

## 10.1 - Slavery, States' Rights, and Westward Expansion

### Vocabulary

Wilmot Proviso - proposed, but reject, 1846 bill that would have banned slavery in the territory won from Mexico in the Mexican War.

Free-Soil Party - antislavery political party of the mid-1800s

Popular sovereignty - policy that voters in a territory - not congress - should decide whether or not to allow slavery there.

Secede - to withdraw formally from a membership in a group or an organization

Compromise of 1850 - political agreement that allowed California to be admitted as a free state by allowing popular sovereignty in the territories and enacting a stricter fugitive slave law

Fugitive Slave Act - law that required all citizens to aid in apprehending runaway slaves

### Introduction

From the earliest days, the issue of slavery divided Americans. Should slavery be allowed to in the new western territories? Southerners said yes; many northerners said no.

### Slavery Divides the Nation

- After the American revolution, the North and the South developed distinctly different ways of life.
  - North: busy cities, embraced technology and industry. Built factories staffed with paid workers. Becoming increasingly diverse with immigrants arriving in northern ports.
  - South: agrarian/agricultural, society. The economy based around cotton. Depended on slaves.
- Crucial Question: Should slavery be allowed to spread to new territories west of the Mississippi river?
- Wilmot Proviso Seeks to Limit Slavery: "neither slavery nor involuntary servitude shall ever exist in any" lands won from Mexico.
- Southerners angrily denounced the Proviso. It passed in the House... but not the Senate.
- Northern Views of Slavery - While slavery by the 1860s was almost non-existent in the north there was still prejudice.
- Most white northerners at the time viewed blacks as inferior.
- Laws in the northern states severely limited the rights of free African Americans and discouraged/prevented the migration of more.
- As a result, many white northerners had little personal experience with AAs.
- A vocal minority of northerners were abolitionists, or people who wanted to end slavery. They believed that slavery was morally wrong.
- Not all northerners wanted to end slavery. Bankers/ mill owners/ merchants/ etc. who made a lot of money off cotton and tobacco or by trading or transporting slaves did not want slavery to end.
- They "sympathized" with southerners. Some unskilled laborers in low paying jobs also opposed abolition, fearing that freed slaves might come north and compete with them for work.
- Southern Views of Slavery - Many southerners believed that God intended that black people should provide the labor for white "civilized" society.
- John Calhoun of S. Carolina firmly defended slavery: "I hold it [slavery] to be a good... and [it] will continue to prove so if not disturbed by the... spirit of abolition".
- Southerners claimed that enslaved people were healthier and happier than northern wage workers.

### The Election of 1848

- Democrats and Whigs were split over whether to limit the expansion of slavery. New political factions emerged.
- Free Soil Party Vows to Keep Territories Free - goal was to keep slavery out of the western territories.
- Whigs and Democrats Dodge the Slavery Issue - managing to win support in both the north and the south.

- Both Dems and Whigs embraced the idea of **popular sovereignty**. This idea had wide appeal, as it seemed in keeping with the tradition of American democracy.
  - The Free Soil Party nominated Martin Van Buren as their candidate
  - The Whigs nominated Zachary Taylor, a general and Mexican War hero. (slave holder)
  - The Democrats put forward Gov. Lewis Cass of Michigan.
- The Free-Soil Party wins 10% of the vote, drawing votes away from Cass. Taylor wins.

### **A Compromise Avoids a Crisis**

- California Statehood Threatens the Balance of Power - "Gold Fever" as it came to be known, drew people to California, more than 80,000 people.
- California became a wild and lawless place & realized that they needed a government.
- They drafted a constitution and asked for admittance to the Union as a free state.
- Utah & Nevada would soon also petition to join the union, potentially as free states as well.
- The South was in an uproar about the tipping of the balance between free and slave states.
- Southerners demanded that the federal government enforce the weak and often neglected Fugitive Slave Law of 1793 with Federal funding.
- Three extraordinary statesman in congress
  - Daniel Webster from the North
  - John Calhoun from the South
  - & Henry Clay from the West; becomes known as "Great Pacificator"
- Clay offers a Compromise
  - Congress admits California as a free state
  - New Mexico and Utah would decide the slavery question by popular sovereignty
  - Congress would pass a strict new fugitive slave law
  - Texas would relinquish its claims on New Mexico for \$10 million
- Calhoun and Webster Speak - Calhoun snaps back that If the North would not submit to the South's demands "let the states agree to separate and part in peace. IF you are unwilling that we should part in peace, tell us so, and we shall know what to do." In other words, if the North did not agree, the South would **secede**, or break away, from the Union.
- Webster tries to rally people around the cause of unity.

### **Senate Adopts the Compromise of 1850**

- Over the years, Congress had adopted a variety of measures in order to preserve the Union
  - The NW Ordinance of 1787 to limit slavery
  - The Missouri Compromise of 1820 to maintain balance
  - NOW: The **Compromise of 1850**, based off Henry Clay's' ideas.
- The compromise had the North & South in an uproar.
- Senator Henry Foote rose and aimed a loaded revolver at Senator Thomas Benton over the debate
- Senator Stephen A. Douglas of Illinois took charge and convinced everyone of the compromise.
- By September 1850 both Calhoun and the slaveholding President Taylor were dead.
- The new president, Millard Fillmore, supported the compromise & it came to fruition.
- A new **Fugitive Slave Act** added stringents amendments to the earlier law.
- Most Americans, in both the North & the South, breathed a sigh of relief that the crisis has been laid to rest. Though the Compromise of 1850 restored calm for the moment, it carried the seeds of new crises to come.

## **10.2 - A Rising Tide of Protest and Violence**

### **Vocabulary**

Personal liberty laws - these statutes nullified the Fugitive Slave Act and allowed the state to arrest slave catchers for kidnapping.

Underground Railroad - system that existed before the Civil War, in which black and white abolitionists helped escape slaves travel to safe areas, especially Canada.

Harriet Tubman - aka "Black Moses", lead slaves to freedom

Harriet Beecher Stowe - Author of influential book "Uncle Tom's Cabin"

Kansas-Nebraska Act - 1854 law that divided the Nebraska Territory into Kansas and Nebraska giving each territory the right to decide whether or not to allow slavery

John Brown - abolitionist who led revolt and response to attack on Lawrence, Kansas

"Bleeding Kansas" - terms used to describe the 1854-1856 violence between proslavery and antislavery supporters in Kansas

## Introduction

The ink on the Compromise of 1850 had barely dried before the issue of slavery resurfaced, this time with violent results.

## Resistance Against the Fugitive Slave Act

- The fugitive slave act enraged many northerners, who felt like they were being forced to support slavery.
- They also disliked the increasing federal intervention in the affairs of the independent states.
- A few northern states struck back, passing **personal liberty laws**.
- Some of the captured "fugitive slaves" were really free people being kidnapped and sold into slavery.
- Slaves, fugitives, and free black people plotted and carried out resistance.
- Northern Blacks Mobilize - In 1851 in PA, a group of free African Americans heavily armed themselves & attempted to protect several fugitives from their Maryland master coming to reclaim them. In what became known as the "Christiana Riot" the slave owner was killed. No one was tried for the murder.
- In Christiana as well as many northern communities, African Americans and white bystanders defied officials who tried to reclaim fugitives to slavery.
- **Underground Railroad** to Freedom - although it was not underground and had no tracks or cars, this escape system used railroad terminology to describe its actions. "Conductors" hid runaway slaves and moved them North.
- One of the most courageous conductors was **Harriet Tubman**, a Maryland-born fugitive slave. She was known as "Black Moses" because she led her people out of bondage. Tubman made almost two dozen trips into the South, guiding hundred of slaves, even her own parents, to safety.
- Stowe and Delany Condemn Slavery - In 1852, Harriet Beecher Stowe published, Uncle Tom's Cabin, a powerful condemnation of slavery. It gave slavery a face for those who had never witnessed it firsthand.
- Stowe's story sold more than 300,000 copies in its first year, becoming the second book to sell out nationwide since the bible.
- White southerners tried writing their own books. In these accounts, slaves were happy and carefree, gently cared for by aught Christianity by their kind masters. They claimed the mental illness "Drapetomania" caused slaves to flee.

## The Kansas-Nebraska Act Undoes the Missouri Compromise

- The Missouri Compromise, the Wilmot Proviso, the Compromise of 1850: each seemed to offer the solution. But, in reality, the issue lay beyond the ability of patchwork legislation to resolve.
- Douglass Presses for Popular Sovereignty - Senator Douglas, introduces a bill to set up a government in the Nebraska Territory. He proposed popular sovereignty.
- Congress Debates the **Kansas-Nebraska Act** - The South, feared Nebraska would enter the Union as a free state so they pressured Douglass to divide the territory into two distinct territories: Kansas and Nebraska. They assumed Kansas would be a slave state and Nebraska would be a free state.
- In effect, the Missouri Compromise is nullified.

## A Battle Rages in "Bleeding Kansas"

- Competition between settlers to control the government in Kansas would have deadly consequences.
- Two Governments Are Established - proslavery residents from Missouri, known as Border Ruffians, swept into Kansas and coerced local voters into voting for pro slavery candidates. They cast their own illegal votes. Within two years they developed a constitution that would legalize slavery and punish those who spoke or wrote against it.
- Northern abolitionists also rushed into Kansas, they established the town of Lawrence, a few miles east of the pro slavery capital of Lecompton. They established an antislavery government in Topeka. By early 1856, this Topeka government petitioned Congress for its own statehood. Kansas now had two governments petitioning for statehood. It was a sure setup for disaster.
- Violence Grips the Territory - On May 21, 1856, Border Ruffians raided the antislavery town of Lawrence, Kansas. They pillaged homes, burned a Hotel, and destroyed a newspaper print shop.
- **John Brown**, a NY abolitionist, had moved his family several times in pursuit of opportunities to confront slavery head-on now lived near Lawrence. He retaliated swiftly. With his sons and a few friends, Brown carried out a midnight execution of five proslavery settlers at Pottawatomie Creek.
- Abolitionists were outraged at the Border Ruffians for raiding Lawrence, but condemned Brown's massacre.
- In Kansas, both sides armed for battle. Throughout the fall of 1856, violent outbreaks occurred in various locales around Lawrence. Reporters characterized the territory as "**Bleeding Kansas**".
- It was clear that popular sovereignty was not a solution to the slavery issue.
- Over the next several years, the question of how to admit Kansas to the Union baffled everyone.
- President Franklin Pierce urged Congress to admit Kansas as a slave state in 1858. However, Congress refused and Kansas submitted 4 constitutions before it finally entered as a free state in 1861, after the Civil War had already begun.
- Violence Spreads to the Senate - Some congressmen went to work armed not only with words but with pistols and canes. In May 1856, just after fighting broke out in Kansas, Massachusetts senator Charles Sumner delivered the speech "The Crime Against Kansas". He blasted southerners for their bullying and afraid in the Kansas elections, and he referred to the Border Ruffians from Missouri as "hirelings, picked from the drunken spew and vomit of an uneasy civilization -- in the form of men" and then insulted S. Carolina senator Andrew Butler.
- A few days later, Butler's nephew, attacked Sumner in the Senate, beating him unconscious with a cane.
- What happens next illustrates the division of the two sides. Congress tried to punish the nephew by removing him from office. His constituency simply re-elected him and sent him back.
- Sumner was so badly injured that he could not return to the Senate for 3 years. The Massachusetts voters re-elected him anyway, using his empty seat as a public reminder of southern treachery.
- The divide between North and South grew even wider and deeper.

## 10.3 - Political Realignment Deepens the Crisis

### Vocabulary

Know-Nothings - political party of the mid-1800s, officially known as the American Party, that opposed immigration

Republican Party - political party established around an anti slavery platform in 1854.

Dred Scott - slave who attempts to sue for his freedom in a free state, in a pivotal court case. He is denied his freedom.

Roger B. Taney - the chief justice who makes the Dred Scott Decision

Abraham Lincoln - 16th president, candidate for the Republican party, questions the morality of slavery  
Stephen A. Douglas - senate candidate who runs against Lincoln and wins, but believes in popular sovereignty  
Harpers Ferry - town in Virginia (now West Virginia) where abolitionist John Brown raided a federal arsenal in 1859.

## Introduction

Americans had sectional differences that negotiation and compromise couldn't fix. By the mid 1850s, the battle over slavery threatened to tear the nation apart.

## The Shifting Political Scene

- Traditionally, political parties were decided on more than just "north" or "south". Democrats and Whigs came from the North, South and West. But by 1840, politics were increasingly based on slavery.
- The Whig Party Disintegrated - for being too empathetic to both the north and the south.
- By the mid-1800s, a growing immigrant population was changing the country (The Irish & Germans).
  - For Ex. Majority protestant -> majority catholic.
- People's concerns: would catholics bring ideas that would undermine America's religious freedom? Would the newcomers take jobs away from workers who were already here? Would they be lazy, not work, and become paupers, weighing down society?
- Know-Nothings Attract Support - concerns fueled the growth of this anti-immigrant movement. Called this because members responded "I Know nothing" when questioned about their secret nativist organization. They eventually go public as "The American Party".
- The Republican Party is Born - antislavery zeal gave rise to the new Republican Party in 1854. Opposition to slavery was the center of the Republican philosophy.

## Sectional Divisions Intensify

- The Election of 1856 Causes Alarm
  - Republican - John C. Fremont
  - Democrat - James Buchanan
  - Know-Nothings/American Party - Millard Fillmore
- Buchanan, who had promised to stop "the agitation of the slavery issue" won the election.
- The Dred Scott Decision Triggers Outrage - U.S. supreme court ruled in the case of Missouri slave Dred Scott, who had sued for his freedom based on the fact that his master had taken him to the free state of Illinois and Wisconsin where slavery was outlawed by the Missouri Compromise.
- Chief Justice Roger B. Taney, decided against Scott.
- In a controversial decision, the Court decided that slaves and their descendants were property, not citizens, and therefore were not entitled to sue in the courts.
- Abolitionists and the North were alarmed.
- Leading black abolitionist Frederick Douglass predicted that the decision would hasten the end of slavery.

## The Lincoln-Douglas Debates

- "Honest Abe" vs. "The Little Giant" fight for illinois senate seat.
  - Abraham Lincoln was a lawyer and statesman, with a reputation for integrity and directness. Lincoln seemed to be staunchly opposed to slavery, but his political life was marked by a desire to steer a middle course.
  - Rival Illinois politician Stephen A. Douglas, the "little giant" promoted popular sovereignty and seemed sus.



- Douglas Backs Popular Sovereignty - He was somewhat sympathetic to slavery. He insists that the implied intent of the Constitution was popular sovereignty.
- Lincoln Wins a Reputation - he spoke of the “eternal struggle between right and wrong”, referring to the Dred Scott decision as wrong and popular sovereignty as wrong.
- Douglas wins the illinois election by a slim margin. Lincoln won a large following.

### **John Brown's Raid**

- John Brown, viewed himself as a martyr, avenging the evil of slavery. Even before one of his sons was killed in Bleeding Kansas, he has concluded that violence was the best way to reach his goal.
- Brown Seized the Arsenal at Harpers Ferry - By the fall of 1859, Brown was ready. “Men, get your arms” he cried “we will proceed to the ferry”. Gathering his following of 21 men - including 5 free African Americans - Brown set out to seize the federal arsenal in Harpers Ferry, Virginia (now West Virginia). He hoped to inspire local slaves to join a revolution that would destroy slavery in the South.
- He failed. Few Americans were prepared to join a rebellion organized by this intense, fanatical white man.
- Frederick Douglass, a close friend, refused to join, warning Brown that his mission “would array the whole country against us”.
- Brown and several others, went to the gallows.
- Brown's Execution Deepens the Growing Divide - many northerners thought abolitionists activism had gone too far. But others now saw Brown as a courageous martyr.
- A popular song later immortalized him, celebrating the fact that “his soul goes marching on”.
- On the morning of his execution, Brown made the prophetic prediction that “the crimes [of slavery] of this guilty land will never be purged away... without very much bloodshed”. Many Americans agreed with him.

## **10.4 - Lincoln, Secession, and War**

### **Vocabulary**

Jefferson Davis - Mississippi senator who became president of the Confederacy

Confederate States of America - government of 11 southern states that seceded from the United States and fought against the Union in the Civil War.

Crittenden Compromise - 1861 proposed constitutional amendment that attempted to prevent secession of the southern states by allowing slavery in all of the territories south of the Missouri Compromise line.

Fort Sumter - federal fort located in Charleston, South Carolina, where the first shots of the Civil War were fired.

### **Introduction**

With the election of Abraham Lincoln in 1860 the crisis over slavery came to a head. The Union was about to dissolve.

### **The Election of 1860**

- John Brown's raid and execution were still fresh in the minds of Americans.

- The Uncertainty of Kansas - slave state or free state? - added to the anxiety.
- The Dred Scott decision caused northerners to lose faith in the supreme court.
- The annoyance of the intrusive Fugitive Slave Act further aggravated the situation.
- Mississippi senator Jefferson Davis restricted federal control over slavery.
- Democrats Split Their Support
  - Southern Dems - wanted federal protection of slavery in their territories - nominated **John C. Breckinridge**. Breckinridge was committed to expanding slavery into the territories.
  - Northern Dems - nominated Stephen A. Douglas (supported popular sovereignty)
- Whigs Make a Last Effort - & team up with the Know-Nothings to create the Constitutional Union Party. Nominated John Bell as their presidential candidate.
- Republicans Nominate Lincoln - after several ballots, they nominated Abraham Lincoln as their candidate (because he was actually more moderate than the other guy William H. Seward). They don't want to interfere with slavery in the states where it already existed but they want to end slavery in the territories (future states).
- Lincoln Wins the Election - win almost 60% of the electoral vote (none of which was from the south) but all the other votes were split between the other 3 candidates.
- Lincoln and Douglas competed for votes in the north; Breckinridge and Bell in the south.
- The North and South were now effectively two political entities, and there seemed no way to bridge the gap.

### **The Union Collapses**

- Southerners were outraged that a President could be elected without a single southern vote.
- Southern States Leave the Union - S. Carolina declares "The union now subsisting between S. Carolina and the other States, under the name of the 'United States of America,' is hereby dissolved."
- In the next few weeks, six other states of the Deep South seceded from the Union
- Slave-dependent, cotton-growing states, often believed they had to take this step to protect their property and way of life.
- The Confederacy is Formed - In Feb 1861, the seven seceding states established the Confederate States of America.
- Not all southerners backed the Confederacy. Some large planters with economic ties to the North still hoped for a compromise. So, too, did many small farmers with no vested interest in slavery.
- The Confederacy chose former senator Jefferson Davis as their president.
- A Final Compromise Fails - A narrow margin of senators votes down the Crittenden Compromise, named after a senator who tried to propose that slavery should be allowed in western territories.

### **The Civil War Begins**

- Lincoln Takes Office - and takes a firm but conciliatory tone toward the South: "I have no purpose, directly or indirectly, to interfere with the institution of slavery in the states where it exists", he began. But he did intend to preserve the Union. "No state, upon its own mere action, can lawfully get out of the Union," he said.
- There was no war, he pledged, unless the South started it.
- Lincoln Decides to Act - When the Southern states seceded they seized their federal forts with them. Leaving only four forts in Union hands. The most important of these was Fort Sumter, which guarded the harbor at Charleston, S. Carolina.
- When President Buchanan sent supplies to the Fort for the troops who desperately needed food and supplies, the Confederacy attacked the ship with supplies.
- Lincoln had to decide whether to take the risk required to hold on to these forts or yield to Confederate demands that they be surrendered.
- At last, trying to steer a middle course, Lincoln notified South Carolina that he was sending supplies - food only, no arms - to the fort.

- Fort Sumter Falls - S. Carolinians did not go for it and ordered the Fort Sumter garrison to surrender to the Confederacy. When they refused, the Confederates fired on the fort. The Union troops eventually ran out of ammunition, forcing the commander to surrender.
- Northerners responded with shock and anger.
- Lincoln declared that “insurrection” existed and called for 75,000 volunteers to fight against the Confederacy.
- The South responded just as strong, and 4 more states joined the Confederacy.
- Americans faced years of terrible suffering before the fighting that had begun at Fort Sumter finally ended.