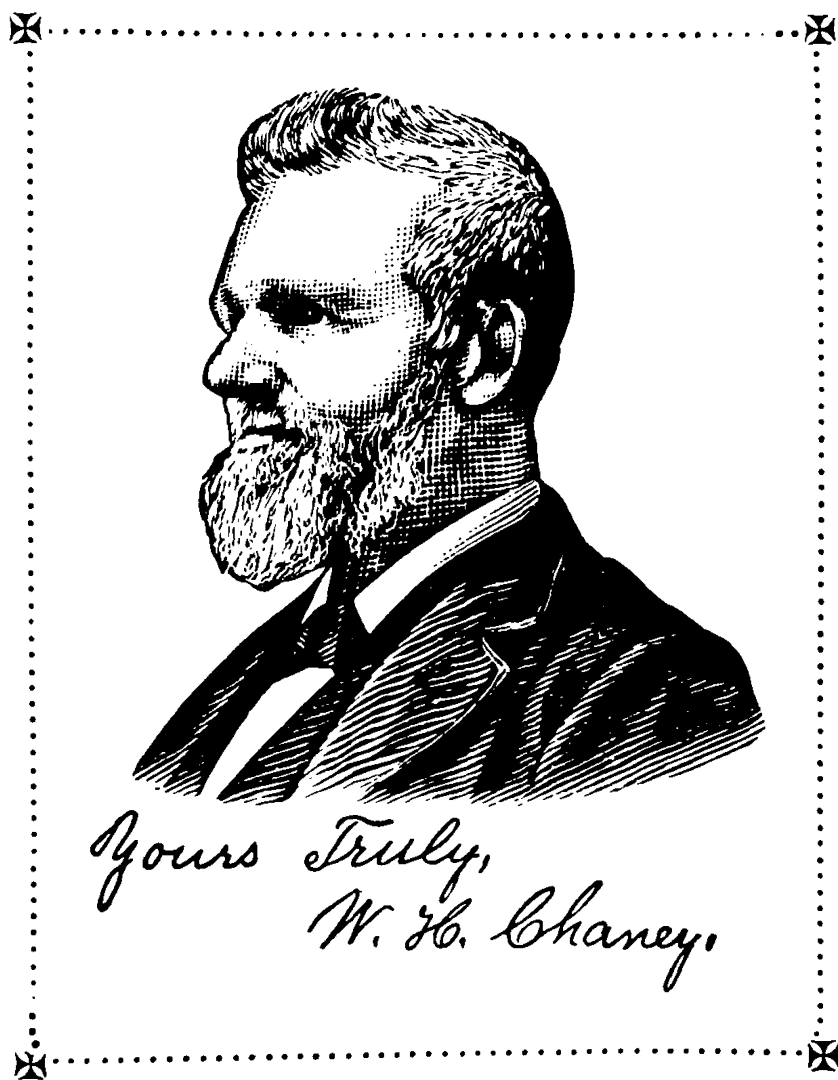




An engraving of "Professor" William H. Chaney in later years. Reprinted by Harvard University Library from *Chaney's Primer of Astrology and American Urania* (St. Louis: Magic Circle Publishing Co., 1890).

PORTRAIT OF A MAINE "KNOW-NOTHING"
WILLIAM H. CHANEY (1821-1903)
HIS EARLY YEARS AND
HIS ROLE IN THE ELLSWORTH NATIVIST
CONTROVERSY, 1853-1854

By
Allan R. Whitmore

In January 1852 Charles Lowell, an Ellsworth attorney hobbled by rheumatism and a painful hip, asked lawyers across Maine to help locate a junior partner for his busy Hancock County practice. A frequent and abrasive commentator on morals, public issues, and the arts, Lowell learned in March that Samuel P. Dinsmore, editor of the *Bangor Mercury*, had misrepresented his search as a confession of professional incompetence. On April 1, however, Lowell was able to gloat that the newspaper's distortion of his curcular letter had been "MEANT . . . FOR EVIL, BUT GOD DESIGNED IT FOR MY GOOD!" The embarrassment of the attorney by the *Mercury* had unintentionally resulted in attracting an able applicant to his door. "I have secured," he announced, "the assistance of W.H. Chaney, Esq., late of the Iowa Bar—a gentleman in the prime and vigor of life, but of several years experience in the profession, and of considerable promise."¹

Lowell came to rue his initial delight. The vigor and promise he detected in his new associate took novel forms over the next several years as religion, nativism, and lawlessness divided Ellsworth residents into war-

ring factions. Chaney at first stood aloof; then, gauging the public mood, he exploited the strife for personal gain, and his demagoguery helped the community earn a national reputation for vigilanteism when on the evening of October 14, 1854, a mob tarred, feathered, and rode the Jesuit priest John Bapst on a rail. Two years afterward in an opportunist stroke of posturing so characteristic of Chaney, he condemned the community for the villainy in which he himself had centrally figured.

Although Chaney, like all people, was a unique individual rather than a historical type, the record of his life and career treats not only a fascinating character but also an important episode in the American "Know-Nothing" movement of the middle-1850s.² The Ellsworth crisis of that period is not widely remembered today, but several treatments of the Bapst outrage have appeared.³ Although varying in focus and depth, these studies agree in interpreting that subject, and they concur in depicting Chaney as one of the leaders—indeed, probably the chief incendiary—in the ugly nativist hysteria which gripped the town. This paper seeks to contribute to the understanding of this Ellsworth controversy by examining the life and career of Chaney before his arrival in the community, his life there from 1852 to 1854, and his role in the nativist episode and the attack on Father John Bapst in 1853 and 1854.

I. A YANKEE OUTCAST ON "THE WESTERN BORDERS OF CIVILIZATION."

William Henry Chaney was nearly thirty-one years old when he returned to Maine in December 1851.⁴ He had left the state twelve years before as a naval recruit with a grudge against the world.⁵ His father's accidental death in a sleighing accident when William was nine years old, cruel and abusive treatment by the seven different famil-

ies of relatives and neighbors with whom he was successively placed in Kennebec and Penobscot Counties, and continuing obligations for the intellectually-inclined lad to work fired his resentment and determination to avenge his fate. Around his native village of Chesterville, the incorrigible adolescent gained the nickname of "Ugly Bill"⁶ and a reputation as the worst youngster in the county for his surly and combative nature. People predicted he would eventually die in prison, if not on the gallows. In 1837 the sixteen-year-old went to a coastal town, perhaps Camden,⁷ where he found work on a fishing schooner which sailed Penobscot and Frenchmen's bays.⁸ A friendly young ship captain, John Remick, whom he came to regard as both a father and a brother, could not dissuade Chaney from his determination to become a ruthless pirate.⁹ "If mankind would not respect me," he reasoned, "I would make them fear me." For two years the angry young man worked to acquire the skills, strength, and tough bearing of a sailor. In October 1839 he enlisted in the navy to perfect his nefarious character. Denying he could read or write, Chaney began to chew tobacco, learned to box,¹⁰ and cultivated a reputation as "a wild rover."

In July 1840 the nineteen-year-old ruffian deserted the receiving ship *Columbus* in Boston harbor and moved furtively Westward toward the intrigue of New Orleans. Chaney conceived of himself as a crafty buccaneer hunted by society: "A refugee, a price set on my head, every man's hand against me. Ishmael was a model of gentleman in comparison." His romantic imagination led him to dramatize his flight: "Travelling only at night, skulking and sleeping by day, under an assumed name, I directed my steps for what was then the 'far west,' namely Ohio." He worked his way as a sailor across Lake Ontario, through the Welland Canal, and along Lake Erie,

until fever forced him ashore for seven weeks to recover. Then, after reaching Cleveland, he earned his passage down the 311-mile Ohio Canal to Portsmouth, where he hired on a flatboat bound for New Orleans. Just before the trip was to start, however, he relapsed into fever and a deep chill. The captain, believing Chaney would not recover and not wishing to be burdened, ordered him to the wharf. As the boat floated away, Chaney was left shaking with fever and feeling totally deserted. He later recalled, "I counted my money—\$1.27; had no baggage—not even a spare shirt; sick and in a strange land; not yet twenty years old—really, my prospects looked gloomy."

People in the small hamlet of Sciota Furnace came to his aid by securing medical attention, nursing him through a difficult month of suffering, finding him a suit of second-hand clothes and two new shirts, and helping him obtain a teaching position in nearby Porter Township, a small village of about a thousand residents ten miles from Portsmouth, which he began on his twentieth birthday on January 13, 1841.¹¹ The kind treatment he initially received in Scioto County transformed his outlook. He forgot about piracy and concentrated on self-improvement. His natural intelligence, curiosity, and energy, together with his summer study at a local academy—where Chaney earned his tuition by sweeping classroom floors and by tending the stove—, helped him compensate for a lack of formal preparation for teaching. Thus did Chaney enter into an eleven-year experience on what he later referred to as "the Western borders of Civilization."¹²

Life was hard for Chaney during several years of "boarding around" with the families of his students and rooming in "a miserable garret" in a rough area populated by "the lower grade of humanity." The "writing

master”¹³ scrimped on coarse homespun clothing so as to save some of his eight to ten dollar monthly salary to purchase books, which provided “his only companions.”¹⁴ Having few friends and little money, he taught, composed poetry, and read widely, hoping that somehow he might find a way—perhaps through the study of law—to achieve wealth and fame.

Apparently in early 1843 Chaney met a wealthy Virginian, Ephraim Pollock, among whose holdings was a farm on the Ohio side of the Ohio River across from the small Virginia towns of Moundsville and Grave Creek and thirteen miles southwest of Wheeling.¹⁵ A self-made man himself, Pollock was impressed by the ambition and intelligence of Professor Chaney, whose patched trousers, thread-bare coat, rustic shirt, stout boots, and old hat lent credibility to his story of a life of disappointment and adversity. Pollock said the Wheeling area would present teaching opportunities as well as long-range prospects for success, offered him a farming job, and promised to assist his advancement. Chaney accepted the advice and moved two hundred and fifty miles up the Ohio River to pick apples, operate a cider press, and manage Pollock’s orchard in the Belmont County farming district known as Dellie’s Bottom. A later self-portrait of Chaney at this time described him as being “five feet nine or ten inches high . . . [with] a stout, muscular frame that weighs not less than 180; his pants are made of tow and linen, and as he wears no suspenders, they are supported by a leather strap buckled round his hips. He has black hair, dark eyes, rather small and sunken, and high cheek bones. His shirt collar is open and turned back, sleeves rolled up to the elbow, and as he thus stands with his brawny arms akimbo, we have a fair specimen of a hardy son of New England whose adventurous spirit has led him to the West.”¹⁶

Pollock discussed his worker's abilities, hopes, and needs with Morgan Nelson, a wealthy lawyer and Whig city councillor in Wheeling. Nelson agreed to provide Chaney with room and board while the young man read law under his guidance and assisted the attorney in his work and household. Chaney assumed his new duties in Wheeling on September 3, 1843. He swept the floor and kept the office in order; he drafted declarations, proceedings, and pleadings; he copied legal arguments and briefs; he ran errands and collected bills; and he performed the other general drudgery of the law office. His days were so filled with work that he seldom had time to use Nelson's law books before evening. Then he would struggle with fatigue and discouragement to read law cases and commentaries until he fell asleep—usually after midnight—on the battered couch which was the only furniture in his room. Chaney continued teaching school in autumn and winter months and worked summers in the Belmont County fields to meet his clothing and miscellaneous expenses.¹⁷

Chaney tried to identify himself with his new community. He wrote poems and essays for the *Wheeling Times and Advertiser* and served the Whig Party as a stump speaker and polemicist.¹⁸ The booster summoned residents to lift their eyes from selfish matters to regard Wheeling's potential greatness. Chaney characteristically saw a dastardly conspiracy which the city would eventually overcome. "She has long been imposed on by enemies," said the newcomer, "and depressed by pretended friends; but she will soon throw off the yoke of inactivity and sunder the fetters of indifference."¹⁹

Fundamental to Chaney's beliefs about individual development and community growth was his reverence for education. He thus condemned lax city leaders who had held a university charter for fourteen years without act-

ing. Minds and talents remained undeveloped; families lacked money to send youngsters away to college. A pleasant and healthy site was "just far enough from the business part of the City not to be disturbed by the noise and confusion attendant there, and just retired enough to give that buoyancy and thought to the mind which it requires in the pursuit of knowledge."²⁰ Chaney also urged the State of Virginia to invigorate its laggard efforts in public education to enhance democracy, morality, and enlightenment.²¹

Despite his hopefulness, life was not easy for the law student. Loneliness troubled him, for he had no friends and few acquaintances beyond Mr. Nelson and the rough, cynical and callous people he met in performing legal assignments. Feeling sensitive about being, like Moses in the land of Midian, "a lone stranger,—in a land that's strange—,"²² he wrote poetry recalling the happiness of his early boyhood and celebrating his native New England.²³ He received no encouragement or kindness except from his mentor. Indeed, young Wheeling lawyers and businessmen increased Chaney's discomfort by making fun of his rude clothes and awkward manners.²⁴

His essays and stories, in response, criticized fashion and social snobbery. Probably because of his own experience, Chaney displayed throughout his life sympathy for the outcast, the criminal, the sufferer, and the pauper. In his poem "THE ERRING," he urged people to

Think gently of the erring,
Ye know not of the power
With which dark the temptations came
In some unguarded hour.
Ye know not how earnestly
They struggled, or how well,
Until the hour of weakness came
And sadly thus they fell.

Think gently of the erring,
 Oh, do not thou forget,
 However darkly stained by sin,
 He is thy brother yet.
 Heir of the self-same heritage;
 Child of the self-same God;
 He hath but stumbled in the path,
 Thou hast in weakness trod.

 Speak gently to the erring,
 For it is not enough
 That innocence and peace have gone,
 Without thy censure rough?
 It sure must be a weary lot
 That sin-crushed heart to bear
 And they who share a happier fate,
 Their chidings well may spare.

 Speak kindly to the erring,
 Thou yet mayst lead them back,
 With holy words and tones of love,
 From misery's thorny track.
 Forget not thou hast often sinned,
 And sinful yet may be,
 Deal gently with the erring one,
 As God hath dealt with thee.²⁵

Chaney showed no such friendship for charlatans, however, in a May 1844 episode which also revealed the unusual combination of gullibility and vindictiveness in his character. C.S. Chase, an itinerant lecturer on mnemotechny, visited Wheeling claiming to have invented the science of memory improvement and to hold a copyright on the system, which no one could teach without a personal license. When Chaney attended a lecture, Chase impressed him with abstruse descriptions of the art, references to Latin terms, and an air of lofty knowledge. Chaney afterwards sought out the gentleman-scholar about obtaining a license to teach mnemotechny and become an associate. He was convinced that Chase had

found a key to decipher the mysteries of man and nature which stodgy scholars had overlooked in tedious orthodox studies. Chase said he was happy to work with Chaney. In fact, he said, he needed someone in that very region to guard against imposters as well as to enlighten the populace.

Chaney went away delighted with his apostolic assignment. He looked around Wheeling to learn more about the subject which he had immediately accepted as a science. He found a copy of J.R. Murden's *The Art of Memory*, published in New York in 1818, which listed sixty studies that had been printed on the subject before that date. Chaney read further in the book. The form and coverage seemed familiar. Then it came to him. He had been deceived. Chase had plagiarized from Murden's study.²⁶

On May 27 Chaney wrote a letter to the *Wheeling Times and Advertiser* declaring the lecturer to be a humbug. Rather than being a bold discoverer, Chase was a poor copier: "Wherever Chase has attempted improvements [of Murden's study], he has created confusion, where before existed harmony." Chaney also disputed Chase's claim that during the past seven years, he had presented the first lectures on phrenology west of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Chaney challenged his adversary to debate two questions:

1st. 'Is Mr. Chase really an author upon Mnemotechny?'

2nd. 'Is Mr. Chase an imposter, and does he deserve the severest criticism of the community on which he has imposed?'

Chaney explained that he would support the negative side of the first question and the affirmative on the second. Chaney then pushed his attack further to humble the poser before the public: "If Mr. Chase backs out from this proposition, by simply asserting that my state-

ments are incorrect, then he must be under the charge of being an *imposter* and *humbugger*. If he meets me manfully, and proves the falsity of my assertions, then he will establish for me the reputation of a mischief maker and slanderer, for which he may obtain another copy right." Chaney added that he preferred a public debate so that each man could demonstrate mnemonic principles.²⁷

Chaney's letter was not the sole criticism of Chase. Another correspondent to the *Times* made the same charges. Chase, learning about the letters, asked the editor to postpone the May 28 edition until he could persuade the critics to withdraw their accusations.²⁸ Both men refused, and Chase proceeded to denounce Chaney, author of the more savage critique, in the newspaper.

Chaney replied with sarcasm and ridicule:

Hallo, Mr. Public! Have you seen how this S.C. Chase, *alias*, knight of the Needle and Thread, *alias* quondam pedagogue, *alias* primeval Phrenological Lecturer, *alias* Animal Magnetizer, *alias* Latin scholar, *alias* Methodist Preacher, *alias* Temperance Lecturer, *alias* author of the *Art of Memory*, *alias* Mnemotechny Lecturer, has served me up in his article in yesterday's *Times*, in the same manner that a tailor would sew up a bag coat? Ye gods such wit! and from such a source!

He is like the Indian who said, 'if you get one truth from me for every two lies me speakum, den you do very well.'

Claiming that Chase's "Brain is too shallow to perceive a man's meaning . . . ," Chaney urged the lecturer to "make immediate application to a *cow doctor*, and have his head bored with a good sized gimlet and have the vacuum (for nature abhors a vacuum) filled with pepper and salt to cure him of the *hollow horn*."²⁹

After three years of work, study, and controversy, Chaney completed his legal preparation and was admitted to the bar. Soon thereafter, in September 1846, he moved to Burlington, Iowa, a growing young city on the west

bank of the Mississippi River.³⁰ His first legal case in Iowa Territory demonstrated his distinctive approach to his profession.

Arraignment proceedings had begun for the trial of a suspect charged with brutally beating his wife. Chaney observed to other attorneys in attendance that any lawyer who tried to clear the suspect should himself be imprisoned for life. When the judge instructed the indigent defendant to choose an attending lawyer to act as counsel, he selected Chaney, who reluctantly accepted.

After the defendant registered a plea of innocence, the prosecutor stated his need for testimony from the seriously injured woman who lay near death in a hospital several miles away, and he requested that her deposition on the case be taken. Chaney agreed to the request when the judge said the attorney's consent would not prejudice a further objection.

Chaney, the prosecutor, and a clerk went to the stricken woman's bedside to record testimony of such cruelty that the always emotional young defense lawyer broke into tears. As the men prepared to leave, the woman requested Chaney to remain a moment. She pathetically asked him to swear to exert his entire abilities to save her husband. Her death being likely, she said that her husband—a basically good person who had been haunted by misfortune since his father had disowned him for marrying the woman—was the only other protector of their children. She further asked Chaney to persuade the estranged paternal grandparents to take care of the couple's children if her husband was convicted and if she died. Chaney swore to do his best.

When the trial resumed, he waited for the prosecutor to present his case and then moved to strike the woman's deposition, the major evidence, from the record because

the Iowa constitution required a defendant to be confronted by every witness. The judge reluctantly sustained Chaney's motion but expressed sadness in seeing a young attorney of great potential "lightly violate his word. No confidence can hereafter be placed in his professional agreements." Without this evidence, the largely hearsay case of the prosecution could not convict the defendant.

The bar and citizenry of Burlington scorned the young lawyer who had made such a distinctive entrance into the community. When the woman died, and her husband soon after, Chaney succeeded in fulfilling his promise to reconcile the children with their grandparents.³¹ Typical of Chaney was his willingness to ignore orthodox conduct and follow his own, frequently erratic, judgment as to what was "right."

Indeed, poor judgment and gullibility undercut many of his programs for advancement. He later bemoaned his many mistakes and admitted that he had often been "duped by men of smooth and polished exterior."³² In autumn 1847 a judge assigned Chaney, who considered himself a very clever lawyer, to represent a burglary defendant. The man was placed in Chaney's custody when the trial was delayed. Chaney believed his client was innocent in spite of damaging evidence to the contrary. The defendant convinced him that they should both travel the two hundred miles to the actual criminal's hiding place in St. Louis, capture the guilty party, and establish the client's innocence. Brashly feeling that he had detected truth where others were blind and believing that by a bold stroke he could establish his professional brilliance, Chaney agreed to accompany the man on this pilgrimage of vindication. In St. Louis the client escaped and left an abashed Chaney to return alone to Burlington.³³

After sharing an office with the respected attorney, and later judge and federal commissioner of patents, Charles Mason,³⁴ Chaney opened his own office in July 1848 and announced that he would devote "particular attention to procuring Land Warrants for Soldiers and promptly attend to all general agency business."³⁵ In addition to his private practice, he was appointed city recorder in July 1850.³⁶ While in that position he served as a notary public and ran his law practice from the city council chamber.³⁷ In December, he also assumed the position of deputy clerk of Burlington Township.³⁸ As in Wheeling, Chaney joined civic activities by, for example, playing an active part in the establishment of a lyceum, serving as secretary of the Burlington Hook and Ladder Company No. 1, and participating in a Burlington mass meeting to support the controversial Compromise of 1850.³⁹ In the March 3, 1851, city elections, the attorney ran as a Whig for re-election as city recorder, receiving fewer votes than his party's mayoral and treasurer's candidates and losing 493 to 243 to the Democratic nominee.⁴⁰

Fortune smiled on him, however, when the city council appointed him solicitor for Burlington that spring and, even more on the evening of July 10,⁴¹ when he married Jane Anna McGeary of Burlington, the twenty-one-year-old daughter of a once-wealthy family which had not prospered since migrating from Pittsburgh. Jane, a milliner and maker of artificial flowers, was a freckle-faced girl of medium stature with reddish-brown hair, expressive eyes, and a pleasant smile. Her gentle, amiable, and generous nature endeared her to Chaney, who had been quick in the past to pursue attractive women but equally careful in avoiding serious relationships, let alone marriage.⁴² Impressed by her intelligence, he wished that she shared his interest in science and

philosophy as much as she delighted in literature and the fine arts.

The couple enjoyed but a brief moment of bliss. Ten weeks after the marriage of the Chaney's, police arrested Jane's brother for passing counterfeit money.⁴³ A day or two later, on September 30, she fell seriously ill—probably from cholera which was then epidemic in Burlington—and died five days later without leaving her bed. A melancholy newspaper account of her death mentioned the crushing unhappiness her demise brought to her "aged parents, and others to whom she was equally endeared," but strangely made no specific mention of her husband.⁴⁴

As city solicitor, Chaney represented Burlington three weeks later in the October 31 and November 1 jury trial of a civil suit brought by Jacob Yanaway. Chaney and the city lost the case, as the jury awarded \$278 to the plaintiff.⁴⁵ On November 10 the city council appointed a replacement for Chaney and also removed the city surveyor.⁴⁶ Chaney's service as city solicitor had been controversial. His characteristically unorthodox performance of his duties had earlier drawn public criticism.⁴⁷ Although no further information about the Yanaway case exists, the simultaneous appointments of a new solicitor and a new surveyor raise the possibility that the management of a city land matter had displeased the council.

Whether his decision stemmed from his separation from his legal post, grief over his wife's death, or other considerations, Chaney left Iowa in November 1851 to return to his native state. In travelling to his destination in Maine—which probably was in Penobscot County for his mother lived in Bangor and a sister resided, at mid-century, in Corinth—⁴⁸ he stopped in either Franklin or Penobscot county to repay an old debt. Seventeen years

before, a man had brutishly knocked the adolescent Chaney to the ground and kicked him in the side injuring his ribs.⁴⁹ Chaney had over the years brooded about the incident and nursed a hope for revenge. He now looked up his former assailant and savagely beat him. Chaney later remarked that this "tremendous whipping" illustrated his regular "style of forgiving one who wrongs me."⁵⁰

II. A QUARRELSOME ICONOCLAST.

Learning in the *Bangor Mercury* about Charles Lowell's search for a law associate, Chaney approached the Ellsworth attorney in March 1852 and the two men agreed to form a partnership to begin on May 1.⁵¹ The satisfaction Lowell took in announcing the establishment of Lowell & Chaney soon faded as differences in personality, manner, and legal philosophy and ethics rose to the surface in their relationship.

Strained professional relations increased Chaney's continuing disappointment in a fickle fate which had left him a widower and wandering refugee. He blanched at a five-stanza poem "To My Mother" in the *Camden Advertiser*. The young poet "MARY" therein petitioned her mother not to stifle her frolics and thereby prevent her from enjoying life before adversity struck in her old age. Chaney replied in June with another poem "TO MARY" which revealed his philosophy and his present difficulties:

O, Mary 'laugh while yet you may,'
Nor will I call it 'rude and gay,'
Because I love a merry heart,
Where I can claim the smallest part—
But soon enough you're sure to find,
Your happy laugh is left behind;
For time in haste will sorrows bring
And o'er your mirth a sadness fling.

Then Mary laugh, be blithe and gay,
Enjoy life while yet you may.

Nor horde [sic] your mirth as miser's gold
 Till age cannot one joy unfold—
 And death with cold, relentless knife,
 Has severed all the sweets of life,
 Nor kindly spared one happy hour,
 But left you like a faded flower.

 But Mary, such has been my lot,
 Outliving all-by all forgot—
 I'm but a branchless, leafless tree,
 Without one joy on earth for me,
 Yet I would see others gay,
 And see them 'laugh while yet they may,'
 For joy is but a meteor light—
 It fades away and all is night!

 But Mary, in this fickle life,
 Where less of love and more of strife,
 Is mingled in each bitter draught,
 Which by each mortal must be quaffed,
 One antidote for every care,
 May yet be found in fervent prayer,
 That when this troubled life is o'er,
 We reign with God forevermore.

 Then Mary, don't forget to pray,
 Although you 'laugh while yet you may';
 And may that happy heart of thine,
 Ne'er know the with'ring blight of mine!⁵²

With Chaney as well as Lowell recognizing that their partnership had been a mistake, the two men agreed to dissolve thier law firm on July 3 and to pursue their careers independently.⁵³

Chaney's Iowa experience had demonstrated his professional iconoclasm. His legal training had been brief, unsystematic, and largely self-directed. He had as little respect for the forms and etiquette of the law as he had for the principles of other institutions. He disdained legal precedent as dry, deadly, and abstract.⁵⁴ When defending a person with a weak case, Chaney would proceed

to unusual lengths to present unlikely arguments and to describe analagous abstract situations which would support his client's position. In one such example, the *Ellsworth American* reported that Chaney "stated a hypothesis which seemed so unnatural, unreasonable, improbable, and so far fetched—(and a case quoted outside of the books to fortify the position)—that it gave the County Attorney a fine chance to reply . . . [that the sole source of Chaney's analagous case was] 'Bunkam's Reports,' "55 Chaney's unruly courtroom manner and irreverence for his profession led district court judge J.W. Hathaway to interrupt the attorney's argument to a jury to observe, "It is a filthy bird that fouls its own nest."56

Chaney wanted to reform the legal system. In seeking to revise the length of prison terms, he maintained that "*certainly*, not the *severity*, of punishment . . . deters the criminal." He described the institution of the grand jury as a "humbug" relic of medieval ignorance because of its secretive, one-sided, unrestricted, and expensive operation. Irresponsible prosecutors, jurors, and witnesses could so damage an innocent person's reputation that even a favorable trial verdict could not overcome the opprobrium of a grand jury indictment. Chaney also alleged that many trials concentrated upon the form and wording of a grand jury bill of indictment rather than upon the facts of the criminal situation.⁵⁷

Chaney continued to practice law after separating from Lowell, but he earned scarcely \$40 over the next two years. He believed the profession had declined over the previous dozen years as society became more enlightened. Only one lawyer in ten depended solely on his profession for income: "If they have the means," he maintained, "discounting and sharing notes constitutes a large proportion of their income. If without a capital, then they dabble in politics, strive for office, and if they fail

in this, they generally manage to become the pet of one who may chance to be more successful.”⁵⁸

“A Friend of the Law,” perhaps Charles Lowell, wrote the *Eastern Freeman* in Ellsworth to challenge Chaney’s assessment of the profession. He said that several Hancock County attorneys annually averaged from \$400 to \$1200 in fees. Chaney had received the smallest legal business of any lawyer who had ever practiced in the county. People had little confidence in his integrity, knowledge, and ability. “They look upon him,” said the anonymous critic, “as a man whose head and heart are both wrong—a man laboring under a singular compound of *mental* and *moral* insanity—as a man whose whole influence, public and private, is exceedingly deleterious to the best interests of society.”⁵⁹

With his law practice foundering, Chaney eked out a living by clerking in a lumber store where he busied himself “weighing out pork, drawing molasses, and trim[m]ing greasy lamps.”⁶⁰

Chaney was a romantic individual with a curiosity about life which could not be stifled in legal drudgery or general stores. Man, he maintained, should seek truth, rather than friendship or love:

Frail Friendship’s like a meteor flash,
Scarce lent from earth to heaven;
’Tis like the rainbow’s varied hue—
’Tis lost as soon as given.

And love is like an angel’s wing—
Half seen and then withdrawn—
’Tis like the flick’ring of the star,
That ushers in the morn.

But Truth—the guardian power on earth,
Of Friendship and of Love,
Stands by them close while here below,
Then guides them both above.⁶¹

Chaney wrote stories for the Boston *True Flag*, the Portland *State of Maine*, the *Boston Bee*, and other publications. Allusions to Shakespeare, Lord Byron, the Bible, and other sources, which dotted his writing, pointed to an inquiring mind. Nature and science fascinated him, as did such popular cults of the age as mnemonics, phrenology, and spiritualism, which promised universal understanding through a pseudo-scientific methodology.

When, for example, the Reverend S.S. Fletcher of Exeter, New Hampshire, delivered six lectures on phrenology to overflow crowds in Ellsworth's Lord Hall in autumn 1853, Chaney attended the series and came away as deeply impressed as he had from the presentations of C.S. Chase, the Wheeling mnemonicist, a decade before. No science, said Chaney, was less understood by the public than phrenology, which could guide people in understanding character as sheet music enabled a musician to play a new song. A phrenologist could not err in evaluating a subject's character, whatever the latter's clothing or appearance. Phrenology enabled man to remedy his personal "defects of organization" so that he could know himself and his society. Parents and school teachers, in particular, should master the science so they might instruct children in its principles. Thus did Chaney couple a curiosity about a general knowledge and life system with a disposition prepared to accept it. He also displayed a didactic and utilitarian concern with informing the public about a neglected system which could help reform society.⁶²

The same combination of personal curiosity and public spirit informed certain of his other interests. He sought knowledge about new inventions and natural phenomena. He thus followed accounts of a new comet in 1853⁶³ He marvelled about the development of an atmospheric telegraph. His report was not merely another

salute to progress, so typical of the nineteenth century, for he prepared a detailed description of the operation and practical consequences of the invention.⁶⁴ The same attention to detail and public edification featured his continuing concern with mnemonics.⁶⁵

Whenever a dramatic show or lecturer appeared in Ellsworth, Chaney turned out to learn or be entertained. When Mr. English's Dramatic Corps spent two weeks in Ellsworth in July 1852, Chaney praised the troupe for both the variety and the morality of its fare. As "WILLIAM OF ELLSWORTH" he offered in the August 6 *Bangor Whig and Courier* an acrostic to the beautiful and accomplished leading lady:

L ife's but a play, this 'world the stage'
 I n which with hope we first engage;
 Z eal kindly wakes the dreaming heart,
 Z eal urges on, we play our part,
 I nspiring crowds with wild delight,
 E' en while we feel a sick'ning heart.

 S ometimes applause the heart will cheer,
 T hen next a hiss will sting the ear,
 U ntil the soul in anguish yields,
 A nd flies the fake Elysian fields,
 R epulsed by envy, scorn and strife,
 T hat poison all the sweets of life.

 S uch is the actor's fated lot—
 T he curtain falls and he's forgot
 E nough, he's dead—new players rise,
 E ntrancing crowds unto the skies;
 L ife still is played, the scenes the same,
 E nticed by hope, lured on by fame.

Chaney seized all available opportunities to explore his intellectual interests. On Friday evening, October 1, 1852, he presented a lecture on "Science" at Lord's Hall. After the address, he remained to organize a local debat-

ing society.⁶⁶ On the following Tuesday night, the first meeting of the Ellsworth Debating Club took place, and Chaney was elected secretary. Together with the president and vice president, he then prepared the society's rules and regulations which were presented at the next meeting that Friday, when members discussed the precise question that Chaney's Burlington, Iowa, lyceum had several years before treated: "Do the signs of the times indicate the prosperity and perpetuity of our present form of government?"⁶⁷ A critic in the December 3 *Ellsworth Herald* admitted that the discussions drew many participants to instruct and amuse one another, but deplored the recent consideration of "woman's rights" as well as other "ridiculous themes" and urged club members to concentrate on practical subjects.

His earlier school experiences in Ohio and Virginia, as well as his intellectual interests and involvement in the Ellsworth Debating Club, made Chaney an appropriate candidate when a teaching vacancy appeared. In the summer term of 1853 he was assigned to teach in the district three Ellsworth school on the eastern side of the Union River. The March town meeting had established a committee to begin grouping students according to their abilities and ages. The third school district that term had two women teachers as well as Chaney, and the school committee determined that Chaney would teach the youngsters showing the most advancement. In practice, however, the committee moved a disproportionately large number of pupils along, giving Chaney over sixty students of widely varying ages and abilities when the term began on May 16.

Chaney's classroom was located directly over that of another teacher. The daily trooping of his students to and fro disrupted the class on the ground floor. After consulting various school officials, the imaginative Cha-

ney arrived at a novel solution. Onto the classroom floor, he shoveled a three-inch load of saw-dust which, he said, "emitted a sweet odor, completely deadened the sound occasioned by moving about, and by a daily use of the sprinkler, not only prevented the dust from arising but cooled the atmosphere by evaporation."⁶⁸

Chaney was an effective teacher with good rapport with students and a considerable devotion to education. When he obtained some vases and filled them with flowers for botany instruction, girls took it upon themselves to bring in fresh flowers every day. When the school committee visited Chaney's class, they were impressed with the industry and decorum of the students.

As a teacher, Chaney faced enormous burdens. He had not only the largest and most varied class in the Ellsworth schools, but also diverse instructional responsibilities which required extraordinary versatility on his part. In addition to the traditional studies of arithmetic, grammar, and geography, he offered formal instruction in history, philosophy, astronomy, algebra, and botany.

Although the school committee considered Chaney's teaching performance far superior to that of his predecessors, he felt so frustrated by school problems that he obtained little satisfaction. A feud broke out between Chaney and the Ellsworth school agent for reasons which are now unknown. Relations became so sour that the two men cut all relations and Chaney had to file suit for his pay. The teacher nevertheless performed his duties until the term ended with an examination of his students before school officials, parents of students, and "friends of education" on Saturday morning, July 23.⁶⁹

Even before his teaching responsibilities concluded, the ambitious Chaney had seized an additional opportunity, this time in journalism. Financial problems had haunt-

ed the weekly *Ellsworth Herald* since its founding in 1851. Its editor, the Reverend James Belcher, pastor of the local Baptist Church, had considerable newspaper experience, but he suffered from poor health. When he saw no means of reversing the newspaper's decline, he retired in June 1853 to concentrate on his religious duties as well as to escape the doomed paper before it damaged his reputation and his health.⁷⁰

Casting about for a replacement—as Chaney said—“to pilot it [the *Herald*] safely into the harbor of obscurity,” the publisher Elijah Couillard approached his fellow Ellsworth Debating Club associate to edit the paper.⁷¹ Chaney later explained that in June he had felt personally adrift and reckless, with “no ambition or pretention [sic] as an editor, and like a desperate adventurer, would as soon volunteer for a ‘forlorn hope,’ or to command a fire ship, as for a service less dangerous.”⁷² His June 10 salutory expressed uncertainty whether his tenure would be temporary or permanent. He modestly hoped to perform his duties creditably in a new field, and he lavished praise on the energy and ability of his predecessor.

Chaney declared that his paper would pursue an independent course, would assume the right to consider any issue or position, would not bow “to any party or sect—political or religious,” and would welcome discussion of all subjects promoting public morals and enlightenment. The management of the *Herald* would “never consent to their being used as a medium for personal abuse, crimination and recrimination, or a means whereby one party or sect may vent its spleen upon another, and thus stir up our citizens to strife and dissension.” The June 14 *Bangor Courier* observed that, “The new editor [of the *Herald*] has sprightliness and force—is a live man and will jump into the current of time where he finds it, and give his energies to the popular impulses.” Despite

his professions of meekness and uncertainty, Chaney was so ambitious that it seems unlikely he would watch passively while his newspaper expired.

Peril and alarm filled Chaney's editorials. Disturbed on one occasion by the slow construction of a crystal palace in New York to rival that in London, he transformed practical building problems into a test of national honor. Lacking a sense of proportion, Chaney invoked spread-eagled patriotism to declare that foreign nations might briefly surpass Brother Jonathan (the contemporary symbol of the United States), "but conquer him—never! *never!!* NEVER!!"⁷³

Chaney saw society threatened by both fanatical outcasts and institutional administrators. He was deeply alienated from his fellow man, suspicious of their intent, and eager to surpass them or bring them down to his level. In an editorial "Grumbling," he seems to have provided a self-characterization:

[The accomplished grumbler] feels his every hope in life cut off, and is angry if any one about him is successful. He is always grumbling at his own evil destiny, and wonders that every body don't [sic] come and sympathize with him. Feels himself the especial object of conversation for a whole village, and grumbles because he is slighted, if they don't talk about him. Grumbles if he hears his name mentioned in a crowd without understanding what is said, because he suspicions they are speaking evil of him. Makes pretensions to literature, writes a long essay for some country paper, and when he finds no one charges him with the authorship, grumbles because accused of writing it, and grumbles because the people are incapable of appreciating a production of so much merit.

Should any one else make a lucky hit, either in an essay or oration, he joins in the chorus of pronouncing it 'good,' but incessantly grumbles as the devotee prays in secret. If a historical fact has been introduced in the language of another, the writer is a plagiarist, and while he pretends to grumble, secretly rejoices at an opportunity for detracting from the merit of another. With him it is nothing but grumble, grumble, grumble.⁷⁴

In his editorials, the iconoclastic Chaney criticized journalism, law, and medicine for their formal procedures and etiquette.⁷⁵ He condemned the power of social customs and standards: "No laws are so arbitrary, no laws so exacting, no laws so imperative, as are those of society." He cited the common plight of young men with limited incomes who were pressured by convention and, particularly, by women into spending large sums on clothes and entertainment. Financial need sometimes lured them into crime and personal ruin. Determined to make "the laws of society . . . less imperative . . .," Chaney summoned strong, independent people to act: "There are . . . abuses in society which cry aloud for redress, and notwithstanding the press continually teem with articles upon this subject, yet no individual person will step forward as a pioneer in the cause of reformation, because they lack the moral courage to meet the sneers and taunts, of 'upstart' 'who wants you to be teaching us how we are to act!'"⁷⁶

Chaney promised that his paper would regularly scrutinize government. "A public officer," said he, "is merely a servant of the people, and as such, every citizen has a right to enquire into his acts and doings." Too many newspapers, being the agents of parties, sects, and other interests, failed to point out governmental malfeasance except when reform served partisan interests. The *Herald*, an independent paper drawing its support from "the sovereign people," would ignore personalities but would "show them [public officials] up on all occasions, 'to cry aloud and spare not[,] no not even a brother.'" Chaney was prepared for the abuse his reform efforts would provoke: ". . . We doubt not that we shall raise a breeze about our ears, and probably have every demagogue in the State snarling at us. But what of it? We owe them nothing but brotherly love and good will, so their snarling will be uncared for, unheeded."⁷⁷

The iconoclast believed that formality and ceremony had so separated churches from social needs that congregations had to push their clergy into reform involvement. Deploring dry sermons about the Trinity, the Divinity of Christ, and baptism, he preferred “two practical sermons . . . [to] one hundred and four doctrinal ones.” Clergymen should speak to people in common language about relevant personal and social problems:

We like to hear a man preach who does not hesitate to point out the sins of his congregation, and tell them how their work of reformation should commence—a preacher who seizes upon each passing event, either in the literary scientific or philosophic world, and turns it to account in his sermons. One who is *of* the people, and *with* the people—not a man who seems to be elevated above their heads, and deals out technical, doctrinal, metaphysical spirituality, upon the end of a ten feet pole; but one who will take us by the hand, even as a brother, tell us all our faults and how to correct them.⁷⁸

Although Chaney did not affiliate with any church in Ellsworth and although he considered many clergymen formal, insensitive, and impractical, he did not publicly break with Christian beliefs until 1859.⁷⁹ He thus condemned “the utter folly . . . and the malignant blasphemies” of “crack-brained infidels and hair brained fanatics” at a “disgusting” free-thought convention in Hartford. Assembled were “every profane, silly, and disorganizing creed”: “Socialist, Spiritual Rappers, Millerites[,] Abolitionists, Fourierites, infidels of every grade and kind met together in motley conclave to pour out ribaldry upon all that is good and holy. Hate and contempt of all religious truth, was the sole bond that united this incongruous and insane assembly.” Attacks on religion undermined the most “potent” influence in making people “humane, just and righteous.” “Without religion,” said Chaney, “society would soon lapse into chaos and

violent and evil passions assert their sway over man's selfish nature."⁸⁰

As one of the lighter aspects of his duties as editor of the *Herald*, Chaney dealt with enthusiastic amateur poets and essayists who favored the newspaper with their prized compositions. He informed one lady that "you must learn the laws of versification before you attempt poetry,"⁸¹ and told another literary craftsman that "you must remember that blank verse is as well entitled to measure and accent, as rhyme, although you are allowed greater freedom." The editor ridiculed a "YOUNG BYRON": "You're a queer fellow! What! you as good a poet as Lord Byron at your age? Bah! You never saw any of your sentimental nonsense in print or you would not think so."⁸² He apologized to another poet for not publishing her "very pretty" verses, but "unfortunately for you Lord Byron chanced to write upon the same subject several years since, and what is so very odd, his Lordship employed precisely the same language. You will find it in his 'Hours of Idleness.' We do not charge you with the theft, but must insist that it is a remarkable coincidence."⁸³

When Chaney's first issues of the *Herald* in summer 1853 contained essays of animal life and society in the West, *The Machias Union* and the newly-initiated Ellsworth weekly, the *Eastern Freeman*, began to poke fun at these tales which the *Union* attributed to Chaney's "fruitful imagination . . . which is most expansive and almost as wild as the prairies of his favorite west. If he would only tame his natural lightning but a little; and tie a string to it, it might be saved from running too far from home, which would be greatly to the editor's advantage."⁸⁴

Chaney could not accept such chiding without losing

his temper. The impulsive, inexperienced editor could not distinguish between malicious character assassination and the sharp banter and "one-upsmanship" of contemporary newspapers. He later admitted that like the man who knew only two letters in the alphabet, "letter go" and "letter rip," he "forgot the duty due both to ourself and the public, in the gratification of personal spite."⁸⁵ Despite his noble salutatory promise to avoid personalities, he continued a feud which his predecessor, the Reverend Belcher, had earlier developed with the *Eastern Freeman* and, on his own part, initiated an abusive campaign against his former law partner Charles Lowell, who was a frequent essayist in, and apparently an advisor to, that other weekly.⁸⁶

After two months of operating the *Herald*, Chaney stepped down to associate editor in late August.⁸⁷ His replacement, and publisher Couillard's new partner, was announced as George S. Raymond, who told associates that his real name was "Don Carlos R. Kearney," that he was the son of a Commodore in the United States Navy, and that he had been a revolutionary in South America. An adventurous past had allegedly seen Raymond build war vessels for Brazil, receive titles, fight sea battles, learn to speak six languages and write four, and command a ship yard on the Rio Grande. In the early 1850s he had moved to New York and then to Boston where his adventure and romantic stories appeared in *Gleason's Flag*, *Olive Branch*, *The Pictorial*, *Sunday School Banner*, *Waverly Magazine*, *The True Flag*, and the *New York Dutchman*. More recently Raymond had edited the *Northern Light*, a weekly newspaper in Portland. His wife Ervina, a writer of poetry and stories, also joined the *Herald* as associate editor.⁸⁸

Chaney apparently accepted his demotion without sorrow. He needed to learn the newspaper trade, and Ray-

mond would be “a competent instructor.” Chaney said his duties would be virtually the same, and he would continue to be active: “We shall do battle with small arms while Br. R[aymond] attends to the heavy ordinance.” The *Eastern Freeman* observed on September 2 that the new staff members of the *Herald* brought “much versatility of talent and newspaper experience.” In remarks obviously directed against Chaney, the *Freeman* said, “One much needed and desirable improvement—common courtesy and good manners—the paper can scarcely fail to make under the management of respectable and responsible conductors.”

The *Herald* profited only briefly from association with the Raymonds. Chaney and Couillard learned that Raymond was a bigamist, a liar, and a general rogue. As the scandal broke in Maine newspapers, particularly the *Portland State of Maine*, Raymond—whose actual name was Charles R. Ketchum—fled to Boston and then disappeared in New York.⁸⁹

Out of necessity, Chaney found himself back in the editor’s chair at the end of September struggling to learn his craft and to keep the troubled newspaper in operation. The weekly’s sorry financial condition led the concern to accept subscriptions paid in “butter, eggs, potatoes, apples, beans, poultry, and in fact anything that can be used in a family. We will allow as much as they will at any of the stores in the village.”⁹⁰ When his publisher, foreman, and adolescent helper all became ill, Chaney even printed the paper. “We didn’t know the *frisket* from the *tympan*,” he reported. “But something *must be done*. So we stript off coat[,] turned up sleeves, tied on a huge sheet of wrapping paper *à la apron*, and with the proprietor, scarcely able to stand up, to ‘roll’ for us, we worked till near the small hours in the morning.” Chaney said that if Couillard did not know “what a ‘frisket’ was,

we beat it into his noodle before morning, for twice the plaguy thing came frisking down on his head, making him cry 'O,' most melodiously."⁹¹

The *Freeman* permitted the *Herald* management to use their press when the latter paper's machinery broke down, but relations between the weeklies became more strained. After Chaney began a series called "Lowell Gems" to ridicule his former law partner, the *Freeman* reported receiving certain biographical information about the obnoxious rival editor which it proposed to publish under the title of "Chaney Pearls." These scraps, otherwise not explained, allegedly concerned "incidents . . . occurring in Camden,—at Thomas's Hill in Bangor and upon the 'Western borders of civilization' which although low and vulgar, are perfectly characteristic of the principal actor, and their publication would afford a rich morsel for scandal mongers."⁹²

Sneering attacks on Chaney by the *Freeman* matched his own venom. The paper commented in one note: "Noble and generous natures strive to improve, elevate, and ennoble mankind—but mean and envious spirits cannot bear the contiguity of that superior excellence so strongly with the native baseness and vulgarity of their own minds—and hence they are ever seeking to degrade and bring talent and worth *down to their own dirty level!*"⁹³

The *Freeman* described Lowell's dilemma as "AN UNEQUAL COMBAT."

Whatever the provocation and outrage upon a well-dressed, and well bred gentleman, he cannot safely and consistently, with a proper self respect, get down into the gutter and throw dirt and mud with a ragged, dirty fellow, who regards not the weapons of culture and decorum—and who has neither the character to loose [sic], nor clothes to be soiled!—The former is a stranger, a simpleton, at blackguardism—and the latter, an expert in all its varied modes and customs. It is just suited to a low mind, incapable of a noble conception!⁹⁴

In a similar vein, the same paper's editorial, "NATIVE INSTINCTS—Or, Refinement and Vulgarify," again contrasted Lowell and Chaney, describing the latter as

a person whose *deep-rooted, innate vulgarity* 'grows with his growth, and strengthens with his strength,' and that too in spite of all the influences of education—all the advantages of birth, of fortune, and of virtuous association! Yes, in spite of these benign influences, there ever appear in his designs and conduct, the ignoble sentiment, the licentious illustration, the vulgar trick, the blackguard joke, and the horse-laugh! There is nothing elevating, useful, or ennobling about him and his career. It matters not whether he resides in the East, West, North or South—whether he occupies a public or private position, nor whether he pursues a learned profession, a mechanical, or other pursuit, the *low buffoon, and the vulgar blackguard*, still stand out, in bold relief, vulgarizing the minds, vitiating the tastes, and undermining the morals of the rising generation! Such a creature is wholly incapable of a great and noble conception in behalf of humanity. His soul is ever among the revolting elements of a swinish debasement.⁹⁵

A letter from QUIZ (probably Charles Lowell) elaborated on the editorial. It alluded, without mentioning names, to the mutual fondness of Chaney and nineteen-year-old Mary Alice Jordan, daughter of a wealthy Ellsworth lumber merchant Joshua Jordan, and wondered—because of Chaney's apparent intimacy with one of the town's most prestigious families—why the editor of the *Herald* "makes no effort to eradicate some of that innate vulgarity, for which alone he is now notorious."⁹⁶

Chaney had thus quickly become embroiled in personal and journalistic bitterness in autumn 1853 when a larger controversy erupted in Ellsworth early that November.

III. A DEMAGOGUE AS NATIVIST BLACKGUARD.

Nativism flared into the open in Ellsworth in autumn 1853. The issue focused upon the traditional school prac-

tice of reading the Protestant King James version of the Bible in opening exercises and class work. The six to eight hundred Irish-Catholics in the 4,000 citizens in the town⁹⁷ had hitherto acquiesced in the practice. The arrival of a priest in January 1853 to set up a permanent church establishment in Ellsworth changed their attitude.⁹⁸

Born in Switzerland in 1815, the Reverend John Bapst had received an excellent Jesuit education.⁹⁹ After teaching college for several years, he and other Jesuits were expelled from Switzerland, and the Church ordered him, following a brief interval in France, to leave for the United States in 1848. The frail intellectual was then assigned to minister to the Penobscot Indians on thier island near Old Town, Maine. Unfamiliar with the language of either Indian or white Americans and unprepared for the rusticity and climate of Maine, he was at first disappointed at receiving the lonely assignment. He nevertheless devoted himself to improving the spiritual and moral conduct of his flock and resolving their factional strife. He won the praise of Protestants, particularly in Waterville and Skowhegan, for his cooperation in temperance work and general social uplift. He carried the same dedication to a new assignment in Eastport in autumn 1850. Father Bapst was reassigned to Ellsworth in January 1853 to be more accessible to rural Catholics in Hancock and Washington Counties as well as the growing Irish population in the shire town.

Father Bapst strengthened his people's piety and also improved their conduct, which had previously been criticized for drunkenness and unruly behavior.¹⁰⁰ A church, whose construction had been started before the priest's arrival, was completed to replace a small chapel and to symbolize the Catholic revival in the community. Father Bapst delivered a series of Sunday afternoon lectures on

Catholic doctrines, Bible instruction, and the lives of saints, which disturbed Protestants when some of their young people attended out of curiosity and a few converted.¹⁰¹ Anxiety about Catholicism appeared in letters to Chaney's editorial predecessor urging the *Herald* to reprint the recent New York lectures attacking the Catholic Church by Father Gavazzi, a former Italian monk.¹⁰²

The Catholic resurgence in Ellsworth coincided with a more assertive policy by the American branch of the Church as immigration increased the Catholic population and more aggressive leaders, such as Archbishop John Hughes of New York fought for Catholic rights. Such activism, in turn, provoked additional Protestant opposition to the Catholic Church and its devotees.¹⁰³

When the schools opened in autumn 1853, Father Bapst ended the previous Catholic acquiescence in using the Protestant Bible in classrooms. He instructed Catholic families to have their children refrain from participating in services and organized his people for whatever further actions might be necessary. When Catholic students asked to be excused from Bible-reading, several teachers granted them permission as long as they kept quiet. As might be expected from human nature and the more militant Catholic spirit, some youngsters disturbed opening exercises by foot-stamping and talking. The destruction of Bibles and school property brought the problem to the school committee in early November. At this point Father Bapst presented a petition of more than one hundred Catholics protesting the school-committee policies on Bible-reading.

The petition and a resultant hearing on November 6 became controversial subjects in the dispute.¹⁰⁴ The school committee and town leaders claimed the petition had slurred Protestantism in vulgar terms and that Father

Bapst had demanded to share town school funds to enable Catholics to operate their own schools. Father Bapst denied these charges. He said Catholics did not want to end Bible instruction in public schools, but he demanded the right of Catholic students to read the Douay version and the reinstatement of the sixteen students whom the school committee had dismissed in the second week of November when the youngsters refused to participate in school religious exercises. The basic conflict about Bible-reading in the schools became more personal and complicated over the next months as emotions rose and accusations multiplied.

Chaney acknowledged broad community interest in the school controversy in November and December, but the *Herald* all but ignored the topic which was drawing the attention of out-of-town papers like the *Portland State of Maine* and *The Machias Union*.¹⁰⁵ Chaney did not publish any of the numerous letters he received on the subject.¹⁰⁶ He limited himself to reprinting two contrasting reports which had appeared in the *Belfast Journal* and the *Augusta Age* and an extended statement by the Superintendent of Public Instruction in New York State, who declared that no child could be forced to read the Bible as part of a school program.¹⁰⁷

Editor Chaney explained in November that "the discussion of any sectarian question, through the columns of a newspaper, never yet did any good, but in our opinion, has always resulted in evil." Neither Protestants nor Catholics would convince the other side of the correctness of their own views. Religious and nativist conflict in Philadelphia in 1844 had brought only hatred and violence to a once happy city. Chaney urged both sides to end the dispute before fighting began: "Like a little fire, it may be easily extinguished if taken in time, but if left to itself will soon kindle into a devouring flame." He

closed by urging readers, "above all don't try to discuss this vexing question through the newspaper."¹⁰⁸

His editorial policy presented Chaney as a wise peacemaker. Another interpretation is possible, however. The phrasing of his conclusion raises the possibility that, like Br'er Rabbit's pleas that the fox not throw him into the briar patch, his entreaties were designed to coax people to act contrary to his public statements. Although personal motivation cannot be conclusively explained, a simpler explanation of his intent seems more likely for several reasons. First, Chaney was frequently crude and offensive, but not subtle or sly. Second, since anti-Catholics held the dominant power in the town, Chaney had no reason to fear expressing the views of the majority as his own, except for the unlikely possibility that he wanted to pose for distant newspapers. Third, he frequently displayed an objective, moderate, or even indifferent attitude toward public issues. He thus took an aloof position on the slavery issue, condemning the institution yet equally criticizing abolitionist "ultras."¹⁰⁹ In addition, he never regarded himself as a "'RAM-ROD' fanatic" on the temperance question, although he was consistently involved in the movement.¹¹⁰ Fourth, because of the illness of staff members and the poor financial position of the *Herald*, Chaney was forced to work long days—sometimes sixteen to eighteen hours—in his newspaper office when the nativist controversy arose that autumn. He wrote in the December 9 *Herald*: "For four weeks past some one of the hands have been sick all the time, leaving us a double share of duty to perform. We have seldom left the office before eleven at night, and usually have to light a lamp for half an hour in the morning. For some days past we have been quite unwell ourself." Chaney did not have sufficient time or interest to attend the November school-committee hearing where the conflict

burst into public discussion.¹¹¹ For these reasons, it seems likely that his November and December professions of neutrality and recommendations of reconciliation were genuine rather than contrived.

As the controversy mushroomed in December, however, pressure grew on Chaney and Couillard for the *Herald* to take a stand. Nativist readers began to cancel subscriptions at the rate of six to fourteen a day.¹¹² In a long December 30 editorial "The Catholic Bible Question," Chaney finally entered the fray on the anti-Catholic side, explaining that it was only within the week that he had learned from school committeeman John D. Richards that Father Bapst's actual demands to the committee exceeded the priest's public posture. Chaney claimed the school issue in Ellsworth was part of an elaborate Roman Catholic conspiracy to undermine republican institutions. Father Bapst replied to Chaney saying that the *Herald* had misrepresented the Catholic position and the entire controversy of the past two months.¹¹³

This rebuttal only fueled Chaney's wrath, for he never welcomed criticism or correction but instead turned differences of opinion into deeply personal adversarial, or even combative, situations. He admitted later in life that when his quick temper flared, he appeared to be a different person: "In my normal state my voice is smooth and flowing, my appearance quite youthful . . . , with a genial laugh, inclined to be witty and humorous and considered quite amiable in disposition. But when angered all this sunshine vanishes. My voice is loud and harsh, my features become rigid, my little eyes set and seem to glow with the fierceness of a demon more than a human."¹¹⁴ Chaney further observed that, "Persons who have been accustomed to see me only in my gracious mood, are astounded at my appearance when angry. Some have told me when they have seen me drawing a

knife or revolver that I looked more like an incarnate fiend than an earthly mortal.”¹¹⁵ When Chaney became involved with a subject, he refused reconciliation because, he said, “I hold that a compromise implies a surrender of something that should be retained.”¹¹⁶

In the January 13 issue, Chaney surprisingly announced his retirement from the *Herald*. He noted overwork and also harassment by local newspapers, but stated his determining reason was: “We are anxious to make money faster than we possibly can as an editor.” On February 15 Chaney would marry Mary Alice Jordan, daughter of Joshua Jordan of the lumber firm Austin & Jordan,¹¹⁷ and the editor may have felt a need for increased income to support his wife and/or believed that marriage would open new economic opportunities for himself. If his stated reasons for leaving journalism were correct, they suggest that Chaney had limited interest in the church-school issue and that opportunism explained his December change in policy on that subject.

Chaney’s actions nevertheless belie the stated explanation of his retirement. Rather than recovering from exhaustion or building up his income, he entered more directly into the Bible controversy. In late January and in February he organized mass rallies which crowded five-hundred-seat Lord’s Hall to cheer his demagogic tirades. Only two days after his wedding Chaney returned to a busy lecturing tour of the neighboring villages of Hancock, Reed’s Brook, Morgan’s Bay, Blue Hill, Southwest Harbor, Surry, North Penobscot, North Hancock, and Gouldsboro.¹¹⁸ Chaney was also a major figure in organizing The Protestant League to control town elections in March and to strengthen Hancock County nativism.¹¹⁹

Chaney had long been fascinated by organization and conspiracy. In a letter which he had written in Wheeling

years before, he had described that city as threatened by conspiracy.¹²⁰ In 1847 he had left Burlington, Iowa, to visit the Mormon settlement at Nauvoo, Illinois. When he later recalled seeing the magnificent temple, Chaney was struck by the disciplined work organization:

The erection of this vast superstructure was mainly effected by laying a contribution upon the labors of each Mormon. The entire male force of the city was organized into companies of fifties, each company having a captain who was tyled 'Captain over Hundreds and Captains over Thousands;' and over all presided the genius of Mormonism, the renowned Joseph Smith. Each man was required to devote one day out of the seven to labor on the Temple

Chaney wished that other Americans would "draw a moral from the Mormon organization."¹²¹

In addition to participating in lyceum and debating societies, Chaney was a dedicated Mason, serving as Senior Deacon in the Ellsworth Lygonia Lodge.¹²² He was also an earnest supporter, and probably a member, of the "Cast-Iron Band," an Ellsworth vigilante group of toughs who roughed up a dramatic troupe, destroyed a lawyer's library, and performed other outrages.¹²³ It is probable that Chaney provided the name for that disreputable organization.¹²⁴

Like many other Know-Nothings,¹²⁵ Chaney was fascinated by the organized and secretive nature of the Catholic Church which his movement opposed. Chaney's essays and stories about the Church emphasized its allegedly conspiratorial character. In other Chaney writings, there also appeared discussions of fictional secret organizations designed to combat evil in society. Thus, however awkward and clumsy he was, Chaney delighted in plotting and conspiring.

In middle-February 1854, after gaining little of the rest

that he had supposedly wanted, Chaney resumed the editorship of the *Herald*, which week after week trumpeted its hatred of Catholics as its circulation doubled. He wrote a short story, "THE PRIEST'S VICTIM — OR — THE DANGERS OF POPERY," which described aspects of the Ellsworth crisis. Fictional names replaced, but not conceal, those of actual Ellsworth citizens. The story slurred Father Bapst, Thomas White (a militant Catholic layman who was the chief associate of Bapst), and the Tinker family, whose twenty-year-old daughter Mary Agnes was one of the converts to Catholicism.¹²⁶ Chaney also wrote for the *Herald* an extended attack on Father Bapst and White in the form of a venomous parody of the Book of Chronicles.¹²⁷ He reprinted the discredited *Kirwan Letters* which purported to relate the confession of a recanted priest.¹²⁸ Two cartoons¹²⁹ and many editorials in the *Herald* derided Father Bapst and Catholicism. Chaney coined the term "Jack Catholic" to smear Irish sympathizers, including such newspapers at the *Bangor Mercury*, *Belfast Journal*, and *Eastern Freeman*.¹³⁰ He used his newspaper to attract toughs to Ellsworth for work, and, particularly, for anti-Catholic combat. The April 14 *Herald* thus carried a notice headed "1000 men wanted," which declared: "To Protestant laborers everywhere, we say, come to Ellsworth, and come quickly! for your services may yet be needed in more ways than one!"¹³¹

As editor of the *Herald*, Chaney linked nativism in Hancock County with the national movement. Through newspaper exchanges, he was able to report triumphs and tactics of the American Party—as Know-Nothings were formally known—in other states. After his letters of inquiry about the movement failed to elicit replies from party organizers in Boston and New York, Chaney went in late May to Boston where he joined the American Party.¹³² He returned to Ellsworth on June 10 to develop

the organization in Hancock County; so effective was his work that the county was the major source of Know-Nothing strength in Maine in the autumn 1854 elections.¹³³

Spring 1854 was a vicious time in Ellsworth. Many Irish women and girls working as domestic servants daily heard their mistresses ridicule Catholicism, poke jibes at Friday fish-and-egg diets, and slander Father Bapst. Workingmen no longer lounged and gossiped on the wharfs and along the streets in late afternoons and early evenings. Instead they shut themselves in their homes, but even there they could not escape the vigilante hostility of the Cast-Iron Band. Nearly every evening mobs marched up "Paddy Lane" calling out to Catholics, taunting them, and challenging anyone to stop the Band.¹³⁴

Catholics could not contain their hatred of Chaney. Groups cursed him on the streets, and Irish women asked God to save them from the devil Chaney. Such retorts were understandable if one considers the editor's behavior.¹³⁵ When meeting an Irish-Catholic, he sometimes pretended to cross and bless himself while a smirk graced his face and a glint shown on what an observer called his "button-hole eyes."¹³⁶ After a friend presented a rosary to him, Chaney observed,

The cross has upon one side a ladder, lance, spear, mallet and pair of pincers. Upon the reverse side is a 'graven image,' over which are the letters I.H.S., which Ned Buntline says are the initials for Ignorance, Hypocrisy and Superstition. The ignorant papist who daily kneels before the 'graven image,' would do well to study the 4th and 5th verses of the twentieth chapter of Exodus.¹³⁷

A rumor spread in the town in early April that Catholics would "blot out" Chaney and his press on Friday or Saturday evening, April 14 or 15.¹³⁸ Chaney and some henchmen gathered early on the anticipated night in the

Herald office. As darkness fell, they talked in hushed tones while carefully keeping watch through the windows. Chaney took on a demonic look as a sense of crisis grew. Flashing, gleaming eyes revealed the excitement Chaney felt. When the men detected suspicious individual movements on Main Street and then in the field behind the office, they prepared for action. Chaney ordered them to keep their guns holstered, at least initially. He then passed out large gobs of printer's ink. When the attackers finally crept to the rear windows and raised them to enter, Chaney shouted a signal and his guard routed the surprised Irish.¹³⁹

A month later on May 23, an Irish-Catholic Tim Doyle confronted Chaney on the street and launched into a string of insults. At first Chaney laughed condescendingly, but finally he ordered the stout Irishman to stop. When Doyle said he would do as he pleased, Chaney lost his temper and threatened to kick him. Doyle shook his fist in Chaney's face, and proposed to knock his teeth down his throat if he did not keep quiet. When the men squared off, the rugged Chaney immediately knocked his assailant down and, like a crazed animal, leaped on him. Holding the prostrate man's hair with his left hand, Chaney pommeled him with his right until spectators managed to pull him off the beaten man.¹⁴⁰

Although Chaney was obviously a leader in the nativist crisis in Ellsworth, he did not direct Know-Nothing elements in a carefully orchestrated plot. Other important business and professional men in the movement sometimes differed with his proposals. In addition, a number of workers—who came from outside the area to find jobs in Ellsworth's prospering shipyards in the 1853-'54 period—were active anti-Catholic agitators.¹⁴¹ It appears that although Chaney sometimes worked with, or in the same direction as, these toughs, he did not manipulate

them. These elements, for instance, attacked Father Bapst's residence and destroyed the former Catholic chapel in early June when Chaney was in Boston.¹⁴²

With civil war raging in Ellsworth, Archbishop John Fitzpatrick of Boston in the second week of June transferred Father Bapst to Bangor's St. Michael's Church to protect him from danger.¹⁴³ Bitterness continued in Ellsworth, particularly because of concern about the forthcoming trial in July of a suit against the school committee brought by a Catholic family whose daughter had been expelled the previous November.¹⁴⁴ A July 8 town meeting voted to contribute five hundred dollars to the school committee's legal defense and declared that since Father Bapst was responsible for this expense, should he be found again in Ellsworth "we manifest our gratitude for his kindly interference with our free schools, and attempts to banish the bible therefrom, by procuring for him, and trying on an entire suit of new clothes such as cannot be found at the shops of any Tailor; and that when thus apparelled, he be presented with a free ticket to leave Ellsworth upon the first *railroad operation* that may go into effect."¹⁴⁵

When Father Bapst arrived in Ellsworth on October 14 either to say mass or to interrupt a missionary journey to Cherryfield, a mob wearing crepe masks¹⁴⁶ seized the priest and carried out the town's July mandate.¹⁴⁷ Before separating, the criminals vowed to "scare" more severely than Bapst any lawyer or magistrate who dared to bring even one of their number to trial.¹⁴⁸

Chaney's role in these notorious proceedings needs brief examination. Although Catholics blamed him for the outrage,¹⁴⁹ there is no evidence that he participated in the mob action. He claimed to have been in his house at the time of the violence.¹⁵⁰ Two years later, after he broke with Ellsworth nativists, they did not accuse him

of involvement in the tarring and feathering of Father Bapst.¹⁵¹

Yet there is evidence for his responsibility in the affair. No other person contributed to the explosive feelings of hatred in Ellsworth as much as Chaney did in his writing, speaking, and organizing. In addition, Chaney seems to have been the schemer who formulated the idea of tarring and feathering the priest. George W. Madox, the nativist who introduced the July town meeting resolution, later alleged that Chaney had given him the resolution which was in the editor's handwriting.¹⁵² The devious phrasing of the resolution certainly conforms to Chaney's penchant for literary cleverness.

It is also interesting to note an episode in a story Chaney wrote and published two years earlier in *The Ellsworth Herald*. In "The Mertons," Chaney described the treatment accorded his fictional villain in Dayton, Ohio. A mob took the criminal from the police and administered "one hundred lashes upon the bare back with a cow-hide. He was then taken down[,] put upon a rail, carried through the town to the side of the canal, where he was tarred and feathered and then kicked down the bank."¹⁵³

Chaney did not apologize for the attack on Father Bapst. Newspapers across the state and in the nation condemned the community¹⁵⁴—*The Boston Pilot* calling it "the Sodom and Gomorrah of Maine"¹⁵⁵—but a mass meeting directed by Chaney on the evening of October 24 showed no compassion. The minutes of the meeting report: "Mr. Chaney was now called for and took the stand amid much cheering and applause. Mr. Chaney spoke three-quarters of an hour, giving a history in short of the Roman Catholic trouble in Ellsworth, being often interrupted by the cheering of the audience, which was never larger in the Hall."¹⁵⁶ Chaney regretted the vio-

lence but blamed Father Bapst for inciting angry feelings in the town.¹⁵⁷ A week later, having gathered evidence which he considered very strong, Maine's Attorney General, George Edmunds, presented charges against at least two and perhaps as many as fifteen men to a Hancock County grand jury in Ellsworth which included a large Know-Nothing contingent. When the grand jury allegedly voted nine to seven against finding a bill of indictment on each of the accused, Edmunds was so angry that he refused to remain overnight in the town.¹⁵⁸ Throughout the autumn, and later on as well, Chaney showed no editorial concern with determining and punishing the perpetrators of the crime. For a man professing dedication to republican institutions, he offered nothing but sarcasm to serious efforts to bring criminals to justice.

Chaney continued to advocate and organize the American Party in Hancock County, which had the largest branch of the movement in the state. He was elected an officer in the state convention of the party in Bangor in October 1854 and was a delegate from Maine, one of twenty-two states represented at the national convention in Cincinnati early in November.¹⁵⁹

Chaney was, nevertheless, not a single-minded devotee of the Know-Nothing movement. He still searched for personal advancement. In December he was considering moving West once again, when an opportunity came to purchase the *Herald*. Borrowing at least \$107 from his cousin Josiah Chaney in Portland and \$147 from the Ellsworth nativist John True, he paid \$600 for the newspaper,¹⁶⁰ which then had 1,200 subscribers,¹⁶¹ and reorganized it in January 1855 as the *Ellsworth American*.

When the American Party declined in Maine in 1855 as many members went into the fledgling Republican

Party, Chaney sold his paper in December and left for New Bedford, Massachusetts, where on February 25, 1856, he launched the daily *New Bedford Evening Express*, another Know-Nothing newspaper. The movement also stalled in Massachusetts and the paper staggered, so he transformed his journal in late June into *The New Bedford Express* and, without any apparent embarrassment, embraced the Democratic Party and its Presidential nominee James Buchanan, whom he had been condemning but one week earlier.

In that election year Ellsworth Republicans, some of whom had been Know-Nothings, began to publicize Democrat Chaney's former involvement in the nativist turmoil in Hancock County. Chaney fought back. His newspaper published the poem, "A Litany for Ellsworth, Me.," which condemned his former community:

May fire and brimstone never fail
To fall in showers in Ellsworth, Maine;
May all the leading fiends assail
The thieving town of Ellsworth, Maine.

May beef or mutton, lamb or veal,
Be never found in Ellsworth, Maine,
But garlic soup, and scurvy kail
Be the food of Ellsworth, Maine.

May fame resound a dismal tale
When'er she lights on Ellsworth, Maine;
May Egypt's plagues at once prevail
To thin the knaves of Ellsworth, Maine.

May frost and snow, and sleet and hail
Benumb each joint in Ellsworth, Maine;
May wolves and bears trace and trail
The cursed crew of Ellsworth, Maine.

May want and woe each joy curtail
That e'er was found in Ellsworth, Maine;
May no coffin want a nail
That wraps a rogue in Ellsworth, Maine.

Oh! may my couplets never fail
To find a curse for Ellsworth, Maine;
And may grim Pluto's inner goal
Forever groan with Ellsworth, Maine.¹⁶²

To defend his innocence in the Bapst outrage, Chaney cited an editorial in the June 17, 1854, *Ellsworth Herald* in which he had deplored violence and mob action. He asserted that this editorial reflected his consistent approach to events in Ellsworth in 1854. He noted his refusal to publish in the *Herald* the provocative July town meeting resolution advocating the tar-and-feathering of Father Bapst. "We can show," Chaney declared, "a clear record in reference to the Ellsworth outrage." Any contrary charge, he said, "we should consider discreditable to us both as a man and as an editor."¹⁶³

Chaney's self-righteous characterization of his role in the Ellsworth nativist crisis obviously conflicted with the truth. He had come full circle on the controversy—from counselling moderation in November 1853, to proclaiming vicious anti-Catholicism in 1854 and 1855, to deploring violence in 1856. His Ellsworth experience pointed to the intensity with which his ambition and his lively mind drove him after power and wealth. The tough, willful, energetic, and erratic Chaney would continue to pursue his personal quest through bizarre methods and schemes across the entire nation for yet another half a century before he died—still struggling—in Chicago on January 8, 1903.¹⁶⁴

NOTES

¹*Ellsworth Herald*, April 16, 1852.

²Ray Allen Billington, *The Protestant Crusade: 1800-1860* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1938), presents the best analysis of the national movement, including brief references to the Ellsworth episode. (pp. 293-94, 309-310.)

³See Robert H. Lord, John E. Sexton, and Edward T. Harrington, *History of the Archdiocese of Boston*, 3 vols. (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1944), II, 672-78; William Leo Lucey, *History of the Catholic Church in Maine* (Francestown, N.H.: Marshall Jones Co., 1957), pp. 118-35; Nancy Skoglund, "Assault on John Bapst: An Inquiry into the Background and Causes, with Particular Reference to Know-Nothingism," in Richard S. Sprague, ed., *A Handful of Spice: Essays in Maine History and Literature* (Orono: University of Maine Press, 1968), pp. 107-26; Richard O'Connor, *Jack London: A Biography* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1964), pp. 13-15. The last volume contains many errors in discussing Chaney's life from 1840 to 1851. See, also, M[ary]. A. T[incker]., *The House of Yorke* (New York: Christian Press Association Publishing Co., 1872). This novel, written by a significant figure in the Ellsworth nativist controversy, is a major source on the Bapst affair. (William L. Lucey, "The House of Yorke, A Forgotten Source on John Bapst, S.J.," *The Historical Bulletin*, XXXIV [January, 1956], 67-74.)

⁴*New Bedford Express*, July 10, 1856; before June 29, 1856, the newspaper was known as *New Bedford Evening Express*. The best biographical sketch of Chaney, although ignoring his Ellsworth experience, is Fulmer Mood, "An Astrologer from Down East," *New England Quarterly*, V (October, 1932), 769-99.

⁵The quotes and information in my coverage of Chaney from his youth to his flight to Ohio are drawn, except where noted, from W.H. Chaney, *Chaney's Primer of Astrology and American Urania: Old Rules Simplified, New Rules Added, with Improved Nomenclature and Numerous Tables Never Before Published* (St. Louis: Magic Circle Publishing Co., 1890), pp. 14-16; hereafter cited as *Chaney's Primer*.

⁶*Ellsworth American*, May 4, 1855; AMERICUS [Chaney], "LUELLA: — or the — THREE VOLUNTEERS! A Tale of the Mexican War," *The State of Maine* [Portland], November 8, 1855. Chesterville was in Kennebec County until 1838, when the town became part of Franklin County.

⁷Chaney apparently had some association with Camden before April 1852. See *Eastern Freeman* [Ellsworth], September 16, 1853; *Ellsworth Herald*, November 11, 1853. Because of his extended stay in the West, it seems likely that Chaney spent some time in Camden in the 1837-1839 period.

⁸W.H. Chaney, "The Great Northwest, II," *West Shore* [Portland, Oregon], X (February, 1884), 43.

⁹*Ellsworth Herald*, September 23, 1853.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, March 10, May 26, 1854.

¹¹*Chaney's Primer*, p. 16; *New Bedford Express*, August 19, 1856.

¹²See, for examples, *Ellsworth Herald*, September 30, October 7, 1853; May 12, 1854; *Eastern Freeman*, September 16, 1853.

¹³*New Bedford Express*, August 19, 1856.

¹⁴E.H.T. [Chaney], "The Poor Student," *Waverly Magazine*, VI (April 2, 1853), 210.

¹⁵*New Bedford Express*, July 31, 1856.

¹⁶Wm. H. Chaney, "The Mertons," *Ellsworth Herald*, October 7, 1853.

¹⁷*Ibid.*; E.H.T. [Chaney], p. 210; *Ellsworth Herald*, May 12, 1854.

¹⁸*Ibid.*: see, also, Chaney's political letters under the pseudonym "A YANKEE" in *Wheeling Times and Advertiser*, May 11, 18, June 17, 18, 1844.

¹⁹SPECK. [Chaney], letter, *ibid.*, March 1, 1845.

²⁰*Ibid.*, August 26, 1845.

²¹*Ibid.*, October 14, 1845.

²²C**** [Chaney], "Lines," *Wheeling Times and Advertiser*, May 19, 1846.

²³*New Bedford Evening Express*, April 2, 1856.

²⁴*Ellsworth Herald*, March 10, 1854.

²⁵*Wheeling Times and Advertiser*, May 22, 1846.

²⁶*Ibid.*, May 31, 1844.

²⁷*Ibid.*, May 28, 1844.

²⁸*Ibid.*, May 29, 1844.

²⁹*Ibid.*, May 31, 1844.

³⁰*New Bedford Evening Express*, April 2, 1856.

³¹Wm. H. Chaney, "THE ORDEAL OF A WIFE'S LOVE! A Sketch of the Western Borders; TAKEN FROM REAL LIFE," *Ellsworth Herald*, September 30, 1853.

³²*Ibid.*, October 28, 1853.

³³Wm. H. Chaney, "The Reclaimed," *Ellsworth Herald* October 6, 20, 1854; reprinted in *New Bedford Evening Express*, March 6, 8, 1856. The burglary is reported in *Burlington Hawk-Eye*, August 26, 1847.

³⁴*Ellsworth Herald*, March 10, 1854.

³⁵*Burlington Hawk-Eye*, July 27, 1848.

³⁶*Ibid.*, August 1, 1850.

³⁷*Ibid.*, September 26, 1850.

³⁸*Ibid.*, December 12, 1850.

³⁹*Burlington Tri-Weekly Telegraph*, January 14, March 18, 1851; November 30, December 3, 14, 1850.

⁴⁰*Iowa State Gazette* [Burlington], February 19, March 5, 1851.

⁴¹*Burlington Weekly Telegraph*, July 12, 1851.

⁴²See, for examples, Chaney, "The Reclaimed," *Ellsworth Herald*, October 6, 1854, and C[hane]y, "A SONNET TO _____," *Wheeling Times and Advertiser*, September 23, 1846.

⁴³*Chaney's Primer*, pp. 165-66.

⁴⁴*Burlington Weekly Telegraph*, October 11, 1851. Chaney's mother-in-law died two days after his wife. (*Iowa State Gazette*, October 15, 1851.)

⁴⁵*Burlington Hawk-Eye*, November 6, 1851.

⁴⁶*Ibid.*, November 13, 1851.

⁴⁷See the controversy in *Burlington Weekly Telegraph*, July 1, 3, and 4, 1851.

⁴⁸Charles Henry Pope, *The Cheney Genealogy* (Boston: Author, 1897), pp. 388-89.

⁴⁹*Chaney's Primer*, pp. 129, 140.

⁵⁰*Ibid.*, p. 110.

⁵¹*Ellsworth Herald*, May 7, 1852.

⁵²*Ibid.*, November 11, 1853.

⁵³*Ibid.*, July 9, 1852.

⁵⁴*Chaney's Primer*, p. 145.

⁵⁵*Ellsworth American*, November 13, 1857.

⁵⁶*Chaney's Primer*, p. 145.

⁵⁷*Maine Rural* [Gardiner], May 28, 1859; TRUTH [Chaney], letter, *Burlington Hawk-Eye*, August 22, 1850.

⁵⁸*Ellsworth Herald*, May 19, 1854.

⁵⁹*Eastern Freeman*, May 26, 1854.

⁶⁰*Ellsworth American*, January 12, 1855.

⁶¹W.H. Chaney, "Friendship, Love, and Truth," *Ellsworth Herald*, September 30, 1853.

⁶²*Ibid.*, October 28, 1853.

⁶³*Ibid.*, September 2, 1853.

⁶⁴*Ibid.*, June 3, 1853.

⁶⁵*Ibid.*, June 24, 1853; *Ellsworth American*, August 31, 1855.

⁶⁶*Ellsworth Herald*, October 1, 1852.

⁶⁷*Ibid.*, October 8, 1852; *Burlington Hawk-Eye*, February 17, 1848.

⁶⁸*Ellsworth Herald*, July 22, 1853.

⁶⁹Chaney's school experience can be followed in *ibid.*, March 11, April 22, May 20, June 23, July 22, and September 2, 1853.

⁷⁰*Ibid.*, June 10, 1853; *Ellsworth American*, January 12, 1855; the Reverend Belcher concluded his service as pastor of the Ellsworth Baptist Church on October 2, 1853, and accepted a similar post in Old Town. (*Eastern Freeman*, October 7, 1853.)

⁷¹*Ellsworth Herald*, October 8, 1852.

⁷²*Ellsworth American*, January 12, 1855. Chaney, upon becoming editor of the *Herald*, turned to Belcher for advice on running the newspaper. Chaney also defended Belcher from attack by the *Eastern Freeman*; indeed, he permitted Belcher to compose part of the defense which appeared in the *Herald*. When Chaney became more in-

dependent and refused Belcher's advice in the autumn, the latter turned against Chaney. (*Ellsworth Herald*, December 9, 1853.)

⁷³*Ibid.*, June 17, 1853.

⁷⁴*Ibid.*, August 12, 1853.

⁷⁵See, for example, *ibid.*, July 11, 1853.

⁷⁶*Ibid.*, December 23, 1853.

⁷⁷*Ibid.*, July 11, 1853.

⁷⁸*Ibid.*, August 12, 1853.

⁷⁹*Ibid.*, February 3, 1854; *Spiritual Age* [Boston], September 3, December 31, 1859.

⁸⁰*Ellsworth Herald*, June 24, 1853.

⁸¹*Ibid.*, July 8, 1853.

⁸²*Ibid.*, July 1, 1853.

⁸³*Ibid.*, July 8, 1853.

⁸⁴*Machias Union*, August 3, 1853; *Eastern Freeman*, August 12, 1853.

⁸⁵*Ellsworth American*, January 12, 1855. Chaney thus wondered if another editor was "among those given over to simplicity of verdancy and greatness of stupidity [sic], condemned to rant about boobies, of whom he is chief, and to believe that a prayer to 'sublime Gammon and exquisite Nonsense' availeth much." (*Ellsworth Herald*, August 19, 1853.)

⁸⁶See, for examples, *Bangor Courier*, November 8, 1853; *Ellsworth Herald*, July 22, November 25, 1853.

⁸⁷*Ibid.*, August 26, 1853.

⁸⁸*Ibid.*, September 30, October 28, November 25, 1853; *Bangor Courier*, August 20, 1853; *Eastern Freeman*, September 2, 1853; a picture of G.S. Raymond is in *Waverly Magazine*, IV (January 17, 1852), 17.

⁸⁹*Ellsworth Herald*, October 28, November 25, 1853; *State of Maine*, September 16, 1853; *Bangor Daily Whig and Courier*, October 4, 1853; *The Democrat* [Bangor], October 4, 1853.

⁹⁰*Ellsworth Herald*, October 21, 1853.

⁹¹*Ibid.*, September 30, 1853.

⁹²*Eastern Freeman*, September 16, 1853. Chaney denied the allegations. (*Ellsworth Herald*, September 23, November 11, 1853.)

⁹³*Eastern Freeman*, September 16, 1853.

⁹⁴*Ibid.*, September 30, 1853.

⁹⁵*Ibid.*, September 2, 1853; another critic called Chaney “a perfect specimen of a saphead.” (*Ellsworth Herald*, November 11, 1853.)

⁹⁶*Eastern Freeman*, September 9, 1853.

⁹⁷*Ibid.*, June 9, 1854.

⁹⁸*Ellsworth Herald*, January 14, 1853.

⁹⁹Information on Father Bapst is drawn from “John Bapst: A Sketch,” *Woodstock Letters*, XVI (1887), 324; XVII (1888), 218-29, 361-73; XVIII (1889), 83-93, 129-42, 304-19; XX (1891), 61-68, 241-49, 406-418.

¹⁰⁰See, for example, *Ellsworth Herald*, November 12, 1852.

¹⁰¹M.A.T[incker]., p. 153.

¹⁰²*Ellsworth Herald*, May 13, 20, 1853.

¹⁰³Billington, *Protestant Crusade*, ch. 12; on this subject, see also John R. Bobo, *The Protestant Clergy and Public Issues: 1812-1848* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1954), ch. 3.

¹⁰⁴In addition to the accounts cited in note 3, see the lengthy discussion of the controversy in an anonymous es-

say, probably written by Charles Lowell, in the *Eastern Freeman*, June 9, 1854.

¹⁰⁵*State of Maine*, November 11, 1853; *Machias Union*, November 22, December 13, 1853; *Democrat*, November 22, 1853.

¹⁰⁶*Ellsworth Herald*, November 11, December 16, December 30, 1853.

¹⁰⁷*Ibid.*, December 9, 23, 1853.

¹⁰⁸*Ibid.*, November 11, 1853.

¹⁰⁹*Ibid.*, June 9, 1854.

¹¹⁰*Ibid.*, July 29, 1853.

¹¹¹*Ibid.*, December 30, 1853.

¹¹²*Eastern Freeman*, February 24, 1854. The *Freeman* claimed that a desire to improve circulation figures explained the development by the *Herald* of an anti-Catholic position: "Friend Chaney, you are not the first zealot that love of filthy lucre has made." (*Ibid.*)

¹¹³*Ellsworth Herald*, January 6, 13, 1854.

¹¹⁴*Chaney's Primer*, p. 123.

¹¹⁵*Ibid.*, p. 124

¹¹⁶*Ibid.*, p. 147.

¹¹⁷*Eastern Freeman*, February 24, 1854; December 9, 1853.

¹¹⁸*Ellsworth Herald*, February 3, 10, 17, 24, March 3, 10, 17, 24, 31, April 21.

¹¹⁹*Ibid.*, February 17, 1854.

¹²⁰See *supra*, n 19.

¹²¹*New Bedford Evening Express*, April 1, 1856.

¹²²*Ellsworth Herald*, November 12, 1853; March 3, 1854. See, also, *New Bedford Evening Express*, March 20, 1856.

¹²³*Ellsworth Herald*, November 3, 1854; *Bangor Daily Journal*, October 17, 1854.

¹²⁴Chaney's partner on the Gardner weekly *Maine Rural* once remarked: "It is not theory, dear RURAL, that I am propounding to you, but a 'cast iron fact,' as one of my editorial breathrn [sic] is wont to observe." (*Maine Rural*, February 25, 1860.)

¹²⁵See Billington, *Protestant Crusade*, ch. 14, and David Brion Davis, "Some Themes of Counter-Subversion: An Analysis of Anti-Masonic, Anti-Catholic, and Anti-Mormon Literature," *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, XLVII (September, 1960), 205-224.

¹²⁶Story in *Ellsworth Herald*, February 3, 1854. The Tinker family is therein referred to as Temple. Chaney seems to have been on personal terms with the family, particularly the daughter Charlotte, a year earlier. See her poem that introduced Chaney's story, "The Mertons," in *ibid.*, July 8, 1853; see, also, *New Bedford Evening Express*, April 17, 1856, and *New Bedford Express*, July 24, 1856.

¹²⁷*Ellsworth Herald*, February 10, 17, 24, March 10, 1854.

¹²⁸The *Letters* begin in *Ellsworth Herald*, January 27, 1854.

¹²⁹*Ibid.*, January 20, February 24, 1854.

¹³⁰*Ibid.*, March 10, 1854.

¹³¹Quoted in *Boston Pilot*, May 6, 1854.

¹³²*Ellsworth American*, December 28, 1855.

¹³³*Ibid.*; Chaney claimed to be the first Know-Nothing editor in Maine. (*Ibid.*, May 18, 1855.)

¹³⁴M.A.T[incker]., pp. 128-29; *Ellsworth American*, July 20, 1855.

¹³⁵*Ellsworth Herald*, May 26, 1854.

¹³⁶M.A.T[incker]., p. 131.

¹³⁷*Ellsworth Herald*, May 12, 1854. Ned Buntline, pseudonym for Edward Zane Carroll Judson, was a fascinating adventurer as well as the chief leader of the Know-Nothing movement. (Jay Monaghan, *The Great Rascal: The Exploits of the Amazing Ned Buntline* New York: Bonanza Books, 1951.)

¹³⁸*Ellsworth Herald*, April 7, 14, 1854; *Boston Pilot*, May 6, 1854.

¹³⁹*New Bedford Express*, August 14, 1856.

¹⁴⁰*Ellsworth Herald*, May 26, 1854; *Eastern Freeman*, May 26, 1854.

¹⁴¹*Ellsworth American*, May 23, 1856.

¹⁴²*Bangor Daily Whig and Courier*, June 17, 1854; Skoglund, "Assault on John Bapst," p. 114; "John Bapst: A Sketch," *Woodstock Letters*, XVIII (1889), 137-39.

¹⁴³*Ibid.*, p. 139.

¹⁴⁴*Bangor Daily Journal*, October 17, 1854, Lucey, *History of the Catholic Church in Maine*, pp. 127-28; Skoglund, "Assault on John Bapst," pp. 114, 117-18.

¹⁴⁵*Eastern Freeman*, July 14, 1854.

¹⁴⁶M.A.T[incker]., p. 197.

¹⁴⁷Skoglund, p. 115.

¹⁴⁸Joseph A. Deane, Journal, October 15, 1854, original and copy held by Herbert T. Silsby II, Ellsworth.

¹⁴⁹See, for example, *Ellsworth American*, September 26, 1856.

¹⁵⁰*New Bedford Evening Express*, September 9, October 2, 1856.

¹⁵¹*Ellsworth American*, August 22, September 5, 26, October 3, 1856.

¹⁵²*Ibid.*, September 26, 1856.

¹⁵³*Ellsworth Herald*, July 8, 1853.

¹⁵⁴*Eastern Argus* [Portland], October 20, 23, 24, 1854; *Maine Temperance Journal* [Portland], October 28, 1854; *Gospel Banner* [Augusta], October 28, 1854; *Machias Union*, October 24, 1854; *Gem and Gazette* [Dexter], October 28, November 11, 1854; *State of Maine*, October 19, 30, 1854; *New York Daily Tribune*, October 25, 1854; *New-York Daily Times*, October 17, 1854.

¹⁵⁵*Boston Pilot*, May 12, 1855.

¹⁵⁶*The Progressive Age* [Belfast], November 3, 1854.

¹⁵⁷*Ellsworth Herald*, October 20, 27, November 3, 1854; *Ellsworth American*, January 12, 1855.

¹⁵⁸*Ellsworth Herald*, November 3, 1854; Lucey, *History of the Catholic Church in Maine*, p. 135; Skoglund, "Assault on John Bapst," p. 117.

¹⁵⁹*Ellsworth American*, December 28, 1855; *Cincinnati Daily Enquirer*, November 19, 1854.

¹⁶⁰*Ellsworth American*, January 12, 1855.

¹⁶¹*Ibid.*, February 2, 1855.

¹⁶²*New Bedford Evening Express*, April 8, 1856.

¹⁶³*New Bedford Express*, September 9, 1856; see, also, *ibid.*, August 16, October 2, 1856.

¹⁶⁴Death certificate, Cook County, Illinois, Bureau of Vital Statistics, Chicago, copy in possession of author.

A native of Orono, Maine, Allan R. Whitmore attended the University of Maine, receiving his B.A. in History in 1962, and then did graduate work at Northwestern University receiving his M.A. in 1964 and his Ph.D. in 1970. After several years of teaching at Ohio State University, Dr. Whitmore returned to Maine in 1969 to accept a position at the University of Maine at Portland-Gorham, where he is now an Associate Professor of History. Dr. Whitmore is presently working on a full biography of William H. Chaney.