

CH 15  
**ROAD TO CIVIL WAR**

# The Debate over Slavery

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Section 1

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# New Land Renews Slavery Disputes

- Additional land gained after Mexican-American War caused bitter slavery dispute
- Missouri Compromise of 1820 prohibited slavery north of latitude 36°30'
- President Polk wanted to extend the line to the West Coast, dividing Mexican Cession into free and enslaved parts
- Some leaders wanted **popular sovereignty**, the idea that political power belongs to the people, to decide on banning or allowing slavery.

# Regional Differences about Slavery

## Growing Sectionalism

- Some northerners wanted to ban slavery in the Mexican Cession.
- The **Wilmot Proviso**, which would outlaw slavery in new lands, was proposed but not enacted.
- **Sectionalism**, favoring the interests of one section or region over the interests of the entire country, was on the rise.
- Antislavery northerners formed a new party—the **Free-Soil Party**—to support the Wilmot Proviso.

# California Question

- California applied to enter the Union.
- Southerners did not want California to be a free state because it would upset the balance of slave and free states.

# Compromise of 1850

- Senator Henry Clay offered the **Compromise of 1850**

## **TO PLEASE THE NORTH:**




- California would be admitted as a free state
- Slave trade would be abolished in Washington D.C.

## **TO PLEASE THE SOUTH:**

- Pass the Fugitive Slave Act
  - Slavery in Mexican Cession land would be decided by popular sovereignty
- 
- The compromise was enacted and settled most disputes between slave and free states.

# COMPROMISE OF 1850



-  Free states and territories
-  Slave states
-  Open to slavery by popular sovereignty, compromise of 1850

# Fugitive Slave Act

- Made it a crime to help runaway slaves and allowed officials to arrest runaway slaves in free areas
- Slaveholders could take suspected fugitives to U.S. commissioners who, decided their fate.
- Commissioner received \$5 for release; \$10 for turning over to slaveholder
- Accused fugitives could not testify on their own behalf



# Antislavery Literature

- Northern abolitionists used stories of fugitive slaves to gain sympathy for their cause.
- Fiction also informed people about the evils of slavery.
- ***Uncle Tom's Cabin*** by Harriet Beecher Stowe was an influential antislavery novel published in 1852.
  - More than 2 million copies sold within a decade.
  - Still widely read as source about harsh realities of slavery.

AN EDITION FOR THE MILLION!

UNCLE TOM'S  
**CABIN**

OR,

**LIFE AMONG THE LOWLY.**

BY HARRIET BEECHER STOWE.

245,000 COPIES,  
ALREADY PUBLISHED IN AMERICA.

BOSTON:  
PUBLISHED BY JOHN P. JEWETT AND COMPANY.  
CLEVELAND, OHIO:  
JEWETT, PROCTOR AND WORTHINGTON.  
1852



# Trouble in Kansas

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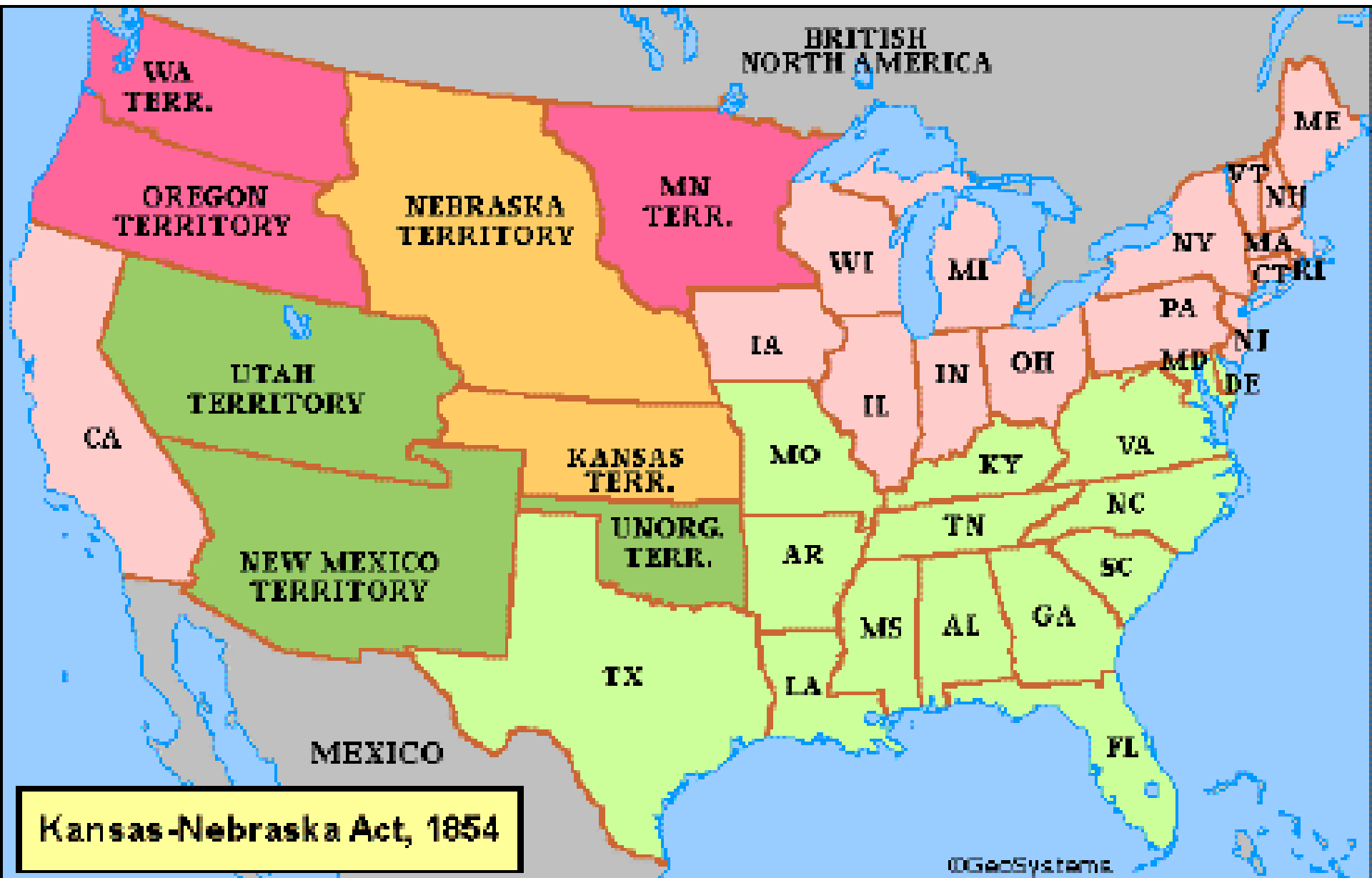
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# The Election of 1852

- **Franklin Pierce** was Democratic candidate.
  - Promised to honor Compromise of 1850 and Fugitive Slave Act.
  - Trusted by southerners.
- Whig Party chose Winfield Scott, a Mexican War hero.
  - Southerners did not trust Scott because he had not fully supported Compromise of 1850.
- Pierce won election by large margin.

# The Kansas-Nebraska Act

- **Stephen Douglas** introduced a bill in Congress to divide the remainder of Louisiana Purchase into two territories—Kansas and Nebraska
- Would allow people in each territory to decide on slavery
- Would eliminate the Missouri Compromise's restriction on slavery north of the 36°30' line
- Antislavery northerners were outraged that free territory could be turned into slave territory.
- **Kansas-Nebraska Act** was passed in 1854 with southern support



# Kansas Divided

- Antislavery and pro-slavery groups rushed supporters to Kansas since popular vote would decide the slavery issue.
- Pro-slavery voters crossed the border to vote, allowing their side to win the vote.
- The new government created strict laws, including that those who helped fugitive slaves could be put to death.
- Antislavery group created a new government in protest.
- President Pierce recognized only pro-slavery legislature.
- Controversy over slavery affected everyone in Kansas.

# Bleeding Kansas

## Sack of Lawrence

- Proslavery grand jury charged antislavery government with treason.
- Proslavery forces attacked city of Lawrence, the location of antislavery leaders.

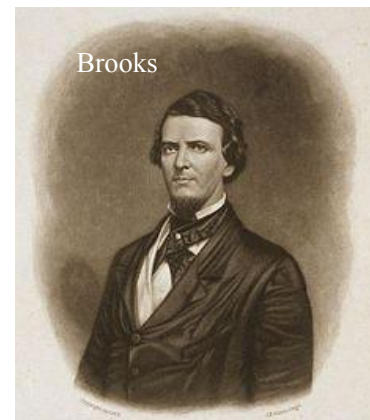
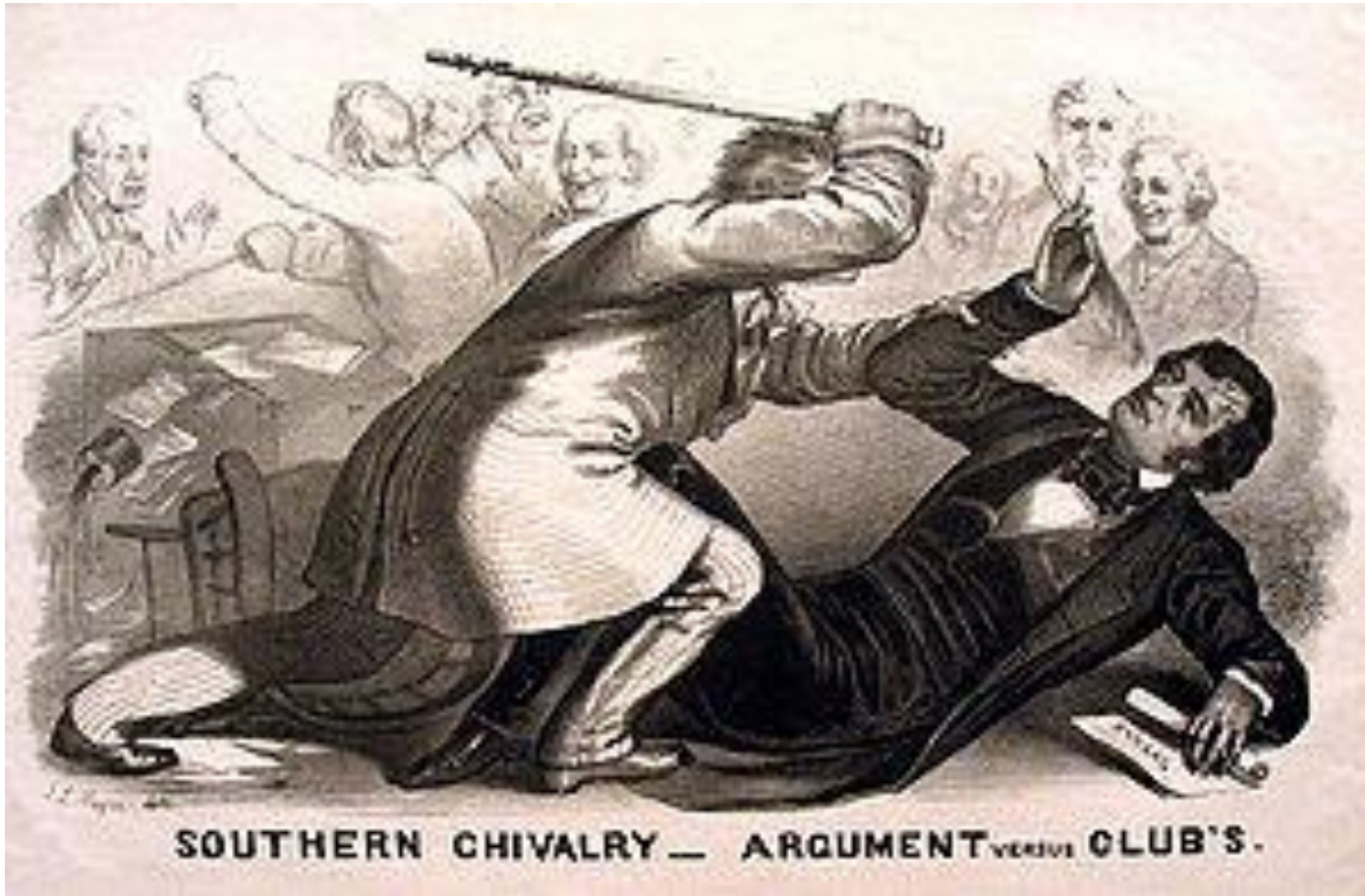
## John Brown's Response

- Abolitionist John Brown and sons killed five pro-slavery men in what was called **Pottawatomie Massacre**.
- Kansas collapsed into a civil war.



Senator **Charles Sumner** criticized pro-slavery people and insulted Senator Pickens Butler.

Representative **Preston Brooks** beat Sumner unconscious.



# Political Divisions

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# Political parties Undergo Change

- Some Whigs, Democrats, Free-Soilers, and abolitionists joined in 1854 to form the **Republican Party**.
  - United against spread of slavery in the West.
  - Nominated explorer **John C. Frémont**, who stood against spread of slavery.
- Democrats were in trouble. Those who supported the Kansas-Nebraska debate were not re-elected.
  - Nominated **James Buchanan**, Polk's secretary of state, who had not been involved in Kansas-Nebraska debate.
- Buchanan was elected by winning 14 of 15 slave states.

# The *Dred Scott* Decision

- Dred Scott was slave of Missouri physician.
- Had been taken to free territory by owner.
- Sued for freedom in 1846 after owner died, arguing he had become free when he lived in free territory.
- Case reached Supreme Court in 1857.

# *Dred Scott v. Sandford*

- Chief Justice **Roger B. Taney** wrote majority opinion.
- Ruled that African Americans, whether free or slave, were not citizens and had no right to sue in federal court
- Also ruled Missouri Compromise restriction on slavery was unconstitutional.
- Most white southerners were cheered by the decision.
- Ruling stunned many northerners, including Illinois lawyer **Abraham Lincoln**, who warned about its consequences.

# The Lincoln-Douglas Debates

- Illinois Republicans nominated Abraham Lincoln for the U.S. Senate in 1858.
- His opponent was Democrat Stephen Douglas, who had been senator since 1847.
- Lincoln challenged Douglas to what became the historic **Lincoln-Douglas debates**.

- Lincoln stressed that central issue of campaign was spread of slavery in the West.
- Douglas criticized Lincoln for saying nation could not remain “half slave and half free.”
- Douglas put forth **Freeport Doctrine**: people had right to introduce or exclude slavery, and police would enforce their decision even if it contradicted the Supreme Court.
- Freeport Doctrine helped Douglas win, but Lincoln became an important Republican Party leader and later president.

# The Nation Divides

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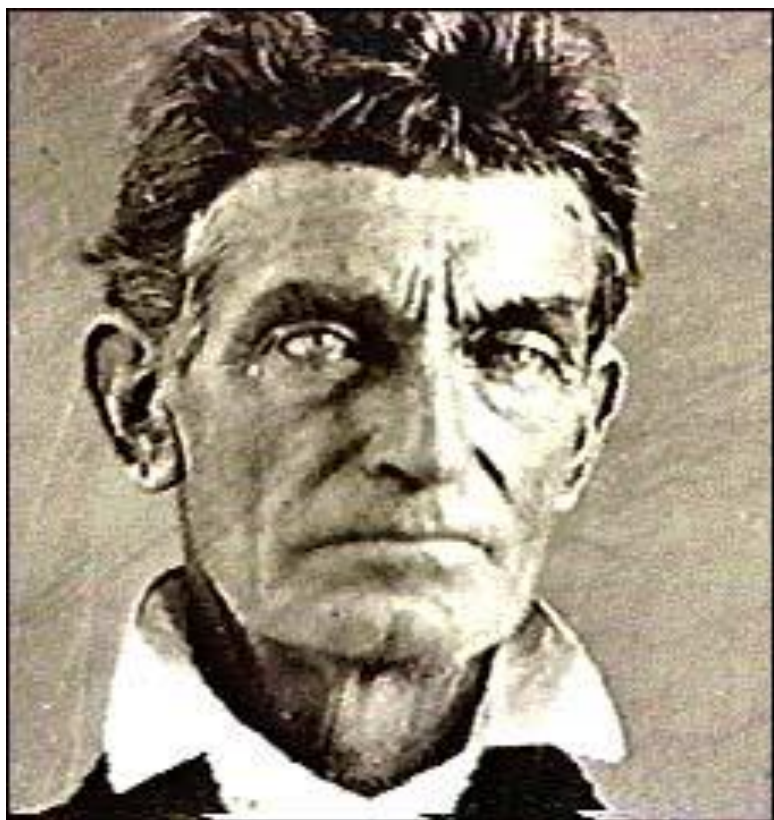
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## Raid on Harpers Ferry

- John Brown tried to start uprising in 1858.
  - Planned to arm local slaves by attacking federal arsenal at Harpers Ferry, Virginia.
- **John Brown's raid** began on night of October 16, 1859, when he and his men took over arsenal.
- Could not get slaves to join uprising.
- Federal troops captured Brown and men in attack on arsenal.







- Brown was convicted of treason, murder, and conspiracy, and was hanged.
  - Many northerners mourned his death, but criticized methods.
  - Most southern whites felt threatened, and newspapers started to call for leaving the Union in order to remain safe.

# Election of 1860

- Northern Democrats chose Senator Stephen Douglas; Southern Democrats, Vice President **John C. Breckinridge**.
- The **Constitutional Union Party** selected **John Bell** of Tennessee.
- Republicans nominated Lincoln, who won with most votes of the free states.
  - Lincoln promised not to abolish slavery where it already existed.
- The result angered southerners.
  - Lincoln had not campaigned in the South or carried any southern states in the election.

# The South Secedes

- Lincoln insisted he would not change slavery in South, but would not let it expand
- People in South believed that their economy and way of life would be destroyed
- South Carolina legislature met to consider **secession**, formally withdrawing from the Union
- South Carolina seceded, believing it had the right because it had voluntarily joined the Union

# Confederate States of America

- Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, and Texas joined South Carolina to form **Confederate States of America**.
- **Jefferson Davis** of Mississippi was elected Confederate president.
- Senator **John Crittenden** proposed series of constitutional amendments hoping to satisfy the South by protecting slavery.
- Lincoln believed there could be no compromise about the extension of slavery, and the plan was rejected.



# Lincoln Takes Office

- Lincoln inaugurated on March 4, 1861
- Opposed idea that southern states could leave the Union because they were unhappy with government's position on slavery
- Announced in inaugural address that he would keep all government property in the seceding states
- Hoped that southern states would return to the Union



