

The Missouri Compromise; sectionalism

- Missouri's admission to the Union was very controversial
- In 1819, 11 states permitted slavery and 11 were free states. This also allowed for an even representation of free and slave states in the Senate. The admission of EACH new state would call this balance into question: would it be slave or free?
- *Sectionalism* was the order of the day as North and South, slave and free, were faced with growing tensions and hostilities day by day

Clay's Proposal

- Maine applied for statehood at the same time as Missouri
- Maine was to enter as a free state, Missouri as a slave state; slavery was also not allowed north of the 36 degree line of latitude
- The agreement was a temporary Band Aid on the slavery issue

New Western lands/Conflicting views

- The states of Texas, New Mexico, and California brought the slavery issue back into the spotlight during the 1840's.
- America fought a war with Mexico to obtain control of the areas that would eventually become the states of California, New Mexico, Arizona, and parts of several other western states
- Wilmot Proviso vs Calhoun's counter-proposal

California

- President Zachary Taylor wanted both New Mexico and California to immediately apply for statehood and then allow the citizens of each state to determine its stance on slavery.
- Disputes in Congress were already ramped up concerning slavery in the District of Columbia and the implementation of a new fugitive slave law.
- The balance of power in the Senate (15 free states, 15 slave states) was also a huge factor
- Some Southerners began to debate the issue of secession

A New Compromise

- Henry Clay devised a multi-step plan to settle the slavery issue in Congress.
- 1. Admit California as a free state
- 2. New Mexico Territory had no restrictions on slavery
- 3. New Mexico/Texas border dispute to be settled in favor of New Mexico
- 4. **Slave trade** abolished in D.C.,
- 5. Stronger Fugitive Slave Law enacted
- Talk of secession in the South again ramped up upon hearing the news that California would enter the Union as a free state.

The Fugitive Slave Act/Resistance to the Law

- See the story of Anthony Burns
- The law required ALL citizens to help seize runaway slaves. Any person who helped a runaway slave could be fined or even go to prison.
- Southerners hoped the measure would lead to more respect for the pro-slavery institution of the South, but the law actually caused even more bitter resentment to the practice of slavery in the North.
- Some captured slaves had been runaways who'd lived free for years, and worse, some had never been slaves but were detained and taken South anyway- it was brutal.
- Harriet Beecher Stowe, “a nightmare abomination.”

*Resistance
to Fugitive Slave Act*

- Many Northerners did not cooperate with the law
- The Underground Railroad
- Anti-slavery groups contributed money to help purchase the freedom of slaves.

Harriet Beecher Stowe

- As a child, she watched as slaves were loaded onto ships to be taken to slave markets. She wrote many books about social reform.
- Stowe's most profound work was *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, published in 1852. The story depicts slavery as a cruel and brutal system.
- It was a nationwide best-seller, selling over 300,000 copies just in the first year of publication.
- Stowe even met with Abraham Lincoln in the White House!
- Southerners criticized Stowe's work, but she stayed strong in her beliefs—publishing dozens of other books throughout her career.

Kansas-Nebraska Act; Passage; Division Grows

- Illinois senator Stephen A. Douglas proposed a bill that would open further settlement west of Iowa and Missouri- in the territories of Kansas and Nebraska.
- Wanted a transcontinental railroad project to begin
- Both Kansas and Nebraska were north of the “magic” 36/30 N line implemented in the Missouri Compromise, so it seemed each state would enter the union as a free state, but Douglas knew Southern states wouldn’t approve of that.
- Douglas proposed **abandoning** the Missouri Compromise and relying on **popular sovereignty** to determine the issue.

- Northerners immediately protested the bill- strongly
- Southerners, as you might've guessed, supported the bill. They expected (correctly) that Kansas would be settled mostly by slaveholders from Missouri and would vote to implement slavery in Kansas as well.
- The Kansas-Nebraska Act passed Congress in 1854