

Causes of the Civil War



THE CIVIL WAR
m u s e u m

UPPER MIDDLE WEST EXPERIENCE

Causes of the Civil War

The Civil War Museum has put together this kit to help teach difficult history; our educators searched for the best-suited primary and secondary sources to address the cause of the American Civil War. This kit is broken into two sections: 1) background information for the educator to help build a better understanding of what they are teaching, and 2) resources for student-driven exploration of primary sources, including essential questions, context, and extensions.

Our hope is that this kit helps provide your classroom with authentic and accurate information on the cause of the Civil War.

Goals:

- Facilitators of this loan kit will be able to understand that slavery was the cause of the Civil War by using primary resources from the time.
- Students using this kit will learn to read primary sources critically and develop arguments based on what they read.
- This loan kit will be used to enhance classroom lessons surrounding Civil War topics.

Warning: This loan kit does have primary sources from the 1860s which contain language that might be offensive to some.

Items in Kit:

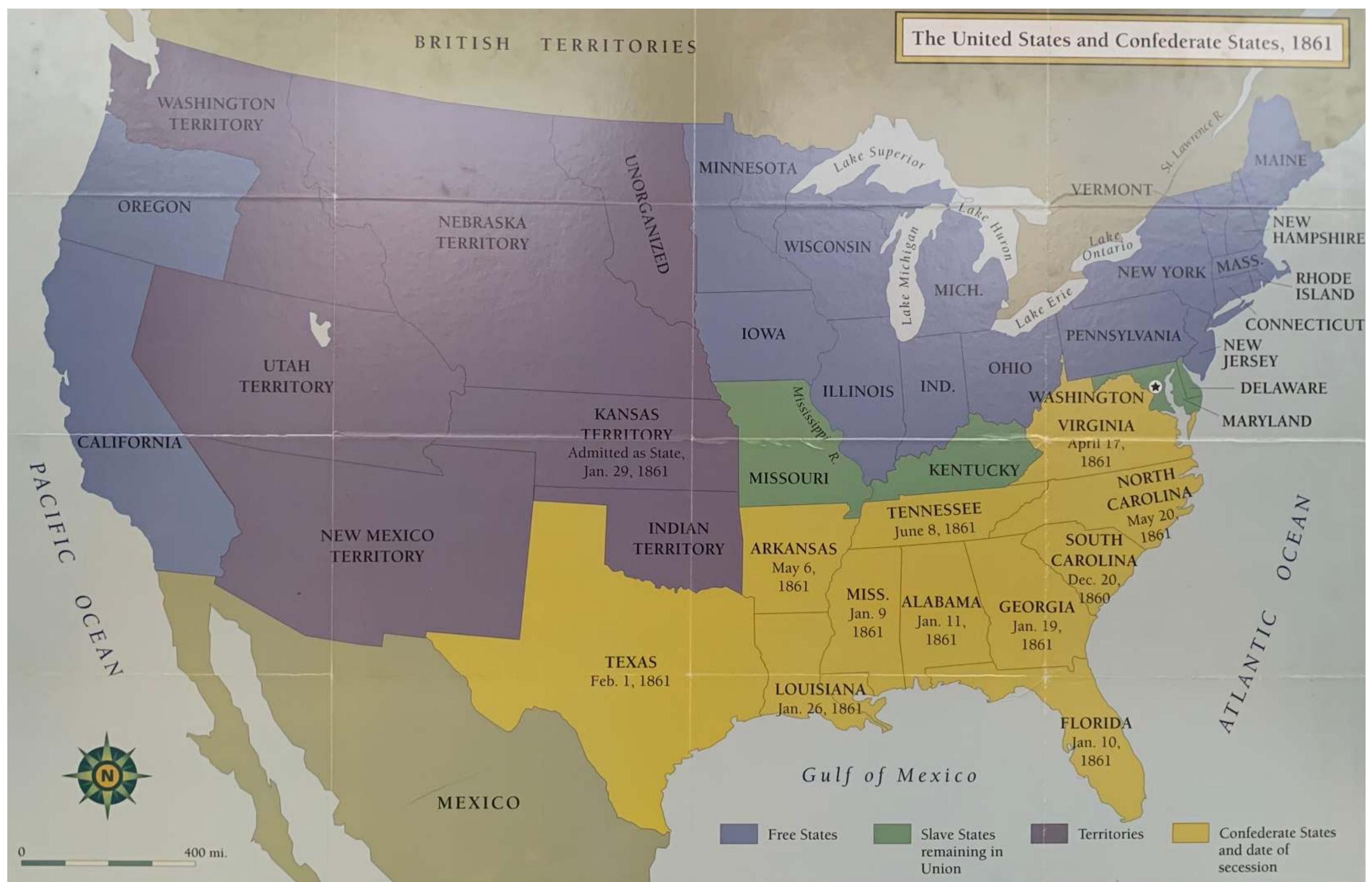
Background Information for Facilitator:

- Enslaved and Seceding States Statistics (from *Myth of the Lost Cause*)
- *Slavery: Cause and Catalyst of the Civil War* (pdf link from the National Park Service below)
 - <https://www.nps.gov/shil/learn/historyculture/upload/slavery-brochure.pdf>
- Map of 1860s America
- *Slavery and the Civil War* (information sheet from the National Park Service)
 - https://www.nps.gov/liho/planyourvisit/upload/cw_slavery_site_bulletin.pdf
- Three copies of exhibit labels from *The Fiery Trial* at The Civil War Museum

Student Activities (context, key passages, essential questions):

- *The Cornerstone Speech* by Alexander H. Stevens
- *A Declaration of the Immediate Causes which Induce and Justify the Secession of the State of Mississippi* from the Federal Union
- *Inaugural Address* of Abraham Lincoln
- Selected images and an article insert from *The Illustrated London News*

Map of the United States in 1861



The Cornerstone Speech

Summary:

On March 21, 1861, Confederate Vice President Alexander Stephens gave a speech in Savannah, Georgia, explaining the basic foundations of the new Confederate government and their reasons for seceding from the United States. In his famous *Cornerstone Speech*, Stephens clearly lays out the centrality of slavery and white supremacy in this decision. He leaves no doubt that the Confederacy embraced that the foundation of the Confederate nation was built on African-American subordination and slavery.

Source:

<https://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/document/cornerstone-speech/>

Key Passages:

The new Confederate constitution has put at rest, forever, all the agitating questions relating to our peculiar institution--African slavery as it exists among us--the proper status of the negro in our form of civilization. This was the immediate cause of the late rupture and present revolution. Jefferson in his forecast, has anticipated this, as the "rock on which the old Union would be split." He was right. What was conjecture with him, is now a realized fact, but whether he fully comprehended the great truth upon which that rock stood and stand, may be doubted. What was conjecture with him, is now a realized fact.

The prevailing ideas by him and most of the leading statesmen of the time of the formation of the old constitution were that the enslavement of the African was in violation of the laws of nature; that it was wrong in principle, socially, morally, and politically...These ideas, however, were fundamentally wrong. They rested on the assumption of the equality of races. This was an error. It was a sandy foundation, and the government built upon it fell when the "storm came and the wind blew."

Our new government is founded upon exactly the opposite idea; its foundations are laid, its cornerstone rests, upon the great truth that the negro is not equal to the white man; that slavery subordination to the superior race is his natural and normal condition. This, our new government, is the first, in the history of the world, based upon this great physical, philosophical, and moral truth.

Our Confederacy is founded upon principles in strict conformity with these laws. This stone which was rejected by the first builders 'is become the chief of the corner'--the real corner stone--in our edifice.

Essential Questions for Students:

1. What is the "cornerstone" Stephens talks about?
2. What does Stephens say are the reasons for secession and forming the new government?
3. In what way does Stephens believe the Constitution's authors were wrong?
4. How does Stephens's platform differ from the platform laid out during Abraham Lincoln's First Inaugural Address?
5. To what extent does this speech provide evidence of slavery being the cause of the war?

Extensions:

- Have students create a Northern response to this speech.
- Have students respond to Stephens's claims against the Constitution authors, as the authors themselves.

Mississippi Secession Resolution

Summary:

On November 30, 1860, the Mississippi legislature called for a secession convention with delegates elected by voters. Their grievances with the North and federal government included the following:

- The North had defied the Constitution's fugitive slave provision
- Interfered with slavery
- Enticed slaves to flee
- Agitated against slavery
- Sought to exclude slavery from the new territories
- Opposed the admission of more slave states

Source:

<https://www.battlefields.org/learn/primary-sources/declaration-causes-seceding-states#Mississippi>

Key Passages:

On January 9th, 1861, Mississippi's secession convention passed a secession ordinance that stated:

Our position is thoroughly identified with the institution of slavery--the greatest material interest of the world. Its labor supplies the product which constitutes by far the largest and most important portions of commerce on the earth. These products are peculiar to the climate verging on the tropical regions, and by an imperious law of nature, none but the black race can bear exposure to the tropical sun. These products have become necessities of the world and a blow at slavery is a blow at commerce and civilization.

Essential Questions for Students:

1. What is the main argument laid out for breaking away from the Union?
2. To what extent does this document provide evidence of slavery being the cause of the war?
3. According to this document, what had the North done to hurt the South?

Extensions:

- Have students create a map of the Southern states that seceded with the date and the reasoning of each state.
- Have a Socratic Seminar on what the cause of the war was, according to the Confederate states' secession resolutions (other states' secession resolutions available via the Civil War Trust).
- Have students create a newspaper article summarizing the document and what it means for the future of the United States.

Lincoln's First Inaugural Address

Summary:

On March 4th, 1861, President Lincoln gave his First Inaugural Address. In the election of 1860, Lincoln was one of four presidential candidates. The old Democratic party had split and had two candidates, Stephen A. Douglas, a Northern Democrat, and John C. Breckinridge, a Southern Democrat. This division of the Democratic party allowed the newly founded Republican party's candidate Abraham Lincoln to win with a non-majority vote. When Abraham Lincoln took office, in March of 1861, seven southern slave holding states had already seceded from the Union.

In Lincoln's First Inaugural Address, he not only lays out the platform of his ideas, but also that of the young Republican party. Lincoln addressed an already fractured society, in hopes of preserving the Union.

Source:

<https://www.battlefields.org/learn/primary-sources/lincolns-first-inaugural-address>

Key Passages:

I do but quote from one of my speeches where I declare that, "I have no purpose, directly or indirectly, to interfere with the institution of slavery in the States where it exists. I believe I have no lawful right to do so, and I have no inclination to do so."

In your hands, my dissatisfied fellow countrymen, and not in mine, is the momentous issues of civil war. The government will not assail you. You can have no conflict, without being yourselves the aggressors. You have no oath registered in Heaven to destroy the government, while I shall have the most solemn one to "preserve, protect and defend" it.

I am loth to close. We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. We are not enemies. Though passion may be strained, it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battle-field and patriot grave, to ever living heart and hearthstone, all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union, when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature."

Essential Questions for Students:

1. Why would Lincoln state that he has no purpose to interfere with the institution of slavery? What was his platform in terms of slavery at the beginning of his presidency?
2. During this speech, in what light does Lincoln paint the South?
3. Based on this address, summarize what the Republican Party platform was in the 1860 election.

Extensions:

- Have students write an article as a reporter covering this inauguration.
- Have students compare modern inaugural addresses. How do they differ?

The Illustrated London News

Summary:

Presented in the packet are a selection of original images drawn by artists for the British newspaper *The Illustrated London News*. The images are from the original newspaper, sold to the British public between 1860-1865.

Enslaved people and the institution of slavery were frequent topics for the illustrations of *The Illustrated London News*. Readers saw drawings of enslaved people working on Confederate fortifications, being inspected during slave auctions, attending to their masters, worshiping in church, selling produce on the streets, waiting to be sold, and escaping into Union lines.

In the packet there are a few images and one article on the auction published in *The Illustrated London News* shortly before the start of the war.

Source:

The primary sources for this subject are on the following pages.

Key Passage:

The Illustrated London News

February, 16 1861

Slave Auctions in Richmond, Virginia

A higher bidding not coming forth, he (the auctioneer), told the negro to get down and walk. He then stood aside to recover himself, and the negro paced up and down the room to show that he was sound on his legs. Some of the buyers stopped him during his walk and asked him a variety of questions, as to his last employment, state of his health, and so forth. Then they turned his head to the light, and lifted the corners of his eyes, to ascertain whether they were free from indications of disease, in the same way examine his teeth.

This was the first human being I had ever sold, and during the time of the biddings I felt the greatest difficulty in preventing myself from fainting. A dreadful, indescribable sickness came over me, which defied all my efforts to conquer. I felt giddy...

Essential Questions for Students:

1. How were the enslaved people depicted in these images? What impression of slavery were the artists trying to depict to their audience? Why do you say that?
2. Were these illustrations accurate to what was going on during this time period? Why do you think that?
3. Do these images lead you to believe that *The Illustrated London News* favored the Confederate or the Union cause during the Civil War?
4. How did that article portray the lives of the enslaved people?

Extensions:

- Have students create their own descriptions of what was going on in the images. Compare their descriptions to the other primary resources in this loan kit. How are they alike? How are they different?
- Have students create a letter to the editor of *The Illustrated London News*.

Primary Source:

Edited Article, Feb. 16, 1861: SLAVE AUCTIONS IN RICHMOND, VIRGINIA

The Illustrated London News, vol. 38, no. 1075, pp. 138-40.

February 16, 1861

By: G.H. Andrews

I Arrived in Richmond, the capital of Old Virginia, on a Sunday afternoon, and found the whole slave population in the streets. I was much struck with the general well-to-do look of these people, for I had imagined they would have wretched, downtrodden appearance showing marks of ill-usage, and be afraid to look up at strangers; instead of which I found them well dressed, well fed, and apparently happy and contented; but I was looking on the surface only, I suppose.

I had a letter of introduction to a gentleman in the city, ...and explained to him that my object in visiting the capital of the Old Dominion was to see what I could of slave institutions, and more particularly a slave auction, with the intention of writing an account of it, and also making some sketches, if possible, to be published in an English newspaper. My friend said this was rather a serious matter, for the Southerners had been so grossly libelled and misrepresented by novelists and newspaper-writers that they had got into a bad habit of not thinking of them or treating them in a kindly spirit; on the contrary, they rather manifested a desire to tar and feather them. ...A sensation of stickiness had come over me in consequence of his tar-and-feather allusions. However, he would consult, he said, with a gentlemen of influence in the place, let me know the result, and advise me how best to proceed.

Taking up a station on one of the great wooden bridges over the river, I had an excellent opportunity of observing the negroes of both sexes who were promenading along the road which passes over these structures: some thousands of them were out, all dressed in their best, in the height of fashion---negro fashion, of course. Scores of them passed and repassed during my stay there, all looking happy and contented.

On my return to the hotel I found my friend waiting for me; he had with him the influential person before alluded to,...

[He said] that the Northerners were continually threatening immediate abolition and proposing to use force to carry out their views; that they were determined to meet force by force, and that there was, in consequence, little chance of peace between them. He said they had been most foully slandered by Mrs. Beecher Stowe, that the incidents described by her as having all actually taken place were picked out of the events of fifty years, and yet made to appear as though they were every-day occurrences.

Yet, said he, in spite of all this affection for my wife, my children, and myself, if a rising of the negro population took place I would not trust one of the them; they would murder us all in our beds if they could, and they howl in sorrow and misery over the bodies of their victims; they would blindly, and without reflection, follow others, doing what they did, and be deeply sorry for it afterwards.

A carriage having been procured we drove into the country, calling at one or two places to see the negroes in their quarters, and very comfortable quarters too---little cabins of [sic] cottages, several in a row. The interiors looked very tidy, and the women and children seemed quite happy. They brought me milk and fruit, which appeared to be abundant.

The building in which this poor creature was about to be sold was built either for a mill or a granary; the ceiling was very low and of great strength, immense beams crossed it transversely, and the negro's black head stood out well against the great white beam at the back (for the whole interior was whitewashed) as he stood on the block evidently making the most of himself with a view of getting his owner as high a price as possible.

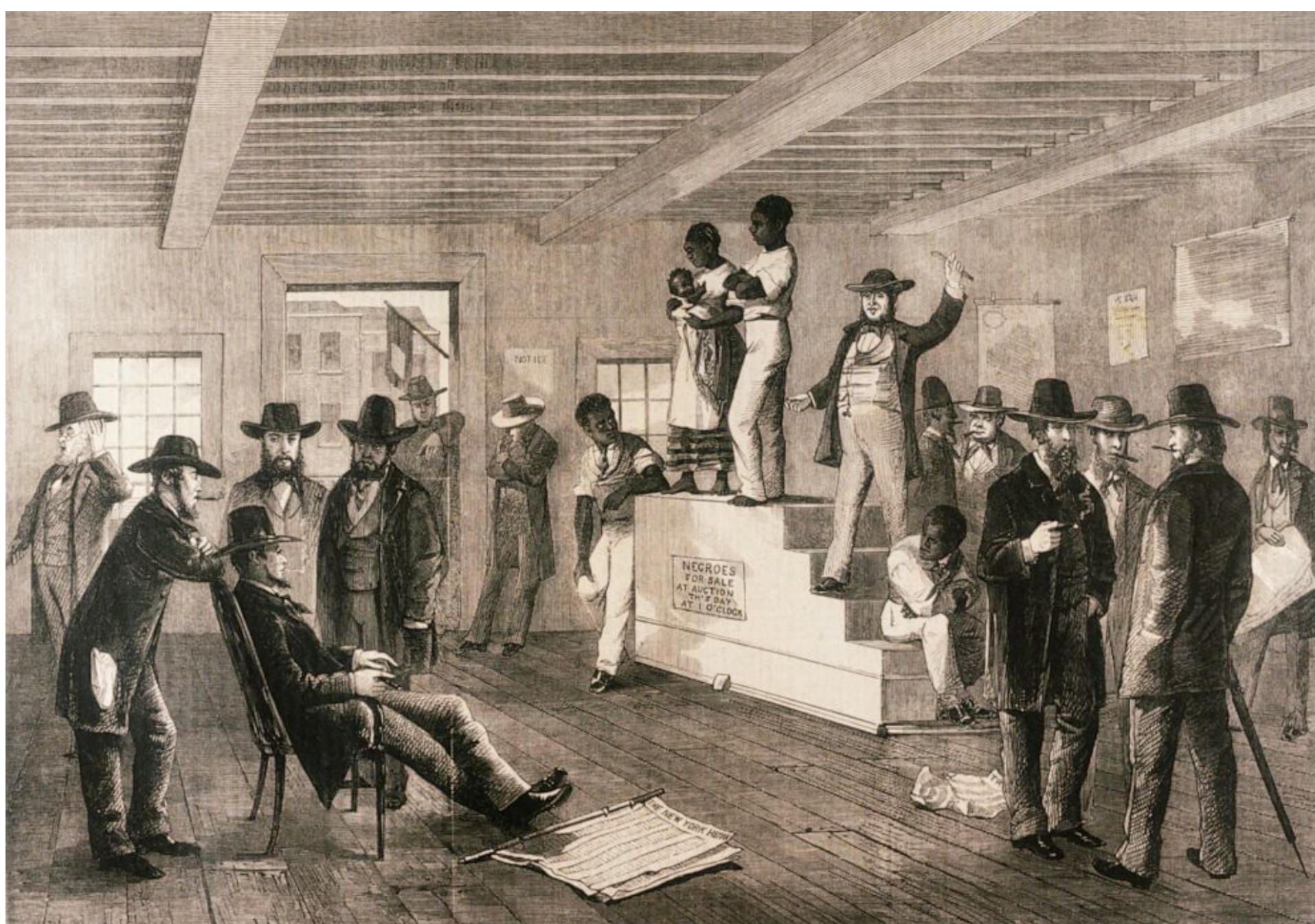
Then the biddings commenced, and 800 dollars were offered. This sum was mentioned by the auctioneer, over and over again, as fast as he could utter it until a higher bid was made; he then took up the fresh bidding and repeated it in the same manner, hundreds of times, raising his voice each time until he had got to the top of it. At the same time he gesticulated violently, got himself red in the face, and became breathless.

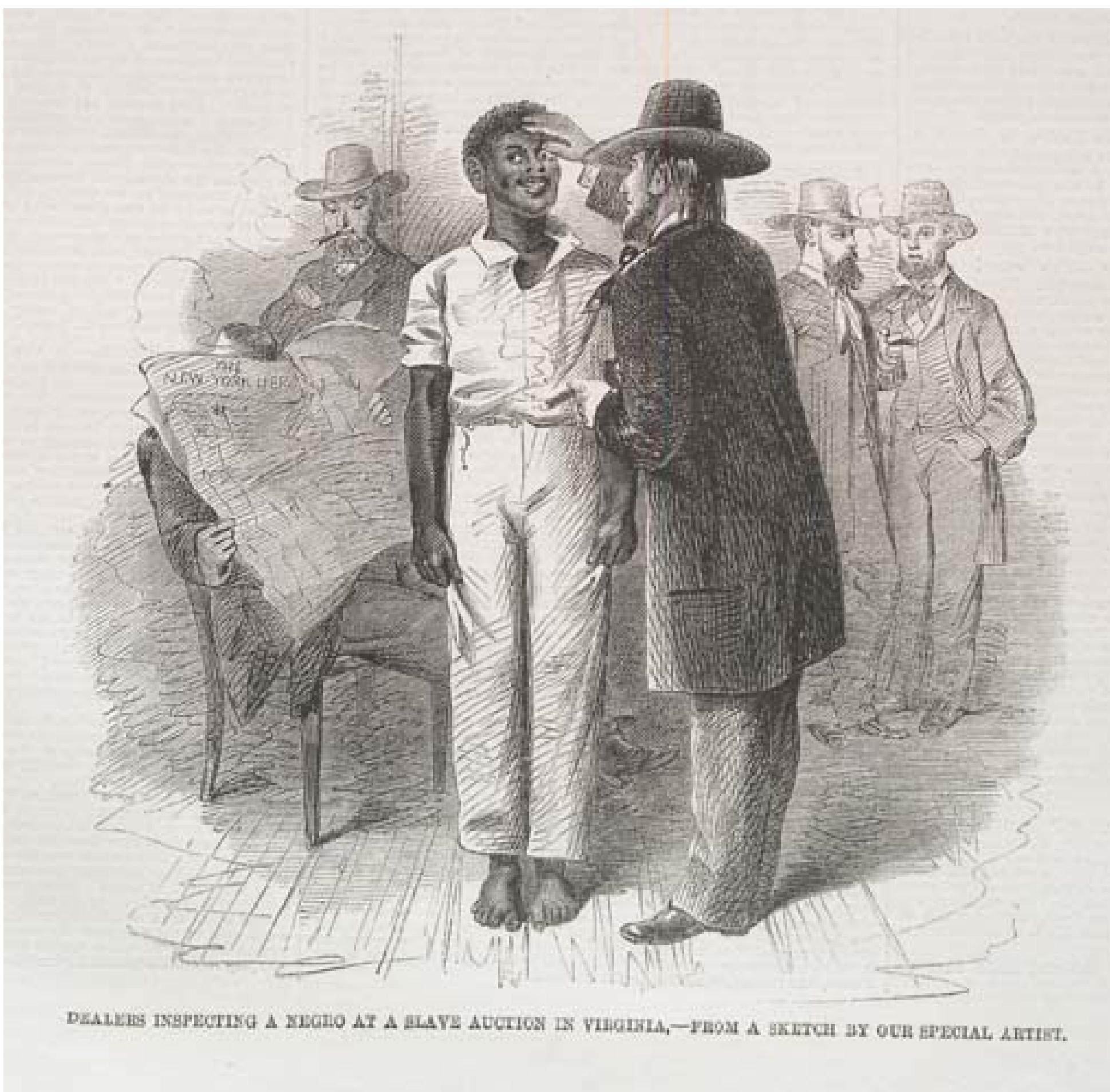
Primary Source:

"Once, twice, gone!" The negro was sold for 1500 dols. Another lot was then brought forward.

I was much struck with the quickness and intellect of a negro whom I met in Missouri. He was in charge of the bar of an hotel. I entered into conversation with him about the condition of the slaves. On the bar-counter in front of us were some slops of wine and beer and crumbs of biscuits: a number of flies were feeding upon them when I asked him if the slaves were contented with their lot. He instantly turned a tumbler glass down upon the counter and two or three of the flies were imprisoned under it; there was fire in his eye, and his whole body was agitated as he pointed with his finger to the glass in which the captured flies were buzzing about. "Why," said he, "don't those flies continue to eat and drink as before? There is plenty there for them, enough to last them a week, but they will neither eat nor drink; they have lost their liberty, and without that nothing else is of value." He lifted the glass, the flies flew away. "Now," said he, "they are happy again and will eat and drink, and enjoy what they eat and drink." It would be as safe to cram the cellars of their houses with gunpowder and continue to live over them as to fill the State with men like these, for certainly they will strike for liberty when they have a chance.

G.H. Andrews





Seceding Slave States, Slave Populations, and Ownership

Seceding States	Number of Slaves and slaves' percent of state population 1860	Percent Slaveholding Families 1860
South Carolina	402,406 slaves, 57%	46%
Mississippi	436,631 slaves, 55%	49%
Florida	61,745 slaves, 44%	34%
Alabama	435,080 slaves, 45%	35%
Georgia	462,198 slaves, 44%	37%
Louisiana	331,726 slaves, 47%	29%
Texas	182,566 slaves, 30%	28%
Virginia	490,865 slaves, 31%	37%
Arkansas	111,115 slaves, 26%	20%
Tennessee	275,719 slaves. 25%	25%
North Carolina	331,059 slaves, 33%	28%
All seceding states	3,521,110 slaves, 39%	31%

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UNCLE TOM'S CABIN



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UNCLE TOM'S CABIN

One of the most powerful voices against slavery in the decade before the Civil War was a small novel called *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, by abolitionist Harriet Beecher Stowe. It dramatized the harsh reality of human enslavement by telling the story of a slave called Uncle Tom. It was the best-selling novel of the 19th Century, and is credited with aiding the abolitionist cause. The book, however, also helped create stereotypes about African-Americans, and these negative associations now overshadow the book's historical impact.

When Abraham Lincoln first met Harriet Beecher Stowe in 1862, he said, "So you are the little woman who wrote the book that made this great war."

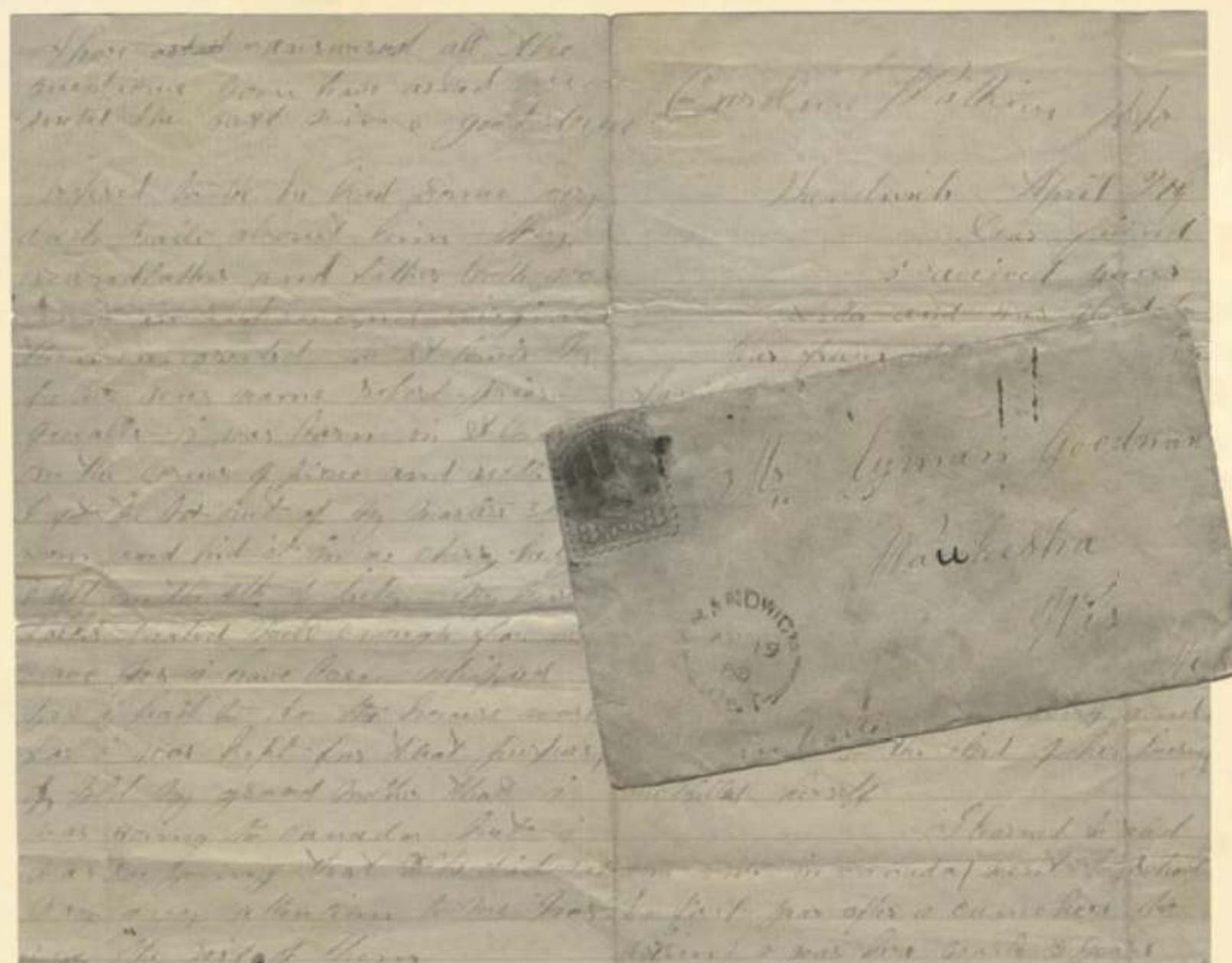
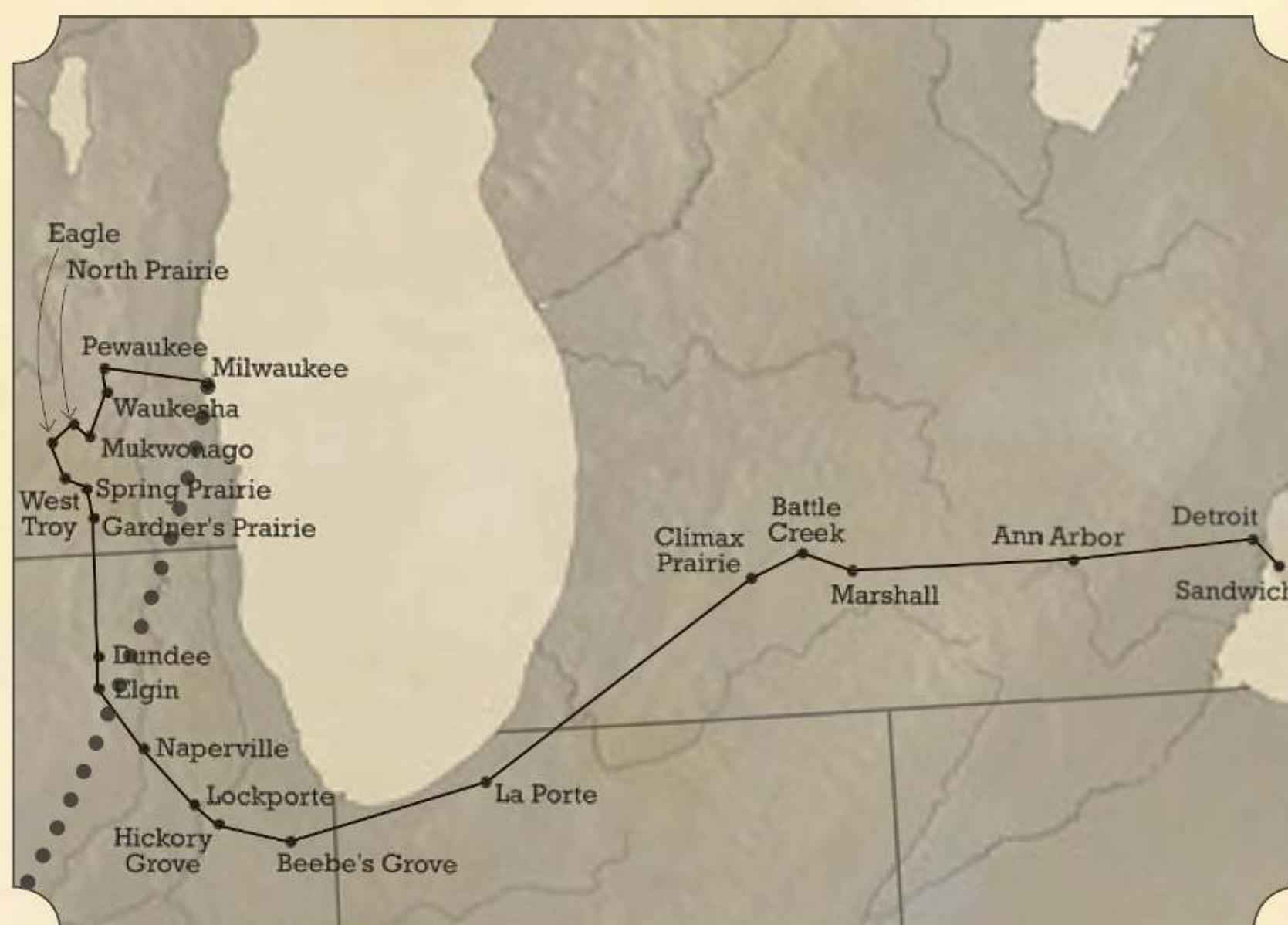
CAROLINE QUARLLS

Caroline Quarlls is one of the most celebrated travelers on the Underground Railroad. She is the first known fugitive slave conducted through the Wisconsin network to freedom, and left a unique record of her life afterwards in Canada.

Quarlls was 16 when she fled her master's home in St. Louis on July 4, 1842. She traveled by steamboat to Alton, Illinois, and by stagecoach to Milwaukee. Pursued by agents of her owner, she was hidden by abolitionists in Milwaukee, Pewaukee, Waukesha, Spring Prairie, and Burlington.

In early September, Lyman Goodnow of Waukesha agreed to take her to Chicago, across Indiana, and to Detroit. She crossed to freedom in Canada and was left in the custody of a missionary.

Thirty-eight years later, Goodnow sent a letter inquiring after Quarlls. He was surprised when she wrote back. She had learned to read and write, married runaway slave Allen Watkins, and lived near Sandwich (modern Windsor), across from Detroit. "Pen and ink could hardly express my joy when I heard from you once more," Quarlls wrote. "I am living and have to work very hard but I have never forgotten you nor your kindness..."



CAROLINE'S FIRST LETTER TO LYMAN GOODNOW*

1880

Sandwich April 17th

Dearest friend, pen and ink could hardly express my joy when i heard from you once more.

I am living and have to work very hard, but i have never forgotten you nor your kindness. i am still in Sandwich, the same place where you left me.

Just as soon as the postmaster read the name to me, your name, my heart was filled with joy and gladness and i should like to see you once more before I die to return you thanks for your kindness towards me.

I would like for you to send me one of those books that you was speaking about.

Dearest friend, you don't know how rejoiced i feel since i heard from you. Answer this as soon as you get it and let me know how you are and your address. Direct your letter to Caroline Watkins, Sandwich Ont Ca 98.

i hope you will send me one of those books you spoke of to the post master.

CAROLINE'S SECOND LETTER TO LYMAN GOODNOW*

Caroline Watkins

1880

Sandwich April 27

Dear friend,

i received your letter and was glad to hear from you and your family and that you was well and doing well. it leaves me in not very good health. I did mary a man on Col. prince's farm by name of Watkins, but he was considerable elder that I was and had children by his first wife as old as i was, but she was sold from her children in slavery and before she got to the end of her journey she killed herself.

I learned to read and write in canada. went to school the first year after i came here. to askin, i was here nearly 3 years before i was married. my husband's occupation is a cook. I get a pretty good living but by working pretty hard for it, but i am not very happy. I have heard from St louis several times since i came, by my cousin who served her time out and got free and came here. my old mistress is dead and my master is married again. that is charles r hall.

I knew about me having property left me before i came away. perhaps if i had of stayed until i became of age i could have got it and perhaps not. there was not but only 2 of us. i had one sister but she died before I came away. I have forgotten how long i was going from alton to milwaukee by stage.

Mr pots was the name of the minister that my master and his wife went to and they were Presbyterians.

my husband was once a slave, born in richmond virginia, belonged to a man by the name of William Watkins. after he died he fell heir to a widow in kentucky by the name of Nancy cleveland and remaind there until he came to canada.

I have six children, 3 boys and 3 girl[s]. 3 married and 3 single. the youngest is 16, a boy. my oldest boy is a farmer and my other boy is in cinanati. my youngest girl, 18, is at home. i am trying to educate her for a school teacher only she had quite a impediment in her speech. they have all very good educations.

mr askell is dead. he moved away from here the second year after i came here. he was not the man as professed to be. he had some very dark traits about him.

My grandfather and father both was born in richmond virginia, then emigrated to st louis. my father was name[d] robert prior quarlls. i was born in st louis on the corner of pine and sixth str.

I got the box out of my Masters store room and hid it in a cherry hedge. i left in the 4th of July. My masters folks treated [me] well enough for a Slave. Yes i have been whipped. yes i had to do the house work, for i was kept for that purpose. I told my grand Mother that I was going to canada but I was so young that she did not pay any attention to me, nor any of the rest of them.

I have answered all the questions you have asked me. until the next time, good bye.

CAROLINE'S HUSBAND'S LETTER TO LYMAN GOODNOW*

1880

Sandwich April 24

Mr. goodnaw, allow me to present My self to you – Mr. Watkins. excuse me for taking these liberties, but according to your request and my wishes, i shall endeavor to give you a short narrative of my life as far as i can remember, and believe me, as a stranger, that you cannot imagine how much pleasure it affords me to be able to answer a few [questions] for a friend who has been such a deliverer to the poor fugitive slaves who was oppressed in the bitter pangs of slavery, and may the lord ever Bless you and peace reign in your household and in my prayer.

I was born in richmond, virginia [and] raised in kentucky. the first thing that started me from slavery, i married and had 3 children and they sold my wife. after the[y] sold her i became so much dissatisfied. going to church one Sunday the minister told me that i was sold also. his name was Nathan riggs, a baptist minister. i then resolved to go away that night.

I stole a boat and manage[d] to get across the Ohio river that night. after i crossed i went and stopped in Mud creek bridge. the bridge has 2 storys and my pursuers passed right under me as i was lying on the top part and could hear every word they said. they went straight up to Cincinnati expecting we was up there but it so happen that we did not go. we went up the hill into a field and stopped there one week. during the week we got in with abolitioner friends and they brought us 60 miles. we traveled on foot, shuning all towns and villages, until we got to pickle town [Pickrelltown] and from there we got with friends again who carried us to Sandusky city and thank god for our Sandusky City.

our good friends put us on a boat and took me clean through to detroit and from there to canada and i am able to say that i had no trouble getting to canada, not as my wife had, and i will always be ready and willing to speak a good word for those glorious abolitioners.

No more at present. i should [be] very much pleased to hear from you at any time and if any of your family ever comes here i should be happy to have you call as i own my house where i live. i remain yours, well wishes,

Allen Watkins

I hope if you get that paper printed you will send us some. write often as you can if you please.

* Note: Punctuation added to all letters.

\$200 Reward.

RAN AWAY from the subscriber, on the night of Thursday, the 30th of September.

FIVE NEGRO SLAVES,

To-wit: one Negro man, his wife, and three children.

The man is a black Negro, full height, very erect, his face a little thin. He is about forty years of age and calls himself *Washington Reed*, and is known by the name of Washington. He is probably well dressed, possibly takes with him an ivory headed cane, and is of good address. Several of his teeth are gone.

Mary, his wife, is about thirty years of age, a bright mulatto woman, and quite stout and strong. The oldest of the children is a boy, of the name FIELDING, twelve years of age, a dark mulatto, with heavy eyelids. He probably wore a new cloth cap.

MATILDA, the second child, is a girl, six years of age, rather a dark mulatto, but a bright and smart looking child.

MALCOLM, the youngest, is a boy, four years old, a lighter mulatto than the last, and about equally as bright. He probably also wore a cloth cap. If examined, he will be found to have a swelling at the navel. Washington and Mary have lived at or near St. Louis, with the subscriber, for about 15 years.

It is supposed that they are making their way to Chicago, and that a white man accompanies them, that they will travel chiefly at night, and most probably in a covered wagon.

A reward of \$150 will be paid for their apprehension, so that I can get them, if taken within one hundred miles of St. Louis, and \$200 if taken beyond that, and secured so that I can get them, and other reasonable additional charges, if delivered to the subscriber, or to THOMAS ALLEN, Esq., at St. Louis, Mo. The above negroes, for the last few years, have been in possession of Thomas Allen, Esq., of St. Louis.

WM. RUSSELL.

THE WESTERN INDEPENDENT



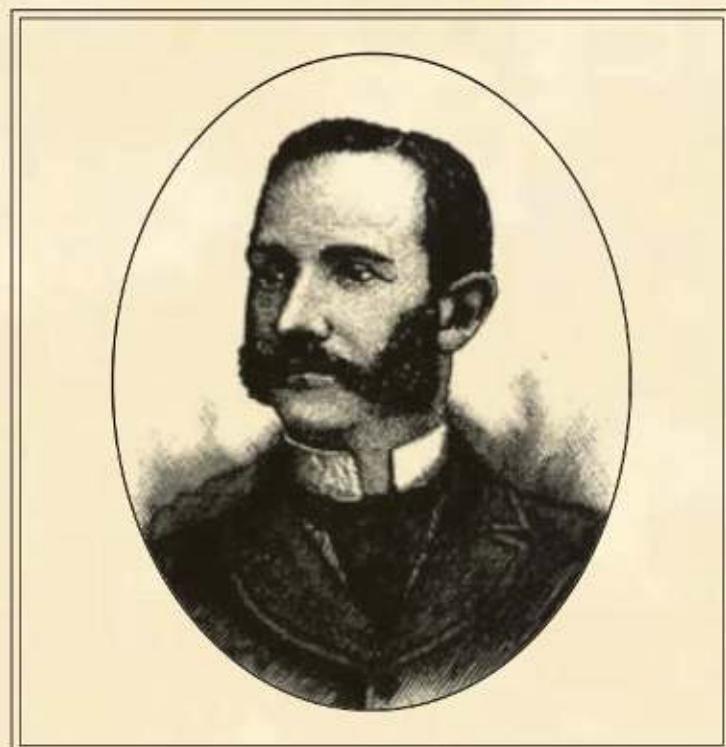
VOL. IV

ITEMS OF INTEREST TO THE UPPER MIDDLE WEST

SINGLE COPIES SIX CENTS
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THE JOSHUA GLOVER CASE

The case of fugitive slave Joshua Glover made national headlines. A Missouri slave, Glover fled to Wisconsin in 1854. His owner, using the Fugitive Slave Law, had him arrested and placed in the Milwaukee County jail. Waukesha editor Sherman Booth and other abolitionists surrounded the jail, broke down a door, and got Glover safely to Canada.



Booth was arrested for breaking the Fugitive Slave Law. He was freed on appeal by the Wisconsin Supreme Court, which held that federal law could not override state law. Booth was rearrested and freed several more times before he was finally pardoned, in March of 1861, by President James Buchanan.

ADVERTISEMENTS.

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ELIJAH P. LOVEJOY OF ALTON, ILLINOIS

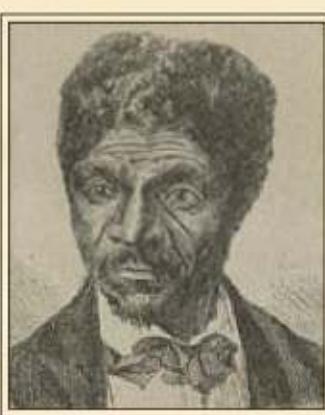
One of the most outspoken abolitionists was Elijah P. Lovejoy, editor of the *Alton Observer*. His strong stand for immediate emancipation aroused bitter opposition among Northern wage earners, who competed for jobs with free African-Americans. Angry mobs repeatedly destroyed Lovejoy's presses and threw them into the Mississippi River. But he always ordered another.

On November 7, 1837, a mob attacked the warehouse where the latest press was stored. Lovejoy, who was on guard with about 20 supporters, ran out to prevent the building from being set ablaze and received a fatal blast from a shotgun. The mob then seized the press, broke it into pieces, and dumped everything into the river.



THE DRED SCOTT DECISION

The 1857 U.S. Supreme Court ruling on Dred Scott's appeal for freedom infuriated abolitionists.



Scott, slave to an army surgeon from Missouri, moved with his owner to the free state of Illinois and the free territory of Minnesota before being taken back to the slave state of Missouri. He appealed to the Supreme Court in the hope of using the Missouri Compromise — which barred slavery from lands acquired in the Louisiana

Purchase — to gain his freedom. Scott's lawyers argued that living on free soil had made Scott a free man.

The Court responded by ruling the Missouri Compromise unconstitutional, thus opening the way for slavery in all of the nation's territories. It also declared that all blacks, slave as well as free, were not and never could become citizens of the United States.

The fact that the Court was dominated by Southerners only intensified resentment and bitterness over the decision.

THE WESTERN INDEPENDENT



VOL. IV

ITEMS OF INTEREST TO THE UPPER MIDDLE WEST

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FAILURE OF COMPROMISE

In the end, the rapid growth of the Upper Middle West destroyed efforts to maintain a balance of power between the North and South.

The Northwest Ordinance of 1787 drew the line between slave and free states and excluded slavery forever from the old Northwest Territory — lands that became much of the new Upper Middle West. The Missouri Compromise of 1820 barred slavery from the immense northern part of the territory acquired in the Louisiana Purchase.

The Compromise of 1850, in addition

to strengthening the emotionally charged Fugitive Slave Law, allowed for territorial government in lands ceded by Mexico after the Mexican War. Settlers in the new territories would themselves decide whether their lands should be slave or free. This measure served as a pattern for the Kansas-Nebraska Act.

In 1854, the provisions of the Kansas-Nebraska Act overturned the Missouri Compromise by opening the way for slavery in lands where it had been barred. Northern states were furious. The careful balance of slave states and free states was over.

THE BIRD HAS FLOWN

— From the *Sabbath Recorder*, 1854

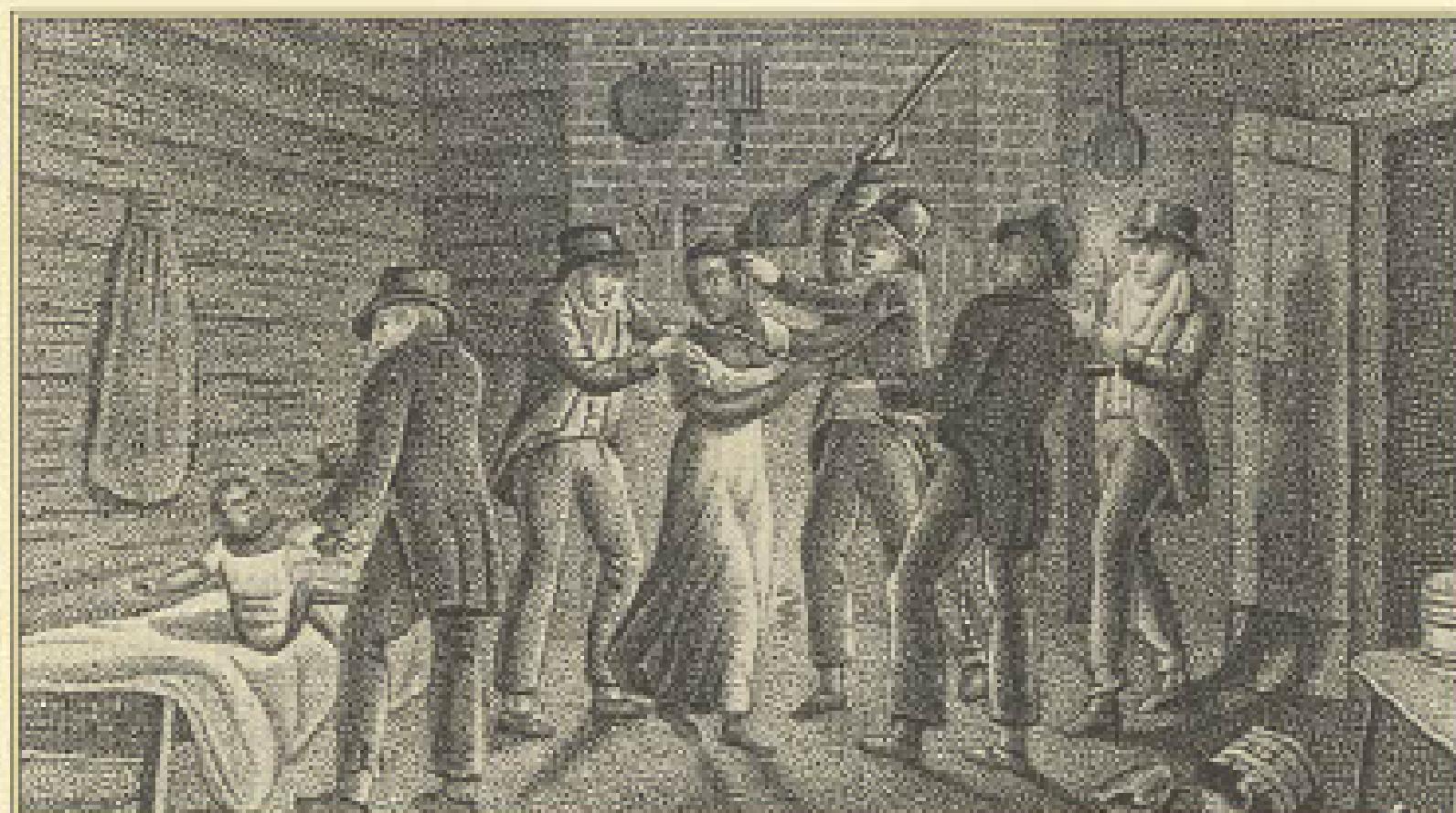
The slave-hunters appear to be particularly busy in Wisconsin. At the last accounts they were in pursuit of a female, about 24 years of age, nearly white, and beautiful, who has been residing for some time in Kenosha. But the matter somehow got out, and when the kidnappers arrived in that city, the bird had flown, having taken the express train for Canada several hours previous to their arrival.

The Fugitive Slave Law

No issue aroused more violent feeling in the North and Upper Middle West than the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850. It allowed slave owners or their representatives to follow runaway slaves into free states and demand the assistance of local and federal authorities in recapturing them.

The new law came at a time when the crusade against slavery was sweeping the Western world. New England editor William Lloyd Garrison and others roused the passions of the abolitionists, who opposed slavery on moral grounds.

Disobedience to the new law was widespread in the Middle West. A Wisconsin incident involving runaway slave Joshua Glover led to a challenge of the law. A mob rushed the county jail in Milwaukee where Glover was being held, breaking down the door and secreting him away to Canada and freedom.



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Newspapers and the Sectional Crisis

The growth of newspapers fanned the flames of sectionalism in the 1850s. Literacy was widespread. Technical advances—the telegraph, steam-driven presses able to run thousands of newspapers an hour, expanding railroad links—made it possible to quickly reach mass audiences for the first time.

They also made newspapers profitable. Editors used their growing power to push political agendas and inflame public opinion to expand readership and sell papers.

Most newspapers had a party affiliation, be it Democrat, Whig or Republican, and their editorials reflected the party line. The Chicago-based *Western Citizen*, for example, was the official organ of the Illinois Liberty Party and served as an abolition voice for Illinois, Indiana, Wisconsin, and Iowa.

NORTH, SOUTH AND THE NEW WEST

The emerging Upper Middle West held the balance of power in Congress before the 1850s. The North and South were about equally divided in political strength, at least in the Senate. As a result, political leaders of both regions tried to gain Midwestern votes for their own legislative programs. However, they were afraid to take a strong stand on any of the major issues confronting the nation. They feared a strong show of support for any policy

that favored one region over another would anger voters and lead to political disaster.

The struggle to control Congress was often reduced to whether the western frontier should become slave or free. Slaves could not vote, but they did count on the census rolls, swelling the slave states' populations and increasing their seats in the House of Representatives. This political aspect of slavery made it a central issue in many of the nation's concerns.

Economy Divides South and North

The North and South were at odds over the tariff issue in the years before the Civil War. Southerners pushed again and again to lower the import taxes protecting northern manufactured goods from competition with imported wares. Northern industrialists and wage earners opposed any such move. The Northerners believed the Southerners were trying to use Congress to uphold the agrarian interests of the South and Midwest at the expense of northern industry.

The Midwest, divided on the question

of tariffs, was courted by both regions. Yet both North and South were wary of the expanding frontier.

Railroads had made it easier for thousands of would-be settlers to reach the fast-growing Upper Middle West. Northern manufacturers feared the allure of open public lands would drain away their labor supply and force them to pay higher wages to keep workers from leaving. Southerners worried quick settlement of the frontier by northern emigrants would hasten the day when slave states would be in a minority.



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VOL. IV

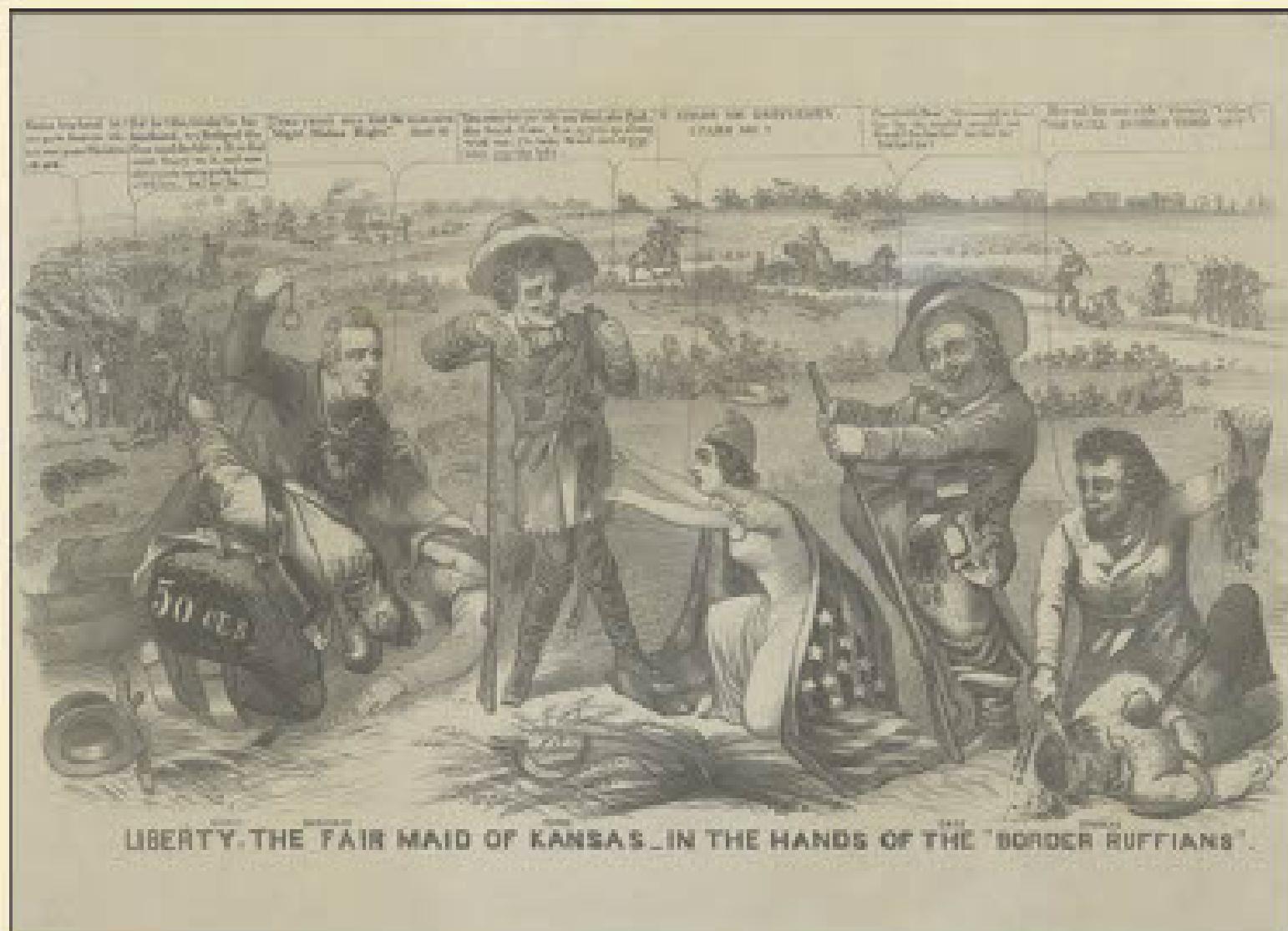
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THE KANSAS-NEBRASKA ACT OF 1854

The Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854 threatened to change the balance between free and slave states. It created two new western territories — Kansas and Nebraska — and allowed the people living there to decide if they wanted slavery.

The bill was pushed by Senator Stephen A. Douglas of Illinois. Mindful of Midwestern interests and his own presidential ambitions, he wanted the new territories opened so the government could build a transcontinental railroad from Chicago to the Pacific. Northerners were angry because the Act gave Southerners a way to extend slavery westward. Its passage launched a furious struggle for control of the western territories.



OLD POLITICS AND A NEW REPUBLICAN PARTY

The Kansas-Nebraska Act re-opened the dispute over slavery. Meetings to oppose the Act were held across the North, but neither Democrats nor Whigs took a tough anti-slavery stand for fear of losing support in the South and Midwest.

First in Wisconsin and Michigan, and then in other states, meetings were called with the aim of creating a new political party opposed to the westward expansion of slavery. It soon became known as the Republican Party. It drew members from several smaller political organizations, as well as abolitionists and disenchanted Whigs and Democrats.

The first Republican presidential candidate, the western explorer John C. Fremont, ran in 1856 on a slogan of "Free Labor. Free Speech. Free Kansas. Fremont."

MASS MEETING! AT MASON, SEPT. 9th, 1854.

To the People of Ingham County, without distinction of Party:

In view of the recent action of Congress in regard to the organization of Nebraska and Kansas Territories, and the evident designs of the Slave power to attempt still further aggressions upon Freedom, we invite all our Fellow Citizens, without reference to former political associations, who think that the time has arrived for a Union at the North, to protect Liberty from being overthrown and down-trodden, to assemble in

Mass Convention,

On Saturday, the 9th day of September next, at 10 o'clock A.M., at the Court House, in the Village of Mason, for the purpose of putting in nomination suitable persons to fill the County offices, Representative to the State Legislature, delegates to the Congressional and Senatorial Conventions, and to transact such other business as may be deemed expedient.

BLEEDING KANSAS

Kansas became a battleground for the growing dispute over the spread of slavery, warning of the larger conflict to come. In the North and Upper Middle West 'emigrant aid companies' sent anti-slavery settlers into Kansas to influence the territorial government. But neighboring pro-slavery Missourians crossed the state line in large numbers to confuse the voting results.

President James Buchanan at first refused to get involved in the issue. Then a pro-slavery group raided the town of Lawrence, Kansas, and burned part of it to the ground. Fanatical abolitionist John Brown and his men avenged the raid by killing five helpless pro-slavers. Piecemeal fighting erupted throughout the state. An estimated 200 citizens lost their lives in 'Bleeding Kansas'. Federal troops were sent in, but were only able to restore partial order.

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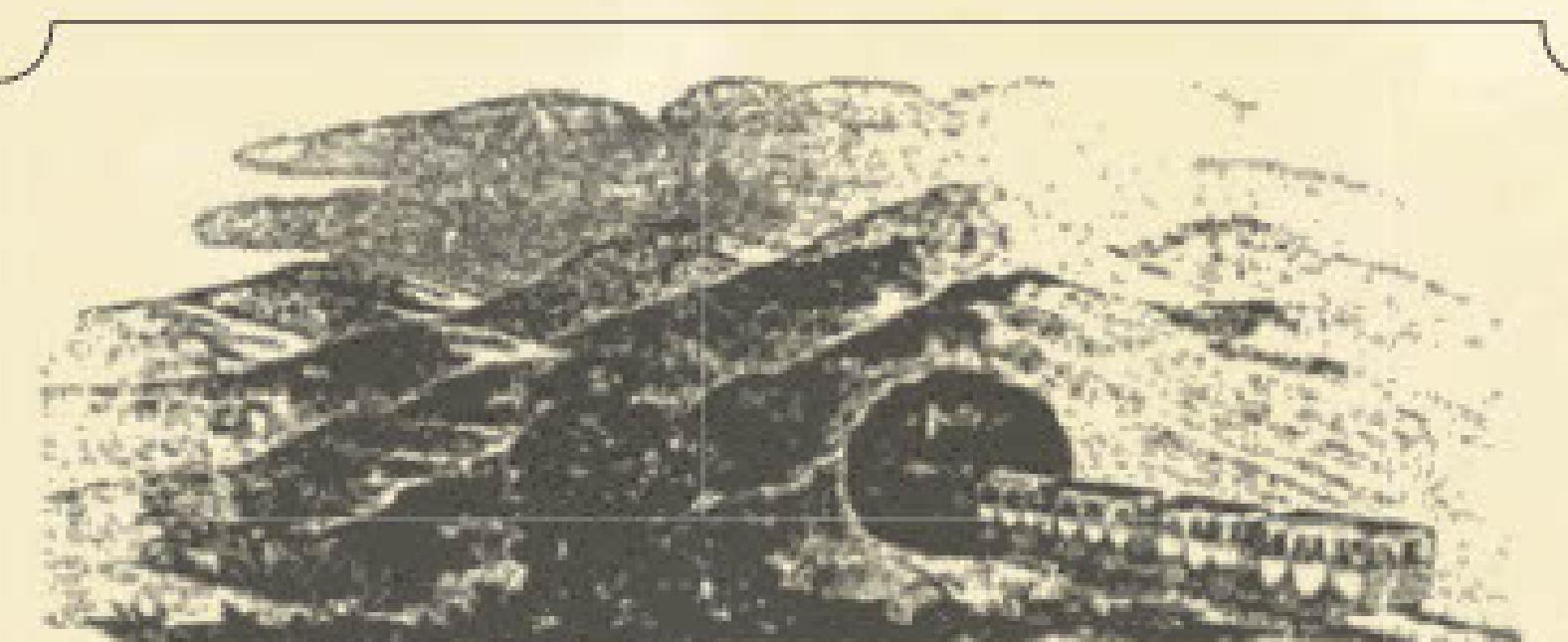
Abolitionism and the Upper Middle West

The rise of abolitionism — the opposition to slavery — evolved in the United States as part of an international movement to end human bondage. At first, American opponents supported moving black Americans to Africa or the Caribbean, but it soon became obvious such schemes were wholly impractical.

Britain emancipated its slaves in 1833; France and Denmark followed in 1848. In the United States radical New England abolitionists demanded immediate emancipation. By the 1850s, there were 2,000 anti-slave societies in the North. They were largely the effort of an extremely vocal movement

including Quakers, freed blacks, and some Protestant denominations and based on religious and humanitarian values.

Opposition to slavery grew in the Upper Middle West with the development of free farming, labor-saving farm machinery, and the growth of humanitarian concerns. Southerners, however, depended on slavery to meet the demands of their labor-intensive agricultural crops. They sought to strengthen laws that protected their slave-holding rights, and began to view the rise of the Upper Middle West and western politicians with growing concern.



LIBERTY LINE NEW ARRANGEMENT -- NIGHT AND DAY

The improved and splendid Locomotives, Clarkson and Lundy, with their trains fitted up in the best style of accommodation for passengers, will run their regular trips between the borders of the Patriarchal Dominion and Libertyville, Upper Canada. Gentlemen and Ladies, who may wish to improve their health or circumstances, by a northern tour, are respectfully invited to give us their patronage.

SEATS FREE, *irrespective of color.*

Necessary Clothing furnished gratuitously to such as have "fallen among thieves."

"Hide the outcasts — let the oppressed go free." — *Bible.*

For seats apply at any of the trap doors, or to the conductor of the train.

J. CROSS, *Proprietor.*

N. B. For the special benefit of Pro-Slavery Police Officers, an extra heavy wagon for Texas, will be furnished, whenever it may be necessary, in which they will be forwarded as dead freight, to the "Valley of Rascals," always at the risk of the owners.

Extra Overcoats provided to such of them as are afflicted with protracted chilly-phobia.

On the Underground Railroad

'Underground Railroad' is the symbolic term given to the routes used by fugitive slaves to escape to freedom in the North and Canada before the Civil War.

Fleeing from slavery was usually a desperate and dangerous act, and fugitives who were caught were harshly punished as an example to other slaves. It is believed most runaways were young men unrestrained by family who often fled with nothing but the clothes on their backs. They usually fled in an attempt to renew family ties, avoid punishment, or escape from new masters.

Runaways most often found help within free black and Quaker communities. Many Midwest religious groups were involved. Among the 'conductors' promoting the Railroad's secret work was Levi Coffin of Newport, Indiana (now Fountain City), often called the "President of the Underground Railroad." Laura Smith Haviland worked openly in Michigan as a 'conductor,' sounding a loud horn when slave-catchers approached so the hunted could seek safety.

Much of this assistance was spontaneous rather than organized. Little is actually known of the Underground Railroad, as it was illegal and therefore secretive — and sometimes unpopular. Many sources are accounts written long after the events. Most of these stories appeared after the Civil War and are based on the recollections of aging abolitionists and so romanced by news reporters it became hard to separate fact from folklore.

One of the few autobiographical accounts of the Underground Railroad to survive is that of Caroline Quarlls Watkins, who escaped to Canada and wrote of her experiences.