped short of secession, thus preserving the compact of states. Calhoun's *Exposition and Protest* accompanied resolutions of the South Carolina legislature protesting the tariff and calling for its repeal.

Many in South Carolina, as well as throughout the South and West, believed that the Tariff of 1828 was unconstitutional. Its only purpose was to protect domestic industry against foreign competition. Since the vast majority of American industry lay in the Northeast, the agricultural South and West felt that they were being taxed for the benefit of a particular section, since they would have to face higher prices for manufactured goods and lower foreign demand for their own products. The Northeast, they argued, selfishly promoted its own interests at the expense of the rest of the nation. Not only did most Southerners and Westerners favor free trade, moreover, they also believed that the Constitution authorized tariffs for revenue purposes only. A protective tariff, such as the Tariff of Abominations, violated the Constitution and, therefore, must be repealed. The doctrine of nullification was proposed as one of the peaceful means to achieve this objective.

Green had backed the Tariff of 1828 only because he understood it to be primarily an electioneering tool aimed at electing Jackson. As to the operation of the tariff itself, he disliked its protective principle, which promoted one section of the Union at the expense of the others. But once Jackson was elected president, Green began to withdraw his support of the tariff. By the summer of 1829, the editor openly expressed concern about the sectionalism inherent in the tariff. He appealed to the manufacturers of the Northeast, asking them to meet the South and the West on middle ground in order to arrive at a "judicious" tariff. Certainly these two sections of the Union had sacrificed their interests when the public good called for it. "What interest, then, can be promoted by making the question of the tariff, sectional and local?" Green asked in the *Telegraph*. All sections of the country, he declared, "are bound together by a triple cord of interest and principle." The manufacturing

interest of the Northeast must realize this. As for the doctrine of nullification, however, Green had not yet commented upon it, either publicly or privately.<sup>2</sup>

## II.

Nothing more would come of the nullification issue until the celebrated 1830 Senate debate between Daniel Webster and Robert Hayne. The debate began, not over the tariff, but over the question of the public lands. In late 1829, Connecticut senator Samuel Foote introduced a contentious motion whereby federal land sales would be restricted in the West. When the Senate considered the motion in 1830, an incensed Missouri senator Thomas Hart Benton denounced the Foote Resolution as a sectional measure designed to retard the settlement of the West and to allow the Northeast to retain its cheap supply of factory labor. Hayne, of South Carolina, saw a chance to connect the public lands issue with that of the tariff, hoping to join West and South in a movement to support cheap lands and to lower tariff rates. The senator argued that the sectional policy of the Northeast not only hurt the other sections of the Union, but it ultimately undermined the sovereignty and the independence of the states.

Webster immediately rose to the defense of the Northeast. Acclaimed as one of the most skilled orators in the United States, the Massachusetts senator denied that the Northeast harbored sectional tendencies. He then chastised Southerners for their repeated cries of consolidation when speaking of the Union. At this point, the question of the public lands disappeared, and Webster sought to drag Hayne into an open defense of states' rights and the theory of nullification.

The ruse worked. Hayne, also a skilled orator, defended the *Exposition and Protest*. Referring to the Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions of 1798, and even pointing to the Hartford Convention of 1814, the South Carolinian argued brilliantly that the Union was a compact of states and that the federal government could not be the judge of the limits of its own powers. The states had the constitutional and historical right and authority to interpose when the delegated powers had transcended their bounds, thereby threatening the liberty of the states.

Webster returned fire by postulating a nationalistic view of the Constitution and the Union. The thirteen colonies had fought for indepen-

2. *U.S. Telegraph*, July 25, August 12, 1829.

dence as a united entity, not as thirteen separate republics. Sovereignty, therefore, resided in the people as a whole; the federal and the state governments were nothing more than mere agents of popular will. To allow a state to nullify a federal act would be to reduce the Union to a mere “rope of sand.” The Supreme Court, Webster concluded, was the final arbiter of the Constitution, and a state could neither nullify federal law nor secede from the Union. Civil War was the only outcome of nullification. Then, in one of the most dramatic endings to any speech ever given in the Senate, Webster thundered the famous line: “Liberty and Union, now and forever, one and inseparable.” The eloquence captivated the audience packing the Senate galleries.

Hayne’s arguments were more accurate historically, for the Union was indeed a compact of states, as demonstrated by the making and ratifying of the Constitution. But Webster’s speech stirred the emotions and appealed more to the nationalistic ardor of Westerners. Like Jackson, who had sided with Webster’s version of the Union over Hayne’s, Westerners lent more credence to majority rule than to abstract theories of states’ rights and nullification. In the end, the Foote Resolution was defeated and Webster’s view of the Union would gradually triumph.<sup>3</sup>

Green gave extensive coverage to the debates. The discussion on Foote’s Resolution, he believed, had a “favorable tendency,” for it furnished a common platform upon which the “democracy of the country” might rally around Jackson and the Democratic Party. More important, the debates benefited the interests of the West. “I can never forget that the West is essentially democratic & the place of my nativity,” he wrote a friend. The West was certainly democratic, more so than any other section of the Union. Green failed to see, however, that it was equally majoritarian; the West disdained nullification.<sup>4</sup>

Like most political observers, Green was captivated by the exchanges between Webster and Hayne. “To say that the debate was ably conducted on both sides will not do justice to the talents of either gentleman,” he wrote in the *Telegraph*, “but no republican can be at a loss to determine which had the better of the argument.” The doctrine espoused by Hayne, Green continued, “is too well understood, and too firmly established as the essential and fundamental distinction between the parties of this country, to be shaken by the concentrated talents of those

3. For the various debates surrounding the Webster-Hayne exchange and the Foote Resolution, see Herman Belz, ed., *The Webster-Hayne Debate on the Nature of the Union: Selected Documents*.

4. Green to Dr. Cantry, February 24, 1830, Green Papers, LC.



who advocate a government of *limited* powers in time of war, and a government of *unlimited* powers in time of peace." Obviously, the editor referred directly to the Hartford Convention in the last phrase.<sup>5</sup>

But Green had more than an accurate historical perspective on the nature of the Union. He defended Hayne because he also desired a union between the West and the South; he, too, hoped that those who pressed for cheaper lands and a lower tariff could join forces in a common pursuit. "The question of the public lands," he would tell Edwards, "is daily attracting more attention and the anti-tariff party of the South anticipates that the West will unite in some modification of the entire system so as to give to the West the fund arising from the sales of public land as a permanent appropriation for purposes of internal improvement. May not this be done?" Green sincerely believed that the interests of the West and South were inextricably bound.<sup>6</sup>

Green, therefore, began to criticize Webster's speech. He attacked the Massachusetts senator, much as he had during the election of 1828, as an ultra-Federalist, a proponent of the Hartford Convention, and a danger to the liberties of the states and to the Union itself. Green also defended the speech of his longtime archenemy, Benton. In an editorial entitled "Democracy vs. Federalism," he portrayed the opposing views endorsed by Hayne and Webster as, respectively, one of states' rights, the Constitution, and limited powers on the one hand and of the Hartford Convention and unlimited power for the federal government on the other. So vocal was Green's attacks on the Massachusetts senator that Webster rose in the Senate to protest the *Telegraph's* take on his speech. He stated that Green erroneously quoted him as having said that "the National Government was established by the people, who had imparted to it unlimited powers over the States and the Constitution." Green, writing to Hayne, denied "willfully & intentionally" misrepresenting Webster. It was the last word the editor would say on the famous debate. It would not be his last word on nullification, however.<sup>7</sup>

5. *U.S. Telegraph*, January 28, 1830.

6. Green to Edwards, January 19, 1831, *Edwards Papers*, ed. Washburne, 568. A month after Jackson's election in 1828, Green wrote a friend in St. Louis, stating that the "South will unite with the West *and it will prevail*. . . . In relation to this question [public lands] & the tariff the South & West have the same interests & they ought to act together." Green to Dr. H. Lane, December 28, 1828, Green Papers, LC.

7. *U.S. Telegraph*, January 29, 30, February 2, 4, 5, 8, 9, 13, 16, 18, 25, 1830; Claude M. Fuess, *Daniel Webster*, 1: 385, fn.5; Green to Hayne, March 9, 1830, Green Papers, LC.

## III.

Although the final break between Jackson and Calhoun would not officially occur until early 1831, after Green published the Seminole correspondence, the two men had already begun to part over the issue of nullification. Jackson had no knowledge of the author of the *Exposition and Protest*, but he suspected it was the vice president. At the same time, many political observers had no knowledge of the president's stance on nullification. After all, Jackson was a slaveholder, a native of South Carolina, and the favorite son of the South. Many, including Green, thought the Old Hero would certainly side with Hayne's version of the Union and that he would sympathize with the plight of the Palmetto State. In April 1830, on the heels of the Webster-Hayne debates, all would know where the president stood. Once again Green would injure his standing in the eyes of Jackson.

On April 13, 1830, the Democracy staged a dinner in honor of Thomas Jefferson's birthday. The friends of Calhoun, however, controlled all the arrangements of this Jefferson Day dinner. They intended to use the event to further their political agenda in favor of nullification. Both Jackson and Van Buren were invited to attend as a matter of protocol. The two men had decided prior to the dinner that the president would make a toast that left no doubt where he stood on the issue. After the twenty-fourth toast, all lauding states' rights, Jackson stood, raised his glass, and looking directly at Calhoun, said: "Our Union—It must be preserved!" Trembling so that he spilled wine from his glass, the vice president gave his rebuttal toast: "The Union, next to our liberty, the most dear!" A fine retort indeed, but Calhoun went too far, adding another statement that stole much of the fire from his first statement: "May we all remember that it can only be preserved by respecting the rights of the States and distributing equally the benefit and the burden of the Union!" It made no difference, however. The president had stolen the show from the Calhounites, and all knew where he stood on the issue: there would be no violation of federal law as long as he was in the White House.<sup>8</sup>

Green reported on the Jefferson Day dinner toasts, but he completely missed the significance of the exchange between the president and vice president. The event, he recalled, was "free from all spirit of faction (although differing in some minor measures)." The editor printed all the toasts, and as requested by Hayne, inserted the word "Federal" in

8. Remini, *Course of American Freedom*, 234–36.

Jackson's toast: "Our *Federal* Union—It must be preserved." In commenting on the president's toast, Green ignored the significance it had for the nullification movement. Yet, at the same time, the editor did attempt to preserve party unity and harmony. "The President's toast was intended to speak to all parties," declared the *Telegraph*. "It calls as loudly upon the advocates of the tariff to relax unnecessary and oppressive restrictions, as it does to the South to submit with patience to the wholesome operations of public sentiment." The editor went on to argue that Jackson's statement placed the "blessings of the federal union" above the "unjust exactions" of the current tariff, appealed to all sections to avoid collisions that weakened the bond of union, and recognized dissatisfaction in the South and a desire to remove the cause of dissension. What Jackson's toast did not imply, argued Green, was a will to use "his strong arm to rivet their oppression upon them." The Union was indeed to be preserved by compromise, not force. Moderation was the only avenue, and preservation of the Union was again Green's watchword:

In the language of the President, we say that the Union is dearer to us than the tariff. If the South is unjustly oppressed, we would modify the tariff to relieve them from that oppression. Yet it is the duty of the South—it is the duty of all, to maintain that high regard for the Union which would sacrifice everything short of liberty itself, to preserve it. Let our public men act out the principles of the President's toast. Let them approach the question with a determination to preserve the Union, and it will be preserved.<sup>9</sup>

Green also preached moderation to the nullifiers in South Carolina. Three factions made up intrastate politics in the Palmetto State: the *Unionists*, led by Joel Poinsett, William Drayton, Daniel Huger, and Hugh S. Legare, who were loyal to Jackson; the *Extremists*, led by George McDuffie and Governor James Hamilton Jr., who were radically states' rights and pro-nullification; and, the *Calhounites*, led by Hayne, Francis Pickens, and James Henry Hammond, who were moderate in their stance on states' rights and nullification. It was to this last fac-

9. *U.S. Telegraph*, April 15, 17, 20, 23, 1830. Jackson and his closest advisors believed that Green had misread the president's stance regarding nullification. Kendall told Blair that the "disposition which Gen. Green has exhibited to identify Gen. Jackson and his friends with the nullifiers of South Carolina has excited anew their desire for another paper here." According to Jackson, moreover, he had explained his views on nullification to Green on several occasions. Remini, *Course of American Freedom*, 292, 293.

tion that Green appealed to control the extremists. Writing to Calhoun in the summer of 1830, the editor warned the vice president that any rash action on the part of some within South Carolina could force him off the ticket in the election of 1832. "Let me entreat you my dear Sir to use your influence to moderate your public men," Green begged. "You are to be the sufferer" if he failed to do so. Too many influential forces were already pushing Jackson to declare his hostility against South Carolina and nullification, and if the vice president did not rein in the volatile elements within his state, he would surely be ousted from the administration. "You may rest assured that the policy of our friends [in South Carolina] will end in bitter disappointment," the editor concluded. "[Nullification] is condemned by *all* parties. It has no apologists out of your own State & if you are not active & cautious & more moderate, you will before another year be in a minority in your own state."<sup>10</sup>

Writing to Hamilton the very same month, Green chastised the extremists for their sectional bent regarding the tariff and nullification. South Carolina congressmen, McDuffie especially, had made numerous speeches accusing the Western states of supporting the tariff advocates of the Northeast. Green, the Westerner, called such attacks unwise. "I have before told you," he reminded Hamilton, "that when you argue that it is the interest of the West & Middle States to continue the tariff you arm your opponents with an argument subduing reason & patriotism and riveting the oppression which you combat." A moment's reflection would clearly demonstrate that the South was the natural and most valuable customer of these regions. How then, queried Green, was it in the interest of the West to oppress the South? Again, the editor cherished a South-West alliance, and the bold statements emanating from South Carolina only threatened that alliance. Moreover, they instilled further hostility and sectional tendencies.

As for Green, he told Hamilton outright that he could never support the extremist agenda. "I cannot go with you because I think you are taking the surest way to defeat the great objects which you have in view," he told the governor. The editor believed that he could not defend this faction when public sentiment was so strongly set against them. They would have to defend themselves, but Green would leave

10. Niven, *Calhoun*, 179; Green to Calhoun, August 1, 15, 22, 1830, *JCCP*, 11: 210–11, 215–17, 217–18. Green also wrote Edwards that an "attempt will be made to prevent Mr. Calhoun's running as Vice-President. . . . Our friends in the South have played a foolish part on the tariff, and Calhoun suffers. His own state will desert him." Green to Edwards, October 8, 1830, *Edwards Papers*, ed. Washburne, 547–49.

them with cogent advice. Upon the subject of the tariff and nullification, he counseled Hamilton, "I think your presses & your speeches have to be reformed." Avoid inflammatory speeches and publications; appeal directly to the interests of both the West and the East. By showing all sections, the West especially, that the South was their best customer, that the manufacturers do not consume their agricultural products, and that Southern prosperity was tied directly to theirs, then and only then would other sections seek a modification of the tariff. Even appealing to certain interests in New England would bring about reform. "You thus would enter Congress with strong aid from the West & East," Green concluded. Moderation and appeals to the interests of all sections of the Union was the editor's watchword.<sup>11</sup>

Green's endeavors on behalf of moderation failed. Jackson had already determined to enforce the tariff if South Carolina nullified. His Jefferson Day dinner toast should have been evidence enough of this fact. The extremists in the Palmetto State became more vocal in their promise to defy federal law. Events in 1831 accelerated the impending confrontation between the president and the nullifiers. As in every other affair in which he had participated during that year, Green continued his drift away from Jackson and toward permanent opposition.

#### IV.

In late spring of 1831, following on the heels of the publication of the Jackson-Calhoun correspondence and the cabinet reorganization, the attitude of extremists in South Carolina became more defiant. McDuffie gave another incendiary speech in Congress that May, further alienating the nullifiers from mainstream sentiment. The situation appeared to have no peaceful solution. Green again attacked the South Carolina congressman for his rash and divisive actions. All must seek an amicable adjustment to the tariff, he reiterated; continued attacks on other sections, namely the West, would only cause more ill-feeling. "The surer remedy," he wrote in the *Telegraph*, "is wisdom, moderation, and perseverance."<sup>12</sup>

Finally, during the summer of 1831, Green disclosed his view of nullification. In an angry letter to Governor Hamilton, the editor attacked the doctrine directly. "You say your doctrines are gaining strength," he

11. Green to Hamilton, August 1, 22, 1830, *JCCP*, 11: 211-13, 218-19.

12. *U.S. Telegraph*, May 30, 1831.

declared. "If by your doctrines you mean nullification, you are mistaken." Nullification, Green continued, was nothing less than a Southern Hartford Convention. No man outside of South Carolina dared to defend the doctrine. All the Union opposed it, even the other Southern states. Green called nullification "odious," "hateful," and "inexpedient." It meant nothing less than "*disunion*." The Palmetto State was quickly isolating itself from the rest of the nation.<sup>13</sup>

But his efforts fell on deaf ears. The extremists would not back down. Hamilton even wrote Calhoun telling him that "the States Rights party will not be diverted for one moment from the prosecution of their cause by the presidential question & that they could support the election of no man on the ground of Green's proposed compromise with the Manufacturers." That "proposed compromise" was nothing less than Green's attempt to instill moderation in revising the tariff.<sup>14</sup>

To Green, only one individual could come to the rescue of the nation—John C. Calhoun. Jackson was already casting his die against the nullifiers, but Green would not stand with the Old Hero any longer. Calhoun, thought the editor, stood the best chance of restoring unity and harmony among the sections. As it stood, the only choice was between Jackson's growing nationalism and South Carolina's radical nullifiers. Mainstream America, Green surmised, desired a moderate, a states' rightist like Jackson had been in 1828. Calhoun was that man. All that remained, therefore, was for the vice president to further clarify his position regarding the doctrine of nullification, beyond what he had written in the *Exposition and Protest*. A staunch states' rightist himself, Green sincerely believed that Calhoun's views meshed with his own moderate stance. In no way would the South Carolinian support the extremist position espoused by many of those within his state. It was one thing to support states' rights under the Constitution, Green asserted, but it was quite another to enforce a doctrine that undermined the very threads of union.

Green decided that a Calhoun candidacy, either for another term as vice president or quite possibly for the presidency itself, was the answer for which everyone looked. After reading McDuffie's tirade in Congress, Green wrote the vice president pressing him to separate himself from the damage he believed the extremists would inflict on his reputation and his candidacy. "You have it in your power to save yourself,"

13. Green to Hamilton, June 12, 1831, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

14. Green to Hamilton, June 12, 1831, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Hamilton to Stephen D. Miller, June 25, 1831, James Hamilton Papers, South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina.

Green admonished Calhoun. Come out on the issue of nullification, the editor begged him, and avow "your desire to compromise the question [of the tariff], your willingness to give an incidental protection to manufacturers [*sic*] and your attachment to the Union." Moreover, the editor pleaded with the vice president to save himself from the folly of the extremists. If Calhoun failed to separate himself from the likes of McDuffie, then Green was reluctantly compelled to abandon all hope of modifying the tariff peacefully and of any chance for Calhoun's political elevation. "I tell you in sober sadness that you have no other hope," Green warned, "and that I intend openly to avow that you do not concur in Mr. McDuffie's views and that if you did, I would be among the first to abandon you to your fate."

Again, the editor had demonstrated his independence and his commitment to principles, not men. In fact, Green told Calhoun that the *Telegraph* "never can and never will so long as I have any controle [*sic*] over its columns give countenance to such folly" as nullification. He had already hazarded everything in defending Calhoun's character, and he was paying for it now, and he believed he had every right to threaten the vice president. "Curse on your dinners and your nullification," Green angrily concluded, "the word is more odious to me than any other in our language, and I fear that you are destined to wish from the bottom of your heart that it never had a place in our vocabulary." His prediction would soon come true.<sup>15</sup>

Throughout the summer of 1831, Green desperately tried to separate Calhoun from the extremist views emanating from South Carolina, what he called "the folly of McDuffie." It did not matter to him that Calhoun remained quiet on the growing nullification crisis since the publication of the *Exposition and Protest*. Green was sure the vice president would not approve of the views and actions of those in the Palmetto State. The editor publicly avowed that Calhoun had always been and continued to be the advocate of union and harmony and that he supported the modification of the tariff. He told Barry, for example, that Calhoun was "no more a nullifier than you and Jefferson always were" and that the vice president was labeled a nullifier solely for political reasons: Van Buren intended to destroy Calhoun's career by connecting him to nullification. Even when it had become common knowledge that Calhoun had written the *Exposition and Protest*, Green continued to defend the South Carolinian, continually arguing that he had never actually countenanced disunion. If only the vice president

15. Green to Calhoun, May 31, 1831, *JCCP*, 11: 398–400.

would clarify his position on nullification, and reveal that he only proposed a constitutional form of states' rights, even a passive defense of the reserved powers, all would be well. Calhoun would be the moderate voice between staunch nationalists and radical nullifiers.<sup>16</sup>

Calhoun indeed had decided, as Green beckoned him to do, to take charge of the nullification movement in South Carolina in order to moderate it, to make it peaceful and constructive, and to prevent disunion and civil war. The vice president promised everyone that he would come out on the issue, clarifying the views that he had outlined in the *Exposition and Protest*. Green had no idea what the nature of that response would be, but he was, again, certain it would accord with his sentiments against disunion. But Calhoun was not writing fast enough for Green. The editor believed that time was slipping away for any successful run for the White House. "Our friend Calhoun sleepeth," he told a friend. "He is permitting the fairest opportunity to pass away and has manacled his friends by promising to come out on the subject of nullification. . . . He has permitted the enemy to rally *all* his forces." Green again sent a series of missives to Calhoun, pushing him to come out on nullification, but he never received a response. "Can't you say 'well done,' or some such thing?" pleaded the editor. Green even offered some advice, hoping that it would prod or inspire Calhoun: "It seems to me that upon the subject of nullification you have only to take the ground of union & conciliation—throwing yourself on your general devotion to the Country & its institutions and it may perhaps be enough for you to say without going into detail, that your desire has been to allay excitement and to devise some practical mode of adjusting the disputed powers without impairing the rights of the States or endangering the Union." Still, nothing, and Green could only wait.<sup>17</sup>

Calhoun finally delivered the much anticipated document. Published in the *Pendleton (South Carolina) Messenger*, and immortalized in the annals of American political thought as the "Fort Hill Address," the vice president had indeed laid bare his views in a lengthy address. Although he called for a reduction of tariff duties, he strongly defended the theory of a "state veto"—he avoided using the term *nullification*—

16. Green to Russell, July 12, 1831, Green to James Hamilton, July 18, 1831, Green to Benedict, August 1, 1831, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Green to Floyd, March 10, 1831, in Ambler, *Diary of John Floyd*, 128–29; *U.S. Telegraph*, March 14, 17, 18, 25, April 5, 9, 1831.

17. Niven, *Calhoun*, 180; Green to Storrow, July 29, August 8, 1831, Green to Benedict, August 1, 1831, Green to Forbes, August 8, 1831, Green to Holly, August 8, 1831, Green to Salmon, August 8, 1831, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Green to Calhoun, August 5, 1831, *JCCP*, 11: 449–50.



basing the doctrine on the famous Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions of 1798. There was no doubt now where Calhoun stood on the issue. He may not have gone as far as the extremists, but he had brilliantly and publicly espoused the right of a state to resist the oppressive measures of the federal government.<sup>18</sup>

Green was completely unprepared for Calhoun's address. "Mr. Calhoun's address was like a shock produced by a cold bath," he told a friend. "His friends had been taught to believe that he was not a nullifier little considering what the term implied. They expected him to denounce the doctrine because they supposed that he knew that such a measure would promote his popularity; and without knowing the man or examining his position they were shocked to find that he had not availed himself of the occasion to make himself popular." Green could not help but conclude that the address doomed Calhoun's presidential aspirations, at least for 1832. The editor recognized that all the potential candidates for the White House—Jackson, Van Buren, Clay, McLean—used Calhoun's views against him, further debilitating him politically. "Nullification has disposed of him," Green informed supporters.<sup>19</sup>

But apparently the shock Green felt over Calhoun's revelation had not yet worn off. The editor believed he could still salvage Calhoun's candidacy. If he could paint a moderate picture of Calhoun, show the country that he was not a disunionist, and attempt to gain the endorsement of the Antimasons before their convention, maybe he could rescue the vice president from the evil influence of the likes of McDuffie and Hamilton. Green immediately commenced a letter-writing campaign on behalf of Calhoun, attempting to downplay the nullification label. "Mr. Calhoun's address operates as a powerful tonic," he wrote Hamilton. "It is bitter in the mouth but produces a healthy action of the system." At first, many would be shocked to read Calhoun's address, but then they would realize that it had merely "renewed the doctrine of Madison & Jefferson & the Republican school of '98." In fact, nullification was an incorrect term to describe Calhoun's beliefs; the right of resistance was the accurate term. "The strong point to urge constantly," continued Green, "is that Mr. Calhoun's proposition is in favor of Union." His doctrine avowed the right of a state to resist the oppressive encroachments of the federal government or another section of the Union. It never denied to the federal government any of its

18. Niven, *Calhoun*, 181–82. For the complete text of the Fort Hill Address, see Ross M. Lence, ed., *Union and Liberty: The Political Philosophy of John C. Calhoun*, 367–400.

19. Green to Cralle, August 21, 1831, *SHA Publications*, 7: 167–68; Green to Storrow, September 3, 1831, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

legitimate powers; it merely denied its right to oppress. Moreover, this “right of resistance” would be accomplished legally, effected by three-fourths of the states, which then could possibly be overridden by a constitutional amendment. Despite all of Green’s glossing of Calhoun’s address, nothing could be done to successfully rejuvenate the South Carolinian’s bid for the presidency. No political party would adopt him as their candidate as a result of his Fort Hill Address. “But for the cry of Nullification,” Green believed, “Mr. Calhoun would have been nominated by the Anti-masons.” Instead, the vice president was left without a party at all.<sup>20</sup>

In the meantime, Green had apparently made a shift in his own position on nullification. What was once “odious” and “hateful” to him now seemed to be acceptable. Although the shock had been felt, Green believed that after deeper reflection of Calhoun’s address there followed a “healthful glow.” Nullification was nothing more than the doctrine espoused by the Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions, or so the editor surmised. It was not the monster portrayed by the extremists, rather it was a defense of states’ rights, the Constitution, and liberty. Was Green’s independence wilting under the influence of Calhoun? Was he aware that he appeared to justify, not denounce, nullification? By attempting to save Calhoun’s candidacy, the editor was actually trying to redeem himself. Jackson had ousted him from the Democracy, so he could not without losing all self-respect side with the Old Hero. Driven by a self-righteous belief in his own infallibility, Green would see this as surrendering his own principles. It proved far easier and certainly more comfortable for the editor to see some justification and credibility in a doctrine that defended states’ rights, even if it elevated states’ rights above the Union itself. Through the remainder of 1831, then, Green explored further the doctrine of nullification, gradually respecting the concept but not quite yet accepting it fully. Events on the national political scene would quickly push him over the precipice.<sup>21</sup>

## V.

Although Jackson detested nullification and the nullifiers of South Carolina, Calhoun especially, he made numerous attempts to reduce

20. Green to Storrow, September 3, 1831, Green to James Hamilton, September 4, 1831, Green to Ingham, September 4, 1831, Green to Cralle, September 4, 1831, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Green to Cralle, September 5, 1831, October 4, 1831, *SHA Publications*, 7: 168–69.

21. Green to Cralle, August 21, 1831, *SHA Publications*, 7: 167–68.

tariff rates. Beginning in 1829, the president called on Congress to modify the Tariff of 1828. In the spring of 1830, Congress obeyed Jackson's request and lowered duties on certain goods, such as tea, coffee, salt, and molasses. The nullifiers, however, argued that these reductions did not go far enough. Near the end of 1831, the president, attempting to deflate the nullification movement altogether, asked for even more reductions in the tariff. The result was the Tariff of 1832, ironically pushed through Congress by ex-president and now Massachusetts congressman John Quincy Adams. Still, duties on cotton, wool, and iron remained rather high. Green, nonetheless, again preached moderation and compromise, pressing Southerners to accept the new tariff as the best they could expect to receive. To prolong the issue would only result in further division within the country and possibly outright violence.<sup>22</sup>

Green actually endorsed Jackson's actions to reduce tariff rates. The editor told South Carolinians that the president's measures demonstrated a good faith effort to address their grievances and a willingness to compromise. In an effort to bolster the administration's tariff modifications, Green asked pro-Jackson papers to show that the new measures would indeed ease the economic woes of the South and soothe sectional tensions. "No one who loves his country," the editor wrote New York congressman Gulian Verplanck, "can fail to appreciate such efforts to harmonise the conflicting interests which threaten to endanger the Union and all that is wanting to secure a favorable adjustment of the tariff is decided and fixed cooperation of the intelligence and patriotism of Congress." Both sides, pro-tariff and anti-tariff, must arrive at an acceptable agreement. But if Congress failed to modify the tariff, Green believed that South Carolina would carry out their threat to nullify the Tariff of 1832, resulting in either an adoption or acquiescence of South Carolina's doctrine or civil war.<sup>23</sup>

Still dissatisfied with the course of the tariff reduction in Congress, the legislature of South Carolina, filled with a vocal nullificationist contingent that had gained seats in the 1832 election, called for a special convention to address the matter. The convention, held in Columbia, overwhelmingly adopted an ordinance of nullification. The South Carolina Ordinance declared the tariffs of 1828 and 1832 unconstitutional and forbade collection of any duties in the state after February 1, 1833. The state legislature followed up the ordinance with an act that al-

22. Remini, *Course of American Freedom*, 358–61; Niven, *Calhoun*, 172.

23. Green to Calhoun, August 1, 1830, *JCCP*, 11: 211; Green to Verplanck, November 8, 1831, NYHS; Green to Edwards, January 14, 1832, *Edwards Papers*, ed. Washburne, 578–79.

lowed any citizen who had his property seized as a result of ignoring the tariff to get a state court order to cover his loss. The legislature then elected Hayne governor and Calhoun, who resigned as vice president on December 28, 1832, to the U.S. Senate.

South Carolina's actions stunned Green. He believed that the Tariff of 1832 did little to placate the South and actually fostered, rather than calmed, sectional animosity. But he did not approve of the action of the Palmetto State, and he told his readers as much. Beyond any doubt, argued Green, the rash actions of South Carolina would provide her adversaries with a great advantage and make it considerably more difficult to modify the tariff satisfactorily for all interests involved. "It remains for every patriot," stated the *Telegraph*, "to bring all the influence which he may possess into the scale of moderation, forbearance, and conciliation."<sup>24</sup>

But Green seemed unsure just where to stand. He believed that South Carolina disdained disunion, that she sought justice against oppression, and that her threats to secede should not be ignored. Although the editor desired a peaceful remedy to the confrontation, he also beckoned South Carolina to stand firm and resist the oppressive measures of the federal government. Yet he stopped short of endorsing the South Carolina Ordinance, and he never believed that the state would actually carry out its provisions. Matters would move quickly, however, and Green would find himself more and more the defender of South Carolina and more and more the proponent of the very doctrine he once called "odious" and "hateful."

## VI.

Green had been correct on one account—South Carolina's actions isolated her from the rest of the Union. Even the Southern states opposed the ordinance of nullification; the other Deep South states of Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi called the action rash, unsound, and dan-

24. *U.S. Telegraph*, May 24, July 2, November 29, December 3, 18, 1832. Green proposed several principles in which the tariff must be modified in order to terminate the dangerous sectional conflict: "that there be no surplus revenue beyond the ordinary and clearly constitutional wants of the government" and "that the modification shall be such as to equalize the burdens as nearly as practicable." A surplus revenue, he argued, would merely continue the "present distraction," for "it must be apparent that the present dangerous sectional conflict cannot terminate so long as there is a surplus." Green also argued that the tariff transferred the profits of the labor of the South to the North. *U.S. Telegraph*, May 24, 25, 1832.

gerous, and refused to support their sister state in openly defying federal law. Jackson privately threatened to hang all the nullifiers, Calhoun especially. In his annual message, delivered to Congress on December 4, 1832, the president promised to firmly enforce the tariff, though at the same time he asked for more reductions in its protective level. But it was the Old Hero's next address, six days later, that transformed the nullification issue into a full-blown national crisis.

On December 10, 1832, Jackson communicated his Nullification Proclamation. No less important to American political thought than the Fort Hill Address, the address was a complete refutation of Calhoun's exposition. The president called nullification an "impractical absurdity." He argued that the power of a state to annul a federal law was incompatible with the Union, contradicted the letter of the Constitution, and destroyed the spirit and the objectives for which the Union and the Constitution were created. Do not follow the deceitful and errant leaders of your state, he admonished South Carolinians. Those who said that they could peacefully disobey federal law were seriously misled. Make no mistake, the president warned, the laws of the United States would be enforced at all costs. Those who profess nullification preach disunion; there were no exceptions. And to make clear the seriousness of the issue and to express in no uncertain terms his determination to stop disobedience, the president declared that "disunion by armed force is treason." A showdown between the federal government and the state of South Carolina seemed almost inevitable.<sup>25</sup>

Jackson's Proclamation completely changed Green's attitude toward nullification. He had only flirted with the doctrine in the months following the Fort Hill Address, but now he had emerged as a staunch proponent of it. The president's message was far more dangerous to the Union, the Constitution, and to liberty, he believed, than nullification could ever be. In fact, nullification had now become a means to arrest the unconstitutional and dangerous growth of executive power.

Immediately, the editor attacked Jackson's promulgation in the pages of the *Telegraph*. First, the editor argued that the Proclamation destroyed states' rights, an essential element of the federal system of government, and completely abrogated all the principles which Jeffersonian Republicans had been contending for since 1798. Second, and following from the first, the Nullification Proclamation was an explicit

25. On the Nullification Proclamation, see James D. Richardson, ed., *A Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents, 1789-1897*, 2: 640-56; Remini, *Course of American Democracy*, 8-45.

avowal of the Federalist persuasion, “an adoption of the perfect consolidation of the most ultra *federal* school.” Third, Jackson’s argument again revealed “in all its native deformity, the despotic principles of the Executive.” The Old Hero had essentially argued that there were no limitations to the power of the president and of the federal government and that the government itself was the sole judge of its own powers. Fourth, and following from the third, the proclamation disallowed resistance to oppressive and unwarranted power, also an essential element of the federal system. What happened, Green asked, when the national government transcended its legitimate authority? What remedy did the people and the states then have? Had not Jefferson and Madison argued on behalf of the right of a state to resist such aggrandizements? Fifth, after the natural right of resistance had perished, the president threatened outright force against a state seeking a peaceful remedy. It was not South Carolina that was the aggressor, rather it was Jackson himself. While South Carolina had petitioned for her rights, the president promised military action. He had all the power in his hands, supported by Congress, to modify the tariff, but he chose to intimidate instead. Finally, Green argued that the Nullification Proclamation was a personal attack on Calhoun and an electioneering gambit designed to elect Van Buren. More important, Jackson’s proclamation had turned Green into a nullifier.<sup>26</sup>

But would Jackson actually enforce his proclamation? Green predicted that he would not. It was little more than hot air, a bluff, a ruse to scare the nullifiers. “The proclamation is but words—words, words, words,” declared the *Telegraph*. “Let South Carolina be firm. Let her pursue her remedy by a *peaceable* appeal to her judiciary. Let her be careful to give no pretext for the use of force, and it will become a *monument* of WORDS.” Jackson’s next step, taken shortly after the Nullification Proclamation, forced Green to change his prediction.<sup>27</sup>

The president sent reinforcements of federal troops under the command of General Winfield Scott to Fort Moultrie and Castle Pinckney in Charleston Harbor. Backed by a ship of war and seven revenue cutters, federal officials were determined to enforce the tariff before vessels even had the chance to dock. In South Carolina, both nullifiers and unionists organized armed volunteer units in response. In January 1833, the president asked Congress for legislation authorizing him to

26. *U.S. Telegraph*, December 12, 15, 1832, January 4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 15, 17, 18, 21, March 5, 1833.

27. *U.S. Telegraph*, December 12, 1832.

use military force to enforce the tariff. Jackson already legally held such power, but he recognized that congressional affirmation would only bolster his cause.<sup>28</sup>

This "Force Bill," or "Bloody Bill" as the nullifiers called it, further inflamed Green, who again set out to attack the president in the columns of the *Telegraph*. The editor proclaimed that the Force Bill, like everything Jackson had promulgated in his first term in office, indicated the "progress of consolidation and despotic principles." The president and his cabinet had again abandoned all vestige of republican principles and had adopted the extreme ultra-Federalist position. The Force Bill, moreover, annihilated the judicial authority of the states as guaranteed under the Constitution, "subverts the ramparts of their reserved powers," and "reduces them to mere dependents and humble corporations." Most of all, the bill created a military dictatorship under the control of the president.<sup>29</sup>

Congress passed the Force Bill, and the president signed it on March 4, 1833. Green despaired for the republic. "I conceive the bloody bill as worse than the tariff," he wrote a friend. "I intend to put the *Telegraph* in mourning on to-morrow, for the constitution is dead—my apprehension . . . is but an evidence that the principles of that bill will overlay the sleeping energies of the States—A bill passed in the mere wantonness of power; and annihilating at one blow all that is valuable in our institutions." On the day the bill became law, Green lined the columns of his paper in black. States' rights had perished, he proclaimed; the law "sounds the knell of the Constitution," and the "genius of consolidation" had risen triumphant, while that of the republic "lies low and lifeless in the dust." Fortunately for the Union itself, the nullification crisis never came to blows, in part because just two days before he had signed the Force Bill, Jackson had signed into law the compromise Tariff of 1833, ending the standoff between South Carolina and the United States.<sup>30</sup>

28. It was at this time, in December 1832, that Green regularly assailed the Unionists in South Carolina, which resulted in his beating by South Carolina congressman James Blair. *U.S. Telegraph*, December 25, 28, 1832; John W. Taylor to [unknown], December 26, 1832, John W. Taylor Papers, South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina; Nevins, *Diary of Hone*, 85; Nevins, *Diary of Adams*, 434, 450; Edwin Bergh to his father, March 1, 1833, Charles Edwin Bergh Papers, Duke University.

29. *U.S. Telegraph*, January 23, 1833.

30. Green to Cralle, March 4, 1833, *SHA Publications*, 7: 284; *U.S. Telegraph*, March 4, 1833.

## VII.

The compromise Tariff of 1833 had its origins in a bill lowering tariff duties known as the Verplanck Bill, after the New York congressman who introduced it on behalf of the administration on January 8, 1833. Many nullifiers believed that the measure still did not go far enough to alleviate their plight. Clay then stepped forward and offered one of his renowned compromises. The compromise tariff set out to reduce rates gradually until 1842, when the rate on cotton would be cut in half. The nullifiers, seeing no other way out of their predicament, supported Clay's bill. The compromise tariff passed both houses of Congress and was signed into law on March 1, 1833. The nullification crisis had ended, but not until South Carolina, attempting to save face, nullified the Force Bill. Both sides claimed victory. Jackson had saved the Union, but South Carolina had obtained a satisfactory reduction of the tariff.

Green not only supported the compromise Tariff of 1833, but he also argued that he had a direct role in its formulation and passage. In December 1832, Green felt that Jackson, in an effort to suppress nullification, would adopt measures that could lead to civil war and disunion. Hoping to avert such a disaster, Green, through the agency of a friend, advised Clay to form a joint committee to consider a compromise between South Carolina and the federal government. Green then approached Congressman Robert Letcher of Kentucky and Senator John Clayton of Delaware, and "together agreed upon and inaugurated the movement for a compromise, with the understanding, that they would unite in giving to Mr. Clay the credit of the movement." Green's tale of his direct role in initiating the Tariff of 1833 appears quite incredulous, especially when considering his penchant for exaggerating his own importance and role in national affairs. But Clay did go to Philadelphia to consult with others regarding a compromise tariff, one of whom was Congressman Letcher. At that time, Letcher brought Calhoun and Clay together for the purpose of resolving the tariff issue. Since Calhoun was involved, and Green had his ear, it is possible that the editor could have had some influence on the movement to seek a compromise on the tariff. Just how much remains uncertain, for no other evidence than Green's exists.<sup>31</sup>

Nonetheless, Green publicly endorsed the Tariff of 1833. In fact, he broke with most Southerners who were still dissatisfied with the

31. Autobiographical Fragments, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Remini, *Clay*, 417, 424; Benton, *Thirty Years' View*, 1: 342-43.



compromise. Yes, the editor disagreed with some of the stipulations of the new tariff, namely the nine-year period before the duties fell to acceptable levels. Yet, Green "was decidedly of the opinion that a sudden immediate reduction might have been productive of serious and disastrous consequences." Certainly "strict and exact justice" to the South would have entailed immediate reductions, but "something was due to those of our brethren at the north, whose interests were wrapped up in the manufactories." When pro-states' rights and anti-tariff newspapers in the South fomented trouble by calling for additional reductions in the new tariff, Green berated them. Let the *Globe* and other "collar" presses cause trouble, he admonished. "Let us show our brethren at the north, that, although we are fully determined not to submit to injustice, beyond a certain point, yet we are willing to yield not a little, for the sake of peace and the Union." Here again, the editor revealed his desire to avoid sectional divisions and maintain unity and harmony.<sup>32</sup>

## VIII.

Yet, despite all his cries for unity and harmony, by the end of 1832, Green had emerged as one of the more outspoken advocates of nullification. In only a year's time, he had changed his views on the doctrine one hundred and eighty degrees, going from one of its most vocal opponents to one of its staunchest proponents. Everyone who read the *Telegraph* recognized that its editor had become a full-fledged nullifier. But did Green actually believe in the feasibility of nullification? Did he believe that it should be carried out as South Carolina had? Or did he simply espouse the theoretical implications of the doctrine alone?

Green's deep aversion to Jackson directly affected the editor's views on nullification more than any other factor. It was not until the Old Hero stepped into the fray and threatened to thrash South Carolina for its "disobedience" that Green first began to defend the doctrine. The power of the executive scared the editor far more than the actions of the nullifiers. In fact, he quickly warmed to the concept of nullification when he saw it through the eyes of the "oppressed," that is, South Carolina. If by nullification they meant resistance to the tyranny of the president, then Green was fully behind nullification. "For myself," the editor revealed to a friend, "I believe that the doctrine [of nullification]

32. *U.S. Telegraph*, April 5, May 6, 1833.

is the only hope of the country; the only means of preserving the Union—short of rebellion.”<sup>33</sup>

After reflecting deeper on Calhoun’s version of nullification, combined with his reaction against the measures of the president, Green began to see that the doctrine was actually a peaceful remedy against the aggrandizing tendencies of the federal government. “We care not what it is called,” he wrote in the *Telegraph*, “whether nullification, state interposition, or defence of states’ rights; it is still the same thing—resistance to the unconstitutional acts of the General Government.” This principle of resistance had been rooted in the history of the early republic, the editor maintained, and in the very foundation of the Jacksonian Democracy as well. Jefferson had entertained the doctrine of nullification in the Kentucky Resolutions back in 1798; he declared the Alien and Sedition Acts, which had violated states’ rights and the spirit of the Constitution, null and void. Why could Jackson and his friends not see that? Why would they oppose South Carolina when it was exercising the very same principle as had Virginia and Kentucky in 1798, or even Georgia in 1826 when it chose to ignore the Supreme Court’s decision regarding Cherokee lands?<sup>34</sup>

Green consistently argued that there was never any danger of disunion from nullification. How could the defense of the reserved powers lead to disunion, he asked? “This is supposing that the majority will attempt to enforce these illegal exactions at the point of the bayonet,” Green questioned a friend, “but does this prove that nullification, being the argument of the weaker party, is wrong? This would be to yield that the power to enforce proves the right to do so.” He argued that nullification had actually saved the Union from either secession or civil war. South Carolina was the patriotic party during the whole crisis, Green contended, for they believed that the measures they proposed would arrest the obnoxious laws and preserve the Union in the end. The onus for avoiding disunion was on the federal government, the aggrandizing party. When the Union becomes the means of oppression, Green concluded, it is the right and duty of the oppressed to resist. “If disunion follows, it will be the fault of the wrong doer, not of those who resist the wrong.” As for secession itself, Green wanted little to do with it. “With the apostle of liberty,” he wrote in the *Telegraph*, “we are for

33. Green to John Cuthbirt, July 9, 31, 1832, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

34. *U.S. Telegraph*, March 12, 17, April 4, 1832, February 26, March 7, 16, May 15, 1833; Green to Cralle, March 12, 1832, *SHA Publications*, 7: 270–71; Green to John Cuthbirt, July 9, 1832, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

keeping the Union together as long as possible, and only separate when the usurpations of the General Government have left us no other choice but separation or submission to unlimited powers.”<sup>35</sup>

Green also argued, like many in South Carolina and those throughout the Union who had supported the nullifiers, that nullification alone had resulted in the compromise Tariff of 1833. The federal government had backed down, the editor argued; it did not enforce the Tariff of 1832. “Nullification is triumphant,” Green declared in the *Telegraph*. The doctrine had indeed rescued states’ rights, the reserved powers, from the advance of consolidation. The Nullification Proclamation and the Force Bill had succumbed to the doctrine of nullification, Green proudly stated, and the Union had been saved because one of the states had decided to exercise the cherished and established right of resisting oppressive measures by the federal government.<sup>36</sup>

The question of nullification led Green to reflect on the nature of the Union itself. Nullification was another manifestation of the perennial struggle between power and liberty, he argued. States’ righters were for both the Union and liberty: “All that they claim is the power to prevent the execution of unconstitutional laws.” But, liberty predated the Union; the Revolution sought to establish American liberty, not the Union. “The Revolution gave us *liberty*,” Green reflected, “the object of the *Union* was to preserve it.” The states had created the Union in order to prevent collisions among themselves, “by inhibiting to the majority the exercise of powers which it was foreseen would prejudice the minority; or, in other words, to secure liberty.” The manufacturers of the North, he continued, assumed that the federal government had the power to compel the planters of the South to deal exclusively with them, to expel foreign commerce. “If this be so,” Green reasoned, “instead of securing *liberty*, the Union has made the South the slaves of the North. Instead of becoming free republics, the Southern States have exchanged masters, and no more.” The nullification crisis, therefore, had demonstrated whether the American government was instituted “for the purpose of enabling a majority to trample upon the rights and interest, and coerce the obedience of the minority to their utter ruin and impoverishment” or whether it was instituted “for the pur-

35. *U.S. Telegraph*, June 26, 28, July 14, August 12, 1832, April 3, 29, May 9, 1833; Green to Tomlinson Fort, July 20, 1832, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

36. *U.S. Telegraph*, March 9, 16, August 12, 1833. For other editorials concerning various aspects of the doctrine of nullification, see *U.S. Telegraph*, March 23, April 8, 9, 13, May 20, August 30, September 4, 6, 19, 24, 26, 27, November 16, 1833, February 20, July 23, 1834, February 7, 1835.

pose of cooperation in measures of mutual benefit.” The Union, Green concluded, was not the end; it was not the great object for which everything else was to be abandoned and sacrificed. The Union was a means, a great and powerful avenue by which liberty, peace, and independence could be attained.<sup>37</sup>

Many people had asked the editor how he could support a doctrine that allowed a state to be both in and out of the Union at the same time. Green argued that such an assertion was ridiculous. “A state is in the Union to the extent of the delegated powers,” he stated in the *Telegraph*. “It never was in the Union so far as her reserved rights are involved. These belonged to her before the Union, and were *reserved* against the Union.” The Constitution, therefore, was the limit of consent, and whoever advocated the exercise of powers not granted, and sought their enforcement by military means, became the enemy of the reserved powers, the states. “To substitute *force* for *consent*,” Green continued, “violates the Constitution; those who would use *force*, to violate the Constitution, are the enemies of the Union.” Defending the reserved powers against the encroachment of the delegated powers preserved both the Union and states’ rights. A state could be in and out of the Union at the same time, and do so constitutionally and peaceably. Green had indeed come a long way to espouse a theory he once considered “odious” and “hateful.” He would defend the doctrine of nullification for the rest of his life.<sup>38</sup>

37. *U.S. Telegraph*, January 23, 24, March 25, April 29, 1833.

38. *U.S. Telegraph*, April 29, 1833.

## CHAPTER 16



### The Bank War

#### I.

**A**lthough the nullification crisis was undoubtedly one of the most significant events of Jackson's presidency, it took second place to another, equally more dramatic and emotional struggle, yet one that far exceeded any of the contention and strife arising from the Palmetto State's defiance of federal law. The Old Hero's war on the Bank of the United States [BUS], not his war on John C. Calhoun or on South Carolina, was the central event of Jackson's two terms in the White House. While the battle over nullification certainly affected the presidential election of 1832, it was the war against the nation's central financial institution that defined the campaign, the opposing candidates and their respective political parties, and even the spirit of Jacksonian America itself. Here again, Duff Green would play an important role, but one not nearly as vocal, defiant, and determined as he had played in defending South Carolina against the perceived aggrandizement of executive power. In fact, Green would timidly support the president's actions, even after Jackson had ousted him from the ranks of the Democracy—further indicating the editor's independent course in American politics.

The Bank War centered on two powerful personalities, Nicholas Biddle, the president of the BUS, and President Jackson. Under Biddle's capable management, the bank had not only grown and prospered, but it also supplied a stable currency and promoted the expansion of business in the United States. The BUS had very powerful enemies, how-

ever, mostly in the form of state banks, debtors, speculators, New York's Wall Street, and states' rights proponents. Many Westerners, like Jackson, Benton, and Green, also detested the BUS; to these men, Biddle's bank was an aristocratic monopoly bent on undermining democracy and republicanism. After an early disastrous experience with banks, compounded by the Panic of 1819, the Old Hero came to distrust paper money, speculative mania, and banking in any form. The stage was thus set for a bitter conflict between two powerful characters and two equally powerful political and economic camps. Biddle would fire the first salvo.<sup>1</sup>

Although the bank's charter was not set to expire until 1836, Biddle could not wait; he wanted to ensure the continuance of the bank before that date, but was not sure when to bring the issue before Congress. The National Republicans, behind the impetus of Clay and Webster, pushed Biddle to seek recharter prior to the election of 1832. Clay desired to use the bank as the central focus of his campaign against Jackson, and supporters of the bank held a majority in Congress. Surely, thought Clay and his cohorts, the Old Hero would never risk losing the election by vetoing the recharter. They obviously underestimated Jackson's resolve and his hatred of banks.

In the summer of 1832, both houses of Congress passed the recharter of the BUS—28 to 20 in the Senate and 107 to 85 in the House—both majorities lacking the necessary two-thirds to override a veto. On July 10, 1832, Jackson indeed vetoed the bill to recharter. In his celebrated veto message, the president declared the BUS a monopoly that smacked of special privilege, a den for foreign influence, and outright unconstitutional. Congress could not override, and the crisis went to round two—the 1832 election.

Jackson took his clear victory over Clay as a mandate to take the offensive against the BUS. His first move was to ask the House to look into the safety of the government's deposits in the bank. On March 2, 1833, behind the forces of Calhoun and Clay, Congress declared the deposits safe—the same day that the president signed the Compromise Tariff of 1832, ending the nullification crisis. With that specter behind him, the Old Hero ignored Congress's assessment and decided to remove all government deposits from the bank. When Secretary of the

1. On the Bank War and the various issues arising from this struggle, see Robert Remini, *Andrew Jackson and the Bank War*; William G. Shade, *Banks or No Banks: The Money Issue in Western Politics, 1832–1865*; James Roger Sharp, *The Jacksonians Versus the Banks: Politics in the States after the Panic of 1837*; John McFaul, *The Politics of Jacksonian Finance*.

Treasury Louis McLane opposed Jackson's wishes, the president again reshuffled his cabinet. After the new treasury secretary William Duane also refused the order to remove the deposits, the president dismissed him and promoted Attorney General Roger Brooke Taney, a Jackson faithful and fellow bank hater, to the now vacant post. Removal quickly followed. Over the next year, Taney deposited the government's money in twenty-three state banks, dubbed "pet banks."

Biddle would not surrender, however. He retaliated by contracting credit to cover the loss of the deposits. Financial duress immediately afflicted the nation. By 1834, the severity of distress following in the wake of numerous business failures forced many to approach the president in search of a remedy. Go see Nicholas Biddle, barked the president, for it was he who was causing all the economic troubles. Biddle, too, pointed the finger of guilt, but at Jackson for removing the deposits. The Old Hero characteristically held out, and in the spring of 1834, with the mass of Americans blaming Biddle rather than their beloved president, won the war. In April 1834, the House approved Jackson's new banking policy, voting 134 to 82 against rechartering the BUS, 118 to 103 against restoring the government's deposits in the bank, and 117 to 105 in favor of the state banks as the best place to put the government's money. For the remaining three years of his presidency, Jackson undertook a complete reform of the nation's banking and currency. Biddle's arrogance and belief that he had more clout than Jackson cost him the BUS and the war. He would eventually fade from the limelight into obscurity. The Old Hero again had proven that he was indeed as tough as "Old Hickory."<sup>2</sup>

## II.

George Hoffman, one of the directors of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad, wrote to Nicholas Biddle after the election of Andrew Jackson in 1828. "I have read with great dissatisfaction the assertions, insinuations [*sic*], and threats of Duff Green in his Telegraph," he fumed to the bank's president. "This enflated [*sic*] flimsy Editor does much mischief and may do more if not put right, his paper circulates extensively and has done a good deal for the cause of Genl Jackson, I should be very sorry to imagine the next administration would in any way be influ-

2. The cornerstone of Jackson's currency and banking reform was the Coinage Act (1834), the Distribution Act (1836), and the Specie Circular (1836).

enced by such a paper.” Not only had Hoffman captured the worries harbored by many friends of the bank about Jackson’s hostility to the institution, but he also revealed Green’s equal dislike of the BUS. Indeed, both the new president and his chief mouthpiece had long believed that the bank represented a monied aristocracy, possessed a corrupting influence that undermined republican values, and directly threatened the agrarian foundation of the young republic. That the BUS was poised to destroy republicanism was a belief that Green completely shared with Jackson.<sup>3</sup>

Throughout Jackson’s first two years in the White House, Green consistently attacked the BUS in the columns of the *Telegraph*. He opposed recharter, criticized those in Congress who spoke on behalf of the bank, advised his readers not to purchase bank stock, blamed the bank for all the pecuniary distresses, especially the Panic of 1819, that had befallen the South and the West, and argued that state and local banks were “the *only* barriers against a monied aristocracy, more absolute and oppressive than eastern despotism.” If the states removed local banks, Green maintained, it would simply enable the BUS to open branch banks, which “being under the controul [*sic*] of a Directory appointed by the Mother Bank, will throw all the political as well as monied influence of this country into the hands of a few Philadelphia Brokers.” That was his favorite charge against the BUS—that Biddle’s bank had acquired unwarranted power and corrupted the people and the institutions of government via a monied aristocracy. “The Bank has money, and it has the purchased presses,” ran one of Green’s editorials. “It is gradually extending its power, by planting its agents in the shape of Bank Presidents, Cashiers and Directors, in the Several States, and it must be put down, if at all, by the sovereign people.” Arguing that the renewal of the bank’s charter would “put an end to civil liberty,” Green vowed to assail the institution relentlessly.<sup>4</sup>

People listened. George Hoffman mentioned to Biddle that he had heard an influential state legislator, whose family held large amounts of stock in the BUS, declare “he would sell out his stock on reading Duff Green’s paper.” James A. Hamilton, upon reading a letter from Green that suggested that the South Carolinian was speculating in

3. George Hoffman to Biddle, December 20, 1828, in Reginald C. McGrave, ed., *The Correspondence of Nicholas Biddle Dealing with National Affairs, 1807–1844*, 61–62.

4. Wiltse, *Calhoun, Nullifier*, 50; *U.S. Telegraph*, May 8, December 21, 1829, April 20, May 17, 1830; Green to John Mumford, April 8, 1830, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Green to William Branch Giles, March 22, 1829, Green Papers, LC.



BUS stock, vehemently denied any such activity. Hamilton quickly reiterated his innocence to Jackson a few days later. Such was the impact of Green's paper and its attack on the bank. Anyone who supported the Old Hero refused to be associated with the institution for fear of gaining the animosity of the president. And all one had to do to become the president's enemy was read his own name in the *Telegraph* as a supporter of the bank.<sup>5</sup>

But somehow, Jackson came to believe that Green was not doing enough to attack the BUS. The president charged Green with being silent on the whole issue, that the editor had not taken notice of several congressional speeches regarding the bank (which was untrue), and that the two men had never exchanged opinions about the BUS. "The truth is," Jackson wrote Lewis in the summer of 1830, "[Green] has professed to me to be heart and soul, against the Bank, but his idol [Calhoun] controls him as much as the shewman does his puppets, and we must get another organ to announce the policy, and defend the administration; in [Green's] hands, it is more injured than by all the opposition." James A. Hamilton, as well, called for another administration press in Washington to replace Green, because he believed that the editor had somehow or other not gone far enough to criticize a report by Congressman George McDuffie defending the BUS. But Green *had* come out in the pages of the *Telegraph* staunchly attacking McDuffie's "Bank Puff." The editor declared that McDuffie's report, which was that of the House Committee on Finance, was nothing more than a report written by the bank itself. Green went on to say that the BUS was heavily involved in the political arena, that it had extended its branches into "doubtful districts," and that it intended to create and perpetuate a monied monopoly, "consolidating the powers of the Government in the hands of a few brokers located in Philadelphia."<sup>6</sup>

Still, Jackson ousted Green from his ranks. "Duff Green has violated his pledge on this subject [the BUS] and is neutralised," the Old Hero informed Hugh Lawson White. Green's ousting, however, was clearly not related to the Bank issue—not if Jackson and his circle had read the editorials attacking the "monster" in the *Telegraph*. While those closest to the president pursued a replacement for the *Telegraph*, the

5. Hoffman to Biddle, December 20, 1828, *Correspondence of Biddle*, 62; Hamilton to Green, December 19, 1829, Green to Hamilton, December 31, 1831, Hamilton, *Reminiscences of James A. Hamilton; or, Men and Events, at Home and Abroad, During Three Quarters of a Century*, 151, 152.

6. Jackson to Lewis, June 26, 1830, Hamilton to Jackson, July 29, 1830, *Jackson Correspondence*, ed. Hemphill, 4: 156, 167–68; *U.S. Telegraph*, July 8, 1830.

paper and its editor still attacked the bank. Green defended the president's plan for removing the government's deposits from the BUS and placing them in the U.S. Treasury. He argued that such a move would not bankrupt the nation and chided the opposition press for supporting the bank. Even after finding himself expelled from the Democracy, Green still professed his opposition to Biddle's bank—albeit with a small caveat: "You ask my views against the Bank," the editor wrote a friend. "I am opposed to all great monopolies. I believe the present Bank dangerous but I think silence as to it now perhaps most advisable." Jackson had actually silenced one of the chief critics of the Bank of the United States.<sup>7</sup>

### III.

Quite possibly, the president and his closest friends had become wary over the possibility that Green was indebted—literally—to the BUS. Green had indeed incurred a relatively substantial debt to the Bank and several of its branches, eventually amounting to \$15,600. But the editor had done everything within his powers to pay the debts, especially after he had assailed the BUS so vociferously. As soon as the election of 1828 was over, Green applied for several loans with the intention of paying off his debts to the BUS. Still, the costs of publishing the *Telegraph* proved quite large, and in February 1831, a few weeks prior to the publication of the Seminole correspondence, Green asked the BUS to lend him \$20,000. The editor used the congressional printing contract and a mortgage of Washington real estate, including the *Telegraph* office, to secure the loan. "My object in making this arrangement," Green informed the BUS, "is to obtain a cash capital for my business and to reduce all my pecuniary liabilities in to one." Green added a caveat, however: "It may be proper to add that no accommodation given by the Bank will induce me to abate in any respect the course which my paper has pursued in relation to it." Biddle, nonetheless, guaranteed a "kind & respectful consideration" of the request for a loan. It was a matter of business, he told one of the bank's directors. "The Bank is glad to have friends from conviction, but seeks to make none from interest. For myself, I love the freedom of the press too much

7. Jackson to White, April 29, 1831, *Jackson Correspondence*, ed. Bassett, 4: 272; *U.S. Telegraph*, December 15, 1830; Green to Stephen Simpson, July 17, 1831, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

to complain of its occasional injustice to me, & if the loan be made, it shall be with a perfect understanding, to be put into the Note if necessary, that the borrower is to speak his mind about the Bank, just as freely as he did before." Green obliged, and continued his attacks on the bank, even though he was very indebted to it. Here again, Green's independent course prevailed.<sup>8</sup>

Green sincerely desired to make his paper independent of the BUS, and he consistently denied that the bank had "purchased" his paper. He even tried to hide his transactions with the BUS from the secretary of the treasury, out of fear that it could wound the president, not to mention the veracity of his own assault against the "monster." During the election of 1832, with the bank issue taking center stage, Green believed that the recharter of the BUS rendered it "doubly dangerous," and hoped Jackson would veto it. When the Old Hero followed through, the editor supported Jackson's veto. "Our opinions upon the subject of the Bank are known," the editor told his readers, "and it gives us pleasure to approve this act of the Executive. . . . We approve the [veto] for itself, and because we are opposed to the monopoly enjoyed by the Bank."<sup>9</sup>

#### IV.

After the election of 1832, Green altered his position regarding the bank. He still vowed his opposition to the institution. "We are no partisan of the Bank," he regularly stated, but the editor saw a more sinister plot behind the war on the BUS. "I am not the partisan or the advocate of the Bank of the United States," Green reiterated, "but as the blow which has been aimed at the Constitution, was struck through that institution, I will proceed to examine the false pretences under which it has been assailed, and to develop the unholy purposes contemplated in the attack." The war on the bank, Green came to believe, was actually a conspiracy to unite all the financial power of the country in the hands of Vice President Martin Van Buren and his Regency in

8. Green to David Henshaw, January 17, 1829, Green to McKenna, September 10, 1829, Green Papers, LC; Green to William Ingalls, March 8, 1830, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Biddle to John Potter, January 9, 1830, *Correspondence of Biddle*, 96; Statement of loans made by the BUS and its branches to Green, *Correspondence of Biddle*, 358; Green to Joseph Hemphill, February 4, 1831, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Biddle to Joseph Hemphill, February 10, 1831, *Correspondence of Biddle*, 124.

9. Green to Brent, December 21, 1830, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; *U.S. Telegraph*, June 6, July 11, September 24, 1832; Crouthamel, "Bribe the Press," 35, 36.

New York. The Magician seemed to be behind every event and issue that did not go Green's way, and the Bank War was no exception.<sup>10</sup>

"I intend to make war on the Regency, and the monied influence which they have made to bear on Gen. Jackson," Green wrote Cralle in the fall of 1832, "and to show that the attacks on the Bank have been stock jobbing operations." The entire war on Biddle's bank, the editor argued, was nothing more than a conspiracy to put Van Buren in the White House. The plan was all too clear to him: the friends of the vice president intended to withdraw the government's deposits from the BUS, charter new banks in the West, join these banks with those in New York City, and make war on the BUS and compel it to suspend specie payments, sending the nation into economic distress. "If this is accomplished," Green informed Calhoun, "the reputation of Jackson and Van Buren will be sustained, their identity achieved, and the heir apparent is to float in on the steam boat party discipline." In the meantime, "Lewis, Kendall, & Co." would be enriched by their speculation in stocks.<sup>11</sup>

Green sincerely feared the powers exercised by the Bank of the United States; but he feared more the power of the federal government if it were to control the banking system, especially under the influence of Van Buren and the New York Regency. The editor opposed the BUS because he opposed "all monopolies," but "monied and Executive influence may conspire against the liberties of the country" as well—and that is just what he believed Jackson intended to accomplish all along, the combination of the U.S. Treasury and the nation's banking system. The Bank War, Green wrote a friend, was nothing more than the removal of a competitor; the administration attacked the bank because they knew they could not control its directors. Jackson removed the deposits, therefore, to cripple the BUS, only to place the government's money in pet banks under the control of Van Buren. In short, the Old Hero objected to "*the* bank" and not to "*a* bank."<sup>12</sup>

Green, therefore, began to attack the removal policy of the Jackson administration as much as he assailed the Bank of the United States itself. Removal, argued the editor, was arbitrary, unjust, vindictive,

10. *U.S. Telegraph*, September 7, 1833, September 9, 1834.

11. Green to Cralle, September 10, 1832, *SHA Publications*, 7: 281; Green to Calhoun, *JCCP*, 11: 667–68.

12. Green to Milton Gregg, October 24, 1832, Green to James Hagan, October 24, 1832, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; *U.S. Telegraph*, March 22, April 1, 3, 25, May 25, 1833, January 2, May 29, September 13, 1834, March 11, 1836; Frank Gatell, "Sober Second Thoughts on Van Buren, the Albany Regency, and the Wall Street Conspiracy," 19–40.

and inexpedient. No one gained by removal of the deposits, Green regularly asserted; only the New York banks and the Regency had gained. The people were thus forced to choose between Van Buren and his "league of state banks" and the BUS. When the Bank War had ended, and Jackson proved victorious over the "monster," the federal government had acquired all power over the currency and the commercial business of the country. The president was the true "assailant," not the Bank of the United States. The pet banks would become the tool of the Jackson—and soon the Van Buren—administration. They would ignore sound principles of banking, Green concluded, and "move in accordance to the beck and nod of those in power." Nothing had changed; power had been replaced by more power. But this all fit neatly into Green's preoccupation with Jackson's abuse of executive power and the concomitant unconstitutional expansion of the powers of the federal government.<sup>13</sup>

13. *U.S. Telegraph*, August 13, September 4, 14, 16, 19, 20, 21, 23, 24, 26, 30, October 5, 22, 23, November 9, 14, 22, December 4, 1833, January 2, 11, February 10, May 29, 1834, March 11, 1836. Green eventually blamed Jackson for bringing on the Panic of 1837: the president "willfully and knowingly brought all these distresses on the commercial community which are now extending to all other interests of the country." *U.S. Telegraph*, February 25, March 29, 1834. Green also proposed that Duane run for a seat in Congress from Pennsylvania, and, if elected, push his nomination for Speaker of the House, which Green believed would thwart the designs of Jackson and Van Buren. Duane, the editor believed, would receive the unanimous support of the West and the South. Green to Biddle, October 1, 1833, Green to Duane, October 1, 1833, Green to Benjamin Richards, October 1, 1833, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

## CHAPTER 17



# Slavery

## I.

**A**lthough the Bank War and the nullification crisis, and the various issues surrounding and emanating from these passionate struggles, dominated the American political scene during the 1830s, another volatile issue, slavery, appeared during this decade. It carried more emotional venom than any issue yet to arrive on the national political stage, eventually inciting passions to unparalleled heights and raising political invective to new limits—even momentarily tearing apart the threads of union. What Jefferson had described as the “firebell in the night”—the sectional agitation aroused during the debate over the admission of Missouri to the Union and the future of slavery in the United States—had again come to the fore of American political discourse. The slavery issue had essentially lain dormant for nearly a decade after the Missouri Compromises. But new movements would arise in the middle of Jackson’s first term, which would broach new concerns over the nature and the place of the peculiar institution in American society. And just as he had in the Bank War and in the nullification crisis, Duff Green would play a central role in this debate as well.

From the time of the American Revolution through the 1820s, there were few public figures, North or South, who openly defended slavery. Antislavery groups were strong in the upper South, and the emancipation movement, which grew in popularity after the formation of the American Colonization Society in 1817, found its greatest strength in

the slave states. The objective of the emancipation and colonization movement was to urge slaveholders to voluntarily free their slaves, rather than to force manumission upon masters via government fiat, and to remove them to Africa. Some of the most prominent names in American society, slaveholders themselves, were active supporters of the emancipation movement: James Madison, James Monroe, and Henry Clay, to name only a few. But by the early 1830s, antislavery assumed a new dimension, one that eschewed gradualism and espoused immediate abolition.<sup>1</sup>

Two events, both occurring in 1831, launched the abolition movement before the American public. William Lloyd Garrison of Massachusetts began publication of the *Liberator*, a newspaper dedicated to the abolition of slavery. Southerner slaveowners were immediately outraged at Garrison's militancy and utter disregard for their propertied interests. They were even more incensed—and outright frightened—when a Virginia slave named Nat Turner led a revolt against his owner's household. Before the day had ended, the slaves had killed fifty-five whites. Not even the state militia's indiscriminate killing of numerous slaves in quelling the revolt or the execution of seventeen and the deportation of seven of the guilty slaves could appease Southerners. The next year, 1832, two new antislavery groups formed: the New England Anti-Slavery Society, started by Garrison, and the American Anti-Slavery Society, founded by Arthur and Lewis Tappan. The growth of these two groups, combined with the abolition of slavery in the British Empire, forced Southerners to take the defensive. Abolitionists, they sincerely believed, had declared war on their constitutionally protected domestic institution.<sup>2</sup>

In the summer of 1835, a mob in Charleston ransacked the post office and burned abolitionist literature sent through the U.S. mail. The local postmaster decided it unwise to deliver the material and heated debates in Congress quickly ensued. Jackson demanded a law dealing with the "incendiary literature," but Congress would not enact such legislation. The postmaster general, however, never enforced the delivery of

1. On the antislavery issue in the United States during the early nineteenth century, see James Brewer Stewart, *Holy Warriors: The Abolitionists and American Slavery*; Ronald G. Walters, *Antislavery Appeal: American Abolitionism after 1830*; Lawrence Lader, *The Bold Brahmins: New England's War against Slavery, 1831–1863*.

2. On the abolitionist movements, see John L. Thomas, *The Liberator: William Lloyd Garrison*; Bertram Wyatt Brown, *Lewis Tappan and the Evangelical War against Slavery*; and Robert H. Abzug, *Passionate Liberator: Theodore Dwight Weld and the Dilemma of Reform*.

the detested propaganda. In 1836, when abolitionists inundated Congress with antislavery petitions, Congress passed a “gag rule,” which automatically tabled all such petitions, effectively ignoring them outright. Several years earlier, in 1832, the Virginia legislature wandered from its emancipationist leanings when it struck down a plan for gradual emancipation and colonization. Slavery was gaining ardent defenders as quickly as it was enlisting vehement opponents.<sup>3</sup>

Political protest and mob activity were only half the equation, however. Southerners took the defensive in abstract ways as well. During the 1830s, following on the heels of the growing abolitionist movement, Southerners began to develop a systematic and formal ideology in the defense of slavery. As the historian Drew Gilpin Faust has recently pointed out, this in-depth investigation into their domestic institution was more than a “political weapon of short-lived usefulness during the height of sectional conflict.” It was “an effort to construct a coherent southern social philosophy.” The theoretical defense of slavery, in essence, became an avenue for exploring fundamental social issues, from the role of natural law to the apparent contradiction between liberty and equality, tradition and progress. This ideological defense of slavery and its concomitant social movement began in 1832 with Thomas Roderick Dew’s *Review of the Debate in the Virginia Legislature*. Other proslavery apologists followed during the 1830s: Whitemarsh Seabrook, Thomas Cooper, and William Harper, to name a few of the more prominent. Although they would defend slavery through various media, from the Bible to social science, their consistent and comprehensive defense would continue unabated up to the Civil War. It was during this very theoretical deliberation that Duff Green abandoned his previous “business,” exhibited during the election of 1828, of keeping the topic of slavery out of national discussion.<sup>4</sup>

3. On the political aspects of slavery during the 1820s and 1830s, see William J. Cooper, *Liberty and Slavery: Southern Politics to 1860* and *The South and the Politics of Slavery, 1828–1856*; Freehling, *Disunion*; Don E. Fehrenbacher, *The Slaveholding Republic: An Account of the United States Government’s Relations to Slavery*; Michael A. Morrison, *Slavery and the American West: The Eclipse of Manifest Destiny and the Coming of the Civil War*.

4. Drew Gilpin Faust, *The Ideology of Slavery: Proslavery Thought in the Antebellum South, 1830–1860*, 1–2. On proslavery thought in antebellum America, see also Eugene Genovese, *The Slaveholder’s Dilemma: Freedom and Progress in Southern Conservative Thought, 1820–1860*; Larry Tise, *Proslavery: A History of the Defense of Slavery in America, 1701–1840*; Kenneth S. Greenberg, *Masters and Statesmen: The Political Culture of American Slavery*; William Sumner Jenkins, *Pro-Slavery Thought in the Old South*.



## II.

Green's views on slavery had been formed years before the debates of the early 1830s. During the contest over the admission of Missouri to the Union, the Missourian defended the institution of slavery and denied congressional power to ever interfere with it. His fellow citizens elected him to the Missouri Constitutional Convention based upon his support of keeping Missouri slave, and he made it one of his campaign slogans while he pursued a seat in the first Missouri General Assembly. A Westerner, like many of his fellow countrymen from Kentucky who poured into Missouri after the War of 1812, he had always supported the moderate proslavery sentiment of the upper South. The events and the arguments concerning slavery that arose in the early 1830s, however, inspired Green to take up his pen and more vocally defend the efficacy of the South's domestic institution. But how far would he go in this endeavor? Would he champion the moral virtues of slavery, as the new proslavery theorists openly espoused? Or would he stand by his more moderate, Missourian and Kentuckian, defensive stance on slavery, arguing that it was not the domain of the federal government to interfere with constitutionally protected property, or that it was an economic system integral to the nation's economic vitality?<sup>5</sup>

Formulating a coherent social philosophy in the defense of slavery was one thing; disseminating that philosophy was quite another. In order to propagate their various arguments, apologists for slavery made formal arrangements with Southern publishers for the publication and distribution of their proslavery literature. They also encouraged the region's most capable intellectuals to unite in defense of their domestic institution, to regularly correspond with each other regarding objectives, ideas, and plans of attack, and to circulate their writings via newspapers, pamphlets, and books. Here, Green broke with his previous position and actively participated in this publishing phenomenon. He continually urged the reprinting of Dew's pamphlet on slavery, consistently used the columns of the *Telegraph* as a clarion call for Southern unity in defense of slavery, and established his American Literary Company primarily for the purpose of publishing school textbooks and other pertinent monographs that defended the institution of slavery in the United States. Knowing Green, he promoted such publishing schemes as an opportunity to acquire personal pecuniary profit, but did he share the philosophical and scientific theories of the new extremist school?

5. *U.S. Telegraph*, March 15, 1832.

Despite his personal views, Green's active participation in promoting proslavery literature forever labeled him as a proslavery extremist of the Hammond mold.<sup>6</sup>

But Green indeed went beyond his promotion of proslavery publication and joined the ideological exploration of the South's peculiar institution. Through his editorials in the *Telegraph*, he reprinted many of the various arguments proffered by the more prominent slavery apologists, such as those, for example, who pointed out that the great republics of antiquity—Greece and Rome—had slavery. But there was one argument that Green regularly and consistently lifted up. He championed the notion that Southern slavery, in comparison to the economic, social, and political systems of the Northern states, was a beneficent and benign institution. Some of the arguments found in the writings of William Harper, James Henry Hammond, and Green's close friend Nathaniel Beverly Tucker also found their way into Green's editorials. The editor, for example, asserted that the condition of free blacks in the Northern states was inferior to that of their enslaved Southern counterparts. He contended that free blacks filled the penitentiaries of the North in far greater numbers than anywhere in the South; that their mortality rates were far higher and that they died at a much younger age than enslaved blacks; and that free blacks were inclined to be impoverished, sick, or mentally debilitated. Under the paternalistic influence of Southern slavery, Green continued, masters clothed, fed, and ensured the health of their slaves over the course of their entire lives. No such paternal system existed for free blacks in the North. Green also upbraided the North for the poor condition of their free *white* labor, which, he argued, wealthy capitalists purposefully and continually kept in an impoverished state. He argued that the white laborer of the North was not far removed from the deplorable condition of the pauper of Europe. Were these workers treated as well and protected as much as the master did his slave? Certainly not, Green retorted. This comparative approach emphasizing differing—and potentially competing—socioeconomic systems dominated Green's views on slavery.<sup>7</sup>

The antislavery elements in the North were, according to Green, hypocritical in their charges against the South. "The Northern philanthropists say that slavery is an evil, because all men are *born* free and

6. Faust, *Ideology*, 4–5; Green to Cralle, January 18, 1833, *SHA Publications*, 7: 284; *U.S. Telegraph*, June 8, 21, 24, 1833.

7. *U.S. Telegraph*, June 16, September 5, 1833, July 21, August 29, December 2, 1835.

*equal*, and that, therefore, slavery should cease," argued Green. But what would they think of a "Southern philanthropist" who insisted that "poverty is an evil, and that, therefore, the rich should divide their property with the paupers? There is as much law and humanity in one case as the other." The North, in addition, was hostile to free blacks living among them, and they would never accept the freed slave as an equal member of its society. Had not the "free" North already denied free blacks all civil, military, political, and ecclesiastical rights? queried Green. Indeed they had, he answered. In short, both free blacks and white laborers in the North were left to fend for themselves in a society that openly denigrated and oppressed them. In one of his usual bouts of sarcasm, for which he was so well known, Green even took a shot at the treatment of Northern women: "We suggest the propriety of getting up a society for the protection of those wives who are so much abused by their husbands. Charity should begin at home; and the ladies of the north will, no doubt, subscribe liberally to the anti-bad-husband society. We propose that the *salary* of the President of this society shall be three thousand dollars per annum, and that *each* of the Secretaries, two thousand!" Why, then, the attack on Southern slavery? Surely, Northerners could see past their hypocrisy. The answer, according to Green, was far from obvious.<sup>8</sup>

Green's defense of slavery lacked the sociological, scientific, biblical, and moral arguments consistently propounded by the proslavery extremists emerging from the 1830s debate on slavery. Instead, he concentrated on the legal and economic aspects of the domestic institution, especially the economic. Slavery should be defended because it promoted national interests and economic vitality, not because it was the natural condition of the Negro; promoting the financial superiority of the nation, and of the South particularly, outweighed any arguments supporting the innate inferiority of a race of man. Green's defense of slavery was based more on the practicable than the ethical, more on the essential than the natural. Of course that did not make his arguments any more the just or acceptable to those attempting to remove the institution from the supposed Empire of Liberty.

In classic Green style, the specter of conspiracy entered the debate as well. The economic pursuit of interested men lay at the heart of the abolition movement, and this must be exposed and countered. This is why Green broke his silence on the slavery issue, just as he broke open the Eaton Affair and the Seminole Correspondence; this is why it now

8. *U.S. Telegraph*, July 15, 17, 1833, September 19, 1834.

became his “business” to speak out. He believed that the “northern agitators” were actually the wealthy, aristocratic Northern capitalists who desired to acquire a monopoly of the Southern market. To accomplish this feat, they had to eradicate slavery so as to prevent competition from the South. Slave labor was much cheaper than free labor, argued Green—despite the assertion of many Southerners that slave labor was actually more expensive than free labor, owing to the fact that the Northern capitalist was not responsible for the care and upkeep of his workers. The competition between the free-labor system and slavery, then, served as the basis of the entire antislavery movement. “The mobocracy of the North under the soothing title of the ‘Working Men’ the ‘Laboring Men,’” Green charged, “is to be instigated to bring their force to bear upon the institutions of the south—and so are the capitalists by whom the working men are employed. These interests are to operate under the direction of such religious fanatics as Tappan, Garrison, &c. unless we are to consider the latter as the mere tools of the former.” Destroy slavery and the Northern aristocrat would immediately increase his own wealth and power. It was all one big conspiracy against the economy of the South, he concluded, and the nation would pay dearly for it if not exposed.<sup>9</sup>

But what of the apparent implication of black inferiority in Green’s argument that it was the role of the Negro to slave away for the sake of the nation’s economic gain? For Green, the laboring class had no color. If found economically feasible, the white man could be just as economically exploited as the black slave—the manufacturers of the Northeast had already proven this, Green maintained. Slavery was, he argued, the only viable economic system available to Southern planters. The staples of the South could never be cultivated on a large-scale basis by any other labor force than black slaves; free white labor was too costly and unavailable. “When the super-abundant population of the north shall be thrown upon the South,” the editor opined, “and shall come into fair competition with that of the slave, and shall be found the most advantageous to the planter, it will then be employed and not till then.” Any attempt in the meantime to persuade Southern planters that it was in their interest to pay a higher price for free white labor as opposed to cheaper slave labor would fall on deaf ears. The time may arrive, Green wrote, when free white labor would be more profitable than black slave, and when this occurred “slavery will necessarily cease.” But whether this was desirable or not, it was useless to discuss. “Slavery,” Green

9. *U.S. Telegraph*, April 12, July 10, June 5, 1833, December 27, 1834.

believed, "will end when the causes which produced it will end. Its cessation must and will be gradual." The existence of slavery, then, was an economic determination, not a moral one. It was an institution based upon economic necessity rather than upon natural condition.<sup>10</sup>

In this manner, then, slavery itself was not a "sin, curse, nor an evil." "We deny—we broadly deny," Green concluded, "that slavery, as it exists in the South, is the monster which it has been described to be. . . . We go further still, and assert, that slavery, as it exists, in the South, is the best form in which it can exist." He never employed the Bible, natural law, or scientific theorems to defend the institution, but he did perceive the paternalistic nature of slavery as one of its beneficial and recognized assets. Many in the South might cringe to hear Green espouse the eventual and natural elimination of slavery, but nearly all would agree with his assessment that it was not only necessary, it also had become—in economic terms—a positive good.<sup>11</sup>

### III.

Green greatly feared the abolition movement as an instigator of sectionalism and potentially of disunion and civil war. He sincerely believed that "northern agitators" threatened more than the Southern way of life. "The truth is," the editor wrote, "that the [abolitionists] are becoming daily more and more bold upon the subject . . . [T]o them it seems like madness and folly in the South to resist either their religious fanatical logic, or the physical force of a majority, aided by the arm of Government." If not arrested, Green asserted, they would certainly bring irreparable harm to the whole country. Every means must be taken to thwart their evil designs, and Green used every means at his disposal to accomplish this very end: he pleaded for a Southern convention to address the specter of abolition; he constantly beckoned his readers to oppose the distribution of the "incendiary tracts" through the mail; he openly called attention to abolition meetings in England, as well as to those in the New England states. Southern slaveholders, in short, must not "repose in false security whilst the most zealous and untiring efforts are making to establish political principles, and consolidate in the north a political influence, which has for its object the emancipation of their slaves."<sup>12</sup>

10. *U.S. Telegraph*, July 10, 15, 1833.

11. *U.S. Telegraph*, March 15, 1832, September 4, 1835.

12. *U.S. Telegraph*, April 4, 16, 23, 24, May 6, 30, June 3, 20, August 20, 23, October 7, 1833, August 17, 18, October 26, 1835.

But more was at stake than just the Southern way of life; abolitionists threatened the very threads of Union. The fanaticism of these troublemakers, Green argued, was “formidable to the peace and tranquility of the country.” Antislavery forces fostered an “inveterate hatred” between the North and the South, so much so that the “inevitable consequence” was disunion. Once the Union had been torn asunder, only then would the North reap the evils that they had sown by succumbing to the twisted designs of the abolitionists. Following the dissolution of the Union, Green accurately predicted, the North would throw open their whole region to the admission of fugitive slaves from the South. The South, in turn, would “throw off the whole of their refuse population.” “The worthless, the idle, and the profligate,” Green charged, “will seek a happy refuge in the Canaan of Northern cities—there to come into open competition with their white brethren, the *free labor* Democracy of the *free states*! And what will be the result of that? Curses on their own ignorance and fanaticism, that produced such results.” To bolster his prediction, Green pointed to current riots in Philadelphia by white workers angry over the influx of free blacks.<sup>13</sup>

#### IV.

Green also warned his fellow countrymen, North, South, and West, of what he believed were efforts to join the power of the federal government with the fanaticism of the abolitionists, with the intended end being the complete overthrow of Southern society. The editor did not waste time in attaching the name of Martin Van Buren to the activities of the abolitionists. Indeed, the slavery issue came alive during the presidential election of 1836 as a tool for Whigs to wield against the Democrats. Many Southern Democrats, as well, harbored fears about Van Buren’s stance on slavery. Despite the Magician’s assurances to protect the institution, Green still used the threat of abolition to hammer away at Van Buren’s candidacy. Whether he actually believed the *New Yorker* would threaten slavery, Green never revealed. But it was a useful and potent campaign ploy nonetheless—and Green had already proven his skill for such tactics.<sup>14</sup>

The greatest threat to the South and its cherished domestic institution, however, came not from the vice president, but rather from the

13. *U.S. Telegraph*, April 29, May 7, August 15, October 10, 1833, July 20, 1835, February 1, 1836.

14. Niven, *Van Buren*, 386–87; *U.S. Telegraph*, April 6, 1833, February 28, 1835.

president, a slaveholder, Andrew Jackson. Maybe the Old Hero never intended to threaten the existence of slavery in his home region, Green suggested, but his quest to augment the powers of the executive branch and his recent war against the USB and nullification, which increased the powers of the federal government at the expense of the states, directly played into the hands of fanatical Northern anti-slavery elements. Here was the legal argument of Green's defense of slavery, and the logic was quite obvious to him. The editor consistently argued that the president's Nullification Proclamation, bolstered by the "Bloody Bill," gave Congress unlimited powers, one of which could be control over the future of slavery. Since the North had a majority in the House of Representatives, it could gradually accumulate the power to legislate over issues affecting slavery, powers that constitutionally resided with the states. As the abolitionist influence swayed more and more Northern members of Congress, it would only be a matter of time before slavery would be abolished by act of Congress, an act completely devoid of any consideration for the South. "The time hastens," Green admonished his Southern readers, "when the South, the *whole* South, will be awakened to the selfish considerations which govern the philanthropy of Northern statesmen—men who have labored through a long series of years to make the question of slavery the means of concentrating a sectional influence, that by rallying a numerical majority under false sympathies, and long cherished prejudices, they may consolidate the powers of the federal government in the hands of Northern aspirants." Green's legal-constitutional arguments echoed more of John Randolph of Roanoke than of James Henry Hammond.<sup>15</sup>

"The question for the people of the South to consider," Green added, "is not what are the present opinions of the abolitionists. It is, what might these people do, under a construction of the Constitution, which leaves the action of the Federal Government, subject to exclusive control of the Congress and the Supreme Court?" A numerical majority in northern hands was certainly a grave danger to the South; an outright abrogation of the Constitution itself—broad construction—was even more threatening. To strengthen his pleas, Green reiterated constitutional arguments that few Southerners ever denied: slavery was a political institution sanctioned by the Constitution, one in which Congress had no power to interfere. Slavery was a domestic issue, governed exclusively by the reserved powers. And to take a swipe at Jackson, Green declared that if Congress ever violated the social com-

15. *U.S. Telegraph*, May 8, 13, 22, April 19, June 14, 1833, July 23, 1834, May 8, 1836.

pact by legislating over slavery, nullification would be the appropriate response.<sup>16</sup>

## V.

Green's diligent attention to slavery—he addressed the topic in numerous issues of the *Telegraph* from 1833 through 1836—quickly gained him adherents to the proslavery cause and a notoriety for defending the peculiar institution. “If we have to part from the Yankees as I fear that we will be compelled to do,” wrote one Southerner to Willie P. Mangum, “[Green] is better fitted to advance our cause than any other person.” But for every adherent gained, the editor alienated many more. Several major newspapers, including the *Globe*, attacked Green for being a proslavery agitator who promoted sectional animosity and exceeded the zealotry of the most avowed abolitionist. Thomas Ritchie, John H. Pleasants, and other Southern editors likewise grimaced at Green's reflections on slavery. They chided him for his apparent radical views and stated that he made more abolitionists than all the Northern fanatics combined. Green never saw it that way, and he continued his onslaught against the abolition movement.<sup>17</sup>

As in all his other causes, Green again exhibited a penchant for self-righteousness in his assault on abolition and in his defense of slavery. He started to believe that the South was ignoring his warnings and neglecting his call for action. To continue to do so, the editor opined, only invited defeat and eventual annihilation. “The South sleeps and deserves to have her fair fields made a wilderness, if she continues to close her eyes on such startling facts,” he told his readers. “United she has nothing to fear—[but] she is divided and betrayed.” Green quickly became dejected at what he perceived as the South's apparent disregard for its own institutions, and he refused to help them any longer if

16. *U.S. Telegraph*, April 16, 19, 23, May 7, 11, 1833, July 23, 1834.

17. Charles P. Green to Mangum, March 1, 1836, in Henry Thomas Shanks, ed. *The Papers of Willie Person Mangum*, 2: 402; Remini, *The Course of American Democracy*, 272; *U.S. Telegraph*, July 12, 1834, August 19, 20, 21, 1835; Benton, *Thirty Years' View*, 1: 615. For other articles addressing in length the slavery issue, see *U.S. Telegraph*, April 4, 25, May 1, 14, 18, 21, 23, 27, June 1, 4, 8, 11, 18, 27, 29, July 2, 5, 6, 13, 27, August 19, September 3, 12, 14, October 4, 16, 19, December 21, 1833, August 8, 28, September 3, October 30, 1834, May 19, June 4, July 17, 18, 23, 28, August 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 11, 22, 26, 28, 31, September 3, 5, 9, 10, 11, 14, 23, October 3, 9, 16, 20, 27, 28, November 2, 6, 20, 25, 28, December 1, 17, 23, 24, 25, 28, 1835, January 4, 5, 6, 8, 20, 21, February 1, 5, 9, 10, 15, 16, March 1, 5, 7, 19, 23, 25, 28, April 6, 12, 29, 30, May 19, 20, August 4, 31, 1836.



they were not going to follow his lead. After all, he, and he alone, held all the answers, all the solutions, to their current distress. "The Editor of this paper," ran one of his last editorials on slavery, "feels the weighty responsibility which rests upon him. He has in vain made appeal after appeal to the patriotism of the South. He has time after time warned them of the approach of the present crisis. He has endeavored to convince the men of property in the South that a deep conspiracy against their interests, involving their existence, had been long matured, and that the time for explosion was near at hand. . . . These appeals were made in vain. . . . So far from being liberal, the South has been ungrateful and unjust."<sup>18</sup>

Although an apparent defender of slavery, Green was not the proslavery extremist of the Fireater mold. Like the vast majority of Westerners, he supported slavery for a variety of reasons, primarily economic and constitutional. Green hailed from Kentucky and Missouri, both slave states. He carried this brand of proslavery mentality with him to Washington, and it determined his position on the peculiar institution when attacked by the emerging abolition movement. Many other Westerners shared Green's perspective. Green defended the South as a concerned Westerner, not as a radical Southern sectionalist. He became disillusioned when the South appeared to ignore his admonition about the fate of their domestic institution; he never feared his own existence nor his own way of life, but he feared for the continued political and economic viability of the South. Its demise, he believed, simply spelled the doom of the entire Union—his own "firebell in the night."

Green's dejection over the perceived disregard of his warnings by the South was not so much the product of the specter of abolition; nor was it solely the result of the imperial actions of Jackson, the rise of Van Buren and the fall of Calhoun, or his own expulsion from the Democracy. Certainly politics had a great deal to do with his growing despondency. But outside circumstances had come into play in the summer of 1834, and by the end of the election of 1836, these factors—mostly personal in nature—had taken their toll on the editor. From hints of family troubles and failing health, to labor problems at the *Telegraph* office and to the loss of all public printing contracts, the mid-1830s would be years of dejection and defeat for the beleaguered editor. But Green was the typical resilient Westerner; he would find new diversions, new interests, and he would eventually return to the national political scene and, again, be as controversial as ever.

18. *U.S. Telegraph*, July 12, 1834, May 8, 1836.

## SECTION V



### Defeat, Dejection, and Diversions

#### *Jacksonian American*

In the years following Jackson's reelection, Green was deeply concerned with things other than the nullification crisis, the Bank War, and the slavery issue. Personal and business matters began to weigh heavily on him. As a consequence of his combined political defeats and setbacks over the past six years, Green gradually became more and more disillusioned with national politics and ever more wearied by the toils of publishing and editing a national newspaper, especially when he regularly found himself on the defensive. He began looking for a change, for new ways to exert his talents and energy. Even then, however, family affairs would intervene, further taking their toll on the editor's health and his willingness to remain in Washington.<sup>1</sup>

In the fall of 1834, the Green's eldest child, Laura, suddenly emerged as a prime concern for her father. Several years earlier, Laura had married Shelby Reed, the son of Mississippi senator Thomas B. Reed. The marriage became strained after Shelby refused to give up the use of tobacco

1. Travers, *Genealogical and Historical Notes*, 68; Wiltse, *Calhoun, Nullifier*, 107.

and to stop gambling. As a precondition to their nuptials, he had promised both Laura and Green that he would give up such "dissipation." Shelby's "offensive breath" had brought Laura "to the very verge of the grave," Green informed a relative. He constantly smoked and chewed the "miserable weed" despite his assurances to quit. When Laura complained, Shelby would use tobacco behind her back, then attempt to wash his mouth to conceal the "loathsome smell," but to no avail. He also left his wife regularly for the gambling table, again despite promises he would quit that habit as well. Shelby had chosen to associate with "the vilest of the vile," Green asserted, and he had the audacity to upbraid Laura "as the cause of his disquietude" and to declare that he "could not abandon his vicious associates until she became cheerful and rendered home more attractive to him than the miserable haunts of sin in which he was wasting his time and her health and happiness." As a result of his failed promises to reform, Laura temporarily left Shelby, declaring that she would not return until he had lived up to his pledges.<sup>2</sup>

Shelby immediately sent letters to both Green and Laura, begging that she return to him and promising to abandon his offensive habits. The editor, however, would have none of it. "I never can and I never will again write to him or in any manner recognise him as a son, until I learn that he makes you an affectionate husband," Green informed his daughter. "His treatment to you and to me and to your mother is without apology and almost without parallel." He had been against the marriage in the first place but had quietly resigned to the wishes of his daughter. Now, he could only feel a combination of anger over Shelby's actions and hurt over the affliction facing his "poor Laura." She had a sense of duty and a love, Green reflected, "as ardent as it is pure for her unworthy and ungrateful husband." The concerned father believed that Shelby was insincere in his letters; his son-in-law was mortified, not by the loss of his wife, but rather by the consequences to his personal reputation. If only he could bring his daughter back home, to Washington, then Green would know that Laura's "patient and gentle spirit was at least at rest in full enjoyment of the happiest immortality."<sup>3</sup>

But Laura was willing to give her husband another chance, an act that unnerved and displeased Green. Although she pledged to her father that she would leave her husband permanently if he failed to re-

2. Green to Ann Marshall, October 29, 1834, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

3. Green to Ann Marshall, October 29, 1834, Shelby Reed to Laura Reed, October 28, 30, 1834, Green to Laura Reed, November 5, 1834, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

form, the editor was not relieved. Laura may have hopes, Green confided to a family member, but "I have none." He even told Shelby's mother that her son's "insubordinate vanity and self-love will prevail and that he will torture [Laura] by cruel neglect." Yet, he chose to once again submit to his daughter's determination to save her marriage. Green still offered Laura advice on the path she desired to take. If she would exercise firmness when dealing with her husband, then there might be a good chance of saving the marriage. But, "if you permit him to play the tyrant upon you again without resenting it as becomes you," he told Laura, "your fate is sealed." And again, the distraught father repeated his lack of confidence in Shelby's continual promises of reformation.<sup>4</sup>

But Green could not help but to intervene actively in the matter. He prepared a written contract and begged his daughter to have Shelby sign it—for her sake as well as their children's. The contract would give Laura full custody of her children in the case that she was forced to leave her husband permanently. Green then offered a stern warning to Laura: "If [Shelby] does not sign it and you live with him afterwards, I shall feel it my duty to forget as far as I can forget that you were ever my daughter. If under such circumstances you consent to bear him another child, I will leave you and your children to the fate which I shall in vain have struggled to avert." In addition, if Shelby ever desired to win Green's esteem, then he had to apply himself to his study and to his profession. "Let him avoid speculation beyond his own resources," he advised Laura. "A few years of study and close application to his books will bring him business and character."<sup>5</sup>

Green also sent one of his brothers to look after Laura in Louisville, Kentucky. Not only was Green's brother charged with protecting his niece, but the editor also empowered him to purchase furniture and servants for Laura and to secure a loan with which to provide her with the necessities of life. Green knew that Shelby had squandered much of his money and that Laura would be in great need of funds if she were to live on her own. But Laura became upset with both her uncle and her father for their intervention; she believed that they had both gone too far and that their doubts about her ability to save the marriage and help reform her husband only insulted her. The strained marriage continued well into the 1840s, with Laura and her husband continually

4. Green to Ann Marshall, October 29, 1834, Green to Laura Reed, November 5, 1834, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

5. Green to Laura Reed, November 5, 1834, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

splitting and then reconciling. Green continued to “protect” Laura during the rough times, but rarely said anything more when Laura returned to her husband. In fact, Green never wrote anything more about the relationship between his daughter and his son-in-law.<sup>6</sup>

Green’s second child, Margaret, had much better luck than her older sister. Calhoun’s daughter, Anna Maria, was a frequent visitor at the Green’s home in Washington, and a strong friendship developed between the two girls. Early in the spring of 1835, following on the heels of the marriage fiasco between Laura and Shelby, Margaret went with Anna Maria to visit Fort Hill, Calhoun’s plantation in South Carolina. While there, Green’s daughter began to spend more time with Calhoun’s son, Andrew. The relationship matured quickly, and Margaret and Andrew were married in Washington in May 1835. Fortunately for the Greens and the Calhouns, this marriage would never encounter the difficulties faced by Laura and Shelby.<sup>7</sup>

By 1835, the union between Margaret and Andrew had become the only real bright spot in Green’s personal and professional life. Labor problems at the *Telegraph*, the excessive costs of running the paper, the loss of all government patronage following the reelection of Jackson, and the election of Van Buren in 1836 would take heavy tolls on the editor’s health and desire to remain in his current occupation. Green wanted to find new ways to support his family and to relieve his constant pining. By 1837, entirely discouraged with his current professional situation, dejected over the course of national politics, and faced with little or no prospect for financial improvement, Green made a life-changing decision. He sold the *Telegraph*, left politics altogether, and began to search for new diversions that would provide him wealth and satisfy his insatiable energy and ego. He would succeed beyond anything he had imagined. Green—former Jacksonian partisan, then Jacksonian apostate and adversary—now embarked on economic ventures that made him the quintessential Jacksonian American: innovative, dynamic, industrious.

6. Green to Ann Marshall, October 29, 1834, Green to Laura Reed, February 3, 1835, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

7. Niven, *Calhoun*, 221.

## CHAPTER 18



# The Printing Business

## I.

Green's financial stability depended on more than just the revenue accumulated through sales of the *Telegraph*. The income from the public printing, in fact, far exceeded that of the paper. Between 1831 and 1835, when the *Telegraph* was barely breaking even, Green received more than \$70,000 a year for printing contracts from Congress, and from 1831 to 1837, the year when he sold the paper, Green had been awarded a total of over \$300,000 for various government printing jobs. Indeed, if he ever lost the money from congressional printing contracts, the editor would have to find other sources of income to support his family. Much of the credit for this considerable income can be attributed to Green himself, for the industrious editor constantly sought out contracts, never simply waiting for Congress to request them.<sup>1</sup>

Not only had the massive effort to publish a daily, nationally circulating newspaper and to fulfill public printing contracts demanded great exertions of time, energy, and diligence on the part of the editor, it also required extensive and expensive machinery and a rather large labor force as well. Green invested nearly \$45,000 in his presses alone. To operate these machines and to oversee the daily operations of his business, Green had employed, by the summer of 1832, about 110 workers

1. Cole, *Presidency*, 89, 90; Green to Aaron Dayton, November 18, 1830, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; U.S. Congress, Senate, *Proposals by Duff Green for Printing Journals of Senate, and Secret Journal, of Old Congress*, Sen. Doc. 9, 22nd Cong., 1 sess., 212.

in his office, ranging from apprentices to journeymen to accountants. He bragged to a friend that his printing business and the profits it generated, combined with \$25,000 of real estate in Washington, gave him one of the most profitable establishments in the United States. "I have been prosperous," Green boasted. "I am now nearly out of debt." But this substantial number of workers and equipment was not enough for the ambitious editor, and, in the fall of 1832, he proposed to significantly increase the scope of his business. To facilitate this expansion, he planned to establish what he called the Washington Institute.<sup>2</sup>

Green proposed to erect a large, aesthetically landscaped paper mill on the outskirts of Washington in an area overlooking the capital, in order to support his printing business. The water required to power the mill would come from a local canal that could supply more than enough to operate the machinery. But the mill was only half the venture. Green also intended to use the factory as a way to educate orphaned children.<sup>3</sup> The editor planned to employ anywhere from two to three hundred orphaned children at the mill, which he guilefully called the Washington Institute. Children ages six to eight and both male and female were to be admitted and placed under the charge of the Sisters of Charity. The devout Protestant Green specified that the children be raised exclusively Roman Catholic. He proposed to divide the orphan's day into three periods: two periods, totaling eight hours, were to be employed in labor at the mill and the other period, five hours, engaged in study. The children would learn to speak and read fluent French, Spanish, Latin, and Greek, and read elementary works on chemistry, natural and moral philosophy, mathematics, algebra, rhetoric, geography, and history. Some would study music and art as well. The orphans would, of course, also become skilled compositors and binders. They would remain at the institute, working and studying, until the age of twenty-one. During their tutelage, Green proposed to establish a fund to aid them when they entered the real world; upon leaving the institute, each twenty-one-year-old would receive \$725. The intended objective of the Washington Institute was to qualify the children as teachers themselves, but it had an altruistic end as well: to rescue the poor orphans from "moral and spiritual death" and to "open the path which may lead them to the highest destiny of which they are capable

2. Green to Rev. John Hickey, August 4, 1832, Green to William Ingalls, September 15, 1832, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

3. Green to Charles Mercer, September 12, 1832, Green to Hickey, October 25, 1832, Green to Rev. James Whitefield, October 25, 1832, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

under our free and happy institutions.” They would also help Green reap a tidy profit.<sup>4</sup>

Green’s plans for the Washington Institute reveal another defining characteristic of the Jacksonian era: social and moral reform. Spawned by the Second Great Awakening, various reform movements—temperance, prison and asylum reform, women’s rights, antislavery, public school reform, the quest for utopian communities, and several religious movements—permeated the social fabric of Jacksonian America. The Washington Institute was merely another manifestation of this reformist impulse. Green’s planned institute closely reflected the renowned Lowell System. In 1822, in Lowell, Massachusetts, Boston manufacturing interests established a large textile mill along the Merrimack River. In order to avoid the perceived evils inherent in an urban-industrial society, the founders of the plant sought to establish an industrial operation incorporating the ideals of pastoral republicanism and higher learning. Mills were located in the countryside and an extensive plan for paternal supervision was adopted. Hiring mostly young women, the Lowell System provided workers with housing, meals, moral discipline, cultural enlightenment, and educational instruction. Libraries and lectures accompanied the factory. Although this experiment in industrial republicanism failed in New England by the end of the 1830s, Green’s Washington Institute nonetheless clearly continued in the spirit of the Lowell System. Jacksonian Democracy, which Green epitomized, proudly and comfortably combined democratic ideals, social reform, and capitalistic pursuits. Unfortunately for Green, the project never went further than the planning stages. In January 1834, the Washington Institute encountered a serious obstacle—the printers themselves. Green pressed on with his plans, creating chaos for his business as well as for the entire American printing world.<sup>5</sup>

## II.

Green later admitted that one of the primary reasons he proposed Washington Institute was his inability to compete against other printing

4. Green to Hickey, August 4, 1832, October 25, 1832, Green to Mercer, September 12, 1832, Green to Ingalls, September 15, 1832, Green to Whitefield, October 25, 1832, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

5. On the social reform movements during the Jacksonian era, see C. S. Griffin, *The Ferment of Reform, 1830–1860*, Ronald G. Walter, *American Reformers, 1815–1860*, and Russell B. Nye, *Society and Culture in America, 1830–1860*.



establishments. He accused Gales and Seaton, now printers to the Senate, of bringing in journeymen from Boston and New York and paying them higher wages, which soon increased the cost of running his own presses. By bringing in orphans, and paying them 75 percent less than regular journeyman wages, Green could compete against the better-paying publishing firms. In addition, he estimated that he would save \$15,000 a year by not paying wages given to journeymen printers. Since the orphans were not considered apprentices, moreover, he was not responsible for clothing and sheltering them—that would be the responsibility of the Sisters of Charity. Although he had apprentices whom he boarded, Green “employed” as many as forty young boys in positions that should have been paid regular journeymen’s wages.<sup>6</sup>

In January 1834, when Green announced at the nineteenth annual anniversary dinner of the Columbia Typographical Society (CTS) his plan to cut labor costs and revolutionize the printing trade via his institute, the CTS immediately formed a committee to investigate the scheme. Following several months of correspondence between the society and Green, the CTS officially protested against the Washington Institute in August of that year. The journeymen’s organization feared that Green’s plan would be implemented in other U.S. cities, thus undermining their profession through the use of cheap labor. They also charged Green with attempting to acquire a monopoly in the printing trade. Green, however, arrogantly disregarded the rising tide of opposition and published a prospectus for the “school” and a lengthy article defending it, citing both humanitarian and economic reasons for going forth with his project.<sup>7</sup>

But the running war of words with the CTS turned against Green when the battle soon entered his own shop. When he added a number of youths to his burgeoning labor force, almost half of the young boys went on strike. Shortly thereafter, realizing that the Washington Institute would threaten their own position, Green’s journeymen also saw a reason to strike. The strikes threatened Green’s Senate printing contracts, and in a desperate attempt to avoid losing the profitable public printing, Green promised to abandon his cherished project and to take no disciplinary action against the strikers. The workers re-

6. Autobiographical Fragments, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Green employed about seventy-five journeymen, as well as a number of women. See William S. Pretzer, “‘The British, Duff Green, the Rats and the Devil’: Custom, Capitalism, and Conflict in the Washington Printing Trade, 1834–1836,” 5–30.

7. Pretzer, “Green,” 13, 14; *U.S. Telegraph*, August 25, 29, 1834.

turned and the Washington Institute would never be spoken of again. Labor problems, however, would continue.<sup>8</sup>

In November 1834, in another attempt to reduce labor costs, Green streamlined his operation. He hired two brothers, John and George Haswell, as foremen, employed to impose and ensure strict and heavy production quotas. The journeymen immediately cried foul, drew up a resolution calling for John's dismissal and the end of the quota system, and signed the document right in the middle of Green's shop. Again, to keep pace with the extensive Senate printing jobs, Green backed down and released John Haswell.<sup>9</sup>

But the struggle would not end there. John's brother George regularly clashed with the workers under his supervision. Again, the journeymen presented Green with another petition of grievances, and when he backed Haswell, they walked out. Although Green again yielded to the strikers' demands, he refused to re-hire the chief fomenters or to dismiss George Haswell. Green's next move only exacerbated an already tense situation.<sup>10</sup>

When the editor brought George Haswell back into the office, the workers went beyond the usual recourse of striking. Instead, they rioted. They destroyed some of the machinery and ransacked the rest of the shop. The CTS joined the battle. The society held a public meeting, condemned Green's practices as unfair, and declared any man that worked for him to be a "rat." Soon, other typographical societies were mobilized against Green's shop.<sup>11</sup>

This time, however, Green refused to "submit to their dictation." He brought in workers from out of town and continued his operation. The local strikers reacted violently. Many of the boardinghouses where Green's new employees resided were attacked, and almost daily, men in disguise uttered threats as they passed his shop. When the CTS published a "rat" list of the names of the workers still employed by Green, the violence heightened. Street brawls quickly ensued between Green's laborers and the strikers. The largest fracas occurred when one Charles Lowery, a corresponding secretary for the CTS, was attacked by several *Telegraph* men, ironically, outside the offices of the *National Intelligencer*, one of Green's chief rival papers. Workers from the *Intelligencer* came to Lowery's rescue, and a huge brawl ensued,

8. Pretzer, "Green," 16–17.

9. Pretzer, "Green," 17.

10. Pretzer, "Green," 17–18.

11. Pretzer, "Green," 18–19.

only to be broken up by local law enforcement. More fisticuffs and property damage occurred over the next few days. The city magistrate then stepped in and arrested most of the CTS men and striking journeymen. None of the *Telegraph* men who assaulted Lowery were arrested. The law had sided completely with Green. The House and Senate, however, would not.<sup>12</sup>

### III.

More than likely, the reelection of Andrew Jackson scared the editor, for he must have realized that the Old Hero's victory would threaten his position as printer to Congress. After all, Jackson had favorable majorities in the House of Representatives, and the election of Van Buren to the vice presidency only presaged further opposition in the Senate to his public printing contracts. He was right. On February 16, 1833, the *Telegraph* notified its readers that the House had chosen another printer. Seemingly undaunted, Green informed his readers that he hoped they would continue to subscribe to the *Telegraph* in order to keep it from being discontinued. The paper, he told the public, was already operating at a loss of several thousand dollars annually. Two years later, however, in March 1835, the Senate, too, would find another printer. Green had lost all public patronage.<sup>13</sup>

But the editor still refused to surrender. The *Telegraph* will not be destroyed, he promised readers; it would not be adversely affected by the loss of the House printing. To prove his contention, Green listed numerous printing interests which he had already commenced. Besides the *Telegraph* and the *Telegraph Weekly*, he was publishing the *Political Register*, the *Literary Gazette*, the *American Army and Navy Journal*, and the *Washington Library*, which was a monthly periodical containing novels, poems, tales, travel accounts, plays, and biographies, to make up for the staggering financial setback caused by the loss of the congressional printing. In April 1835, Green took over Condy Raguet's *Political Examiner*, an organ dedicated to states' rights. In addition, he began publishing several multivolume editions, such as the *Register of*

12. Pretzer, "Green," 19–21; Autobiographical Fragments, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; *U.S. Telegraph*, June 4, 6, 8, 16, 20, 1835; *Telegraph Extra*, June 12, 1835. During the strikes and confrontations, Green regularly received requests for employment in his shop. F. B. Emerson to Green, April 1, 1835, William McCandless to Green, April 1, 1835, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

13. *U.S. Telegraph*, February 16, 1833, March 2, 1835.

*Debates, The Jurist*, which was a reprint of standard law books, and the thirty-five volume set of “Dr. Pattison’s Cyclopaedia of Medical & Chirurgical Science.” Green also republished St. George Tucker’s edition of William Blackstone’s legal commentaries. “We must learn our young lawyers to be Americans,” he told Beverly Tucker, son of St. George. Surely, an additional income motivated the editor as well. Finally, the editor established a corporation in New York City for publishing textbooks and history books on Greece, Rome, England, and the United States.<sup>14</sup>

One of the more ambitious, and certainly one of the more politically charged, ventures on which Green embarked was the American Literary Company. Disturbed by the vexatious march of abolitionism, the editor organized the literary company for the purpose of publishing books and periodicals defending the South and its institutions. If few would step forward to vindicate Southern rights and principles, then he would take it upon himself to be that lone and vocal standard-bearer. Beyond any doubt, Green’s self-righteous mentality demanded that he take on the role of defender. He reprinted Thomas Dew’s popular “Review of the Debate in the Virginia Legislature” in pamphlet form and suggested the idea of the *Partisan Leader* to Nathaniel Beverly Tucker and published it after Tucker wrote it. *The Partisan Leader; a Tale of the Future* was a novel, which doubled as a campaign document, portraying the catastrophic events that would befall the United States during Van Buren’s fourth term on the “Presidential throne,” when a successful Southern Confederacy would be created under the leadership and direction of the capable and brilliant “Mr. B—,” who undoubtedly represented Calhoun.<sup>15</sup>

Green also commenced a design to reestablish the *Southern Review*. Compelled by the dire condition of the South and the crisis caused by the revolution in Texas, the editor called for an “abler and more

14. *U.S. Telegraph*, August 28, 1832, May 4, 1833, March 10, April 10, 1835. Advertisements for the multivolume editions are found extensively throughout the *Telegraph*. Green to Sylvanus Thayer, August 31, 1832, Green to William Clark, August 31, 1832, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Green to Tucker, October 24, 1833, in “Correspondence of Judge Tucker,” 87; Green to Tucker, January 12, 1835, May 2, 1836, September 13, 1836, January 12, 1837, Tucker-Coleman Collection, Manuscripts and Rare Books, Earl Gregg Swem Library, College of William and Mary; Green to Cralle, September 21, 1835, *SHA Publications*, 7: 288; Green to Cralle, March 17, 1836, Green Papers, LC.

15. Green, “Militant Journalist,” 257; *U.S. Telegraph*, August 2, October 6, December 3, 1836; Green to Cralle, May 6, 1836, Tucker to Green, April 20, November 20, 1836, Green Papers, LC.

authoritative exponent of public opinion than the newspaper press—that there should be some acknowledged organ of Southern sentiment, elevated above all the considerations of mere personal ambition, in which patriots of every party may commune together, and labor for the preservation of the republic.” Many Southern leaders approved Green’s endeavor to resuscitate the *Southern Review*. The South Carolina Society for the Advancement of Learning, under the direction of William Harper, proposed that the society endorse the journal’s revival. Spurred by Preston, Hamilton, and Calhoun, Green traveled to Virginia, the Carolinas, and Georgia to garner public support. He offered the editorial responsibilities to Judge Abel Parker Upshur of Virginia, who turned the post down. Although many Southerners backed Green’s idea to revive the *Southern Review*, few dared to contribute financially. Despite Green’s efforts, the *Southern Review* would not resume publication until 1842, and by then, the editor would be engaged in diplomatic affairs, which ironically would soon serve the interests of then secretary of state Upshur.<sup>16</sup>

#### IV.

In the spring of 1835, Green would also approach Upshur about editing the *Telegraph*. The editor had tired of the editorial business. His caustic pen and acerbic opinions had taken their toll on his health. Green had already lost the government printing, and the various publishing projects he undertook could not make up for the loss of income. The *Telegraph* alone was a financial albatross around Green’s neck. Though he seriously contemplated the offer, Upshur rejected it in favor of the security and the income of the Virginia bench. The Virginian, too, realized that the *Telegraph* was failing. Another taker would have to be found, for Green seriously wanted out of the newspaper business.<sup>17</sup>

Green then approached his close friend Richard K. Cralle. “You will have seen if you have read the *Telegraph* the necessity of placing the

16. Prospectus of the *Southern Review* [1837], Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Claude Hall, *Abel Parker Upshur: Conservative Virginian, 1790–1844*, 106–7; *U.S. Telegraph*, December 7, 1836, January 4, 1837; Green to Cralle, March 4, 1835, March 17, 28, 1836, Green Papers, LC; Edward W. Johnston to Langdon Cheves Jr., September 25, 1836, Cheves Family Papers, South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina.

17. Green to Cralle, March 4, 1835, March 17, 28, 1836, Green Papers, LC; Simms, *Rise of the Whigs*, 101; *U.S. Telegraph*, December 7, 1836, January 4, 1837; Hall, *Upshur*, 106–7.

paper on a better basis," he informed his associate. "My engagements are such that I cannot devote my time to it if my health would permit me, but I cannot without a certainty of a premature death return to the editorial desk." Cralle accepted. Green had already imparted to Cralle many editorial tasks. The editor had, after all, passed many of his opinions past his friend before he inserted them in the columns of the *Telegraph*. Cralle simply could start off where Green desired to depart. If the new editor ever needed any guidance, Green told him to see Calhoun.<sup>18</sup>

Calhoun, incidentally, supported Green's decision to sell the *Telegraph*, and he also believed that Cralle was a good choice to assume the editorial reins of the paper. Other friends of Green, such as Frances Pickens, shared Calhoun's assessment. William C. Preston wrote Nathaniel Beverly Tucker that the *Telegraph* "will pass into the charge of Cralle, a sensible, but somewhat prosing editor; but it will be better than at present, for the paper is like a pasture with the fence down, into which all the beasts of the neighborhood go."<sup>19</sup>

Indeed, since late 1835, Green had lapsed in his editorial duties. Editorials had become less frequent, shorter in length, and lacked depth and the hallmark acidity. On August 5, 1836, as the presidential election heated up, Green informed his readers that changes were at hand. "It is known that other engagements have for more than twelve months prevented my giving this paper my personal attention," he wrote. "I have made an arrangement with Mr. R. K. Cralle, who, after the first of September, will have the exclusive and independent control of the editorial department." Cralle would be as independent as "if he held the entire property of the paper." The paper's heading still indicated Green's ownership. But in October of that year, Cralle's name appeared for the first time next to Green's, and Green would never again write an editorial for the *Telegraph*. He soon sold all his interests in the paper, and on February 21, 1837, Green published his last issue. He informed readers that he was "compelled by other indispensable engagements to withdraw from the publication" of the paper, and that the subscribers "will hereafter receive in its stead 'THE REFORMER,' a new paper published in this city by MESSRS . . . MOORE . . . CRALLE." The *United States Telegraph* had come to a quiet end.<sup>20</sup>

18. Green to Cralle, May 6, 10, 1836, Green Papers, LC.

19. Calhoun to Green, August 30, 1835, *JCCP*, 12: 547–48; Green to Cralle, June 6, 1836, *SHA Publications*, 7: 290; Preston to Tucker, February 28, 1836, "Correspondence of Judge Tucker," 94.

20. *U.S. Telegraph*, August 5, October 4, 1836, February 21, 1837.

## V.

Green still tried to make one last attempt to remain in the printing business. In the summer of 1837, he joined again with Cralle and began publishing the *Baltimore Merchant and Reformer*. The *Reformer*, which Cralle had been publishing from February 22 to April 29, 1837, was published three times a week; the *Merchant* was a daily. The editorial page of the *Merchant* contained two columns, one written by Green in Baltimore and the other by Cralle in Washington. But the endeavor soon failed for the very same reasons that doomed the *Telegraph*—lack of subscriptions, Green's inattention to editorial tasks, and his preoccupation with new business pursuits. His one last attempt had become his last breath in public life—at least for the moment.<sup>21</sup>

By 1837, therefore, Green's celebrated career as a newspaper editor had ended, and, with it, his famed days as a vocal defender and then opponent of the policies of Andrew Jackson. He could not beat the Old Hero, and as a consequence, he chose to fade from the public scene. Rough Green silently slipped away into the extensive commercial operations for which he would soon be recognized. But family troubles, the failure of the Washington Institute, the recurring labor troubles, the loss of congressional printing, the declining subscriptions of the *Telegraph*, and poor health were not the only reasons why Green decided to leave public life. The course of the presidential election of 1836 and the consequent election of Van Buren to the presidency were the final straws that pushed Green into finding new pursuits outside the political realm.

21. Smith, "Green and the *Telegraph*," 258–59; Green to Mangum, June 17, 1837, *Papers of Mangum*, 505; Calhoun to Green, June 26, 1837, Green to Calhoun, July 11, 1837, *JCCP*, 13: 517, 520–22; Green to Cralle, August 9, 1837, *SHA Publications*, 7: 353; Green to John Mulvany, May 10, 1839, Barton/Mulvany Papers, Duke University; "Prospectus of *The Reformer*," October 28, 1837, Bassett Family Papers, Virginia Historical Society. In January 1838, Green also tried to publish a complete edition of the laws of the United States and asked Congress for a subscription to do so. U.S. Congress, House, *Laws U.S., on Application of Duff Green to Stereotype*, House Report 286, 25th Cong., 2nd sess., 333.

## CHAPTER 19



### The Election of 1836

#### I.

**T**he presidential election of 1836 signaled the official beginning of the second two-party system in American politics. Not since the heated political and constitutional battles between the Jeffersonian Republicans and the Federalists, which essentially had ended after the War of 1812, had two political parties competed on the national political scene. The elements and forces composing the Democratic Party had been forming ever since Jackson's election in 1828. But another, equally potent and nationally organized party had not arrived until 1834. During that year, the remnants of the rather loosely organized National Republicans, led by Clay and Adams, joined forces with disparate political factions—Antimasons, states' rights Democrats, and Westerners supporting internal improvements—to form the Whig Party. Unlike the Democratic Party, which had a single figurehead in Andrew Jackson, the Whig Party had multiple leaders, the most important being Henry Clay, Daniel Webster, and John C. Calhoun, soon to be known as the Great Triumvirate. The catalyst for the Whig Party was opposition to the policies of President Andrew Jackson, especially the Old Hero's assault on the Bank of the United States; the core of the Whig Party adopted Clay's American System. This two-party system, between Democrats and Whigs, would last for another twenty years, only to be terminated by the sectional tensions that resulted in the U.S. Civil War.<sup>1</sup>

1. On the emergence of the second American party system and the rise and composition of the Whig Party, see McCormick, *Second American Party System*; Michael



Labeling Jackson as “King Andrew I,” opponents of the Old Hero adopted the name “Whig” in order to connect themselves with the patriots of the American Revolution, also called Whigs. “Whig” also referred to the British political faction that opposed the Tories and the policies of King George III during the latter half of the eighteenth century. Who first came up with the term to describe the party opposing the Jacksonians in the 1830s remains uncertain. Some historians have given the New York merchant Philip Hone credit; others point to a widely circulated speech made by Henry Clay in April 1834. But there is strong evidence indicating that Green first employed the term.<sup>2</sup>

As early as the presidential campaign of 1832, Green used the name “Whig” to indicate the states’ rights opposition to the tariff and to represent the nullifiers. In March of that year, Green wrote to Cralle suggesting that they support the nullifiers of South Carolina and “organize WHIG clubs.” “Take the Whig principles of ’98, the creed of Jefferson, opposition to the tariff, &c. as your text,” he commanded his friend. The editor also publicly used the term in the columns of the *Telegraph* that very same month: “the great WHIG party of South Carolina”; “We would almost despair of the Republic, did we not clearly see the progress of the renovation, of pure WHIG principles, appearing in the South”; “There is, in fact, springing up in the South, the very spirit which animated the WHIGS of ’76. In a word, the great WHIG party, which is but synonymous with constitutional liberty”; “State Right or Whig party.” Green indeed had been using the term to describe one of the chief elements joining the Whig Party in 1834—states’ rights Democrats.<sup>3</sup>

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F. Holt, *The Rise and Fall of the American Whig Party: Jacksonian Politics and the Onset of the Civil War*; Daniel Walker Howe, *The Political Culture of the American Whigs*; Wilfred E. Binkley, *American Political Parties: Their Natural History*, 152–80; Pessen, *Jacksonian America*, 197–260; Thomas Brown, “Politics and Statesmanship: A Study of the American Whig Party”; Lynn Marshall, “The Strange Still-birth of the Whig Party.”

2. Remini, *Course of American Democracy*, 137–40, and *Henry Clay*, 458–70; Watson, *Liberty and Power*, 199–205.

3. Wiltse, *Calhoun, Nullifier*; 230; Green to Cralle, March 12, 1832, March 28, 1832, April 30, 1832, *SHA Publications*, 7: 271, 272, 273–74; *U.S. Telegraph*, March 12, 17, 24, April 4, 1832; Simms, *Rise of the Whigs*, 55; Green to Tucker, November 9, 1833, Tucker-Coleman Collection, Manuscripts and Rare Books, Earl Gregg Swem Library, College of William and Mary.

## II.

Green would soon emerge as a pivotal figure within the states' rights wing of the Whig Party, which would pay dividends for him when Tyler ascended to the presidency following the death in office of the first Whig president, William Henry Harrison. Jackson's reaction to nullification, not his attack on the Bank of the United States, compelled men like Green, Tyler, and Calhoun to join the Whig ranks. Indeed, Green's very definition of a Whig proved synonymous with states' rights: "We would say that as the Whigs of '76 were those who maintained the *rights of man* against the usurpations and encroachments of the mother country, so the Whigs of '34 are those who support the *rights of the states* against the usurpations and encroachments of the Federal Government." Therein resided the essence of this particular faction's opposition to Jackson and the Democratic Party: the consolidation of power in the federal government coupled with the expansion of executive power.<sup>4</sup>

Throughout the presidential election of 1836, Green harped on this issue. He returned to one of the overriding themes he had stressed during the election of 1828: the struggle between power and liberty. "Government is organized and armed with the means of intimidation, as well as purchase—with the purse and the sword," the editor declared. "Its constant tendency is to run into abuses, and to exercise all its influence to conceal those abuses. Hence, in all countries, and in all ages, there has been a constant struggle between those in office and the people: the object of those in office being to enlarge their powers, that of the people to restrain them within specified limits." The powers of the federal government, Green argued, were active and offensive and thus always encroaching upon the liberties of the states and the people. The states, however, were reactive and defensive and thus were locked in a continual struggle to resist aggrandizement by the federal government and its executive. Nowhere in the Constitution, the editor concluded, had the federal government or the executive possessed the power to determine its own powers and to be the judge of the extent of its own jurisdiction.<sup>5</sup>

The growth of executive power, most of all, had done the most damage to the liberties of the states and the people, Green asserted. The Leviathan in the White House dominated all patronage and corrupted the national government to its very core. "Those whom the people have

4. *U.S. Telegraph*, April 28, 1834.

5. *U.S. Telegraph*, May 15, October 1, 1833, April 19, 1834.

elevated to office are prone to abuse their trust," he declared, "and no sooner do they find themselves in office than they enter upon the same course of oppression and abuses for which their predecessors were condemned." Such was the very case with the election of Andrew Jackson. Green argued that the Democratic Party was in a state of "willful blindness" if it could not see that the principles of '98, of Jefferson, were in danger of being sacrificed to the "passions of General Jackson and the corrupt ambitions of office-seekers." Jackson, as well as Van Buren, deserted the principles they so ardently espoused in 1828. The promises they had made then—that the government patronage would never influence Congress, that the government would practice economy and pursue retrenchment, that the rights of the states would be maintained, and that the powers of the executive would never be increased—were not kept. "The Democracy now contains the advocates of unlimited power," Green charged. "Go figure!"<sup>6</sup>

Green was not without his usual remedies either. As he had done earlier during the election of 1828, he proposed a series of constitutional amendments limiting the powers of the president. One proposal would abolish the electoral college and give the election of the president directly to the people. Another would provide that the two candidates receiving the highest votes would have to run again. The editor also vehemently supported Calhoun's measures, introduced in the Senate in January 1835, to investigate the growth of executive power.<sup>7</sup>

The states' rights element of the Whig Party, Green concluded, must, therefore, unite behind a single strong candidate that fervently supported the rights of the states and opposed the advance of executive power and consolidation. "We can make the next president," Green informed Tucker, "and what is more important, we can make him a thorough-going states rights republican." There had to be an "early, vigorous & decided organization" if they were to succeed. The Whig Party must not divide. But that was the very problem. Green had unwittingly noticed a critical flaw in the Whigs' pursuit of the presidency

6. *U.S. Telegraph*, May 2, October 1, 1833, April 2, August 19, 1834. For additional editorials addressing the issue of the growth of executive power and the consolidation of power in the federal government, see *U.S. Telegraph*, August 2, October 7, 8, 10, 12, 14, 15, November 2, December 10, 23, 1833, January 1, February 6, 21, 25, 27, April 11, May 9, June 10, November 12, 1834, April 30, July 6, 24, October 31, November 16, December 23, 24, 1835.

7. Green to McLean, July 1, 1833, Green to Calhoun, July 8, 1833, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; *U.S. Telegraph*, October 1, 1833; *U.S. Telegraph*, January 11, 1835; Green to Tucker, January 17, 1835, Tucker-Coleman Collection, Manuscripts and Rare Books, Earl Gregg Swem Library, College of William and Mary. On Calhoun's resolutions, see Niven, *Calhoun*, 213–15.

in 1836: although they had made significant gains, “there was still not unity in its ranks.” He could not have been more accurate in his assessment.<sup>8</sup>

### III.

Few contemporaries, as well as historians of the Jacksonian period, could fail to see that the Whig Party was a league of disparate, even contradictory, factions representing conflicting views and ideologies—their only unity being opposition to Andrew Jackson. How could the same party contain the federalism of Daniel Webster, the American System of Henry Clay, and the states’ rights ideology of John C. Calhoun? While the Democrats held a national convention in May 1835 and united behind Van Buren as their standard-bearer for the White House, the diffuse Whig coalition held no convention. They could not unite upon a single candidate, a direct result of their disparate elements. Instead, the Whigs ultimately chose to run multiple candidates: Daniel Webster, chosen by the Massachusetts legislature, Hugh Lawson White, proposed by anti-Jackson forces in the Tennessee legislature, and William Henry Harrison of Indiana, nominated by an Antimasonic convention in Pennsylvania. Henry Clay, the recognized leader of the Whig coalition, was passed over. Despite their splintered slate, Whigs hoped that their multi-candidate strategy would end as the election of 1824 had: no candidate would emerge with a majority of votes and, therefore, the election would go to the House of Representatives, where Whigs believed they had the numbers to settle on one of their candidates and elect him president of the United States.<sup>9</sup>

Green himself reflected the inability of the Whigs to settle upon one candidate. He, too, vacillated from one candidate to another as the election unfolded, and he, too, would finally choose a candidate based solely upon the interests of his particular faction. Beyond any doubt,

8. Green to Tucker, November 9, 1833, “Correspondence of Judge Tucker,” *WMQ*, series 1, 12(2)(October 1903), 88–89; Green to Cralle, September 10, October 15, 1834, in Simms, *Rise of the Whigs*, 92.

9. On the election of 1836, see Remini, *Clay*, 473–80, 490–91; Niven, *Van Buren*, 394–98, 400–402; Remini, *Jackson*, 252–57, 373–76; McCormick, *Second American Party System*, passim; Richard P. McCormick, “Was There a ‘Whig Strategy’ in 1836?” 47–70; William G. Shade, “‘The Most Delicate and Exciting Topics’: Martin Van Buren, Slavery, and the Election of 1836,” 459–84; Derek Hackett, “The Days of This Republic Will Be Numbered: Abolition, Slavery, and the Presidential Election of 1836,” 131–60; Martin B. Duberman, “Charles Francis Adams, Antimasonry, and the Presidential Election of 1836,” 114–26.

the editor fervidly opposed the election of Van Buren. The New Yorker, whom Green regularly labeled the “heir apparent” and the “Pretender,” had long been one of his archenemies, dating back to the early days of Jackson’s first administration. Clay, as well, had been the traditional foe of the editor, and Green would again oppose his nomination under any circumstance—even if it would result in the defeat of Van Buren. Principle rather than party had greater influence on Green when it came to backing Clay. Green also abhorred Webster and could never back that stalwart Federalist. Whom then would he endorse?<sup>10</sup>

Calhoun seemed to be the most obvious choice. But Green hesitated to bring forth the South Carolinian. Instead, the editor first settled on the candidacy of John McLean. In 1833, Green journeyed to Baltimore, Philadelphia, Trenton, Newark, and New York City in the hopes of mobilizing the Workingmen’s Movement behind McLean—an ironic move considering Green’s atrocious record with the workingmen’s movement in his own shop. All attempts failed. Discouraged by his failures, the editor turned finally to Calhoun. But he still proposed McLean as the vice presidential candidate.<sup>11</sup>

Calhoun was a natural choice for Green. After all, the South Carolinian was the standard-bearer of the states’ rights wing of the Whig Party. States’ rights, above all, was the overriding consideration guiding the editor during the 1836 election. By early 1834, as the Whig coalition formed, Green declared that there was “no alternative” but to “show a distinct flag” by bringing out Calhoun—and the sooner the better. An early and organized movement supporting Calhoun would help ward off the potential candidacies of both Clay and Webster. Throughout the summer of 1834, the *Telegraph* actively promoted the presidential candidacy of the South Carolinian.<sup>12</sup>

Green’s vociferous espousal of Calhoun angered many Whigs. “Can anything be more stupid than the course of Duff Green?” Clay bellowed to Benjamin Watkins Leigh. “It is suicidal as respects his exclusive object, the election of Mr. Calhoun. Can he suppose that the Whigs are to

10. Green to Tucker, November 9, 1833, “Correspondence of Judge Tucker,” *WMQ*, series 1, 12(2) (October 1903), 88–89; Clay to Tucker, December 23, 1833, Tucker-Coleman Collection, Manuscripts and Rare Books, Earl Gregg Swem Library, College of William and Mary; Green to Cralle, June 19, 1833, Green Papers, LC; Green to Cralle, July 26, 1834, February 12, 1835, *SHA Publications*, 7: 286, 287–88.

11. Green to Cralle, November 26, 1832, *SHA Publications*, 7: 282; John Schofield to Clay, November 13, 1833, *Papers of Clay*, ed. Seager, 8: 666; Green to McLean, July 1, 1833, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Weisenburger, *Life of John McLean*, 83–84; editor’s note, *JCCP*, 12: 160–64.

12. Green to Cralle, March 14, 1834, July 18, 1835, *SHA Publications*, 7: 285, 288; Green to Charles Fisher, April 24, 1834, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

be driven . . . into support of that gentleman? . . . And to stir *such* a question at *such* a time!" Green only stirred the flames higher when he refused to unite with other factions of the Whig coalition unless they adopted the states' rights principles of his wing. "And . . . how he cants about his principles!" Clay continued, "as, if nobody in the Union had any principles to guide them but himself." Despite the complaints of Clay and other Whigs, Calhoun and many Southerners supported Green's energetic advocacy of both his presidential aspirations as well as states' rights principles.<sup>13</sup>

When Whigs failed to unite behind Calhoun, Green reacted harshly. They were shutting out the South Carolinian as far as possible from public view, the editor argued, and by so doing, they injured the states' rights movement. "What are we to do?" Green asked his friend Cralle. "Are we to merge ourselves in either the Clay or Van Buren party? If we do the country is gone.—We have no alternative but to abandon our institutions in despair or to make ourselves heard." He chose to make themselves heard, and to do that, Calhoun must remain in the Senate, where his leadership would preserve the states' rights element. When it became clear that Calhoun could not gain the necessary support, Green began to search for another candidate. He believed he had found the answer in the candidacy of Hugh Lawson White.<sup>14</sup>

In January 1835, Green announced his support of the Tennessean for the presidency. "I believe Judge White will be the toughest candidate for the presidency," he wrote Tucker. It was a no-lose situation supporting White, Green believed. "If we are beaten with Judge White, we should come out of the contest *a united people*. If we are defeated on any other candidate it would leave us a vanquished and weakened party." Most important, White supported the principles of the states' rights wing of the Whig Party. Yes, Green disapproved of the Tennessean's vote for the Force Bill, as well as his votes for several other acts supported by Jackson, but White's vote against expunging Jackson's censure by the Senate and his subsequent endorsement of Calhoun's resolutions against the growth of executive power vindicated him.<sup>15</sup>

13. Clay to Benjamin Watkins Leigh, August 24, 1834, *Papers of Clay*, ed. Seager, 8: 744; see also Clay to Mangum, August 26, 1834, *Papers of Mangum*, 2:191; *U.S. Telegraph*, July 31, August 4, 7, 11, 12, 13, 14, 20, 22, 1834; Calhoun to Green, September 20, 1834, *JCCP*, 12: 362–63.

14. Green to Cralle, July 12, 1835, Green Papers, LC; Green to Cralle, November 4, 1836, *SHA Publications*, 7: 291.

15. Green to Tucker, January 17, 1835, Tucker-Coleman Collection, Manuscripts and Rare Books, Earl Gregg Swem Library, College of William and Mary; *U.S. Telegraph*, December 4, 1834, March 14, April 9, July 13, September 24, 1835; Polk to John Blair et al., January 20, 1835, *Correspondence of Polk*, 3: 43, 50.

Soon the *Telegraph* spouted editorials in praise of White and did so as actively and energetically as it had for Calhoun the previous year. Green called on Clay to support White against all other Whig candidates, an action that greatly peeved the Kentuckian, especially when the editor openly attacked Clay for his vote for the Force Bill while ignoring White's vote for the same. Green pushed the Tennessee legislature to nominate White, and he promoted the establishment of pro-White newspapers in Washington and throughout the country. He even proposed to edit such a newspaper.<sup>16</sup>

But in the fall of 1835, Green wavered from his vigorous support of White and decided that Harrison was the candidate to back. "I agree with you that Harrison is our man," he told Cralle. "He is to be preferred to White." Although Harrison and White would make an ideal ticket, Green surmised, the Ohioan was the only choice for the White House. "It is indeed *aut Harrison, aut nihil*." "If we are to defeat Van Buren," the editor told John H. Pleasants, "it must be by a rally on Harrison."<sup>17</sup>

Why Green suddenly switched to Harrison is unknown. He never endorsed him in the *Telegraph*, only in several private letters to friends. Quite possibly it may have been a result of Green's reaction to the Whigs, behind the impetus of Tennessean John Bell, who detested Green, supporting another newspaper as the mouthpiece for the White campaign. He was indeed considerably upset that his paper had been passed over. His shock over being spurned turned to outright anger when the White paper, the *Sun*, began to attack Green for his stance on labor. In addition, Green's labor troubles, the loss of the public printing, his dejection over the national political scene, and his growing preoccupation with his nascent business ventures combined to alienate him from White—and from the campaign itself. After all, by 1836, Green had resolved to sell the *Telegraph*; he had already handed over the editorial responsibilities to Cralle, and any editorials he did write were far from the quintessential style and acerbity of "Rough Green." But matters would only worsen for Green. Van Buren would win the election of 1836.

16. *U.S. Telegraph*, January 23, 26, March 2, 14, 25, April 7, 22, 27, 28, May 6, 7, 9, July 10, September 16, 18, 24, 1835; Clay to Francis Brooke, August 19, 1835, Clay to Philip R. Fendall, August 8, 1836, *Papers of Clay*, ed. Seager, 8: 862.

17. Green to Cralle, October 5, 1835, *SHA Publications*, 7: 289; Green to Pleasants, October 17, 1835, Joseph Lancaster Brent Collection, Huntington Library, San Marino, California; Green to Hugh Lawson White, April 11, 1835, Green to John Bell, April 11, 1835, Green to Dixon H. Lewis, April 11, 1835, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

## IV.

The New Yorker received 765,000 popular votes to the combined Whig total of 740,000; the Magician gained 170 electoral votes, Harrison 73, White 26, and Webster 14. Even combined the Whig electoral count was not enough to send the election to the House of Representatives. As for its effect on Green, the outcome of the 1836 presidential election effectively sealed his decision to leave politics forever. "For myself I am tired—heartily sick and tired," he wrote his close friend Tucker. "I am getting to be an old man, with children and grandchildren dependent upon me, and I am resolved to go to the south, Florida and Texas—I will at least explore these new *states* and make up my mind after a careful survey. Of one thing I am resolved, I will leave politics." Green's most hated enemy, the very figure he had blamed for corrupting the Old Hero and for severely injuring the public career of Calhoun was now the eighth president of the United States. It was the last straw. He refused to suffer any more defeats. It was time to go. New ventures beckoned this restless American.<sup>18</sup>

Green's tempestuous political career ended temporarily after the election of 1836. And what a ride it was for the acerbic and often controversial editor. In the span of four years, he emerged from Missouri state politics to become a household name on the national political scene. Green had participated in many of the significant political and constitutional issues of his day—the Missouri Compromise, the election of Andrew Jackson in 1828, the rise of the Democratic Party, nullification, the Bank War—and he had shared the stage with many of America's most famous statesmen—Andrew Jackson, John C. Calhoun, Henry Clay, Daniel Webster, Martin Van Buren. In each of the momentous events defining Jacksonian America, as well as in numerous other political battles and debates of the 1820s and 1830s, Green played a direct and often vocal role—sometimes victorious, many times on the losing end. Through it all, the editor maintained his independence and consistently revealed his proclivity for self-righteousness and his penchant for making enemies. But after 1836 he had had enough. Rough Green took a quiet bow and exited the political stage to pursue other endeavors.

18. Green to Tucker, January 27, 1837, Tucker-Coleman Collection, Manuscripts and Rare Books, Earl Gregg Swem Library, College of William and Mary.



## CHAPTER 20



### New Pursuits

#### I.

In the spring of 1835, while he faced the travails of family troubles, labor problems, and the loss of public patronage, Green began to look away from the political world of the nation's capital and toward new pursuits that would fill his personal coffers and satisfy his venturesome spirit. "To those who know me," he wrote a friend, "I need not explain the anxieties incident to my position. [As to] the growing wants of my family, one should not be dependent upon the fluctuations of politics, and foreseeing the loss of public patronage, I have felt the necessity of making arrangements to provide a revenue from a more cautious source." As a result, Green rekindled his affinity for mercantile endeavors and embarked on a variety of business ventures that brought him recognition for the remainder of his life.<sup>1</sup>

Green's first attempt to find alternative sources of income, apart from the sundry publishing prospects that never materialized, was an investment in a Mississippi cotton plantation. He believed that if he could purchase several hundred acres of land at a cheap price, and secure fifty to sixty slaves to work the fields, he could make anywhere from ten to twenty thousand dollars annually. To set his plans in motion, Green dispatched one of his brothers to Mississippi, with fifteen thousand dollars in hand, to locate a suitable site and to manage the plantation. Over the next few years, Green solicited friends and ac-

1. Green to William C. Preston, April 5, 1835, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

quaintances to subscribe to stock in the plantation, to which several individuals contributed.<sup>2</sup>

The Mississippi cotton venture, however, fell far short of any expectations Green may have entertained, especially when the cotton market collapsed in 1837, which set off the disastrous Panic of 1837. But severe financial downturns never interrupted Green's pursuit of new ventures. In that same year, he made plans to visit the Republic of Texas, and, if he found the newly independent nation suitable to his mercantile designs, would move his entire family there permanently. Green even concocted a scheme for paying the public debt of Texas without resorting to public taxation and sent the plan to Texan president Sam Houston, who scorned any plan proffered by the sworn enemy of Andrew Jackson. The trip to Texas would have to wait until 1844, but Green would make a brief excursion to the Florida Territory, in pursuit of the same dreams that he believed might be realized in Texas. Nothing panned out for him there at all. Fortunately for Green, he had already engaged in several ventures that were yielding substantial dividends and which would continue to do so for the next thirty years.<sup>3</sup>

## II.

By 1835, the morass of Washington politics and the incessant toils of running the *Telegraph* had taken a severe toll on Green's health, both physical and mental. His condition had so deteriorated, in fact, that his physician advised him to abandon his current profession or face an early grave. Heeding his doctor's admonition, the frail editor decided to retreat for a time to the sulfur springs in western Virginia. Shortly after selling the *Telegraph* to Cralle, Green, with his entire family accompanying him in a carriage, started out on horseback for the Virginia backcountry.<sup>4</sup>

As he rode along the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, Green watched

2. Green to William C. Preston, April 5, 1835, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Green to Robert Carter, April 12, 1838, Carter Family Papers, Manuscripts and Rare Books, Earl Gregg Swem Library, College of William and Mary; Green et al. to Robert Carter, April 13, 1838, Carter Family Papers, Manuscripts and Rare Books, Earl Gregg Swem Library, College of William and Mary. Robert Carter invested \$1,000.

3. Green to Willie P. Mangum, March 6, 1837, *Papers of Mangum*, 2: 493; Green to Sam Houston, October 19, 1837, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Green to Andrew Calhoun, January 22, 1838, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Calhoun to Green, October 11, 1838, *JCCP*, 13: 434-35.

4. Ben E. Green's Biographical Fragments on Duff Green, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

engineers surveying the route for the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad. Quickly, his active mind turned to the profitable outcome certain to result from these great works. Instead of spending the summer at the springs, Green placed his family in Allegheny County, Maryland, and, with only a compass to guide him, rode out into the mountains to inspect the rail lines that lined the Potomac Valley and the rivers flowing throughout that region. What captured the attention of the imaginative entrepreneur were the extensive and untapped coal and mineral lands in Virginia and Maryland. "There is between the Dan & Savage mountains a large deposit of coal and iron," Green informed a friend, and "that the coal is the purest bituminous coal." He then set off for New York, hired a geologist to accompany him back to assess the extent of the coal and iron ore, and immediately purchased fifty thousand acres of the rich lands. Over the next five years, Green purchased additional acreage in Virginia and Maryland. His holdings soon became so large that he had to hire an agent, Lot Clark, to represent his companies in the financial capital of New York City.<sup>5</sup>

After buying the extensive tracts of land, Green immediately petitioned the legislatures of Virginia and Maryland and subsequently obtained charters to incorporate the Union Company and the Union Potomac Company. The primary purpose of incorporating these two enterprises was to secure an adequate and efficient means of transporting the coal and ore out of the mountains and to markets in the East and in Europe. In order to improve navigation from the Cumberland to the Potomac River, Green proposed constructing a system of canals, complete with locks and dams, that would offer cheap, efficient transportation of the coal and manufactured iron to the nearest rail lines. These smaller canals and railroads would ultimately connect with the larger Chesapeake & Ohio Canal and the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad. Green immediately contacted the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal Company and asked if his plans would "interpose any objections" by the company. By the next summer, 1836, the canal company passed res-

5. Green, "Industrial Promoter," 31; Ben E. Green's Biographical Fragments on Duff Green, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Green to John H. Pleasants, October 17, 1835, Green to James Lyons, November 7, 1835, Joseph Lancaster Brent Collection, Huntington Library, San Marino, California; Green to Cralle, October 17, 1835, *SHA Publications*, 7: 289; Green to the President/Director of the Chesapeake & Ohio Railroad Company, November 7, 1835, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Green to Tucker, July 4, 1837, Tucker-Coleman Collection, Manuscripts and Rare Books, Earl Gregg Swem Library, College of William and Mary; Green to Calhoun, July 11, 1837, *JCCP*, 13: 520-22. The extensive correspondence between Green and his agent, Lot Clark, are likewise found throughout the Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

olutions that Green's operations, as chartered under the Union and the Union Potomac companies, "would greatly promote the interests of this Company [Chesapeake & Ohio Canal] by increasing the trade upon their canal," and thus authorized Green's request for improvements by his companies. Within the year, Green's system of canals and rail lines had reached the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal, providing an efficient navigable pathway from the Savage to the Potomac River.<sup>6</sup>

The charter of both the Union Company and the Union Potomac Company also empowered Green to raise a substantial amount of capital via large lines of credit and the subscription of stock. Indeed, the charters of his two companies authorized the issue of bonds for any amount, to make contracts regarding the interest of money, and even offer life casualties. New York financiers had already assured Green that they would supply him the necessary capital to construct his canals and rail lines. If the New Yorkers reneged on their promises, he had an alternative plan: he would acquire the requisite capital in England. Fortunately for Green, American capital flowed into his companies, with an initial amount totaling a million dollars.<sup>7</sup>

Credit, too, was an essential avenue for financial success. Green believed that coal and iron served as the best basis for U.S. credit in Europe; consumption of these minerals would double over the next few years, and since he could transport the coal and iron at incredibly cheap rates, Green calculated that he could acquire seven million dollars of credit in New York and New England. He could then pay his laborers

6. Green, "Industrial Promoter," 31; Ben E. Green's Biographical Fragments on Duff Green, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Green to Cralle, October 17, 1835, *SHA Publications*, 7: 289; Green to John H. Pleasants, October 17, 1835, Green to James Lyons, November 7, 1835, Joseph Lancaster Brent Collection, Huntington Library, San Marino, California; Green to the President/Director of the Chesapeake & Ohio Railroad Company, November 7, 1835, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Green to Cralle, December 12, 1835, Green Papers, LC; Meeting of the Stockholders of the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal Company, July 28, 1836, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; An Act Supplementary to the Act Entitled 'An Act to Incorporate the Union Company,' April 4, 1836, Green Papers, SHC-UNC. The commissioners of the Union and the Union Potomac Companies were Duff Green, James Lyons, Beverly Welford, William M. Green, Richard Cralle, Archibald M. Green, and Robert Hord. Green's extensive land purchases in Virginia and Maryland, his extensive correspondence regarding these lands, contracts, receipts, stock subscriptions, and various lawsuits arising from his lands are found throughout the Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

7. Green to James Lyons, November 7, 1835, Joseph Lancaster Brent Collection, Huntington Library, San Marino, California; Green to Gullian Verplanck, June 14, 1836, Verplanck Papers, New-York Historical Society; Green to Calhoun, July 11, 1837, *JCCP*, 13: 520-22.

in bank notes and quite possibly, even buy up the stock of the Bank of Maryland. In addition, Green believed that his large line of credit would enable him to ship cotton and tobacco as well. By selling fifty million dollars of bonds, secured by real estate valued at one hundred million dollars, "the command of the cotton and tobacco, which would of necessity fall into our hands, would enable us to command any amount of European capital," he informed Calhoun. "Having the command of the cotton and tobacco, the value of the imports must pass through our hands and our commissions upon sales, interest upon the advances and profits on our bills of exchange would give to our Company a greater profit than any other monied institution of the country." It was all a "grand scheme" indeed, and in the fall of 1835, Green had set these very plans into motion.<sup>8</sup>

Green went beyond the Union and the Union Potomac companies in his quest for wealth. He helped charter several other smaller enterprises that would assist his two larger companies. The Western Coal and Iron Company, the New Creek Company, the Potomac Mining Company, and the Cumberland Coal Mining Company were just several examples of the subsidiary ventures behind Green's elaborate coal and iron ore business. But he did not stop there. In 1836, he traveled to South Carolina and pushed for the construction of a railroad there. Green even patented several methods of improving the dredging techniques for harbors and rivers, removing sandbars, protecting ocean shorelines and rivers from abrasion, and forming artificial embankments in rivers, in harbors, and in the ocean, and for a better way to build railroads.<sup>9</sup>

Small wonder, then, that Green found so little time to devote to the *Telegraph* and to the scathing editorials that had made him so notorious. By 1835, politics had been replaced with a new passion—business and industry. Jacksonian innovation had supplanted Jacksonian politics. Green indeed had found a new pursuit that would allow him to leave Washington behind and to support his family. "Indeed, if this project succeeds, of which I cannot permit myself to doubt," he wrote to

8. Green to James Lyons, November 7, 1835, Joseph Lancaster Brent Collection, Huntington Library, San Marino, California; Green to Gullian Verplanck, June 14, 1836, Verplanck Papers, New-York Historical Society; Green to Calhoun, July 11, 1837, *JCCP*, 13: 520–22.

9. "An Act to Incorporate the Western Coal and Iron Company," December 31, 1838, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Green to Cralle, November 4, 1836, *SHA Publications*, 7: 290–91; Green, "Industrial Promoter," 31; Green to the Commissioner of Patents, undated, SHC-UNC.

John H. Pleasants, "it will render me comparatively independent apart from other resources. I have had a busy summer—but it is fast ripening into rich harvest." Only time would tell how wealthy his new pursuits would make him, but he was already being recognized for his increasing financial stature. "Duff Green, you are aware," Edward William Johnston informed Langdon Cheves Jr., "has in the strangest manner, turned all his great imaginations into gold-realising, from one of his many charters alone, some 700,000 dollars for himself and most immediate associates. He is, therefore, in the most successful state." This was indeed a far cry from what the harsh and unforgiving political world of Washington had been dealing him.<sup>10</sup>

### III.

Green had faced some difficulties during his days as an industrious Jacksonian entrepreneur—the numerous lawsuits concerning his companies that fill his personal papers attest to this fact alone. But he was most fortunate to survive the most devastating economic downturn yet to face the young American nation—the Panic of 1837. When an economic depression in England and Europe led to a dramatic drop in the price of cotton, the New Orleans cotton market collapsed. In March 1837, on the heels of the cotton disaster, one of the nation's largest dealers in domestic exchange, the New York firm of I. and L. Joseph, went bankrupt. Soon, the entire nation fell into an economic depression.

Right before the Joseph firm went bankrupt, Green had contracted with the firm for the sale of much of his lands in Virginia and Maryland. But the financial giant collapsed only a week before they were scheduled to sign a contract with Green. If he had signed the contract, he would have lost all. Instead, Green decided to keep the title to all his lands and ride out the storm. In the meantime, he still looked for buyers, but to no avail. "I have been so long and so often disappointed," Green wrote his son-in-law Andrew Calhoun. "I have invested all the money that I could raise in mineral land on the Potomac with the prospect of reaping a large profit," he confided to his friend Tucker, only to be financially constrained when strapped and failing investors

10. Green to John H. Pleasants, October 17, 1835, Green to James Lyons, November 17, 1835, Joseph Lancaster Brent Collection, Huntington Library, San Marino, California; Edward William Johnston to Langdon Cheves Jr., September 25, 1836, Cheves Family Papers, South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina.

backed out with their money. Some of his creditors sued him for capital loaned to purchase the lands, but most let him be, realizing that his enterprises over the long term held too much potential for profit for them to abandon him. In the end, however, when flush times returned, Green's decision not to sell his lands paid handsome dividends. He had indeed ridden out the panic.<sup>11</sup>

During the latter half of the 1830s, Green embarked on new pursuits. Tired of incessant political battles, emotionally drained by family troubles, and discouraged with the printing business, he decided to seek his fortune and engage his talents in the business and industrial world. By 1840, mining, canals, and railroads replaced party politics, newspapers, and publishing. Green's participation in and contributions to Jacksonian politics made him a household name. In this, he was exceptional for his age. But the move away from the political arena epitomized his restless, dynamic spirit, as much as it indicated his exhaustion and alienation from Washington. Mining, canals, and railroads had already captured the attention and energy of many of Green's countrymen, and, in this, he epitomized the age in which he lived. Green's move from Jacksonian politics to Jacksonian economic expansion illuminates nineteenth-century America as much as it reveals the public life of an exceptional nineteenth-century figure.

Green's purchase of and investment in extensive coal and iron ore lands in Maryland and Virginia, moreover, also signaled his return to a familiar family tradition—amassing vast tracts of land. Here again he was following in the footsteps of his father, grandfather, and great-grandfather. But instead of heading westward and purchasing new lands along the American frontier, as had his ancestors, Green reversed his family's trend, and, ironically, returned to the region where his great-grandfather had first settled upon his arrival in America, the valleys and mountain ranges of Virginia. He had already reversed the westward march of the family when he relocated to the nation's capital from Missouri. This trend would not last, however, as Green would soon look to acquire and settle on new lands in the American southwest, continuing the family tradition of expanding further westward across the continent. The acquisition would consume Green to his very end, as it had his ancestors.

11. Niven, *Van Buren*, 412; Remini, *Course of American Democracy*, 427; Ben E. Green's Biographical Fragments on Duff Green, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Green to Tucker, July 4, 1837, Tucker-Coleman Collection, Manuscripts and Rare Books, Earl Gregg Swem Library, College of William and Mary; Green to Andrew Calhoun, January 22, 1838, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

## SECTION VI



### Agent of Manifest Destiny

#### *Jacksonian Expansionist*

Sometime during the fall of 1840, as election returns hinted at a triumph for “Tippecanoe and Tyler, too,” a Whig cartoon celebrated the approaching victory of Harrison and Tyler by lampooning Van Buren and the Democrats. Among the various characters in the cartoon, a befuddled Calhoun exclaims: “If I had minded what Duff Green said to me this would not have happened.” The comment refers to Calhoun’s reconciliation with and support of Van Buren in the 1840 presidential canvass, where only four years earlier the two men had been bitter political enemies. For Green this was almost apostasy. How could Calhoun support the very man that spearheaded the move to oust him forever from the graces of Jackson’s administration? How could he actively support the very man who symbolized corruption over virtue, of power over liberty, of executive patronage over republican government and states’ rights? All that Green had so vehemently opposed during the party struggles of the 1830s, Calhoun now actively supported. Mr. Calhoun “has committed a great error in identifying himself with Van Buren by his personal reconciliation,” Green wrote to his daughter, and, in his usual self-righteous, unerring style, he hoped to remedy the



“folly and infatuation that have constantly beclouded Mr. Calhoun’s career.”<sup>1</sup>

Green’s primary concern was to salvage Calhoun’s political standing with the Whigs. Supporting Van Buren would surely damage the South Carolinian’s political career, Green surmised, and he would certainly lose all opportunity to reap the political rewards that would come from aiding Harrison’s election. Moderate your tone and that of your friends toward Harrison, he admonished Calhoun, and you can recover your popularity with many of the Whigs. “For you, the election of Harrison opens the brightest prospects you have ever had.” Green blamed Calhoun’s waywardness on the “fatal counsels” separating him from the sound advice of his “best friends.” He had once blamed Jackson for falling under the sway of misguided and scheming individuals, primarily Van Buren, and now Calhoun, too, had fallen under the spell of deceitful men, and again Van Buren was part of the circle of deceivers. If only Calhoun would listen to me, Green complained to his daughter; after all, he and he alone had been “more regardful of [Calhoun’s] fame and popularity than [Calhoun] himself has been.” Green’s conceit also filled his letters to Calhoun. “I have much better opportunities of judging your position and true interest than any of those who give you other advice,” he told Calhoun. “Had you been advised by me in 1831 you would have been the Candidate in opposition to Gen’l Jackson and elected and the country saved the misery and the disgrace which followed. Had you been advised by me you would have been at the head of the present movement and at this moment the most popular man in the United States. It is yet my desire to serve you and if you give me your confidence, and improve on my suggestions it will yet be in your power to trample over your enemies and serve your country.” Harrison’s victory was certain, Green reminded Calhoun; Van Buren would not receive a single vote, “unless you are mad enough to give him the vote of South Carolina,” which Green did not believe that Calhoun would “commit suicide” by doing.<sup>2</sup>

Calhoun, however, stood his ground against Green’s remonstrances. “I must say,” he informed Green early in the presidential campaign, “that my opinion, as to the result of the [next] election is wholly different from yours.” Throughout the 1840 campaign, Calhoun never wavered in

1. “The Shipwreck” (1840), Library of Congress, PC/US-1840.R661, no. 79; Green to Margaret Green Calhoun, February 25, September 12, 1840, *JCCP*, 15: 119, 348.

2. Green to Calhoun, August 21, September 3, 1840, *JCCP*, 15: 336, 341; Green to Margaret Green Calhoun, September 12, 1840, *JCCP*, 15: 348.

his support of Van Buren's reelection, and he employed all his influence to defeat Harrison. Calhoun was undoubtedly upset by Green's support of the Whig ticket, and although Green and Calhoun maintained a cordial respect in their correspondence, their division over the choice of presidential candidates in 1840 split the Green-Calhoun family. Calhoun's relatives began spreading rumors that Green was planning to publish a paper "advocating the claims of Harrison to the Presidency, & promising to divulge a correspondence, which will prove John C. Calhoun to be one of the *most faithless of traitors!!* So terminates the *disinterested devotion* of that *delightful* family." Writing to his sister Margaret, Green's son Ben attempted to quell the charges flying between the two families: "You seem to fear that father and Mr. Calhoun are engaged, as antagonists in a political war; whereas it is Mr. Van Buren against whom father has enlisted. He neither *has*, nor *will* attack Mr. Calhoun."<sup>3</sup>

Despite the few reassurances that no rupture or open warfare existed between Green and Calhoun over the 1840 presidential election, another issue—the election of House printer—had seriously threatened the friendship between the two men. In January 1840, an article appeared in a Washington newspaper accusing Green of hatching a scheme to elect the next printer of the House in exchange for a share of the printing profits. According to an unidentified informant, Green had approached Gales and Seaton and offered to deliver the votes of the "Calhoun nullifiers" on behalf of their election as House printer if they would in return give him 8 percent of the profits. According to the report, Green had asserted that the editors of the *Globe*, Francis P. Blair and John C. Rives, had already approached him with a ten-thousand-dollar bribe to guarantee the votes of the "Calhoun Nullifiers" for their election. The ludicrous allegations understandably stirred the contempt of the "Calhoun nullifiers." Two days after the newspaper report of Green's supposed machinations, South Carolina congressman Francis Pickens rose in the House to denounce any such scheme and deny any participation in a bribe to elect the next printer. Unfortunately for all involved in this fiasco, Pickens's remarks were inaccurately reported, and Green interpreted the speech as an outright denunciation of himself by Calhoun and his closest supporters. Of most concern to Green

3. Calhoun to Green, February 3, 1840, *JCCP*, 15: 69; Niven, *Calhoun*, 237; Maria Simkins Colhoun to James Edward Colhoun, March 29, 1840, James Edward Colhoun Papers, South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina; Anna Maria Clemson to Patrick Calhoun, April 9, 1840, Ben E. Green to Margaret Green Calhoun, July 22, 1840, *JCCP*, 15: 348–49.

was Pickens's statement that neither he nor any of the "Calhoun Nullifiers" would support Green for House printer. Green, in his usual style, was quick to retaliate, escalating tensions over an issue that should never have gone as far as it did.<sup>4</sup>

Green immediately wrote Calhoun and demanded a letter from him stating the considerations "which induced you to advise your friends against voting for me as printer to the House." These friends, Green believed, would have supported his election as House printer if it were not for Calhoun's intervention, and he offered him the chance to explain his actions, "before taking any step which may sunder, *and forever*, the ties that have heretofore bound us," and to separate himself "from all participation in this heartless conspiracy against my reputation." Upon Calhoun's answer depended Green's course of action. If Calhoun vindicated Green, then he would go public with the letter. But if Calhoun remained silent on the issue or refused Green the justice he believed he deserved, then Calhoun would make himself a party to the conspirators and would compel Green "to hold you responsible for the past as well as the future." I wish you to understand me, he concluded to Calhoun, that Pickens, "*acting under your advice*, has done me an injury which even he cannot repair. . . . He by acting for you and your friends has made you a party." Complete vindication or complete separation was the only option for Green.<sup>5</sup>

Green's missive stunned Calhoun. He replied that if anyone else had written to him in such a menacing tone, he would have refused to respond. As to Green's charge that he had induced his friends to vote against him as printer to the House, Calhoun responded that he had very little conversation with them about the topic. Any opposition that Calhoun may have had to Green's potential election as House printer arose from his principled opposition to the wheeling and dealing that centered around the election of printer; he was compelled to support the current administration, and to let them elect their printer as they saw fit, and when he had heard that the Whigs could not elect Gales and Seaton, and that Gales and Seaton had offered Green compensa-

4. Green to Pickens, January 14, 1840, *JCCP*, 15: 51, 52ff. Private correspondence also hinted at rumors of a possible deal regarding the election of House printer: writing to Governor Campbell of Virginia, William Campbell stated that the "Calhoun party are anxious to bring in Duff Green for a share of the spoils, and the vulture of the *Globe* is unwilling to divide with him." W. B. Campbell to Gov. Campbell, December 6, 1839, Campbell Family Papers, Rare Book, Manuscript, and Special Collections Library, Duke University.

5. Green to Calhoun, January 17, 1840, *JCCP*, 15: 50–51.

tion to support their election, Calhoun refused to have anything to do with the entire subject. Calhoun was most offended, however, by Green's assertion that he was part of some "heartless conspiracy against your reputation," that Pickens was operating on his advice, or that he would refuse Green justice. Pickens's comments were his own, and for that matter, what he did say in the House had been completely misconstrued by Green; Pickens harbored no ill-will toward Green, nor did he ever intend to injure his reputation. He had simply refuted the baseless charge being leveled against them, that they were voting for Blair and Rives only because Green had been paid to secure their votes. Could they in all fairness and justice to themselves have done anything less to defend their honor and reputation? Calhoun concluded by admonishing Green that it would "make a great mistake to attack personally any one in your vindication," that there were "no unkind feelings" toward him, and that to attack would only "convert friends into enemies."<sup>6</sup>

Blown entirely out of proportion, the whole affair was simply the result of misunderstanding on the part of all involved, but Green's most of all. Pickens wrote to Green apologizing for anything he had said that seemed to offend or deprecate Green. Green in turn wrote Calhoun stating that he should have recalled his letter as soon as he had heard from Pickens, that he was gratified with Calhoun's explanation, and that the issue indeed had arisen from considerable misunderstanding. In the end, the "Calhoun Nullifiers" voted with the majority and elected Blair and Rives as House printer, and the issue faded away as 1840 presidential politics heated up. In the end, the House printing brouhaha and their choice of opposing presidential candidates was not enough to rupture the relationship between Green and Calhoun. One month after taking the oath of office, President Harrison died, and John Tyler ascended to the presidency. Tyler was a close friend of both Calhoun and Green, and the two men would eventually serve together on behalf of the Tyler administration.<sup>7</sup>

6. Calhoun to Green, January 17, 18, 1840, *JCCP*, 15: 52–54, 55–56.

7. Green to Calhoun, January 20, 1840, *JCCP*, 15: 56–57. The conflict over the printing was not the only disagreement that Calhoun and Green had during the presidential election of 1840. Green devised a plan in which the U.S. government would provide railroad companies \$50 million for permanent contracts to carry the mail, troops, and munitions. He argued that this would alleviate the financial panic and help promote railroad construction. Calhoun, however, told Green that the plan was inexpedient and that the plan had no hope of ever being passed by Congress. Green to Felix Grundy, March 2, 1840, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Calhoun to Green, February 3, 1840, *JCCP*, 15: 69.

One of the points of contention between Green and Calhoun during the 1840 election was Green's establishment of a pro-Harrison paper, the *Pilot*. Calhoun's relatives believed that Green intended to use the paper, not as a tool to elect Harrison, but to assail Calhoun, and to do so simply because he and his friends "did not support him warmly for the Printer of the House." Calhoun himself had even expressed some reserve over Green's desire of starting up a pro-Harrison press. Green had intended to purchase a paper as early as May 1839, and "hoist the Harrison flag," but not until April 1840 did he establish the *Pilot* in Baltimore. The paper ran until January 1841, when Green was forced to suspend the paper due to a lack of interest in his new topic: questioning the political influence of the Roman Catholic Church. During the presidential canvass of 1840, the *Pilot* admirably served the Harrison-Tyler ticket, almost becoming as influential as the *U.S. Telegraph* had been in the election of 1828. Harrison himself wrote Green and expressed his full appreciation for the aid the paper had brought to his cause. The *Pilot* was not the only pro-Harrison publication to come off Green's press; he also published *The Tippecanoe Textbook*, the *Log Cabin Cabinet*, and *The Tippecanoe Song Book*.<sup>8</sup>

Green had numerous reasons to support Harrison in the 1840 election. One of the more obvious was his long-held opposition to Van Buren and his coterie of supporters; if Harrison emerged victorious, it would not only throw Van Buren out of the White House, but it would also "kill off Benton & Kendall." Green also opposed the Van Buren administration because of its "warfare on the banks & the *Credit* of the States." Green had always supported the divorce of the government from the banks, for it cut off "one great, yea the greatest, source of executive power, and enlists all the monied interests in aid of a system of rigid economy & accountability." But Van Buren's subtreasury system was not the answer, and it threatened the economy and the credit of the nation as much as Biddle's national bank had. Once passed into law, however, Green believed that the subtreasury system would not be repealed, and that Harrison would have no desire to take up the question of a national bank. In that case, the subtreasury system was

8. Maria Simkins Colhoun to James Edward Colhoun, March 29, 1840, James Edward Colhoun Papers, South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina; Green to Margaret Green Calhoun, February 25, 1840, *JCCP*, 15: 119; Green to Cralle, May 10, 1839, Green Papers, LC; Green to Nathaniel Tallmadge, April 1, May 11, 1840, Nathaniel P. Tallmadge Papers, State Historical Society of Wisconsin; Green to Thomas Allen, February 10, 1840, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Green, *Militant Journalist*, 258-59; Harrison to Green, May 10, 1840, Green Papers, LC.

preferable to a national bank, and the existing system would better operate under men such as Harrison or Calhoun, not under Van Buren.<sup>9</sup>

But there were many more reasons to support Harrison than simply an opposition to Van Buren. Since the latter's election in 1836, Green had hoped that one day the conservative interests would rally upon a candidate who would unite the South and the West in a common cause. For Green, that candidate had arrived in William Henry Harrison. Green had always preferred to label himself a states' rights Democrat, more than a Whig, and he believed that Harrison was not a Whig, but rather, "as staunch a Jeffersonian democrat as I am." He believed that the future president would not cater to sectional jealousies and divisions and, most important, that he would eschew political rivalries for the succession by appointing men to his cabinet who were not "partisans of any of the aspirants." Green believed that Harrison would come into office as a true reformer. "The greatest reformation," he lectured Harrison, "is to restrict the abuses of the Executive powers and to arrest the use of Patronage in making Presidents." Old Tippecanoe would indeed restore the confidence of the people in themselves, Green opined. In short, Harrison "will have it in his power to secure a popularity such as no other president ever has had."<sup>10</sup>

An even more inviting reason to support Harrison was his running mate, John Tyler, the conservative states' rights Democrat who epitomized every political and constitutional principle espoused by Green. "For me," Green once reflected, "it is sufficient that [Tyler] sat up the whole night to cast a solitary vote in the Senate against General Jackson's Force Bill." Indeed, there is some evidence to suggest that Green was instrumental in putting Tyler on the ticket in the first place. As far back as 1836, Green told several political operatives promoting a Harrison-Mangum ticket, that he would "unite in support of General Harrison, if they would place upon the ticket as Vice-President, a proper represen-

9. Green to Thomas Allen, February 10, 1840, Green to Felix Grundy, March 2, 1840, Green to J. P. Kennedy, March 26, 1840, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Green to Tucker, September 9, 1837, "Correspondence of Judge Tucker," 94-95; Green to Calhoun, August 21, 1840, *JCCP*, 15: 336. Green even suggested to his friend Cralle that they had said plenty in opposition to the banking system during Van Buren's term and that they should now "maintain the banks as they are, and use the sub-treasury as a means of sustaining the banks not subverting them. Let us be the friends of a well regulated credit, instead of its enemies." Green to Cralle, April 19, 1839, *SHA Publications*, 354.

10. Green to Willis Hall, July 29, September 9, 1837, Ullmann Papers, New-York Historical Society; Green to C. S. Todd, August 21, 1840, Green Papers, LC; Ben E. Green, "The Nomination of Harrison and Tyler," Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Green to Harrison, September 8, October 26, 1840, Green Papers, LC.

tative of our states rights,” and suggested Tyler as a potential running mate. In 1839, Green tried again to have Tyler nominated by the Whigs as a vice presidential candidate, since he believed that Harrison’s health was failing. He could not have been more prescient. The Whig choice of putting Tyler on the ticket paid great dividends for Green when Tyler became president following Harrison’s death in 1841.<sup>11</sup>

Green’s support of “Tippecanoe and Tyler, too” signaled his return to politics after a three-year hiatus. Following the victory of the Whig ticket, Green hoped he would be rewarded for his services. He had apprehensions, however, that “neither my motions nor my efforts would be properly appreciated.” After all, despite Harrison’s appreciation for the *Pilot*, the new president had mentioned to Green during the campaign that “I doubt, but most sincerely hope, that you may be compensated the money, time & talent which you bestow upon it.” But Green would not give up. He wrote Harrison on several occasions requesting a moment of his time before he arrived in Washington. The new president met with Green, and expressed no objections to the latter’s request: the mission to the Republic of Texas.<sup>12</sup>

Green’s aspiration of representing the United States in Texas indicated a return to the political arena, but in a capacity that completely differed from his political career during the 1820s and the 1830s. Foreign ventures and diplomatic missions superceded domestic politics and party battles. Green desired new horizons and new frontiers; west-

11. Green, *Militant Journalist*, 258; *Facts and Suggestions*, 139; Tyler, *Letters and Times*, 3: 52; Ben E. Green, “The Nomination of Harrison and Tyler,” Green Papers, SHC-UNC. Although Green preferred Tyler to Willie Mangum, Green still supported the latter’s political career: he supported the election of the North Carolinian as Speaker of the House and actively pushed Mangum to run for Congress. Green to Mangum, March 6, June 17, 1837, *Papers of Mangum*, 494, 505. Before he departed the political scene in 1837, Green outlined his general political and constitutional principles in a letter to his friend Judge Tucker: “—a strict construction of the constitution—a strict accountability of public officers—a strict economy in the public expenditures—and amendment of the constitution giving the election of the President to the Public—the freedom of the press and opposition to the election of Van Buren . . . —the nomination & appointment by his predecessor.” Green to Tucker, January 27, 1837, Tucker-Coleman Collection, Manuscripts and Rare Books, Earl Gregg Swem Library, College of William and Mary.

12. Green to Thomas Allen, February 10, 1840, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Harrison to Green, May 10, 1840, Green Papers, LC; Green to Harrison, January 15, February 28, 1841, William Henry Harrison Papers, LC; Norma L. Peterson, *The Presidencies of William Henry Harrison and John Tyler*, 36; Robert G. Gunderson, *The Log-Cabin Campaign*, 262. Green had close enough connection to Harrison’s campaign that a number of officeseekers wrote to Green during March and April 1841 requesting his support and asking him to place their names before President Harrison.

ward expansion had captivated him as it had captured his fellow countrymen. “That the march of empire is Westward,” he once wrote in the *Telegraph*, “is in the mind of everyone who looks at the progress of society.” His westward journey was altered in 1826, as he headed eastward to the nation’s capital. But now he desired to once again head westward, for he believed there rested the future of the American empire. Green’s most significant—and controversial—contribution to the expansive decade of the 1840s, to the final decade of Jacksonian America, was as an agent of Manifest Destiny.<sup>13</sup>

13. *U.S. Telegraph*, January 26, 1830.



## CHAPTER 21

### England

#### I.

**G**reen would have to wait three years before reaching Texas. The effects of the Panic of 1837 still stagnated the American economy in 1841, and Green, like many Americans, felt the financial squeeze. Creditors daily hounded him, and some took legal action to collect their debts. Protecting his mountain coal and iron ore lands took priority over a political appointment. In order to pay his debts and save his investments, Green declined the mission to Texas and decided instead to head to Europe in order to secure loans and investors for his various enterprises. English capital, he concluded, was the only recourse to avoid personal financial disaster. So Green departed the United States in November 1841, arriving in England the following month.<sup>1</sup>

But relieving his own financial distress was not the only objective of his stint in England. If it was possible to overcome his personal pecuniary predicament, why could he not also attempt to alleviate the financial woes of the United States itself? Even before leaving the country, Green had decided that it was his duty to press American claims in England along with his own, and, considering Green's view of his own self-importance, he was quite sanguine of his success. He also notified President Tyler that since he was heading to England anyway, he would be more than happy to accommodate the new president and take state department dispatches with him and deliver them to the necessary of-

1. Green to Harrison, March 23, 1841, Harrison Papers, LC.

ficials in England. In the meantime, he would keep Tyler abreast of his activities on behalf of U.S. interests. Tyler consented. It was here, then, in England and France—in the Old World, not in the western regions of the New World—that Green embarked on one of his most controversial activities as an unofficial representative of American commercial interests. During his new adventure in new lands, Green continued to exhibit two traits characterizing the typical Jacksonian American, two qualities shared by his archnemesis, Andrew Jackson—an ardent Anglophobia and a belief in a well-orchestrated British conspiracy undermining American interests. It was no stretch for Green to believe that British capital may save his fortunes, yet all the while the British bogeyman, disguised as the British government, actively conspired against his country.<sup>2</sup>

Green's arrival in England coincided with one of the lowest points in Anglo-American relations since the War of 1812. Beginning in 1837 with the outbreak of the Canadian Rebellion challenging English rule, several incendiary events strained relations between England and the United States. The burning of the *Caroline* and the subsequent McLeod case, the seizure of the *Creole*, and the Maine boundary dispute and the "Aroostook War," brought the two traditional adversaries to the brink of war. In the fall of 1841, Lord Aberdeen, England's new foreign minister, dispatched Lord Ashburton as special envoy to the United States in the hopes of settling the long-standing disputes between the two countries. Working together diligently and amicably, Secretary of State Webster and Lord Ashburton succeeded in resolving many of the disputes that threatened war between their respective nations. But the Webster-Ashburton treaty would not be signed until late summer of 1842, nine months after Green had arrived in England, and so it was in this tense atmosphere that the ambitious Green embarked on a quest to restore friendly relations between the United States and England.<sup>3</sup>

Tensions between the United States and Great Britain, however, did not dampen Green's spirits in the slightest. From the moment he arrived in London, he optimistically believed that the English government desired to "settle all difficulties" currently existing between that country and his. The appointment of Lord Ashburton greatly pleased Green,

2. *Facts and Suggestions*, 141, 142.

3. On the tense relations between the United States and England during the Van Buren and Tyler administrations, see Kenneth Bourne, *Britain and the Balance of Power in North America, 1815–1908*, Wilbur D. Jones, *Lord Aberdeen and the Americas*, and Albert B. Corey, *The Crisis of 1830–1842 in Canadian-American Relations*.

for he felt that no other English official would make as many concessions to ensure peace. He also believed that the British envoy would find the Tyler administration highly disposed to “maintain peace and promote good feelings” between the two countries. Confident in the potential amicable restoration of good relations, Green soon departed for Paris, believing that the state of the money market in France would open new doors for restoring American credit abroad and reviving the economy at home.<sup>4</sup>

After arriving in Paris, however, Green’s optimism quickly turned to cynicism. After reading through some official correspondence between the previous U.S. minister to England, Andrew Stevenson, and the former British foreign minister, Lord Palmerston, Green changed his mind entirely on a potential early adjustment between England and the United States. During the Van Buren administration, Stevenson and Palmerston had been at bitter odds over another significant point of contention between the United States and England: the African slave trade and the right of search. What he gleaned from the communiqués stirred his latent Anglophobia. “It is now apparent to my mind,” Green wrote Bates, “that the correspondence has created a feeling in the United States which renders it impossible to avoid war, unless the British government *immediately* and in the most unequivocal manner recede from the ground assumed in relation to the right of search.” Combined with the ill-feelings engendered over the *Creole* affair and the northeastern boundary dispute, Green concluded, the question of the right of search would most certainly undermine the Webster-Ashburton negotiations if England maintained her controversial position.<sup>5</sup>

When Green arrived in England in December 1841, five European powers—England, France, Prussia, Russia, and Austria—had signed the Quintuple Treaty, allowing the mutual right of search and a more forceful termination of the slave trade. England hoped that the treaty, by including other Western powers, would pressure the U.S. government to join, but the United States stood fast and refused to sign the pact. Ratification of the treaty by the French government, however, was still pending when Green arrived in Paris, and for the few months he resided there, he used all his powers to influence the Chamber of Deputies to decline ratification.<sup>6</sup>

4. Green to William Christian, January 3, 1842, Green to Joshua Bates, January 6, 1842, Green Papers, LC; Green to Calhoun, January 3, 1842, *JCCP*, 16: 33.

5. Green to Bates, January 18, 1842, Green Papers, LC; Green to Everett, January 18, 20, 1842, in *Facts and Suggestions*, 143; Green to Calhoun, January 24, 1842, *JCCP*, 16: 83; Green to Webster, January 24, 1842, *Papers of Webster*, 5: 181.

6. On the question of the right of search and the slave trade, see Fehrenbacher, *Slaveholding Republic*, chapters 5 and 6; Hugh G. Soulsby, *The Right of Search*

For most Americans, the right of search aroused memories of British impressment and attacks on U.S. neutral rights prior to the outbreak of the War of 1812. Green was no different. "The question of the right of search," Green wrote to the U.S. minister to England, Edward Everett, "involves the right of impressment." And never again, Green told the French and British public, would the United States tolerate such a blatant transgression on its sovereignty. "America opposes the right of search," he continued, "because the American ship is American territory, and wherever it may sail, claims the protection of the American government." Green also defended the adequacy of existing U.S. laws prohibiting the slave trade, arguing that since its abolition in 1808, not a single African slave had been imported into the United States. He then put his arguments to paper and published them in the French newspaper *Le Commerce, Journal Politique et Littéraire* in a series of twelve numbers from March 4 to March 30, 1842. Entitled "England and America, Examination of the Causes and Probable Results of a War between These Two Countries," and signed "A Kentuckian," Green's views on the right of search and the slave trade reached a larger French audience.<sup>7</sup>

Green also had a powerful ally in the cause—Lewis Cass, U.S. minister to France. An avowed Anglophobe and War of 1812 veteran, Cass believed the treaty, with its right of search and the proclivity of the Royal Navy to enforce it zealously, threatened U.S. rights and security. He, too, had quickly commenced a campaign to persuade the French Chamber to oppose ratification. In a widely distributed and acclaimed pamphlet entitled "An Examination of the Question now in Discussion Between the American and British Governments concerning the Right of Search," Cass attacked the right of search, denied any distinction between the right of search and the right of visit, pointed to the British abuse of impressment, defended previous U.S. efforts and legislation to halt the slave trade, outlined French interests against the treaty, and concluded that Webster and Ashburton would find a solution agreeable to all parties. Not only was the pamphlet enthusiastically accepted within French circles, President Tyler and Secretary of State Webster approved of Cass's actions.<sup>8</sup>

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*and the Slave Trade in Anglo-American Relations, 1814–1862*; W. E. F. Ward, *The Royal Navy and the Slavers: The Suppression of the Atlantic Slave Trade*, chapter 7.

7. Green to Everett, January 18, 1842, in *Facts and Suggestions*, 144; Green to *Morning Chronicle*, in *Facts and Suggestions*, 133; Duff Green, "England and the United States," in Sioussat, *American Antiquarian Society*, 208–9, 223, 230, 231, 267.

8. On Cass and the Quintuple Treaty, see St. George Sioussat, "Duff Green's 'England and the United States': With an Introductory Study of American Opposition to the Quintuple Treaty of 1841," 194–203.

Cass invited Green's help in defeating French ratification of the Quintuple Treaty, and the U.S. minister regularly and cheerfully entertained Green during his stay in Paris. Green as gladly joined Cass's endeavor, as he, too, had been a veteran of the War of 1812, each serving on the Western frontier. Both men shared a deep suspicion of England as a result, and the events of the late 1830s and early 1840s only intensified their Anglophobia. Green and Cass conducted their work admirably, for the French Chamber of Deputies, influenced to a great degree by the efforts of both men, refused to ratify the Quintuple Treaty. The issue of the right of search was, nonetheless, somewhat satisfactorily resolved in the negotiations between Webster and Ashburton.

As for Anglo-American relations in the early spring of 1842, Green was still dubious about any restoration of good will. In fact, he believed that England and the United States were on the brink of war, and to prove his point he embarked in January 1842 on a highly publicized campaign to expose what he perceived as the real objective of England, the real reason why it was so adamant about enforcing the right of search and so preoccupied with the slave trade. England, he believed, had ulterior motives, more sinister designs in its actions and policies. The Maine boundary dispute, the occupation of Oregon, the destruction of the *Caroline*, the case of the *Creole*, the right of search under the pretense of suppressing the slave trade, and the boarding of American vessels off the coast of Africa, were all "but the incidents" to the real question that "lies deeper." Power and self-interest, not benevolence, determined British policy. The debate over the right of search and the slave trade forced Green to rethink his views regarding British policy, and he made sure that the whole world would know such views.

## II.

In order to disseminate most effectively his reformulated thoughts on British objectives, Green employed a familiar approach: private correspondence to high-ranking statesmen and public pronouncements in the press. Both avenues had worked admirably for him during the 1828 campaign and in his subsequent assault on Jackson and his supporters in the early 1830s, and he would again pursue such a course. In January 1842, Green commenced a letter-writing campaign to prominent American and British statesmen, elaborating more fully on what he perceived to be the true intentions of England. His letters reached President Tyler, Secretary of State Webster, Secretary of the Navy Upshur,

U.S. minister to England Edward Everett, Calhoun, Nicholas Biddle, U.S. congressmen, and British officials.

Not content with restricting his ideas to private missives, he also used the press to explain his theory of a grand British conspiracy. While in Paris, Green had shared with Cass the arguments he had outlined in his private letters during January 1842. The Anglophobic minister obviously found the logic of his compatriot's theory indisputable. The public must be apprised of British designs, then, and who better to tell them than a former renowned editor. "By the advice of Genl. Cass," Green informed Tyler, "I have resolved to prepare an appeal to Europe on the subject and have made arrangements to have it published in the leading Review of this city." That appeal to which Green refers was his twelve articles, entitled "England and America," published in *Le Commerce* in March 1842. Shortly after the publication of these articles in the French newspaper, Green had them combined into a single pamphlet and republished in an English periodical, the *Great Western Magazine*, under the short title of "England and the United States." Keeping the nom de plume "A Kentuckian," Green presented his theory of a British conspiracy for British public consumption, the objective of which was to "give John Bull some trouble."<sup>9</sup>

Throughout his private missives and public pamphlet, Green laid out what he believed to be the true interests of the British government. There was little doubt that England intended to increase and perpetuate her maritime and commercial supremacy. The recent tussles with the United States, primarily the Northeastern boundary dispute and the issue of the right of search, were simply several of many more serious indications of this longing for world mastery. Deeper desires, Green argued, fueled England's pursuit of the "monopoly of the Oceans." She sought to expand her dominion to the Pacific and she coveted possession of Oregon and California. But the sine qua non for acquiring commercial supremacy, Green concluded, was the elimination of her economic competitors, and that obviously meant one thing: England would have to neutralize her chief rival, the United States of America. All of England's policies and actions were designed, therefore, to remove American commercial competition, to prevent the "preponderance of American wealth, power, and influence, among the nations of the earth." Green argued that England could not compete against America's cotton empire and that she feared the competition of America's growing manufacturing sector. So American economic strength had to

9. Green to Tyler, January 24, 1842, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

be removed. In short, England's ultimate objective—one not yet so evident to the world—was commercial supremacy at the expense of the wealth of all her rivals, America's most of all.<sup>10</sup>

Removing U.S. commercial competition and securing the mastery of the world's markets, Green continued, depended directly on England's ability to control the world's source of raw materials. The only way for England to command the world's source of raw materials, short of outright war, was to increase the cost of labor in the Americas. To accomplish this devious end, Green suggested, England had two options. The British government can significantly alter her domestic policies, by repealing the Corn Laws and reducing taxes, thereby diminishing the cost of production and enabling her manufacturing sector to compete with that of the United States. Or, England can destroy slavery altogether, thereby rendering it next to impossible for other manufacturing nations to obtain the raw materials as cheaply as through her. Green believed that England had settled on the latter objective.<sup>11</sup>

Since slave labor in the United States, Brazil, and Cuba was more productive than the cheap labor of British India, Green's argument continued, the Americas could furnish raw materials cheaper than either the West or East Indies. If England could abolish slavery and the slave trade, Green argued, it would enable its East India possessions to undersell the United States, Brazil, and Cuba, and thus greatly increase its manufacturing power. But nothing short of the abolition of

10. Green to Calhoun, January 3, 1842, Green to Biddle, January 24, 1842, Green to Tyler, January 24, 1842, Green Papers, LC; Green to Calhoun, January 24, 1842, *JCCP*, 16: 33, 83, 84; *Facts and Suggestions*, 55, 119; Green to Bates, January 18, 1842, Green Papers, LC; Green to Everett, January 18, 1842, in *Facts and Suggestions*, 144; Green to Tyler, January 24, 1842, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Green to *Morning Chronicle*, in *Facts and Suggestions*, 130, 131, 135, 136, 139; Green to Calhoun, August 2, 1842, in Jameson, J. Franklin, ed. "Correspondence of John C. Calhoun," 847–48, hereafter cited as *AHA*. Green also argued that internal economic and social conditions within England necessitated the pursuit of commercial supremacy. Quoting and paraphrasing extensively from British statesmen, prominent merchants, journals, and reports to Parliament, he exposed the distressed condition of the English domestic economy and its trade: the Corn Laws dramatically raised the price of bread; legislation protecting colonial products also raised the price for sugar, coffee, and meat; trade languished and manufactures could not compete with Europe; and both taxes and unemployment remained dangerously high. Green, "England and the United States," 233–41.

11. Green to Tyler, Green to Biddle, Green to Webster, January 24, 1842, Green Papers, LC; Green to Tyler, Green to Upshur, January 24, 1842, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Green to Calhoun, January 24, 1842, *JCCP*, 16: 84; Green, "England and the United States," 241–42, 248, 249–52, 259–61, 265, 266, 270. These arguments can also be found in Green's article to the *London Morning Chronicle*, in *Facts and Suggestions*, 130–39.

slavery in the United States would give England the command of raw materials and satiate the British lust for commercial superiority. England must ultimately destroy the “culture of cotton” in the Americas, Green wrote to Tyler, “and she believes she will gain this by abolishing slavery in the United States, or by rendering it so dangerous to hold slaves as to diminish its profits.”<sup>12</sup>

Command of the world’s raw materials was the primary reason for the abolition of slavery in the Americas, but not the only one. If the British were to succeed in attaining commercial supremacy, they would also have to undermine the developing manufacturing power of the United States. Therefore, England’s war upon American slavery, he told Webster, was little more than a war upon U.S. manufactures through the South’s domestic institutions. The only way that England could destroy New England’s commerce and manufacturing was to control the world’s sources of raw materials, and to do that she must first destroy American slavery. Controlling the world’s resources would, in turn, give her a virtual monopoly on manufactured goods, thereby easily underselling U.S. manufactures and consequently destroying U.S. commerce. He even presumed that jealousy of U.S. manufacturing and commerce had been the sole reason for England’s abolition of slavery in the West Indies, but abolition within the British Empire did not have the intended consequences of increasing British economic might, necessitating England’s war on American slavery. Destroying slavery in the Americas, therefore, was only the means to the end. British abolition of slavery within the empire and the rigorous attack on the slave trade were not conducted out of benevolence, but, rather, for the sole purpose of securing commercial advantage over its chief rival, the United States.<sup>13</sup>

For Green, this was the most reprehensible part of England’s design for commercial mastery, that it was masked under the pretense of philanthropy. “The monomania of the present age,” he declared, “is a false philanthropy.” The avowed policy of the British government was to “render free labor cheaper than slave labor,” not to ameliorate the

12. Green to Upshur, January 24, 1842, Green to Tyler, January 24, 1842, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Green to *Morning Chronicle*, in *Facts and Suggestions*, 127, 136, 138; *Facts and Suggestions*, 55; Green to Calhoun, January 24, 1842, *JCCP*, 16: 83–84; Green, “England and the United States,” 241–42, 248, 249–52, 259–61, 265, 266, 270.

13. Green to Bates, January 18, 1842, Green Papers, LC; Green to Everett, January 18, 1842, in *Facts and Suggestions*, 144; Green to Webster, January 24, 1842, *Papers of Webster*, 5: 181–82. While Green was still editor of the *Telegraph*, he had predicted that the abolition of slavery in the British West Indies would adversely affect English commercial power. Freehling, *Disunion*, 386.



condition of the enslaved black man. All one had to do was to take a look at the wretched condition of Ireland to expose England's false philanthropy. Here was an excellent example of what happens when free labor was made cheaper than slave labor. "Does anyone believe, that England has more sympathy for East Indian or African, than for the Irishman?" Certainly not, so how could England's policy regarding the slave trade be prompted by benevolence? Why is it, Green continued, "that the cries, the tears, the agony, the mute despair and the eloquent appeals of her own perishing poor are unheard or else unheeded by the Government which spends millions under pretence of a benevolent regard for the rights of Africa?" Simply put, the abolition of the slave trade had become for England "the Philosopher's stone which is to renew the exhausted wealth of India & convert the labor of their own suffering poor into Gold!"<sup>14</sup>

England's objective of commercial supremacy through the abolition of American slavery, control over the world's raw materials, and the subsequent destruction of U.S. manufacturing and commercial power was accompanied, according to Green, by England's war on the credit of the United States. Most Americans, like Green, had placed some blame on England for the financial crisis that caused the Panic of 1837. British investors had indeed curtailed their investments in American ventures, resulting in an enormous drain of specie from the United States to England. To many Jacksonians, Green included, this was a deliberate policy, not a legitimate reaction to the economic downturn also affecting England. Years after the fact, Green recited in *Facts and Suggestions* that the entire banking system of the United States "was but part, and the weaker part," of the English financial system. Specie had been taken from the banks of the South and the West, he argued, and delivered to the Bank of England in order for it to control specie payment, thereby devaluing land and property in the western United States. Green's ideas had not changed from 1842 to 1866; he sincerely believed that England was purposefully depreciating American credit as a means to secure its commercial superiority and destroy her rivals. "Since I came to Europe," Green wrote Nicholas Biddle in January 1842, "I am more than ever convinced that war upon American credit and upon the Bank of the United States, is but part of a deliberate system, the result of a belief, on the part of British statesmen, that to maintain

14. Green, "England and the United States," 241-42, 248, 249-52, 259-61, 265, 266, 270. These arguments can also be found in Green's article to the *London Morning Chronicle*, in *Facts and Suggestions*, 130-39.

her commercial & Financial superiority she must enable her East India colonies to raise the raw materials, cotton & sugar,—cheaper than it could be done in the United States, Brazil, and Cuba. To do this it was necessary to increase cost of production in the latter, by the abolition of slavery, and to drive as much British capital as possible to British India.” It was all part of an elaborate, yet obvious, scheme to dominate the world commercially via financial means.<sup>15</sup>

### III.

In his private letters to American and British statesmen and in his public pronouncements in the press, Green claimed that England intended to carry out her conspiracy for commercial supremacy by whatever means possible, through peaceful avenues first, then by war if negotiation failed. If Ashburton returned home without a satisfactory adjustment of the pending questions between the United States and England, predicted Green, then the United States will be blamed and England will be “compelled to go to war, or be dishonored.” Green even suggested that the real purpose of Ashburton’s mission to the United States had all along been war, not peace; his mission was never really to negotiate anything, for Great Britain had already resolved not to yield, and his certain failure was justification to rally the British people on behalf of war against the United States. England’s vigorous attack on the slave trade served as the perfect pretext for going to war. Going to war for a part of Maine or for the mouth of the Columbia River would not be nearly as popular as going to war for the suppression of the slave trade. Therefore, Great Britain “has resolved upon a war,” Green wrote Everett, “under the belief that she can thereby retard our progress; and that having resolved on war, she has selected the slave-trade as the pretence, under a belief that we are divided on the question of slavery, and that she can cover her real designs under a pretence of benevolence.” Green was for peace, he assured his correspondents, but the only way to ensure peace was for the United States to prepare for war, and he begged the Tyler administration to stand firm and to make every preparation as if war was inevitable.<sup>16</sup>

15. Green to Bates, January 18, 1842, Green to Biddle, January 24, 1842, Green Papers, LC; Green to Everett, January 18, 1842, in *Facts and Suggestions*, 144; *Facts and Suggestions*, 80–81, 142, 166.

16. Green to Tyler, Green to Upshur, January 24, 1842 Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Green to Webster, January 24, 1842, *Papers of Webster*, 5: 181–82; Green to Calhoun,

If war came, Green claimed that the United States was more than ready for the conflict. The nation's greatest strength would be its unity. He firmly believed that North, South, and West would unreservedly join together in the cause, for England's war on America was a war upon all interests of all sections. This theme resonated throughout his letters to prominent Americans and Englishmen: the war will be on New England as much as on the South, and that alone will unite our people. He explained it in more detail to Everett:

A war on the pretence that the right of search to suppress the slave-trade, will be understood in the United States to be a war on our manufactures, on our fisheries (especially in the Pacific), and upon our commerce as well as upon slavery. . . . [It] will be a war in defence of the commerce and manufactures of the North, and of the slavery of the South, and that while New England and the North are defending *their* commerce and *their* manufactures, they will be defending *our* slavery, the consequence will be that the whole country will defend in argument what they defend in arms—slavery will cease to be the slavery of the South—it will be an institution of the Union, and we will become one people on this, as other questions.

Here again, slavery was an economic consideration, an essential element of U.S. economic vitality, a national interest. Green also believed that the unity inspired by a war with England would put an end to the abolition movement within the United States.<sup>17</sup>

National unity was not the only domestic advantage of the United States in a war with England. America had abundant resources and manpower. He told Baron Rothschild that “we have more than three millions of freemen, whose privilege it is to fight in defence of their country, in case we are invaded.” These 3.8 million free men of fighting age, Green wrote in “England and the United States,” would “call down

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January 24, 1842, *JCCP*, 16: 84–85; Green to Biddle, January 24, 1842, Green Papers, LC; Green to Everett, January 18, 1842, in *Facts and Suggestions*, 144–45; Green to Calhoun, August 2, 1842, *AHA*, 847–48; *Facts and Suggestions*, 83, 143; Green to *Morning Chronicle*, in *Facts and Suggestions*, 128, 129, 131; Green, “England and the United States,” 272.

17. Green to Calhoun, January 24, 1842, *JCCP*, 16: 85–86; Green to Webster, January 24, 1842, *Papers of Webster*, 5: 181–82; Green to Upshur, January 24, 1842, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Green to Bates, January 18, 1842, Green to Biddle, January 24, 1842, Green Papers, LC; Green to Tallmadge, April 8, 1842, Tallmadge Papers, State Historical Society of Wisconsin; Green, “England and the United States,” 272; *Facts and Suggestions*, 48.

Heaven's vengeance and America, united by the highest motives that can actuate a people, a love of country, a love of woman & her tender offspring, impelled by one common sentiment of hatred, will not stay her hand until the power of England shall be overthrown." Other advantages abounded. The munitions and supplies necessary to carry out the war would come from the interior of the United States, and no foreign navy in the world could transport enough men and supplies to occupy these interior states. The United States would also carry the war to England. "Our privateers and public steamships will cover every sea," argued Green, a fleet he estimated to be at least six hundred strong.<sup>18</sup>

But war was costly, and if the credit of the United States was so poor as to prevent the government from borrowing in England and on the Continent, how would the country finance a war with England? "The chief reliance of England now is a belief that we cannot borrow money," Green wrote Tyler. In order to properly prepare for war, therefore, "the first measure is such an organization of the financial condition of the treasury," he lectured Calhoun, "as that we can use the credit of the government at home." Luckily for Green, there was already in motion a plan to remedy this problem: Tyler's proposed national exchequer system. Tyler outlined the exchequer program in his annual message to Congress in December 1841. Under this system, a board composed of the secretary of the treasury, the treasurer of the United States, and three commissioners appointed by the president would establish throughout the country a number of agencies to handle the government's money. The agencies would receive deposits of specie up to \$15 million and issue notes against the deposits; the U.S. government would also issue treasury notes to a limit of \$15 million. The plan would eventually fail, but Green saw great value in it. "I look to your financial measure as of vital importance," Green told Tyler, for the exchequer bills "could command the means of war."<sup>19</sup>

Green immediately began lobbying for the adoption of Tyler's exchequer plan. He admonished Calhoun to unite with the Tyler administration in "perfecting the exchequer bill," and he begged Webster to do likewise. There should be no opposition to the exchequer plan, he told the secretary of state, if they truly realized the real motives of England. Green suggested that if the Great Triumvirate united against

18. *Facts and Suggestions*, 82–83; Green, "England and the United States," 272; Green to Calhoun, January 24, 1842, *JCCP*, 16: 84–85; *Facts and Suggestions*, 83; Green to Everett, January 18, 20, 1842, in *Facts and Suggestions*, 146, 149.

19. Green to Tyler, January 24, 1842, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Green to Calhoun, January 24, 1842, *JCCP*, 16: 84–85.

Tyler's legislation, the United States would be forced to "come to Europe and depend upon the Barings, and the Rothschilds, and the Bank of England, for money to defend our cities and to protect our fire-sides!!" But look at the state of the country if the exchequer system passed. In the case of war, all that would be required of the government was to make the exchequer bills convertible into stock and it would command all the men, munitions, and supplies needed to win the war. Taxes could also be paid in exchequer bills, and, more important, the bills would command millions of dollars in capital, the result being that "the *states* will spring forward with an impulse equaled only by the energies of the steam, the great agent of modern improvement." Here, then, according to Green, was another cogent reason for adopting Tyler's exchequer plan—the economic development of the United States. War with England and adoption of the exchequer plan, Green wrote Upshur, "will give an impulse to the improvements of the interior, it will complete our railroads, canals, it will build up our manufactures." So many state internal improvements programs had collapsed in the wake of the Panic of 1837, but now there was a chance to reinvigorate them.<sup>20</sup>

Apart from the domestic advantages the United States possessed, Green also pointed to the fact that the British government was bitterly divided over its domestic policy, a fact that would severely undermine its war effort. Distressed economic conditions in England only exacerbated this dissension, making conditions in England ripe for potential political and social upheaval. Whigs favored the repeal of the Corn Laws, and if England encountered a poor crop yield, the pressure from the opposition combined with the discontent of the masses could lead to the ouster of the ruling Tory Party. A war with the United States would make the domestic situation even worse. On the economic front, England could be forced to abolish its protective duties and repeal the Corn

20. Green to Calhoun, January 24, 1842, *JCCP*, 16: 84–85; Green to Webster, January 24, 1842, *Papers of Webster*, 5: 82; Green to Upshur, January 24, 1842, Green Papers, LC; Green to Everett, January 20, 1842, in *Facts and Suggestions*, 147–49; Green to Tallmadge, April 8, 1842, Tallmadge Papers, State Historical Society of Wisconsin. Green also argued that the European Continent would heartily join the United States in a war against England, as these nations were tired of England's quest for commercial supremacy at their expense, and that a world war against England would only end in the dismemberment of the British Empire. See Green to Bates, January 18, 1842, Green to Tyler, January 24, 1842, Green to Lucretia Green, August 16, 1842, Green Papers, LC; Green to Calhoun, January 24, 1842, *JCCP*, 16: 84–85; Green to Upshur, January 24, 1842, Green Papers, LC; Green to Everett, January 18, 20, 1842, in *Facts and Suggestions*, 83, 143, 145; Green to *Morning Chronicle*, in *Facts and Suggestions*, 135.

Laws and quite possibly lose possession of her colonies and thus her valuable export trade. Ireland might secure her independence, and England would most certainly be driven from its possessions on the North American continent, namely Oregon. There could be social turmoil as well. Internal economic problems coupled with a war could lead to “the reorganization of society, the entire prostration of the present Aristocracy, and a modification of the present prerogatives of the Crown,” resulting in humiliating concessions by the Tory Party. Peel and the aristocracy, therefore, had the most to lose, politically and socially, and Green believed that they would not enter into a war on this account alone. In short, England had everything to lose in a war with the United States; America, on the contrary, had everything to gain.<sup>21</sup>

#### IV.

War between the United States and Great Britain was anything but a foregone conclusion for Green. It could be averted easily. In fact, throughout the summer of 1842, after he had firmly established his theory on the real objectives of England, he stepped up his efforts to promote free trade between the two nations. As he had mentioned in his correspondence to prominent Americans, England had two courses before them: they can repeal the Corn Laws and go for free trade, or they can disrupt slavery, commerce, and manufacturing in the Americas and Europe. He believed that the British government preferred the latter, but he made every attempt to pressure England to accept the former option. “If England be defeated in the present movement,” Green informed Calhoun, “she has no alternative but to fall back on free trade.” Hence, Green admonished the Tyler administration to stand firm, prepare for war, and force England to choose the second alternative, free trade. In the meantime, he would do everything in his power to demonstrate to British statesmen the advantages of free trade to English commercial and manufacturing interests.<sup>22</sup>

One of Green’s primary objectives in going to England in the first place was to secure a trade reciprocity treaty. This was the most obvious,

21. Green, “England and the United States,” 273; Green to Webster, January 24, 1842, *Papers of Webster*, 5: 181–82; Green to Upshur, Green to Tyler, January 24, 1842, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Green to Calhoun, January 3, 24, 1842, *JCCP*, 16: 33, 84–85; Green to Everett, January 18, 20, 1842, in *Facts and Suggestions*, 146, 149.

22. Green to Calhoun, January 24, 1842, *JCCP*, 16: 85; Green to Webster, January 24, 1842, *Papers of Webster*, 5: 182.

and peaceful, means for promoting good relations and for augmenting the economies of both nations at the same time. It was, to Green, a win-win situation. He had outlined the simple logic of trade reciprocity in his "England and the United States":

The population of Great Britain is more than can be employed in agriculture—The United States have more land than they can cultivate—In Great Britain, bread is too dear; in the United States, it is too cheap—On the other hand, for the want of land to cultivate, a large part of the population of England must be employed in manufactures, and the consequence is, that while manufactures are too cheap in England they are too dear in the United States—The natural enquiry is, why is not the cheap bread of the United States exchanged for the cheap manufactures of England?

Here was Jeffersonian agrarianism at its purest. Without this trade reciprocity between England and the United States, Americans would be forced to manufacture their own goods, thus becoming the manufacturing rival of England—but England would never be an agricultural rival of the United States. The potential for such a prosperous trade pattern, then, must be taken directly to British policymakers.<sup>23</sup>

Green first made an acquaintance with Joseph Hume, leader of the Radicals and the free-trade party in Parliament, who in turn introduced him to John MacGregor, secretary of the Board of Trade. Green informed MacGregor of his sincere desire to place the commercial relations of the two countries on the most favorable terms, and complimented the secretary on a book he had recently published on Anglo-American trade. "The perusal of your book has given me renewed hopes of an early restoration of the . . . confidence and good will indispensable to a restoration of the trade between the United States & England," he told MacGregor. "I flatter myself that by uniting our efforts we may do much to accomplish the triumph of the principals of free trade." MacGregor, in turn, inquired about the sincerity of the U.S. government entering into a reciprocity agreement—U.S. agricultural products for English manufactured goods—and asked Green to prepare a detailed statement on the subject for Peel and the Board of Trade, to which Green readily complied. Green had already been asked to prepare a work "historical, statistical & geographical of the United States," which was to be printed in English, French, and German, and

23. Green, "England and the United States," 265.

to constitute “a manual for Banks, Emigrants, Merchants & Politicians in Europe.” MacGregor himself was preparing a report to Peel on the subject and Anglo-American trade, and he stated that Green’s observations “would constitute an important part of it.” The secretary of the Board of Trade then introduced Green to Lord Charles John Canning, undersecretary of state, and Lord Ripon, president of the Board of Trade.<sup>24</sup>

Green’s conversations with Lord Canning and Lord Ripon were also amicable, giving him hope that a reciprocity treaty was just a matter of time. Ripon read the documents Green had compiled for MacGregor and informed him that he and Peel “were deeply interested” in the facts stated. The president of the Board of the Trade also questioned Green about his opinions on the present U.S. tariff, President Tyler’s position on the tariff, and the course of political parties in the United States. Eventually the conversation turned to Green’s accusations of an English conspiracy to abolish slavery in the Americas as a means to eliminating commercial rivals and attaining commercial supremacy. Ripon assured Green that the British government had no intentions of interfering with the subject of slavery in the United States, that the general sentiment against slavery was strong in England, and that Green had done them an injustice by supposing that British abolition originated in any design to prejudice the United States. Green in turn informed Ripon of the unpopularity of the abolition movement in the United States and that it was his duty to explain to the British public the true views on this subject.<sup>25</sup>

The ultimate objective for Green was a hearing with Peel himself. MacGregor and Ripon had both told him that the prime minister desired a meeting in order to discuss “the subject of extending the commerce of England in the United States,” and so Green made numerous attempts to set up an interview with Peel. He would have to wait some time before an audience with the prime minister, but he did get enough of his foot in the door to gain a hearing with Lord Aberdeen, the British foreign minister. Green suggested to Aberdeen “some measures for increasing the consumption of British manufactures in the United States,” demonstrated the “vital importance” of such a treaty as a means to

24. Green to MacGregor, August 8, 10, 1842, Green to Lucretia Green, August 16, 1842, Green Papers, LC; Green to Calhoun, September 16, 1842, *JCCP*, 16: 458; Green to Upshur, January 24, 1842, Green Papers, SHC-UNC. Lord Ripon was Frederick John Robinson.

25. Green to Lucretia Green, August 16, 1842, Green Papers, LC; Green to Calhoun, September 16, 1842, *JCCP*, 16: 458–60.



strengthen Peel's standing with the middle class, and pressed him on the urgency of sending a special agent to the United States to negotiate a commercial treaty. According to Green, Aberdeen approved of his suggestions and would recommend to Peel the importance of sending an agent. No such mission, however, was ever sent.<sup>26</sup>

The cornerstone of Green's reciprocity treaty with England was direct trade with the Western states. "Permit me to urge on your consideration," he wrote MacGregor, "the importance of encouraging a trade with the Western States and that it is impossible to estimate what the consumption of your manufactures under wise commercial regulations, will be in these and the new states yet to spring up west of the Mississippi." He focused on convincing England that if she repealed her restrictive duties and adopted free trade, it would be in the interest of the Western and Southern states to consume British manufactured goods in preference to paying higher duties at home. The states of the Old Northwest consistently held the balance of power in tariff debates in the United States, he informed Ripon, and if not repealed, then British restrictions would force these states to adopt a higher tariff in order to create a home market, or force them to look to the Continent for manufactured goods. Admit American grain and beef duty free, he admonished the Peel government, and the Western states—Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, and Kentucky—will unite with the Southern states growing cotton and tobacco and force a reduction of American duties on British manufactured products. To confirm his claims, Green begged the Peel government to send an "intelligent representative" to visit the Western and Southern states. Although no representative was ever sent, Green was successful in convincing Richard Cobden, the recognized leader in Parliament for the repeal of the Corn Laws, to convene the Board of Trade for the purpose of promoting trade with the Western states.<sup>27</sup>

At times, however, Green harbored concerns about the Peel ministry's sincerity in adopting free-trade policies with the United States.

26. Green to Lucretia Green, August 16, September 17, 1842, Green to Peel, August 15, 20, no date, 1842, Green to Ripon, August 21, 1842, Green Papers, LC; Green to Calhoun, September 16, 1842, *JCCP*, 16: 458–60.

27. Green to MacGregor, August 10, 1842, Green to Lucretia Green, August 16, 18, 1842, Green Papers, LC. One of Green's chief complaints was the British policy of forcing trade through Canada. Beef and pork were sent to market between November and May, he argued, but the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence seaway were frozen over much of these months, preventing trade through Canada. Green recommended sending beef and pork down the Mississippi River, via the Illinois, Ohio, and Tennessee Rivers, which were less susceptible to freezing up.

Writing to Calhoun in late summer of 1842, he mentioned his fear that Peel may be “disposed to fold his arms and let events take their course.” Free trade flowed both ways, and the United States “cannot purchase from others their manufactures unless we are permitted to send them our agricultural products.” If the Peel government refused to enter into a reciprocity agreement with the United States, then maybe he should spend his time promoting a change in the ministry. Green was well aware of the Whigs’ desire to repeal the restrictive trade legislation, the Corn Laws most of all, and he considered treating with them exclusively in the hopes that they would soon oust the Tory Party. During the summer of 1842, Green met with the leader of the Whigs, Lord John Russell. He suggested that Russell’s American policy ought to be one of the points on which the Whigs would come to power. A Russell ministry, Green surmised, would go for free trade, immediate adjustment of the Oregon question, admission of slave-grown produce, a denunciation of attempts to abolish slavery in Cuba, Brazil, and the United States, and noninterference in the domestic policy of other nations.<sup>28</sup>

A successful reciprocity treaty depended directly upon the willingness of the British government to remove its restrictive trade legislation, namely the controversial Corn Laws. But despite a succession of poor harvests and mounting resentment against the Corn Laws, Parliament refused to repeal the acts excluding the importation of foreign corn. Led by members of Parliament Richard Cobden and John Bright, the Anti-Corn Law League immediately commenced a highly effective and potent campaign to repeal the restrictive legislation. They reasoned, as Green had, that if Parliament abolished the high tariffs on foreign grain, then European or American grain would flow into England, reducing the price of bread. Cheaper bread, moreover, would allow Englishmen more money to purchase manufactured goods, and the sale of grain to England would likewise allow Europeans and Americans to buy English manufactured products. Manufacturing would then revive, employment would subsequently rise, and the depression would end. Many British statesmen, moreover, concurred with Green’s contention that the abolition of slavery in the West Indies may have been a mistake and that this may be the sole reason why these English possessions were less productive than they were prior to emancipation.

28. Green to Calhoun, August 2, 1842, *AHA*, 847; Green to Everett, January 20, 1842, in *Facts and Suggestions*, 148–49; Green to Calhoun, September 16, 1842, *JCCP*, 16: 458–60.

England could not reinstate slavery, but it could remove its trade restrictions to compensate for the losses due to abolition. Green indeed had fertile fields in which to plant his ideas and propositions.<sup>29</sup>

A successful reciprocity treaty also required the removal of the restrictive commercial policies imposed by the U.S. government, and Green worked diligently to remove such barriers. His main objective was joining the West and the South in tariff reform. In several letters to U.S. congressmen, Green testified that congressional pursuit of higher tariff duties was injuring the cause of free trade. "If you could be here and realize the effect the proceedings in our Congress have had on public opinion," he informed Nathaniel Tallmadge of Indiana, "you [would] make still greater efforts than you have made to restore that character which we once held abroad." Congress met Green only halfway. In August 1842, Congress enacted the Tariff of 1842, restoring duties only to about the 1832 tariff levels. As in the failure of England to repeal the Corn Laws, the 1842 tariff stood as one more obstacle blocking Green's cherished dream of free trade. Even worse for Green was that as the news of the tariff was making its way across the Atlantic, he was promising Lord Ripon that the U.S. government had every intention of adjusting the tariff toward free trade.<sup>30</sup>

But if he could not secure a reciprocal trade agreement, maybe Green could restore U.S. credit abroad. "I have thought much of the best means of regaining the ground we have lost in relation to American credit," he had once told Joshua Bates of the House of Baring, and when an English financial firm called on Green, after reading his articles on free trade, and asked how they could revive American credit, his advice was the restoration of the credit of the states themselves. Emphasizing Illinois and Indiana, Green suggested that by advancing the states funds to complete their canal and railroad projects, the entire American economy would rebound and American credit with it. Green also impressed upon Peel the need for a \$5 million loan to help bail out the United States from its financial mess. Such a loan, he assumed, would provide "an immediate stimulus to trade." He was quite sanguine that he could prevail upon Peel "to aid me in getting the loan

29. On the Corn Laws and the British free-trade movement, see Donald G. Barnes, *A History of the English Corn Laws from 1660 to 1846*, and Robert L. Schuyler, *The Fall of the Old Colonial System: A Study in British Free Trade, 1770-1870*.

30. Green to Tallmadge, April 8, 1842, Tallmadge Papers, State Historical Society of Wisconsin; Green to Lord Ripon, September 21, 1842, Green Papers, LC; Wiltse, *Sectionalist*, 235; David Pletcher, *The Diplomacy of Annexation: Texas, Oregon, and the Mexican War*, 23-24.

taken,” but just as he had failed to convince the British government to authorize an agent to negotiate a commercial treaty with the United States, so, too, he failed to secure a loan.<sup>31</sup>

Green refused to let these setbacks dampen his spirits, and he continued his quest for free trade. Throughout the remainder of his tour in London, Green conversed with a number of members of Parliament and several prominent British statesmen and financiers, promoting a reciprocity treaty between England and the United States. He also publicized his free-trade views in several articles for the *London Times* and to the Manchester Chamber of Commerce and Manufactures. Although the *London Times* refused to print many of Green’s editorials, namely those accusing the British government of undertaking a conspiracy against the United States, Green still maintained a cordial and regular correspondence with the editor. The Manchester Chamber of Commerce, however, was expectedly quite receptive to Green’s free-trade activities. Cobden informed Green that he fully supported his campaign to repeal the Corn Laws, and, after reading Green’s views on free trade, he promised that the Chamber “will be most happy to give [Green’s views] all the publicity in their journal.” The Chamber, as Cobden had promised, printed his letters, read them with “great interest,” and gave Green a unanimous vote of thanks for his efforts to promote free trade.<sup>32</sup>

MacGregor, too, inspired Green to continue his efforts unabated. The secretary of the Board of Trade responded positively to Green’s activities on behalf of free trade and ensured him that he would do all in his power to foster better commercial relations with the United States. From the moment the two men had met, MacGregor and Green quickly established an amicable rapport, maintaining a regular correspondence that lasted the remainder of their lives. MacGregor greatly valued their frequent conversations and was saddened when he learned that Green had to return to the United States. He would later tell Webster that “I have seen a good deal of General Green, who seems to me to understand the condition of the United States more comprehensively than most American citizens who have lately visited this country.”<sup>33</sup>

31. Green to Bates, January 6, 1842, Green to Lucretia Green, August 16, 1842, Green Papers, LC; *Facts and Suggestions*, 167.

32. Green to Calhoun, September 16, 1842, *JCCP*, 16: 458; Green to Lucretia Green, August 16, September 17, 1842, Cobden to Green, September 1, 7, 8, 10, 1842, Green Papers, LC; *Facts and Suggestions*, 84.

33. MacGregor to Green, October 6, 18, 1842, Green Papers, LC; MacGregor to Webster, June 17, 1843, *Papers of Webster*, 5: 308.

Such positive reception made Green quite overly optimistic about his chances of obtaining a reciprocity treaty. "I am confident of success with Sir Robert Peel," Green wrote to his wife, "and if so it will be one of the most important triumphs that any American citizen has ever accomplished." By the end of summer of 1842, despite failing to secure a treaty or a loan, he still believed that he had already accomplished a great deal of what he had gone to Europe for in the first place. "I could not give a stronger proof of the position I occupy here than the fact that I have changed the whole tone of the public press, in relation to American securities," he again wrote his wife. "No candid American can deny that I have done more than all other persons toward sustaining the credit and character of the country, in Europe, and in doing so I have done more to protect the character of the President than any other person." He insisted that American financial interests—"satisfied that I was the only man now in Europe who could carry through the loan"—had placed the negotiations for a government loan completely in his hands, and because of this perceived confidence, he fully expected to be appointed the commissioner to negotiate a reciprocity treaty with England. Here again was the quintessential Green—self-righteous, arrogant, hyperbolic. But Green had run out of time—and money—and personal business required his attention at home. Yet, even as he prepared to depart England for home, in November 1842, he still thought a reciprocity treaty was just days away. "I have ascertained that Great Britain is prepared to make most important concessions," he wrote Calhoun, "and believe that Sir Robert Peel will place the United States in very much the same relation as the English colonies." He could not have been more wrong.<sup>34</sup>

## V.

Despite the lack of overall success, one cannot deny that Green was an astute observer of English domestic politics, just as he had been of American politics. He conversed regularly with English officials at the highest levels and on both sides of the benches, from members of parliament to the prime minister, from the head of the House of Baring to the president of the Board of Trade, and from Whig leaders to the leader of the Radicals. He was correct, then, when he bragged to Calhoun that "I have been a close observer of events here [London] and have had ac-

34. Green to Lucretia Green, August 18, 1842, September 17, 1842, Green Papers, LC; Green to Calhoun, November 10, 1842, *JCCP*, 16: 541.

cess to the most accurate sources of intelligence.” Again, the only weakness in his political and economic acumen was his consistent belief that the Tory government shared the ideology and goals of the opposition forces. But eventually, within four years of his departure from England in the fall of 1842, the political and economic policies Green espoused, namely the principles of free trade, indeed became the guiding principle of the British government. Only his timing was off.<sup>35</sup>

The opposition parties in England, the Radical Party especially and most in the Whig camp, approved wholeheartedly of Green’s viewpoints and his efforts on behalf of free trade. The charges he made about a British conspiracy to eliminate her rivals and secure her commercial supremacy by war if necessary, however, were quite repugnant to most Britons, especially the ruling Tories. The American public was much more receptive to Green’s allegations and activities while in London and Paris. Charles Greene, editor of the *Boston Post*, for example, published all of Green’s letters written in England and France, including the ones rejected by the *London Morning Chronicle*. They were “extremely able letters,” he informed Green, and they were received “with favor and read with avidity by the general public.” The arguments proffered in “England and the United States” and in his private correspondence had struck a familiar chord in the United States. Anglophobia was the norm, not the exception, in late Jacksonian America, and, in this, Green was again the quintessential Jacksonian. He shared with the vast majority of his countrymen a deep-seated prejudice, a long-held suspicion, and an outright distrust and, at times, even a hatred of Great Britain. Americans had ample justification for their Anglophobia. From the era of the American Revolution, through the War of 1812, to the *Creole*, the *Caroline*, the McLeod case, the Maine boundary, and the right of search, America’s one constant nemesis was Great Britain. Ironically, the British and American economic systems were interdependent, yet always competitive.<sup>36</sup>

Anglophobia, however, was only half the equation. Americans of the Jacksonian era were constantly on guard against perceived conspiracies. A conspiracy lurked around every corner, and in every action there was an ulterior motive, designed to take something away from someone. As one historian has so ably demonstrated, a “virtual obsession with hoaxes, imposters, frauds, confidence men, and double identities” dom-

35. Green to Lucretia Green, August 16, 1842, Green Papers, LC; *Facts and Suggestions*, 84; Green to Calhoun, August 2, 1842, *AHA*, 846.

36. Greene to Green, June 1, 1842, Green Papers, LC. For good examples of the extent of American Anglophobia during the late Jacksonian period, see Thomas R. Hietala, *Manifest Design: Anxious Aggrandizement in Late Jacksonian America*.

inated the popular literature and culture of the Jacksonian period, and that “various interest groups in America had long sought to portray their opponents as confidence men whose cloak of goodwill concealed an insidious scheme to rob the public.” The idea of a perpetual conspiracy on the part of power against liberty, for example, was a common theme of republican ideology, and this, too, permeated many a Jacksonian American. No American was more sensitive to a potential conspiracy than Andrew Jackson himself; Green was a close second. In fact, one can ultimately attribute the bitter break between Jackson and Green to a belief that one was conspiring against the other. Jackson and Green shared another common trait—Anglophobia and conspiracies. Little wonder, then, that Green viewed English policy in conspiratorial terms, and little wonder, then, that Green’s arguments were readily accepted in the United States. Why not believe that England’s desire to terminate the slave trade was nothing more than a conspiracy to destroy the economic rivalry of the United States? Green’s contention that English policy was not benevolence, but self-interest, was, like Anglophobia, the norm, not the exception.

The American psyche aside, many in the Tyler administration appreciated Green’s reports from London and Paris and relied upon the information and insight in them to help formulate foreign policy. In fact, his only apparent detractor in the Tyler administration was Secretary of State Webster, whose friends in England received Green coldly and, influenced directly by Webster’s correspondence, refused to associate with Green while in London. Other American statesmen applauded Green for his views and his efforts while in England and France. Calhoun believed that Green’s articles to London newspapers were “well calculated to give the British public a more correct conception of the character of our political system, than is usually entertained on that side of the Atlantick.” The South Carolinian sincerely hoped that Green’s efforts would contribute to better commercial relations between the United States and England, and he concurred with Green’s assessment of British designs.<sup>37</sup>

Kentucky’s other favorite son, Richard M. Johnson, applauded Green’s efforts to stimulate trade between England and the Western states. He, too, had read Green’s articles and letters written in London and Paris and was “exceedingly gratified” to see that they were written “with so much ability” and that the views and facts stated “are correct.”

37. Green to Lucretia Green, September 17, 1842, Green Papers, LC; Calhoun to Green, April 2, October 27, 1842, *JCCP*, 16: 209, 516; Hietala, *Manifest Design*, 22.

Green would most certainly be entitled to the gratitude of the nation “and particularly of your West,” Johnson gushed, if he could secure a treaty between the United States and England giving the Western states a market for their surplus productions. Such a reciprocal trade agreement, Johnson concluded, would certainly restore the prosperity and happiness of the West. Most Westerners shared Johnson’s sentiment.<sup>38</sup>

One of Green’s staunchest American supporters was another Westerner and Anglophobe, Lewis Cass. The two men met frequently while in Paris, combined their talents to undermine the Quintuple Treaty, and maintained a regular correspondence after Green returned to England. But their close relationship and mutual support was not limited to their political activities in Paris. To help Green obtain an audience with European dignitaries, Cass wrote numerous letters of introduction on Green’s behalf. Green “is in all respects one of our most respectable citizens,” Cass informed a Russian nobleman. In fact, Green had been the primary reason for Cass remaining in Paris as U.S. minister to France after the ascendancy of Tyler to the presidency. Learning that the new president intended to replace Cass, Green quickly came to the defense of the Michiganian. Cass had proven himself “an able minister” and had “great influence with the king of the French.” There was also the consideration of practical party politics for keeping Cass in France. If recalled, the Democratic Party would most likely rally around him, Green predicted, for Cass had the potential to rally more supporters around him than could either Van Buren or Calhoun. “If you are magnanimous toward him,” Green advised the president, “if you permit him to remain and bestow this much of your confidence, you render it impossible for him to come home to become your opponent.” It was not long, however, until Green himself flirted with the idea of a Cass presidential candidacy. During 1842, he gave some countenance to the Cass movement emerging in the states of Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Indiana, and advised Cass to take a course of “wise inaction”: to have his political supporters move in concert with Tyler and Calhoun, for if either of these front-runners failed to gain the nomination of the Democratic Party, then Cass was the next obvious choice. Presidential politics, however, would have to wait another year for Green. He had not yet finished his efforts on the other side of the Atlantic.<sup>39</sup>

38. Johnson to Green, May 10, 1843, Green Papers, LC.

39. Cass to Baron de Magendorff, March, no date, 1842, Green to Tyler, October 16, 1841, Green to Cass, June 16, 1842, Green Papers, LC; James C. N. Paul, *Rift in the Democracy*, 49.



## CHAPTER 22



# England and Texas

## I.

As soon as he had arrived back in the United States in late 1842, Green immediately began making arrangements to return to England. Believing that he had much more to accomplish in regard to furthering the cause of free trade, he indeed embarked again for England in the spring of 1843. His second trip, however, was as a private citizen; he did not in any way represent the Tyler administration nor did he ever present himself as being on an official diplomatic mission. Negotiating a commercial treaty between the United States and England had become, therefore, an all-consuming personal quest. It was now or never. "I confidently believe that there never has been a moment so favorable as the present for an advantageous adjustment of all the impending questions connected with our political and commercial relations with this country," he wrote President Tyler, "& I sincerely believe that if the present moment is permitted to pass by unimproved there will not again occur any combination of circumstances so favorable to the United States."<sup>1</sup>

Picking up where he had left off from his first tour, Green rekindled his friendship with various British statesmen—MacGregor, Hume, Cobden, and several other members of Parliament. He also regularly attended debates in the House of Commons, diligently observing the movements of English party politics. His ultimate objective was, again,

1. Green to Tyler, May 17, 1843, Green Papers, LC.

an interview with the prime minister, whereby the two men could discuss a treaty “providing for exchange of the surplus products of the two countries on terms of a just reciprocity” that would “really promote the interests of both.” Peel agreed to meet with Green, but let the American know in no uncertain terms that it was not in his power to enter into any discussions on the subject of a commercial treaty with the United States. Green admitted that he was acting as a private citizen, and therefore not “regularly authorized” himself to discuss the subject of a treaty, but he assured the prime minister that he was the best source for information and facts on the state of political parties in the United States and their policies on commerce and trade. “I am one of the American people who in the United States direct and control the government itself,” he boldly told Peel, and as such, there was no one more qualified to show the British government the advantages of negotiating a free-trade agreement. Peel, true to his word, refused to discuss his views on a potential reciprocity treaty, but he cordially listened to Green’s arguments nonetheless.<sup>2</sup>

Green impressed upon the prime minister the importance of making such a treaty with the United States “as would secure to England the privilege of introducing her manufactures into our markets upon a mere revenue duty: England giving us the advantage of her markets for our agricultural products upon reciprocal terms.” He reviewed at length the advantages that such a commercial reciprocity would have on both nations. By removing her restrictive Corn Laws and admitting American staples into the country, England would secure in the United States an extensive market for the consumption of its manufactured goods. Economic prosperity for both nations would be the reward. To confirm the veracity of his arguments, Green provided Peel with an extensive examination of both English and U.S. trade, which he had composed prior to the meeting. There were also political advantages to a commercial treaty. Green believed that Peel was “pressed by the opposition” and “not heartily sustained by the tories.” A reciprocity treaty, therefore, would certainly strengthen the Peel ministry by robbing the opposition of one of its chief complaints against the government.<sup>3</sup>

If England declined commercial reciprocity, it would force the United States to expand its own manufacturing base, turning America into a

2. Everett to Peel, May 24, 1843, Green to Peel, May 24, 1843, Peel to Green, May 27, 1843, Green to Peel, May 29, 1843, Green Papers, LC; Green to Tyler, May 31, 1843, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

3. Green to Peel, June 6, 1843, Green to Tyler, May 31, 1843, Green Papers, LC; Green to Tyler, May 31, 1843, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

competitor. Refusal to remove trade barriers would also confirm the widespread belief in the United States that the true policy of the British government was “the abolition of slavery in America as a means of enabling [England] to obtain cotton, sugar, rice, and coffee from India in exchange for manufactures, cheaper than they could then be produced in America.” As he had also told Tyler, Green concluded that now was the most favorable moment for negotiating a commercial treaty, and he entreated the prime minister to send a commission to the United States immediately, and to do so before the next meeting of Congress, “as the time had arrived when we in the United States were compelled to choose between *free trade* & restriction.”<sup>4</sup>

Again, commercial reciprocity worked both ways, and England was not the only party that needed to be convinced of the efficacy of free trade. The Tyler administration likewise shared a responsibility for securing a reciprocal commercial treaty. “It is now in your power to quiet agitation in England and in the United States,” Green advised Tyler, “by disposing of the corn laws and our tariff by a commercial treaty, which will open British ports to our corn and other great staples.” Believing wholeheartedly that the British government, and Peel especially, would negotiate accordingly, he begged the president to authorize Everett to notify the Peel ministry of the desire of the United States to make such a treaty modifying the U.S. tariff and repealing British commercial restrictions.<sup>5</sup>

Following his interview with Peel, and reassured by what he had been observing in British political circles, Green was quite confident of success. He felt certain that it was only a matter of weeks until England and the United States would begin negotiations for a commercial treaty. This optimism, however, quickly turned to outright alarm. Near the end of May 1843, the Texan minister to England, Ashbel Smith, had some distressing news. Apparently, the Texan told Green, the British government was seriously considering a loan to the Texas Republic in exchange for the abolition of slavery there. The information did not really shock Green; it merely confirmed his deepest fears of an avowed British conspiracy against the United States. With his Anglophobia rekindled to new heights, Green immediately altered his English policy. He believed it was his duty to do whatever he must to defeat the British government’s malevolent scheme to abolish slavery in Texas, for if England succeeded it could spell doom for the Union. In so doing,

4. Green to Tyler, May 31, 1843, Green Papers, LC; Green to Tyler, May 31, 1843, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

5. Green to Tyler, May 17, 1843, Green Papers, LC.

Green had a share in redirecting U.S. foreign policy, and in the long run, changing the course of American history. The annexation of the Republic of Texas would now become the overriding objective of the Tyler administration and one of the most controversial issues in late Jacksonian politics.

## II.

Green was by no means the only American espousing an economic interpretation of slavery. A recent emigrant to Texas, Stephen Pearl Andrews, also proffered an economic argument. But where Green stressed the economic advantages of American slavery, Andrews emphasized the economic *disadvantages* of American slavery. Andrews believed that slavery in Texas actually kept nonslaveholding settlers from coming to the country and that its abolition would spur a boom of emigration to the young republic. The massive increase in land sales, therefore, would stimulate the Texan economy and replenish the coffers of the Texan treasury. Andrews was, by no means, an antislavery fanatic; he had little motive for abolishing slavery from a philanthropic motive—the almighty dollar was his sole objective. So as Green began his campaign for free trade during his first trip to England, Andrews commenced a spirited campaign in Texas to publicize his project to abolish slavery. Green arguably had more success with his mission, for proslavery crowds quickly ran Andrews out of town.<sup>6</sup>

Ironically, both Green and Andrews found solace and a sympathetic ear within certain British circles on behalf of their respective economic causes—the former figure with the opposition parties, and the latter with the ruling party. Andrews may have had little success convincing most Texans that emancipation was in their favor economically, but he had struck a receptive chord with an official representative of the Peel government, Charles Elliott, the British minister to Texas. After his arrival in Texas in August 1842, the new British minister heartedly welcomed Andrews's scheme. Maybe England could help convince the Texan government of the advantages of emancipation, Elliott informed Andrews, by providing the necessary funds to compensate Texas slave owners. Elliott's plan was quite simple: British capitalists would loan Texas slave owners money to emancipate their slaves, Texas lands

6. Freehling, *Disunion*, 372–78; Harriet Smither, “English Abolitionism and the Annexation of Texas,” *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, 193–205; Madeleine B. Stern, *The Patriarch: A Biography of Stephen Pearl Andrews*; Charles Shively, “An Option for Freedom in Texas, 1840–1844,” 77–96.

would be used as collateral, and the British government itself would cover the interest on the loan. The extinction of slavery in Texas, the British minister concluded, would be a significant advantage to British commerce, not to mention the philanthropic aspect that accompanied emancipation. Elliott put his proposal down on paper and immediately sent it to the British Foreign Office for consideration. In the meantime, Andrews, enticed by Elliott's plan and prodding, went to England the first week of June 1843 to seek out financial support from the Peel government for the purpose of ending slavery in Texas.<sup>7</sup>

Before Andrews reached England, however, a chain of events had already been set in motion drastically changing the Texas issue in Anglo-American relations. A close friend of Andrews, Andrew Yates, wrote to a friend in England about the activities of Elliott and Andrews. Like Andrews, Yates was no abolitionist; he, too, believed in the economic benefits that emancipation could bestow on Texas. But Yates's friend gave the letter to the Texan minister in England, Ashbel Smith, and a harmless letter quickly turned into a bona fide concern for the United States. Smith showed the letter to Green, who, in turn, immediately sent a copy to President Tyler.<sup>8</sup>

"I feel it my duty to enclose [to] you a copy of a letter received here," Green wrote the president. "I have seen the original and have no doubt of the sincerity of the writer [Yates]. You will see that he says that the attempt to amend the constitution of Texas so as to abolish slavery is about to be made, under assurances from the British Minister there that such a measure will secure for Texas the warmest support from the British Govt in their present struggle with Mexico, and also the means of paying for their slaves." If this was true, if the British government was sincerely pursuing the abolition of slavery in Texas, then there could be only one obvious reason: England intended to render the whole world dependent on her East India possessions for the supply of cotton, sugar, rice, and coffee, not by producing it cheaper, but by increasing the cost of production by depriving her rival of the cheaper slave labor. But emancipation in Texas was simply a means to another end. England was moving along a deliberate course, Green suggested to South Carolinian Hugh Legare, to promote the abolition of slavery in the United States itself by all the means in her power. Green had

7. Freehling, *Disunion*, 378–81; Smither, "English Abolitionism," 197; Clagette Blake, *Charles Elliott, R. N., 1801–1875: A Servant of Britain Overseas*, 73–74, 77, 80, 84.

8. Freehling, *Disunion*, 381–82; Smither, "English Abolitionism," 201–2; *Facts and Suggestions*, 84; Green to Tyler, May 31, 1843, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

been making this argument for over a year now, and the Yates letter seemed to confirm his fears—England was conspiring to eliminate her competition and establish her commercial supremacy at all costs.<sup>9</sup>

But Green was not the alarmist many scholars contend. He did not instantly berate the British government through the publication of scathing newspaper articles, nor did he undertake an extensive letter-writing campaign to expose the evil designs of the United States' traditional foe. Elliott was the problem, not the Peel government. The Yates letter merely revealed to Green that the movement for the abolition of slavery in Texas was solely the pet project of Captain Elliott alone. He, and only he, had given such assurances and made such a declaration. "How far [Elliott] had the authority of his government, or how far that government will ratify what he has done, is another question," Green advised Tyler. "I cannot believe that Sir Robert Peel is governed by such motives." In fact, Green fully believed that Peel would disavow the efforts of Elliott, for the prime minister was too "wise and well informed" to be misled by the "monomaniacal ravings" of John Quincy Adams or the "fanatical representations" of American abolitionists. Besides, Green surmised, conditions within England combined with the swelling ranks of the opposition—the Whigs, the Radicals, the Chartists, the Anti-Corn Law League—had convinced the Tory ministers that a commercial treaty was the best means to confirm their power and to quell internal agitation. Green's confidence in free trade had temporarily overshadowed his innate Anglophobia and his Jacksonian proclivity for believing in conspiracies.

Still, the U.S. government must protest Elliott's machinations. "You cannot fail to see the necessity of taking immediate and energetic measures to counteract or defeat this movement of Captain Elliot," Green admonished the president. "My own belief is that a proper, spirited remonstrance addressed to this government will cause Elliott's conduct to be disaffirmed and probably lead to his recall." Nothing more needed to be done, said, written, or publicized. No fingers should yet point to the conduct of the Peel ministry. A resolute response and a vigilant restraint was all that Green suggested.<sup>10</sup>

Green was nonetheless seen as an instigator, a manipulator; he was unnecessarily stirring the flames of Anglophobia for political ends, and his real intention was to exploit the situation in order to promote

9. Green to Tyler, May 31, 1843, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Green to Legare, June 1, 1843, Green Papers, LC.

10. Green to Tyler, May 31, 1843, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

Southern interests at the expense of the nation. He was often blamed for leaking the Yates letter to the *Boston Post*, where it was published on June 21, 1843. But Green certainly was not the only American to see the Yates letter or to hear of Andrews's scheme; he was just the first to reach the ear of the president. In June 1843, Smith also sent a copy of the Yates-Converse letter to the Texan minister in the United States, Isaac Van Zandt, and one to Calhoun as well. William S. Murphy, the U.S. minister to England, also warned Secretary of State Upshur in June about English influence in Texas. In the end, Green could not have been the one responsible for slipping the correspondence to the Boston press—his self-righteous attitude and conceit would not have allowed him to keep such an act hidden from public view; his ego had to reveal his actions for public acclaim.

### III.

Green's restraint was short-lived. Several events during the summer of 1843 forced Green to rethink his views about the extent of England's motives regarding Texas. For one, Andrews's arrival in England coincided with the general convention of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society being held in London. Certainly one of the more prominent attendees of the conference was the abolitionist fanatic and leader of the American Antislavery Society, Lewis Tappan. Tappan learned of Andrews's objective in England and quickly joined with him. Other prominent Americans, such as Massachusetts congressman John Quincy Adams, also publicly endorsed the scheme to emancipate slaves in Texas. The convention then appointed a committee, with both Tappan and Andrews as key members, to meet with Lord Aberdeen. The British foreign minister agreed to hear the committee, and on June 19, Andrews outlined to Aberdeen the plan he and Elliott had devised earlier. One option called for British capitalists to raise \$1 million to pay Texas slave owners for their property. To recoup their contribution, the capitalists could purchase Texas lands at cheap prices, with the expectation that emancipation would bring droves of white settlers to Texas, thus driving up the price of land. Another option was for British capitalists to loan the Texas government money to emancipate slaves, using Texas lands as collateral. The British government, for their part, would guarantee the loan by covering the interest. When Green learned of the meeting between Aberdeen and the Tappan committee, he was livid. It was one thing for a minor British official in a distant land to promote a

plan for emancipation, but it was quite another for a prominent minister to give an audience to fanatics countenancing the same.<sup>11</sup>

According to the Tappan committee, Aberdeen had assured them that the British government would undertake any legitimate measure to secure the abolition of slavery in Texas, and a member of that committee told Ashbel Smith that Aberdeen had made several statements implying that the British government would, if necessary, guarantee the interest on a loan for the purpose of emancipating slaves. The Texan chargé immediately told Green what he had heard. Green then informed Tyler that the British government “desire to prevent the annexation of Texas to the U. States, and that to accomplish that the ministers would recommend a loan for the abolition of slavery,” and that they would guarantee the loan to the amount of \$5 million. But Green was relying on secondhand hearsay. Aberdeen never officially promised British aid in a loan to emancipate slaves in Texas. The foreign minister declared the official British position on slavery in another meeting with the Tappan committee, where he stated in no uncertain terms that the British government would *not* guarantee the interest on a loan, nor would it loan money to Texas, at the present time, *but*, he concurred most heartily with the mission of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society. Loan or no loan, Green’s worst fears seemed to be confirmed—the British government was indeed conspiring to destroy the commercial power of the United States by eliminating its monopoly of cheap slave labor.<sup>12</sup>

Green immediately changed his tone and strategy in order to prevent what he perceived as an outright threat to U.S. national interests. A policy of vigilant restraint was no longer feasible; bold and decisive

11. Freehling, *Disunion*, 382–83; Smither, “English Abolitionism,” 194–95; Green to Tyler, July 3, 1843, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Green to Calhoun, August 2, 1843, in Jameson, *AHA*, 846. On the antislavery efforts of Tappan, see Wyatt-Brown, *Tappan*.

12. Ephraim D. Adams, *British Interests and Activities in Texas, 1838–1846*, 137–47; Green to the Editor of the *Express*, April 26, 1844, Green to Tyler, July 3, 1843, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Green to Calhoun, August 2, 1843, in Jameson, *AHA*, 846; Green to Upshur, August 3, 1843, in William R. Manning, *Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States*, 12: 296; Freehling, *Disunion*, 394. Later, in 1876, Smith wrote in his *Reminiscences* that Green, “naturally an alarmist,” had the Yates letter and accompanying comments published in American newspapers, “the worst effect of this publication was that through sheer ignorance of the writer, Mr. Yates, it seemed to connect the British cabinet with the abolition crusade.” Written long after the fact, this reflection does not mesh with his views during the 1840s, for Smith had informed several Americans as well as the Texas government that British influence in the republic was very real. Ashbel Smith, *Reminiscences of the Texas Republic: Annual address delivered before the Historical Society of Galveston, December 15, 1875*, 38–60; Smith to Green, August 1, 1843, Green Papers, LC.



measures now had to be taken. He must convince the Tyler administration of the necessity of adopting a stern policy to counter the British menace and to protect U.S. interests. If the plan to emancipate slaves in Texas succeeded, it would turn America's southwestern neighbor into "a depot for smugglers & runaway slaves," eventually leading to a border war between the United States and Texas, and, ultimately, resulting in the conquest of the Lone Star Republic. Such a catastrophic conflict had to be prevented. "When we look at what the abolitionists have done & ask ourselves what will fanaticism sustained by British gold accomplish," he admonished the president, "we must face the necessity of meeting the issue at once." First, Tyler should instruct Everett to communicate to Aberdeen the rumors circulating of a proposed loan to Texas for the emancipation of slaves and to demand an explanation. Second, Everett should ask Aberdeen to appoint commissioners for the purpose of negotiating a commercial treaty with the United States. Finally, Tyler should "meet them in Texas by a proposition of annexation" and to take that issue before the American public. "Let me entreat you to meet the crisis," Green pleaded with the president. "Make a treaty for the annexation [of Texas], put yourself before the next Congress on that issue and rely on the people. Rely on what I tell you. It is to become the question which will absorb all other questions." That last sentence may have been the most accurate observation Green ever made about American politics.<sup>13</sup>

Although there was very little time to waste in checking the designs of England, Green still felt that the United States had the advantage over England, that the Tyler administration had the power to determine the course of events and to decide the outcome. "If you take a bold and decided ground you will control the policy of England," he advised the president. Green believed that England was not in any condition to risk an open rupture with the United States, that the Peel government preferred knocking down the barriers to free trade rather than provoking a war by threatening American commerce and Southern slavery. "If [England] finds that she cannot make Texas a refuge for runaway Negroes & thus use it for abolishing slavery in the U. States," he surmised, "she will then be glad to make a treaty securing to herself the advantages of our market." Tyler would then "by a bold course" secure both the annexation of Texas and a lucrative commercial treaty. Green still believed the peaceful option would prevail, but only if the presi-

13. Green to Tyler, July 3, August 29, 1843, Green to Upshur, October 17, 1843, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Green to Upshur, August 3, 1843, in Manning, *Diplomatic Correspondence*, 12: 296-97.

dent would act, and act decisively. *"If you look on and wait for events, all the measures of England will be hostile,"* he concluded to Tyler, *"but if you come boldly forward and control events all the measures of England will be friendly."*<sup>14</sup>

Other movements by English officials throughout the summer of 1843 further convinced Green that the British government was out to get the United States. Several prominent British statesmen, such as Lord Morpeth and Lord Brougham, delivered rousing speeches at the World Antislavery Convention. In early August, Lord Brougham stood up in the House of Lords and asked the ministry to declare its position on the abolition of slavery in Texas, to which Aberdeen replied that the British government would make every effort to attain such an objective. These pronouncements greatly unsettled Green, and he stepped up his efforts to combat English policies inimical to the interests of his country.<sup>15</sup>

If the Peel ministry would not relinquish its abolition schemes for free-trade policies, then maybe the opposition parties could force its hand. So in August 1843, Green turned to the Whigs in the hopes of thwarting the abolition designs of the Tory government. He employed a two-pronged strategy. First, he would convince the Whigs to adopt a policy of noninterference in the domestic affairs of the United States and Texas and to promote free-trade policies instead. Second, he would persuade the opposition to attack the government's position on these two issues, in the hopes that they would topple the Peel ministry. The first task could prove as, if not more, challenging than the second, for Green's beloved free-traders were being linked with the anti-slavery movement. This he had to stop immediately. Green visited with Lord Palmerston, Lord John Russell, and other leading Whigs "disposed to go astray" on the slavery issue, telling them that "the effort to abolish slavery in the United States must fail and that the attempt to substitute the products of India for those of America, would react on the manufacturing interest in the United States as well as England." If the opposition truly intended to promote free-trade policies, it would have to admit raw materials "without reference to the source from where the produce comes in exchange," considering that much of that produce would be slave grown. They could not have both free trade and abolition.<sup>16</sup>

14. Green to Tyler, July 3, 1843, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

15. Smither, "English Abolitionism," 195, 197; Green to Tyler, August 29, 1843, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

16. Pletcher, *Diplomacy*, 121, 123; Green to Tyler, August 29, 1843, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Green to Calhoun, September 29, 1843, in Jameson, *AHA*, 884.

To help further neutralize the slavery issue, Green pushed his campaign for free trade. The Whigs and other opposition forces, such as the Anti-Corn Law League, were already leaning toward a reduction in British commercial restrictions, but there was no harm in amplifying that sentiment. The more they concentrated on free trade, the less they would reflect on the interference with American slavery. Green made a concerted effort to convince the Whigs to oppose discriminating duties on slave-grown products, primarily cotton and sugar, and to negotiate a reciprocal arrangement of trade between the United States and England. He told them that the Tariff of 1842 did not truly reflect American public opinion, that the Panic of 1837 was finally over, and that the campaign for a reduction of higher tariff duties in the United States was intensifying. Green also included the resolution of the Oregon boundary as part of a potential reciprocity treaty.<sup>17</sup>

As for the second part of his strategy, convincing the opposition to attack the current government in the hopes of replacing it, Green believed he had made significant strides. He informed the Tyler administration that opposition leaders had assured them that they would assail all parts of "Sir Robt. Peel's American policy," from blocking any loan to Texas for the abolition of slavery, to opposing any interference into the domestic institutions of foreign nations, to eliminating trade restrictions and allowing slave-grown produce into England. Green was confident that the Anti-Corn Law League and the Radical Party would support the Whigs in their attack on the Tory ministry. By late fall of 1843, therefore, Green felt that a change in the ministry was the elixir needed to heal the division between the United States and England, and that upon a change in government, the United States would get what it asked. "I have assurances on which I can rely that on a change of ministry we will have no difficulty on the slave question or the Oregon," he assured Secretary of State Upshur; "that this government will meet us in the most liberal spirit and that the leading members of the opposition will make up their issues with ministers so as to prepare public opinion for yielding to our views on the slave question & the Oregon, upon the ground that it is their interest to make these and even greater concessions for the sake of peace and to secure our trade."<sup>18</sup>

17. Green to Tyler, August 29, 1843, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Green to Calhoun, September 29, 1843, in Jameson, *AHA*, 884.

18. Green to Upshur, August 3, 1843, in Manning, *Diplomatic Correspondence*, 12: 296-97; Green to Calhoun, September 2, 29, 1843, in Jameson, *AHA*, 871-72, 884; Green to Tyler, July 3, August 29, 1843, Green to Upshur, November 4, 1843, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; *Facts and Suggestions*, 85.

All that remained was for the Tyler administration to do its part. "It is now well understood that Tory sympathy for the negro is but another name for Tory oppression of the white labour of England and you may rest assured that all that is wanting to give the last blow to this humbug is for the Government of the United States to take a decided stand upon this subject," Green wrote Upshur. "Not in favor of the slave trade, but in support of existing institutions—not in favor of slavery in the abstract—but against the impertinent interference of England in the domestic institutions of the United States, of Cuba & Brazil." Here again was the quintessential moderate economic and legal interpretation of American slavery. Free trade was also part of the equation, and he admonished Calhoun that all Americans "should raise the banner of free trade" and make common cause with the free-trade interests in England. The antislavery party was losing influence rapidly in England, Green believed, and if the Tyler administration could be induced to take a strong ground on the Texas question, the free-trade party would most certainly "rally for us against the fanatics" and the Whigs would "make the refusal of ministers to meet the proposition of our Government a matter of serious assaults." Send word immediately to Everett, Green pleaded with the secretary of state, that he is to invite the British government to send a commission to Washington, charged with the authority to settle all questions between the United States and England, but especially to adjust tariff restrictions. Despite all his efforts to promote the ascendancy of the Whigs and to persuade the British government to adopt free-trade policies, Green again fell short of his personal objective for going back to England. The Peel ministry remained in power and no commercial treaty had been negotiated. All his hopes now rested on the efforts of the Tyler administration.<sup>19</sup>

#### IV.

A great many of Green's countrymen shared his apprehension over England's apparent efforts to abolish slavery in Texas. American fears of British intervention in the Lone Star Republic were quite justified. As soon as Texas secured its independence from Mexico in 1836, the British government actively supported Mexican efforts to reconquer its lost territory. Commercial considerations dominated English reason-

19. Green to Upshur, October 17, 1843, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Green to Calhoun, September 2, October 18, 1843, in Jameson, *AHA*, 871–72, 888–90.

ing against an independent Texas. The loss of Texas weakened Mexico's ability to pay British creditors, and if the United States annexed Texas, it could shut British trade out of the Gulf region. In November 1840, seeing that Mexico was incapable of retaking Texas, England signed several treaties with the new republic. The first made England the mediator between Mexico and Texas, and the other granted British recognition of Texas, provided for commercial regulation between England and Texas, and required the suppression of the slave trade. When the Peel government came to power in 1841, they immediately took measures to guarantee a strong independent Texas. Again, commercial considerations weighed heavily on this policy. A strong and independent Texas would preclude U.S. annexation and strengthen British commercial interests. The emancipation of slavery in Texas became the cornerstone of this new policy. Green's continual charges of a British conspiracy to undermine U.S. commercial power via the abolition of slavery, then, had a degree of factual basis.<sup>20</sup>

Early in 1843, the British government shifted its emphasis from the abolition of slavery in Texas—as had been proposed by Elliott and Andrews—to putting pressure on Mexico to recognize the independence of her former province. Mexican recognition, English ministers assumed, would better preserve English commercial interests. But in July 1843, the question of abolition resurfaced within ministerial circles. Aberdeen had already queried Elliott about the potential for emancipating Texas slaves, and he had already had his first meeting with the Tappan committee. If the British government would not guarantee a loan for abolition, maybe they could find another way, one less obvious and far less controversial. At the end of July 1843, then, the British government made Mexican recognition of its lost province contingent upon the abolition of slavery in Texas. The Texan government, long desirous of English aid in securing its recognition from Mexico, listened intently. During the summer of 1843, Texan president Sam Houston, after direct British intervention on behalf of Texas, agreed to an armistice with Mexico and withdrew his previous offer of annexation to the United States. Whether he did so to inflame Anglophobia and coquette the United States remains uncertain. British interests in Texas were very real, and fears that America's longtime nemesis could gain a foothold to her southwest were certainly justified. By midsummer of 1843, there-

20. For a much fuller study of British activities and interests regarding the Republic of Texas, see Adams, *British Interests*, passim; Smither, "English Abolitionism," passim; Blake, *Elliott*, 65–103.

fore, the Tyler administration felt it was time to take that bold and decided action recommended by Green—the annexation of Texas would now become the administration’s paramount objective.<sup>21</sup>

Scholars have long questioned Green’s role in initiating the annexation movement. Most argue that he was the catalyst sparking the Tyler administration’s diplomatic and political efforts to acquire Texas, that he was responsible for spurring Tyler and Upshur to seek annexation, and that he directly influenced the formation of the administration’s annexation policy. William Freehling, however, argued that Green did not cause the Tyler administration to act, that Upshur was “predisposed to believe in English interference months before Green supplied evidence,” and that Upshur was concerned about the accuracy of Green’s statements and found his charges against England “too loose,” and therefore “suspiciously scrutinized” Green’s assessment of British influence. Green had advised the president in early July to pursue annexation as a means of checking British influence in Texas. But had Tyler already decided that such a move was necessary? Green had also informed the Tyler administration, as far back as January 1842, of British designs to destroy American slavery and undermine American commercial power. But did Green’s indictment merely reconfirm the administration’s suspicions of British designs in North America? Green was the first to warn the president of a potential British loan to emancipate slaves in Texas. But was this the catalyst that sparked the administration’s annexation movement? And to what extent, if at all, did Green’s letters influence the formulation of the administration’s annexation policy?<sup>22</sup>

American interest in Texas was anything but novel in the early 1840s; Americans had coveted Texas for nearly half a century. Many believed that the Louisiana Purchase included the region and that the official surrender of any claim to that area in the 1819 Adams-Onís Treaty, signed between the United States and Spain, was anathema. In fact, once the United States officially embarked on the annexation of its southwestern neighbor, it was popularly titled “reannexation.” Green,

21. Adams, *British Interests*, 123–36.

22. Historians who argue that Green significantly influenced the Tyler administration’s annexation policy include William J. Cooper, *The South and the Politics of Slavery, 1828–1856*, 184; Pletcher, *Diplomacy*, 127, 143; Hietala, *Manifest Design*, 22, 23; Frederick Merk, *Slavery and the Annexation of Texas*, 17, passim. Freehling, *Disunion*, 388, 393–94, 398. Although Merk argues that Upshur took Green’s word as is, without verifying the contents of his letters, he also implies that Upshur was predisposed to agree with Green’s views and assessment.

too, possessed a keen interest in Texas. He gave the Texan Revolution extensive coverage in the *Telegraph*, avidly favoring the cause of Texas, and on several instances he hinted at the potential addition of the region to the United States if the Texans gained their independence. As soon as Texas had secured its independence in 1836, the question of admission into the American Union was quickly broached, but domestic issues within both Texas and the United States precluded annexation at that time.

The Texas question resurfaced when Tyler ascended to the presidency. The new president broached the idea of annexation as early as 1841, but, again, numerous and more weighty considerations precluded annexation at that time. For one, relations between Mexico and the United States had been quite friendly, and, in addition, the two nations not only had treaties of amity and commerce, but claims negotiations assumed greater weight than the acquisition of Texas. For another, then secretary of state Daniel Webster not only opposed annexation, but the negotiations with England over the northeastern boundary question engaged the full attention of the State Department. As such, Tyler reluctantly declined repeated offers by Texan president Sam Houston to procure a treaty of annexation.

Relief came when Webster completed negotiations with England—the Webster-Ashburton Treaty of 1842—and quickly exited the Tyler administration. By the summer of 1843, with the last Whig out of the cabinet, Tyler appointed officials agreeable to his views, particularly that of annexing Texas. To guide his Texas ship through the murky and dangerous waters of a hostile U.S. Senate, the president enlisted the skills of his new secretary of state, Abel Parker Upshur, fellow Virginian, devout Anglophobe, and respected friend of Duff Green. President Tyler, therefore, already had Texas in his sights several years before receiving Green's correspondence in May and July 1843. He shared with most Americans the belief that Texas should enter the American Union, he raised the annexation question to Webster within his first year in office, and he quickly appointed a new secretary of state that fully agreed with his desire to acquire Texas. Green had certainly begged Tyler to annex Texas, but his words had fallen on just more than fertile ground—Tyler was already moving to acquire the Lone Star Republic when Green's letters reached his desk.<sup>23</sup>

Had, then, Green's accusations of British intrigues merely reconfirmed the Tyler administration's own suspicions, possibly serving as

23. The annexation movement could arguably have originated in Henry A. Wise's proannexation speech in the House of Representatives in April 1842, or in Thomas

the catalyst that sparked the administration's annexation movement, or had Green's letters directly influenced the formulation of the administration's annexation policy altogether? By the time Upshur entered the State Department in June 1843, England had indeed handed the Tyler administration a new catalyst for immediate annexation. Waiting on Upshur's desk were Green's various missives to the president, warning of British efforts to abolish slavery in Texas. Green had also written Upshur during the summer of 1843 warning him of British intervention and the dire threat it had on the interests of the United States, and he had included the new secretary of state—then secretary of the navy—in his correspondence of January 1842, outlining his theory of a British conspiracy against America. But Upshur needed little convincing of an ominous British threat. Throughout his political career, he had always exhibited a deep-seated jealousy of British power and maintained a marked suspicion of British commercial expansion and designs in North America. His policies as secretary of the navy in the Tyler administration betray the depth of his Anglophobia. If anything, then, Green's letters merely spurred on the Tylerites, hastening their move to annex Texas.<sup>24</sup>

By September 1843, Upshur had formulated a strategy to thwart British attempts and to protect the interests and security of the United States. He outlined the official position of the Tyler administration in his directions to U.S. ministers in England and Texas. The policy centered upon the designs of England in Texas and the economic injury and the military menace these intrigues entailed for the United States. Much of Upshur's policy contained, and at times outright mirrored, the views outlined in Green's correspondence of 1842 and 1843: that commercial supremacy alone motivated British policy; that England would employ force as a means to this end; that the British intervened in Texas solely to expand her commercial prowess, and to do so at the expense of the United States; that England could no longer compete against slave-grown produce in the Americas and thus pursued the abolition of slavery in North America as a means of eliminating U.S. economic competition; that British machinations affected all aspects of the national economy and all sections of the Union; that a Texas under

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Walker Gilmer's proannexation article published in the *Baltimore Republican and Argus* and the *Washington Madisonian* in January 1843.

24. On Upshur's term as secretary of the navy, see Claude Hall, *Abel Parker Upshur: Conservative Virginian, 1790–1844*, 120–93; “Abel Parker Upshur: An Eastern Shoreman Reforms the United States Navy,” *Virginia Cavalcade* (Spring 1974): 29–37; and “Abel P. Upshur and the Navy as an Instrument of Foreign Policy,” *Virginia Magazine*, 290–99.



the influence of England would result in smuggling across the southwestern border and provide a haven for runaway slaves, eventually leading to a war between Texas and the United States. It was all there—nearly everything Green had argued, one can also find in Upshur's official instructions.<sup>25</sup>

But to what extent, then, did Green's arguments actually determine Upshur's official policy? In September 1843, Upshur thanked Green for the "extremely interesting" information he had been sending him from England. The secretary of state assured Green that he was not "insensible to the importance of the crisis" and not "inattentive to the necessary preparations" to meet it, and he proceeded to outline his views on British intervention in Texas. The letter revealed that Upshur had already made up his mind on matters and that Green was merely a single source among many on which to base an annexation policy. Upshur digested information from several sources, not just from Green's missives. He had at his disposal information from Ashbel Smith and William S. Murphy, U.S. chargé d'affaires to Texas, and he relied on these sources more than he did on Green. Upshur even removed from his later official correspondence Green's reference to a British guarantee of a loan to Texas.<sup>26</sup>

At most, then, Green's correspondence to the Tyler administration, revealing the possibility of a British loan to abolish slavery in Texas, was a spark igniting an already quite flammable situation. It was not the smoking gun, only another important piece of evidence in an already expansive prosecution. The Tyler administration incorporated Green's information; they did not rely on it exclusively. Green only confirmed their fears and their disposition; he did not establish the foundation of the administration's annexation policy. In short, Green helped grease the wheels of an already well-oiled machinery. The acquisition of Texas was indeed inevitable—with or without Green's aid. But he sure made it far more interesting and much more controversial.

25. Upshur's policy is found in the following official and confidential dispatches: Upshur to Murphy, August 8, September 22, 1843, January 16, 1844, in Manning, *Diplomatic Correspondence*, 12: 44–49, 51–52, 59–65; Upshur to Everett, September 28, 1843, in Manning, *Diplomatic Correspondence*, 7: 6–17.

26. Upshur to Green, September 25, 1843, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Merk, *Slavery*, 27.

## V.

Green may have had only a limited influence on the annexation policy of the Tyler administration, but he did aid the cause by making noise where he was most qualified—in the public press. During the fall of 1843, Green wrote several editorials to English and American newspapers in an effort to sway public opinion in favor of the U.S. acquisition of Texas. Sent first to the *London Times*, the letters concentrated overwhelmingly on the tariff issue and the necessity of establishing free trade with England. But the letters also had another purpose: to “identify the American abolitionists with the attempt of England to monopolize the trade & commerce of the world” and to “unite our people by the exposure of the hypocritical pretence of British philanthropy.” The arguments on behalf of free trade produced little, if any, debate on either side of the Atlantic. The charge that the British government was conspiring to dominate the world commercially, and that its antislavery policy was based not on benevolence but on self-interest, however, generated as much controversy as it had supporters. The claim that American abolitionists were in cahoots with the British government was a novel approach for Green, albeit a logical conclusion to his conspiracy theory in the wake of the worldwide antislavery movement.<sup>27</sup>

All the opinions, suggestions, innuendos, and allegations contained in his 1842 and 1843 correspondence to prominent American and British statesmen and in his public writings, such as “England and the United States,” were repeated: that England could not compete against the cheap slave labor of the Americas; that to raise the price of labor in the Americas, England must destroy slavery in Cuba, Brazil, and the United States; that once slavery was abolished in the Americas, England would control the supply of raw materials, such as cotton, sugar, rice, and coffee; that once in control of the world’s raw materials, then the planters of the West and East Indies will purchase British manufactured goods—and the goal to establish the commercial supremacy of the British empire would be realized. Green also repeated his claims that England intended to abolish slavery in Texas as a means of achieving a monopoly on the world’s markets and as the next step to ending slavery in the United States, that England’s sympathy for the black man was nothing more than a pretense for plundering and oppressing the white laborer, that England intended to initiate a war with the United States under

27. Green to Upshur, November 4, 1843, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

the guise of philanthropy, that it intended to turn Texas into a refuge for runaway slaves causing a war between Texas and the United States, and that adoption of free-trade policies was the only means for averting war.

But the new element of his argument was actually based on an old assumption of his. He had suggested in 1842 that England assumed that the United States was bitterly divided over the slavery issue, and, therefore, the North would surely unite with it in a war to destroy the institutions of the South. Green countered such a contention by parading the unity of the United States against all things British and declared that the abolition movement would collapse as a result of a war against England. It was here, then, that Green offered a new wrinkle in the British conspiracy theory: American abolitionists had joined England in its cause; they were the tools of British intrigues.<sup>28</sup>

Abolitionists in America, Green argued, “are about to destroy the value of our slaves, and that they may soon expect to substitute the products of India for those of America, and it will be the interest of England to aid them, even by a war, in the accomplishment of that object.” John Quincy Adams and American abolitionists merely fed England’s pursuit of commercial supremacy, ironically undermining the very foundation of their own economy, the commercial and manufacturing strength of New England. Abolitionists represented the lone “obstacle which now impedes the progress of free trade in this country,” and so long as abolition prevailed in America, the United States could expect no further concessions from England.

The *London Times* understandably found Green’s letters offensive, and they refused to publish them. The paper provided their reading audience with a reason for their refusal:

The gentleman’s impudence amounts to a talent. We stare and are astounded as we stare, at the mode in which this advocate and representative of a confederation of public bankrupts coolly turns the tables, and, without having, or pretending to have a word of valid defence, begins lecturing us, his creditors, on the hypocrisy of our pretensions to philanthropy, and the selfishness of our exertions to abolish slavery and the slave trade.<sup>29</sup>

28. Green’s letters to the *London Times* were written on September 18 and November 18, 1843. The September letter was published in the *Boston Post* on October 10, 1843, in the *New York Herald* on October 12, and in *Niles’ Register* on October 21, 1843; the November letter was published in the *Boston Post* on December 9, 1843, and in the *Daily Madisonian* on December 30, 1843, and May 8, 1844.

29. *London Times*, November 14, 1843.

Green's fellow representatives back in the "confederation of public bankrupts" did not share the opinion of the London press. The American press found Green's exhortations worthy of publication. Staunch annexationist James Gordon Bennett, editor of the *New York Herald*, the largest selling newspaper in late Jacksonian America, had met and conversed with Green on numerous occasions while in London. They not only exchanged ideas on matters of journalism and international affairs, but they shared the same views on England's designs for world mastery. It was only natural, then, that Bennett would publish Green's articles in the *Herald*. John B. Jones, editor of the *Daily Madisonian*, published in the nation's capital, likewise found Green's letters worthy of publication. Jones used Green's correspondence to attack abolitionists, promote the cause of Texas annexation, and thwart English machinations deemed injurious to U.S. interests. The *Boston Post* and *Niles' Register* published Green's letters as well. Rough Green had made an encore appearance, and many of his countrymen loved him for it.<sup>30</sup>

## VI.

Green's public campaign during the fall of 1843 coincided with active efforts on the part of the Tyler administration to acquire Texas—movements unbeknown to Green. After formulating the administration's annexation policy in September 1843, Upshur put the plan in motion. He sounded out the Senate regarding its views on a possible treaty of annexation, and actively, yet discreetly, lobbied for its support. By the end of 1843, he had acquired the necessary two-thirds majority needed to ratify a treaty, and he promptly informed President Tyler. At the same time that he pursued senatorial support, Upshur had secretly drafted a treaty of annexation. By the end of 1843, this treaty had been completed, and only the approval of Houston remained to be had, to which the Texan president consented. With the policy of the Tyler administration firmly established, the president sent his proposed treaty for the annexation of Texas to the Senate in April 1844. Partisan attachments, however, proved more intense than national considerations. The Senate followed party lines and promptly rejected the treaty by a vote of thirty-five to sixteen. Discussion now devolved to the halls of Congress and to the streets with the public at large.<sup>31</sup>

30. Hietala, *Manifest Design*, 20–21, 25.

31. Upshur to Murphy, January 16, 23, 1844, in Manning, *Diplomatic Correspondence*, 12: 64, 69; Tyler, *Letters and Times*, 2: 278, 283–84; Hall, *Upshur*, 204–6; Smith, *Annexation*, 127, 159.

Green's role in the making of the rejected Tyler treaty was not without controversy. Although he was not privy to the movements of the Tyler administration during the fall of 1843 and into the winter of 1844, Congress thought otherwise. Six months after he had returned to the United States, and nearly a year after his first missive to Tyler warning of British interference in Texas, Green faced a congressional inquiry into his apparent role in the Tyler treaty. In May 1844, Green's other archnemesis, Thomas Hart Benton, introduced in the Senate a series of resolutions, one of which inquired into Green's role in England in 1843, his ensuing correspondence to the administration, and his role in the administration's annexation policy and activities:

*Resolved*, That the author of the "private letter" (believed to be Duff Green) from London, in the summer of 1843, and addressed to the then American Secretary of State (Mr. Upshur), and giving him information of the supposed slavery designs of Great Britain in Texas, and which information was the basis and moving cause of the American Secretary's leading dispatch to the American charge in Texas to procure the annexation of Texas to the United States, be summoned to appear at the bar of the Senate to be examined on oath in relation to the subject matter of his said communication from London; and also to be examined by the Senate on all points that they shall think proper in relation to his knowledge of the origin, progress, and conclusion of the Texas treaty, and all the objects thereof, and of all influences and interests which may have operated in setting on foot and carrying on the negotiations for the conclusion and ratification of said treaty.

Benton backed up his resolutions with a lengthy speech condemning Green for providing "entirely unfounded and mistaken" information to Upshur. Two weeks later, Benton introduced another resolution, requesting from the president a copy of Green's 1843 letter to Upshur, and demanding to know if Green's mission was paid for by public funds, where such funds originated, official instructions given to him, and all other correspondence of Green concerning the annexation of Texas. The Senate passed the resolutions.<sup>32</sup>

Secretary of State Calhoun replied to the Senate's inquiries on two separate occasions. First, he disclosed that no communication whatsoever, either to or from Green, in relation to the annexation of Texas was ever filed in the State Department. Second, he reported that, ac-

32. U.S. Congress, Senate, *Journal of Executive Proceedings*, 6: 276-77, 294, 310, 474-86; Benton, *Thirty Years' View*, 2: 590.

According to executive records, between December 1840 and December 1843, Green had been paid a total sum of one thousand dollars out of the "Contingent expenses of foreign intercourse" as bearer of dispatches to London and to Paris. This was no secret; he had taken official documents with him on his first mission to England in 1842, and the president had every legal right to use the contingent fund of the State Department at his discretion. Green's second mission to England, however, was another matter. He returned to London in 1843 as a private citizen, a claim he had made on numerous occasions and to numerous individuals. Unfortunately for Green, he had simply become caught up in the party battles surrounding the failed attempt to annex Texas. He was nothing more than a pawn used to attack the president, and Benton knew that. Nothing more came of the Senate's inquest, except further discord between the president and Senate Whigs. It would not be the last congressional inquiry into Green's role in the annexation of Texas, however.<sup>33</sup>

## VII.

It is difficult to chastise Green, the Tyler administration, and a good number of Americans during the Jacksonian period for their intense Anglophobia. The historical record of Anglo-American relations justified their suspicion, fear, and hatred of Great Britain. There is, however, one indictment against them that cannot be justified. Contemporaries charged the Tyler administration with a conspiracy to annex Texas solely for the purpose of extending the slave power interests of the South. Opponents of annexation suggested that sectional, rather than national, and slavery, rather than commercial or military, considerations inspired the administration's expansionist policies. The slave power conspiracy concept gained a great many adherents during the nineteenth century. Beginning in the early twentieth century, however, the slave power conspiracy theme has come under a great deal of scrutiny by modern scholars, and few historians today attribute such conspiratorial motives to the Tyler administration, discounting outright the existence of any slave power conspiracy at all.<sup>34</sup>

33. Calhoun to Tyler, June 8, 1844, *JCCP*, 19: 59–60; Green to Tyler, May 17, 1843, Green to Peel, May 24, 1843, Green Papers, LC; Green to Tyler, May 31, 1843, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

34. For the origins of the slaver power conspiracy, see Benjamin Lundy's issues of the *National Enquirer and Constitutional Advocate of Universal Liberty*, and John Quincy Adams's "Address to the People of the Free States of the Union," March 3,

The slave power conspiracy does not apply to Green's efforts. Many influential politicians of the time, as well as scholars today, directly blamed Green for muddying the waters over the acquisition of Texas by concentrating exclusively on the slavery question, arguing that he promoted slave-owning interests to the detriment of other national interests. The historian Thomas Hietala, for example, while maintaining that Tyler's Texas policy was based on national concerns, contended that Green's arguments "had limited appeal in the North because [he] placed so much emphasis on the vital interests of southern slaveholders," and that he failed "to provide the North with a clear and compelling reason why the free states should support annexation." Even Green was aware at the time that he was being charged with a sectional, proslavery bent. John Quincy Adams labeled Green the "American Ambassador of Slavery" to London, and in 1844, Green received an anonymous letter, signed "Lynch," accusing him of a strictly proslavery, sectional bias:

Most contemptible of God's creatures: I am aware of your hatred and that of your patron (Mr. Calhoun) to everything north of Mason

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1843, and the "Address of the Hon. J. Q. Adams, to His Constituents of the Eighth Congressional District, at Dedham," October 21, 1843, both in Merk, *Slavery*, 205–11, 237–44. For the slavepower conspiracy applied to the Mexican War, see Herman von Holst, *The Constitutional and Political History of the United States*, vol. 3, chs. 9–12, and James Ford Rhodes, *History of the United States from the Compromise of 1850*, 1: 87–93. For the more scholarly and dispassionate works of the early twentieth century, see Justin H. Smith, *The Annexation of Texas*; George P. Garrison, *Westward Extension, 1841–1850*, and "The First Stage of the Movement for the Annexation of Texas," 72–96; Eugene C. Barker, "The Influence of Slavery in the Colonization of Texas," 3–37; Chauncey S. Boucher, "In Re that Aggressive Slavocracy," 13–79. Biographers of the Tyler administration adopted Smith's interpretation, while others, most notably the historian Frederick Merk, found greater weight in the slavery expansion theory. See Oliver P. Chitwood, *John Tyler: Champion of the Old South*; Hall, *Upshur*; Merk, *Slavery*, and *Fruits of Propaganda in the Tyler Administration*, chap. 2. Most modern historians of late Jacksonian expansionism discount Merk's contentions, noting instead a variety of more relevant reasons for annexing Texas. See Fehrenbacher, *Slaveholding Republic*, 118, 124, 125, 126; Hietala, *Manifest Design*, passim; Norman Graebner, *Empire on the Pacific: A Study in American Continental Expansion*; Charles Sydnor, *The Development of Southern Sectionalism, 1819–1848*, 321–25; Cooper, *Politics of Slavery*, 182–85, 187, 188, 190; Freehling, *Disunion*, passim, 356; Joel Silbey, *Shrine of Party: Congressional Voting Behavior, 1841–1852*; Thomas Alexander, *Sectional Stress and Party Strength: A Study of Roll-Call Voting Patterns in the United States House of Representatives, 1836–1860*; Edward Crapol, "John Tyler and the Pursuit of National Destiny," *Journal of the Early American Republic*, 467–91; Sam Haynes, "Anglophobia and the Annexation of Texas: The Quest for National Security," in Sam Haynes and Christopher Morris, eds., *Manifest Destiny and Empire: American Antebellum Expansionism*, 115–45.

& Dixon's line—Thank Heaven, the North is awakening to their true condition. They see that they have been governed for many years back by a clique who believe that the world was created only for the purpose of raising cotton and the institution of slavery. They will be gulled no longer. The Northern Democracy are beginning to be tired of playing second fiddle to such men as you . . . Unless you cease your infernal machinations for a dissolution of the Union which I well know you had in view while conductor of that contemptible paper, the *Telegraph*, I will take the liberty to give you another such dose as you received from the hands of Mr. Blair of South Carolina . . . And if that does not suffice to put an end to your efforts, I will try something more effectual.<sup>35</sup>

Both contemporaries and scholars have been unfair to Green. He defended slavery no more and no less than other prominent American statesmen of the day. In fact—and ironically—Green's views on British activities in North America and on the annexation of Texas were shared by his arch-nemesis, Andrew Jackson. The former president, like Green, was genuinely concerned about the security of Southern institutions, namely slavery. Jackson, too, believed that the "arch fiend" John Quincy Adams and his meddling abolitionists friends threatened U.S. security by their opposition to Texas annexation. *They* were the ones concentrating exclusively on the slavery issue, Jackson argued, and *they* were the ones painting the entire issue of American expansion in sectional colors, and *they*, not Southern slaveowners, undermined the Union. For Jackson, as for Green, slavery was a national concern, and a threat to American slavery was a threat to the nation overall.<sup>36</sup>

Green consistently maintained, both publicly and privately, that slavery was a national concern, that it was part of the economic fabric of the nation, and that if suddenly destabilized or violently destroyed, it would imperil the nation overall. He intended to show that annexation involved no sectional issues, that the manufacturing and the commercial interests of the North had an interest in annexation equal to that of the planters of the South, and that England's conspiracy against American slavery and the slave trade was a war on the entire nation. One only need to review the letters Green wrote in January 1842 to prominent American and British statesmen to see that he was concerned with all aspects of the American economy, not just the Southern.

35. Hietala, *Manifest Design*, 26; Merk, *Slavery*, 14; Freehling, *Disunion*, 386; "Lynch" to Green, quoted in Green, "Militant Journalist," 258; Frederick Merk, *The Monroe Doctrine and American Expansionism*, 11.

36. Cooper, *Politics of Slavery*, 192–93.



In fact, if Green can be considered a sectionalist at all, then it should be as a Westerner more than any other section. Much of his free-trade efforts in England throughout 1842 and 1843 emphasized trade with the Western states, both free and slave. The interests of the West and the South were intertwined, Green always maintained, and British machinations threatened both sections equally.<sup>37</sup>

Green's hatred resided solely with abolitionists, not the free states. He felt abolitionists were a dire threat to national security. Here, again, he was the quintessential Jacksonian American. Throughout the nation and especially in the South, Americans viewed abolitionists as anything but selfless humanitarians; abolitionists were irresponsible fanatics employed by the British to divide the American public and to undermine the Union. Green consistently represented this thinking. He linked abolitionists to Federalists, to Tories, and to monarchists. Abolitionist subservience to the British government, he argued, merely served as a means for the latter to plunder the South and to augment the commercial power of the British Empire. His belief that abolitionists and the British were bent on hoodwinking the American public was shared by a vast number of Americans.

Green defended slavery as a legal matter, an economic consideration, an institution to be protected against the interference of foreign powers, and most of all, as an integral part of the national economy. "That, whether slavery be or be not an evil—whether it should or should not be abolished," he told the British public, "are questions for us, and for us alone, and about which you have no right whatsoever to interfere, is a proposition which few, even in England, will venture to controvert." Here, then, is the essence of Green's defense of slavery, an argument shared by a great many of his fellow Americans. He was not part of any mythical slave power conspiracy, and he emphasized national, not sectional, reasons for thwarting the British conspiracy and for annexing Texas.<sup>38</sup>

37. Green to Editor of the *Express*, April 26, 1844, Green to Tyler, July 3, 1843, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Green to Cralle, December 3, 1843, Green Papers, LC.

38. Green to *Boston Post*, December 14, 15, 1843.

## CHAPTER 23



### England, Texas, and Mexico

#### I.

Between the rejection of the Texas treaty by the Senate in 1844 and the passage of the joint resolution admitting Texas into the Union in 1845, the Texas question rose rapidly to the fore of U.S. political debate, ultimately occupying the bulk of public discussion from 1843 to the consummation of annexation in 1845. Both proponents and opponents of Texas annexation argued along numerous fronts—politics, economics, ideology, national security, constitutionality. Many of the arguments reflected those Green had espoused during his two missions to England. But, during the winter, spring, and summer of 1844, Green made few comments on the Texas question consuming national debate. After returning to the United States in the fall of 1843, Green gave his full attention instead to the continuation of his cherished campaign for free trade.

Beginning in January 1844, Green opened a regular correspondence with free-trade organizations throughout Europe, primarily in England, and he concomitantly proposed the organization of free-trade associations throughout the United States. To facilitate his transatlantic campaign for free trade, Green established a newspaper in New York City, the *Republic*, which ran from January 1844 until February 1845. The chief purpose of the paper was to promote free-trade principles, and in the columns of the *Republic*, Green advocated a number of economic reforms and issues, including a commercial reciprocity treaty between England and the United States, reduction of tariff duties and postage

rates, permanent contracts between the U.S. government and railroad companies for the transportation of mail, troops, and munitions, and federal subsidies for railroad construction; he also opposed the creation of a national bank, the distribution of proceeds from the sale of public lands, and slavery restriction. The reduction of tariff duties in the United States—which he determined to be the “great question” of the day—and the repeal of England’s restrictive Corn Laws were his favorite topics. In Green’s opinion, economic concerns, more than any other domestic or foreign issue, shaped partisan divisions in the United States and determined which political party would control the reins of power. The promotion of free-trade principles and policies, therefore, necessarily led Green back into the arena of American politics, and what propitious timing he had, for the 1844 presidential campaign was heating up.<sup>1</sup>

By 1843, Green had had enough of the high tariff and pro-national bank stance of the Whig Party. These traditional cornerstones of the Whig economic platform, he believed, prevented the adoption of free-trade practices—and he felt that there was no use in trying to show them the error of their ways. Change was needed, but the Whigs were unable—and unwilling—to make the necessary changes. Green’s free-trade efforts in early 1844, therefore, signaled his return to the Democratic fold. Such a move was quite easy and natural for Green, for he had far more in common with the values of the new Jacksonian Democrats of the 1840s, such as James K. Polk and Robert J. Walker, than he had with the Jacksonian Democrats of the 1830s, namely Jackson and Van Buren. The new Jacksonians were steering away from hard money policies and promoting significantly lower tariff duties instead. Green shared these positions, because he believed they would facilitate free trade. Mark my words, Green told Calhoun, “*no man can be elected on the hard money basis*. Nor can the hard money basis be preserved in our country.” He preferred to use the public credit as currency, and therefore favored Tyler’s exchequer plan. The new Jacksonians also favored territorial expansion—another position with which Green felt quite comfortable. The new Democrats, moreover, appeared more irritated with the antislavery movement and were more likely to avoid interfering with the domestic institution—likewise a favorite ha-rangue of Green. It was “now part of the political creed of the Demo-

1. Green to Calhoun, September 29, 1843, *AHA Publications*, 884; Green to Cobden, January 16, 1844, Green to Hume, January 17, 1844, Green to Upshur, January 19, 1843, Green Papers, LC; Green to Tyler, May 31, 1843, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

cratic Party,” he once told a friend in England, “that the question [of slavery] belongs to the states.”<sup>2</sup>

Here again was another reason—an ideological rationale—for siding with the Democrats: they were the party of states’ rights principles. In the summer of 1843, Green expressed to a member of Parliament that the party of Jefferson, of Madison, of John Taylor of Caroline had “insisted that as between a State and the federal Government there was no judge but a convention of the States themselves,” that the Supreme Court was not the final arbiter of the Constitution, and that the Democratic Party “insist on the most rigid construction of the Constitution—binding down the Government, both state & federal to the limits prescribed by the express grants of power, and the necessary implications therefrom.” The Whigs, however, “insist upon an enlargement of the powers of Govt. by construction.” Of course the Democrats—heirs to the party of Jefferson, Madison, and Taylor—had always maintained a states’ rights attitude, Jackson especially. But Old Hickory’s policies led many in the 1830s—Green among them—to believe that he had drifted from original principles, so they entered the ranks of the newly formed Whig Party, albeit as states’ rights Whigs. These former Democrats, however, never felt comfortable in their new role; they were far more out of place within Whig ranks than they ever were while in Jackson’s camp. But Jackson and Van Buren were no longer the uncontested leaders of the Democracy, and many felt safe reentering the Democratic Party. So Green comfortably, and naturally, trotted back.<sup>3</sup>

“We must unite the Democratic Party,” Green lectured Upshur in the fall of 1843. The divisions of the 1830s must be healed. The people must be rallied. The schemes of England required a sacrifice of all considerations of selfish personal interest and political ambition. The treasonous activities of the abolitionists, fomenting slave insurrection and the dissolution of the Union, combined with English designs to perpetuate her commercial and manufacturing monopoly, “will produce so strong a national sentiment in the United States as to overwhelm Mr. Clay & carry in the Democratic candidate by a large majority.” The questions on which to unite Democrats, Green suggested, were free trade and opposition to the antislavery movement. “We must place these questions so prominently before the Country,” he again advised Upshur, “as to absorb all others, and this will be done by the question of annexation

2. Green to Tyler, August 29, 1843, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Green to Calhoun, September 16, 1842, *JCCP*, 16: 459.

3. Green to Tyler, August 29, 1843, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

of Texas.” Free trade, territorial expansion, and states’ rights—here were the centerpieces of the Democratic Party of the 1840s, and here were the issues that enticed Green back into the Democratic fold in 1843.<sup>4</sup>

Party unity was critical, Green maintained, but one thing they must avoid uniting on was Van Buren. Unlike Calhoun, who had returned to the Democracy by supporting the Magician in 1840, Green reentered Democratic ranks bound and determined to keep Van Buren off the 1844 ticket entirely. He may have been closer to the truth when he intimated to Cass that elections “turn more upon our antipathies than upon our preferences,” but Green proffered several political reasons for opposing Van Buren’s nomination. The New Yorker would surely yield on the two issues most dear to Green: suppressing the evils of the anti-slavery movement and reducing the tariff. That alone was enough to resist a Van Buren candidacy. But Green offered another practical reason to ditch Van Buren: he could not win, period. If Green’s traditional enemy could not win, then his other longtime nemesis, Henry Clay, would. Either case proved absolutely repugnant to Green. Therefore, it behooved all the leading Democrats—Calhoun, Cass, Johnson, Buchanan—by “acting together” to ensure that Van Buren was not the party’s standard-bearer in 1844.<sup>5</sup>

Green’s abhorrence for Van Buren was equaled only by his opposition to the Baltimore Convention. Democrats were scheduled to meet in Baltimore in May 1844 to select their nominee for the presidency. Green believed that the convention would be dominated by old party hacks loyal to Van Buren—a “minority to control the majority”—and this must be stopped. “The old set are dying off,” Green wrote Cralle, “and we must save the new who are coming on the field. To do this we must give them a platform to stand upon, and to do this we must throw overboard the old party leaders. We must prevent any nomination by the Baltimore Convention.” The potential rubber-stamping of a Democratic ticket headed by Van Buren caused Green’s deep-rooted hatred of the caucus system to resurface. He had attacked the caucus in 1824, and he would do so again in 1844. A caucus was nothing more than the rule of party managers, Green told his friend Cralle, and they acted

4. Green to Upshur, November 3, 1843, in Manning, *Diplomatic Correspondence*, 7: 313; Green to Upshur, November 4, 1843, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

5. Green to Cass, June 16, 1842, Green to Cralle, February 8, 1843, Green Papers, LC; Green to Cralle, December 30, 1843, *SHA Publications*, 28–29; Green to Cass, January 13, 1844, Green to Henry Wikoff, January 13, 16, 1844, Green to Cobden, January 16, 1844, Green to H. Wheaton, January 19, 1844, Green to Houston, January 19, 1844, Green to Upshur, January 19, 1844, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Green to Calhoun, January 6, 1844, *AHA Publications*, 199.

contrary to the public will and the public welfare. Adhering to the Baltimore nomination of Van Buren, he concluded, would spell the defeat of the Democratic Party.<sup>6</sup>

To thwart the designs of “Van Buren, Benton and Co.,” Green proposed holding another convention, one in which the delegates would be “chosen by district and to vote per capita”—a rudimentary primary system, instead of a caucus. Through the *Republic*, Green issued a call for a free-trade convention to meet in Philadelphia on July 4, 1844. The purpose of the Fourth of July Convention, as Green dubbed it, was not only to make a thunderous public statement on behalf of free-trade principles and policies, but to nominate a Democratic candidate for the presidency. The repeal of the tariff was the primary criterion for one’s selection as the nominee. To make his free-trade convention a reality, Green actively pursued the support of leading Democrats—those seemingly opposed to the selection of Van Buren—and he even invited the Tylerites, supporters of President Tyler’s reelection, who were neither Whig nor Democrat, but undoubtedly recognized proponents of states’ rights principles. When Tyler’s friends failed to jump on the bandwagon, Green proposed to make the Fourth of July Convention a “convention of states rights democrats.” To Green’s consternation, Democrats decided to take their chances with the Baltimore venue.<sup>7</sup>

If Van Buren was clearly an unwise choice, then just whom should the Democrats choose as their standard-bearer in the 1844 presidential campaign? Green, like many other Democrats, had trouble settling on any one person. President Tyler was his first choice. But as Green intimated to a friend, Tyler, albeit a close friend, had made some political

6. Green to Cralle, February 8, December 3, 1843, Green Papers, LC; Green to Cass, January 13, 1844, Green to Henry Wikoff, January 13, 16, 1844, Green to Cobden, January 16, 1844, Green to H. Wheaton, January 19, 1844, Green to Houston, January 19, 1844, Green to Upshur, January 19, 1844, Green to MacGregor, January 29, 1844, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Green, “Militant Journalist,” 260; Green to Calhoun, January 6, 1844, *AHA Publications*, 199; Green to Cralle, January 20, 1844, *SHA Publications*, 420. Green also used the *Republic* to denounce Van Buren and the Baltimore Convention and to promote the nomination of a Democratic candidate friendly to the principles of free trade and states’ rights. Indeed, another purpose for establishing the paper, aside from promoting free trade, was to defend the positions maintained by the Democratic Party and to “counteract the intrigues and machinations of professing friends and open enemies at home” bent on undermining the Democracy. Consistent with Jacksonian principles, the *Republic* was Green’s medium “to make war on monopoly”—the monopoly held by the Albany Regency, the Essex Junto, and the Richmond Junto.

7. Green to Calhoun, January 6, 1844, *AHA Publications*, 199; Green to Cralle, January 20, 1844, *SHA Publications*, 420; Green to MacGregor, January 29, 1844, Green to [no name], February 24, 1844, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

decisions that doomed any chance of his reelection. Always the astute observer of American politics, he realized the futility of backing Tyler, so he proceeded to find another candidate.<sup>8</sup>

Calhoun was Green's second choice. "Should [Tyler] fail," Green again told Cass, "and the Democratic Party rallies on Mr. Calhoun, you and I know that the government will be safe in his hands." He warned Calhoun that if he did not step forward as an aspirant for the White House, then the Democrats would choose Van Buren as their nominee, and if Van Buren won the election, Benton would surely enter the cabinet and become a future contender for the presidency. "If we are to have Van Buren," Green boldly scolded Calhoun, "the responsibility will rest on you, and you owe it to yourself, to your friends, to your Country and the world to counteract as far as possible the evil consequences to be apprehended from his election." Calhoun, however, seemed reluctant to step forward and accept the mantle. He declined Green's advice to tour the country during the summer of 1843, stating his strong antipathy for campaigning on one's own behalf, and he revealed to Green on another occasion his relief that he would not be a candidate. Again, Green was forced to wander through the desert of potential nominees.<sup>9</sup>

Cass seemed a good choice, but only after Tyler and Calhoun were removed from the field. Although he supported several state Cass movements, Green felt the Michigianian might better serve the country as a cabinet official. At one point, he even suggested the selection of an unnamed Democrat, somebody who had not as yet captured the attention of the party. Ironically, that was the course that Democrats took. Green may have opposed the Baltimore Convention, but he avidly supported its nominee, James K. Polk. The Tennessean, known as "Little Hickory," was a fervent expansionist. Democrats then inserted as a keystone in their platform a demand for the "reoccupation of Oregon and the reannexation of Texas at the earliest practicable period." Texas annexation and westward migration were certainly the issues of the day, and so Green could not have been happier with the party plat-

8. Weston J. Birch to George R. Smith, November 16, 1841, General George R. Smith Papers, Missouri Historical Society; Green to McLean, August 26, 1842, McLean Papers, LC; Green to Cass, June 16, 1842, Green to Cralle, February 8, 1843, Green Papers, LC; Green to Upshur, December 29, 1842, in Tyler, *Letters and Times*, 2: 25–26. For a good survey of Tyler and the situation with the Whig party, see Chitwood, *Tyler*, chaps. 14–21, Robert J. Morgan, *A Whig Embattled: The Presidency under John Tyler*, and Robert Seager, *And Tyler Too: A Biography of John and Julia Gardiner Tyler*, 7–8.

9. Green to Calhoun, September 16, 1842, *JCCP*, 16: 459; Green to Cass, June 16, 1842, Green Papers, LC; Green to Calhoun, August 2, 1842, Calhoun to Green, June 7, 1843, February 10, 1844, *AHA*, 538, 568–69, 848–49.

form. Using the Democrats' passion for territorial expansion, President Tyler refused to await the outcome of the 1844 election. Despite the defeat of his Texas treaty earlier in April, the beleaguered president decided to step up his efforts to acquire the Lone Star Republic, and to realize this cherished goal, he sent Green on an official mission to Texas and Mexico in late summer of 1844.<sup>10</sup>

## II.

In September 1844, President Tyler appointed Green as U.S. consul to Texas. The position carried with it no salary, as consuls made income from the collection of fees. Arriving in Galveston several weeks later, Green received an enthusiastic welcome from the local population. A prominent Texan, Memucan Hunt, informed Calhoun that "no offer of any Government, or of any grade has ever been welcomed among us with as much cordiality & respect as the Genl was on his arrival." Hunt, reflecting the sentiment of many of his countrymen, expressed surprise that the Tyler administration had not appointed Green as U.S. minister to Texas. "I assure you the appointment could not be conferred on a gentleman who would be more welcome to the Texian nation in that capacity."<sup>11</sup>

Not everyone was happy to see Green, however. The current occupant of the U.S. consulate at Galveston, Stewart Newell, was quite miffed by Green's behavior. Green arrogantly declared himself the newly appointed consul, without providing any official documents proving such, and demanded that the books and records of the consulate be turned over to him immediately. Newell refused to do so until he had received official orders from the State Department, which were already en route to Texas. He then complained bitterly to Secretary of State Calhoun, stating that Green's course upon his arrival was "irregular from first to last and wanting in that courtesy toward me as an officer and gentleman." Upon his arrival in Texas, Green demanded that the *Woodbury*, the American revenue vessel assigned to Newell, take him at once to Vera Cruz. Forty-eight hours after he had arrived in Galveston, then, Green had departed for Mexico, leaving consulate affairs in the hands of an appointed vice consul.<sup>12</sup>

10. Green to Houston, January 19, 1844, Green Papers, LC; Green to Calhoun, November 10, 1842, *JCCP*, 16: 540–41.

11. Hunt to Calhoun, October 2, 1844, *JCCP*, 20: 21.

12. Calhoun to Tyler, February 6, 1845, *JCCP*, 21: 266; Kennedy to Aberdeen, October 30, 1844, in E. D. Adams, *British Diplomatic Correspondence Concerning the Republic of Texas*, 375; Calhoun to Newell, September 25, 1844, *JCCP*, 19: 854; Newell



Serving as consul in Texas was only one part of Green's overall mission. The Tyler administration had also commissioned Green as bearer of dispatches. Secretary of State Calhoun ordered him to deliver official instructions to Wilson Shannon, the new U.S. minister to Mexico—instructions protesting Mexico's war on Texas, urging payment of the indemnity owed the United States, and adjusting all boundary questions with Mexico on liberal terms. But there was more for Green to do in Mexico than just drop off official documents. He also received verbal instructions from the secretary of state "to aid in conducting the negotiation for the acquisition of Texas, New Mexico, and California." The Tyler administration, therefore, was relying on Green to take the pulse of the Mexican government and to gather intelligence regarding the possibility of buying coveted Mexican territory. The purpose for acquiring these northern provinces, Green recalled, was to advance American commerce in the Pacific. Even before he had signed Green's appointment as consul, Calhoun had requested from John Mason, secretary of the navy, that "some public vessel at Pensacola may be held in readiness to convey [Green] to Vera Cruz with the least possible delay." Mason eagerly ordered the U.S. steamer *Union* to take Green to Texas and then "without delay" on to Mexico. The *Union*, however, had been damaged in a storm en route to Galveston. Unable to proceed safely on to Mexico, the damaged vessel returned to Pensacola. One wonders if Green ever grasped the irony of that accident two decades after the fact—the injury to the *Union* on its mission to Mexico was indeed a pallid harbinger of what U.S.-Mexican affairs eventually wrought. Not to be deterred in the slightest, Green commandeered the U.S. revenue schooner *Woodbury* to complete his journey. There was also a personal reason for the mission to Mexico: Green would be able to spend time with his son Benjamin, who had been appointed by Tyler in May 1843 as secretary to the U.S. legation at Mexico.<sup>13</sup>

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to Calhoun, October 1, 30, 1844, *JCCP*, 20: 10–11, 175–76; Elisha A. Rhodes to Calhoun, October 29, 1844, *JCCP*, 20: 160–62. A copy of Green's commission can be found in the Green Papers, LC. Newell's chief complaint was Green's immediate appointment of a vice consul, which was a direct violation of consular instructions and done without even having received his exequatur from the Texan government.

13. "Statement of Col. Benjamin E. Green, Secretary of the Legation at Mexico in 1844," August 8, 1889, in Tyler, *Letters and Times*, 2: 174–77; *Facts and Suggestions*, 85; Calhoun to John Y. Mason, September 6, 1844, Mason to Calhoun, September 11, 1844, Calhoun to Tilgham Howard, September 13, 1844, Green to Calhoun, September 27, 1844, Newell to Calhoun, September 30, 1844, *JCCP*, 19: 714–15, 753, 773, 865, 884; Charles Raymond to Anson Jones, September 13, 1844, Newell to Anson Jones, October 1844, J. H. Cocke to Anson Jones, October 1, 1844, in Jones,

After his arrival in Mexico City in late September, Green immediately set about his appointed task. Following several weeks of carefully observing political conditions within Mexico, he confidently reported back to the Tyler administration. His initial assessment was a firm belief that Mexico was incapable of recapturing Texas. First, Santa Anna maintained a precarious hold on power. A significant portion of the Mexican congress, Green believed, was opposed to him, and this opposition, fueled by its discontent over the imposition of high taxes, grew daily. Second, behind the leadership of Mariano Paredes, the Mexican president encountered stiff opposition from the outlying provinces, mainly in the north, and even faced potential rebellion in the province of Zacatecas. Suppressing revolt in areas distant from the Mexican capital required the deployment of a large number of troops, horses, munitions, and supplies. With Mexican troops preoccupied elsewhere, Texas had no fear of a genuine invasion. They may encounter predatory harassment from Mexican forces, Green predicted, but nothing to the extent threatening the independence of the Republic. Finally, a concerted war against Texas, complicated by internal rebellion, was far too costly for Santa Anna. The Mexican treasury was empty, taxes remained dangerously high, and with the resources of the country already dried up, the Mexican leader would have to resort to forced loans and the seizure of church property—a recipe for revolution in a country already on the verge of erupting in civil discord. With all the internal dissension and strained resources, Green concluded, Santa Anna could not possibly invade Texas.<sup>14</sup>

But just in case the determined and capable Mexican general actually made the attempt to reconquer his former province, maybe the United States could offer another persuasive argument against undertaking such an offensive action. The only real military threat to Texas, Green surmised, was bombardment of its coastal towns by the Mexican navy. “Will it not be well,” he then asked Calhoun, “to have our fleet in readiness to forbid or to punish this?” Green even went so far as to inform Texan president Anson Jones that in the case of an attack by Mexican naval vessels, he would promptly dispatch the *Woodbury* to

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*Memoranda*, 382, 386, 387–88; Kennedy to Aberdeen, October 2, 30, 1844, in Adams, *British Diplomatic Correspondence*, 370–71, 375; Pletcher, *Diplomacy*, 166–67. On Ben Green’s confirmation as secretary to the U.S. legation in Mexico, see Upshur to Ben Green, July 10, 1843, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

14. Green to Calhoun, September 30, October 7, November 12, 29, 1844, *JCCP*, 19: 882–83, 20: 44–45, 231–34, 393–95; Green to Jones, September 30, 1844, in *Memoranda*, 385–86.

Pensacola, and “unless I am very much disappointed, our fleet, now there, will be off Galveston, prepared to forbid or punish any attempt to do so.” Green also sent a letter to the commanding officer of the naval force stationed at Pensacola, alerting him to the potential threat of a Mexican naval attack.<sup>15</sup>

Santa Anna could not retake Texas, but that did not mean that he would capitulate and allow Texas to drift into the Union. “That he does not wish for war with the United States may be,” Green admonished Calhoun, “but he wishes that our relations shall always be such as to furnish him with a pretence for keeping up an army, which he finds indispensable to keep himself in power.” Domestic dissension and political rivalry in Mexico precluded any concession to the United States. Santa Anna, moreover, had fostered such a deep prejudice in Mexico against the United States that, if he did allow the annexation of Texas or if he did cede Mexican territory, he would most certainly face internal revolt. Mexican opposition to U.S. territorial expansion had become a matter of national pride—damn the argument that ceding land to the United States would refill Mexican coffers. That left only one conclusion for Green. “I am convinced that it is *impossible* to obtain the consent of this government [Mexico] to the cession to the United States of Texas, California or any part of the public domain of Mexico whatever.” Tyler must have winced at learning of Green’s assessment.<sup>16</sup>

Annexation was the only option for acquiring Texas, Green concluded. Mexico would not fold, so the United States would have to deal directly with Texas. The annexation option *sans* the consent of Mexico was nonetheless an explosive alternative. Green believed that Santa

15. Green to Calhoun, September 30, 1844, *JCCP*, 19: 882–83; Green to Jones, September 30, 1844, in *Memoranda*, 385–86; Upshur to Murphy, January 16, 1844, Murphy to Jones, February 14, 1844, Murphy to Upshur, February 15, 1844, in Manning, *Diplomatic Correspondence*, 12: 61, 327–29, 329. Although he fully recognized that he was not authorized to speak for the U.S. government, Green’s assurance of U.S. military aid was not the first indication of such support made by an American to the Texan government. In February 1844, Jones, then Texan secretary of state, informed the U.S. secretary of state, Upshur, that if Mexico learned of annexation negotiations with the United States, that nation would immediately commence hostilities against Texas. In such an event, then, Texas would need a guarantee of U.S. military protection. U.S. minister to Texas, William S. Murphy, quickly responded that the United States would provide the necessary forces to protect Texas during annexation negotiations. He did so, however, without authorization, for Upshur had stated to Murphy earlier that the president possessed “no means” of providing military protection to Texas. As with Green’s case, the Tyler administration made no promise of military aid to Texas.

16. Green to Calhoun, October 28, November 12, 29, 1844, *JCCP*, 20: 132–36, 232–33, 392–95.

Anna could not sustain himself in power in a war with the United States, but he would pursue “angry negotiations” indefinitely for purposes of maintaining a strong army. In short, there would be no peace with Mexico as long as the United States coveted Texas or any other part of Mexican territory. “You cannot have peace with Mexico without a war,” Green coldly told Calhoun. Tyler must have winced at that notion as well.<sup>17</sup>

So what now? What advice could Green provide the Tyler administration? War, Green coolly replied. After all, he believed they deserved it. In April 1844, Calhoun directed Green’s son, acting as interim chargé d’affaires to Mexico, to settle all outstanding questions between the United States and Mexico. One of the pressing issues in question was the payment of claims due to the United States. A convention between the two countries had been agreed upon in January 1843, in which Mexico was to pay the United States in installments, but the Mexican government never lived up to their end of the bargain. Ben Green encountered great difficulty in his negotiations, especially in trying to persuade Mexico to ratify the claims treaty with the United States, and Mexican authorities were anything but cordial in their dealings with Green.

Matters only worsened upon the arrival of Wilson Shannon, the newly appointed U.S. minister to Mexico. So offensive and insulting was the Mexican foreign minister’s conduct toward Shannon that the American minister abruptly discontinued all official correspondence with the Mexican government. Shannon came close to asking for his passport—an action both Greens endorsed. Ben Green, reiterating his father’s opinion, advised Calhoun that a conciliatory posture with Mexico would fail. The United States had nothing to gain from Mexico “unless we should end by getting California and thereby secure a harborage for our shipping on the Pacific and one of the finest countries on the globe.” Like father, like son. The United States, therefore, must not be content with annexation alone, the elder Green informed Calhoun. It must also demand immediate payment of all U.S. claims against Mexico. “This will not be done and a war must be the consequence,” Green avowed. Mexico, he contended, simply had no respect for its northern neighbor, and thus “the time has come when we have no alternative but to punish Mexico and other nations into a proper respect for national character.” Apparently, territorial questions should be a matter of national pride as well as a conduit for commercial expansion. But quite possibly,

17. Green to Calhoun, November 29, 1844, *JCCP*, 20: 233.

as a result of the Mexican insults heaped upon his son, Green may have also harbored a personal vendetta against Mexico. He would have to wait another year, however, before he could avenge both. Believing that there was nothing more he could do in Mexico in late 1844, Green departed the country, returning to Galveston to resume his duties as consul. But his desire to see Texas become part of the American Union was far from over, and he would make that a personal endeavor.<sup>18</sup>

### III.

The “other nations” Green mentioned—the ones the United States must force into “a proper respect for national character”—was none other than America’s ritual adversary, Great Britain. Green had not only been blocked by Santa Anna’s shadow while in Mexico, but he had also stumbled upon the British bogeyman there as well. Here again, he charged, England was making a concerted attempt to halt America’s natural territorial aspirations and stifle its growing commercial power. He had made that argument before, that England was everywhere thwarting American progress—in Europe, along the African coast, in the Pacific, in Oregon, in Texas, Cuba, and Brazil—and now, they had infected Mexico. Anglophobia and annexation had indeed become synonymous, and war against Mexico had acquired new immediacy.

England desired a monopoly over the Mexican trade, Green informed the Tyler administration, and to secure this end, they must drive Americans out of the Mexican market. The best procedure for eliminating American competition was to foment hostilities between Mexico and the United States, and he believed that British officials had already embarked on measures undermining U.S.-Mexican relations. The British legation in Mexico City, Green told Calhoun, was spreading anti-American sentiment throughout the Mexican government, suggesting that President Tyler had little or no support within the United States and that the neighbor to the north was far too divided internally to go to war against Mexico. Mexico, then, had nothing to fear. Green also relayed to Tyler a juicy bit of information he had gleaned from a former British consul still residing in Mexico. The British government, the story goes, had authorized Packenham to guarantee a \$12 million

18. Green to Calhoun, November 29, 1844, *JCCP*, 20: 234; George L. Rives, *The United States and Mexico, 1821–1848*, 2: 116, 119, 141; Kennedy to Aberdeen, November 12, 1844, in Adams, *British Diplomatic Correspondence*, 377; Pletcher, *Diplomacy*, 176.

loan to Mexico in order to boost its economy and trade with England. Such a loan, moreover, would sustain the economic interests supporting Santa Anna, who had the open and avowed support of the British government. First a loan to Texas, and now a loan to Mexico—could British designs and policy be any more transparent? Green ranted.<sup>19</sup>

Losing Mexican markets and trade, however, was of no consequence to Green, and it should not make any difference to U.S. trade as well. He declared the Mexican trade “of little value” anyway, and that it was already “lost to us.” England had already dug its grubby little fingers into the Mexican economy. “We have no means of regaining the trade of Mexico but by chastising them into decent behavior,” Green wrote Calhoun, “and the advantage of a war with Mexico will be that we can indemnify ourselves while by chastising Mexico, we will show other nations what we can do and command their respect also.” Again, that “other nations” to which Green referred was none other than Great Britain. Green preferred peace, but he also saw no means of avoiding a conflict with Mexico. For that matter, Mexico could be chastised rather easily and effortlessly by the United States, Green concluded. Simply seize Vera Cruz and the Mexican fort there and Mexico—and England—would be neutralized in that quarter of North America. Such an action would require only a small force, but it must also be done promptly to be successful.<sup>20</sup>

The loss of the Mexican market proved a minor irritant to Green. But losing California and New Mexico was anathema, a direct and dire threat to U.S. interests. A war to purge England from Mexican markets would never be taken as imperatively as a war to prevent England from acquiring California or New Mexico. Green informed the Tyler administration that British acquisition of Mexican territory coveted by the United States was not only very real, it was highly probable. Because Santa Anna needed British support to maintain his hold on power, the Mexican president would thereby modify Mexican policy to cater to English interests and influence. Green believed there was much more to the British guarantee of a loan to Mexico. A loan to prime the Mexican economy for British commercial interests simply masked British negotiations for the purchase of California “under a belief that war between Mexico & the United States is probable, and that having possession of California [England] may use that possession as a means of strengthening herself in the possession of Oregon.” Green also feared

19. Green to Calhoun, October 9, November 12, 29, 1844, *JCCP*, 20: 50–51, 234, 393.

20. Green to Calhoun, November 12, 29, 1844, *JCCP*, 20: 234, 395.

that Mexican bondholders in England could help the British government acquire California. In the case that the bonds could not be paid, British bondholders would demand some form of collateral, and Mexican territory along the Pacific Coast was the most obvious option. Besides, with Santa Anna in British pockets, the Mexican president would much rather see his northern provinces in the possession of England than in the hands of the United States. England, then, not Mexico, was the real threat to the United States. Green commenced a concerted effort, both publicly and behind the scenes, to thwart British designs to keep California and Texas from their rightful place—in the American Union.<sup>21</sup>

“I see by the papers that Gen. Green is singing another verse of the old tune of British influence,” Charles Elliott wrote to Anson Jones. But Green had every reason to sing away, and loudly. The British government was doing all within its power to keep Mexican territory, current or former, away from the United States. Following Tyler’s annual message to Congress in December 1843, Aberdeen stepped up efforts to prevent Texas annexation. Throughout 1844 the British government expended considerable energy to keep the Lone Star Republic from becoming a star on the U.S. flag. First, they goaded France into a joint protest against annexation, but withheld the protest in the end. Second, the British undertook intense diplomatic activity to convince Mexico to recognize Texan independence. The British government also authorized Elliott to pursue Texan support for their plan to acquire Mexican recognition. Such machinations did not go unnoticed to Green, who also stepped up his activity to convince Texas *not* to support Elliott’s schemes.<sup>22</sup>

After Elliott had arrived in the Texan capital of Washington, Green immediately notified the Tyler administration. “[Elliott] speaks in the most open manner against annexation, and promises that if Texas will give a pledge against annexation, England will obtain an acknowledgment by Mexico of the Independence of Texas.” But Green assuredly notified Calhoun that “I will have the game blocked upon him.” He felt that Elliott would have the uphill battle, for the people and the Texan congress were overwhelmingly in favor of annexation to the United States. Because of such enormous support, Green advised the Tyler ad-

21. Green to Calhoun, October 9, 28, November 29, 1844, *JCCP*, 20: 50–51, 132–36, 394; Green to Cralle, October 28, 1844, *SHA Publications*, 422.

22. Elliott to Jones, January 14, 1845, in Jones, *Memoranda*, 413; Adams, *British Interests*, 185; Blake, *Elliott*, 86, 90, 93, 95, 103.

ministration *not* to pursue immediate annexation, that a year's delay would not undermine the effort to acquire Texas. In fact, waiting only helped U.S. efforts in the end. "To pressure the question now and to fail would [do] injury," Green advised Calhoun. "If the press and our public men discuss the question properly & the Government keeps the question open, no injury will, in my opinion result from the delay until the *next* session of Congress." Texas, he concluded, was prepared to wait in hopes of a more favorable American attitude toward annexation, so the Republic would do nothing that would prevent annexation in the meantime. Green, like Tyler, interpreted the victory of Polk and the expansionist Democratic platform as a public mandate to acquire Texas. The administration should, therefore, simply wait until the newly elected proannexationist Congress convened. Sure, Green would love to get Texas immediately, but the only way to do that would be through "a joint resolution or act, authorizing the admission of Texas as a new state," and that, he believed, "cannot be consummated before the *next* session."<sup>23</sup>

#### IV.

In December 1844, and continuing through the consummation of annexation in March 1845, Green turned his attention away from Mexican

23. Green to Andrew Jackson Donelson, December 20, 1844, Donelson Papers, TSLA; Green to Calhoun, December 8, 13, 14, 20, 29, 1844, March 26, 1845, *JCCP*, 20: 506–7, 541, 548, 600, 661, 21: 446. Another possible reason for Green's suggestion of postponing annexation was his personal rivalry with Benton. In December 1844, Benton introduced in the U.S. Senate a bill for the annexation of Texas. The bill contained numerous provisions, including a limitation on the territorial size of Texas as a state in the Union. This part of the bill concerned Green the most, for he was sure that Texas would never agree to annexation if Benton's bill passed. He was quite apprehensive that the Senate would accept Benton's measures, but he relied on the House to reject them. "The people of Texas will never consent to annexation on Mr. Benton's terms," Green informed the Tyler administration, "unless they can be induced to believe that the next Congress will favor annexation on the terms I have indicated." Hence, the United States should await the convening of the next Congress. On Benton's resolution, see Sarah Elizabeth Lewis, "Digest of Congressional Action on the Annexation of Texas, December, 1844, to March, 1845," 251–67. Green also believed that Benton was adversely influencing president-elect Polk to ostracize Calhoun from the new administration, and he advised Polk not to conciliate Benton, for it would alienate the South, undermine Calhoun's negotiations for Texas and Oregon, contradict all the reasons why he was elected in the first place, subject him to charges of using his power "to gratify personal ends of malevolent men," and damage his reputation. Green to Polk, January 20, 1845, in Tyler, *Letters and Times*, 3: 157; Green to Polk, January 20, 1845, *JCCP*, 21: 159–60.



politics, focused less on the British menace, and even ignored the American political scene. He concentrated instead on affairs in Texas itself. Still residing and working in the Lone Star Republic, Green never abandoned his objective to see Texas become part of the United States. In fact, he embarked on several projects and political campaigns within the Republic geared toward furthering the cause of annexation and even the acquisition of California and New Mexico.

Green had set his sights on Texas as early as 1841, when he requested a diplomatic post to the Republic from President-elect Harrison. Even though he went to England instead, Texas was still on his mind. "I have long wished to be with you in Texas that I might share your fortunes," Green intimated to Edward Burleson, vice president of Texas. "I would have been among the first settlers in your Republic." During his two missions to England in 1842 and 1843, while he pursued a commercial reciprocity treaty with England, Green still found time to achieve his dream of populating Texas with settlers favorable to annexation. In January 1841, the Texan congress passed "An Act to Incorporate the Texas Trading, Mining, and Emigrating Company," with Green serving as president of the board of directors and holding one-quarter of the interest in the company. With two British partners, Green intended to raise money in London and in the United States for the purpose of sending emigrants to Texas, providing each family 640 acres of land and 320 acres to each single man. "The passion of Europe now is to emigrate to America," he told a friend while in England, and Green refused to miss out on a colonization venture. But the act lay dormant until he had arrived in Texas, and then it was replaced by other land ventures.<sup>24</sup>

In January 1844, Green requested from the Texan congress an act incorporating an outfit designed to encourage emigration to Texas and to facilitate land sales, with the intention of raising the value of Texas lands. Entitled the "Texas Land Company," Green promised prominent Texan statesmen that the venture would bring to the Republic a "large

24. Green to William Christian, January 3, 1842, Green Papers, LC; Green to Burleson, January 19, 1844, Green to [unknown], September 13, 1844, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Elliot to Aberdeen, February 17, 1845, in Adams, *British Diplomatic Correspondence*, 448; Elgin Williams, *The Animating Pursuits of Speculation: Land Traffic in the Annexation of Texas*, 177. Green also asked his son Benjamin, while in Mexico as secretary to the U.S. legation, to devote himself to the "acquisition of all the information you can in relation to California, Santa Fe, & Texas," including land titles, mineral lands, land valuation, and so on, and asked if it was possible "to obtain a large grant or grants of land in California from the present government." Duff Green to Benjamin Green, August 29, 1843, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

emigration and large amount of capital” in which to stimulate trade. The company would also be empowered to “monopolize the exclusive and perpetual use” of the country’s navigable streams. Again, British capital would fund the project. Green spent the next few months asking Texan legislators for help in steering the bill through congress. He had planned to come to Texas as soon as possible, but his editorial responsibilities and his free-trade campaign detained him back east.<sup>25</sup>

Green also sought Texan support for another, far more controversial land scheme. He avidly pushed Texan legislators to charter the “Del Norte Company,” which had as its sole purpose “the conquest and occupancy in behalf of Texas, of the Californias, and the Northern Provinces of Mexico by means of an army aided by some sixty thousand Indian warriors, to be introduced from the United States upon [Texas’s] western frontier.” Maybe, just maybe, if Mexico refused to sell its coveted territory, and maybe, just maybe, if the United States refused to take them, then maybe, just maybe, Texas itself could be easily induced to acquire them by force. The Del Norte Company simply implied war against Mexico. But this was not a war by the United States, it was a war by the Republic of Texas—and it all served a single end, the annexation of Texas. In short, when the United States finally came around to annexing Texas, the latter would bring California and New Mexico with it. The United States may not have to go to war against Mexico after all. Deliberation and patience may be the order of the day for the United States, but Green proposed an entirely opposite course for Texas itself.<sup>26</sup>

In December 1844, Green embarked on a campaign urging Texas to commence a military offensive against Mexico. In an extensive conversation with the German prince of Solms, who spearheaded German colonization in Texas, Green elaborated more fully upon the logic of his campaign. Mexico was pledged to invade Texas, he began, and meant to “make it a desert, and to exterminate the inhabitants, men, women, and children; not even sparing the child in the mother’s womb!” Santa Anna would invade via the Rio Grande, using steamboats, and the second part of the Mexican army would land at Galveston and proceed to the Texas interior by way of Houston. Texas, therefore, must meet the crisis head on, and “ought at once, to take up the game, and carry the

25. Green to H. L. McKinney, Green to Thomas Jefferson Green, Green to Houston, January 19, 1844, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

26. Ebenezer Allen to Andrew Jackson Donelson, January 4, 1845, *JCCP*, 21: 73; Elliott to Aberdeen, December 29, 1844, in Adams, *British Diplomatic Correspondence*, 402–3; Williams, *Animating Pursuits*, 166–67.

war—the sooner the better—into the enemies' Country." Green felt it was his duty to urge Texans to take the offensive, promising them every form of aid, from money to U.S. troops. An invasion of Mexico would undoubtedly further the cause of annexation, for a war against Mexico would necessarily involve the United States. Maybe, just maybe, then, the combined forces of Texas and the United States—bolstered with thousands of Indian allies—would also take California and New Mexico in the process. What a grand scheme indeed! And who in Texas could not grasp the logic of it? he wondered.<sup>27</sup>

Green's proposal gained avid adherents in the Texan congress and among the general population. William Kennedy, British consul in Galveston, informed Aberdeen that, upon his return to Galveston, Green printed his scheme in several Texan newspapers and journals, and to consummate his plan, he proceeded on to the Texan capital to obtain the consent of the Texan government. "I have learned, from competent sources, that it will not be owing to General Green's endeavors as a peace-maker if events do not justify the alleged apprehensions of Mexico," Kennedy wrote Aberdeen. "He has urged more than one Member of the Texan Congress, during his sojourn at Galveston, to declare for the invasion of Mexico—with the view that further territorial aggrandizement,—(even it is said, Southward and Westward of the Rio Grande),—should accompany the Annexation of Texas to the Confederacy of the North.—Before the 'espousals' are perfected, it is desired that the bride should bring a still more ample dowry." Many believed, along with Kennedy, that the general would succeed in persuading Texas to invade Mexico. He had many disciples to his plan in the Texan congress, but could he get the backing of the Texan executive himself?<sup>28</sup>

Since a vast majority of Texans preferred joining the American Union, Green believed that the only obstacle in Texas to annexation was Sam Houston and Anson Jones. Houston had waffled in the past regarding his support for annexation. He certainly leaned in favor, but an independent Texas, albeit a *strong* independent Texas, had great appeal to him as well. The United States failed to help Houston's cause either, for the government consistently declined to negotiate for annexation, and when it finally accepted, the U.S. Senate rejected the treaty.

27. Prince of Solms (Braunfels) to Jones, December 3, 1844, in Jones, *Memoranda*, 407; Prince of Solms (Braunfels) to Kennedy, December 3, 1844, Elliot to Aberdeen, December 10, 1844, in Adams, *British Diplomatic Correspondence*, 386–89, 392.

28. Kennedy to Aberdeen, December 5, 1844, in Adams, *British Diplomatic Correspondence*, 380–81.

Little wonder, then, that Houston courted England; maybe that nation could give him what his neighbor to the east could not. Houston, it was clear, would not tolerate another rejection from the United States—another pertinent reason for Green counseling on behalf of deliberation and patience. But many in Texas and in the United States, Green among them, firmly believed that Houston would come out in favor of annexation, and he did. As for Jones, however, it was no secret that he preferred independence to annexation. Green, then, concentrated most of his efforts on influencing Jones.<sup>29</sup>

During the 1844 Texan presidential campaign, Green had published a number of articles in Texan newspapers supporting the candidacy of General Edward Burleson—a staunch advocate of annexation. Jones won the election, but he never let Green’s opposition ruin their relationship. In fact, Jones was “truly happy” to learn that Green was coming to Galveston, and the new Texan president anxiously hoped that the American would find time to visit him at Washington on the Brazos immediately upon his return from Vera Cruz. Green found the time to meet with Jones. The conversation, however, quickly turned sour, eventually resulting in a bitter break between the two men. Green, as expected, initiated the rupture.<sup>30</sup>

Green solicited Jones’s aid in furthering his land ventures, namely the Del Norte Company, and hoped the new president would influence the Texan legislature to sanction his schemes. In return for his support, Jones would be offered a generous portion of the corporate stock of the two companies. The Texan president, however, absolutely refused to countenance or aid any part of Green’s private ventures. Green angrily threatened Jones. If the president refused to support his proposals, then Green would “call a convention of the people and revolutionize the country,” ultimately seeking to “overthrow the existing government.” He boasted of the ease with which he could execute his coup d’état, asserting that public excitement in Texas for annexation to the United States “presented an inviting field for revolutionary operations” against the Jones administration and the Texan government overall.<sup>31</sup>

29. Green to Calhoun, December 8, 1844, *JCCP*, 20: 506.

30. Kennedy to Aberdeen, October 2, 1844, in Adams, *British Diplomatic Correspondence*, 371; Jones to Green, November 2, 1844, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Hietala, *Manifest Design*, 45–46; Merk, *Monroe Doctrine*, 108–11; Herbert Gambrell, *Anson Jones: The Last President of Texas*, 381.

31. Allen to Donelson, January 4, 1845, Donelson to Calhoun, January 9, 1845, *JCCP*, 21: 74.

Needless to say, Jones was outright shocked by Green's audacity. In December 1844, Jones issued a proclamation revoking Green's exequatur. The "interest, honor and safety of the Republic," the Texan executive declared, demanded the revocation of Green's consular privileges. Other Texan officials argued that Jones had not gone far enough. Prominent Texan statesmen issued a public letter to the Texan president demanding that the secretary of state of Texas "be instructed forthwith to issue to the aforesaid Gen. Duff Green a passport out of the limits of the Republic." Jones turned down the request. The revocation of Green's exequatur, he intimated to Elliott, was enough, stating that "no act of his public life had been so difficult for him, or occasioned him so much pain." Such was the ability of Green to turn friends into enemies at short notice.<sup>32</sup>

Green, true to form, only made matters worse. Two days after having his exequatur revoked, he published an article in the *Houston Telegraph* proclaiming not only that Jones was acting under the influence of the British minister in Texas, but that the two men were also working in concert to defeat annexation to the United States. Green also claimed that Jones had sent the Texan secretary of state to visit Sam Houston, in the hopes of inducing the former Texan president to join the current one in defeating annexation. Jones outright denied the imputation.<sup>33</sup>

Green certainly would have been issued his walking papers at this juncture if not for the intervention of Andrew Jackson Donelson, the newly appointed U.S. chargé to Texas and nephew of Andrew Jackson. Upon hearing of the rupture between Green and Jones, Donelson met with the Texan president in the hopes of reducing tensions and, if needed, salvaging the annexation plans of the U.S. government. The American chargé assured the Texan government that the objectionable conduct imputed to Green "ceases to have any higher importance than what belongs to his individual, private character" and that he in no

32. Proclamation, By the President of the Republic of Texas, December 31, 1844, *JCCP*, 21: 75; Jones, *Memoranda*, 412–13; Newell to Calhoun, January 10, 1845, *JCCP*, 21: 88–89; Elliott to Aberdeen, January 2, 1845, in Adams, *British Diplomatic Correspondence*, 407, 408. The individuals listed on the proclamation include Ebenezer Allen (Texan secretary of state), M. C. Hamilton (Texan secretary of war and marine), James B. Shaw (Texan secretary of the treasury), Charles Mason (Texan auditor), Moses Johnson (Texan treasurer), Daniel J. Tober (Texan postmaster general), and Thomas Western (Texan superintendent of Indian affairs).

33. Green to Donelson, January 20, 1845, *JCCP*, 21: 200; Green to *Houston Telegraph*, January 2, 1845, in Hietala, *Manifest Design*, 44–45; Mayfield to Calhoun, February 19, 1845, *JCCP*, 21: 326; Elliot to Aberdeen, January 15, 1845, in Adams, *British Diplomatic Correspondence*, 408; Jones, *Memoranda*, 102.

way represented the views of the U.S. government. In fact, Donelson pointed to Green's recent request not to have his name placed before the U.S. Senate for confirmation as consul to Galveston and stated that Green had notified the Tyler administration of his intention of becoming a Texas citizen. Green indeed took the oath of Texas citizenship in January 1845, with the objective of moving permanently to Corpus Christi.<sup>34</sup>

In private, however, Donelson defended Green. He considered Green's recent behavior "although out of his sphere, and not defensible as a consul, as not obnoxious to the severe imputations cast upon him." He was "full of zeal in the cause of annexation," the American chargé opined to Calhoun, "and mistaking the sense in which the members of Congress heard his project for the defense of the Western frontier and the invasion of Mexico, approached [Jones] too familiarly, but without a doubt of his disposition, if not to concur in his views, at least to consider them in a spirit of kindness." Some prominent Texans added to Donelson's favorable assessment of Green. A friend of Thomas Jefferson Green was sorry to hear that his friend's exequatur had been revoked, "because he's an estimable man and it must be mortifying to receive such a cut from such a quarter." Former Texan secretary of state James Mayfield believed that Green's statements in the press, regarding British efforts to defeat annexation, were widely accepted throughout Texas. Unaware that Green had become a citizen of Texas, Mayfield told Calhoun that as a private citizen of Texas, Green could have sustained all his charges, and do so "without subjecting himself & his friends to the Charge of intermeddling in the policy of our domestic affairs."<sup>35</sup>

Green eventually extricated himself from the mess he had started. In a letter to Donelson, he apologized for any misunderstanding on his part. He had no intention of offending or disrespecting the Texan president, nor had he deliberately resorted to any improper means in seeking Jones's sanction for his ventures. As for the letter to the *Telegraph*,

34. Donelson to Calhoun, January 9, 25, 27, 1845, *JCCP*, 21: 72, 76, 199, 212; Green to Calhoun, January 21, 1845, *JCCP*, 21: 168.

35. Donelson to Calhoun, January 27, 1845, *JCCP*, 21: 212; T. Pillsbury to Thomas Jefferson Green, January 7, 1845, Thomas Jefferson Green Papers, UNC; Mayfield to Calhoun, February 19, 1845, *JCCP*, 21: 326; Peel to Aberdeen, February 23, 1845, in Merk, *Monroe Doctrine*, 110. The British government believed that Green might have actually provided the United States another cause for acquiring Texas. Green's potential expulsion from Texas, Peel informed Aberdeen, might be a "pretext with the U.S. for direct hostility against Texas—and annexation by that means instead of amicable agreement."

charging Jones of conspiring with the British to defeat annexation, Green had tried to stop the letter from being printed and regretted its publication after the fact. Donelson immediately sent Green's letter to the Texan secretary of state, hoping that amicable relations would be restored between the two men. Jones accepted Green's apology and quickly forgave him for his transgressions. Donelson then informed Calhoun that "this unpleasant affair has passed away, producing no injury to the friendly relations existing between the two countries, and leaving no sting behind on the private character of the General." The U.S. Congress thought otherwise.<sup>36</sup>

Congressional Whigs felt that an inquiry into Green's actions—this time in Texas, not in England—was again appropriate. In February 1845, New Jersey senator William L. Drayton, a staunch opponent of annexation, introduced a resolution in the Senate requesting information from President Tyler as to the official status of Green's role in Texas. Secretary of State Calhoun immediately replied that Green was only appointed consul to Galveston, his salary coming from fees and not from the U.S. treasury, and that he never held any official diplomatic post in Texas. As for Green's mission to Mexico, Congress ignored this episode. But if Congress ever inquired into Green's role in Mexico, President Tyler was prepared to answer. In January 1846, Tyler wrote to Green, complimenting him on his service there: "You were not left in Mexico merely to fold your arms and to play off in silence the dignity of your station, but were speedily engaged in a diplomatic correspondence of an interesting character, in conducting which you acquitted yourself in a manner highly creditable to yourself and satisfaction to the Executive."<sup>37</sup>

Green's endeavors in Texas ended shortly after the Jones affair. Personal business matters again required his attention back in the United States. Besides, the campaign to annex Texas had ended. The Republic

36. Green to Donelson, January 20, 1845, Donelson to Allen, January 20, 1845, Allen to Donelson, January 21, 1845, Donelson to Calhoun, January 25, 1845, *JCCP*, 21: 198–202.

37. *Congressional Globe*, 28 Cong., 2 sess., 237; *Senate Doc.*, 28 Cong., 2 sess., (ser. 451), no. 83, 1. In April 1845, Green presented to the Polk administration "his account as Bearer of Despatches to Mexico and Texas." Secretary of State Buchanan informed the former secretary of state, Calhoun, that there was nothing on file in the State Department showing the understanding between Green and Calhoun as to any compensation for his services in Mexico. Buchanan asked Calhoun to review Green's voucher, as to its correctness, so that the account could be settled. There is no evidence that Calhoun ever replied. Buchanan to Calhoun, April 1845, *JCCP*, 21: 518–19; Tyler to Green, January 6, 1845, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

had finally entered the Union. On March 3, 1845—his last day in office—President John Tyler approved a joint resolution of the House and Senate admitting Texas into the United States. Ironically, a joint resolution was the only way Green believed the Tyler administration could acquire Texas. The following year, the Lone Star became the thirty-first star in the blue canton of the United States flag—and the United States went to war against Mexico, taking as spoils California and New Mexico. Green was right, then, the only way to acquire Texas and Mexican territory along the Pacific was through war. He also believed the war would strengthen national character and inspire other nations to show a proper respect for the United States. He was essentially correct here again—England chose to negotiate rather than war over the settlement of the Oregon question.



## CHAPTER 24



### Little Hickory's Wars

#### I.

**T**he 1844 Democratic Party platform not only called for the immediate “reannexation” of Texas, it also demanded the “reoccupation” of Oregon. Using the 1844 Democratic Party electoral triumph as a mandate for expansion, President Tyler had “reannexed” Texas in March 1845. That left only Oregon to “reoccupy.” Four powers—Russia, Spain, England, and the United States—claimed this land, generally recognized as the territory south of 54°40' and north of 42°, with the Rocky Mountains as the eastern boundary and the Pacific Ocean as the western. Russia relinquished its claim in a treaty with the United States in 1824, and Spain surrendered its right to the United States in the 1819 Transcontinental Treaty. But the two remaining contenders, England and the United States, had trouble deciding how to divide the country between them. The perennial rivals found some compromise in 1818 by essentially avoiding the touchy question altogether. It was decided that any lands, including rivers and harbors, claimed by the two nations west of the Rocky Mountains should be free and open to both peoples, without any prejudice against the claims of either. England and the United States tried again to find a compromise boundary, but they failed in 1824 and in 1826. In the Convention of 1827, the two countries extended the 1818 agreement of open use, but added a stipulation that the “joint occupation” could be terminated by either nation after advance notice of one year. The Oregon question was not raised again until the Webster-Ashburton

negotiations of 1842, but, again, both sides decided to table the issue rather than resolve it.<sup>1</sup>

The debate over the disputed territory continued, nonetheless, following the ratification of the Webster-Ashburton Treaty. President Tyler desired to settle the Oregon boundary as much as he desired to annex Texas and acquire California from Mexico. The U.S. government had consistently offered the 49th parallel as the line dividing British Oregon and American Oregon, but England as consistently declined. The British government would accept nothing less than the land north of the Columbia River, north to 54°40'. So the real dispute was over a small chunk of land that today comprises the western two-thirds of the state of Washington. In an effort to gain British support for U.S. acquisition of California, Tyler tried to offer England a considerable slice of the land north of the Columbia, but congressional opposition nixed that plan. There the issue stood when Green arrived in England in 1843.

The Oregon question figured directly into Green's free-trade efforts while in London, and references to Oregon filled his correspondence almost as much as the Texas question. In the same breath that he advised the president to demand from the British government a disavowal of all interference in Texas, Green also pushed Tyler to adjust the boundary of the Oregon Territory. "I would not think of surrendering anything south of Lat. 49," he flatly told the president, and if the administration pressed the American claim to 54°40', he felt that England would be glad to compromise on the 49th parallel. Since the British government was preoccupied with affairs elsewhere on the globe, it was a propitious time to settle the question once and for all. To accept anything less than the 49th parallel would be a stain on national honor, but, more detrimental to national interests, it would give England more harborage on the Pacific Coast.<sup>2</sup>

More access to natural harbors along the Pacific Coast, Green consistently argued, augmented England's objective of destroying American commercial power and acquiring a monopoly on global trade and resources. Oregon, like Texas, was simply another avenue for England's quest for world mastery. He believed that British occupation and control of Oregon presented a greater threat to U.S. commercial power

1. For an extensive history of the Oregon issue in Anglo-American affairs, see Frederick Merk, *The Oregon Question: Essays in Anglo-American Diplomacy and Politics*.

2. Green to Tyler, August 29, 1843, Green to Upshur, November 17, 1843, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

than British influence in Texas, for it would give America's chief rival an advantage in the Pacific trade, and considering that the United States did not have possession of California, that translated into a virtual British monopoly on the West Coast. Green surmised that England had two options regarding Oregon. It could either resolve the dispute peacefully by accepting a compromise along the 49th parallel, or it could go to war with America in the attempt to occupy the entire territory. Adopting free-trade policies were again the only means for an amicable resolution of the Oregon boundary. "Who can believe that if England had a free trade with us," he stated in the *Boston Post*, "she would think of a war with us for the possession of Oregon?" Although he believed that England intended to keep open the Oregon question as another pretense for going to war with the United States, Green also felt that the free-trade forces in England possessed enough sway to persuade the British government to compromise with the United States and adopt an acceptable boundary.<sup>3</sup>

If England chose war against the United States for control of Oregon, it would, as in the case of a war to abolish slavery in the Americas, lose. A war for Oregon would unite all sections of the Union. "I have explained that if we are to have war with England, it will be for the possession of Oregon, and that that question affects more particularly the interests of the north-eastern and north-western states," Green wrote to the *Boston Post*. The South, in addition, would interpret British aggression regarding Oregon as a single part of England's conspiracy to undermine slavery in the United States and to acquire a monopoly on the world's raw materials. Hence, in case of war, "all sections of the country will be united, and it will be conducted with a spirit and energy hitherto unexampled."<sup>4</sup>

Green warned his friends in England that unless the British government availed itself of the opportunity to adjust the Oregon boundary question, the United States would doubtless pass a resolution giving England notice that it intended to abrogate the convention of 1827. Congressional support for giving England notice had already gained considerable momentum by the end of 1843. American migration to Oregon had increased substantially after 1841, essentially giving the United States more claim than England to the disputed land. The year

3. Green to *Boston Post*, December 9, 14, 15, 1843; Green to Calhoun, May 2, 1845, *JCCP*, 21: 530.

4. Green to *Boston Post*, December 14, 15, 1843; Green to Tyler, August 29, 1843, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Green to MacGregor, January 26, 1846, Green Papers, LC.

1843, for example, saw a record number of Americans migrating to the Willamette Valley, lying within the most disputed area of Oregon. But not only would the U.S. government give notice, Green predicted, it would also claim all of Oregon to 54°40'. Many western Democrats, such as Benton and Cass, pushed America's claim to the Russian boundary, even at the point of the sword if necessary. Green brought this to the attention of his English friends as well, and he urged them to convince the British government of the importance of sending an official to the United States to pursue a fair and amicable permanent boundary adjustment. He also predicted that without an immediate and satisfactory resolution of the Oregon dispute, that question would most likely control the next presidential election. The "reoccupation" of Oregon indeed became a major issue in the 1844 presidential campaign, and the presidential candidate supporting this platform proved victorious. Green quickly warmed to the idea of claiming all of Oregon, but he rejected the option of giving England notice. Another idea had captured his attention.<sup>5</sup>

After assuming the post of secretary of state, Calhoun reversed the traditional course of American willingness to compromise on the Oregon boundary. Instead, he offered a plan that would provide the United States with greater bargaining power and claim to more territory. Dubbed the policy of "masterly inactivity," Calhoun recognized that massive American migration to Oregon favored the United States, and, therefore, the settlement of the boundary should wait until more Americans had arrived and claimed even more territory. But the policy of "masterly inactivity" precluded giving England notice, and Green heartily agreed. "If we give notice England will take measures to prevent settlement north of the Columbia and thus limit our possession to the south," Green wrote Calhoun. "Whereas if we do not give notice we can take measures to colonise as far north as 54°40' if we desire it, and in a few years possess the whole country without giving cause for war." Giving notice, however, would undermine American settlement north of 49°, unless the United States enforced its claim to this land by war. As long as America could claim all of Oregon peacefully, through increased settlement, Green was for it. But he would never support "54°40' or Fight," as had many of his fellow Democrats. Why war over territory

5. Green to MacGregor, October 19, 1843, Green Papers, LC; Green to Tyler, August 29, 1843, Green to Henry Wikoff, January 16, 1844, Green to Hume, January 17, 1844, Green Papers, SHC-UNC. On the aggressive posture of Western Democrats, see Hietala, *Manifest Design*, 71–83, 230–39.

that would soon, by the weight of numbers, drift naturally into the American Union? Now, war with Mexico for California was an entirely different matter. Mexico would not sell it, so it would indeed have to be taken by force.<sup>6</sup>

Political opponents berated Calhoun for his idea of “masterly inactivity,” claiming that he was promoting a sectionalist policy. They argued that Calhoun’s support of Texas annexation and his concomitant opposition to giving England notice was nothing more than a desire to maintain a balance of power between the slaveholding and nonslaveholding states. Green berated the partisans of Clay and Cass for charging Calhoun with a sectionalist position, and he begged his friend to fight back. “It is important to show that the idea of such a balance of power is preposterous,” he advised Calhoun, “that the slave holding States are now and ever must be in a minority, that the South stand on the defensive and that the attacks come from both parties at the north, who, knowing that the South are and ever must be in a minority agitate the question because the tendency of that agitation is to create a sectional northern party organized on the basis of placing the government in the hands of *northern* men.” Calhoun’s policy of “masterly inactivity,” Green argued, would actually enlarge the extent of territory in which free states would arise. Get rid of the idea of a balance of power between free and slave states, he concluded. It did not exist, and it only fostered sectional animosity. The occupation of Oregon was a national issue, plain and simple.<sup>7</sup>

But the desire to abrogate the 1827 convention proved more enticing than a waiting game. President Polk instructed Secretary of State Buchanan in July 1845 to propose to the British government that the Oregon Territory be divided at the 49th parallel. Pakenham rejected the offer outright. Invoking the Monroe Doctrine, Polk then announced that the United States would pursue all of Oregon, and he asked for a congressional resolution giving England official notice. Green immediately picked up his pen in an effort to combat congressional endorsement of the notice option. He intended to prove that Polk’s measures would

6. Green to Calhoun, February 22, March 21, 1846, *JCCP*, 22: 615, 742. Green also believed that the British government placed a high estimate on “the privilege of sending their letters and merchandise through from Boston to Canada” and that England would not surrender any part of the Oregon Territory north of the Columbia without an equivalent concession by the United States. Thus, Green wrote Upshur, “I believe you may obtain all the country to the Russian boundary for this concession—the transit of letters & merchandise.” Green to Upshur, February 16, 1844, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

7. Green to Calhoun, February 22, 1846, *JCCP*, 22: 614, 615, 616.

undermine U.S. claim to territory north of 49°. “Never did any Government or any party do so foolish or wicked an act as ours have done in relation to Oregon,” he told Calhoun. Although Green publicly maintained his support of the Polk administration and the Democratic Party, he nonetheless questioned the motives behind serving notice. “You urge the notice as a means of coercing England to an early adjustment of the question of Oregon,” he wrote in an editorial. “All must see that the inevitable consequence of *notice* will be war or a surrender [of] all of Oregon above 49°.” Green counseled patience, for the use of force to acquire Oregon was unnecessary. Adoption of free-trade policies would eventually resolve the issue in favor of the United States.<sup>8</sup>

Congress failed to heed Green's advice. On April 26, 1846, Congress passed a resolution abrogating the 1827 convention. Polk immediately served England the required notice. He also asked Congress to increase military protection for American citizens migrating to Oregon. War seemed inevitable. But Green's fear of war with England over Oregon was all for naught. Lord Aberdeen had already decided, during the excitement of the 1844 presidential campaign, to accept the extension of the 49th parallel to the Pacific. The British minister sent a draft treaty to Polk, who quickly endorsed it and transmitted it to the U.S. Senate, which ratified the treaty on June 18, 1846, by a vote of 41 to 14. And it could not have come sooner, for war had already broken out between Mexico and the United States. Now that the Oregon question had been settled and Texas had been annexed, the acquisition of California and New Mexico was next in line. Green was right, it would take a war with Mexico to wrest from it these coveted territories.

## II.

Surprisingly, Green never commented on the outbreak of war between Mexico and the United States. He offered to organize and lead a brigade of Texas volunteers, but nothing ever came of the proposition. He also had nothing to say about the course of the war in its first year. But there was little reason to offer comment. By the end of 1846, the United States had already captured and occupied the territories it had long coveted, California and New Mexico, and secured the Rio Grande as the boundary for Texas. In November 1846, Green suggested to Secretary of

8. Green to Calhoun, March 25, 1846, *JCCP*, 22: 758; Green to the Editor of the *Union* [1846], Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

the Treasury Robert J. Walker that the U.S. government should organize a government in the conquered region, as the newly acquired territories would provide an excellent route to the Pacific and to the trade of China. Annex California and New Mexico at once, and take all land to the Rio Grande, he advised the Polk administration. Green recognized the fact that if the Mexican government, now under the charge of Santa Anna, rejected U.S. overtures, then the Polk administration would prosecute the war with new vigor and "in that case an effort will be made to annex, perhaps as far south as latitude 22°." He was right on both accounts. Santa Anna refused to negotiate with the United States, formed a considerable army, and renewed the war. The United States then took the war to the heart of Mexico. U.S. troops landed at Vera Cruz and commenced their march to Mexico City, defeating the Mexican army in every encounter along the way, and eventually occupying the Mexican capital in September 1847. As a consequence of the ease with which the United States conducted the war effort, a strong movement arose in the United States to take all of Mexico. Green, however, never gave his opinion on the "All of Mexico" movement.<sup>9</sup>

The Wilmot Proviso, however, changed Green's mind about the course of the war. In the summer of 1846, President Polk asked Congress for \$2 million to facilitate negotiations with Mexico. Democratic congressman David Wilmot succeeded in getting the House to add an amendment to the bill prohibiting the introduction of slavery in any of the territories taken from Mexico. The House passed the bill with the attached proviso. Much of the support for the proviso came from Western Democrats, who were already angry with Southern Democrats for failing to support "54°40' or Fight" and for their timid support of internal improvements. The Senate blocked the bill, causing the Democratic majorities in Congress to start unraveling. The issue of slavery extension had reared its ugly head, consuming American political debate until the outbreak of the Civil War. Green opposed the Proviso, not because he believed in the natural extension of slavery, but because it had raised sectional tensions and threatened property rights guaranteed by the Constitution. The measure indicated "a diseased state of public opin-

9. Green to Governor Henderson, May 16, 1846, Green Papers, LC; Green to Walker, November 19, 1846, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; "Statement of Col. Benjamin E. Green, Secretary of Legation at Mexico in 1844," August 8, 1889, in Tyler, *Letters and Times*, 2: 176-77; Green to [no name], December 11, 1846, Green Papers, SHC-UNC. Green only commented on the fact that Southern slaveholders opposed the "All of Mexico" movement, due to the fact that the Mexican population opposed slavery and much of the Mexican soil was not conducive to slave-grown products.

ion," Green argued, "sufficient . . . to make it the imperative duty of those whose rights, property, and interests are assailed to take immediate and efficient measures of self-defence." In short, the South—the minority South—would have to defend its rights against an aggressive North. The North, he pointed out, not the South, fomented sectional strife.

The domestic turmoil spawned by the Wilmot Proviso drove Green to oppose the Mexican War. "We are for peace," he wrote in a draft prospectus for a newspaper he never published. "Peace between the United States and Mexico—Peace between the north and the south—Peace between the United States and Mexico as soon as practicable." But a quick termination of the war was impossible as long as Mexico refused to negotiate with the United States. Therefore, Mexico must form an independent government, Green advised, one that was willing to end the war. He suggested that a constitution for a new Mexican government should be composed by the Polk administration and approved by Congress. Green even volunteered to write out such a constitution and campaign for its adoption.<sup>10</sup>

But saving the Union was not the only reason for opposing the war against Mexico. There was an economic consideration as well. The Mexican War, Green argued, was destroying free trade and the independent treasury by raising taxes and creating a "currency of government paper" that took the place of specie. The war also increased the public debt. He charged the Polk administration with an "expensive prosecution" of the war, resulting in "great public expenditure, enormous Executive patronage, waste of human life, depravity of public morals," and, of course, a threat to the stability of the Union. The only way for peace to be achieved in the wake of the Mexican War, as a result of the acquisition of an extensive territory, was "a rigid adherence to the compromises of the constitution and a perfect equality in all respects between the slaveholding and nonslaveholding states." And he said nothing more. Fortunately for Green's cause of promoting peace, the war ended between Mexico and the United States in the summer of 1848, by the ratification of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. Unfortunately for Green's cause of saving the Union, the Mexican War inaugurated the road to disunion and civil war.<sup>11</sup>

The Mexican War proved controversial to antebellum Americans for

10. Green to [no name], December 11, 1846, and undated fragment, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

11. Undated fragment, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.



a number of reasons—its origin, its conduct, and its incitement of the slavery extension debate, to name a few. But controversy also arose in the several years following the war regarding the payment of the indemnity owed Mexico under the terms of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo—a bitter political controversy in which Green played a key role, and one in which congressional hostility was once again unleashed on him, as it had been on his activities in England and Texas. Under Article XII of the treaty ending the Mexican War, the United States agreed to pay Mexico \$15 million, via five installments, for its territorial losses. Debate over the manner of paying the indemnity turned into full-scale political warfare during the Thirty-second Congress, as congressmen accused the Taylor and Fillmore administrations of indolence and outright corruption in making the payments. The political melee turned even more bitter as congressmen resorted to petty diatribes, personal attacks, and, on a few occasions, out-and-out slander. Along with their fellow congressmen, one of the favorite targets was Duff Green.<sup>12</sup>

Following the Mexican War, the U.S. government appointed Green an official agent for making arrangements with Mexico for the payment of the indemnity. The Mexican government, in turn, hired his son Benjamin for the same purpose. The Greens attempted to arrange a deal whereby the U.S. government would accept Mexican bills of exchange, instead of sending specie to Mexico to pay the balance on the indemnity. The two men then actively pursued a contract with the federal government to carry out the payments, a contract which would have proved rather lucrative for the Greens. According to Green, President Taylor and Secretary of State John Clayton approved of this plan, but just when the bills of exchange were being forwarded to the Mexican minister in Washington, the president died. The new president, Millard Fillmore, and his new secretary of state, Daniel Webster, disavowed the payment plan accepted by the previous administration. Green went to Congress and campaigned to restore his policy of using bills of exchange instead of specie, but to no avail.<sup>13</sup>

Virginia senator Thomas Bayly bitterly attacked the Greens for their role in the entire affair. He advised the U.S. government to avoid dealing with the two men altogether, insinuating that they possessed the financial means to potentially influence the government into giving them the contract for the indemnity payment. Bayly went so far as to

12. *Congressional Globe*, 32 Cong., 1 sess., 316–28, 338.

13. *Facts and Suggestions*, 215; Green to Fillmore, January 4, 1850, Green to William Meredith, March 19, 1850, Green to J. D. Marks, March 24, 1850, Green to William A. Bradley, September 13, 1850, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

imply that Green was a “faithless, wild, and visionary man,” that his son had already defaulted in transactions with the Mexican government, and that both men were devoid of “all credit whatever.” The U.S. government should obviously contract with another firm, he concluded. Tennessee senator Andrew Johnson, future president of the United States, defended the Greens. He denounced those that attacked the Greens simply because they “hold a correspondence with the Mexican minister, in relation to the best arrangement possible” for the payment of the indemnity. But more senators sided with Bayly than with Johnson, as Congress threatened the Greens with prosecution under the Logan Act. Johnson also noted that, despite “as insignificant a man as Duff Green is,” Bayly had been “a good deal roused by him.” We have seen, Johnson declared, Bayly’s “wrath, physically and mentally, poured out upon even so insignificant a character as Duff Green or Benjamin E. Green.” But such was the anger that Green consistently aroused in others; it was one of his most defining traits. Green certainly was no “insignificant character” at the time, and he certainly had enough detractors to deny him a role in the Mexican indemnity payment. In the end, Mexico itself requested that the indemnity be paid by agents other than the Greens, and so the U.S. government contracted with the Baring Brothers, the powerful British banking and financial firm that had denied Green a loan in 1842.<sup>14</sup>

Green’s pursuit of the contract for payment of the Mexican indemnity represented just one of many of his business and financial ventures during the 1840s. In fact, much of his activity as an agent of Manifest Destiny was inextricably mixed with his role as the quintessential Jacksonian capitalist. In this capacity, Green revealed no aberrant characteristics, for a great many of his fellow countrymen found it hard to separate territorial expansion and economic development. As the last days of the Jacksonian era ticked away—somewhere between the Wilmot Proviso and the Compromise of 1850—Green’s role as a Jacksonian diplomat ended as well. But the important part he played in the nation’s economy in the late Jacksonian period had already expanded as rapidly and as extensively as had his nation’s territory. Immense territorial expansion had accompanied an equally explosive economic expansion in 1840s America, and, in the latter case, Green arguably made his most important contribution to Jacksonian America. Green’s role as a leading Jacksonian capitalist, moreover, proved as controversial and as rocky as his role as a Jacksonian expansionist.

14. *Congressional Globe*, 32 Cong., 1 sess., 215, 338ff, 342–45.

## CHAPTER 25



# Jacksonian Capitalist and Territorial Expansion

## I.

**T**he territorial expansion of the 1840s coincided with America's economic recovery from the disastrous effects of the Panic of 1837. About the time that record numbers of Americans poured into Oregon's Willamette Valley in 1843, the U.S. economy had recuperated fully, and the dynamic economic expansion of the 1820s and early 1830s returned with a vengeance. But for Green, recovery would take a few years longer than his country's. His mountain property had become a huge financial burden, and for the next decade he barely staved off personal financial collapse. While Green was fighting for free trade in England and promoting his country's territorial expansion in Texas and Mexico, he was locked in a bitter struggle to rid himself of an enormous and debilitating personal debt.

Green's desire to go to England stemmed more from his dire financial straits than from a duty to serve the Harrison and Tyler administrations. His primary objective was to interest European investors in either the purchase or the development of his mineral property. English capital, he believed, was the only elixir to salve his financial distress. Here lay the real reason why Green was so adamant about visiting with Harrison shortly after his victory in the 1840 election and before the president-elect reached Washington—he was trying to avoid a sheriff's execution on the sale of furniture from his Baltimore residence.<sup>1</sup>

1. John Quincy Adams noticed Green's desperation in seeking an overseas appointment, noting in his diary that Green "demands it in a tone so preemptory that

Green's entire crusade on behalf of free trade and a commercial reciprocity agreement between the United States and England, moreover, developed from the personal necessity of protecting his mountain investment. The "adjustment of our difficulties with England & the currency question at home," he intimated to Calhoun, would most certainly "render invaluable" his mountain property. National interest and private interest for Green were intertwined. If one advanced, so would the other. Many Americans during the Jacksonian period, Daniel Webster as a good example, agreed with this assumption.<sup>2</sup>

Yet Green failed to acquire the needed capital investment on both trips to Europe. He returned to the United States in late 1843 only to learn that his financial condition had worsened. Creditors pursued him for their due payment on the money they loaned him to purchase his coal and mineral lands. Green could not pay back the loan he received to buy his Carroll Place property in the District of Columbia, and so the bank had commenced legal proceedings against him, forcing him to put his Washington property up for sale. Green was even unable to pay a doctor's bill for medical attention given to his wife and daughter. The financial distress also forced Green to dissolve his connection with the *Republic*. He then resorted to a potential remedy that had put him into debt in the first place: "I am making arrangements here for a loan which if accomplished will save my property for some time at least, but I will require the means of paying interest." He failed at this as well.<sup>3</sup>

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it will brook no refusal." Little wonder, then, that Green applauded Nathaniel Tallmadge for his bill abolishing imprisonment for debt, placing it among "the most valuable of your public services." But he also called to Tallmadge's attention the fact that the bill did not cover the District of Columbia, and he hoped the Indiana congressmen would introduce a bill abolishing imprisonment for debt there as well. Green owned property in the nation's capital also. Green to Tallmadge, December 26, 1840, Tallmadge Papers, State Historical Society of Wisconsin; Ben E. Green's Biography of Duff Green, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Green to Harrison, January 15, 1841, Harrison Papers, LC; Gunderson, *Log-Cabin Campaign*, 262; Adams, *Memoirs*, March 20, 1841, 10: 448.

2. Green to Calhoun, January 3, 1842, *JCCP*, 16: 34. Green was presented with an opportunity of being paid \$3,000 a year by English capitalists, as compensation for campaigning in England for subscriptions promoting free trade. These same capitalists would also lend him "all the money I want to secure my property for six years," plus five hundred shares of stock in an English firm, the dividends of which would cover the loan. The loan could be as high as \$200,000. Green to Lucretia Green, August 18, 1842, Green Papers, LC.

3. Green to Lucretia Green, September 17, 1842, Green Papers, LC; Green to Calhoun, March 19, 1843, in Jameson, *AHA*, 525-26; Ben E. Green's Biography of Duff Green, Green to D. B. Douglas, January 24, 1844, Green to William Jones, February 3, March 3, 1844, Green to [no name], March 3, 1844, Green to John Hoyt, April 18, 1845, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

By the spring of 1845, the optimism Green had revealed as he embarked for England in 1842 and 1843 had now dissipated, just as had his options for getting out of debt. "I have exhausted all my resources in efforts to prevent a sacrifice of the property of the Union Company," he told a longtime business partner. "I am thus thrown on my personal efforts for the support of my family and have no alternative but to surrender my property for the benefit of my condition. The earnings of my whole life and the patrimony of my wife are absorbed in the mineral region near Cumberland." Fortunately for Green, his family stepped forward and provided some much-needed relief.<sup>4</sup>

Green's son Benjamin had proven himself a very capable attorney, maintaining a lucrative practice in the nation's capital. Ben immediately loaned his father enough money to cover some minor debts, but it was the son's skills as a lawyer that the father needed most. While both men were in Mexico—and without his son's knowledge—Green asked Secretary of State Calhoun to release his son as secretary to the U.S. legation in Mexico. "I have matters of private interest to arrange which may require his presence in Washington," he informed Calhoun, and after his son had returned to Washington shortly thereafter, Green begged Calhoun "to permit Benjamin to remain until I can get home [from Texas] as I have some important family arrangements which require his presence, and cannot well be carried into effect without him." Green believed that his son's time spent in Mexico was "a sacrifice which nothing but the most urgent necessity can justify, and I hope to have it in my power to make it his interest to resign." Damn what his son might want. In fact, Ben greatly desired to remove to New Orleans and hang his profitable shingle there. But Green convinced Ben to remain in Washington, to practice law in the nation's capital, to help with his father's business interests, and, mostly, to bail his father out of debt. Green's debt was so large, and his business interests so extensive, that Ben spent little time on anything else.<sup>5</sup>

In the spring of 1845, while Congress berated Green for his conduct in Texas, Ben began to make provisions for the payment of all his father's debts. First, Green assigned all of his interest in the mountain property—over 2.5 million acres of coal and mineral land—to trustees, designated by his son, in order to pay creditors. Any balance would go to Green. The elder Green then conveyed to his son all of his shares in the

4. Green to Hoyt, April 18, 1845, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

5. Green to Calhoun, November 12, 29, 1844, *JCCP*, 20: 235, 395; Ben E. Green's Biography of Duff Green, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

Union Company, the Union Potomac Company, and the American Land Company. Ben, in turn, began to sell the shares to cover his father's debts. Green's son even hired an agent to investigate his father's old land claims in Missouri, hoping to find some remaining interests or unfinished business that Green had forgotten about two decades earlier. Some land claims were indeed discovered, old business that Green overlooked or failed to close before he moved to Washington in 1826. The Greens immediately sold or conveyed the interest in these lands, much of it going to cover overdue taxes. By the summer of 1845, Green believed that he would "command the means" to cover all his debts in a matter of weeks. But the foreclosures continued; more work needed to be done.<sup>6</sup>

"The present debt on all my mountain land," Green informed his son in the fall of 1845, "is about \$260,000." Arrangements were made immediately to sell ten thousand acres of Maryland land for the price of \$165,000 to help cover this debt. In addition, the Greens reorganized the Union Company, assigning some of its land to the Union Potomac Company in preparation for either sale or conveyance to creditors. Throughout all this activity, Green remained positive about his prospects. "You may say to your dear mother & sister that I think I can see day light," he told Ben. In fact, so optimistic was Green that he actually sought to *purchase* additional coal lands in the Cumberland Mountains of Maryland. He composed a prospectus for the Cumberland Coal Mining Company, proposing to buy ten thousand acres of prime coal and iron ore land along Dans Mountain and seeking a subscription of \$1 million shares of stock. With the necessary funds raised to purchase and develop the land, Green intended to not only pay his remaining debts, but to reap a tidy profit as well.<sup>7</sup>

By the end of 1845, much of Green's debt had been paid, but he still owed, and new ventures were either just breaking even or not developing sufficiently to garner a solid profit. Green, "tortured by the delays" of raising funds for his new company, became dejected. "I some times

6. Green to Hoyt, April 18, 1845, Indenture, April 28, 1845, Duff Green to Ben Green, May 15, 1845, W. A. Wilson to Green, June 1, 1845, Green to Peters, June 11, 1845, Green Papers, SHC-UNC. On Missouri land claims, see Duff Green to Abiel Leonard, January 9, 1845, Ben Green to Abiel Leonard, June 19, 1845, Thomas Joyes to Abiel Leonard, February 26, 1846, Duff Green to Abiel Leonard, January 9, 1846, Thomas Joyes to Abiel Leonard, May 30, 1846, Duff Green to Abiel Leonard, August 3, 1847, Power of Attorney for Duff Green, January 8, 1846, in Abiel Leonard Papers, WHMC-SHSM.

7. Green to [no name], May 15, 1845, Duff Green to Ben Green, October 29, 30, November 2, 5, 1845, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

feel as if I were doomed—that it matters not what I may touch, it will fail, how ever profitable it might have been in other hands,” he confided to his son. “I seem to be a blight on all that [I come] in contact with, and why is this so? Certainly it is not sinful in me to desire to make a suitable provision for my family? Certainly it is not sinful that I should wish to be the source of comfort and happiness to them? Perhaps it is in this that I have sinned. The fondest wish of my heart has been to be the source of happiness to others, and especially to my dear wife and children.” As “severe and mortifying” as Green’s business ventures had been to that point in his life, he still sought to command the means of prosperity. Together, he told his son, we can do better, and “the probability is that the place of duty and usefulness will be in the mountains or in some point where we can devote ourselves to the development of that property.” Despite the many financial setbacks, personal wealth always seemed to lie just around the next corner. Green was indeed the quintessential Jacksonian capitalist.<sup>8</sup>

Green would struggle with enormous personal debt for the remainder of his life, as he continually overextended his resources and finances. For all the wealth that he acquired through his own industry and vision, he lost as much through investment in additional ventures or the purchase of more properties. For every debt, there was a new remedy, designed to relieve him of more debt; for every dollar he made, he borrowed another to invest in something else or somewhere else. Yet in his continual battle to extricate himself from debt and to acquire considerable wealth, he helped directly fuel the transportation revolution dominating late Jacksonian America.

## II.

Between 1815 and 1850, improvements in transportation helped spur the Market Revolution in America. New modes of transportation captured the attention of Americans, whetting their appetite for more improved means of travel and an extensive network for moving products and materials. The addition of new territory to the national domain—Texas, Oregon, California, New Mexico—merely hastened the demand to expand and develop the country’s infrastructure. Millions of acres of new land, thousands of miles of new river systems, and thousands of miles of new coastlines, replete with magnificent natural harbors from Galveston to San Francisco, inspired Americans to connect all sections

8. Duff Green to Ben Green, November 2, 1845, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

of the country in the name of expanding markets and augmenting American commercial power. The greatest advancements came on water. By the 1840s, hundreds of steamboats plied the rivers of the nation; new methods and initiatives increased the navigability of rivers; an extensive network of canals connected east and west, joining the Great Lakes, the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers, the Atlantic seaboard, and the Gulf of Mexico; swift and sleek clipper ships made their first appearance, bringing foreign markets closer to domestic ones by significantly reducing the time it took to traverse oceans. Great strides were also made in land transportation, and here the railroad seized the day. The development and expansion of rail lines completed what rivers and canals could not, the integration of the American marketplace. What a wonderful opportunity for a Jacksonian capitalist! What enormous wealth could be acquired! Green salivated at the idea. He, too, had been seduced by the lure of economic expansion, as much as he had been captivated by territorial expansion. He, too, recognized that the two were inextricably bound, and here again, Green represented the archetypal Jacksonian American.<sup>9</sup>

So enamored was Green with extending the country's infrastructure that he emerged in the 1840s as a vocal proponent of federal aid for internal improvements. He shared with many of his fellow Western Democrats a passion for government-sponsored programs opening the interior to the seaboard ports. The Constitution, Green argued, gave the federal government authority over intercourse with foreign governments and among the states. The regulation of commerce, the collection of imposts, the erection of lighthouses, and the deepening of harbors were express grants charged to the federal government from the beginning. The same principle that applied to the transport of the products of the interior to the seaboard, he maintained, likewise applied to the transport of the same products from the seaboard to foreign markets; America's interior trade was simply a part of its foreign trade. Improvements of rivers and harbors, he concluded, should not halt at a custom house. "You cannot convince those who reside on the western lakes that it is constitutional to expend money on the harbors of the Atlantic and unconstitutional to expend it on the harbors of the lakes," he told a friend. "They do not believe that the constitution has one power on salt

9. On the Transportation Revolution in America, see George Rogers Taylor, *The Transportation Revolution, 1815–1860*; Douglass C. North, *The Economic Growth of the United States, 1790–1860*; Carter Goodrich, ed., *Canals and American Development*; Carter Goodrich, *Government Promotion of American Canals and Railroads, 1800–1890*; Albert Fishlow, *American Railroads and the Transformation of the Antebellum Economy*.



and another on fresh water.” Green also believed that the issue of internal improvements was so popular that it would determine the reorganization of parties in the midterm elections of 1846 and consequently dominate the legislation of the successive Congress. The issue may not have inspired partisan realignment, but Congress indeed considered and approved numerous bills for internal improvements during Polk’s administration.<sup>10</sup>

Not all the new Jacksonian Democrats of the 1840s, however, were as avid supporters of federal involvement in internal improvements. Green may have reentered the ranks of the Democracy in 1844 because he shared their views on territorial expansion, free trade, and an independent treasury, but when it came to the issue of the federal government investing in the country’s infrastructure, the party was still bitterly divided. President Polk retained the constitutional scruples of the Jacksonians of the 1830s, vetoing every harbors and rivers bills passed by the Democratic-controlled Congress. Green winced at every veto. He begged Southern Democrats to avoid the course taken by Polk and to vote for the various internal improvements bills. And Green had good reason to think that his friends in the South would support his friends in the West. Had Calhoun not rejoined the Democratic Party because of its economic positions? Had not Southern Democrats voted with Western Democrats for reducing tariff levels (e.g., the Walker Tariff of 1846) and for adopting an independent treasury? So why not join their brethren in voting for a harbors bill?<sup>11</sup>

But there was another cogent reason for supporting federal aid to internal improvements: by uniting the South and West economically, it would damn the abolition movement. Peeved with Polk’s vetoes of the roads, harbors, and rivers bills, proponents of internal improvements organized a convention to meet in Chicago in the summer of 1847. Green vehemently pursued Southern support for and attendance at the convention. “It is no longer a question of whether these appropriations are to be made,” he warned Cralle. “It is a question of whether the south by opposing them shall compel the west to form an alliance offensive and defensive with the East.” The West had “tasted the benefits of *foreign*

10. Green to Calhoun, October 10, 1845, March 25, 1846, *JCCP*, 22: 221–22, 758–59; Green to Cralle, May 30, 1847, Richard K. Cralle Papers, Clemson University. Green also argued that it was within the power of Congress to construct post roads, and because of this opinion, Thomas Ritchie refused to print Green’s editorials promoting federal aid for internal improvements. Thomas Ritchie to Green, August 24, 1847, Green Papers, LC.

11. Green to Calhoun, September 24, 1845, March 25, 1846, *JCCP*, 22: 170, 758–59. Surprisingly, Green never commented on the Walker Tariff. The legislation significantly reduced tariff levels, thereby reflecting Green’s free-trade efforts.

trade,” and if the South opposed appropriations for internal improvements, the West would unite with the East to obtain them. In that case, it became a question between the South and abolition. If the West joined with the East, Green believed, then the friends of internal improvements and the friends of abolition would act in concert, strengthening the cause of each. But if the Southern states would “for once take counsel from the head and act with a little practical good sense” they would attend the Chicago Convention. They could then “modify & regulate its proceedings” and thus “command the West as allies and secure their aid in denouncing and suppressing abolition.” The Northern and Western states were sending full and able delegations, Greed concluded to Cralle, “and I am disposed to think that the action of that body will do much to control the future history of this country.”<sup>12</sup>

Unfortunately for his cherished idea of a united South and West, many Southern Democrats failed to heed Green’s advice. Some voted against internal improvements and few attended the 1847 convention in Chicago. Green was right, then, in a sense: the actions of the Chicago Convention did indeed “do much to control the future history of the country.” Over twenty thousand people attended the convention, revealing the increasing demand for federal involvement in internal improvements. And in less than a decade, the strands that had united the South and West unraveled, as Western support for internal improvements combined with Eastern forces promoting abolition. The “Free-Soil” movement comfortably incorporated Western and Eastern economic expansion and slavery restriction interests, thereby doing much to control the future of the country. For many Southern Democrats, states’ rights took precedence over internal improvements. For Green, however, states’ rights meant checking the growth of executive power and defending domestic institutions against the evil designs of outsiders. States’ rights was a political and constitutional weapon, not an economic one—that is, as long as the economic foundation of slavery was secure.

### III.

Green never let Polk’s opposition, nor that of his Southern friends, deter his passion for internal improvements. The federal government may have turned away from promoting the development of the nation’s

12. Green to Cralle, May 30, 1847, Richard Cralle Papers, Clemson University; Green to Calhoun, May 28, 1847, in Green, “Industrial Promoter,” 30. For Calhoun’s response to Green’s demand that he attend the Chicago Convention, see Calhoun to Green, June 10, 1847, *AHA Publications*, 732.

infrastructure, but there was nothing standing in Green's way of pursuing such projects. Delving into ventures expanding and developing the nation's infrastructure, he surmised, would not only advance the country's wealth, but it would most certainly reap mighty dividends for his own pocketbook. More important, Green *needed* internal improvements to get him out of debt, for the development of the American infrastructure would directly and significantly increase the value of his coal and mineral lands.

In January 1844, Green proposed to contract with the board of directors of the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal for the completion of the canal. Under his proposal, the canal would be extended to the Savage River, connecting Green's mountain property directly with that critical water route, thus facilitating the transport of coal and iron ore to both domestic and foreign markets. He informed his creditors that the ability of the Union Company and the Union Potomac Company to remunerate them depended directly upon the completion of the canal. But, first, Green would need some help from the Maryland state legislature, which needed to clear a few obstacles for his plan to proceed. In early January, the president of the C & O Canal Company informed Green that the Committee on Internal Improvements had adopted resolutions waving state liens on the canal, which allowed Green to pursue English capital. The company president also believed that the state legislature would adopt the necessary legislation approving the extension of the canal, encouraging information that Green happily passed on to his creditors. The wait was excruciating. Despite assurances that the state legislature would acquiesce, and Green's begging for patience, his creditors still actively pursued their due payment. Canal or no canal, Green owed them. Fortunately for Green, the state of Maryland came through. They approved the extension of the canal.<sup>13</sup>

Green then had to convince the C & O Canal Company to accept his proposal. In March, he submitted to the board of directors a "Memorandum of a Proposition for the Completion of the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal to Cumberland." The following day the directors rejected his proposition to extend the canal. No explanation was given for their rejection. But Green continued his pursuit of a contract for the completion of the canal. He had to have the project if he were to pay his debts and make a fortune. Writing to a creditor, Green stated that "nothing

13. President of C & O Canal Co. to Green, January 6, 1844, Green to Rev. John Miller, January 22, 1844, Green to John Hoyt, January 24, 1844, Green to Ames, February 22, 1844, Green to Mrs. Gaines, February 24, 1844, Green to A. W. McDonald, February 24, 1844, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

but the unexpected delays in completing the canal has prevented my realizing a large surplus, after paying all that I owe." His persistence paid off. In 1845, the canal company finally approved a contract with Green for the extension of the canal to his mountain property. Green was ecstatic. "The contract for the completion of the [C & O] canal to Cumberland," he informed Calhoun, "has given an active value to my property & I intend to make hay while the sun shines."<sup>14</sup>

Like most of his fellow Westerners, Green had long favored canal projects. In 1824, while he still resided in Missouri, Green promoted the construction of the great Western Canal project pursued by the states of Virginia, Ohio, Maryland, and Pennsylvania, and in several editorials in the *St. Louis Enquirer*, he emphasized the need to make the Missouri River more navigable in order to connect the markets of the interior with those of the East. Green continued this interest in canals well into the 1840s. Massive territorial expansion, he believed, beget a great need for canals. In January 1846, he secured charters from Texas and Louisiana for canals connecting the Sabine River with the Rio Grande and Mississippi Rivers. The following month he incorporated the Atlantic & Mexican Gulf Canal Company, with the intention of connecting the Savannah River, via the St. Mary's and Suwannee Rivers, to the Gulf of Mexico. Finally, in the spring of 1846, he began planning a ship canal from Newark, New Jersey, to the Atlantic Coast. Many of his canal projects never came to fruition, but Green never let his failures derail his pursuit of internal improvements. In fact, canals were merely a secondary concern to him. Another mode of transportation had already captured his full attention.<sup>15</sup>

#### IV.

"Steam has produced a revolution in commerce," Green noted to a French admiral in March 1842, and, therefore, the "effect and capabilities

14. "Memorandum of a Proposition for the Completion of the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal to Cumberland Submitted to the Directors of the Canal Company by D. Green," March 20, 1844, William Turner to Green, March 21, 1844, Green to John Hoyt, April 18, 1845, R. Withers Cash to Green, July 14, 1845, Duff Green to Ben Green, October 30, 1845, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Green to Calhoun, October 10, 1845, *JCCP*, 22: 221–22. Green's prospectus for the Cumberland Coal Mining Company stated that the extension of the canal would be completed within two years. Securing the contract also validated the purchase of additional coal and mineral lands in the Cumberland region.

15. *St. Louis Enquirer*, January 13, 1824; "An Act to Incorporate the Atlantic & Mexican Gulf Canal Company," February 25, 1846, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Fletcher Green, "Duff Green: Industrial Promoter," 29–42.

of railroads must be seen to be realized.” Like many in America and in Europe, Green quickly recognized the potential of railroads as an efficient and cheap mode of transportation, for the movement of goods as well as for passenger traffic. “The apprehension that railroads were not suited to the transportation of merchandise has vanished before experience, and so has the belief that they are suited only to short distances,” he reiterated to the French admiral. The railroad made its first appearance in the United States during the late 1820s, beginning with the construction of the Baltimore & Ohio (B & O) Railroad. By 1840, nearly thirty-four hundred miles of track traversed the country, linking east and west, competing with canals for the preferred form of travel and transport. Green himself favored rail over water. Where railroads came into competition with water transportation, he argued, “much the greater part of freight and passengers prefer the railroads, because they are found to be more punctual, as well as more expeditious.”<sup>16</sup>

Railroads first enamored Green while in Europe in 1842. In the spring of that year, he tried to convince the French government of the efficacy of building a rail line from the port of Brest to Paris and eventually on to other European cities. A line connecting the Atlantic Coast of Europe to its major interior cities would “bring Paris as near to New York as Liverpool is now,” ultimately replacing England as the major trading partner of the United States. He offered extensive tables, charts, and graphs exhibiting the emerging economic potency of the railroad. In addition, a line from Brest to Paris, with trunk lines extending to other French cities, combined with a line into other European countries, would most certainly give France a military advantage over its—and Green’s—archenemy, Great Britain, in case of war. “The capacity of railroads are not limited to the transportation of merchandise, or of passengers,” Green concluded to the French admiral. “Their bearing on the military and political relations of France are equally important as upon its commerce; and it is characteristic of railroads, that while they constitute the most efficient means of defence against invasion in time of war, or of rebellion, they furnish a profitable investment of capital, and contribute to increase the wealth and productive energies of the country in time of peace.” Who in their right mind, wondered Green, could doubt the advantages offered by railroads?<sup>17</sup>

At the same time he tried convincing the French of the value of rail-

16. Green to Admiral DuPerre, March 4, 1842, in *Facts and Suggestions*, 155, 156.

17. Green to Admiral DuPerre, March 4, 1842, in *Facts and Suggestions*, 155–64.

roads, Green also became interested in the construction of a rail line from St. Petersburg to Moscow. While in Paris in March 1842, Green had a conversation with an agent of the Russian emperor, in which the latter reported that the Russian government was building a railroad from St. Petersburg, through Moscow, terminating in Odessa. In May, he left Paris for Russia, in the hopes of persuading the emperor to support the construction of the route connecting St. Petersburg and Moscow. Green explained his “rather out of the usual course” to President Tyler, asking him for his support in the endeavor. Tyler indeed endorsed Green’s trip, instructing the U.S. minister to Russia to offer his assistance to Green. The project came to naught, and Green returned to London to carry on his campaign for free trade.<sup>18</sup>

Like canals, railroad construction also became a means for increasing the profitability of Green’s mountain property. One of the primary reasons for the creation of an extensive network of rail lines throughout Europe, connecting France to Russia and all major points in between, was to secure a contract with European governments for the use and transportation of coal from Green’s property. When that failed, Green turned to American railroads to boost the value of his coal and mineral holdings. If the extension of the C & O Canal could be accomplished, why not the extension of the B & O Railroad? By 1845, the B & O had already reached Cumberland, with a trunk line nearly completed to Green’s mines. For the next two years, then, Green pursued a contract with the B & O Railroad to extend the line another sixty miles, eventually securing the contract in 1847. His interest in railroad construction, however, quickly transcended a simple desire to realize profits from his coal and mineral lands. In the late 1840s, Green embarked on a number of railroad projects for the sake of their own profitability.<sup>19</sup>

Green may have said so little about the Mexican War because he had become so preoccupied with developing railroad routes throughout the

18. *Facts and Suggestions*, 83; Cass to Baron de Magendorff, March 1842, Green to McCulloch, May 16, 1842, Green to Fairbanks, May 16, 1842, Green to Tyler, May 16, 1842, Tyler to Todd, June 13, 1842, Tyler to Green, June 14, 1842, Green Papers, LC. The Russian agent also informed Green that Russia was building a massive fleet at Sevastopol, with the intention of seizing the Dardanelles. He then gave Green a letter of introduction to the Russian emperor and other important individuals in St. Petersburg, with the understanding that if war erupted between England and Russia, Green would travel to the Russian city and aid in organizing a European and American coalition against the maritime supremacy of England.

19. Green to Admiral DuPerre, March 4, 1842, in *Facts and Suggestions*, 155; Duff Green to Ben Green, October 30, 1845, July 19, 21, 1845, Green to McLane, October 15, 1847, McLane to Green, June 23, 1848, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Green, “Industrial Promoter,” 32.

South, with the goal of connecting the nation's capital and Southern cities with the Pacific Coast. While the United States waged war against Mexico for the extension of American territory, the Greens pursued a variety of railroad projects for the extension of the American economy. By the end of the war, the negotiation of railroad contracts had become a specialty of the partnership of Duff Green and Ben E. Green. In 1847, Green sought out investors in an attempt to purchase the Portsmouth & Roanoke Railroad and the Raleigh and Gaston Railroad, contracted to lay forty miles of iron track for a Pennsylvania railroad, and purchased a quarter interest in a company contracted to lay eighty miles of rail from Portsmouth, Virginia, to intersect the Wilmington and Raleigh Railroad. In 1848, the firm of Green and Green contracted for the construction of the East Tennessee and Georgia Railroad, which proved to be one of the more profitable ventures of the two men, helping Green eliminate his massive debt. Also in 1848, on behalf of a number of interested contractors, Green bid on the construction of the Richmond and East Tennessee Railroad. The ultimate objective of these railroad projects was to consolidate and expand rail lines throughout the South, culminating in a main railroad route from the nation's capital to New Orleans, via Lynchburg and Nashville, and from the nation's capital to Mobile, via Richmond, Raleigh, Columbia, Augusta, Atlanta, and Montgomery. Short line routes, however, were not his sole fascination.<sup>20</sup>

Longer railroad routes reaped the most dividends on the capital invested, he had advised the French back in 1842, so when Green learned in 1847 of plans for a transcontinental railroad from Charleston to the Pacific, he jumped at the opportunity to construct the route. He proposed to construct the line by obtaining rights of way through public lands or through grants of land located on or near public lands; and to finance the building of the line, he suggested dropping the duty on railroad iron and establishing permanent contracts for the transportation of the mail. For the grants of land and the elimination of the duty, he would require railroad companies to conduct mail service, which would reduce postage rates as well as the budget and workload of the U.S.

20. William Ward to Green, April 10, 1847, C. S. Hinton to Green, April 13, 1847, Green to [no name], April 14, 1847, Green to David Henshaw, July 8, 1847, Duff Green to Ben Green, September 17, 1847, Green to Daniel Carmichael, March 4, 1848, Green to J. P. King, November 22, 1848, Ingham Coryell to Green, November 24, 1848, B. B. Williams to Green, November 25, 1848, Thomas Conley to Green, December 15, 1848, Contract for East Tennessee and Georgia Railroad, April 24, 1849, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Green to Cralle, May 3, November 13, 1848, *SHA Publications*, 426; Green, "Industrial Promoter," 33. The East Tennessee and Georgia Railroad connected Knoxville, Tennessee, and Dalton, Georgia.

Postal Service. Green recognized that a transcontinental route, financed as he had outlined, would directly aid commerce, stimulate manufacturing and agricultural production, increase national revenue, and “bind together the remotest sections of our great country.” The best route for a transcontinental line, he argued, would be from the Mississippi River to the Gulf of California via the Gila River. Trade with China, therefore, would ultimately concentrate at or near San Diego. Little wonder, then, that Green early favored war with Mexico—he desired a transcontinental route that, for the time being, crossed Mexican territory.<sup>21</sup>

Once California and New Mexico had been wrested from Mexico, he quickly turned his attention to constructing a railroad route from the South Atlantic coast, through the southern portions of the Mexican cession, and to the Pacific Ocean. One of the reasons for going to Texas and to Mexico in 1844 was to secure permission from the Mexican and Texan governments for a railroad route along the Gila River, but he believed his plans had been defeated “by the intrigues of Captain Elliott and the treachery of Anson Jones.” If he had succeeded, Green steadfastly maintained, he would have handed the United States possession of California and placed the United States “in a position to negotiate with more effect for the *whole* of Oregon.” Following the termination of the Mexican War, then, Green returned to Mexico in the attempt to realize his transcontinental railroad route. He immediately hired an agent to negotiate with Mexican authorities for an extensive grant of land in the Gila valley and extending the whole length of the northern boundary of Mexico. Green would again be thwarted in his attempt to construct a southern transcontinental route, this time by the Fillmore administration. It was Green’s negotiations with the Mexican government for a right of way to the Pacific via the Gila River valley that had raised concerns regarding the Greens’ involvement in the Mexican indemnity payment.<sup>22</sup>

Green would eventually get his way, however. In 1853, Secretary of War Jefferson Davis, representing the expansionist Pierce administration, appointed James Gadsden as U.S. minister to Mexico. A prominent railroad enthusiast, Gadsden negotiated for a right of way through the Gila valley. The Mexican government, indeed in great need of money, sold to the United States for \$10 million the southern portions of the

21. Green to Walker, January 8, 1847, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

22. Green to Walker, January 8, 1847, Green to John S. Clayton, March 12, 1850, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.



modern-day states of Arizona and New Mexico, encompassing the entire Gila River. Green immediately implemented his grand plan for a Southern Pacific railroad, connecting the American southeast with the Pacific coast. From 1852 to 1860, he secured charters from the legislatures of Georgia and Alabama for construction of rail lines with the intention of eventually reaching western routes; secured a charter for the Florida Central, Atlantic and Gulf Railroad; entered into negotiations with the Mexican government to secure a charter for a route connecting the Rio Grande with the Pacific, via Mexico City, with trunk lines to Vera Cruz, Acapulco, and Matamoras; received permission from Mexico to charter the Rio Grande, Mexican, and Pacific Railway and the New Mexican Railway; secured a charter from the Texas state legislature for the Sabine and Rio Grande Railroad Company; and secured a charter from the Louisiana state legislature for the New Orleans, Opelousas, and Great Western Railroad Company.<sup>23</sup>

To finance his dream of a Southern Pacific railroad route, Green promoted a scheme for railroad companies to contract with the U.S. Postal Service for carrying the mail. The effect of these contracts, he believed, would significantly enhance the value of funds invested in railroads, making railroad stock and bonds available as capital and thus furnishing “a basis for investments, and for the organization of a system of American credit, much more reliable than the system of European taxation.” Green also organized a fiscal agency to collect and provide funds and to act as a holding company. In 1856, he applied to the New Jersey legislature for a charter for a railroad trust company. When his proposal was defeated, he applied to the Pennsylvania state legislature, securing a charter for the Pennsylvania Fiscal Agency in 1859. Affairs seemed to favor Green’s grand plan for a Southern Pacific railroad route. It had been endorsed by the Mexican government, supported by President Buchanan, and sustained with the promise of British capital. Green informed his wife that it was “no small triumph to have devised the means of building the first road to the Pacific”—and then it all came unraveled. Lincoln was elected president of the United States, the Southern states seceded, and the Civil War began—and Green lost all.<sup>24</sup>

23. Green, “Industrial Promoter,” 34–35; Fletcher M. Green, “Origins of the Credit Mobilier of America,” 242–43.

24. On Green’s idea of using mail contracts to finance railroad construction and provide a system of American credit, see “Letters from Duff Green to Gov. Floyd, of Virginia, President of the Board of Public Works,” 1850, Emory University. On the formation of the Pennsylvania Fiscal Agency, see Green, “Industrial Promoter,” 35–37, and “Credit Mobilier,” 239, 243–47.

After joining the Confederate cause, Green feared that he could lose the Pennsylvania Fiscal Agency under the Confiscation Act of 1861. His fears were realized, but not by an action of the federal government. Several directors of the Pennsylvania Fiscal Agency, seeing an opportunity to make a fortune, forced a reorganization of the company, eliminating the rebel Green's shares of stock and selling the rights of the agency to a third party. In 1864, the Pennsylvania Fiscal Agency became the Credit Mobilier of America—its charter unaltered from Green's original. Using Green's creation, the Credit Mobilier successfully constructed the first transcontinental railroad, the Union Pacific.<sup>25</sup>

Following the Civil War, Green employed a number of legal avenues to reclaim his company, but to no avail. Still, he undertook other efforts to establish an extensive railroad network in the postwar South. He continued his attempts to consolidate various rail lines in Virginia, North Carolina, Georgia, and Alabama; he proved instrumental in building the Dalton, Rome, and Selma line, the Dalton and Southwestern line, and the Dalton and Jacksonville line—all still part of the Southern railroad system; and, shortly before his death, he helped organize the Great Southern Trans-Oceanic and International Air Line Railroad, connecting Austin, Texas, to the Gulf of California. Despite losing the claim of being the first to build a transcontinental railroad, Green nonetheless was directly responsible for facilitating the explosive growth of railroads in antebellum America. By 1860, nearly thirty-one thousand miles of track covered the country, two-thirds of it being built in the 1850s, and Green and his son were responsible for much of it. As one historian so appropriately stated, today a railroad “follows almost every line in which Green was interested.” He had emerged as a far more important figure in expanding the nation through economic means than he ever had through the diplomatic route.<sup>26</sup>

## V.

Canals and railroads were not the only entrepreneurial ventures Green undertook in the 1840s. The promise of riches in the Texas soil beckoned him as well. His several land and immigration schemes in Texas have already been mentioned, but there were plenty other business and property interests on which to capitalize in the Lone Star

25. Green, “Credit Mobilier,” 248–51.

26. Green, “Industrial Promoter,” 41, 42.

Republic. After arriving in Texas in the fall of 1844, a close friend of Green's wined and dined him and lured him with tales of Texan land and rivers. Thomas Jefferson Green informed Green of extensive river systems flowing through Texas and their ease and length of navigability; he talked of the potential of hundreds of miles of railroad line that could connect the Rio Grande with the Gulf of California. Green was quickly enticed. It was here, then, in Texas, that he embarked on his cherished project of connecting the Atlantic to the Pacific via canals and railroads. More than that, Green was so pleased with prospects in Texas that he decided to move there permanently.

But a consulate was worth little from a pecuniary point of view, so Green pursued other, more profitable ventures. He had asked Calhoun not to place his name before the Senate for confirmation as the consul at Galveston because he was preoccupied with business elsewhere along the Texan coast. Green and a partner made arrangements to secure funds for the purchase of Padre Island and all the land from Corpus Christi to the Rio Del Norte, with the goal of securing a profitable trade across the Mexican border. Green became interested in securing contracts for the construction of a levy at Galveston, with the intention of constructing a canal to connect the Mississippi River to the Sabine and Rio Grande Rivers. He also speculated in Texas lands and planned to serve as legal counsel for claimants "entitled to head rights under the constitution of Texas."<sup>27</sup>

So enthralled had Green become with his Texas ventures, both actual and potential, that in the summer of 1845, he desired to sell all his interest in the coal and mineral lands of Maryland and Virginia, not so much for the purpose of eliminating his debt as for providing the means of investing in Texas. "I will sell at this time very low because I wish to go to Texas," Green told a creditor. "If it is necessary to go to Europe to raise the funds I will go myself—My object is an immediate sale that I may turn my attention to Texas." Investing in and even moving to Texas made perfect pecuniary sense. He looked to Texas, he told his son, "not as your dear mother supposes because I wish to gratify a rambling propensity," but because he wanted to acquire a comfortable living for his family. Green's debt and its elimination, however, proved too burdensome. He would not move his family to Texas due to

27. Green to Calhoun, September 27, 1844, 28 October 1844, Donelson to Calhoun, December 24, 1844, *JCCP*, 19: 865–66, 20: 136, 620; Elliott to Aberdeen, February 8, 1845, in Adams, *British Diplomatic Correspondence*, 442; Green to H. L. Kinney, February 13, 27, 1845, Kinney to John McLemore, February 18, 1845, Memorandum, September 12, 1845, Green to Thomas McKenney, March 8, 1846, Duff Green to Ben Green, April 19, 1846, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Pletcher, *Diplomacy*, 85–86.

his many financial constraints back east. But in the end, familial duty actually *kept* him from Texas. "I am bending all my energies to my mineral property," Green told his son. "Your mother is so unwilling to go to Texas that I wish to arrange my affairs so as relieves me from the necessity of doing so. If all else fails I will rely on her good sense and affections and believe that she will not fail in her duty." Lucretia stood firm—and in Maryland. But that did not stop Green from pursuing property elsewhere.<sup>28</sup>

Green turned his attention again to the south, not to Texas or to Florida, but to the Caribbean. In the spring of 1847, Green became interested in promoting the independence of St. Domingo—today's Dominican Republic—and Cuba, both from Spanish rule. He reflected to Pierre Soule "how much more prosperous our trade with these magnificent islands would be if both were independent & well governed." The plantations of Cuba, however, quickly paled in Green's assessment when compared to the opportunities available on St. Domingo, and so he would concentrate his efforts and activities here. The valuable mines of copper ore captured Green's attention, certainly more than any claim he may have made for extending the fruits of self-government to the island's inhabitants, and he proposed to purchase an interest in the island's mineral lands "with a view to work the mines & establish a commercial house on the Island." He immediately hired an agent to investigate the value of the lands and the mines on St. Domingo and soon thereafter began negotiating a contract to tap the copper.<sup>29</sup>

Exploiting the mineral resources of St. Domingo was only one part of Green's plan. He also promoted American settlement of the island, and to accomplish this end, he turned to the Mormon Church. Writing to Mormon leaders, Green argued that there "is no place on the face of the habitable globe on which the persecuted Mormons could establish with any prospect of becoming an independent and sovereign nation. Here they may establish themselves in the mountains. Here they may grow and become a great people." Mormon Charles R. Dana, sent by Brigham Young to Washington in order to raise funds, quickly warmed to Green's scheme of Mormon emigration to St. Domingo. "In a word all sects and parties are bound to listen to Genl Green," Dana wrote in his diary. Green, in turn, expressed his sympathies for the plight of the Mormon people, and he informed Dana that "should your people send a

28. Green to H. L. Kinney, June 23, 1845, Green to J. Rynes, July 4, 1845, Duff Green to Ben Green, October 23, 1845, November 2, 1845, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

29. Duff Green to Ben Green, October 20, 1845, Green to Pierre Soule, March 19, 1847, Green to P. Hargous, March 28, 1847, Nicholas Julia to Green, May 28, 1847, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

deputation to Washington as I think they should do, it will give me pleasure to aid them as far as I can." Whites on St. Domingo were capable of self-government, Green contended, and the U.S. government would most certainly support independence and Mormon settlement there. "It follows that if the [Mormons] remove in a body," Green concluded to Dana, "their present number would give them a great influence and very soon enable them to alter the government to meet their own views. When we see what our armies are doing in Mexico we may anticipate what such a body of our people would do in the midst of a people similar in all respects to those of Mexico." If the Mormons concurred with Green's plan of settlement, he would go with them "to explore the country and make a contract of colonization and introduce and sustain them in all their rights and privileges." Brigham Young never took Green's idea seriously, however, for he had already proclaimed the valley of the Great Salt Lake as the new destination for the Saints.<sup>30</sup>

Green still pursued the copper on St. Domingo, with or without Mormon settlement, and to facilitate that end, he needed political stability on the island. U.S. recognition of the island's government would do the trick, he surmised. To accomplish this, the Dominican government should send a diplomatic agent to the United States. Not surprising, Green offered to serve as that representative and press the island's claims to independence in Washington. He believed that both political parties favored the recognition of the island nation and that it could be accomplished in the next session of Congress. His assessment was not far off the mark. Green convinced the Taylor administration of the efficacy of appointing a special agent to the Dominican Republic, and, in 1849, Secretary of State Clayton sent Green's son to the island to negotiate a treaty of commerce and to secure a coaling station for U.S. steamers. The objective was to augment American commerce in the Caribbean, but securing a commercial treaty and access to a harbor served a dual purpose by blocking any potential British designs on the island. Clayton allowed Green's son extensive discretionary authority for negotiating a treaty, even to the point of recognizing the independence of St. Domingo. The Taylor administration also authorized Ben Green to negotiate with Haiti for the adjustment and payment of claims owed U.S. citizens, in return for "partial recognition" by the U.S. government.<sup>31</sup>

The Greens did not stop with canals, railroads, Texas lands, and

30. Davis Britton, "Historians Corner," 15: 1: 105–10.

31. Green to Pierre Soule, March 19, 1847, Green to P. Hargous, March 28, 1847, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Henry M. Wriston, *Executive Agents in American Foreign Relations*, 446–50, 460, 723–24.

Caribbean copper. During the Mexican War, they purchased more property and received additional income from several other ventures back in the United States. Green obtained a charter and organized a company for the purpose of purchasing and improving land fronting the bay of New York and inquired into acquiring property near Hoboken, New Jersey; he contracted with the U.S. Navy to build the Gosport Naval Yard in Norfolk, Virginia, and to purchase land lying opposite the naval yard; and he purchased a furnace, rolling mill, and land in Jackson and Carter Counties in eastern Tennessee. But the most profitable venture for the Greens came through their legal skills. The father and son team received enormous sums of money for successfully defending Cherokee claims against the federal government—enough money to completely cover all of Green's debts by 1850.<sup>32</sup>

The Transportation Revolution was not the only economic trend defining Jacksonian America. The Age of Jackson witnessed a remarkable advance in inventions and innovations in technology, such as the telegraph in 1846 and Charles Goodyear's vulcanized rubber in 1844. Innovation and invention, and the lure of new technologies, captivated Green. During the 1840s, he applied for a number of patents: for an "improved method of deepening rivers & harbors," for a "new and improved mode of constructing railroads," for a "new and improved method of removing earth, constructing embankments, and filling up of lowlands," for a "new and useful improvement on the iron truss to be used in the construction of bridges," and for an "improvement in the manufacture of steel." Green pursued a contract with the state of Louisiana "for making an embankment on both sides of the Mississippi, from the state line to the Gulf." Although he failed to secure the contract, he had laid the plans for the extensive levy system lining the Mississippi River today. Green also had an interest in the telegraph, contracting for the use of telegraph lines along his numerous railroad routes, and, after Charles Goodyear showed him a piece of "India Rubber," he purchased rubber bands from Goodyear for his rolling mill. Little wonder, then, that Green had been elected a director of "The Maryland Institution of Literature, Science, and Art." He was indeed the archetypal capitalist of the day, possibly embodying more than any other figure the spirit of Jacksonian capitalism and territorial expansion consuming America in the 1840s.<sup>33</sup>

32. Green to W. Townshend, March 4, 1846, John Duff to Green, April 30, 1846, George H. & Jos. Nash to Green, October 11, 1847, Bill of sale with C. K. Gillespie, July 10, 1848, Ben E. Green's Biography of Duff Green, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

33. Green to the Commissioners of Patents, October 14, 1847, Green to Goodyear, November 11, 1848, Goodyear to Green, November 14, 1848, Henry O'Reilly to Green,

## VI.

Green also pursued another, much more familiar, venture in the late 1840s—editing a national newspaper. And we end the 1840s where we began the decade, with Green supporting a Whig candidate for president and bitterly quarreling with Calhoun over it. The presidential election of 1848—the last presidential campaign of the Age of Jackson—was one of the last presidential elections in which Green attempted to contribute a significant verse. Again, Calhoun flirted with a potential run for the White House in 1848, and, again, he was Green’s top choice for the office. So, in the spring of 1847, Calhoun and his supporters investigated the possibility of establishing a daily newspaper in the nation’s capital, promoting a Calhoun candidacy. The South Carolinian proposed that Green take the editorial reins, but his supporters thought otherwise. “The selection of the editor, you know, must depend on the leading contributors,” Calhoun notified Green. “I suggested your name, as if sounding; and I am bound in candour to say, there was no response. Nothing was said in disparagement of you, but I was forced to infer that it did not meet with approbation.” Of course, he concluded to his friend, “I would individually be glad; nay rejoice to see you returned to your old position.” But he had to consider the opinions of his backers.<sup>34</sup>

Opposition to Green, even outright indignation toward him, was not uncommon in Jacksonian America, and it would again appear in the late 1840s. In the summer of 1847, a Calhoun supporter in Alabama informed the South Carolinian that rumors of Green becoming the editor of a pro-Calhoun daily gave the enterprise “no additional favor.” Not that anyone would be dissatisfied with his editorial abilities or his dedication to the paper and the cause of Calhoun, but they thought his name alone would damage the paper’s reputation, arguing that he had become too identified with Washington politics and newspaper tactics to give the organ “that lofty and disinterested tone indispensable to its influence.” Others agreed. McDuffie had told Calhoun that he could not select a worse man as a confidential adviser than Duff Green. Francis Pickens informed Calhoun that “I could not trust myself with such a man [Green]” and that “*such men as these* [Green] *would ruin any man*

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December 26, 1848, February 15, 1849, Edmund Burke to Green, April 20, 1849, Green to J. B. Plauche, February 6, 1850, Watson & Renwick to Green, April 19, 1850, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Green’s numerous petitions for patents and other innovations, mostly undated, are found on roll 22 of the Green Papers, SHC-UNC; George W. Dobbin to Green, October 13, 1840, Green Papers, LC.

34. Calhoun to Green, March 9, 1847, *AHA Publications*, 719.

*in the world.*” Calhoun, of course, delicately informed Green that his editorial services would not be needed.<sup>35</sup>

Green, expectedly, responded with his usual arrogance, selfishness, and rashness. He found Calhoun’s dismissal of his role in establishing and editing a national newspaper difficult to accept. No one, he boldly told Calhoun, had made more sacrifices on his behalf and received so little praise or reward for doing so. He had a right, therefore, to demand Calhoun’s complete and public support, and if he refused it, then Green would be forced to sever all ties of friendship and political support and to hold Calhoun in the same contempt as he had Jackson and Van Buren. “I have now been proscribed for many years by Jackson, Van Buren, Tyler and Polk because they all feared that any influence I might obtain would be exerted for you,” he told Calhoun. “If your *friends* can persuade *you* that I should be proscribed for any cause . . . it is time that I should know it.” If Calhoun’s supporters established a paper promoting a Calhoun candidacy and desired Green to edit it, then he would heartily accept. But if they preferred another editor, Green was “at no loss as to the motives and will be at no loss for the means to establish a paper.” Calhoun responded firmly to Green’s insolent diatribe and threats, and after coolly reflecting on the whole matter, Green apologized for his imputations against his friend, and the two men quickly reconciled. Green would not, however, be the editor of any Calhoun organ.<sup>36</sup>

Turning his attention to the 1848 presidential campaign, Green let personalities rather than party platforms determine his choice of a candidate. If the Whigs picked McLean and the Democrats chose Wright or any other person from the Van Buren wing, Green would gladly support the Whig ticket. However, he preferred to see McLean nominated by the conservative wing of the Democratic Party, and he really wanted to support the Democrats, but he could not stomach a candidate that touted the Wright–Benton–Van Buren line. Supporting a Whig was distasteful as well, for Green believed that some of the Whig leaders in the east were trying to absorb the abolitionists, and “modern abolition is disunion.” By the spring of 1847, Green realized that few could contend with the popularity of General Zachary Taylor, and he gradually gravitated toward a Taylor candidacy. He suggested to his friend Cralle that Taylor’s popularity was due more to “disaffection

35. Joseph Lesesne to Calhoun, August 21, 1847, *AHA Publications*, 393; McDuffie to Calhoun, March 10, 1844, *AHA Publications*, 214; Pickens to James Edward Colhoun, April 27, 1845, Pickens to Calhoun, May 23, 1845, *JCCP*, 21: 541, 571.

36. Green to Calhoun, March 17, 1847, *AHA Publications*, 371–72.



towards the party organization and party leaders” than to “a strong and fixed preference for Genl Taylor,” and that the Democrats, scrambling for a candidate, found Taylor a “good enough Democrat” more to “sway the Whigs than to commit themselves.” Although Green hoped the Democrats would select the general, he never let the Whig nomination of Taylor dampen his open support for the Taylor ticket—even when the Democrats nominated his friend Cass.<sup>37</sup>

Green preferred the Southerner Taylor over the Westerner Cass because he believed that the former figure could heal the sectional divisiveness consuming the country after the Mexican War. The slavery issue had reared its ugly head following the introduction of the Wilmot Proviso in 1846, remaining the preeminent political issue polarizing Americans and tearing asunder the second American party system during the 1850s. Green saw it coming. He disdained any issue that divided Americans and threatened to unravel the threads of Union. The abolition movement, he maintained, undermined the security and imperiled the rights and interests of the South. The Southern states, therefore, must unite upon a candidate to thwart the evil designs of a deceitful minority and to preserve the Union. Defensive measures would halt the offensive maneuvering of abolitionists. But Green felt his admonitions were falling on deaf ears. “I confess that it does appear to me that the South are a doomed people,” he intimated to Calhoun in 1847, “and I am compelled to ask myself, why should I who have so little in common with them take upon myself the advocacy of their interests?” He could not close his eyes “to the fact that this lethargy in the South indicates a state of indifference which . . . greatly discourages me.” Taylor would reverse this trend, thought Green.<sup>38</sup>

37. Green to Calhoun, March 26, June 1, 1845, October 23, 1846, *JCCP*, 21: 446–47, 581, 23: 501; Green to Calhoun, April 1, 1847, *AHA Publications*, 1108–9; Green to Cralle, May 30, 1847, Cralle Papers, Clemson University; Green to R. C. Wood, December 8, 1848, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Abraham Lincoln to Richard Yates, December 10, 1847, in Roy P. Basler, ed., *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, 1: 419. Following the election of Taylor, Lincoln asked Green if he would “get the ear” of General Taylor in order to secure for Lincoln an appointment to the General Land Office in Illinois. Lincoln also asked for Green’s support in such an appointment: “Would you as soon as I should have the Genl. Land Office as any other Illinoisan? If you should, write me to that effect at Washington where I shall be soon. No time to lose. Yours in haste.” Lincoln had just lost reelection to Congress, hence his haste to secure political patronage. Green returned Lincoln’s letter with the following endorsement: “I most sincerely wish you success.” Lincoln to Green, May 18, June 5, 1849, Basler, *Works of Lincoln*, 3: 49–50, 53.

38. Green article to nominate Taylor [1848], Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Green to Calhoun, April 6, 1847, *AHA Publications*, 1108–9.

Quite possibly confusion, more than discouragement, forced Green to turn away from politics after the election of 1848. Which party protected the rights and interests of the South and of the Union? Which party promoted that healthy alliance of the West and South? How could there be Free-Soil Democrats and proslavery Whigs? Which party supported internal improvement and economic expansion? Which party disdained the sectionalist tendencies of the abolitionists? The bonds of Union were beginning to tear, and massive territorial expansion was the ultimate cause. But how could something so advantageous and so desirable for the cause of economic expansion be the root of disunion? How could something that brought the sections of the nation closer together be the cause of its separation? In 1850, Green stood where many another Westerner did, wondering how the country could possibly be headed toward disaster. Territorial expansion bred bitter sectionalism, despite the expansion of the infrastructure Green so adamantly pressed as the cord to strengthen the bonds of Union. Both confusion and disgust, then, convinced him to look elsewhere for respite from potential political chaos and calamity. So just as he had at the end of the 1830s, Green drifted from the political arena at the end of the 1840s. Just as iron ore and coal had captured his attention in the late 1830s, railroads and industrial development consumed his attention in the late 1840s, remaining his chief focus until his death in 1875. By 1850, the Age of Jackson had come to an end, and the road to disunion commenced. Green's inestimable contribution to the Age of Jackson cannot be ignored. He had indeed influenced the development and character of Jacksonian America and, arguably, unintentionally laid the foundation for its demise. But Green's influence on the course of American history after 1850 could never match his contribution to the Age of Jackson. Only his perpetuation of the dynamic spirit of Jacksonian capitalism, well beyond 1850, revealed the last remnants of a quintessential Jacksonian American.



## CONCLUSION



### *The Last Years of a Jacksonian American*

Just when the Jacksonian era ended is still a matter of debate for historians. Some end it with the Wilmot Proviso in 1846, others with the end of the Mexican War and the election of Zachary Taylor in 1848, and some with the Compromise of 1850. For purposes of this study, maybe we should end it where Duff Green may have, in 1850, with the death of Calhoun. Green had made several attempts to convince his ailing and dying friend to move into his Washington residence, but Calhoun declined. Green's wife, Lucretia, nonetheless daily attended to Calhoun at his home, right up until his death in 1850. Or maybe he would have ended the era with the beginning of the collapse of the fragile alliance between Green's native West and his betrothed South. He must have felt anguish as he defended states' rights, a true interpretation of the compact of states, and an innate resistance to executive power. Yet his spouse had denounced internal improvements and a more diversified economic development and had displayed an unwillingness to support northwestern expansion. Free trade became the only concord between West and South by the end of the 1840s, but even the Walker Tariff of 1846 was not enough to stop the divorce. But 1850 is a good point to end this story. Although a representative American of the economic development of the 1850s, Duff Green simply no longer affected political development as he had during the 1820s, 1830s, and 1840s—the Age of Jackson.<sup>1</sup>

Some things in Green's long life followed him well into the next

1. Wiltse, *Sectionalist*, 474.

decades. For one, he would always face problems with debt. In 1851, after accumulating considerable income from defending Cherokee claims, combined with the sale of ten thousand acres of some of his mountain property in Hampshire County, Virginia, Green was finally able to eliminate his entire debt, still leaving him in possession of a considerable amount of valuable coal and iron ore lands in Maryland, as well as substantial stock holdings in a number of companies to the amount of several hundred thousand dollars. But within a matter of a couple of years, he had lost most of his wealth in bad stock transactions. By 1853, then, Green was "again so much embarrassed" that he again needed the aid of his son to "keep him out of his difficulties." There was no regular income for Green, save for some property in Washington, and he was forced to sell his Gosport property. In 1855, Green purchased a large amount of land in and around Dalton, Georgia, permanently moving his family there. The income from the Washington property, however, ended with the beginning of the Civil War, forcing him to acquire the Washington County Tennessee Iron Works for additional income. He now used Confederate money to pay his debts. At end of the war, Green was left holding a trunk full of worthless Confederate money, and he was forced again to turn to his old London contacts to provide him with the necessary capital to start several ventures aiding the devastated South. Such aid would not only get Green back on his feet, it would also help Southern planters get back up on their feet as well.<sup>2</sup>

Green would also clash again with Calhoun, but this time it was Calhoun's son, John C. Calhoun Jr. In 1853, Green loaned Calhoun Jr. five thousand dollars in order to pay off some of the latter's creditors. When Calhoun Jr. could not repay, Green threatened to sue him. John maintained that the money advanced him was a down payment by Green for part purchase of Anzie Island, which Green flatly denied. John desired to avoid once and for all "so disagreeable a connection" with his father's friend and appealed to Green for an amicable settlement of the outstanding account. Green, however, was not so sympathetic. He informed Calhoun Jr. that he would abandon the lawsuit, but only if John could pay him back by January 1, 1855. In the end, in December 1855, Anzie Island was auctioned in order to pay John's creditors. Ironically, Green purchased the island for fifty dollars more than the amount he loaned Calhoun Jr. It says much about Green's character that he would be so demanding and inflexible regarding the

2. Ben E. Green's Biography of Duff Green, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

debt of a family member, even while he himself faced enormous debt problems.<sup>3</sup>

Green not only continued into the 1850s his deep interest and investment in railroads and mining ventures, but he also embarked on a crusade to reform the financial system of the United States. His papers contain numerous writings, memorials, and bills on national currency, treasury certificates, banking, credit, public debt, bonds, coinage, specie, and labor. Much of this material was later condensed and inserted throughout *Facts and Suggestions*. After the Civil War, in an attempt to aid the reconstruction of the war-torn South, Green concentrated mostly on financial, rather than industrial, projects. Students of the history of finance and business during the mid-nineteenth century would find Green's manuscripts a gold mine for primary research.

Green's preoccupation with American credit and finance stemmed from his Anglophobia, a malady he would carry to his grave. Long after Texas annexation, long after the war with Mexico, and long after the Civil War and the abolition of slavery, Green continued to protest loudly against England's economic and commercial policies, which he argued were detrimental to the growth of the U.S. economy. Always the Anglophobe, he sought reforms in currency, credit, and finance as a means to protect the United States from British commercial and financial policies. Much of his writings in the 1850s exhibited a deep distrust of the British financial system, as he regularly spoke of a purposed design on the part of British credit to damage the American system. Unless Congress adopted his various proposed reforms, he argued, the U.S. financial system would always be at the mercy of British capitalists. He viewed with suspicion British imperialistic schemes in the mid-nineteenth century, such as the construction of the Grand Trunk Railroad in Canada and a British naval depot in Puget Sound, and he even saw British designs in French intervention in Mexico in the 1860s.<sup>4</sup>

The ultimate objective of currency reform was national prosperity through the unification of American economic power and progress. Economic interests, both agricultural and manufacturing, combined with financial reforms that strengthened American credit, would unite the sections of the nation, Green argued. Even after the Civil War, Green believed economic progress and financial reform would reunite

3. Ernest M. Lander Jr., *The Calhoun Family and Thomas Green Clemson: The Decline of a Southern Patriarchy*, 146, 154.

4. *Facts and Suggestions*, 104, 109–10, 184–201.

the country and protect its economic interests from British machinations.<sup>5</sup>

During the 1850s, Green also fought the drift toward disunion, just as he had during the 1830s and the 1840s. Here again, economic unity would lead to national solidarity. In an open letter to the governor of Alabama, Green warned against the “fanaticism & ambition” of the North, which would inevitably result in an “unholy war” upon the South. How should the South combat that growing menace? “We must prepare for this conflict—How? Not by Disunion—for that will accelerate the crisis—Our only hope is in this—that mind and money govern the world—we must educate our sons and our daughters in reference to their duty, and we must avail ourselves of all the proper means of acquiring wealth,” Green advised the South. “We must develop our resources and increase our wealth by stimulating the industry of our people. . . . We must make good roads that our people may associate more with each other and increase the profits of labor by diminishing expense of transporting its products to market. . . . Give us good Roads, and union & concert and we need fear no danger.” Green promoted the use of railroads—iron roads—over regular roads. Ironically, one of the stark weaknesses of the Confederacy, and one of the chief causes of its defeat, was its lack of iron roads.<sup>6</sup>

As the election of 1860 approached, and Americans became more and more polarized between North and South, Green wrote numerous editorials on slavery, states’ rights, and the tariff. He attempted, again, to start several newspapers dedicated to these controversial issues—the *Daily American Telegraph* in 1852 and the *American Statesman* in 1857. Both failed quickly. “Upon the questions of the tariff, the banks, the currency, and Negro slavery,” he wrote in the *Statesman*, “the Editor believes that the real issue is between the American people and their system of industry, of commerce, and of credit on one side, and foreign nations, aided by their systems of industry, of commerce, and of credit on the other.” There should be no Northern interests, or Southern interests, or any sectional interests for that matter, rather all Americans should rally on *their* common interests. But if any interest threatened American unity and the American Union, it was the abolitionists.<sup>7</sup>

Following the Civil War, Green blamed sectional interest in the North for the outbreak of the conflict. Just as he had charged the British government for false philanthropy, he assailed sectional interests in the

5. *Facts and Suggestions*, 62, 80, 92, 184, 191, 193, 199, 200.

6. Green to Governor of Alabama, undated, Green Papers, SHC-UNC.

7. Quoted in Green, “Militant Journalist,” 261.

North for the same crime, “Believing, as I do, that the late civil war was the bitter fruit of the sectional organization of the federal party of the North, and that their pretence of a desire to benefit the African is but a mask to cover their purpose of enslaving the white man, by the centralization of a corrupt, irresponsible power in the federal government, in open violation of the fundamental principles of the Constitution.” He had once charged Jackson and Van Buren for their supposed attempts to consolidate power in the national government, thereby undermining the Constitution. Green also traced what he believed to be a direct connection between the Federalists of the 1790s—monarchists—with the Radical Republicans of the 1860s—also monarchists. The real loser of the Civil War was the common man, Green declared. Radical Republicanism had won the day, and its avowed purpose was military despotism and centralized power.<sup>8</sup>

In the election of 1860, Green supported John Bell and the constitutional Union Party. He wrote the Tennessee senator in 1859 advising him not to deliver a speech advocating a southern transcontinental railroad route, for it would appear that Bell was advocating a sectional measure. Sectionalism had always been anathema to Green, even on the eve of the dissolution of the Union.<sup>9</sup>

Green opposed secession. He had labored too many years to prevent it, he recalled after the Civil War. Yet, believing that his allegiance to his state, Georgia, was paramount, and “sympathizing with the people of the South,” he joined the Confederate cause. He also believed that the South had no chance of winning on the battlefield; the CSA did not have the economic infrastructure to carry on a war against the industrial North. Still, he did everything within his power to augment the Southern war effort, by developing its manufacturing base, constructing internal improvements, and utilizing its natural resources. He purchased and operated a number of iron works in Tennessee and Georgia, manufacturing carbines, rifles, shot, shells, horseshoes, nails, railroad iron, farm implements, keelboats; his iron was used in sawmills, mines, and stone quarries. All said, Green’s manufacturing interests were responsible for nearly one-half of the iron output for the CSA. Generals Bragg and Longstreet relied heavily on Green’s iron works in their campaigns in eastern Tennessee. He also offered to raise funds and build railroad routes, encouraged the development of home manufactures and a cotton market, recommended the use of French ports in order to

8. *Facts and Suggestions*, 34, 36–38, 39–41, 42–44, 45–47, 206–14, 215–34.

9. “To the People of the Slaveholding States,” undated, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Green to Bell, January 15, 1859, in Joseph H. Parks, *John Bell of Tennessee*, 337.



garner both French and English aid in ending the war, and provided the Davis administration with advice on foreign affairs.<sup>10</sup>

Green's services as a diplomatic agent were again called upon in the late 1850s and during the Civil War. In November 1859, Secretary of State Lewis Cass, by order of President James Buchanan, sent Green as a "Confidential Agent of the United States" to the Texas border with Mexico, in order to investigate and report on incursions across the Rio Grande and subsequent depredations against American citizens by Mexican rebels under the command of J. N. Cortina. After making careful observations and deliberating with Texas governor Sam Houston, Green was to propose any measures he felt should be adopted to counter the border raids and punish the brigands. The Buchanan administration also sent Green on another diplomatic mission in 1860, this one of considerable more importance to the interests of the United States. President Buchanan sent Green to Illinois to confer with President-elect Lincoln about the secession crisis and to obtain his views on the Crittenden compromise designed to quell the secession movement. Lincoln and Green were good friends, having boarded together in Washington, and they discussed the situation for hours. According to Green, the president-elect declared his steadfast opposition to the extension of slavery into the territories acquired from Mexico, but that he would also support an amendment to the Constitution implementing Crittenden's compromises if the people approved of such changes. Green, for his part, explained to Lincoln that the South did not want to dissolve the Union, but that they needed certain constitutional guaranties protecting them from the numerical majority of the Northern states and interference into their domestic institutions. Lincoln promised to write out his views in a letter to Green, but the president-elect sent the letter first to close party operatives in Washington, Radical Republicans who never allowed the letter to go public. Little wonder Green distrusted Radical Republicans and blamed them for the War between the States.<sup>11</sup>

10. Green on Secession, undated, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Green, "Industrial Promoter," 37–39; Green to Jefferson Davis, March 1, September 6, 1862, March 24, 1863, Davis to Green, March 12, 1863, in James T. McIntosh, ed., *The Papers of Jefferson Davis*, 8: 73, 378, 9: 98, 112.

11. Cass to Green, November 18, 1859, Green to Cass, December 24, 31, 1859, January 8, 10, 10, February 20, 1860, in Manning, *Diplomatic Correspondence*, 278–79, 1153–56, 1161, 1163–65; Rives, *American Policy*, 2: 266–67. On the conversations and correspondence between Lincoln and Green in late 1860, see David E. Woodard, "Abraham Lincoln, Duff Green, and the Mysterious Trumbull Letter," 211–19.

Green continued his diplomatic efforts during the Civil War, “under the hope that I could aid in adjustment of pending issues, and mitigate its consequences.” In January 1864, he wrote President Lincoln, requesting permission to be allowed under a flag of truce to come to Washington in order to arrange negotiations “which might so adjust the sectional conflict between the North and South as to terminate the war.” The same letter was sent to President Davis. Lincoln denied the request because he felt it would be construed as a recognition of the Confederacy. Davis rejected the proposal because it placed the Confederate president “in an attitude neither desirable nor just.” Green’s letter to Lincoln, Davis added, “will no doubt be regarded as a declaration on your part of neutrality in the war now pending between the northern and the Confederate States of America.” Unfortunately for both warring nations, the bitter conflict continued for another sixteen months, and another several hundred thousand men and boys died horribly because of Green’s failed yet commendable attempt to reunite the country.<sup>12</sup>

During his distinguished, often controversial public life, Green emerged as one of the more pivotal figures in early-nineteenth-century America. He played a major role in many of the major events and issues that defined the making and the course of Jacksonian America, from Missouri statehood and the Missouri Compromise to the election of Andrew Jackson in 1828 and the party battles and contentious political struggles that characterized this seminal period of U.S. history. Green also rubbed shoulders and daily conversed and wrangled with the most pivotal figures of the nation’s developmental period: Andrew Jackson, John C. Calhoun, Martin Van Buren, Henry Clay, Daniel Webster, and numerous other influential Americans of the time. One of his closest roommates was a young Abraham Lincoln. He had chatted with many leading British statesmen of the 1840s. His family connections were equally notable: his brother-in-law was Illinois senator Ninian Edwards, and his daughter married the son of John C. Calhoun. Yet for so important a player on the national political scene and contributor to Jacksonian America, few scholars have studied Green, and those who have paid him visit have misunderstood him. This study intends to correct this deficiency and to offer one view of the public career of Duff Green.

12. Green on Secession, undated, Green to Lincoln, January 2, 1865, Green Papers, SHC-UNC; Davis to Green, January 9, 1864, in Dunbar Rowland, ed., *Jefferson Davis, Constitutionalist: His Letters, Papers and Speeches* (Jackson: Mississippi Department of Archives and History, 1923), 6: 147–48.

In the end, Green's personality and attitude determined his public career and his contributions to Jacksonian America more than any other factors. His abrasive personality often alienated many around him and made it difficult for others to endure his presence for a lengthy period of time. An acerbic pen, a sarcastic comportment, a penchant for innuendo and insult, even a looseness with the facts if it served his purpose, only worsened the situation. The editor had indeed earned the sobriquet "Rough Green." Little wonder, then, that Green enraged so many of his contemporaries, even to the point of outright violence against him. The Blair assault in 1832 and Bayly's verbal battering in 1852 are only a few of the examples of the hatred he inspired in those around him. Either one hated Green or simply tolerated him; few loved him, and almost no one had a neutral opinion of him.

Green was also presumptuous. He often embellished his own role in the events and issues of the Jacksonian era and attributed to himself a self-importance that was obvious to all and obnoxious to most. That he was a pivotal figure of the day cannot be denied; that he knew this and let it be known to others also cannot be denied. His arrogant demeanor in assuming he would influence and determine key appointments and patronage following the election of Jackson in 1828 is an example of how his presumptuousness alienated his allies. Certainly he deserved a say in the matter as a result of his pivotal role in getting Jackson into the White House, but he assumed and demanded too much from his fellow Jacksonians, which only hurt his cause of securing posts for friends and family. His actions in the 1840s again proved how unrivaled arrogance could undermine his most cherished objectives. Threatening to overthrow the president of Texas by instigating and leading a popular revolt certainly was not the most intelligent way to garner support for annexation. The episode with Anson Jones was quite possibly the most presumptuous moment of his entire life.

During his public life, Green accomplished a great deal. He owned and edited a national newspaper that exercised considerable political clout, became a respected political operative and renowned national figure, and entered into several lucrative business ventures. Yet his abrasive and presumptuous personality detracted from these accomplishments and gave them a negative connotation. He was his own obstacle to greatness.

Green also had a self-righteous attitude. In his own assessment, he was never wrong, always right. He, and he only, knew the definition and boundaries of liberty and power, of democracy and aristocracy, of virtue and corruption, of republican principles and government, of ter-

ritorial and economic expansion and integration. His views on the nature of the Union and of the Constitution reigned supreme in his mind. Those who disagreed with him were an anathema and deserved to be exposed and assailed for their dangerous precepts or traitorous policies. Truth was his domain. Yes, Green was practical and pragmatic, and he often inclined to compromise on many issues, such as the tariff. But there was no compromise when he believed principle was on the line or his views were being ignored, opposed, or impugned. He enforced his infallibility even to the point of outright violence, as his numerous brawls indicate. Green would sooner face financial ruin than to admit that he had erred. Indeed, his whole course of drifting away and eventually opposing Jackson reveals just how self-righteous Green could be. He believed that he was right and that the president was wrong, and, therefore, he chose partisan banishment and the loss of both patronage and income over surrendering to Jackson's mighty will. The publication of the Seminole correspondence and the constant attacks on Eaton and Van Buren, for example, drove him away from the confidence of the president, but Green did not see it that way. He was, after all, the one pursuing the righteous, principled course. He even threatened his familial relationship with Calhoun on several occasions.

Ironically, Andrew Jackson and Duff Green had much in common when it came to their personalities and attitudes. They both shared the same traits; both had iron wills and stubborn departments. Both, for example, always saw a conspiracy lurking around, waiting to undermine their position. Jackson saw a conspiracy in "Calhoun, Green, and Co.;" Green saw a conspiracy in "Van Buren, Eaton, and Co." And at the bottom of these conspiracies lay corrupt, designing, ambitious, and unprincipled men and policies. Neither had the patience, reserve, and poise—as did Van Buren—to deal with the other. Sooner or later the two personalities would clash, and they did, to Green's detriment—although he would most certainly disagree. But Green's personality and attitude (and Jackson's for that matter) represented the age in which he (they) lived. His raucous behavior was indicative of frontier America. Jackson engaged in as many brawls and duels as did Green. American society in the nineteenth century was contentious, boisterous, and dynamic. The life of Duff Green merely reveals this fact. He exhibited every one of these traits.

But Green's personality and attitude also determined his exceptional role in the Jacksonian period. Green published the Seminole correspondence because he felt he was right and must expose a wrong to the American people; he opened the Eaton "scandal" to the whole nation

because he felt the “evil ministers” must be exposed and defeated; he became a vocal opponent of the president he helped elect because he believed the Old Hero had become corrupt. The consequence of all of this was the permanent break between Jackson and Calhoun, controversial and unprecedented cabinet reorganizations, the ascendancy of Martin Van Buren, and, ultimately, the formation of a concerted opposition to the Jackson administration. In short, Green helped shape the nature of Jacksonian politics, and his personality lay behind it. Quite possibly, without the acerbic pen and the arrogant demeanor of Duff Green the political battles of the Jacksonian period may not have been so contentious, at least when it comes to the internal struggles that wracked the Jacksonians. Again, Jackson could not refer to Calhoun without mentioning Green. There is a good reason for this: the latter had more to do with the break between the president and the vice president than any other figure at the time. And the break would undeniably shape the course of Jacksonian politics.

Yet for all his influence upon the Jacksonian period, scholars have either ignored his pivotal role altogether or, when they have mentioned Green, have outright misunderstood the man and portrayed him as something other than this study suggests. Therefore, this study revises existing assessments of Duff Green and offers a more balanced, less negative appraisal of the man’s career and contributions to early U.S. history. What emerges, then, is a considerably more independent individual who was far more moderate and less fanatical than previously thought.

Many of Green’s contemporaries and scholars of the Jacksonian period labeled Green a lackey of Calhoun. He was, they argue, an unprincipled minion, bent more on undermining the careers of Calhoun’s rivals, uplifting the South Carolinian’s stature at any cost, and reaping the benefits thereof. But the evidence suggests otherwise. During the election of 1828, for example, Green vehemently defended and promoted the candidacy of Jackson, only defending Calhoun when no one was attacking the Old Hero. Not once did the editor lift Calhoun above Jackson; Green consistently supported a unified and formidable ticket. The election of Jackson the Cato—and all that he stood for—and the defeat of John the Second—and all that he threatened—preoccupied Green. The political elevation of Calhoun was of no concern to the editor. The South Carolinian, like the Old Hero, sought liberty and justice for the American people. Green steadfastly remained with the Whig ticket in 1840, chiding Calhoun for his apostasy in supporting Van Buren, and he had no qualms about ending their ties when it appeared

that Calhoun on more than one occasion questioned Green's advice or denied his editorial expertise.

Other examples of Green's independence abound. One of the reasons for establishing the *Globe* was the perception among Jackson and some of his supporters that Green was not completely supportive of the administration. They said he was a tool of the vice president. But Green continued to defend the president and his policies through the end of 1830, never promoting Calhoun at the expense of Jackson. And all the while, Jackson and his closest advisers sought the demise of Green. Even when Green came out publicly against the president, he knowingly did so to the detriment of his future of political riches and patronage in the Jackson administration. He would sooner forfeit these fruits than cater to the president and to the evil counselors who had the Old Man's ear. In short, Green was fiercely independent, even to his own detriment.

Throughout the 1830s, Jackson, not Calhoun, consumed Green's attention. Although he supported Calhoun at one juncture or another from the presidential elections of 1832 to 1848, Green's primary consideration was the defeat of Jackson, Van Buren, and their ilk, not the election of Calhoun. In fact, in all the presidential elections between 1832 and 1848, Green supported—again, at one juncture or another—other candidates. He only endorsed Calhoun because he believed the South Carolinian would uphold the promises of the 1828 election—promises that he believed the Old Hero failed to keep. When he thought that Calhoun was not the best man for the nation, Green dumped him for another, more worthy statesman, most of them representing Northern states, from Cass to McLean. Green even opposed Calhoun on certain political issues and publicly revealed his disappointment in the South Carolinian on several occasions. In short, Green sought the demise of Jackson and Van Buren, and all that they had supposedly become: corrupt, power-hungry, despotic; the editor never promoted Calhoun at the cost of liberty, republicanism, states' rights, and democracy. The issues far outweighed the men—"measures, not men" was a constant theme of Green's. He was far too self-righteous and presumptuous to be someone's lackey.

Both contemporaries and scholars have also labeled Green a pro-Southern, proslavery, sectionalist of the fire-eater mold. They have portrayed him as a zealot who desired to promote Southern interests at all costs, even if it resulted in disunion. But, again, the evidence suggests otherwise. Green, for example, often chastised both Southerners and Northerners for their sectional tendencies: he openly criticized the

incendiary speeches of McDuffie and Hamilton during the tariff debates; assailed the parochial economic interests of certain Northern manufacturers; and supported a tariff compromise that considered all sections of the Union. Initially, Green also opposed the threats of nullification emanating from South Carolina. He warmed to, and finally accepted, the theory of nullification only when he perceived the actions of President Jackson as more dangerous to the *Union* and to the *republican* principles inherent in a *federal* constitution; Green endorsed the theory of nullification because he believed it was the only remedy to check the aggrandizement of consolidated and executive power and to rescue the reserved powers from the encroachment of the delegated. In fact, he only accepted nullification in theory; he stopped short of endorsing the actual implementation of it. He would oppose secession as well. His free-trade campaign and promotion of territorial and economic expansion in the 1840s represented a Westerner more than a Southerner.

Green supported the institution of slavery, as most of his fellow Missourians and Kentuckians had. Slavery, however, was a question of states' rights, of economic vitality, and of constitutional protection of property. But Green never argued that slavery was biblically sanctioned or that it was the natural condition of the African. In fact, he favored gradual emancipation and the colonization of freedmen. Only when the abolition movement gained strength in the 1830s did Green openly revisit the question of slavery. He detested abolitionists for their hypocrisy. Free white laborers in the North, he argued, endured conditions far worse than any slave in the South. Abolition, moreover, threatened the Union, he maintained, for if abolitionists could harness the power of the federal government on their behalf, bloody civil war and race war would result. Abolitionists, not Southern planters, fostered sectionalism and narrow interests; abolition, not the expansion of slavery, threatened the existence of the Union. Abolitionists, moreover, were merely tools of the British juggernaut, conspiring to destroy American commercial power and to undermine the Union. Slavery would eventually disappear, Green argued, and be replaced with a more efficient labor system; but that day would arrive naturally and deliberately, not forced by the government or by shortsighted sectional hypocrites. In short, Green was a moderate and a Westerner first. His interests were primarily those of Missouri and Kentucky, not of South Carolina or Mississippi.

Duff Green died on June 15, 1875, at Hopewell Farm, his home near Dalton, Georgia. He was buried in Dalton Cemetery next to his wife,

who had died in July 1863. Green was eighty-four years old when he passed away. His brief obituary in the local newspaper stated that he had “attained much celebrity as a caustic and fearless commentator upon public men and measures.” Green’s funeral was held at the First Baptist Church, and the hymn sung was entitled “How Blest the Righteous When He Dies.” Duff Green must have selected the hymn prior to his death. Such an action would have befitted his personality. He would have had it no other way. One is reminded of a comment made at the funeral of Andrew Jackson three decades earlier, when a friend of the Old Hero’s asked another if he thought Jackson was in Heaven. “If he wants to be,” replied the friend. Those who attended Green’s funeral could have easily said the same about him. But would there be enough room in Heaven for both Andrew Jackson and Duff Green?<sup>13</sup>

13. *Dalton Enterprise*, June 15, 1875.





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