



## PEOPLE

### John C. Calhoun

- Pro-slavery South Carolina Senator
- Warned government leaders of the danger of abolitionists
- Said blacks were inherently barbaric and slavery civilized them
- In 1837 speech, warned of disunion over issue of slavery

### Jefferson Davis

- First and only President of Confederacy
- Mississippi Senator at time of secession crisis
- Originally argued against secession but went along with his state's vote for it

### Stephen A. Douglas

- Powerful Illinois Senator throughout the 1850s
- Sponsored 1854 Kansas-Nebraska Act, which led to creation of Republican Party
- Best known for engaging Lincoln in series of debates in 1858 Illinois Senate race
- Douglas defeated Lincoln in 1858 senate election, before Lincoln easily defeated Douglas in 1860 presidential race

### Thomas Jefferson

- Third U.S. president; principal author of Declaration of Independence
- Virginia slaveholder but envisioned gradual end to slavery
- Authored 1787 Northwest Ordinance, which barred slavery north of Ohio River
- His Ordinance drove first wedge between "free" North and slaveholding South

### Abraham Lincoln

- Anti-slavery Republican, elected U.S. President, 1860
- Lost to Democrat Stephen Douglas in 1858 Illinois Senate race, but that campaign earned him Republican nomination for president, 1860
- Moderate stance on emancipation; not abolitionist, but against slavery's

expansion

- His election triggered secession crisis, which led to Civil War

### Dred Scott

- Virginia slave who migrated with his owner to Missouri in 1820s
- Sold to military man posted in Illinois, a free state; tried but failed to buy his family's freedom, so sued for freedom instead
- U.S. Supreme Court rejected his appeals, but he eventually was freed by his owners

### Roger B. Taney

- Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court, beginning in 1835
- Delivered majority opinion in *Dred Scott* case, 1857
- Struck down part of Missouri Compromise that barred slavery in northern territory, arguing that Constitution protected slavery
- Argued blacks had "no rights that a white man is bound to respect," so Scott had no right to sue

### Nat Turner

- Virginia slave preacher in early 1800s
- In 1831, led major slave rebellion that left over 50 whites dead before Turner and other leaders caught and executed
- His revolt convinced southern leaders that laws protecting slavery (and punishing rebels) had to be strengthened

### Eli Whitney

- Invented the cotton gin in the late eighteenth century
- Yale graduate and blacksmith who took management job on Georgia plantation
- His machine revolutionized cotton production by speeding cotton seed removal
- Made cotton profitable, inadvertently leading to huge growth in slavery

## EVENTS

### 1787 Northwest Ordinance

- Federal measure drafted by Thomas Jefferson, a Virginia slaveholder
- Allowed for creation of several new states north of Ohio River
- Each new state could be equal member in Union as long as it prohibited slavery
- Drove first major wedge between “free” North and slaveholding South

### 1820 Missouri Compromise

- Drafted to limit spread of slavery while allowing Missouri to practice slavery
- Admitted Missouri to the Union as slave state, Maine as free state
- Banned slavery in all other territory above 36°30’
- Only *seemed* to solve disputes between slave and free factions

### 1854 Kansas-Nebraska Act

- Sponsored by Stephen A. Douglas, Democratic senator from Illinois
- Allowed settlers in new territories to vote on status of slavery in Northwest
- Repealed 1820 Missouri Compromise and prohibition of slavery in Northwest
- Controversy surrounding act led to creation of antislavery Republican Party

### 1857 *Dred Scott v. Sandford*

- Supreme Court case regarding legality of slavery in free states
- Dred Scott, a slave, sued for his freedom by arguing that his owner took him into the free state of Illinois and thus made him free
- Chief Justice Roger B. Taney delivered majority opinion against Dred Scott
- Struck down part of Missouri Compromise that barred slavery in Northwest, ruled blacks had no rights

### 1858 Lincoln-Douglas Debates

- Series of public debates held during 1858 Illinois Senate race
- Republican Abraham Lincoln versus incumbent Democrat Stephen A. Douglas
- Major topic of debate was expansion of slavery
- Douglas won the election, but Lincoln’s strong performance in debates earned him Republican nomination for president

in 1860

### 1860 Presidential Election

- Abraham Lincoln wins 4-way race to become first Republican president
- Democratic Party split into factions before election
- Lincoln won despite receiving zero electoral votes in 10 southern states
- South Carolina seceded from Union in response to Lincoln’s victory

### 1861 Fort Sumter Attack

- First shots fired in American Civil War, 12 April 1861, at Union-controlled Fort Sumter in South Carolina
- Jefferson Davis, president of Confederacy, ordered strikes against Union forces
- Attack spurred U.S. President Abraham Lincoln to call for war against Confederacy

## GROUPS

### Republican Party

- Founded in 1854 during controversy surrounding Kansas-Nebraska Act
- Motivated by one goal: to prevent the spread of slavery
- After 1858 Illinois Senate race, Abraham Lincoln became its most promising politician

### Liberty Party

- Abolitionist political party created in 1830s
- First political party to object to existence of slavery in U.S.
- Never very popular

### Democratic Party

- Dominant political party of antebellum period; strongly influenced by southern slaveholders
- Rift grew between northern and southern Democrats in years leading up to the war
- Some northern Democrats joined the newly created Republican Party in the 1850s
- Further split in months before 1860 presidential election, when many southern delegations withdrew from Democratic Convention

### Whig Party

- One of two major parties from 1830s to 1850s, represented alliance of pro-development southerners and rich northern merchants and industrialists
- Pursued modern society built on federal aid for industry, tariffs, national bank
- Abraham Lincoln's first political party
- Controversy over 1854 Kansas-Nebraska Act led to its demise

## CONCEPTS

### Abolitionists

- Unlike antislavery advocates, attacked slavery mainly on moral grounds and demanded immediate end to slavery
- Politically powerful, despite comprising only a small portion of total northern population
- Southern slaveholders and political leaders feared they would incite war
- Lincoln was not an abolitionist

### Antislavery

- Antislavery advocates were not necessarily abolitionists
- Opposed mainly to expansion of slavery into American territories rather than seeking its abolition in the South
- Posed threat, like abolitionists, to slaveholding South
- Argued that free labor and not slave labor was key to the nation's future

### "Gag Rule"

- A congressional agreement to censor all discussion of emancipation in Congress, mid-1830s
- Demanded by southern leaders
- Most northern Whigs voted against it, most northern Democrats for it
- Abolitionists responded by flooding Congress with emancipation petitions

### "Peculiar Institution"

- Historical term for slavery in the United States
- Called "peculiar" because it was essential to the nation's economy while also so divisive as to result in political upheaval and war

### Secession Crisis

- Sequence of events that led to the creation of Confederate States of America
- Reaction to election of Republican Abraham Lincoln as president, 1860
- South Carolina was the first to secede, 20 December 1860
- SC's action triggered quick secession of 6 more states: MS, FL, AL, GA, LA, TX
- Lincoln tried but failed to use negotiation to resolve the crisis

## PLACES

### Missouri

- Threatened sectional balance of power when it sought to enter the Union as a slave state in 1820
- Resulting Missouri Compromise banned extension of slavery to other territories farther north

### Kansas

- Controversy over whether Kansas should enter Union as free or slave state led to near civil-war conditions there from 1854-1859