*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.*