*Preamble*

*'Whereas the United States Congress at its session in 1850*

 *at the bidding of the slave holders and apparently for the promotion*

*of slavery enacted a law for the recovery of fugitive slaves which*

*deprives the accused of those means of defense which the constitution*

*allows to the most aban­doned villian in the land and is so*

 *manifestly iniquitous and unconstitutional as to create*

 *doubts in the minds of lovers of freedom as to their duty in*

*sustaining sais law*

*And, whereas, public opinion is the expounder of all laws*

 *enacted by an elective government. Therefore we, the citi­zens*

 *of Acton feel it our duty to express in this public man­ner*

 *our views of this, as we believe, unjust and despotic law.*

*Resolves*

*Therefore resolved that we, sons of the Puritans and de­scendants*

*of that patriotic band who with Capt. Isaac Davis and other*

 *kindred spirits on the 19th of April* 1775 *made*

 *the first organized resistance to the armed power of*

*the mother country while attempting to enforce oppressive*

*laws in that war which led to the independence of*

*these States Feel it to be a duty we owe to the memory of our*

 *Fathers that we owe to ourselves, to our descendants, to our*

 *Country and to our God, to record our solemn protest against*

 *said laws.*

*Resolved that although we justify our fathers in their*

 *re­sistance to the oppressive acts of the Government of*

 *England, we could not be understood as advocating forcible*

 *resistance to our Government or any of its despotic laws,*

 *believing there is still power with the people at the ballot box*

 *to cause their rights to be respected and to affect the repeal*

 *of all unjust and oppressive laws and when selecting men*

 *for our rulers if we had more regard for principles than for*

 *party and when depositing our ballots if we would be guided*

 *more by the dictates of reason and the welfare of our race*

 *than by designing politicians and a corrupt party press we*

*should have less reason to complain of unjust laws and less*

 *fear of losing our liberties.*

*Resolved that the act for the recovery of Fugitive Slaves with*

 *its summary process, its irresponsible tribunals, its violation*

 *of habeas Corpus and jury trials, its disregard of ordinary*

 *rules of evidence, and its temptations to bribery is an abomination*

 *without a parallel in the annals of our government*

*.*

*Resolved that the apparent compromise and agreement*

*between the advocates of chattel slavery and the monied*

 *interest in sustaining the Fugitive act and kindred*

 *measures should be a stimulus to all lovers of Freedom*

 *and the rights of man in uniting to sustain all measures*

 *which tend to advance the cause of human liberty and*

 *maintain our in,­alienable rights.*

*Resolved that a compliance with the act for the recovery*

 *of Fugitive Slaves would be in opposition to all our cher­ished*

 *ideas of the Declaration of Independence, our Bill of Rights,*

 *and our moral duties as accountable beings and that we*

 *would sooner suffer the pains and penalties that might be*

 *inflicted upon us for refusing it our aid than be guilty*

 *of hindering a Fugitive from oppression in regaining*

 *and sustaining that liberty which we believe to be of more value*

 *than gold.*

*Resolved that as friends of liberty and well wishers for the*

 *peace and prosperity of our country we believe that a rigorous*

 *enforcement of this law instead of cementing our bond of*

*Union and stopping all agitation on the subject of slavery*

 *will and should awaken the friends of human rights*

 *to increased activity and that our duty as lovers of our country*

 *and our race should impel us to use all the means*

 *in our power for the repeal of this as we believe un­wise*

 *and wicked law.*