



## Chapter Preview

The conflict over the issue of slavery continued to divide the country. A series of events in the 1850s caused the crisis to deepen. Eventually the conflict erupted into war between North and South.

### Section 1

#### Growing Tensions Over Slavery

Pages 482–485

### What You Will Learn

With the addition of new western land, debate over the spread of slavery increased.

### Section 2

#### Compromises Fail

Pages 486–491

After all efforts at compromise failed, violent fighting broke out in the Kansas Territory.

### Section 3

#### The Crisis Deepens

Pages 494–498

As tensions increased, a new antislavery political party emerged.

### Section 4

#### The Coming of the Civil War

Pages 499–503

Abraham Lincoln's election led seven southern states to leave the Union.



### U.S. Events

1850

Fugitive Slave Act requires citizens to help catch runaway slaves.

1852

Harriet Beecher Stowe publishes *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

1854

Kansas-Nebraska Act leads to violence.

1850

1853

1853 Commodore Matthew Perry arrives in Japan to open trade.

1856

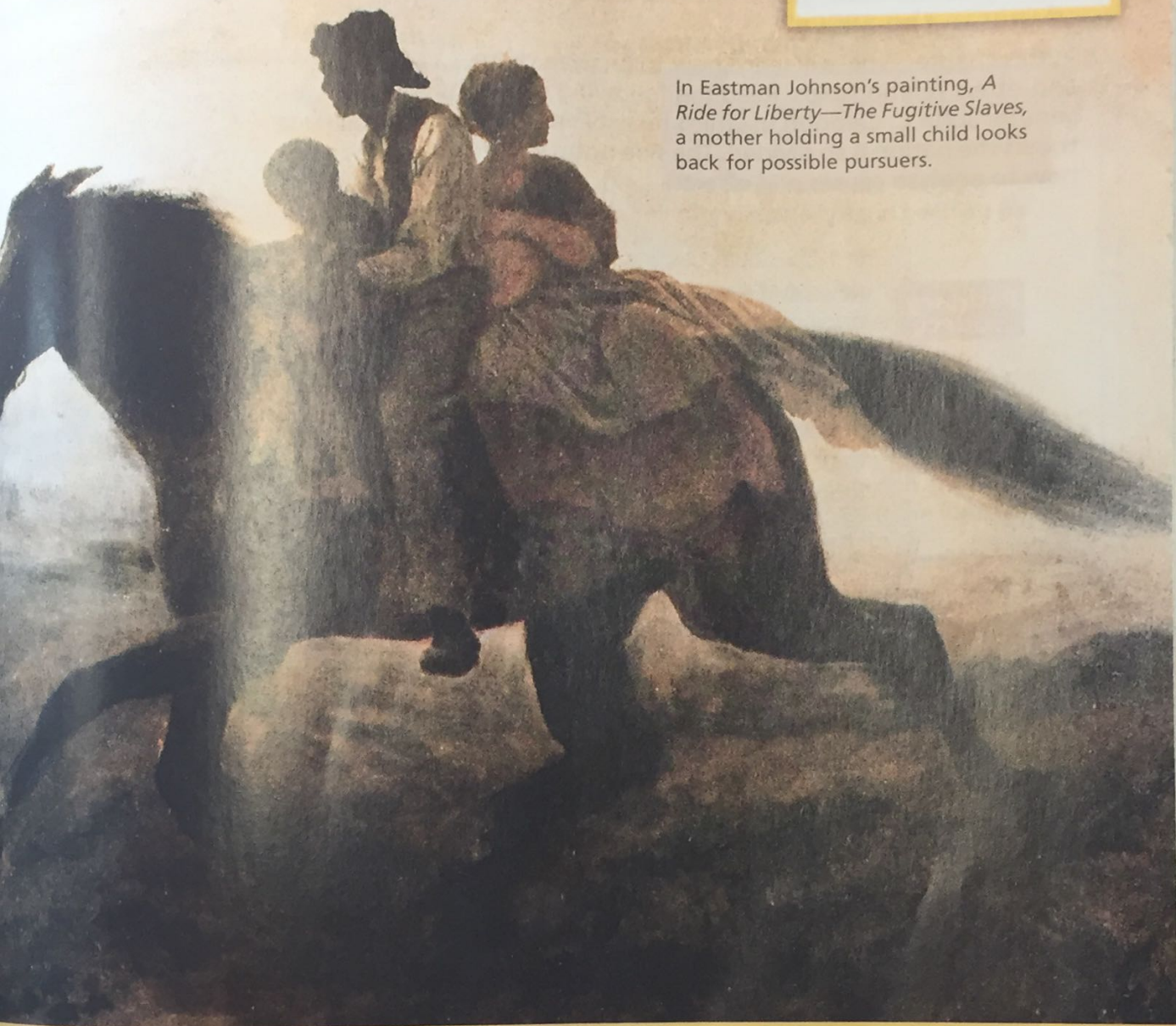


### World Events

**Quick View Video**

View the chapter video for a quick preview of the main ideas.

In Eastman Johnson's painting, *A Ride for Liberty—The Fugitive Slaves*, a mother holding a small child looks back for possible pursuers.



**1857**

Supreme Court declares Missouri Compromise unconstitutional.

**1860**

Abraham Lincoln is elected President.

**1861**

Civil War begins with bombardment of Fort Sumter.

**1856**

**1857** Soldiers in India revolt against the British.

**1859**

**1861** Russian tsar frees serfs.

**1862**



# SECTION 1 Growing Tensions Over Slavery

## Objectives

1. Explain why conflict arose over the issue of slavery in the territories after the Mexican-American War.
2. Identify the goal of the Free-Soil Party.
3. Describe the compromise Henry Clay proposed to settle the issues that divided the North and the South.

## Prepare to Read

### Reading Skill

**Analyze Causes** Causes are the reasons that events happen. As the United States struggled over the issue of slavery, events such as new laws or important speeches had dramatic effects on the struggle. Understanding how these events made such an impact will help you make sense of this turbulent time in American history.

## Vocabulary Builder

### High-Use Words

vital, p. 482

crisis, p. 484

### Key Terms and People

popular sovereignty, p. 483

secede, p. 484

fugitive, p. 484

Henry Clay, p. 484

John C. Calhoun, p. 485

Daniel Webster, p. 485

★ **Background Knowledge** The Missouri Compromise of 1820 seemed to have quieted the differences between North and South. Then, the American victory in the Mexican-American War added new territory to the United States. In this section, you will learn how this development recharged the slavery issue.

## Main Idea

The vast territory acquired as a result of the Mexican-American War reignited the controversy over slavery.

## Slavery and the Mexican-American War

Between 1820 and 1848, four new slaveholding states and four new free states were admitted to the Union. This maintained the balance between free and slaveholding states, with 15 of each. However, territory gained by the Mexican-American War threatened to destroy the balance.

**The Wilmot Proviso** The Missouri Compromise did not apply to the huge territory gained from Mexico in 1848. Would this territory be organized as states that allowed slavery? The issue was vital to northerners who wanted to stop slavery from spreading.

Fearing that the South would gain too much power, in 1846 Representative David Wilmot of Pennsylvania proposed that Congress ban slavery in all territory that might become part of the United States as a result of the Mexican-American War.

This proposal was called the Wilmot Proviso. The provision was passed in the House of Representatives, but it failed in the Senate.

Although the Wilmot Proviso never became law, it aroused great concern in the South. Many supporters of slavery viewed it as an attack on slavery by the North.

## Vocabulary Builder

vital (vī tahl) *adj.* necessary for life; of great importance

**An Antislavery Party** The controversy over the Wilmot Proviso also led to the rise of a new political party. Neither the Democrats nor the Whigs took a firm stand on slavery. Each hoped to win support in both North and South in the election of 1848.

The Democratic candidate for President in 1848, Senator Lewis Cass of Michigan, proposed a solution that he hoped would appeal to everyone. Cass suggested letting the people in each new territory or state decide for themselves whether to allow slavery. This process, called **popular sovereignty**, meant that people in the territory or state would vote directly on issues, rather than having their elected representatives decide.

Many Whigs and Democrats wanted to take a stronger stand against the spread of slavery. In August 1848, antislavery Whigs and Democrats joined forces to form a new party, which they called the Free-Soil Party. It called for the territory gained in the Mexican-American War to be “free soil,” a place where slavery was banned.

The party chose former Democratic President Martin Van Buren as its candidate. Van Buren did poorly in the election. However, he won enough votes from the Democrats to keep Cass from winning. General Zachary Taylor, a Whig and a hero of the Mexican-American War, was elected instead.

**Checkpoint** Why was the Free-Soil Party founded?

## The Election of 1848



### Reading Political Cartoons

#### Skills Activity

This 1848 cartoon reflects a view that members of the Free-Soil Party were “barnburners,” ready to burn down the barn (the Democratic Party) to get rid of proslavery “rats.”

- Identify Main Ideas** How does the cartoon relate to the Election of 1848?
- Apply Information** In the cartoon bubble (top right), what are the meanings of “FREE SOIL” and “Davy Wilmot”?

## Calhoun Versus Webster

“[If] something is not done to arrest it, the South will be forced to choose between abolition and secession. . . . If you are unwilling we should part in peace, tell us so; and we shall know what to do when you reduce the question to submission or resistance.”

—John C. Calhoun, March 4, 1850



John C. Calhoun

“I wish to speak today, not as a Massachusetts man, nor as a Northern man, but as an American. . . . I speak today for the preservation of the Union. . . . I speak today . . . for the restoration to the country of that quiet and that harmony which make the blessings of this Union so rich, and so dear to us all.”

—Daniel Webster, March 7, 1850



Daniel Webster

### Reading Primary Sources

#### Skills Activity

During the Senate debate on Clay's Compromise of 1850, John C. Calhoun and Daniel Webster wrote dramatic speeches evaluating the compromise.

- (a) **Detect Points of View** For what region does Daniel Webster claim to be speaking?
- (b) **Apply Information** Calhoun says “[If] something is not done to arrest it, the South will be forced to choose between abolition and secession.” To what does “it” refer?

### Main Idea

The compromise proposed by Henry Clay produced one of the greatest debates in American history.



### Analyze Causes

What event did both southerners and northerners worry would destroy the balance of power between them?

### Vocabulary Builder

**crisis** (KRĪ sihs) *n.* turning point or deciding event in history

## A Bitter Debate

After the discovery of gold in California, thousands of people rushed west. California soon had enough people to become a state. Both sides realized that California's admission to the Union as a free state would upset the balance between free and slave states in the Senate.

Northerners argued that California should be a free state because most of the territory lay north of the Missouri Compromise line. But southerners feared that if free states gained a majority in the Senate, the South would not be able to block antislavery attacks like the Wilmot Proviso. Southern leaders began to threaten to **secede**, or **withdraw**, from the nation if California was admitted to the Union as a free state.

There were other issues dividing the North and South. Northerners wanted the slave trade abolished in Washington, D.C. Southerners wanted northerners to catch people who had escaped from slavery. Southerners called for a law that would force the return of **fugitives**, or **runaway enslaved people**.

For months it looked as if there was no solution. Then, in January 1850, Senator **Henry Clay** of Kentucky stepped forward with a plan to calm the **crisis**. Clay had won the nickname the Great Compromiser for working out the Missouri Compromise. Now, Clay made another series of proposals that he hoped would forever resolve the issues that bitterly divided northerners and southerners.

The Senate's discussion of Clay's proposals produced one of the greatest debates in American political history. South Carolina Senator **John C. Calhoun** was against compromise. Calhoun was gravely ill and just four weeks from death. He was too weak to give his speech, but he struggled to sit upright while his final speech was read to the Senate.

The admission of California as a free state, Calhoun wrote, would expose the South to continued attacks on slavery. There were only two ways to preserve the South's way of life. One was a constitutional amendment to protect states' rights. The other was secession.

Three days later, Massachusetts Senator **Daniel Webster** rose to support Clay's proposals and called for an end to the bitter sectionalism that was dividing the nation. Webster argued for Clay's compromise in order to preserve the Union.

Which view would prevail? The very existence of the United States depended on the answer.

**✓Checkpoint** How did California's proposed admission to the Union affect the debate between the North and the South over slavery?

**★ Looking Back and Ahead** With the territories acquired by the Mexican-American War, the nation could no longer overlook the slavery issue. Statehood for each of these territories would upset the balance between free states and slaveholding states. For a short while, it seemed to many that Henry Clay's proposed compromise gave concessions to both sides. But, as you will read in the next section, the compromise soon fell apart. When it did, the nation once again plunged down the road to all-out war between the regions.

## Section 1 | Check Your Progress

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### Comprehension and Critical Thinking

- (a) Recall** What was the Wilmot Proviso?  
**(b) Analyze Cause and Effect** Did the Wilmot Proviso successfully address the nation's divisions over slavery? What effect *did* it have on the nation?
- (a) List** What were the main issues that led to Henry Clay's proposed compromise?  
**(b) Detect Points of View** Write a sentence describing how you would feel about the need to compromise if you were a member of Congress from the North.

### Reading Skill

- Analyze Causes** What did southerners want Congress to do about enslaved people who had fled to the North?

### Vocabulary Builder

Complete these sentences so they clearly show your understanding of the key terms.

- The status of new western territories would be decided by **popular sovereignty**, which is \_\_\_\_\_.
- If southern states **seceded** from the Union, then \_\_\_\_\_.

- Many northerners would not report **fugitives**, who were \_\_\_\_\_.

### Writing

- Consider the broad topic "Conflicts Between Slave States and Free States Before the Civil War." Divide it into four or five narrower topics. Each of these narrower topics should be covered in a research paper of a few pages.



## Objectives

1. Summarize the main points of the Compromise of 1850.
2. Describe the impact of the novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.
3. Explain how the Kansas-Nebraska Act reopened the issue of slavery in the territories.
4. Describe the effect of the Kansas-Nebraska Act.

## Prepare to Read

### 🎯 Reading Skill

**Analyze Effects** The important events of the 1850s had far-reaching effects around the nation. As you read Section 2, try to identify and understand these effects. Remember that two events do not necessarily have a cause-and-effect link just because they occur in sequence. Use signal words such as *result* to help you identify effects.

## Vocabulary Builder

### High-Use Words

deprive, p. 487

impose, p. 490

### Key Terms and People

**Harriet Beecher Stowe**, p. 488  
**propaganda**, p. 488

**Stephen Douglas**, p. 489

**John Brown**, p. 491

★ **Background Knowledge** In the previous section, you learned how many Americans hoped that Henry Clay's proposed compromise would quiet the controversy over slavery. Their hopes were soon dashed. In this section, you will learn how new disputes about slavery destroyed the compromise and led to new crises.

## Main Idea

The key part of the Compromise of 1850 related to the Fugitive Slave Act.

## The Compromise of 1850

In September 1850, Congress finally passed five bills based on Clay's proposals. This series of laws became known as the Compromise of 1850. President Zachary Taylor had opposed the Compromise. However, Taylor died in 1850. The new President, Millard Fillmore, supported the Compromise and signed it into law.

**To Please the North** The Compromise of 1850 was designed to end the crisis by giving both supporters and opponents of slavery part of what they wanted. To please the North, California was admitted to the Union as a free state. In addition, the Compromise banned the slave trade in the nation's capital. (However, Congress declared that it had no power to regulate the slave trade between slave states.)

**To Please the South** Under the terms of the Compromise, popular sovereignty would be used to decide the question of slavery in the rest of the Mexican Cession. People in the states created from that territory would vote whether to be a free state or a slave state when they requested admission to the Union. Also, in return for agreeing to outlaw the slave trade in Washington, D.C., southerners got a tough new fugitive slave law.

The Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 allowed special government officials to arrest any person accused of being a runaway slave. Suspects had no right to a trial to prove that they had been falsely accused. All that was required to deprive them of their freedom was for a slaveholder or any white witness to swear that the suspect was the slaveholder's property. In addition, the law required northern citizens to help capture accused runaways if authorities requested assistance.

**Outrage in the North** The Fugitive Slave Act became the most controversial part of the Compromise of 1850. Many northerners swore that they would resist the hated new law.

Northerners were outraged to see people accused of being fugitive slaves deprived of their freedom. An Indiana man was torn from his wife and children and given to an owner who claimed the man had escaped 19 years earlier. A wealthy African American tailor was carried back to South Carolina after living in New York for years. His friends quickly raised enough money to buy his freedom. But most who were shipped south remained there. Thousands of northern African Americans fled to the safety of Canada, including many who had never been enslaved.

In city after city, residents banded together to resist the Fugitive Slave Law. When two white Georgians arrived in Boston to seize fugitives, Bostonians threatened the slave catchers with harm if they did not leave the city right away. Another group rescued an accused runaway and sent him to safety in Canada. When the mob leaders were arrested, local juries refused to convict them.

John C. Calhoun had hoped that the Fugitive Slave Law would force northerners to admit that slaveholders had rights to their property. Instead, every time the law was enforced, it convinced more northerners that slavery was evil.

 **Checkpoint** How did the Compromise of 1850 deal with the admission of California to the Union?



## Uncle Tom's Cabin

One northerner deeply affected by the Fugitive Slave Act was **Harriet Beecher Stowe**. The daughter of an abolitionist minister, Stowe met many people who had escaped from slavery. She decided to write "something that will make this whole nation feel what an accursed thing slavery is."

In 1852, Stowe published *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, a novel about kindly Uncle Tom, an enslaved man who is abused by the cruel Simon Legree. In this passage, Tom dies after a severe beating:

“Tom opened his eyes, and looked upon his master. . . .  
‘There an’t no more ye can do! I forgive ye with all my soul!’  
and he fainted entirely away.

‘I b’lieve, my soul, he’s done for, finally,’ said Legree,  
stepping forward, to look at him. ‘Yes, he is! Well, his  
mouth’s shut up, at last,—that’s one comfort!’”

—Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Chapter 38

Stowe's book was a bestseller in the North. It shocked thousands of people who previously had been unconcerned about slavery. As a result, readers began to view slavery as more than just a political conflict. It was a human, moral problem facing every American.

Many white southerners were outraged by Stowe's book. They criticized it as **propaganda, false or misleading information that is spread to further a cause**. They claimed the novel did not give a fair or accurate picture of the lives of enslaved African Americans.

 **Checkpoint** What impact did *Uncle Tom's Cabin* have?





The Compromise of 1850 and the Kansas-Nebraska Act threatened to upset the balance between slave and free states.

- (a) **Read a Map Key** Which areas did the Kansas-Nebraska Act open to slavery?
- (b) **Clarify Problems** What happened to the Missouri Compromise after 1854?

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## The Kansas-Nebraska Act

The nation moved closer to war after Congress passed the Kansas-Nebraska Act in 1854. The act was pushed through by Senator **Stephen Douglas**. Douglas was eager to develop the lands west of his home state of Illinois. He wanted to see a railroad built from Illinois through the Nebraska Territory to the Pacific Coast.

In 1853, Douglas suggested forming two new territories—the Kansas Territory and the Nebraska Territory. Southerners at once objected. Both territories lay in an area closed to slavery by the Missouri Compromise. This meant that the states eventually created from these territories would enter the Union as free states.

To win southern support, Douglas proposed that slavery in the new territories be decided by popular sovereignty. Thus, in effect, the Kansas-Nebraska Act undid the Missouri Compromise.

As Douglas hoped, southerners supported the Kansas-Nebraska Act. They were sure that slave owners from Missouri would move across the border into Kansas. In time, they hoped that Kansas would enter the union as a slave state.

Northerners, however, were outraged by the Kansas-Nebraska Act. They believed that Douglas had betrayed them by reopening the issue of slavery in the territories. "The more I look at it the more enraged I become," said one northern senator of Douglas's bill. "It needs but little to make me an out-and-out abolitionist."

### Main Idea

The Kansas-Nebraska Act allowed settlers in the territories to decide whether their new states would allow slavery.

After months of debate, southern support enabled the Kansas-Nebraska Act to pass in both houses of Congress. President Franklin Pierce, a Democrat elected in 1852, then signed the bill into law. Douglas predicted that, as a result of the Kansas-Nebraska Act, the slavery question would be "forever banished from the halls of Congress." But events would soon prove how wrong he was.

**✓Checkpoint** How did Stephen Douglas's plan undo the Missouri Compromise?

## Bleeding Kansas

The Kansas-Nebraska Act left it to the white citizens of the territory to decide whether Kansas would be free or slave territory. Both proslavery and antislavery settlers flooded into Kansas within weeks after Douglas's bill became law. Each side was determined to hold the majority in the territory when it came time for the vote.

Thousands of Missourians entered Kansas in March 1855 to illegally vote in the election to select a territorial legislature. Although Kansas had only 3,000 voters, nearly 8,000 votes were cast on election day! Of 39 legislators elected, all but 3 supported slavery. The antislavery settlers refused to accept these results and held a second election.

**Growing Violence** Kansas now had two governments, each claiming the right to impose their government on the territory. Not surprisingly, violence soon broke out. In April, a proslavery sheriff was shot when he tried to arrest some antislavery settlers in the town of Lawrence. The next month, he returned with 800 men and attacked the town.

Three days later, John Brown, an antislavery settler from Connecticut, led seven men to a proslavery settlement near Pottawatomie (paht uh wah TOH mee) Creek. There, they murdered five proslavery men and boys.

These incidents set off widespread fighting in Kansas. Bands of proslavery and antislavery fighters roamed the countryside, terrorizing those who did not support their views. The violence was so bad that it earned Kansas the name Bleeding Kansas.


**Bloodshed in the Senate** Even before Brown's raid at Pottawatomie Creek, the violence in Kansas spilled over into the United States Senate. Charles Sumner of Massachusetts was the leading abolitionist senator. In a fiery speech, Sumner denounced the proslavery legislature in Kansas. He then attacked his southern foes, singling out Andrew Butler, an elderly senator from South Carolina.

Butler was not present the day Sumner made his speech. A few days later, however, Butler's nephew, Congressman Preston Brooks, marched into the Senate chamber. Using a heavy cane, Brooks beat Sumner until he fell to the floor, bloody and unconscious. Sumner never completely recovered from his injuries.

Many southerners felt that Sumner got what he deserved. Hundreds of people sent canes to Brooks to show their support. To northerners, however, Brooks's violent act was just more evidence that slavery was brutal and inhuman.

 **Checkpoint** What was the outcome of the election to select a legislature in the Kansas Territory?

 **Looking Back and Ahead** By 1856, all attempts at compromise had failed. The bitterness between the North and the South was about to alter the political landscape of the United States.

 **Background Knowledge** You have learned that bitterness between northerners and southerners over slavery weakened the nation's two major political parties. In this section, you will learn about a new party that rapidly came to dominate northern politics.

## **A New Antislavery Party**

As the Whig Party split apart in 1854, many northern Whigs joined a new political party. It was called the Republican Party, and its main goal was to stop the spread of slavery into the western territories. The Republicans' antislavery stand also attracted northern Democrats and Free-Soil Party members.

The Republicans quickly became a powerful force in politics. The congressional elections of 1854 were held only months after the party was founded. Of the 245 candidates elected to the U.S. House of Representatives, 105 were Republicans. Republican victories in state races also cost the Democrats control of all but two northern state legislatures.

Two years later, in 1856, the Republican Party ran its first candidate for President. It chose John C. Frémont, the army officer who had helped California win independence during the Mexican-American War. The Republicans waged a strong antislavery campaign. Although the Democrat James Buchanan was elected, Frémont won in 11 of the nation's 16 free states.

 **Checkpoint** What was the result of the election of 1856?

## The Dred Scott Decision

In March 1857—only three days after Buchanan took office—the U.S. Supreme Court delivered a shattering blow to antislavery forces. It decided the case of *Dred Scott v. Sandford*.

**Dred Scott** was an enslaved person who had once been owned by a U.S. Army doctor. The doctor, and Scott, lived for a time in Illinois and in the Wisconsin Territory. Slavery was illegal in both places. After leaving the army, the doctor settled with Scott in Missouri.

With the help of antislavery lawyers, Scott sued for his freedom. He argued that he was free because he had lived where slavery was illegal. In time, the case reached the Supreme Court. Neither northerners nor southerners were prepared for what the Court decided.

**The Court Decides** Chief Justice **Roger B. Taney** wrote the decision for the Court. Scott was not a free man, he said, for two reasons. First, according to Taney, Scott had no right to sue in federal court because African Americans were not citizens. Second, Taney said, merely living in free territory did not make an enslaved person free. Slaves were property, Taney declared, and property rights were protected by the U.S. Constitution.

But the ruling went even further. Taney wrote that Congress did not have the power to prohibit slavery in any territory. Thus, the Missouri Compromise was unconstitutional.

**Reaction** Supporters of slavery rejoiced at the Dred Scott decision. The decision meant that slavery was legal in all territories—just as white southern leaders had been demanding all along.

Northerners, however, were stunned. African American leaders such as Frederick Douglass condemned the ruling. Still, Douglass declared, “my hopes were never brighter than now.” He believed that outrage against the decision would bring more whites to the abolitionist cause.

Indeed, white northerners were also shocked by the ruling. Many had hoped that slavery would eventually die out if it were restricted to the South. Now, however, slavery could spread throughout the West.

One northerner who spoke out against the Dred Scott decision was an Illinois lawyer named **Abraham Lincoln**. The idea that African Americans could not be citizens, he said, was based on a false view of American history. In a very short time, Lincoln would become a central figure in the fight against the spread of slavery.

**Checkpoint** Why did Dred Scott claim he was no longer enslaved?

### Main Idea

The Dred Scott ruling meant that all American territories were open to slavery.



### Biography Quest

**Abraham Lincoln**  
1809–1865

Abraham Lincoln was not yet a nationally known figure in 1857. But he was well known in Illinois as a clever, successful lawyer and politician.

People liked Lincoln for his quick wit and down-to-earth approach. He was known as a good, straightforward speaker. Even so, a listener once complained that he could not understand a speech of Lincoln's. “There are always some fleas a dog can't reach,” was Lincoln's reply.

### Biography Quest

**Why was Lincoln voted out of Congress after one term?**

**For:** The answer to the question about Lincoln

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## Death of John Brown

Thomas Hovenden painted this portrait of a saintly John Brown. On his way to his death, Brown stops to kiss a child. Hovenden did not personally witness the events he showed here. **Critical**

**Thinking: Contrast** Compare this painting to the one on the previous page. How do these two paintings try to stir different emotions?

At his trial, Brown sat quietly as the court found him guilty of murder and treason. Before hearing his sentence, he gave a moving defense of his actions. The Bible, he said, instructed him to care for the poor and enslaved. "If it is deemed necessary that I should forfeit my life for the furtherance of the ends of justice . . . I say, let it be done." He showed no emotion as he was sentenced to death.

When the state of Virginia hanged Brown for treason on December 2, 1859, church bells across the North tolled to mourn the man who many considered a hero. But southerners were shocked. People in the North were praising a man who had tried to lead a slave revolt! More

than ever, many southerners were convinced that the North was out to destroy their way of life.

**✓ Checkpoint** What was John Brown's goal in launching the raid on Harpers Ferry?

**★ Looking Back and Ahead** The nation had suffered one dispute after another over the expansion of slavery since the end of the Mexican-American War in 1846. By the election of 1860, talk of the breakup of the United States was everywhere. In the next section, you will read how that breakup came about.

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## Biography Quest



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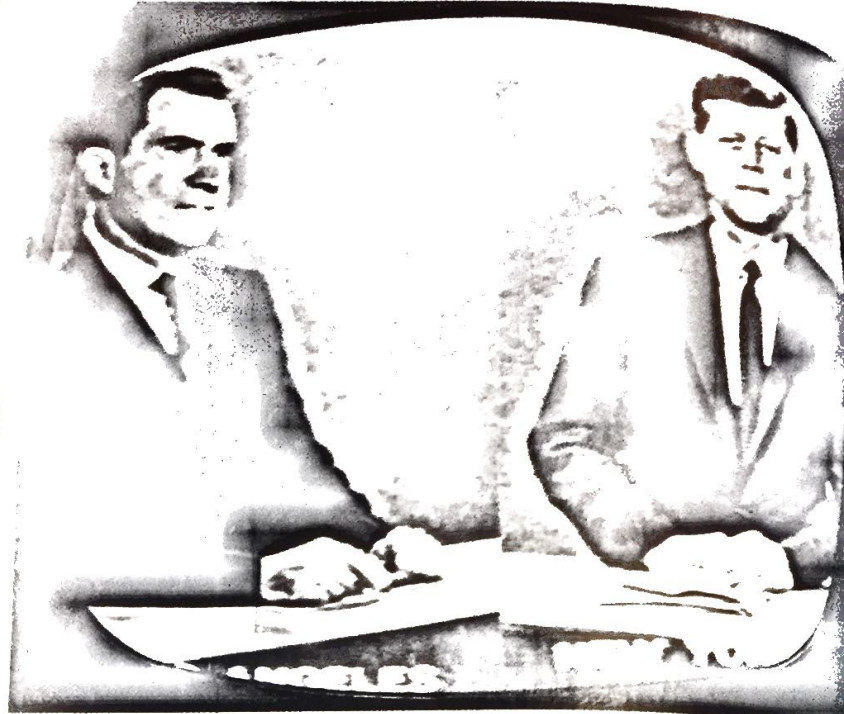
1858 Americans followed the Lincoln-Douglas debates as telegraph reports circulated around the country.

1960 Americans were for the first time able to watch presidential candidates debate live on television. Richard Nixon and John F. Kennedy debated before an enormous television audience. Many experts believe that the debates played a major role in Kennedy's victory.

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### Main Idea

Abraham Lincoln took a strong stand against slavery's expansion in the Lincoln-Douglas debates.

### Vocabulary Builder

**embrace** (ehm BRAYS) *v.* to hold tightly; to readily accept

## The Lincoln-Douglas Debates

Lincoln had had only a brief career in politics. After serving in the Illinois state legislature, he was elected to Congress as a Whig. There, he voted for the Wilmot Proviso. After a single term, he returned to Illinois to practice law.

Lincoln's opposition to the Kansas-Nebraska Act brought him back into politics, this time embracing the Republican cause. He had long been a rival of Illinois Senator Stephen Douglas, the author of the Kansas-Nebraska Act. Their rivalry was personal as well as political. Both men had courted Mary Todd, who married Lincoln.

**A House Divided** In 1858, Illinois Republicans chose Lincoln to run for the Senate against Douglas. Accepting the nomination, Lincoln made a stirring speech in favor of the Union:

“A house divided against itself cannot stand. I do not believe this government can endure, permanently, half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved—I do not expect the house to fall—but I do expect it will cease to be divided. It will become all one thing or all the other.”

—Abraham Lincoln, Springfield, Illinois, June 16, 1858

Lincoln did not state that he wanted to ban slavery. Still, many southerners became convinced that Lincoln was an abolitionist.

**Debating Slavery** Lincoln then challenged Douglas to a series of public debates. Thousands of people gathered to hear them speak. Newspapers throughout the nation reported what each man said.

Douglas strongly defended popular sovereignty. "Each state of this Union has a right to do as it pleases on the subject of slavery," he said. "In Illinois we have exercised that sovereign right by prohibiting slavery. . . . It is none of our business whether slavery exists in Missouri." Douglas also painted Lincoln as a dangerous abolitionist who wanted equality for African Americans.

Lincoln took a stand against the spread of slavery. He declared, "If slavery is not wrong, nothing is wrong." Lincoln predicted that slavery would die on its own. In the meantime, he said, it was the obligation of Americans to keep it out of the western territories.

In reply to Douglas, Lincoln stated: "I am not, nor ever have been in favor of bringing about in any way the social and political equality of the white and black races." But he did clarify this view. He insisted that "there is no reason in the world why the Negro is not entitled to all the rights enumerated in the Declaration of Independence, the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

In the end, Douglas won the Senate election. However, the debates had made Lincoln known throughout the country. Two years later, the men would be rivals again—this time for the presidency.

**Checkpoint** What position did Douglas take on slavery?

## John Brown's Raid

The nation's attention soon was captured by the actions of John Brown. Driven out of Kansas after the Pottawatomie Massacre, Brown had returned to New England. There he hatched a plot to raise an army and free people in the South who were enslaved.

In 1859, Brown and a small band of supporters attacked the town of Harpers Ferry in Virginia. His goal was to seize guns the U.S. Army had stored there. He thought that enslaved African Americans would support him. He would then give them weapons and lead them in a revolt.

Brown quickly gained control of the arms. But troops commanded by Colonel Robert E. Lee surrounded Brown's force before it could escape. Ten of Brown's followers were killed. Brown was wounded and captured.

### John Brown in Kansas

John Steuart Curry began painting this 10-foot-high mural in 1937. It shows John Brown as a fiery abolitionist with a rifle in one hand and a Bible in the other. **Critical Thinking: Detect Points of View** Based on this painting, do you think Curry admired John Brown?



**Vocab**  
**clarify**  
meanin

**Main**  
North  
shock  
slave

Se



At his trial, Brown sat quietly as the court found him guilty of murder and treason. Before hearing his sentence, he gave a moving defense of his actions. The Bible, he said, instructed him to care for the poor and enslaved. "If it is deemed necessary that I should forfeit my life for the furtherance of the ends of justice . . . I say, let it be done." He showed no emotion as he was sentenced to death.

When the state of Virginia hanged Brown for treason on December 2, 1859, church bells across the North tolled to mourn the man who many considered a hero. But southerners were shocked. People in the North were praising a man who had tried to lead a slave revolt! More

than ever, many southerners were convinced that the North was out to destroy their way of life.

**✓ Checkpoint** What was John Brown's goal in launching the raid on Harpers Ferry?

**★ Looking Back and Ahead** The nation had suffered one dispute after another over the expansion of slavery since the end of the Mexican-American War in 1846. By the election of 1860, talk of the breakup of the United States was everywhere. In the next section, you will read how that breakup came about.

created a crisis that shattered the nation and led to war.

## The Nation Divides

As the election of 1860 drew near, Americans everywhere felt a sense of crisis. The long and bitter debate over slavery had left the nation seriously divided.

**Election of 1860** The Republicans chose Abraham Lincoln as their presidential candidate. His criticisms of slavery during his debates with Douglas had made him popular in the North.

Southern Democrats wanted the party to support slavery in the territories. But northerners refused to do so. In the end, the party split in two. Northern Democrats chose Stephen Douglas as their candidate. Southern Democrats picked Vice President John Breckinridge of Kentucky.

Some southerners still hoped to heal the split between North and South. They formed the Constitutional Union Party and nominated John Bell of Tennessee. Bell promised to protect slavery *and* keep the nation together.

Stephen Douglas was sure that Lincoln would win the election. However, he believed that Democrats "must try to save the Union." He pleaded with southern voters to stay with the Union, no matter who was elected. However, when Douglas campaigned in the South, hostile southerners often pelted him with eggs and rotten fruit.

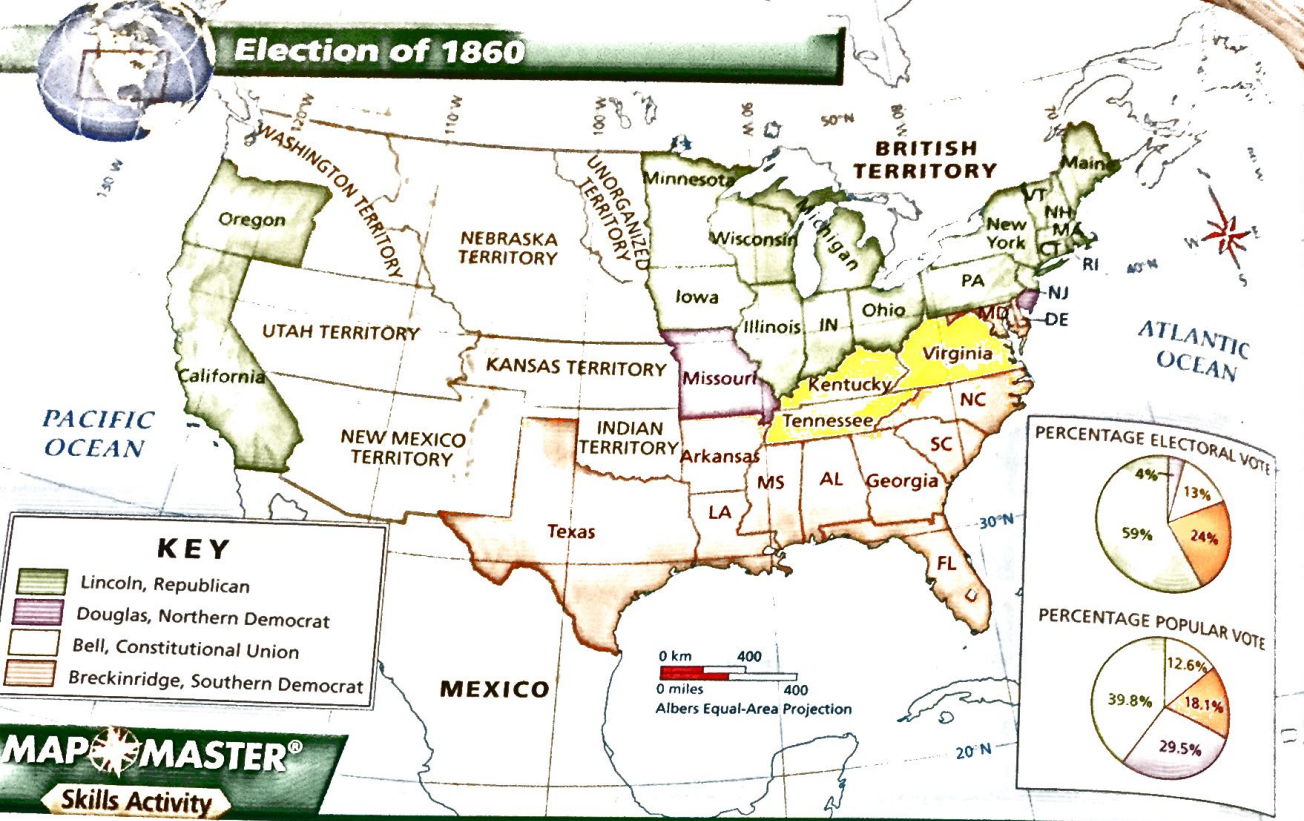
### Main Idea

The election of 1860 led to the breakup of the Union.

Wood carving of Stephen Douglas



## Election of 1860



Due to rising tensions between the North and South, the election of 1860 took place in an atmosphere of distrust and suspicion.

**Read a Map Key** What do the four colors on the map stand for? Which party won nearly all the northern states? Which party won nearly all the southern states?

**Draw Conclusions** How does the map show that sectionalism was important in the election?

MapMaster Online

For: Interactive map  
Visit: PHSchool.com  
Web Code: myp-5104

The election showed just how fragmented the nation had become. Lincoln won in every free state and Breckinridge in all the slaveholding states except four. Bell won Kentucky, Tennessee, and Virginia—all in the upper South. Douglas carried only Missouri. Although Lincoln got only 40 percent of the popular votes, he received enough electoral votes to win the election.

**Southern States Secede** Lincoln's election sent shock waves through the South. To many southerners, it seemed that the South no longer had a voice in the national government. They believed that the President and Congress were now set against their interests—especially slavery.

One Virginia newspaper expressed the feelings of many southerners. "A party founded on the single sentiment . . . of hatred of African slavery, is now the controlling power," it observed. "The honor, safety, and independence of the Southern people are to be found only in a Southern Confederacy."

South Carolina was the first southern state to secede from the Union. When news of Lincoln's election reached the state, the

legislature called for a special convention. On December 20, 1860, the convention passed a declaration that "the union now subsisting between South Carolina and the other states, under the name of the 'United States of America' is hereby dissolved."

**The Confederate States of America** With hope of accommodation all but gone, six more states followed South Carolina out of the Union. However, not all southerners favored secession. Tennessee Senator Andrew Johnson and Texas Governor Sam Houston were among those who opposed it. Yet, the voices of the moderates were overwhelmed. "People are wild," said one opponent of secession. "You might as well attempt to control a tornado as attempt to stop them."

In early February, leaders from the seven seceding states met in Montgomery, Alabama, to form a new nation that they called the Confederate States of America. By the time Lincoln took office in March, they had written a constitution and named former Mississippi Senator Jefferson Davis as their president.

**Checkpoint** Why did southern states secede from the Union?

## The Civil War Begins

On March 4, 1861, Abraham Lincoln became President of a nation facing the greatest crisis in its history. In his inaugural address, he assured the seceded states that he meant them no harm. "I have no purpose, directly or indirectly, to interfere with the institution of slavery where it exists," he promised. But he also warned them about continuing on the course they had chosen:

"In your hands, my dissatisfied fellow countrymen, and not in mine, is the momentous issue of . . . war. The government will not assail [attack] you. . . . We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bonds of affection."

—Abraham Lincoln, Inaugural Address, March 4, 1861

Lincoln's assurance of friendship was rejected. The seceding states took over post offices, forts, and other federal property within their borders. The new President had to decide how to respond.

**Fort Sumter** Lincoln's most urgent problem was Fort Sumter, located on an island in the harbor of Charleston, South Carolina. The fort's commander would not surrender it. South Carolina authorities decided to starve the fort's 100 troops into surrender. They had been cut off from supplies since late December and could not hold out much longer.

Abraham Lincoln speaks at his first inauguration

### Vocabulary Builder

**accommodation** (ak kom moh DAY shuhn) *n.* adjustment; adaptation

### Main Idea

President Lincoln's assurances of friendship in his inaugural address were rejected by the South.



Lincoln did not want to give up the fort. But he feared that sending troops might cause other states to secede. Therefore, he announced that he would send food to the fort, but that the supply ships would carry no troops or guns.

Confederate leaders decided to capture the fort while it was isolated. On April 12, Confederate artillery opened fire on the fort. After 34 hours, with the fort on fire, the U.S. troops surrendered.

**Why War Came** The Confederate attack on Fort Sumter marked the beginning of a long civil war. A **civil war** is a war between opposing groups of citizens of the same country.

The Civil War probably attracts more public interest today than any other event in American history. Americans continue to debate why the war took place and whether it could have been avoided.

In 1850, southerners might have been satisfied if they had been left alone. But by 1861, many Americans in both the North and the South had come to accept the idea that war could not be avoided. At stake was the nation's future. Four years later, a weary Lincoln looked back to the beginning of the conflict. He noted:

“Both parties [condemned] war, but one of them would *make* war rather than let the nation survive, and the other would *accept* war rather than let it perish, and the war came.”

—Abraham Lincoln, Second Inaugural Address, March 4, 1865

**Vocabulary Bu**  
isolate (i sah layt)  
to separate



**Analyze**

**Causes**

**According**

what were two  
War?

**✓Checkpoint** Why was Lincoln reluctant to give up Fort Sumter?

☆ **Looking Back and Ahead** Confederate cannons had nearly destroyed Fort Sumter. To many, it seemed like a huge fireworks display. No one knew that the fireworks marked the beginning of a terrible war that would last four years.