

Maine History

Volume 28
Number 1 *James G. Blaine, Maine statesman*

Article 2

6-1-1988

The "Plumed Knight" At Home: An Intimate Sketch of James G. Blaine

H. Draper Hunt
University of Southern Maine

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/mainehistoryjournal>



Part of the [Political History Commons](#), and the [United States History Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Hunt, H. Draper. "The "Plumed Knight" At Home: An Intimate Sketch of James G. Blaine." *Maine History* 28, 1 (1988): 2-35. <https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/mainehistoryjournal/vol28/iss1/2>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@UMaine. It has been accepted for inclusion in Maine History by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@UMaine. For more information, please contact um.library.technical.services@maine.edu.

THE "PLUMED KNIGHT" AT HOME:
AN INTIMATE SKETCH OF JAMES G. BLAINE

The man strolling on the lawn of the imposing mansion across the street from the Maine State House would have been noticed anywhere: tall and well-built, with a large, fleshy nose, striking dark eyes which turned down at their outer corners, an olive complexion and gray hair and beard, he caught the attention of a rifleman in the cupola atop the capitol dome. Only the intervention of an alert guard averted the assassination of James G. Blaine.

An electoral crisis engulfed Maine in 1879. Both Republicans and Democrats claimed the election and furious Republicans besieged a State House converted into a fortress by Democratic Governor Alonzo Garcelon. Blaine, United States senator and former speaker of the U. S. House of Representatives, marshaled the Republican forces, oblivious to personal danger. But his friends lined his fence fronting the State House with armed men prepared to lay down their lives for the chieftain.¹

This episode illustrates the impact Blaine had on the politics of his age. Many men loathed him, at least one enough to murder him. Many more men adored him, some enough to give their lives to save his. As historian H. Wayne Morgan put it, "Observers remarked that men went insane over him in pairs, one for and one against." His popularity dazzled contemporaries, leading the wife of a fellow politico to marvel: "Had he been a woman people would have rushed off to send expensive flowers." Whenever he strolled in public, hats were in the air; he stopped repeatedly to chat, and policemen offered to escort him at crossings. On the other hand, his bitter enemy, New York Senator Roscoe Conkling, would have felt it more appropriate had the friendly policeman taken Blaine into custody. Asked to campaign for him for president in 1884, "Lord Roscoe" allegedly snapped, "No thank you, I don't engage in criminal practice."² To some Blaine was the "Plumed Knight";



Scenes from James G. Blaine's career. A composite illustration from John Clark Ridpath's *Life and Works of James G. Blaine* (1893).

to others, the "Continental Liar from the State of Maine." Blaine's personality was a quality that inspired either intense loyalty or absolute disgust.

James G. Blaine — speaker of the U. S. House of Representatives, U. S. senator, secretary of state under two presidents, and nearly president of the United States himself — achieved an amazing hold on the imagination of Gilded Age Americans,

and his career provides an intriguing study in the interweaving of public and private behavior. Blaine's private and family life was fashioned by the same forces that animated his politics. Exploring this complicated personality illuminates the personal drives and the family relationship that sustained a strong-willed Victorian Age politician.

Although Maine adopted Blaine, Pennsylvania claimed him as a native son. He was born January 30, 1830, in West Brownsville, to Maria Gillespie Blaine and her husband, lawyer-merchant Ephraim Lyon Blaine. From his father's family he inherited a wanderlust, a fascination for business wheeling and dealing, and a genius for hospitality. His mother, a Roman Catholic of Irish stock, provided an example of religious toleration that gentled some of the more combative qualities of the boy and man.³

At age eleven, he went to school in Lancaster, Ohio, living with his mother's kinsman, Secretary of the Treasury Thomas Ewing, whose daughter Ellen and adopted son William T. ("Cump") Sherman became lifelong friends. A Brownsville resident recalled Blaine's early leadership qualities:

He was a master boy to lead off. He would get together a lot of youngsters and propose a frolic in the hills, a game of ball, or a fishing jaunt, and all agreed to his suggestion and joined in whatever he proposed. It was enough to insure the sport of the boys that Jimmy Blaine had charge of the game or the frolic⁴

With due allowance for the impact of the statesman's subsequent celebrity on old memories, one can see in this reminiscence the energy and good-heartedness that were prime factors in the popularity of Blaine the man.

In 1843, at age thirteen, Jim Blaine entered his father's alma mater, Washington and Jefferson College, in the town of Washington, Pennsylvania, where his family then lived. A mediocre institution, limited in its offerings and characterized by the rigid curriculum of that day, the college nonetheless retained a special spot in his heart. Blaine quickly developed a

reputation as an aggressive debater with amazing recall, and an accomplished athlete. His room became an unofficial debating society; Jim argued politics endlessly, sitting "sideways at a table, his feet cocked up in such a way that he would swing his right hand around and whack the table." There he would hold forth as long as anyone stayed to talk back or listen, until his roommate feared "he would split our ears and that table-top at the same time." Local Democratic politicians found him a skillful and knowledgeable advocate of Whig principles.⁵

Jim Blaine graduated second in his class, with highest marks in mathematics and history. His dream of studying law at Yale dissolved due to shaky family finances, and in January 1848, a few weeks before his eighteenth birthday, he landed a job teaching mathematics and ancient languages at Western Military Institute in Georgetown, Kentucky. The young professor adjusted well to the small preparatory school, and he reveled in the Kentucky political scene, where his Whig idol Henry Clay reigned supreme. Clay's "American System" — protection for American industry, a strong national bank, and federally-financed internal improvements — remained Blaine's lode-star throughout his career. Biographer David Muzzey likened young Blaine to "a ship carrying an immense spread of political sail, but lacking the necessary ballast of education and experience." If his ship was unsteady, at least his course was clear: as early as 1849, he knew he wanted to be speaker of the U. S. House of Representatives.

But politics took a back seat to love when he met Harriet Stanwood, teaching at the female seminary at Millersburg, Kentucky. The young professor traveled the twenty miles between Georgetown and Millersburg so often his horse could have found its way blindfolded. Harriet, two years older than James, was not beautiful, though certainly high-spirited, intelligent, well-read and witty. In 1850, in the midst of the developing love affair, word arrived of Ephraim Lyon Blaine's death, necessitating James's return to Pennsylvania to help settle his father's affairs. "It being very doubtful if I could return to

THE "PLUMED KNIGHT" AT HOME

Kentucky, I was threatened with an indefinite separation from her who possessed my entire devotion," he recalled years later. "My one wish was to secure her to myself by an indissoluble tie against every possible contingency in life." They were secretly married on June 30, 1850, in the presence of a few close friends. Blaine returned to his Kentucky classroom briefly, deeply worried about the legality of the marriage ceremony under Kentucky law. "After much deliberation and with an anxious desire to guard in the most effectual manner against any possible embarrassment," they were remarried in March 1851 in Pittsburgh. Three months later their first child, Stanwood, arrived. In 1884, Democratic scandalmongers, aware only of the second marriage, jeered that the Republican presidential nominee had approached the altar at the business end of a shotgun! An intensely private man in matters concerning his family, Blaine had to resort to full newspaper disclosure to vindicate his personal reputation.⁶

Harriet walked proudly by his side as he ascended the high-road to political power. Some have argued that she unwittingly undermined his political career: "Mrs. Blaine was a very masterful-high-spirited woman, unblessed with tact, and far too prone to interfere with her husband's political concerns." But Gamaliel Bradford, author of a perceptive biographical sketch of "The Wife of the Plumed Knight," disagreed. "To have that clear, shrewd analytical intelligence thoughtfully working at all times on political events and character was of incalculable benefit to a man so impulsive and so sensitive as Blaine was, ever apt to be unduly confident and unduly depressed." And we know Blaine constantly discussed political affairs with his wife, once observing to James A. Garfield, "The advice of a sensible woman in statecraft is invaluable."⁷

But all this lay ahead of the young couple as they left Kentucky for good and settled in Philadelphia, where Blaine won a post as instructor in English and literature at the Pennsylvania Institute for the Education of the Blind. This experience honed still further his sensitivity to the problems of

others. Harriet labored with him, reading classics aloud to the blind students at night, baby Stanwood dozing in a student's lap. The death of the little boy was the first of many tragedies Harriet and James would endure.⁸

An invitation to edit the *Kennebec Journal* of Augusta, Maine's leading Whig paper, rescued Blaine from his stagnant career at the institute. Blaine's keen grasp of politics and unshakable Whig loyalties had not gone unnoticed by John L. Stevens and John Dorr, owners of the *Journal*. Timely financial aid from Harriet's brothers enabled James to buy into the paper, and the young couple settled into the elm-shaded Stanwood home in November 1854. Built in the late eighteenth century, the fine old house was an early duplex, with the Blaines occupying the "east tenement." Harriet relieved him of all housekeeping duties. With the aid of a servant, she kept the house and the household accounts and paid the bills.

The young editor of the *Kennebec Journal* had no study; he wrote his editorials on the dining room table after the removal of the cloth. He proved a successful editor, taking on the *Portland Advertiser* too in 1857. Blaine made the transition from Whig to Republican in 1854. Indeed, he was a founding father of the Maine Republican party, which he would rule from 1859 to 1880. He left journalism for full-time politics in 1860, two years after his Augusta neighbors first sent him to the Maine Legislature. Elected speaker of the house in his second term, he sharpened his parliamentary skills and reveled in a life of political action. In 1877, he reminisced:

The Representatives Hall, Maine — that was the theater of a great deal of early pride and power to the undersigned. It never covered the horizons of my hopes and ambitions, but while in it and of it I worked as though there was no other theater of action in the world.⁹

On the home front, babies arrived: Walker in 1855, Emmons in 1857, and Alice in 1860. And with James's election to Congress in 1862, clearly the Blaines needed a home of their

own. On November 20, 1862, Congressman-elect Blaine purchased the Captain James Hall house directly across Capitol Street from the Maine State House. He paid \$5,000 to the heirs of Greenwood Child, and presented it to Harriet as a birthday present. For the rest of his life, this was Blaine's "home place," the dearest of all his dwellings. By May 1872, Blaine had enlarged and altered the stately mansion to suit the needs of his growing family, to reflect his burgeoning political fortune, and to indulge his Jefferson-like love of building.

Blaine constructed a smaller replica of the front section of the house onto Captain Hall's ell, the family always referring to it as the "new part." Two features that delighted Blaine were his handsomely furnished study and the billiard room, where he, his children, and guests often played. A spacious living room and a large dining room flanked the front hallway to left and right, with bedrooms on the second floor of both the old and new parts. Handsome cupolas, a stable, and a surrounding picket fence completed this combination gentleman's mansion and political clubhouse.

The comfortable Victorian hominess of the mansion was captured in a contemporary account

There was an air of *use* about the apartments which did not belie the fact. Home, office and headquarters were all under the same hospitable roof. The requirements of a family of eight persons, visiting friends, social callers, and a constant stream of political pilgrims left no room for that apartment of sacred seclusion which is so dear to the heart of the New England housewife. The entire house and its appointments seemed dedicated to use and comfort. In nothing was there displayed any aim at ostentation.¹⁰

At the center of this little world stood James G. Blaine. A born teacher, he enjoyed nothing more than sharing items of knowledge from his vast, *onmium gatherum* memory. A visitor to the Blaine library once found the master and Emmons stretched out on the carpet poring over an atlas while the father regaled his nine-year-old son with a combination geography,



The Blaine house, Augusta. Blaine purchased the residence across from the Capitol in 1862 from the heirs of Greenwood Child and presented it to his wife, Harriet, as a birthday present. MHS photo collections.

physiography, and history lesson. Blaine loved debate of any kind and encouraged his children to air their views.

As Mary Abigail Dodge, Harriet's cousin who lived with the Blaines much of the time, recalled:

He never saved himself for anything. He was an inexhaustible source of information and inspiration. His best talk was as free at his own breakfast table as to a listening constituency. His best thought was at the service of his own family, and he was never more direct, more rich in illustration, more earnest, eloquent, and luminous than when he was ... explaining a point ... to this select audience of the fireside

Billiard games and tennis and croquet matches added vibrancy to a house "rampant with life." The State House grounds and woods became an extension of Blaine's home, and he often led hiking expeditions of children and friends to Governor Enoch Lincoln's grave, to Milliken's farm, up Betsy Howard Hill and along Canada Brook.¹¹

Every summer was a campaign summer. Maine's strong Republican showing often helped generate a bandwagon rush in federal elections. Congressman Blaine hitched up his buggy and, with Harriet or some other family member, rolled through scores of cities, towns, and villages spreading the party's gospel. A magnificent speaker, he viewed out-of-doors oratory as healthful and lung-expanding.

Blaine could chat with a person once and years later remember not only the face and name but minute details about family and farm or business life. In the 1880s, he would dazzle a dinner party by flawlessly calling the roll of the 1850 United States Senate. This recall, combined with a genuine love for people, gave a freshness and immediacy to all his human contacts. Political enemies sneered at his much-vaunted magnetism, but it was very real. Often Blaine would grasp a voter's hand heartily, then hold it while chatting. During the 1884 presidential campaign, at the depot of a small Ohio town, he shook hands "from the beginning to the end of his visit," and even leaned out his car window to grasp a few more, including that of a young woman.

Blaine seized her hand with his hearty grip. Almost instinctively and at almost the same moment, an old friend of his engaged him in conversation. Blaine began to talk, still holding the girl's hand, not noticing, I suppose, that it was not the hand of the man to whom he was speaking.

A minute went by, and people began to notice the young lady's plight. She tried to retrieve her hand gently, but Blaine tightened his grip and talked even faster. The girl's red-faced lover finally came up and twitched Blaine's sleeve, whereupon the "genial Presidential candidate let go the girl's hand at once with a word of apology, and the blushing maiden was led away into the amused crowd."¹²

Blaine's keen memory was paired with an equally remarkable absent-mindedness. Extremely careless about money, he counted on Harriet to see that he didn't leave the house penniless. "Now remember, Maggie," she would say, "a clean

handkerchief for Mr. Blaine, and at least two dollars in his pocket. I will leave the money here." He neglected to deposit checks and rarely looked at his bank book. As speaker of the house, he often worked in his study on committee construction and other weighty matters with his private secretary Thomas Sherman. Whenever a vital document disappeared temporarily, Blaine would summarily fire Sherman. "Mr. Blaine has dismissed me," the secretary would say. "I will go into the orchard until I can come back."

Blaine's notorious carelessness about his personal dress was a function of this absent-mindedness. Friends and family joked about his clothes, especially his hats. Someone asked Marshall Jewell, Grant's postmaster-general, what would happen if he forgot to send his hat to be brushed each week. "Why it would look just like Blaine's," he replied, looking gleefully at the gentleman in question. On one occasion, about to take a train, Blaine couldn't find his hat, which eventually turned up under a heap of newspapers and books "having evidently been used all day for a cushion by every sitter down in the library." During the electoral crisis of 1879, Senator Blaine rode a hand-car from Etna to Newport, Maine, to make a train connection, in the process losing his hat and suitcase. The latter was found after a train ran over it, scattering its contents along the track, ruining the bag and shredding one shirt.¹³

Politics took precedence over such mundane matters as petty finance and dress. The foundation of Blaine's power lay in his iron control of the Maine Republican party. In a day when the Pine Tree State boasted such renowned politicians as Hannibal Hamlin, William Pitt Fessenden, Thomas Brackett Reed, Nelson Dingley, and William P. Frye, Blaine bestrode the political scene like a colossus. Writing party platforms, choosing most candidates for important offices, raising and spending large sums of money, flooding the state with important Republican speakers "from away" — all these Blaine did with frenetic energy and gusto. He set meeting and rally times and places, saw to press coverage, demanded and received detailed reports from operatives all over Maine, and crowded

THE "PLUMED KNIGHT" AT HOME

into his memory political facts and figures on every city, town, village, and hamlet of the state and, it seemed, every individual voter's preference. The lion's share of federal patronage for Maine passed through his hands, and faithful workers and followers could be assured of rewards.¹⁴

Congressman Blaine's record on Reconstruction combined support for universal suffrage and universal amnesty with an occasional wave of the "bloody shirt" (linking the Democratic party with treason and rebellion). Nevertheless he numbered many southern members of Congress among his friends, including Senator L.Q.C. Lamar of Mississippi, who confessed his love for Blaine but resented a Blaine attack on former Confederate President Jefferson Davis. On currency matters, Blaine assumed a "sound money" stance. His support for protection of American industry won him a legion of followers among farmers and factory workers. In foreign policy, he was fascinated by the possibilities of Pan-Americanism, reciprocity treaties with Latin American nations, and opening markets for American goods south of the border. Culturally conservative, Blaine introduced an amendment to the Constitution prohibiting the use of public funds for religious schools and strongly supported the Chinese Exclusion bill barring Chinese immigration to the United States.¹⁵

In 1869 Blaine won the speakership of the House of Representatives and displayed a typical dynamism in taming that legislative "bear-garden." When pounding his desk-top to splinters with his gavel failed, he bellowed, "Business is suspended until the House is in order," then stretched out on the sofa behind the rostrum to await silence. Contrary to tradition, he sometimes perambulated the floor to give orders to his supporters. He drove himself relentlessly. Blaine's study was usually awash with papers. Books overflowed the shelves onto the table, the chairs, and the floor. Here the speaker of the house labored over committee assignments. "Your father and Mr. Sherman desperately busy over the committees," Harriet once wrote. "It is the secret of the power of the Speaker, and like everything else worth having, it is a rock of offense and a block of stumbling to many, though to others the chief corner stone."

Through committee assignments meticulously and painfully worked out, through countless favors to Republican congressmen, Speaker Blaine built a personal following stretching from Maine to California. His incessant campaigning on behalf of Republicans in other states, particularly the Midwest, also contributed greatly to the process by which, in the mid-1870s, Blaine had come to enjoy considerable fame and power.¹⁶

Blaine's widening political horizons necessitated constant travel. "Father left for New York Wednesday," Harriet wrote Walker in 1871. "I could hardly let him go. I need his reviving society so much, but he had wool and cotton manufacturers to meet in Boston; dinners, breakfasts and luncheons, all or some, to give and take in New York, and over and above all, pressures to resist or permit of congressional committees." His arrivals home were grand domestic events. The children met him at the Augusta station with shouts and hugs; Harriet greeted him with special delight. It was, quite simply, "everything to have him come home":

Father greets me with the salutation "Well old lady, the separation is over. We have nothing to do now but enjoy each other." This on Friday, but on Wednesday I find myself at the door, that familiar old bag in my hand which I could pack asleep, saying goodbye with the best grace I can.

And so, "To all this large household I am obliged to be father, mother, aunt and referee on every subject, spiritual and secular."¹⁷

The powerful bond between mother and children was matched by the strong and steady love James showed for his sons and daughters. Both Walker and Emmons attended Phillips Academy, Andover, and both boys rushed home on their first vacation, Walker somewhat warily because of a poor report card. Emmons tried to intercede for his brother, but

An irate father was not to be appeased till the miserable but happy boy, barely inside the threshold, had promised to do his best the next term; and the storm having burst in one minute, in two minutes the sun was shining clear.

Then the tall, thick-set Emmons crawled onto his father's lap, his long legs dangling almost to the floor, while Walker, elbows on knees, sat cross-legged, hanging on Blaine's every word.²⁸

One lesson all Blaine children learned early: They had to share their parents with the world. As a freshman congressman, Blaine lived in boardinghouses and hotels, but the speaker's chair brought heavy entertaining, so he bought a house on Fifteenth Street in a posh section of Washington. The Blaine house featured two large parlors and a sitting and dining room on the first floor, all connected with folding doors "so that the crowds that used to surge in at the Speaker's official receptions were measurably well accommodated."¹⁹

During the Augusta summer the fine line between domestic and political life vanished. Daughter Harriet recalled, "Campaign summers were great times for us children. The house was full from morning until night, and all the visitors were nice to us." The great agnostic orator Robert Ingersoll — who coined Blaine's "Plumed Knight" sobriquet — arrived with marshmallows stuffed into his frock-coat pocket and pontificated on the merits of orange peel as a laxative. A special favorite of the Blaine children was Senator J. Donald Cameron of Pennsylvania, who distributed fistfuls of candy sent to him by friends trying to help him quit smoking. Unusual nonpolitical visitors were the dashing naval officers from a Russian warship anchored off Mt. Desert Island, with whom a number of lucky Augusta girls waltzed at a hastily improvised "soiree d'onsante."

Hordes of visitors meant countless meals and incessant entertaining. Harriet bore this burden with good humor.

I ought not to write another word, for every thought in my head and all the strength of my hands is given to my party of Friday evening. What do you think of providing standing room and supper for over five hundred people? ... The ices and salads are made out, but our kitchen furnishes the rest. Do you know that one quart of ice cream will suffice for ten persons,



Scenes in the Blaine house demonstrated the melding of public and private life that seems so characteristic of Blaine's career. Official visitors, family, and friends mixed in an exciting but hectic campaign summer atmosphere. MHS photo collections.

and that one quart of oysters will satisfy only five?

Then we are making thirty-two Charlottes.

The electoral crisis of 1879 brought unusual social as well as political burdens, as visitors streamed through the Blaine house night and day. Caroline, the black cook, worked feverishly to feed the multitudes, from July to November cooking 250 chickens and then "beginning on turkeys." Her mistress chuckled she was "more to be dreaded than the foxes." Sometimes the pace of life told on Harriet; yet this tough New Englander endured all domestic vicissitudes, including her husband's chronic complaints about countless ailments.²⁰

T rue, Blaine did suffer from genuine ailments, notably gout. But from young manhood Blaine had fretted about his

health, taking to his bed and summoning a doctor at the slightest sign of a cold. Mrs. Blaine had long understood the connection between stress and hypochondria in her husband's life. Yet positive, fulfilling activity worked like a tonic. When pressed to succumb to a congressional draft in May, 1882, Blaine refused.

To put the energy and time and temper into the House, which it would require to secure and hold its control, he told me this morning, would lose him a fortune, which the same effort otherwise applied would make for him. "O, Mother, Mother Blaine," he said, "I have so much to do, I know not which way to turn." "Good," said I. "Yes," he said, "isn't it perfectly splendid." A very different cry from the other "O Mother, Mother Blaine, tell me what is the matter with me?" which so often assailed my earliest waking ear, and which always makes my very soul die within me.²¹

The most savage attack of stress-related illness struck in June, 1876, damaging Blaine's presidential aspirations. The events leading up to this episode involved the tangled "Mulligan letters" affair. In 1869, the year he became speaker of the house, he saved a federal land grant for the Little Rock and Fort Smith Railroad, receiving subsequently a lucrative bond-agency for the road. His roles as speaker and bond-salesman for a railroad likely to receive future federal favors raised a question of conflict of interest. More serious was the charge that Blaine had exchanged depreciated Little Rock bonds for a \$64,000 "loan" from the Union Pacific Railroad, a loan never repaid and presumably the *quid pro quo* for past and prospective Blaine favors to the Union Pacific. The Democrats, in control of the House of Representatives in 1875, targeted "the honorable hyena from Maine," a leading Republican presidential hopeful, for destruction. A subcommittee of the House Judiciary Committee investigated charges of corruption in the spring of 1876, including testimony of one James Mulligan of Boston that he had letters written by Blaine to Warren Fisher of

Boston that proved him a crook. His whole political career at stake, Blaine talked the letters out of Mulligan's hands, then staged a dramatic House appearance, reading excerpts from the letters to prove his innocence. His parliamentary skill never served him better. Like a great stag at bay, he gored and tossed his enemies, then stood on a high place and shook his antlers at the moon.

But the strain had been horrendous. He would sit sometimes lost in bitter thought, and once, lying on a sofa, he raised his clenched fist and cried, "When I think — when I think — that there lives in this broad land one single human being who doubts my integrity. I would rather have stayed — " leaving the thought uncompleted. On Sunday, June 11, the family decided to walk to church, but as he reached the church door, he held his handkerchief to his eyes. "Anything in your eye, Father?" Harriet asked. "No, my head, my head," he murmured and slumped to the pavement. An omnibus whisked him back home, where he was left on the hall floor until a bed could be set up in the drawing room. "Blaine! Blaine!" grizzled, weather-beaten General Sherman called as he leaned over the invalid. No response. Blaine regained consciousness Tuesday afternoon, recognized Harriet, and murmured, "Crying?" The doctor diagnosed "cerebral depression" but predicted a complete recovery, given rest and quiet.

These dramatic events occurred only two weeks before the Republican National Convention in Ohio. There, rumors raced through the halls: Blaine had died! He was not dead but dying! Webb Hayes, Ohio Governor Rutherford B. Hayes's son, reported a dispatch from Washington saying "if Blaine doesn't die, he will lose his mind or his eyesight." On June 14, young Hayes reported:

A hard fight is now going on for and against Blaine. A drunken [Benjamin H.] Bristow man expresses himself thus: 'Why, I'll vote for Blaine before I will vote for a Democrat, but I hate like hell to vote for a man whose shirt tail is covered with s---.' Vulgar but expressive.

Robert Ingersoll almost stampeded the convention with a rousing speech likening Blaine to "a plumed knight ... [throwing] his shining lance full and fair against the brazen forehead of every traitor to his country and every maligner of his fair reputation" Lingered questions about Blaine's financial affairs and the nature of his illness blunted his drive for the nomination; the convention turned to dark-horse Rutherford Hayes. It was a bitter blow to Blaine who tried twice more to win his party's nomination, but never wanted it quite so badly as in 1876.²²

The second try for the presidency came in 1880, when U. S. Senator James G. Blaine led the "Half Breed" wing of the Republican party against the "Stalwarts," captained by Grant and Conkling and committed to the ex-President's third-term ambitions. Blaine managed to thwart the Grant bid, but once again the nomination went to a dark-horse: Blaine's close friend James A. Garfield. Blaine, although critical of Garfield's abilities earlier, now stood at the nominee's right hand, assuring himself a powerful role in the new administration. Following Garfield's victory, Blaine received an invitation to be secretary of state. Clearly this was to be a personal as well as political alliance. As political advisor, Blaine urged Garfield to deal openly with the Grant forces. "Of course it would not be wise to make war on them They must not be knocked down with bludgeons: they must have their throats cut with a feather."

The Blaines relished the prospect of political and social pre-eminence in the new administration, particularly since patronage feuding with President Hayes had kept him away from the White House for several years. Harriet preferred visiting the executive mansion to living there. On March 28, 1881, she wrote

Flowers have just come from Mrs. Garfield, and yesterday she and the President were both here. They hate the situation (i.e. Presidency), but this is not to be spoken of, and I never want to be nearer the White House than I am now.

The Blaines had house plans of their own, anticipating four years of entertaining Washington Society. By January 1881, they had acquired a house lot on Sixteenth Street. But four months later, Blaine set his sights on a new location at Massachusetts Avenue and Twentieth Street, the property of his old friend William Walter Phelps, who sold it to him very cheaply — with the provision that Blaine would construct a spacious dining room!²³

The Blaines watched over every phase of construction. Their mansion became a Washington showplace, leading political enemies, and historians later, to remark cynically that Mr. Blaine did amazingly well with little visible means of support. How indeed, one wonders, did the Blaines manage to live in the style suggested by three separate residences, expensive schools for the children in America and Europe, wide travel here and abroad, and the sumptuous entertaining he and Mrs. Blaine did? His enemies responded that he stole what he needed to live so "high." Actually Blaine seems to have enjoyed a substantial income from investments begun while editor of the *Kennebec Journal* in the 1850s. As state printer, he earned \$4,000 per annum, and spent only \$600. He invested in Pennsylvania coal and iron lands, West Virginia coal fields, real estate (including house lots in booming Chicago and Denver), money-lending, stocks, railroads, and even a Michigan silver mine (in which he lost all but \$55 of his \$1,000 investment).

Political power too gave entry to the world of high finance. He counted millionaires Stephen B. Elkins, W. W. Phelps, and Andrew Carnegie among his close friends. Indeed, in March 1880, Carnegie wrote in response to a favorable vote by Blaine on a bill to benefit domestic steel rail manufacture: "Rest assured we shall not fail if opportunity offers to show our gratitude in more tangible forms." Such men surely alerted Blaine to profitable investments. Clearly Blaine finances had their ups and downs, as did those of most Gilded Age plungers. Balancing losses, his massive *Twenty Years of Congress*, completed in 1886, sold widely; Carnegie informed British statesman William E. Gladstone that Blaine stood to earn as much as \$300,000 in royalties.

Blaine however denied the imputation that he gained his fortunes through his "connection with public affairs." In a letter reprinted in the *New York Times* in 1871, he gave the public a peek at his finances and concluded: "My gains would have been far more, I have good reason to believe, if I had been out of public life, devoting my whole time and energies to my private affairs."²⁴

On July 3, Secretary Blaine arose early to escort President Garfield to the railroad station as he left for a class reunion at Williams College. As the two men strolled arm-in-arm through the station, Charles Guiteau, a deranged disappointed office-seeker, opened fire. The next time Harriet saw the President, a bullet deep in his body and in a state of semi-shock, he kissed his hand gallantly to her as a dozen men carried him into the White House on a mattress held above their heads. The President fought for his life amidst probing doctors, cooled by a primitive air-conditioning system. Garfield felt well enough on July 6 to ask, unsuccessfully, for a steak, and vowed, "When I am ready to eat, I am going to break into Mrs. Blaine's larder." Day after day the death watch continued, with the Blaines snatching eagerly at every crumb of hope. From Long Branch, New Jersey, where the emaciated President had been taken to escape Washington's heat, Blaine wrote on September 6:

The President holds his own. I wish I could say a great deal more but I cannot, and I am overcome with dread of the final result. He is so greatly reduced; still, he has lived out seventy-one days, and that is a great thing. Was there ever a life so desired and so prayed for! May God look down in mercy!²⁵

Eighty-four days after he was shot, Garfield gave up the struggle. One last service to Garfield remained — to Blaine a labor of love. He paused occasionally, as he worked on his eulogy to the late president, to weep (for he was a deeply sentimental man). After rehearsing endlessly to keep from breaking down, he delivered it to a joint session of Congress. With Garfield's death, James G. Blaine's position as secretary of state ended as well. Chester Allan Arthur, the new president,

had been Roscoe Conkling's chief lieutenant and had no intention of retaining the Half Breed leader in office, although he did ask Blaine to serve until December.

During these traumatic days, the Blaine mansion reached completion and the family occupied it through the 1882-1883 winter. It had been intended as the residence of the secretary of state, not a private citizen, and financial reverses in the early 1880s meant it would have to be sold. During that sunny winter, Blaine wandered the surrounding hills of what was then a rural environment, "relieved from his heavy responsibility, full of joy, of life, and love, and congenial work [his *Twenty Years of Congress*]," his imagination scattering parks, avenues and public buildings (including a national university) among the trees and across the empty spaces. The 1883-1884 winter the Blaines spent in the rented Marcy House on Lafayette Square, where the master of the house contemplated the opportunities and pitfalls of the next presidential campaign.²⁶

The Blaine children had matured considerably by 1884: Walker, his father's counselor at the State Department, resigned too, and served as assistant counsel for the distribution of the Geneva Award; Emmons, who learned railroading in Chicago, had settled in Baltimore; Alice, whose 1882 wedding in the new house to a native Irishman, Colonel J. J. Coppinger of the U. S. Army, had dazzled official Washington, lived at Fort Riley, Kansas, while her parents raised her first-born child. The younger children, Margaret, James, and Harriet, were their father's boon companions in Washington and Augusta. The family had gathered in the big house across the street from the Maine State House in June 1884, when news reached them that this was indeed "Blaine's turn." Forty-four years later, Margaret Blaine Damrosch recalled the thrill:

How absolutely we counted on his election in 1884 (and I still think he was elected). Why I had even planned minutely the beautiful dress I was going to wear at his inauguration! How I sped from our telephone (the telephone was a new invention then and



Blaine relaxing with family. Domestic scenes such as this added a greater sense of credibility and respectability to Blaine's career, troubled, as it sometimes was, by aspersions about official indiscretions. Hunt, *The Blaine House: Home of Maine Governors* (1974).

very recently installed on the second floor of our old Augusta house) to throw myself in his arms under an old Augusta apple tree ... shouting and sobbing, "Father, father, you are nominated."

Laughter, tears, hugs and kisses — and the center of all this excitement lay impassively on a hammock, pondering the news that he was the Republican nominee for the president of the United States. Crowds, bands, parades, frequent off-the-cuff speeches from the front steps: this was the public face of Blaine's early campaign. Behind the scenes, he wrote countless letters mending fences and asking for help. "My old Friend," he saluted C. B. Farwell of Chicago:

In this important period of my public career I need the sympathy of all those who in years gone by stood near to me. There is a shade between us which I wish to put aside. Bygones must be bygones. You are certainly conscious that I never meant to disregard your wishes. I have no special favor to ask — no special thing for you to do — but I want to feel that you are supporting me with the cordiality of the olden time — and not in a mere perfunctory manner as the Republican candidate.

Blaine counted on his personal appeal to muster the divided Republican party. Such a man as the reform-minded intellectual and journalist George William Curtis, a prominent Republican "Mugwump" reformer whom Conkling had in mind when he sneered at the "carpet knights" in politics, supported Blaine's Democratic opponent, Governor Grover Cleveland of New York, believing that "whatever the result of the election may be, there can be no doubt that the character and extent of the protest against so unworthy a nomination as that of Mr. Blaine will be a most effective force in the purification of politics."

The Blaine-Cleveland contest certainly needed purification: It was unprecedentedly dirty, with Republicans alleging that Cleveland, the bachelor, had fathered an illegitimate child by a woman of negotiable virtue ("Ma, Ma, where's my Pa? Gone to the White House, ha! ha! ha!"). Democrats countered with an attack on Blaine's putative "shot-gun" marriage. Cartoonist Bernhard Gillam pilloried Blaine in classical motif as "Phryne before the Chicago Tribunal," standing stripped of his toga before gasping and tittering senators, his portly body tattooed from head to foot with his public sins, his legendary magnetism explained by a "magnetic pad" round his neck. Thomas Nast of *Harper's Weekly* savaged Blaine, always supplying him with a plumed topper. In one cartoon Nast showed him with a spotless reform shirt, having put his legs through the sleeves because of his unfamiliarity with that particular garment!

Most of the attacks on Blaine centered on his public career — on the Mulligan Letters, on charges of gross conflict of interest and bribery, on the disparity between his lavish manner and his ostensibly modest income. Many voices defended the man from Maine: predictable champions like Congressman Nelson Dingley and unexpected voices like that of a Kentucky Democrat who, asked to assail the Republican nominee on the hustings, vowed, "I will attack Blaine's politics, but if you want me to attack him, I won't do it ... I have sat in the House with him for years, and a loftier man never lived." Indeed, most

Cleveland supporters probably agreed with the Chicagoan who counseled:

We are told that Mr. Blaine has been delinquent in office but blameless in private life, while Mr. Cleveland has been a model of official integrity but culpable in his personal relations. We should therefore elect Mr. Cleveland to the public office which he is so well qualified to fill, and remand Mr. Blaine to the private station which he is so admirably fitted to adorn.²⁷

With the outcome of the election anything but certain, Blaine broke with tradition and campaigned openly and vigorously for the presidency. A tour beginning September 17 carried him to lower New England and the Midwest. Enormous crowds greeted him in the latter region, where his support for western development had won him friends. Blaine zealots often paraded in armor, symbolic of "plumed knighthood," rich Republicans in the genuine medieval article topped with ostrich feathers, and poorer compatriots making do with a burlap-and-stove-polish imitation. In Chicago, Blaine and his running-mate, U. S. Senator John A. ("Black Eagle") Logan of Illinois, gazed down from their hotel balcony onto a river of fire, as torch-bearing Republicans marched by, intoning slogans in "one solemn, heavy voice." Ignored were Cleveland parades and rallies with Democrats roaring

Burn this letter!
Burn this letter!
Burn, burn, oh, burn this letter

Blaine! Blaine!
The Continental liar
From the State of Maine
Burn this letter!

By late October, Blaine had spoken some 400 times. The trip undoubtedly helped the Republican cause, but it left the nominee physically and emotionally drained, his political instincts dulled. New York City was crucial, and Blaine hoped

to win a large Irish-American vote there because of his family's Catholic connections and his reputation for twisting the British lion's tail. But he had reckoned without the Reverend Dr. Samuel D. Burchard, a Presbyterian minister dubbed by the *New York Sun* "a Silurian or early Paleozoic bigot." While the groggy candidate only half-listened, Burchard publicly serenaded him at the Fifth Avenue Hotel with the assurance:

We are your friends, Mr. Blaine, and notwithstanding all the calumnies that have been urged against you, we stand by your side. ('Shouts of Amen!') We expect to vote for you next Tuesday ... We are Republicans, and don't propose to leave our party and identify with the party whose antecedents have been rum, Romanism and rebellion. We are loyal to our flag. We are loyal to you.

Blaine's response gave no clue that he had picked up on this outrageous slur on Catholic Americans. Although two days later Blaine formally disclaimed the allusion to the "ancient faith in which my mother lived and died," the damage had been done, and the Democrats had a potent new issue to draw a growing Catholic constituency to their party.

Further damage to the party occurred when Blaine attended a lavish dinner in his honor at Delmonico's, and sung the praises of wealth and national prosperity under Republican rule — this in the midst of depression and widespread unemployment. Next morning the *New York World* splashed a devastating cartoon across its front page depicting "The Royal Feast of Belshazzar Blaine and the Money Kings." Blaine, napkin around neck and knife and fork ready, sat surrounded by fawning, diamond-studded millionaires, as he prepared to gobble such delicacies as "lobby pudding" and "monopoly soup." In the foreground, a ragged family begs for crumbs. Other papers took up the cry, scorching the Republican nominee as a callous creature of predatory special interests. Vice-presidential nominee Logan evaluated the disastrous New York trip: "If Blaine had eaten a few more swell dinners, and had a few more ministers call on him, we should not have carried a northern state."²⁸

Blaine, his wife, and daughter Margaret arrived at the Augusta mansion late on election day, the candidate exhausted and none too sure of victory. A special telegraph wire carried the returns into the library where Blaine, with family, friends, and neighbors, passed the evening. Talk of his cabinet exasperated him. "Good night, gentlemen; I'll talk about cabinets when I'm elected." Finally, he said, "If I carry New York by only about a thousand votes, they will surely count me out. Don't disturb me unless something decisive comes in." Although the decision was known by midnight, Blaine's secretary Thomas Sherman let the candidate and his family sleep late. Finally he went to Blaine's bedroom with "demnition totals," unable to choke back tears. The defeated nominee gazed up from the pillows:

As the Lord sent us an ass in the shape of a preacher, and a rainstorm to lessen our vote in New York, I am disposed to feel resigned to the dispensation of defeat which flowed directly from these agencies. In missing a great honor I escaped a great and oppressive responsibility. You know how much I didn't want the nomination.

Sour grapes? Perhaps. But Blaine seems to have had a deeply ambivalent attitude toward the presidency, hungry for the honor and the power, yet shrinking from the torrent of abuse and slander he must face pursuing and administering that great office.

In the wake of defeat, he assessed the election with good humor. "I should have carried New York by 10,000 if the weather had been clear on election-day, and Dr. Burchard had been doing missionary work in Asia Minor, or Cochin China." But bitterness permeated his statement that "the whole campaign was a disaster to me, personally, physically, pecuniarily. I ought to have obeyed what was really a strong instinct against running It was the wrong year, and gave my enemies their coveted opportunity." And a reporter from the *Boston Journal* testified to an "exciting evening" with James G. Blaine in Augusta. As they discussed the election, Blaine's voice rose

ominously until his angry bellows brought Tom Sherman on the run to urge that they close the window before the statesman aroused the whole neighborhood!²⁹

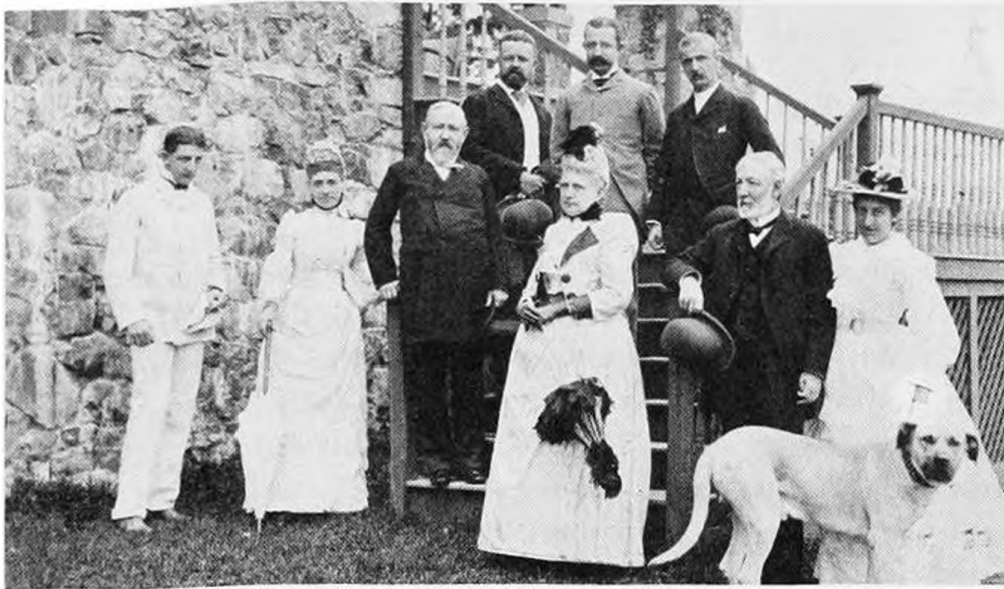
The years immediately following the 1884 heartbreaker found James and Harriet living a quiet domestic life — the master of the house completing his *Twenty Years of Congress*, the mistress attending to the myriad details of housekeeping. The book, two giant slabs of political history covering the pre-Civil War period to 1881, contained sharp vignettes of politicians Blaine had known and is still interesting for the insights into Gilded Age politics by a major player. But it is scarcely a personal memoir; Blaine the man is buried in a sea of details and opinions on themes such as the great war, Reconstruction, and the Grant regime. Still, it sold prodigiously, its buckram or full-calfbound volumes gracing parlor tables all over the land.

The flood of royalties helped make a dream come true. Plans for a summer home on Mount Desert Island in Maine were first broached in 1882. Three years later, the Blaines purchased a house lot in Bar Harbor, and later a new site on a high point with a spectacular ocean view. Blaine threw himself into the project joyfully, reporting excellent progress by June 1886:

Here we are ... with carpenters, painters, blacksmiths, plumbers, cabinet-makers, paper-hangers, seamstresses ... and I know not what with us; we have firm possession of the third floor, and disputing the second, while chaos and mechanics have absolute sway on the first.

The final result was an imposing shingled and field-stoned "summer cottage," a splendid tribute to the success and eminence of James G. Blaine.³⁰

The Blaines spent the winters of 1885 and 1886 in Augusta, and on June 1887 sailed for an extended stay in Europe aboard the *S. S. Ems*, a German ship. Shortly after their arrival in London, the Blaines were presented to Queen Victoria at a Buckingham Palace garden party. Royal beefeaters escorted



The Blaines at home in Bar Harbor, 1889. Front row (left to right): James G. Blaine, Jr., Mrs. Henry Cabot Lodge, Benjamin Harrison, Harriet Blaine, James G. Blaine, and the Blaine's daughter, Harriet. Back row (left to right): Henry Cabot Lodge, Walker Blaine, and E. W. Hallford (private secretary to President Harrison). MHS photo collection.

them onto the terrace, where they found themselves in gardens "pretty as a dream," surrounded by thousands of gorgeously dressed ladies and hundreds of gentlemen "in every shade of ugliness." Soon the Queen entered, on the arm of portly Albert Edward, Prince of Wales, and leaning on a little cane. Republican Harriet Blaine sniffed:

It was not an impressive sight, to see all the ladies falling backward before this little and old woman, like waves dying on the seashore. That they should be willing to do it, I found hard to understand, for the curtsying amounted to obeisance.³¹

Early in July, the Blaines left London for Scotland, seeking rest, refreshments, and fresh air. Blaine found what he needed at Andrew Carnegie's castle "Kilgraston." Harriet reported her husband spending all day in the fresh air, stripping off his woolen socks and gaiters, picking up a tan, dancing the Haymaker ("our Virginia Reel") on the castle lawn and playing skittles. He ate heartily, slept well, and could even read champagne labels without his glasses!³²

Blaine pursued his family roots on a short visit to Ireland, then traveled via Paris to Homburg to take the waters, then on

to Vienna and Budapest and back to Paris early in December. A visit to Switzerland and a long sojourn in Italy took up the winter and spring of 1887-1888. Blaine caught cold crossing the Alps, and an Italian doctor joshed him about his hypochondria, observing that his patient "was a fortune to doctors and that he thought they must miss him very much in America." "I think," Harriet chuckled, "he has correctly diagnosed his little weaknesses."

Amidst the beauties and sunshine of Florence, Blaine still fretted about his health. An aged English doctor had scared his patient into a "three-day's relapse." A fear of paralysis was dispelled, but still Blaine complained and spun weird medical theories to explain his malady.

All this afternoon, I have sewed and your Father has reminisced and reflected aloud with the utmost tranquility and clear mindedness. Indeed when I consider how great is his light of intellect, I must think him a humbug, to talk of his side and his arm and his leg, as though these members, honorable though they may be, had anything to do with the brain.³³

The Blaines returned to America in early August 1888. Boats packed New York harbor and crowds on shore jostled for a glimpse of the Plumed Knight. Out in Indianapolis, Republican presidential nominee Benjamin Harrison saluted Blaine's return and alluded to the possibility that Indiana would be "hearing his powerful voice ... before the campaign is old." But Maine, as always, had first call on Blaine's campaigning genius. Any rumors of his ruined health evaporated as he stumped the state, later toured the West, and finally spoke in Connecticut and New York.

If anything, Blaine proved more effective than in 1884. In Indianapolis, on October 11, before the doubtless envious eyes of Harrison, Blaine drew 50,000 citizens to greet him, reviewed a parade of 25,000, and spoke to 30,000 at the Exposition Grounds in the afternoon and a packed hall that night.³⁴ When Harrison defeated Cleveland in November, Blaine's selection as secretary of state was a foregone conclusion. While not intimate

with the President-elect as he had been with Garfield, Blaine looked forward eagerly to pressing on with the work aborted by Guiteau's bullet. "There is no doubt that your Father will accept this trust, and gladly," Harriet wrote Jamie. Early in 1889, the Blaines took the old William H. Seward home on Lafayette Square, within easy walking distance of the State Department and the White House. The house had a fascinating, if somewhat sinister, history. Tradition has Henry Clay winning the land in a poker game. Commodore John Rodgers built the house in 1831. On its front steps in 1859, Congressman Daniel Edgar Sickles of New York shot and killed Philip Barton Key, son of Francis Scott Key, for allegedly sleeping with his young wife. During the Civil War, the Seward family occupied the house, and in an upstairs bedroom the fanatical young giant Lewis Payne had slashed Secretary of State Seward repeatedly with a dagger on the night John Wilkes Booth shot Abraham Lincoln. The house would also play a tragic role in the lives of the Blaine family.

The Seward house underwent extensive renovations, as Harriet told Blaine's Maine henchman, Joseph Manley

It is very interesting here now, almost painfully so. The old house had its first upripping yesterday. Edmunds (Senator George T. Edmunds of Vermont) wants Mr. Blaine to know that Seward thought the floor insecure. We are having solid beams of wood and iron girders put in, new floors laid when necessary, a new kitchen, six south windows put in, wholly new plumbing and a steamheater, besides all the changes visible to the naked eye.

Well-wishers crowded in to see the man many regarded as the "prime minister" of the Harrison administration. "I often wish we were hidden in the safe obscurity of Augusta," Harriet wrote. Blaine found a moment of respite gazing at a little grandson's picture: "I can feel that boy pulling powerfully at my heartstrings."

But the future seemed vastly exciting and promising. "I thrill when I think of the part your Father may play in the future of this country," Harriet wrote. Indeed James G. Blaine had his most enduring impact on American history in the field of foreign policy. In an age when some considered abolishing the State Department as a useless frill, few of Blaine's contemporaries shared his vision of a burgeoning American role in world affairs, based upon the nation's immense wealth. Blaine's greatest claim as a statesman was his vigorous and unceasing sponsorship of Pan-Americanism — the recognition and institutionalization of American interest in the Latin American republics and the settlement of economic and political disputes through arbitration.

One marvels that Blaine could find the heart to carry on his duties after 1890. That year the family circle, unbroken since little Stanwood Blaine's death in 1854, was shattered. On January 15, 1890, Walker Blaine, State Department solicitor, and his father's right-hand man, died in the Seward House, swept away by a sudden attack of pneumonia. Walker's parents had not had time to come to terms with their loss when, two weeks later, their eldest daughter, Alice Coppinger, died in the Lafayette Square house. She had come to Washington for her brother's funeral, and she left two young children behind.

Blaine's own life drew to a close amid heartbreaking personal tragedy and political disappointment. His increasingly strained relations with President Harrison snapped on June 4, 1892, when he resigned from the Cabinet abruptly and curtly. Three days later, the Republican National Convention met. Blaine apparently hoped for a presidential draft. Illness, the strain of office, and the death of his children had taken their toll on his judgment. The convention renominated President Harrison. He and Blaine reconciled their differences, with the former secretary campaigning for the Republican ticket as much as his deteriorating health would permit. Death claimed Emmons Blaine with brutal suddenness that same June, before his parents could leave Bar Harbor to hurry to his bedside. A

further grief in 1892 was the divorce ending Jamie's secret marriage, entered into in 1886, at age 17.

Blaine himself had little more than six months to live. The fancied and minor ailments of a lifetime had given way to Bright's disease and circulatory and pulmonary disorders that wracked his once robust body. A planned trip to California that last winter had to be abandoned. Late in November, growing weakness confined him to the Lafayette Square house. Blaine never left his bed after he took to it in December. His lungs showed signs of tubercular infection. His straining heart nearly gave out on December 18. Blaine had improved slightly by mid-January, but his body and vitality were wasting away. News of his illness spread through Washington. Large crowds gathered silently outside the Seward House, and messages of hope and sympathy poured in from all over the country. Late on the morning of January 27, 1893, James G. Blaine died quietly, Harriet holding his hand to the end. In three days, he would have been sixty-three years old.³⁵

NOTES

¹Edward Stanwood, *James Gillespie Blaine* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin Co., 1905, 1908), p. 223; Thomas Sherman, *Twenty Years with James G. Blaine: Reminiscences by his Private Secretary* (New York: The Grafton Press, 1978), p. 42; Gail Hamilton (Mary Abigail Dodge), *The Biography of James G. Blaine* (Norwich, Connecticut: The Henry Bill Publishing Company, 1895), pp. 454-55; Harriet Blaine Beale, "James G. Blaine," in *Just Maine Folks*, edited by the Maine Writers Research Club (Lewiston, Maine: The Journal Printshop, 1924), p. 30.

²H. Wayne Morgan, *From Hayes to McKinley: National Party Politics, 1877-1896* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1967), p. 68; Hamilton, *Blaine*, p. 599; David M. Jordan, *Roscoe Conkling of New York: Voice in the Senate* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1971), p. 421.

³David Saville Muzzey, *James G. Blaine: A Political Idol of Other Days* (New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1934), pp. 1-8.

⁴H. J. Ramsdell, *Life and Public Services of Hon. James G. Blaine* (Philadelphia: Hubbard Brothers, Publishers, 1884), p. 29; John C. Ridpath, *Life and Public Services of James G. Blaine* (New York: Bryan, Taylor Co., 1884), pp. 276-78; John C. Ridpath, *Life and Work of James G. Blaine* (Philadelphia: Historical Publishing Co., 1893), p. 41.

⁵Muzzey, *Blaine*, p. 14; Henry Davenport Northrop, *Life and Public Services of James G. Blaine* (New York: W. J. Holland, 1893), pp. 39-42; Willis Fletcher Johnson, *Life of James G. Blaine* (Philadelphia: Atlantic Publishing Co., 1893), p. 41.

⁶Muzzey, *Blaine*, pp. 17-21; H. Draper Hunt, *The Blaine House: Home of Maine Governors* (Somersworth: New Hampshire Publishing Company/Maine Historical Society, 1974), pp. 6-7; Blaine to William W. Phelps, September 6, 1884, in *New York Times*, September 20, 1884.

⁷Gamaliel Bradford, "The Wife of the Plumed Knight," *Harper's Monthly Magazine*, 151 (June - November 1925): 166-67.

⁸Muzzey, *Blaine*, pp. 22-23; Ridpath, *Life and Work of Blaine*, pp. 56-58; Northrup, *Blaine*, p. 48. The principal of the Pennsylvania Institute recalled him leaving behind "not only universal respect at a serious loss to the institution, but an impression of his personal force upon the work and its methods which survives the lapse of twenty years." Northrup, *Blaine*, p. 48.

⁹Edward Stanwood, *James Gillespie Blaine* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1905), p. 29; Muzzey, *Blaine*, pp. 23-23; Hunt, *Blaine House*, p. 8; *Daily Kennebec Journal*, December 8, 1968; James P. Boyd, *Life and Public Services of Hon. James G. Blaine, The Illustrious American Orator, Diplomat and Statesman* (Publishers' Union, 1893), pp. 141-45; Stanwood, *Blaine*, pp. 45-46; Blaine to ?, February 3, 1877, in Hamilton, *Blaine*, p. 424; Morgan, *Hayes to McKinley*, p. 66.

¹⁰Hunt, *Blaine House*, pp. 9-15; Ridpath, *Life and Work of Blaine*, p. 205.

¹¹Hunt, *Blaine House*, p. 15-16; Beale, "Blaine," pp. 28-29; Hamilton, *Blaine*, pp. 192-93, 224-25; Harriet Blaine to Margaret, August 27, 1882, June 30, 1883, in Harriet Blaine, *Letters of Mrs. Blaine*, edited by Harriet Blaine Beale (New York: Duffield and Company, 1908), II, pp. 45-46; Sherman, *Blaine*, p. 126; *Daily Kennebec Journal*, September 2, 1972.

¹²Hamilton, *Blaine*, p. 192; *Kennebec Journal*, April 7, 1869; Northrup, *Blaine*, pp. 39-40; Muzzey, *Blaine*, p. 9; Frank G. Carpenter, *Carp's Washington*, arranged and edited by Francis Carpenter (New York: McGraw-Hill Books Company, Inc., 1960), p. 31.

¹³Beale, "Blaine," p. 31; Sherman, *Blaine*, p. 159; Hamilton, *Blaine*, p. 599; Harriet Blaine to Margaret, August 14, 1879, in Beale (ed.), *Letters of Mrs. Blaine*, I, p. 159; Harriet Blaine to Walker, August 18, 1879, December 20 [1871], in *Letters of Mrs. Blaine*, I, pp. 162-63.

¹⁴Stanwood, *Blaine*, pp. 49-50; James Talcott Kitson, "The Congressional Career of James G. Blaine, 1862-1876," Ph.D. dissertation, Case Western Reserve University, 1971, pp. 36-37.

¹⁵Carl Russell Fish, "James G. Blaine," in *Dictionary of American Biography*, edited by Allen Johnson (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1957), I, Part 2, p. 324; Hamilton, *Blaine*, p. 464; Harry Barnard, *Rutherford B. Hayes and His America* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc.,

THE "PLUMED KNIGHT" AT HOME

1954), p. 273; H. Draper Hunt, *Hannibal Hamlin of Maine: Lincoln's First Vice-President* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1969), pp. 212-13.

¹⁶Charles Edward Russell, *Blaine of Maine: His Life and Times* (New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, 1931), p. 192; Morgan, *Hayes to McKinley*, p. 67; Russell H. Conwell, *The Life and Public Services of James G. Blaine* (Augusta, Maine: E. C. Allen & Co., 1884), p. 430; Sherman, *Blaine*, p. 12; Harriet Blaine to Walker, October 9, [1871], in Beale (ed.), *Letters of Mrs. Blaine*, I, p. 41; Harriet Blaine to Walker, October 23, 1871, in *ibid.*, p. 50.

¹⁷Harriet Blaine to Walker, November 12, 1871, in Beale (ed.), *Letters of Mrs. Blaine*, p. 56; Harriet Blaine to "V.", December 30, 1880, in Hamilton, *Blaine*, p. 529; Harriet Blaine to Walker, April 27, 1869, in Beale (ed.), *Letters of Mrs. Blaine*, I, pp. 9-10; Harriet Blaine to Walker, April 27, 1869, in *ibid.*, p. 10; Harriet Blaine to Walker, April 27, 1869, in *ibid.*, p. 8.

¹⁸Blaine to Walker, October 24, 1871, in Hamilton, *Blaine*, pp. 261-62; *ibid.*, p. 224.

¹⁹Ridpath, *Blaine*, p. 281.

²⁰Hunt, *Blaine House*, pp. 19-22; Sherman, *Blaine*, pp. 156-67, 160-61; Norman L. Bassett, "History of the Blaine Mansion," *Sprague's Journal of Maine History*, 3 (December 1920): 198; Harriet Blaine to Abby Dodge, January 10, 1877, in Beale (ed.), *Letters of Mrs. Blaine*, I, pp. 145-46; Harriet Blaine to Emmons, November 21, 1879, in *ibid.*, p. 166; Harriet Blaine to Margaret, October 17, 1882, in *ibid.*, II, p. 58.

²¹Harriet Blaine to Walker, May 15, 1872, in Beale (ed.), *Letters of Mrs. Blaine*, I, pp. 125-27; Harriet Blaine to Margaret, May 8, 1882, in *ibid.*, II, pp. 16-17.

²²Muzzey, *Blaine*, pp. 83-100, *passim*; Hamilton, *Blaine*, pp. 395-96, 415-17; Webb Hayes to Rutherford B. Hayes, June 12, 14, 1876, in Barnard, *Hayes*, pp. 291-92; Muzzey, *Blaine*, p. 110.

²³Blaine to Washburn, December 21, 1863, in *Israel, Elihu and Edwall Order Washburn: A Chapter in American Biography*, compiled by Gaillard Hunt (New York: Macmillan Company, 1925), p. 111; Blaine to Garfield, October 28, 1880, in Hamilton, *Blaine*, p. 489; Blaine to Garfield, December 10, 1880 in *ibid.*, p. 490; Harriet Blaine to Margaret, March 28, 1881, in Beale (ed.), *Letters of Mrs. Blaine*, I, pp. 198-99; Harriet Blaine to Margaret, January 17, 1881, in *ibid.*, I, pp. 193-94; Harriet Blaine to Emmons, May 17, 1881, in *ibid.*, I, p. 201.

²⁴Stanwood, *Blaine*, p. 43; Muzzey, *Blaine*, p. 28, 232-36; Carnegie to Blaine, March 30, 1880, Blaine Family Papers, Library of Congress; Blaine to Harriet Blaine, n.d., 1883, *ibid.*; Harriet Blaine to Margaret, December 29, 1881, in Beale (ed.), *Letters of Mrs. Blaine*, I, p. 277; Muzzey, *Blaine*, 254-55; Blaine to editors of *Maine Standard*, in *New York Times*, September 3, 1871.

²⁵Mrs. Blaine to Margaret, July 3, 6, 8, in Beale (ed.), *Letters of Mrs. Blaine*, I, pp. 209-10, 212, 214, 215; Blaine to ?, September 6, 1881, in Hamilton, *Blaine*, p. 544.

²⁶Fish, *DAB*, I, Part 2, p. 325; Sherman, *Blaine*, p. 89; Hamilton, *Blaine*, pp. 569-70; Harriet Blaine to Margaret, December 24, January 18, 1882, in Beale (ed.), *Letters of Mrs. Blaine*, II, pp. 69-70.

²⁷Hunt, *Blaine House*, pp. 22-28; Stanwood, *Blaine*, pp. 263-64; *Kennebec Journal*, June 7, 10, 11, 16, 17, 18, 23, 1884; *New York Times*, June 22, 1884; Mrs. Damrosch to "Mr. Hain," October 4, 1938, Blaine Family Papers, Library of Congress; Blaine to Farwell, June 25, 1884, Chicago Historical Society; Richard Hofstadter, *The American Political Tradition* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1948), p. 171; Curtis to "Mr. Sawyer," October 10, 1884, Massachusetts Historical Society; Hamilton, *Blaine*, p. 584; Alva Johnston, "That Was a Dirty Campaign: The Tattooed Man Versus Sir Mordred," *New Yorker* (October 24, 1936), p. 24.

²⁸Hunt, *Blaine House*, pp. 28-30; Morgan, *Hayes to McKinley*, p. 225; Johnston, "Dirty Campaign," p. 24; Morgan, *Hayes to McKinley*, p. 225; Muzzey, *Blaine*, p. 315-20; Morgan, *Hayes to McKinley*, p. 232.

²⁹Hunt, *Blaine House*, pp. 31-32; Morgan, *Hayes to McKinley*, p. 230; Sherman, *Blaine*, p. 94; Harriet Blaine to Alice B. Coppinger, November 30, 1884, in Beale (ed.), *Letters of Mrs. Blaine*, II, pp. 120-21; Muzzey, *Blaine*, p. 322; Sherman, *Blaine*, p. 94; Morgan, *Hayes to McKinley*, p. 232; Edward D. Mead to Thomas Sherman, n.d., Blaine Family Papers, Library of Congress.

³⁰Harriet Blaine to Margaret, September 24, 1885, in Beale (ed.), *Letters of Mrs. Blaine*, II, pp. 123-25; Blaine to ?, June, 1886, in Hamilton, *Blaine*, p. 637.

³¹Harriet Blaine to May Abigail Dodge, June 24, 1887, in Beale (ed.), *Letters of Mrs. Blaine*, II, pp. 150-52; Harriet Blaine to Emmons, June 30, 1887, in *ibid.*, pp. 153-54.

³²Blaine to ?, July, 1887, in Hamilton, *Blaine*, pp. 601-2; Harriet Blaine to Emmons, July 15, 1887, in Beale (ed.), *Letters of Mrs. Blaine*, II, p. 157.

³³Harriet Blaine to Joseph H. Homans, December 31, 1887, in Beale (ed.), *Letters of Mrs. Blaine*, pp. 164-66; Harriet Blaine to Harriet, January 23, 1888, in *ibid.*, p. 173; Harriet Blaine to "Dearest Daughter," February 16, 1888, in *ibid.*, p. 180.

³⁴Muzzey, *Blaine*, pp. 382-86.

³⁵Hunt, *Blaine House*, pp. 36-38; Harriet Blaine to Jamie, January 30, 1888, in Beale (ed.), *Letters of Mrs. Blaine*, II, pp. 236-37; Harriet Blaine to Joseph Manley, February 19, 1889, *ibid.*, pp. 245-46; Harriet Blaine to Jamie, February 26, 1889, *ibid.*, p. 249, 245; Fish, "Blaine," in *DAB*, I, 2, p. 326; Muzzey, *Blaine*, p. 461-62, 489-90; Ridpath, *Life and Works of Blaine*, pp. 222-25.

H. Draper Hunt is a professor of history and department chair at the University of Southern Maine. His works on Maine's political life include THE BLAINE HOUSE: HOME OF MAINE GOVERNORS, and HANNIBAL HAMLIN OF MAINE: LINCOLN'S FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT.