

HEADING TOWARD DISUNION

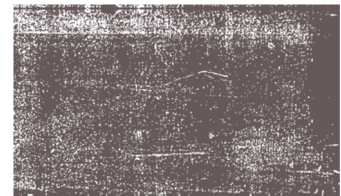
Chapter 19



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I. STOWE AND HELPER: LITERARY INCENDIARIES

- **Uncle Tom's Cabin**—Harriet Beecher Stowe
 - She was determined to awaken North to wickedness of slavery
 - By laying bare its terrible inhumanity, especially splitting families
 - Relied on powerful imagery and touching pathos
 - Deeper sources of her anti-slavery sentiments lay in evangelical crusades of Second Great Awakening



135,000 SETS, 270,000 VOLUMES SOLD.

UNCLE TOM'S CABIN

FOR SALE HERE.

AN EDITION FOR THE MILLION, COMPLETE IN 1 VOL. PRICE 27 1/2 CENTS.
 - - IN GERMAN, IN 1 VOL. PRICE 50 CENTS.
 - - IN 2 VOLS. CLOTH, 6 PLATES, PRICE \$1.50.
 SUPERB ILLUSTRATED EDITION, IN 1 VOL. WITH 152 ENGRAVINGS,
 PRICES FROM \$2.50 TO \$5.00.

The Greatest Book of the Age.

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THE February morning looked gray and drizzling through the window of Uncle Tom's cabin. It looked on downcast faces, the images of mournful hearts. The little table stood out before the fire, covered with an ironing-cloth; a coarse but clean shirt or two, fresh from the iron, hung on the back of a chair by the fire, and Aunt Chloe had another spread out before her on the table. Carefully she rubbed and ironed every fold and every hem, with the most scrupulous exactness, every now and then raising her hand to her face to wipe off the tears that were coursing down her cheeks.

Tom sat by, with his Testament open on his knee, and his head leaning upon his hand; — but neither spoke. It was yet early, and the children lay all asleep together in their little rude trundle-bed.

Tom, who had, to the full, the gentle, domestic heart, which, woe for them! has been a peculiar characteristic of his unhappy race, got up and walked silently to look at his children.

“It's the last time,” he said.



I. STOWE AND HELPER: LITERARY INCENDIARIES (CONT.)

Success of novel at home and abroad was sensational

- Also lengthy runs on stage in “Tom shows”
- No other novel in American history can be compared with it as a political force
- When introduced to President in 1862; Lincoln remarked, “So you're the little woman who wrote the book that made this great war”

Stowe never witnessed slavery in Deep South:

- Had seen it briefly during visit to Kentucky
- Lived in Ohio, center of Underground Railroad activity

Uncle Tom:

- Left endearing and enduring impression on North
- Many swore they would have nothing to do with enforcing Fugitive Slave Law



I. STOWE AND HELPER: LITERARY INCENDIARIES (CONT.)

- Devoured by millions of impressionable youth
 - Immensely popular abroad, esp. Britain and France
- ***The Impending Crisis of the South*** (1857) by Hinton R. Helper:
 - Hating slavery and blacks, he attempted to prove with statistics that, indirectly, non-slaveholding whites were ones who suffered most from millstone of slavery
 - He finally found a publisher in North
- Helped fuel fears of planters that non-slaveholding majority might abandon them
- Book banned in South
- In North, thousands distributed as campaign literature by Republicans
 - Southerners embittered when learned northern brethren spreading wicked “lies”



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II. THE NORTH-SOUTH CONTEST FOR KANSAS

- Popular sovereignty:
 - **New England Emigrant Aid Company:**
 - Antislavery organization sent 2,000 people to Kansas to forestall South and to make profit
 - Many carried new breech-loading Sharps rifles, nicknamed “Beecher’s Bibles” after Rev. Henry Ward Beecher (Harriet Beecher Stowe’s brother) who helped raise money to pay for them
 - Southern spokesmen raised cries of betrayal
 - Northern “Nebrascals,” out to “abolitionize” both Kansas and Nebraska
 - Some southern hotheads attempted to “assist” small groups of well-armed slave-owners to Kansas
 - Planting slavery in Kansas a losing game:
 - Slaves were valuable and volatile property
 - Foolish for owners to take them where bullets were flying
 - Kansas might be voted free under popular sovereignty
 - Census of 1860 found only two slaves among 107,000 souls in Kansas and only 15 in Nebraska



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II. THE NORTH-SOUTH CONTEST FOR KANSAS (CONT.)

- Crisis conditions in Kansas rapidly worsened (see Map 19.1):
 - 1855 election for first territorial legislature:
 - Proslavery “border ruffians” poured in from Missouri to vote early and often
 - Slavery supporters triumphed; set up puppet government at Shawnee Mission
 - Free-soilers established extralegal regime of their own in Topeka



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II. THE NORTH-SOUTH CONTEST FOR KANSAS (CONT.)

Confused Kansans had choice of two governments:

- One based on fraud
- Other on illegality

Tensions mounted as settlers feuded over conflicting land claims

- Breaking point (1856): gang of proslavery raiders, alleging provocation, shot up and burned part of free-soil town of Lawrence
- Outrage was prelude to bloodier tragedy



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III. KANSAS IN CONVULSION

- John Brown now stalked upon Kansas battlefield
 - Obsessively dedicated to abolitionist cause:
 - Brooding over attack on Lawrence, he led a band to Pottawatomie Creek in May 1856
 - There they hacked to pieces 5 surprised men, presumed to be proslaveryites
 - Terrorist butchery besmirched free-soil cause
 - Brought vicious retaliation from proslavery forces



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Civil war erupted in Kansas in 1856:

- Continued until it merged with Civil War of 1861-1865
- Destroyed millions of dollars' worth of property
- Paralyzed agriculture in certain areas
- Cost scores of lives

Kansas applied for statehood on popular sovereignty basis

III. KANSAS IN CONVULSION (CONT.)



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Lecompton Constitution: a proslavery document

- people not allowed to vote for or against constitution as a whole
- Vote for constitution either “with slavery” or “with no slavery” (but with protections for slavery already there)
- Whatever the outcome, there would still be slavery
- Free-soilers boycotted polls
- Proslaveryites approved constitution with slavery in late 1857

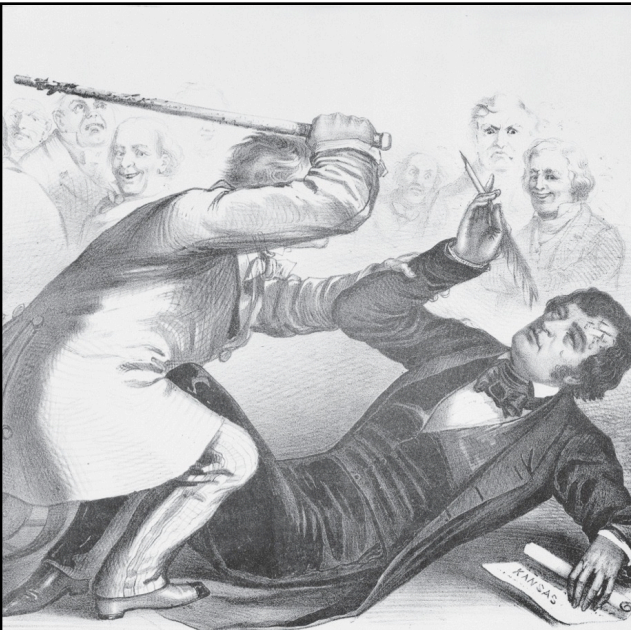
Scene then shifted to Washington:

- President Pierce had been succeeded by James Buchanan, who was strongly under southern influence
- Buchanan supported Lecompton Constitution
- Senator Douglas threw his support behind true popular sovereignty
- Compromise: submit entire Lecompton Constitution to people
- Free-soil voters thronged to polls and voted it down
- Kansas remained a territory until 1861, when southern secessionists left Congress
- Buchanan's action divided Democratic Party by antagonizing Democrats in North

III. KANSAS IN CONVULSION




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CHIVALRY — ARGUMENT VERSUS CLUB'S.

IV. “BULLY” BROOKS

- **Bleeding Kansas:**
 - Spattered blood on Senate floor in 1856:
 - Senator Charles Sumner (Mass.) a leading abolitionist
 - Made himself one of most disliked men in Senate
 - Delivered speech “The Crime Against Kansas”
 - Condemned proslavery men
 - Referred insultingly to South Carolina and its senator Andrew Butler
 - Congressman Preston Brooks (S.C.):
 - Resented insults to his state and to its senator
 - To Brooks, only alternative was to chastise senator
 - On May 22, 1856, he approached Sumner and pounded him with an 11-ounce cane until it broke
 - House could not muster enough votes to expel Brooks
 - He resigned but was triumphantly reelected
 - Sumner had to go to Europe for treatment of his injuries
 - For 3 ½ years, Massachusetts kept his seat open until Sumner could return
 - Bleeding Sumner thus joined with Bleeding Kansas as political issues



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IV. "BULLY" BROOKS AND HIS BLUDGEON

- Free-soil North infuriated by Brooks:
 - Copies of Sumner's speech sold by thousands
 - Every blow to Sumner made thousands of Republicans
 - South not unanimous in approving Brooks, but:
 - Angered by Sumner's speech
 - Upset that speech so applauded in North
 - Sumner-Brooks clash and ensuing reactions revealed how dangerously inflamed passions had become
 - Blows rained on Sumner were among first blows of Civil War



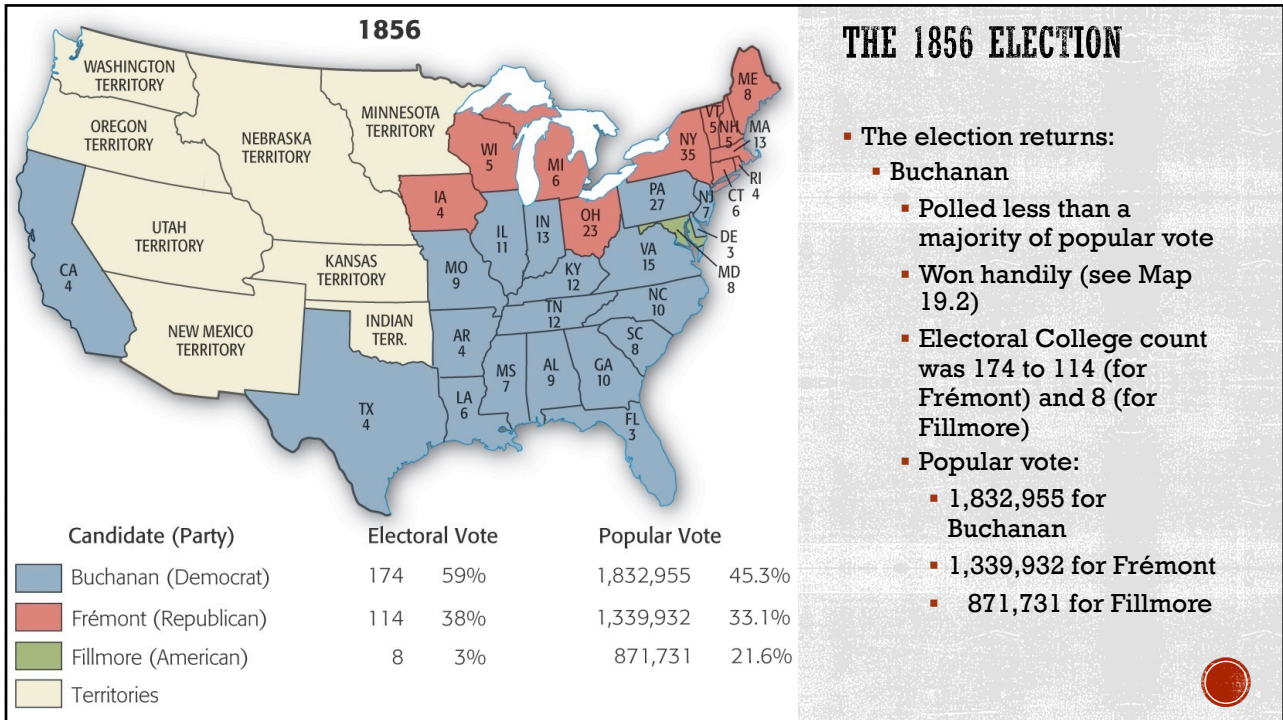
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V. "OLD BUCK" VERSUS "THE PATHFINDER"

- Democrats met in Cincinnati to elect presidential standard-bearer of 1856
 - Delegates chose James Buchanan:
 - He was serving in London during Kansas-Nebraska uproar—therefore "Kansas-less"
 - In a crisis that called for giants, he was mediocre, irresolute, and confused
- Republicans met in Philadelphia:
 - "Higher Law" Steward was conspicuous leader
 - However, final choice was John C. Frémont:
 - So-called "Pathfinder of the West"
 - Virtually without political experience, but not tarred with Kansas brush
 - Republicans came out strongly against extension of slavery into territories
 - Democrats declared emphatically for popular sovereignty.



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VI. THE ELECTORAL FRUITS OF 1856 (CONT.)

- Why Republican defeat:
 - Frémont's lack of honesty, capacity, sound judgment
 - Southern threat that election of "Black Republican" would be declaration of war, forcing South to secede
 - Many northerners thus intimidated to vote for Buchanan
 - Innate conservatism triumphed, assisted by southern bullyism
- Fortunate for Union that secession and Civil War did not come in 1856:
 - Frémont was ill-balanced and second-rate figure
 - In 1856, North was more willing to let South depart in peace than in 1860
 - Dramatic events (1856-1860) aroused still-apathetic northerners to fighting pitch
 - 1856 election cast long shadow as politicians, North and South, peered anxiously toward 1860

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DRED SCOTT CASE



- Dred Scott, an enslaved man from Missouri filed suit against his owner.
- Scott said that because he and his wife once lived in states where slavery was illegal, the couple was in fact free.
- Scott did indeed live as a free man in a free state for 5 years.



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DRED SCOTT DECISION

- The Supreme Court ruled 7 to 2 against Scott.
- The ruling stated that Scott and therefore all slaves, were not citizens, and since the 5th Amendment protected private property, slaves had no right to sue in court.
- The court also found the Missouri Compromise unconstitutional.
 - ***Slaves were property of their owners and congress could not deprive people of their property without due process.***
- Antislavery forces were disgusted with the decision.
- The ruling meant that Congress had no power to ban slavery anywhere.



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THE FINANCIAL CRASH OF 1857

- **Panic of 1857: why crash?**
 - Inpouring California gold inflated currency
 - Demands of Crimean War (Russia, 1853-1856) overstimulated grain production
 - Frenzied speculation in land and railroads
- **Over 5,000 businesses failed:**
 - North and its grain growers hardest hit
 - South enjoyed favorable cotton prices abroad
- **Panic provided further proof cotton was king:**
 - Helped drive overconfident southerners closer to shooting showdown
- **Distress in North, esp. agriculture, invigorated call for homesteads of 160 acres from public domain**
- **Opposition to free farmland:**
 - Eastern industrialists feared losing workers
 - South opposed because plantation slavery not possible on only 160 acres

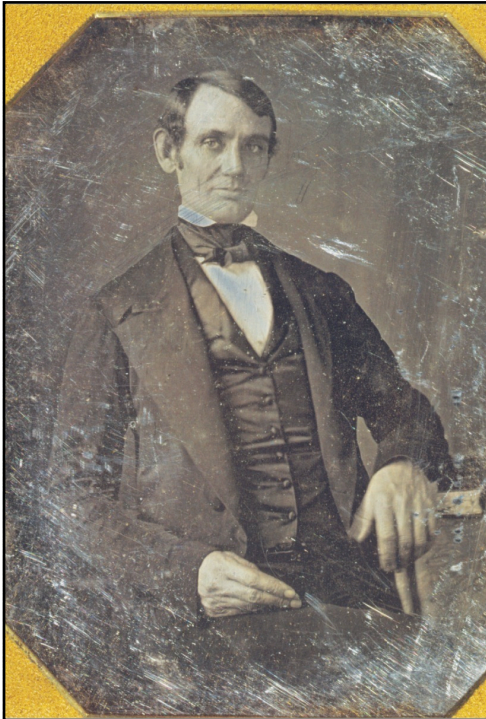
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VIII. THE FINANCIAL CRASH OF 1857

- Congress (1860) passed a homestead act
 - Public land available for 25 cents an acre
 - Killed by President Buchanan's veto
- Panic of 1857 created clamor for higher tariff rates
- because of large Treasury surplus as well as pressure from South, Congress lowered tariffs in 1857
 - **Tariff of 1857:**
 - Reduced duties to about 20 percent on dutiable goods—lowest point since 1812
 - As Treasury surplus melted away:
 - Industrialists in North pointed to need for higher duties
 - Concerned mostly about need for increased protection
 - Panic of 1857 gave Republicans two surefire economic issues for 1860 election:
 - Protection for unprotected
 - Farms for farmless



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AN ILLINOIS RAIL-SPLITTER EMERGES

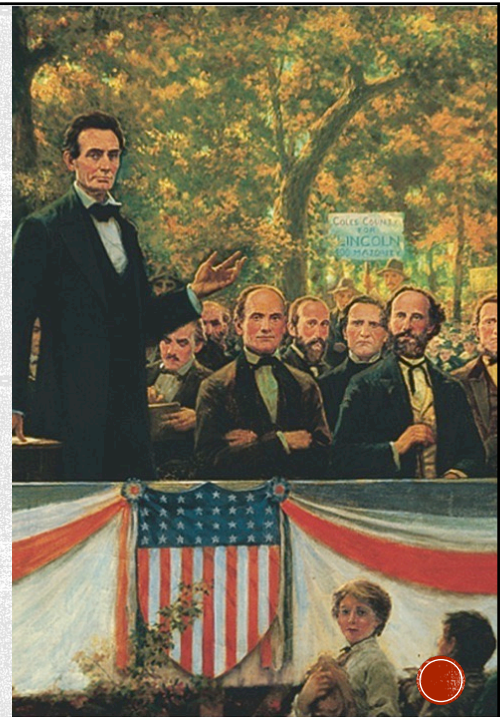
- Illinois senatorial election of 1858 claimed national spotlight:
 - Senator Stephen Douglas up for reelection
 - Republicans ran Springfield lawyer, Abraham Lincoln:
 - Not well educated, but an avid reader
 - Married “above himself” into influential Todd family of Kentucky—helped to school him in patience and forbearance
 - Emerged as a trial lawyer in Illinois
 - Widely referred to as “Honest Abe”
 - Served an undistinguished term in Congress, 1847-1849
 - Kansas-Nebraska Act light a fire within him:
 - Emerged as one of foremost Republican politicians and orators in Northwest
 - At Republican convention in 1856, Lincoln received 100 votes for vice-presidential nomination



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LINCOLN VERSUS DOUGLAS

- **Lincoln-Douglas debates:**
 - Lincoln challenged Douglas to debates; Douglas accepted
 - Took place from August to October 1858
 - Most famous debate at Freeport, Illinois:
 - Lincoln presented a question based on Supreme Court ruling in *Dred Scott* decision
 - Douglas had already publicly answered **Freeport question**, and was consistent in his answer.
- **Freeport Doctrine:**
 - No matter how Supreme Court ruled, slavery would stay down if people voted it down
 - Pro-slavery laws need to be passed by territorial legislatures
 - If unpopular, slavery would soon disappear
- Douglas defeated Lincoln for Senate seat:
 - His loyalty to popular sovereignty was decisive
 - Senators then chosen by state legislatures
- “Honest Abe” emerged as a power Republican figure.
- Douglas, in winning Illinois, lost chances of winning presidency
- Lincoln-Douglas debates proved to be one of the preliminary battles of Civil War.



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JOHN BROWN: MURDERER OR MARTYR?

- Studied tactics of black rebels Toussaint L'Ouverture (Chap. 11) and Nat Turner (Chap. 16)
 - Hatched scheme to invade South secretly:
 - Then call upon slaves to rebel and furnish them with arms
 - Establish a black free state as a sanctuary
 - **Harpers Ferry:**
 - Brown seized federal arsenal in October 1859
 - Killed seven innocent people (incl. a free black)
 - Injured ten or so more
 - Slaves failed to rise up
 - Brown and his remnants captured by U.S. Marines under Robert E. Lee:
 - Convicted of murder and treason
 - Marched up scaffold steps without flinching
 - Devotion to freedom so inflexible, he took on exalted character
 - Effects of Harper Ferry were inflammatory:
 - To South, Brown a murderer and an apostle of treason
 - Assumed entire North was "Brown-loving" Republicans
 - Moderate northerners and Republican leaders deplored Brown's actions
 - Abolitionists and ardent free-soilers infuriated by Brown's execution
 - Free-soil centers in North tolled bells, fired guns, lowered flags, and held rallies
 - Ghost of martyred Brown would not be laid to rest



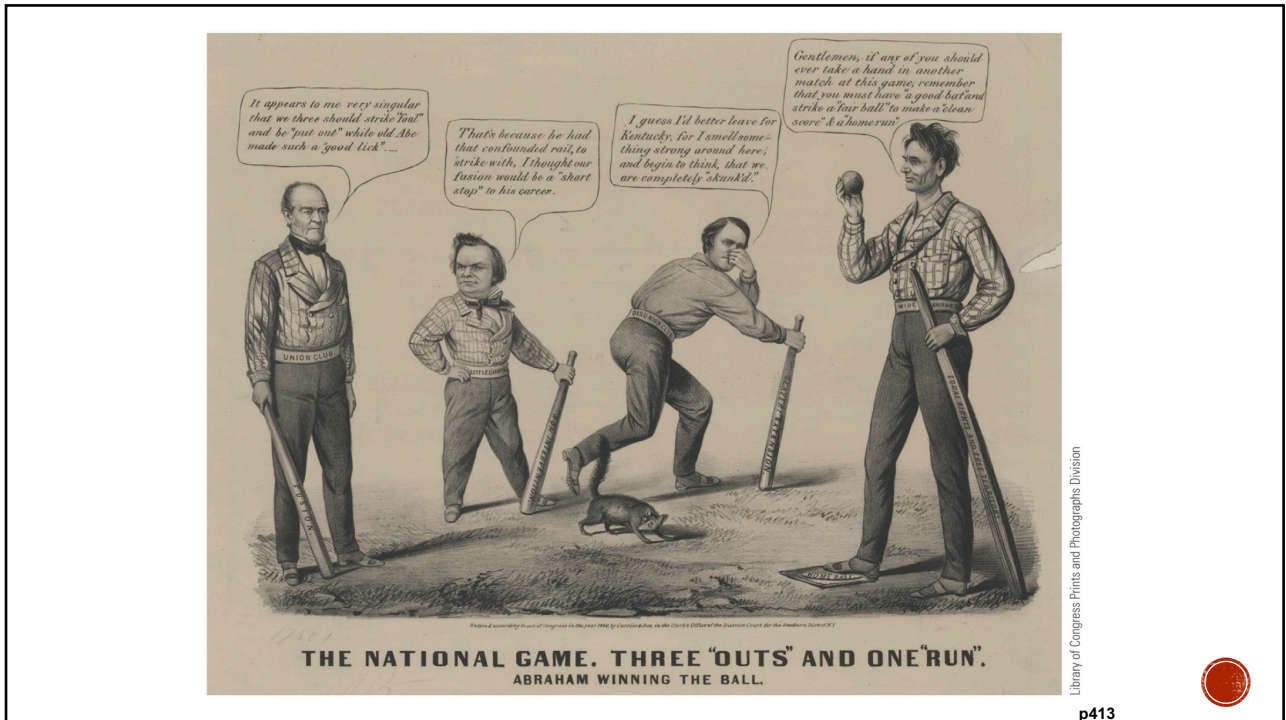
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- Presidential election of 1860 was most fateful in American history:
 - Democrats met in Charleston, South Carolina:
 - Douglas leading candidate of northern wing
 - Southern wing regarded him as traitor because of Lecompton Constitution and Freeport Doctrine
 - Cotton state delegates walked out
 - Remaining delegates disbanded after unable to generate enough votes to nominate Douglas
 - First tragic secession was secession of southerners from Democratic National Convention:
 - Departure became habit-forming
 - Democrats tried again in Baltimore:
 - Douglas Democrats firmly in control
 - After cotton-state delegates again withdrew, rest of delegates enthusiastically nominated Douglas
 - Platform came out squarely:
 - For popular sovereignty
 - Against obstruction of Fugitive Slave Law by states
 - Southern Democrats then selected John Breckinridge as their candidate:
 - Platform favored extension of slavery into territories and annexation of slave-populated Cuba



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Republicans met in Chicago:

- William Seward was best known candidate:
 - "Irrepressible conflict" speech at Rochester 1858 ruined his prospects
 - Enemies' slogan, "Success Rather Than Steward"
- Lincoln of Illinois:
 - "Second Best," but a strong candidate because had fewer enemies
 - Overtook Seward on third ballot to gain nomination
- Platform made appeal to every nonsouthern group:
 - For free-soilers, nonextension of slavery
 - For northern manufacturers, a protective tariff
 - For immigrants, no abridgment of rights
 - For Northwest, a Pacific railroad
 - For West, internal improvements at federal expense
 - For farmers, free homesteads from public domain
- Southern secessionists called Lincoln "abolitionist" rail-splitter who would split Union
- Lincoln hated slavery, but he was no outright abolitionist

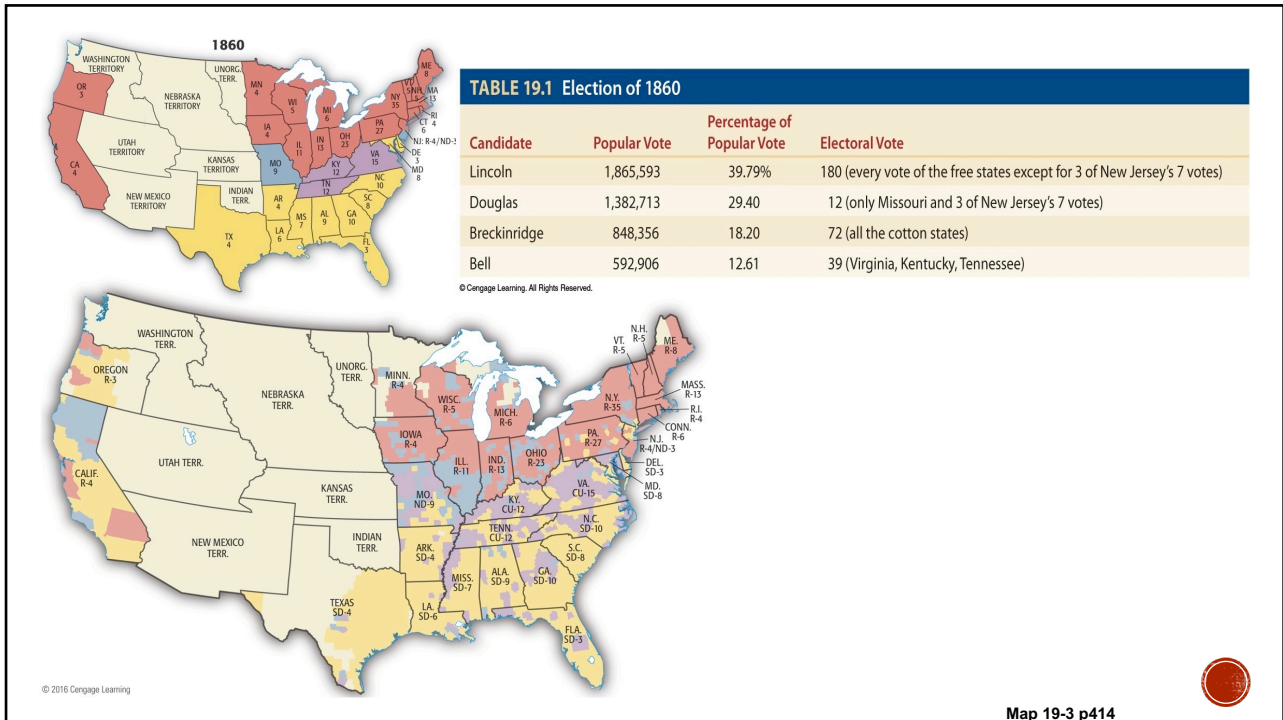
Lincoln enthusiasts staged roaring rallies and parades

Douglas waged vigorous speaking campaign

Returns proclaimed sweeping victory for Lincoln (see Table 19.1)

XIII. A RAIL-SPLITTER SPLITS THE UNION

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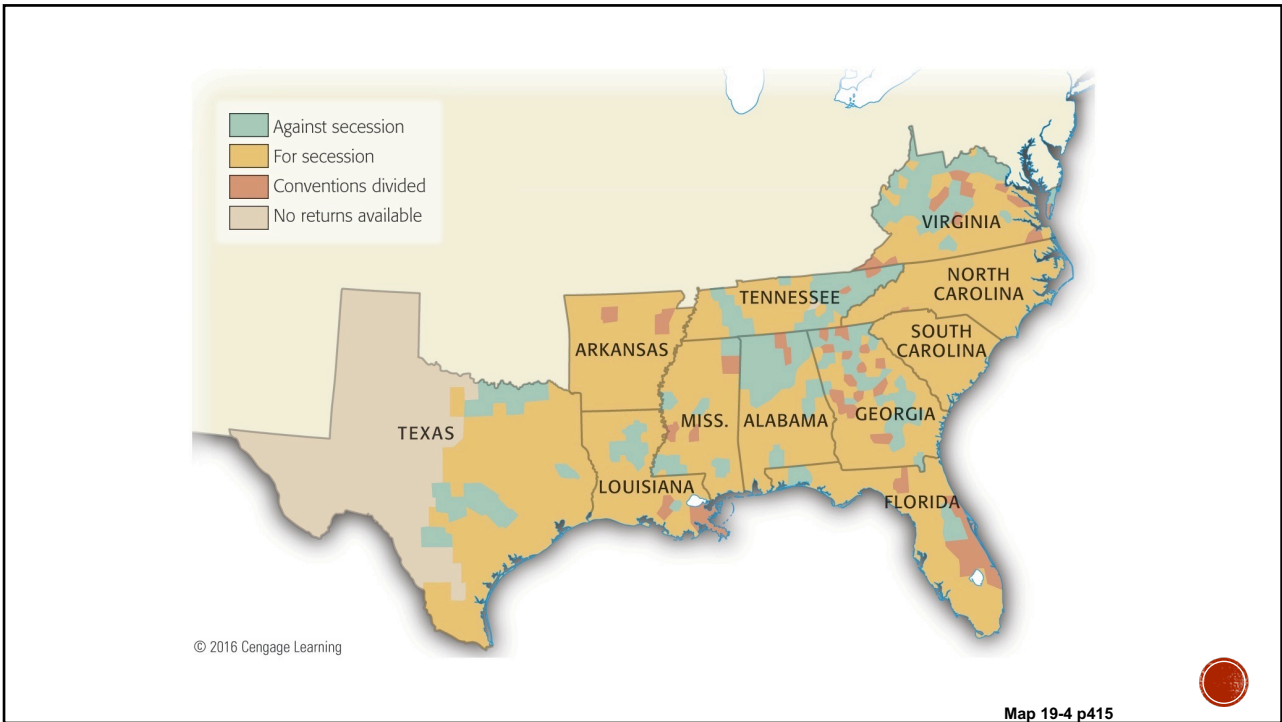


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XIV. THE ELECTORAL UPHEAVAL OF 1860

- Lincoln a minority president:
 - 60% of voters preferred someone else
- Lincoln a sectional president:
 - In ten southern states, not on ballot
 - Election of 1860 was virtually two elections: one for North and one for South (see Map 19.3)
- South Carolina rejoiced over Lincoln's victory; they now had excuse to secede
- Douglas won only twelve electoral votes:
 - Campaigned energetically for himself
 - Douglas and Breckinridge together amassed 365,476 more votes than did Lincoln
- Ballot box did not indicate strong sentiment for secession (see Map 19.4)
- Breckinridge polled fewer votes in slave states than combined strength of Douglas and Bell
 - Breckinridge failed to carry his own state of Kentucky
- Even though Republicans had elected Lincoln:
 - They controlled neither Senate nor House
 - South had 5-4 majority on Supreme Court
 - U.S. government could not touch slavery in slave states, except by constitutional amendment, which slave states could easily block

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Hot passions, not cool reason, began to drive events

South Carolina had threatened to secede if "sectional" Lincoln won:

- Four days after election, S.C. called a special convention
- Meeting in Charleston, December 1860, convention voted unanimously to secede

Action set off chain reaction of secession

Crittenden amendments to Constitution:

- Sponsored by Senator John Jordan Crittenden (Kentucky) to appease South
- Slavery in territories north of 36° 30' line banned, but south of line, it would be federally protected in all territories existing or "hereafter to be acquired"
- Future states could come into Union with or without slavery as they choose
- Slavery supporters guaranteed full rights in southern territories regardless of popular sovereignty during territorial period
- Lincoln flatly rejected Crittenden scheme
- Elected on platform that opposed extension of slavery, Lincoln felt he could not yield, even if slavery gains might only to be temporary

XIV. THE ELECTORAL UPHEAVAL OF 1860

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As Crittenden Compromise failed in early 1861, six more southern states voted to secede:

- Alabama, Mississippi, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Texas

Four more would join later, bringing total to eleven

Confederate States of America:

- Formed by seven seceding states in Montgomery, Alabama in February 1861:
- Chose Jefferson Davis as their president

Crisis deepened by “lame duck” interlude:

- Lincoln could not take office until March 4, 1861
- During this time, secessionist move gained momentum
- Buchanan blamed for not holding nation together
- He did not believe southern states could legally secede
- He could find no authority in Constitution for stopping secession by force

XVI. THE SECESSIONIST EXODUS

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- Secessionists left for a number of reasons, most related to slavery:
 - Threatened by North's “despotic majority of numbers”
 - Dismayed by triumph of Republican party
 - Weary of free-soil criticism, abolitionist nagging, and Northern interference ranging from Underground Railroad to John Brown's raid
 - Supported secession because sure departure would be unopposed
 - Saw secession as golden opportunity to cast aside generations of “vassalage” to North
 - An independent Dixieland could develop its own banking and shipping and trade directly with Europe
 - Who could tell when “greedy” Republicans would pass oppressive protective tariff?
 - Tensions for decades between:
 - North with its manufacturing plants
 - South with its agricultural exports
 - Worldwide impulses of nationalism fermenting in South
 - Principles of self-determination from Declaration of Independence—seemed to many southerners to apply



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XVII. FAREWELL TO UNION



Few southern states felt they were doing anything wrong or immoral

- Historical parallel ran even deeper:
 - 1776: thirteen American colonies, led by rebel George Washington, seceded from British empire by throwing off yoke of King George III
 - 1860-1861: eleven American states, led by rebel Jefferson Davis, were seceding from Union by throwing off yoke of "King" Abraham Lincoln
 - With Union burden gone, South confident that it could work out its own peculiar destiny more quietly, happily, and prosperously



CHRONOLOGY

<p>1852 Harriet Beecher Stowe publishes <i>Uncle Tom's Cabin</i></p> <p>1853-1856 Crimean War in Russia</p> <p>1854 Kansas-Nebraska Act Republican party forms</p> <p>1856 Buchanan defeats Frémont and Fillmore for presidency Sumner beaten by Brooks in Senate chamber Brown's Pottawatomie Massacre</p> <p>1856-1861 Civil war in "bleeding Kansas"</p> <p>1857 <i>Dred Scott</i> decision Lecompton Constitution rejected</p>	<p>1857 Panic of 1857 Tariff of 1857 Hinton R. Helper publishes <i>The Impending Crisis of the South</i></p> <p>1858 Lincoln-Douglas debates</p> <p>1859 Brown raids Harpers Ferry</p> <p>1860 Lincoln wins four-way race for presidency South Carolina secedes from Union Crittenden Compromise fails</p> <p>1861 Seven seceding states form Confederate States of America</p>
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