



UNDER THE OAKS

On July 6, 1854, a state convention of anti-slavery men was held in Jackson to found a new political party. *Uncle Tom's Cabin* had been published two years earlier, causing increased resentment against slavery, and the Kansas-Nebraska Act of May, 1854, threatened to make slave states out of previously free territories. Since the convention day was hot and the huge crowd could not be accommodated in the hall, the meeting adjourned to an oak grove on "Morgan's Forty" on the outskirts of the town. Here a state-wide slate of candidates was selected, and the Republican party was born. Winning an overwhelming victory in the elections of 1854, the Republican party went on to dominate national politics throughout the nineteenth century.

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