



▲ This poster warns African Americans in Boston about the arrival of slave catchers such as those shown at left.



WITNESS HISTORY AUDIO

A Fugitive Escapes

The Fugitive Slave Law of 1850 made it a crime to help African Americans escape from slavery. But that did not stop Levi Coffin and his fellow abolitionists from taking action when slave catchers in Indiana arrested a fugitive named Louis. Coffin described how Louis escaped from a public courtroom in broad daylight:

“[Louis] slipped his chair back a little way. Neither his master nor the marshal noticed the movement, as they were intently listening to the judge, and he slipped his chair again, until he was back of them. . . . Next he rose quietly to his feet and took a step backward. Some abolitionist friendly to his cause gave him an encouraging touch on the foot, and he stepped farther back. Then a good hat was placed on his head by some one behind, and he quietly and cautiously made his way . . . toward the door.”

—*Reminiscences of Levi Coffin*

The Union in Crisis

Objectives

- Trace the growing conflict over the issue of slavery in the western territories.
- Explain how the Fugitive Slave Act increased northern opposition to slavery.
- Analyze the importance of the *Dred Scott* decision.

Terms and People

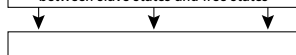
Wilmot Proviso
Free-Soil Party
Compromise of 1850
popular sovereignty
Harriet Beecher Stowe

Kansas-Nebraska Act
John Brown
Dred Scott v. Sandford
Abraham Lincoln

NoteTaking

Reading Skill: Recognize Sequence As you read, trace the sequence of events that led to the division of the Union.

1820: Missouri Compromise keeps balance between slave states and free states



Why It Matters Regional differences between the North and the South had existed since colonial times. These differences widened in the 1800s as the North developed an industrial economy while the South continued to depend on plantation agriculture and slavery. In time, conflict over the issue of slavery led to an armed struggle that would forever change the nation: the Civil War. **Section Focus Question: How did the issue of slavery divide the Union?**

Slavery and Western Expansion

During the Mexican-American War, the question of slavery in the West emerged as a major issue. To prevent the South from extending slavery into the western territories, in 1846 Pennsylvania congressman David Wilmot proposed an amendment, or proviso, to an appropriations bill. The **Wilmot Proviso** called for a ban on slavery in any territory that the United States gained from Mexico as a result of the war.

Southern leaders angrily denounced the proposal. The amendment passed the northern-dominated House of Representatives, but it was defeated in the Senate. Although it never became law, the Wilmot Proviso contributed to the increasing tension between the North and South over the slavery issue.

A New Party Opposes Slavery The Wilmot Proviso helped spur the rise of antislavery political parties. In 1848, northern opponents

of slavery formed the **Free-Soil Party**. The Free-Soil Party wanted to prevent the expansion of slavery into the western territories. The party nominated former President Martin Van Buren as their presidential candidate in the election of 1848. Van Buren did not win, but he and other Free-Soil candidates garnered enough votes to show that the party's motto of "Free soil, Free speech, Free labor, and Free men" would not be silenced.

Congress Tries to Compromise In 1850, California applied to enter the Union as a free state, threatening the balance of power between slave and free states in the Senate. To ease southern concerns, Congress debated and then passed the **Compromise of 1850**. According to this measure, California was admitted as a free state, but in the other territory acquired from Mexico, voters would decide the slavery issue for themselves. This approach became known as **popular sovereignty**. By permitting slavery north of 36°30'N latitude, the Compromise of 1850 undid the Missouri Compromise.

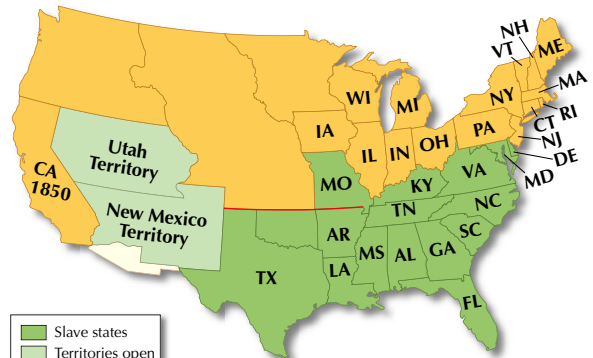
The Compromise of 1850 included a Fugitive Slave Act. This law allowed officials to arrest any person accused of being a runaway slave, denied fugitives the right to a jury trial, and required all citizens to help capture runaway slaves. The Fugitive Slave Act outraged many northerners, who resented being legally forced to support the slave system.

Some northern states fought back by passing personal liberty laws. These laws nullified the Fugitive Slave Act, allowing the states to arrest slave catchers for kidnapping. Northern opponents of the law also mounted an intense resistance. In 1851, at Christiana, Pennsylvania, a small band of African Americans gathered to protect several runaways from southern slave catchers. Local white bystanders refused to help the slave-hunting party. Then, after the slave owner died in the scuffle, a white jury refused to convict the killers.



Checkpoint How did the Compromise of 1850 lead to conflict between the North and South?

Compromise of 1850



- Slave states
- Territories open to slavery by popular sovereignty
- States and territories closed to slavery
- Missouri Compromise Line (36°30'N)

Compromise of 1850

- California enters Union as a free state
- Slavery issue to be decided by popular sovereignty in western territories
- Includes new, stricter Fugitive Slave Act
- Slave trade but not slavery ends in Washington, D.C.
- Compromise of 1850 undoes Missouri Compromise

Vocabulary Builder

intense—(ihn TEHNS) *adj.* very strong; violent; extreme

The Road to Disunion

Resentment against the Fugitive Slave Act spurred **Harriet Beecher Stowe** to write the novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, a powerful condemnation of slavery. Stowe's sympathetic main character, Uncle Tom, put a human face on slavery for readers who had never witnessed slavery firsthand. *Uncle Tom's Cabin* sold 300,000 copies in its first year, increasing antislavery sentiment in the North. But it angered southerners, who argued that Stowe's book presented a false picture of slavery and the South.

Published in 1852, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was so influential that years later, when Stowe visited President Lincoln at the White House during the Civil War, Lincoln reportedly greeted the author by saying, "So you are the little woman who wrote the book that made this great war."



The Sack of Lawrence

On May 21, 1856, proslavery men attacked the Free-Soil town of Lawrence, Kansas. They burned the hotel and destroyed the newspaper. *Why did proslavery forces attack Lawrence?*

southern proslavery forces attacked the free-state town of Lawrence, Kansas. They looted homes, burned down the hotel, and destroyed the presses of *The Kansas Free State* newspaper.

Swift retaliation came from New York abolitionist **John Brown**, who had moved his family to Kansas in pursuit of an opportunity to confront the slavery issue. A few days after the sack of Lawrence, Brown, along with his sons and a few friends, conducted a midnight raid on the proslavery settlement at nearby Pottawatomie Creek. During the raid, they brutally murdered five proslavery settlers.

These killings led to even more violence. Throughout the fall of 1856, there was so much violence perpetrated by both sides that the territory became known as “Bleeding Kansas.” Finally, in 1861, Kansas entered the Union as a free state.

The Republican Party Emerges Opposition to slavery led to the creation of the new Republican Party in 1854. Republicans included abolitionists, anti-slavery business leaders, and northerners who argued that the Fugitive Slave Act intruded into state politics. The Republican Party quickly became a powerful political force, winning 105 seats in the House of Representatives in the 1854 congressional elections.

The presidential election of 1856 pitted Democrat James Buchanan against John C. Frémont, the candidate of the new Republican Party. Buchanan, who promised that as President he would stop “the agitation of the slavery issue,” was supported by a large majority of southerners. He won the election, but Frémont, who opposed the spread of slavery, made a strong showing. Frémont won one third of the popular vote and 11 northern states.

The Dred Scott Decision Inflames the Nation In 1857, a controversial Supreme Court decision widened the growing divisions over slavery. Dred Scott, an enslaved African American from Missouri, had sued for his freedom in 1846.

The Kansas-Nebraska Act In 1854, Congress again tried to settle the issue of slavery in the West. When Senator Stephen Douglas introduced a bill to establish a government for the Nebraska Territory, his proposal was defeated by southern senators who objected to allowing Nebraska to enter the Union as a free state. To accommodate southerners, Douglas rewrote the bill. After much debate, Congress passed the **Kansas-Nebraska Act**, which divided the Nebraska Territory into Kansas and Nebraska. Voters in each territory would decide the issue of slavery by popular sovereignty. Many northerners complained that this plan allowed slavery in areas where it had been banned by the Missouri Compromise.

Soon, both proslavery and antislavery settlers were flocking to Kansas, each hoping to outnumber the other when the time came to vote on slavery. In 1855, proslavery supporters set up a territorial government at Shawnee Mission. Free-state settlers responded by establishing an antislavery government in Topeka. Kansas now had two governments—a formula for disaster.

Violence Erupts in Kansas

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TRACK THE ISSUE



How much power should the federal government have?

Under the Constitution, all powers not granted to the federal government belong to the states. Over time, however, the federal government has expanded its scope, especially in the area of social programs. Use the timeline below to explore this enduring issue.

1791 Bill of Rights

Tenth Amendment reserves most powers to the states.

1798 Kentucky and Virginia Resolutions

States argue that they can void federal legislation.

1831 Nullification Crisis

John C. Calhoun declares that states may overturn federal laws.

1857 *Dred Scott v. Sandford*

Supreme Court rules that federal government does not have power to outlaw slavery within territories.

1930s New Deal

Government expands power over economy and social services.

1965 Voting Rights Act

Law allows federal officers to register voters.



Dred Scott



Exhaust and waste gases from cars are just one of the many issues in the center of the continuing national debate about the environment.

DEBATE THE ISSUE

The Environment and States' Rights Since 1967, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) allowed California to make its own emissions rules. California is exempt from the Clean Air Acts as long as its rules are stricter than those of the Federal Government and it obtains a waiver from the federal government. In November 2007, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger sued the Federal Government because the EPA denied California a waiver.

"The authority of the States to address greenhouse gas emissions from motor vehicles has been supported—by the Supreme Court [and] by a federal court here in California. On this issue, the . . . EPA . . . has failed to follow the States' lead . . . we are prepared to force it out of the way . . . to protect the environment."

—Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger,
April 2, 2008

"I believe that Congress by passing a . . . federal standard of 35 mpg (miles per gallon) delivers significant reductions that are more effective than a state-by-state approach. This applies to all 50 states. . . . and that's great for the economy, for national security, and for the environment."

—Stephen L. Johnson,
EPA Administrator



TRANSFER Activities

- 1. Compare** Why does Governor Schwarzenegger feel California should oppose the federal government? Why does Stephen Johnson disagree?
- 2. Draw Conclusions** How did the debate over slavery in the 1850s reflect a similar clash between federal and state authority?
- 3. Transfer** Use the following Web site to see a video, try a WebQuest, and write in your journal. **Web Code:** neh-7002

Scott's lawyers argued that he should be considered free because between 1834 and 1838 he had lived with his master in the free state of Illinois. After a series of appeals, Scott's case reached the Supreme Court.

In ***Dred Scott v. Sandford***, the Court ruled against Scott. But the Court's sweeping ruling went far beyond the particulars of Scott's case. The Court declared that African Americans were not citizens and, therefore, were not entitled to sue in the courts. Furthermore, the Court ruled that Congress did not have the power to ban slavery in any territory and that the Missouri Compromise was unconstitutional because it could deprive citizens of their property without due process of law.

Southerners were delighted with the *Dred Scott* decision, but northerners viewed it with alarm. Leading black abolitionist Frederick Douglass predicted that the Supreme Court's ruling would actually hasten the end of slavery: "This very attempt to blot out forever the hopes of an enslaved people," he said, "may be one necessary link in the chain of events preparatory to the complete overthrow of the whole slave system."

Lincoln-Douglas Debates

In 1858, Stephen Douglas and Abraham Lincoln, the U.S. Senate candidates from Illinois, appeared in a series of debates held throughout the state. Large crowds listened to the candidates talk about slavery, which Lincoln described as a "moral, social, and political evil."

✓ **Checkpoint** How did northerners and southerners react to the ***Dred Scott*** decision?

The Lincoln-Douglas Debates

The 1858 Senate race in Illinois crystallized the slavery issue for many Americans. Republican **Abraham Lincoln** challenged Senator Stephen Douglas, a Democrat and the architect of the Kansas-Nebraska Act, to a series of debates.

"Honest Abe" v. "The Little Giant" Both men were excellent speakers whose political differences were underscored by their contrasting physical appearances. Lincoln, tall and thin, had a reputation for integrity that had earned him the nickname "Honest Abe." Senator Douglas, short and stout, with a deep voice, was known as the "Little Giant."

Lincoln, a self-educated lawyer, had begun his political career as a representative to the Illinois state legislature. From 1847 to 1849, Lincoln served one term in the House of Representatives and then returned to his law practice in Springfield. His opposition to the Kansas-Nebraska Act and popular sovereignty inspired Lincoln to resume his political career.

The politically ambitious Douglas believed that popular sovereignty was the implied intent of the Constitution. But many questioned his motives, saying that Douglas favored popular sovereignty in order to gain southern support for a future presidential run. Others claimed that Douglas was eager for Kansas and Nebraska to achieve statehood, because railroad lines built through the new states would benefit Chicago, the largest city in Douglas's state, by making it a hub for economic development of the West.

Opposing Views of Slavery Thousands of Americans attended the Lincoln-Douglas debates and listened intently as the candidates presented opposing



views of slavery and its role in America. Lincoln did not call for the immediate abolition of slavery or for political equality for African Americans. Still, he argued:

Primary Source “There is no reason in the world why the negro is not entitled to all the natural rights enumerated in the Declaration of Independence, the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. . . . In the right to eat the bread, without leave of anybody else, which his own hand earns, he is my equal and the equal of Judge Douglas, and the equal of every living man.”

—Abraham Lincoln, debate at Ottawa, Illinois, 1858

Douglas, meanwhile, promoted popular sovereignty as the solution to regional tensions. “This Union was established on the right of each State to do as it pleased on the question of slavery, and every other question,” he insisted. Douglas won the Senate race, but the debates, covered by newspapers throughout the country, brought Lincoln national attention.

John Brown Plans a Revolt While Lincoln and Douglas used the political process to address the slavery issue, radical abolitionist John Brown concluded that using violence was the best way to defeat slavery. In the fall of 1859, Brown and a small band of followers seized the federal arsenal at Harpers Ferry, Virginia (now West Virginia), hoping to inspire and arm local slaves for an uprising that would end slavery. But no slaves joined Brown’s revolt. Instead, troops under the command of Colonel Robert E. Lee retook the arsenal, wounding Brown and killing or capturing most of his men.

Put on trial for treason and murder, Brown proclaimed his willingness to “mingle my blood . . . with the blood of millions in this slave country whose rights are disregarded by wicked, cruel, and unjust enactments.” After a brief trial, the court found him guilty and sentenced him to death by hanging.

Brown’s defense of his actions and the dignified calm with which he faced execution made him a heroic martyr to the antislavery cause. Although most northerners had condemned the raid, Brown’s death touched many, increasing northern opposition to slavery. But northern sympathy for a man who had tried to lead a slave revolt further inflamed southern anger and suspicion.

Checkpoint How did Lincoln and Douglas differ on the issue of slavery?



John Brown’s Raid

John Brown’s attack on the federal arsenal at Harpers Ferry made national headlines.

SECTION 1 Assessment

Progress Monitoring Online

For: Self-test with vocabulary practice
Web Code: nda-0302

Comprehension

- 1. Terms and People** Write a sentence explaining how each of the following was connected with the growing rift between North and South.
 - Wilmot Proviso
 - Free-Soil Party
 - Compromise of 1850
 - popular sovereignty
 - Kansas-Nebraska Act
 - John Brown
 - *Dred Scott v. Sanford*
 - Abraham Lincoln

2. NoteTaking Reading Skill:

Recognize Sequence Use your flowchart to answer the Section Focus Question: How did the issue of slavery divide the Union?

Writing About History

3. Quick Write: Identify a

Viewpoint Write a paragraph describing one of the two viewpoints on slavery discussed in this section. Be sure to identify the underlying attitude about the nature of federal versus state authority.

Critical Thinking

- 4. Draw Inferences** Why do you think southerners in Congress insisted on the passage of a Fugitive Slave Law? Why did many northerners oppose it?
- 5. Summarize** How did the Kansas-Nebraska Act undo the Missouri Compromise?
- 6. Analyze Information** Why was the *Dred Scott* decision a blow to those who opposed the extension of slavery?
- 7. Determine Relevance** How successful was John Brown’s raid on Harpers Ferry?