Once a Household Name: Pinckney Benton Stewart (P.B.S.) Pinchback

Written by
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Introduction

Pinckney Benton Stewart Pinchback was the first African-American to hold the office of governor in the United States, specifically serving as the governor of the state of Louisiana. His term in office was brief, five weeks in the very early years of the Gilded Age (December 1872 - January 1873). At the same time, limiting his place in history to just the facts in those two sentences prevents us from understanding the more complex (and fascinating) man known to his contemporaries as P.B.S. Pinchback. He was at different times in his life a riverboat hustler, a newspaper editor and publisher, a Union soldier, a member of Congress (albeit unseated) and most importantly, a long-term advocate of civil rights. Largely unrecognized for that work, his battle with Congress to be seated is a fascinating tale.

As one might expect, contemporary views of him were mixed. Henry Clay Warmoth, the sitting governor whose self-serving influence helped to elevate Pinchback to the position of lieutenant governor wrote in his memoir, “He was a restless, ambitious man and had more than once arrayed himself against me and my policies. He was a freelance and dangerous and had to be reckoned with at all times.” [1]

Others reported on Pinchback as being “personally of fine presence, easy address, ready utterance, and an earnest and eloquent
speaker. Broad in his judgments of measure and men, faithful to his race and resolution in the maintenance of their rights; embracing in his character not only the qualities of an astute politician, but the important elements of a statesman," [2]

**Early Life**

In 1837, P.B.S Pinchback was born as a free man of a mixed-race marriage. His white father, William Pinchback crossed color lines to marry a black woman, Eliza Stewart. The boy spent his early years in the south with his family but was sent north for formal schooling at Gilmore High School in Ohio. Gilmore was one of the few institutions where black sons of white planters could receive a reasonable education. Upon the death of William Pinchback in 1848, the legality of the marriage was questioned by hostile white relations and, rather than run the risk of being taken into slavery in Mississippi, P.B.S. Pinchback, his mother and his siblings moved to Cincinnati. Leaving school in order to support his family, the young boy found work on the river boats traveling the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers, rising from cabin boy to the position of steward by the time he had reached manhood. However, in 1862, Pinchback joined the Union forces, abandoning his position on one such steamboat in order to do so. The war offered opportunities for better employment and advancement, but his reluctance to behave in a more servile manner in a largely white setting created issues even as it fostered Pinchback's ambitions to rise in Louisiana society.

**The Economic and Political Fall Out of the War**

In the years immediately following the Civil War, the United States faced serious economic, political and social challenges. Debt incurred during the war needed to be repaid. Recovery in the defeated Confederate states was inconsistently handled by government agencies and bureaucracies. Economic sustainability and stability needed to be re-established in one part of the country even as remarkable opportunities for the creation of new wealth were emerging elsewhere. Opportunists and reformers fought for dominance.

As reported in *The Christian Recorder*, an initial Civil Rights Act passed into law in 1866, despite Andrew Johnson’s presidential veto. The opening Section sets forth clearly the Act’s intent:

*Section 1. That all persons born in the United States, and not subject to any foreign power, excepting Indians not taxed, are hereby declared to be citizens*
of the United States; and such citizens of every race and color, without regard to any previous condition of slavery or involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime, whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall have the same right in every State and Territory to make and enforce contracts, to sue, to be sue, be parties, and give evidence, to inherit, purchase, lease, sell, hold and convey real and personal property, and to the full and equal benefit of all laws and proceedings for the security of person and property, as is enjoyed by white citizens; and shall be subject to like punishment, pains and penalties, and to none other, any law, statute, ordinance, regulation or custom to the contrary notwithstanding. [3]

The first Reconstruction Act passed in March 1867 with a particular requirement that the Confederate states rewrite their constitutions, and it is here that we pick up P.B.S. Pinchback’s political career. The Act required the following:

SEC. 6. When the people of anyone of said rebel States shall have formed a constitution and government in conformity with the Constitution of the United States in all respects, framed by a convention of delegates elected by the male citizens of said States 21 years old and upward, of whatever race, color or previous condition, who shall have been resident in said State for one year previous to the day of election, except such as may be disfranchised for participation in the rebellion or for felony at common law, and when such constitution shall provide that the elective franchise shall be enjoyed by all such persons as have the qualifications herein stated for electors of delegates, and when such constitution shall be ratified by a majority of the persons voting on the question of ratification who are qualified as electors for delegates, and when such constitution shall have been submitted to Congress for examination and approval, and Congress shall have approved the same, and when said State by a vote of its Legislature elected under said constitution shall have adopted the amendment to the Constitution of the United States proposed by the XXXIXth Congress, and known as Article 14, when said article shall have become part of the Constitution of the united States said State shall be declared entitled to representation in Congress, and senators and representatives shall be admitted.
therefrom on their taking the oath prescribed by law, and then and thereafter
the preceding sections of this act shall be inoperative in said State. [4]

Establishing respectability in New Orleans as a married man, Pinchback founded
and organized the Fourth Ward Republican Club of that city and, as a result,
as elected to the Republican party’s state committee. New Orleans had a
sophisticated population of white, black and mixed-blood citizens.[5] It was
relatively easy in that setting for Pinchback to push back against the inequities
of the society as in the instance of “passing” as white when riding in a whites-
only car in the city’s public transit system or by rising in formal public meetings to
advocate for the rights of the 50,000 black citizens living in the city in 1868. He
became increasingly visible as well as vocal, seeking to improve the
environment amidst a period of unrest and violent disruption.

Officeholders During Reconstruction (1996, Louisiana State University Press), notes
that it was during this period that Pinchback “wrote the provision guaranteeing
all citizens equal treatment on transportation, and by licensed businesses.” [6]

An example of Pinchback’s political rhetoric was reported on in The National
Anti-Slavery Standard in September of 1868:

PINCHBACK, the mulatto who was recently installed in Mr. Jewell’s place as
Senator from the Second District of Orleans Parish, rising in the Senate yesterday,
to a question of privilege, in reply to certain newspaper paragraphs concerning
him, after accusing the people of this city of murdering and manifesting a
growing disposition to murder men for political opinions and the color of their
skin, uttered the following: “I want to tell them to beware. I want to tell them
they have nearly reached the end of their string. The next outrage of the kind
which they commit will be the signal of the dawn of retribution, of which they
have not dreamed—a signal that will cause 10,000 torches to be applied to this
city; for patience will then have ceased to be a virtue, and this city will be
reduced to ashes.” Despite the calls to order, he proceeded with his speech
and reiterated his threat, adding a warning to the Democratic party that they
(the negroes) propose to take the matter in their own hands in the future, and
we will have peace if they have to conquer a peace. [7]

The anger that Pinchback expressed sprang from the veto of Governor Henry
Clay Warmoth of a social equality bill. Early in October of 1868, The Christian
Recorder included a comment regarding Warmoth’s refusal to sign the bill:
The New Orleans Advocate has an able editorial defending the "Civil Rights Bill," lately passed by the Louisiana Legislature, and which Gov. Warmoth vetoed. Among many good and true declarations which it contains in defense of the colored people, is the following: "They will not force themselves into the society of white men unbidden, but they have a right to demand equal accommodations for an equal price." [8]

A month later, a correspondent described restive conditions in New Orleans, still under military oversight at the time, for The National Anti-Slavery Standard:

The colored people apprehend more danger from the white troops, especially the First United States infantry, than from the rebels. At Gretna, opposite New Orleans, the soldiers, who have been sent there to preserve order, act entirely under the direction of the rebels. Poor, unoffending colored men are arrested by the "citizens," and placed in the hands of the troops for safe keeping.

There has not been a day or night in New Orleans, for the last two weeks, in which some of the colored people were not killed, outraged, or robbed by bands of white outlaws. Many of these outrages are committed within a few squares of Rousseau's headquarters. Troops are seen only after the riots. After dozens of loyal men are murdered or secretly assassinated, Gen. Rousseau sends one or two cavalry officers as a false show, and to throw dust into the eyes of the loyal people.

Gov. Warmoth is as powerless as a child, and to save his own life he has been forced to make disgraceful compromises with the rebels. [9]

Perceived as a Carpetbagger by some, Illinois-born Governor Henry Clay Warmoth had tried to build a coalition of highly diverse constituencies as he strove to impose a new social order in the state. Over time however, he proved to be unsuccessful in balancing competing demands from those supporters. In 1870, he again failed to sign into law a second civil-rights bill presented for his signature. On the basis of on-going racial tensions in the state, he forced through questionable measures granting him additional powers over law enforcement and other critical services. His legislative initiatives put him in direct opposition to factions within his segment of a fragmented Republican party while his alliances with former Confederates put him at odds with his African-American lieutenant-governor, Oscar Dunn.
Meanwhile Pinchback’s star continued to rise in Louisiana, ultimately becoming President Pro Tempore of the State Senate. That position in the line of government succession in Louisiana brought him to the role of lieutenant governor of Louisiana in completion of Oscar Dunn’s term when Dunn passed away unexpectedly late in 1871.

The unpopular Warmoth was fighting for his career at this point, at risk of impeachment by a legislature of his fellow Republicans as well as Democrats. It is here that Frank Leslie’s Weekly picks up the story of an infamous locomotive race as Warmoth and Pinchback (both traveling) each sought to return to the state -- one to retain his power and the other intent on authorization of an administrative transfer of power.

“...a convenient quorum of the extinct Legislature was to be called together, for the immediate impeachment and suspension of the Governor, and for the removal of every official or legal obstacle to the acquisition and complete control of the machinery of the State Government in all its branches. The programme was complete and in process of fulfillment when Governor Warmoth, all unconscious, reached New York city on the afternoon of Saturday, September 14th. At the Fifth Avenue Hotel, he was surprised at meeting, face to face, no less a personage than Lieutenant-Governor Pinchback, whom he supposed was among the forests and mountains of Maine, whence he had transported his talents for the use and behoof of President Grant...[Warmoth underwood that] Pinchback had twenty-four hours the start, and in five minutes after his arrival within the lines of Louisiana he could gain the primal step of advantage in the great conspiracy. Proceeding rapidly to the telegraph office, he opened immediate communication with his friends along the route and placed under surveillance the flying Pinchback. The grand sweepstakes commenced. Pinchback had telegraphed his waiting friends in Louisiana that Warmoth was in charge of his baggage at the Fifth Avenue Hotel, and that he (Pinchback) was hastening with lightning speed to consummate their wishes. The Governor reached Pittsburgh by the Pennsylvania Central lightning train, to learn that Pinchback was twelve hours ahead of him. He next heard of the flying Pinchback at Columbus, and finally at Louisville, but still in the advance. At Louisville he telegraphed for a special train to be in readiness at Humboldt and the track to be cleared ahead. He also telegraphed to Canton, Miss., to a friend—“Pinchback is ahead; make him loose the train at Canton at all hazards...Meantime Pinchback had reached Canton, and his train had halted.
“Are you Governor Pinchback?” gracefully inquired the conductor, as he approached him.

“I am that man, sir.”

“Then it is my duty to inform you that there is at the telegraph office an important dispatch for you, which must be delivered to you in person only.”

Pinchback hustled from the train and hastened to the office.

“This dispatch,” responded the operator, “I am informed, is strictly confidential. I can deliver it only to Governor Pinchback, and, as I have not the pleasure of a personal acquaintance, you must be identified before I can hand it you.”

Pinchback hastened and soon succeeded in being identified, receipted for the dispatch, and retiring to a private corner, opened it. “Sold!” was his exclamation as he removed from the portentous envelope a piece of blank paper and hastened to the door. Alas, it was fastened; then to the window—that, too, was accidentally tightly closed. The door at last being opened, he rushed toward the train; too late—it was rapidly flying down the track.”

Warmoth's train subsequently arrived at the Canton station and Warmoth welcomed Pinchback on to his own slower train. The coverage in Frank Leslie's Weekly concludes:

“Governor Warmoth's special train had made the distance from Humboldt, 443 miles, in thirteen hours, and the State was saved from the conspiracy, which must have resulted in revolution and bloodshed.

At Amite, the first station inside the Louisiana lines, stood a group of Radical chiefs, prepared to meet Pinchback and obtain his signature to the various acts and papers. Gloomy and disappointed, as they saw the Governor and his crestfallen companion pass in the slackened train together, they waited until the
evening train came, and on it returned to New Orleans. Governor Warmoth went on to the platform, waving his handkerchief affectionately and gracefully to them as he passed.

Thus was a most dangerous and desperate revolutionary scheme thwarted by the sagacity and energy of the young Governor, and by one of the most remarkable locomotive and steam rides ever recorded in history.” [10]

Despite the failure of the attempt, Warmoth was eventually removed from office and P.B.S Pinchback assumed the status of Governor of Louisiana for a period of 35 days, December 9, 1872, to January 13, 1873.

Pinchback had further political ambitions beyond the state of Louisiana. He hoped to win a Congressional seat and had stood for election in 1872. However, due to the political unrest in the state, the election results were challenged with the remarkable result in January of 1873 that dual gubernatorial inaugurations were held -- one for John McEnery and one for William Pitt Kellogg. (Kellogg and Pinchback were on the same party ballot -- Kellogg for Governor and Pinchback for Senator.) Even more remarkable, as Philip Dray comments in Capitol Men (2008, Houghton Mifflin), “The next day the Kellogg legislature, the one whose existence was sanctioned by President Grant, elected Pinchback to the U.S. Senate...Seventy-two hours later, his credentials personally signed by Governor Kellogg, U.S. senator-elect P.B.S. Pinchback -- in a supremely exultant moment -- boarded a train for Washington.” [11]

Pinchback and Congress

In a national spotlight, it’s interesting to note the difference in the tone of newspaper coverage of Pinchback and his abilities to serve effectively in Congress.

The Christian Recorder in December of 1873 quoted remarks made by Pinchback

“To vitalize our efforts to secure civil equality and political influence we must improve our condition in wealth and frugal industry, our intelligence by study, our moral force by fidelity to truth and to principle, and by the express and steady purpose to help those who help us, we will find that, instead of seeking recognition, it will seek us, and that parties will court our support after first according our rights. We must do not only well for ourselves but rely on ourselves. The poet has well said, "That we do oft seek from others the help that is in
ourselves." Our success needs not so much an occasion of strength from abroad as the development of that which is within." [12]

But the defeated white gubernatorial candidate, John McEnery, contested the acceptance and seating of Pinchback as Senator. The question was passed by parliamentarians over to the Senate's Committee on Privileges and Elections. The Committee after two weeks' deliberation became deadlocked. The Kellogg administration reaffirmed Pinchback as the duly elected Senator (as logically they would have had to do, since the men were on the ticket in the same election). Criticism of Pinchback's history as a gambler along with unproven rumors of bribery created sufficient concern that the legitimacy of both the Kellogg administration in Louisiana as well as Pinchback's election were called into question. And the civic unrest in Louisiana continued to the extent that Kellogg at one point appealed to the President for military troops to contain violence.

In April of 1875, The Christian Recorder quoted an editorial that had previously appeared in Harpers Weekly, outlining both the challenges and the chaos that gripped both Federal and state administrations unready to accept the election of both Kellogg and Pinchback:

"The Senate, just before adjourning, passed the resolution approving the conduct of the President in defending Louisiana against Civil violence in sustaining the government of Kellogg. It was, however, very careful not to say that he had been lawfully elected but is recognized his de facto character as the compromise in the House had done." Probably the seven Senators thought of this, moved by an honest impulse, and resolved that fraud must and shall be exposed, that honesty and integrity shall reign supreme. Ten years of freedom should teach us to step from under the hand of our white brethren. We are babes no longer. But growing into a strong and vigorous manhood, at the same time endeavoring to cultivate all the true and good traits that belong thereto. Then, by no means should we look to our former protege, insinuating an immunity from the mark we should too, simply because we once were slaves. Congress has all along manifested a reluctance to take up the Pinchback case. Argument after argument has sung throughout the Senate Hall produced by a few of Mr. Pinchback's friends.

But when the votes were casted for his admission they told every time that something was wrong, and we think not on grounds of prejudice for
unquestionably his position, in the last two years has been envied by but few. But many of our people say, "If the Kellogg government be recognized, why not Pinchback also?"

To clearly demonstrate that this is fallacy, we make one more extract from Harper's Weekly, Apr. 3, '75. "If the Senate after the exhaustive and exhausting debate upon this subject, had decided that Mr. Pinchback should not have the seat, it would have taken another forward step toward --- that there was no honest election in 1872. The compromise which recognized Kellogg would not be a compromise if it undertook to legitimate everything that has been done. Kellogg is recognized not because he was fairly elected, but because some arbitrary arrangement was necessary, which included concession on both sides. There is no recognition of the Legislature that elected Pinchback."

Our people are well aware that two wrongs do not make one right.

So let us look upon this question as one of unmitigated fraud, by whose hand perpetrated, we cannot say, and not consider it a criterion by which to judge the actions of Congress and our friends. [13]

That same week, Frank Leslie's Weekly on its front page carried both a political cartoon as well as a statement from President U.S. Grant regarding "The Louisiana Question":

It is conceded by all parties that the Kellogg Government is only upheld by the Federal military. Withdraw the military, and that Government will go down .

If Louisiana was a country by itself, McEnery and his associates would at once be installed in power, but the Conservatives of Louisiana do not propose to fight the Federal Government. They submit, not because they want to, but because they must. In our judgment, the substantial citizens of the State will submit to any fair determination of the question. In their distress they have got beyond any mere question of political party .

In November, 1874, the people of the State of Louisiana did fairly have a free, peaceable and full registration and election, in which a clear Conservative majority was elected to the Lower House of the Legislature, of which majority the Conservatives were deprived by the unjust, illegal and arbitrary action of the Returning Board
The conviction has been general among the whites since 1872 that the Kellogg Government was a usurpation. As the people saw taxation increase and prosperity diminish, as they grew poor while the officials grew rich, they became naturally sore.

The White Leagues comprise a large number of reputable citizens and of property-holders in New Orleans. Their purpose they declare to be simply protection, a necessity occasioned by the existence of leagues among the blacks; of the hostility with which the Kellogg Government arrayed the black against the white race; of the want of security to peaceable citizens and their families, which existed for those reasons; and because, also, of the peculiar formation of the police brigade.

Whether Kellogg was or not elected is not altogether certain.

Kellogg obtained possession of the office, and, in my opinion, has more right to it than his competitor. [14]
The controversy associated with the 1872 election put in limbo the status of both the Louisiana governor William Pitt Kellogg and of P.B.S. Pinchback as the state’s duly elected Congressional representative. “The Louisiana Question,” Frank Leslie’s Weekly, February 6, 1875.
There would be support for Kellogg but not for Pinchback. On March 8, 1876, a final vote was held on Pinchback’s appointment. With the vote count of 32-29, his claim to the Senate seat was ultimately rejected.

The Christian Recorder respectfully reprinted a statement by Governor Pinchback (sic) that speaks most eloquently of his experience:

FELLOW CITIZENS: It is usual on great triumphal occasions to pay such compliments as this to the person or persons that achieved the victory. But often, too often, failure is counted a crime. The struggling hero who has fought his way inch by inch over almost insurmountable difficulties, amid danger and death, until nearly within reach of the goal of his ambition and then fails, rarely receives credit for what he has accomplished; and frequently is soon forgotten.

That such a fact does not await me, is attested by your presence here tonight: and it is this fact that gives significance to the occasion and renders it the mere appreciable.

The action of the Senate in refusing me my seat as Senator from Louisiana, after such a long, weary, and patient struggle, falls heavily upon me but it is not such a blow as to kill. I can and will survive it.

Eight years ago, my political career began as a member of the Constitutional Convention of Louisiana, and although inexperienced and poorly fitted for public life, I have, by patient industry, perseverance, and fidelity to my official trusts, worked my way through successive promotions up to the Senate of the United States, while a title as good and valid as any man’s now holding a seat in that body.

Upon technical grounds I have been denied my seat, and I return home to a constituency true and brave that will continue to honor me with their confidence and support.

The personal loss I have sustained in this contest is great, but immeasurably greater has been the loss of my people, who for eight long years under the most trying circumstances have stood a solid phalanx in the ranks of the Republican party. Upon them the blow falls the heaviest; their anticipated rejoicings have been hushed, and with sorrowful hearts they await my coming to tell them how a Republican Senate could reject their representative.
I shall leave Washington in a few days, my friends, and I go as I came every inch a man. Schooled to adversity in my youth, and the victim of many wrongs, I have long since learned to bear up manfully under all manner of afflictions. It has been said of me, by some one of the numerous newspapers that have criticized me while my case was pending before the Senate, that I was "like an India rubber ball, the harder I was thrown down the higher I would bounce." Believing with Richelieu, that "in the bright lexicon of youth there is no such word as fail," I do not propose to remain down now.

A word in reference to Senator Morton and those other Senators who stood by me so nobly; they are entitled to, and I trust will receive the grateful thanks of the colored people and their friends everywhere. To the former, especially do we owe much, not alone for his course upon the Louisiana Senatorial question, but for his uniform and persistent efforts to advance the interest of the poor and lowly, and to secure to our people protection in their rights all over the land, and especially in the South.

The treatment I received at the hands of the Democratic Senators, with one or two exceptions, under the circumstances was kind and considerate. Their opposition proceeded upon the assumption that Hon. John McEnery was the rightful Governor of Louisiana, and was therefore, perfectly consistent throughout. On the whole, then friends, I shall leave here with no repinings, conscious that the ordeal through, which I have passed, has made me more and better friends that I had when I arrived. As a proof of which I shall point to this grand demonstration given to me by the citizens of Washington, in the hour of my defeat.

Gentlemen appreciating most highly this splendid testimonial of your esteem and friendship, and returning you my grateful thanks for the same, allow me to bid you good night, and farewell. [15]

He did demand compensation for the indignities of the previous three years. In July 1876, Frank Leslie’s Weekly noted a terse element of the Congressional proceedings:

MONDAY, July 3d.—SENATE—A Bill to pay Mr. Pinchback $20,000 for back-pay and mileage was brought up and discussed.... [16]
Finally, *The Christian Recorder* reprinted in 1877 Pinchback’s formal letter of resignation and defeat in his fight to be accepted by the Senate as Louisiana’s legitimately elected representative:

Sir: on the 14th day of January, 1873, I was elected by the General Assembly of the State of Louisiana United States Senator for the term beginning March 4, 1873, and my credentials, duty signed by the Governor and attested by the Secretary of State, with the seal of the State attached, were presented to the Senate of the United States. On the 18 of January, 1875, and pending the action of the United States Senate on the credential of 1873, to cover what might be deemed any irregularity in the first election, the General Assembly of Louisiana re-elected one Senator, as though in case of a vacancy, and my second credentials, duly signed by the Executive and attested by the Secretary of State with the seal of the State attached, were presented to the Senate in February, 1876 the Senate passed on my credentials of 1873, and by a vote of 29 to 31 resolved “that P.B.S. Pinchback be not seated Senator from Louisiana for the term of six years from March 4, 1873,” leaving, nevertheless the credentials of 1875 still before the Senate, and the title created by the election of that year undetermined. My defeat in my first contest was referable to the vote of certain Republican Senators, and on the alleged ground that the Returning Board that gave certificates to the members of the General Assembly of 1873 was unconstitutional, and the Legislature organized thereon illegal, with the credentials of 1875 still pending before the Senate, and inferring from the action of the Senators above referred to relative to the powers and decisions of the Electoral Commission, and more recently from their seating William Pitt Kellogg, that the opinions of these gentlemen as to the constitutional powers of the Returning Board in the matter of creating a Legislature had undergone a change. I determined to make a second contest for my seat in the Senate. A majority of the Committee on Privileges and Elections, including three Republican members, have however, reported that James B. Eustis is lawfully entitled to a seat in United States Senate for the unexpired term for which I was elected. Not willing under the circumstances to continue this contest, and by a seemingly factious opposition embarrasses Mr. Eustis and deprive the State of her due representation, I now respectfully tender to you as Chief Executive of Louisiana my resignation, I deem it proper in this connection as a matter of justice to myself and to my friends to direct attention to the exceptional action had in my case, especially at the same appears in contrast with the prompt and partisan support of Governor Kellogg. [17]
Subsequent Activity

Pinchback continued to be active in public service, holding such positions as the Surveyor of Customs in the city of New Orleans until he took a law degree and relocated himself and his family to Washington DC in 1890. He continued to work with colleagues in Congress in order to advance the cause of civil rights for all American citizens.

Notes


[2] “Hon. P.B.S. Pinchback is thus described by the Graphic, N.Y,” The Christian Recorder, April 26, 1877, Accessible Archives Collection African American Newspapers


[8] “The New Orleans Advocate has an able editorial defending....,” The Christian Recorder, October 24, 1868, Accessible Archives Collection, African American Newspapers

“The Great Race of the Louisiana Governors,” Frank Leslie’s Weekly, October 12, 1872, Accessible Archives Collection, Frank Leslie’s Weekly

Dray, Philip, Capitol Men: The Epic Story of Reconstruction through the Lives of the First Black Congressmen; page 134 (2008, Houghton Mifflin)

“Senator Pinchback in the very excellent address he made upon…”, The Christian Recorder, December 18, 1873, Accessible Archives Collection, African American Newspapers

“MR. PINCHBACK’S CASE,” The Christian Recorder, April 27, 1876, Accessible Archives Collection, African American Newspapers

“Both Sides, The Louisiana Question,” Frank Leslie’s Weekly, February 6, 1875, Accessible Archives collection, Frank Leslie’s Weekly

“SPEECH OF GOVERNOR PINCHBACK,” The Christian Recorder, April 6, 1876, Accessible Archives Collection, African American Newspapers

“CONGRESSIONAL, FORTY-FOURTH CONGRESS—FIRST SESSION,” Frank Leslie’s Weekly, July 22, 1876, Accessible Archives Collection, Frank Leslie’s Weekly

“POLITICAL. ----- PINCHBACK’S RESIGNATION,” The Christian Recorder, December 20, 1877, Accessible Archives Collection, African American Newspapers

Accessible Archives Collections Used in Preparing this White Paper

Accessible Archives provides diverse primary source materials reflecting broad views across American history and culture have been assembled into comprehensive databases. The following collections were utilized in composing this white paper.

African American Newspapers:
This collection of African American newspapers contains a wealth of information about cultural life and history during the 19th and early 20th century and is rich with first-hand reports of the major events and issues of the day. The collection also provides a great number of early biographies, vital statistics, essays and editorials, poetry and prose, and advertisements all of which embody the African-American experience. These newspapers are included: The Canadian Observer, The Christian Recorder, Weekly Advocate, The Colored American, Frederick Douglass’ Paper, Freedom’s Journal, The National Era, The North Star,

Frank Leslie’s Weekly, 1855-1922:
Full run of issues and includes articles on: slavery and abolition; politics, elections, and political parties; the Civil War; industrialization and technology development; business, commerce, and commodities; society and culture; women’s rights and suffrage; African American society and economics; immigration; the world in conflict; labor and radicalism; religion; and featured columns on music, the stage, fashion, fine arts, sports, and literature.

National Anti-Slavery Standard, 1840-1870
Comprises the full run of issues that were published and featured writings from influential abolitionists fighting for suffrage, equality and most of all, emancipation. It contained essays, debates, personal accounts, speeches, events, reports, and anything else deemed newsworthy in relation to the question of slavery in the United States and other parts of the world.

Women’s Suffrage Collection
The 19th Century women’s rights movement built upon the principles and experiences of other efforts to promote social justice and to improve the human condition particularly the Abolitionist Movement. After the Civil War, many abolitionist activists joined the Temperance and Women’s Suffrage movements. This collection covers much of the eighty years from the Seneca Conference to the ratification of the 19th Amendment. It includes newspapers that had some overlap between the temperance and women’s rights movements, as well as an anti-suffrage paper -- The Lily, 1849-1856; National Citizen and Ballot Box, 1878-1881; The Revolution, 1868-1872; The New Citizen, 1909-1912; The Western Woman Voter, 1911-1913; The Remonstrance, 1890-1913; The National Standard: A Women’s Suffrage and Temperance Journal, 1870-1872; The 19th Amendment Victory: A Newspaper History, 1762-1922; and, The 19th Amendment Victory: Books, 1812-1923.

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