

II. The Growth and Decline of the Union

A. Abolitionism

1. People who wanted to *abolish* slavery were known as “abolitionists.”
2. One of the most famous abolitionists was William Lloyd Garrison of Massachusetts. Garrison who published a newspaper called the *Liberator*.
3. Another was Frederick Douglass, a freed black slave who taught himself to read. Douglass was educated and civilized. He was living proof that the racism of Southerners was wrong.

B. Texas Joins the Union (1845)

1. Although the Louisiana Purchase did not include Texas, Americans led by Stephen Austin and Sam Houston had colonized part of that area with the permission of the Mexican government.
2. In 1836, the Mexican government decided to force Texas to give up its state government, and the Texans rebelled.
3. They lost the famous Battle of the Alamo but won the later Battle of San Jacinto, and won their independence.
4. From 1836-45, Texas was an independent country, often called the “Lone Star Republic.”
5. In 1845, Texas became the last slave state to join the Union.

C. The Mexican-American War (1846-47)

1. A clear border between Texas and Mexico had never been agreed upon.
2. Battles between Mexicans and Americans at the border eventually led to a war.
3. The American army easily defeated Mexico, and this caused Mexico to cede a huge territory (from Texas to the Pacific Coast) to the United States in 1848. This territory was referred to as the “Mexican Cession.”

D. California Enters the Union: the Compromise of 1850

1. In 1848, gold was discovered in California, causing a “gold rush”. Within a year, over 100,000 people had moved to that territory.
2. In 1850, California joined the union as a *free* state. Southerners wanted something in return.
3. A compromise was created to reassure slaveholders.
 - a) The Utah and New Mexico territories were created.
 - b) It was decided that the people who settled in those territories would get to choose whether or not slavery was allowed. This was called “popular sovereignty,” which means democracy.
 - c) Since previously slavery had been limited in territories by the federal government, this was a positive development for supporters of slavery.

III. The End of Union in Men's Minds

A. The Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854

1. In 1854, the Federal government created the territories of Kansas and Nebraska.
2. It was decided that slavery would be handled in these territories, as it had been handled in Utah and New Mexico. (The people there would choose if they wanted it or not by “popular sovereignty.”)

3. Both Southerners and Northerners rushed to the state to try to settle it first and create a state government.
4. This contest for Kansas almost became a civil war.

B. The Dred Scott Case

1. In 1857, slave named Dred Scott who had taken by his master from the south into the Minnesota Territory (where slavery was not allowed) sued his master for his freedom.
2. The case eventually was brought before the Supreme Court, which judged that the Federal government had no authority to prevent slavery in the territories, because this power was not stated in the Constitution.
3. This meant that the compromise of 1850 replaced the Missouri Compromise. Now popular sovereignty would decide the issue of slavery in every territory.

C. The 1860 Presidential Election

1. In 1860, Abraham Lincoln, a famous abolitionist, was elected president.
2. Although Lincoln had explained his views that he did not think there was anything the Federal government could do to stop slavery, Southerners were still alarmed by his election.
3. In late 1860, South Carolina decided to leave the Union and was followed by other states in a *secession* from the United States. This started the crisis that would lead to the Civil War.