

multimillionaire, Tilden was not a typical Democrat nominee which, in 1876, was both a strength and a weakness. The Republican nominee, Rutherford B. Hayes, was the Governor of Ohio who carried an unblemished record as a war veteran and public official. But he was not from the Republican inner circles having been a compromise choice on the seventh ballot at the Republican National Convention.

A victory on the November 7th election was anticipated by both sides but the results would not be determined on that day. Early returns showed Tilden carrying New York, Indiana, Connecticut and New Jersey and, if the Democrats could hold the normally Democratic South, the Republicans would be out of office. However, the greatly disputed election returns from South Carolina, Louisiana and Florida were submitted to a 15 member Electoral Commission which decided all disputes in favor of the Republican Hayes.²² The margin of victory was a single electoral vote (185 to 184) declared only three days prior to the inauguration day. Despite receiving 254,235 less popular votes than the Democrat Tilden, Rutherford B. Hayes became our 19th President.

Although Montgomery Blair played a significant role in the post election political maneuvering as editor of the Democratic Washington Union,²³ Maryland did not play a prominent role during the 1876 Presidential campaign and voting. From 1872 it was the Democrats who gained votes from the previous election. Tilden received a comfortable margin of almost 20,000 votes in winning all but four of Maryland's 24 subdivisions. Notwithstanding a large black voting population the Republicans narrowly carried Calvert County (by 42 votes) and St. Mary's County (by 38 votes). Hayes also defeated Tilden in Frederick County (by 277 votes) and in Garrett County (by 17 votes) which voted as a separate entity for the first time and commenced its unique history as the only Maryland subdivision never won by a Democratic presidential candidate.²⁴ This unusual combination of Southern Maryland (with a high percentage of black population) and Western Maryland (with a very low percentage of black population) as areas of Republican strength was evidenced in the party's 1876 victories in the First and Sixth Congressional Districts. The third party Greenback candidate, Peter Cooper who polled 75,973 votes nationwide, had virtually no impact in Maryland receiving only a scattering of votes (See Appendix A, 1876 Vote Map.)

1876 ELECTION SUMMARY

Candidate (Party)	Popular Vote		Electoral Vote	
	Md.	U.S.	Md.	U.S.
Rutherford B. Hayes (R)	71,979	4,034,311		185
Samuel J. Tilden (D)	91,777	4,288,546	8	184

1880

President Hayes had previously committed himself to a single term after the hotly disputed 1876 contest and a Democratic inspired Congressional investigation in the