

Raid on Harper's Ferry/death of John Brown

- Brown led a small group of men on a raid of the federal weapons arsenal in Harper's Ferry, Virginia in 1859.
- The goal was to seize ammunition and muskets inside the arsenal and use them to arm a Southern slave revolt.
- Brown's plan did not work. He was convicted of murder and treason. John Brown was hanged in December 1859
- Brown was looked upon as a hero, even a **martyr**, in the North. He was viewed as a madman and terrorist in the South.
- Brown's actions and his death became a rallying cry for both abolitionists and pro-slavery groups.

The Election of 1860; Lincoln elected

- For many in the South, the election of Abraham Lincoln as America's 16th president was the "point of no return."
- Northern Democrats nominated Stephen A. Douglas
- Southern Democrats nominated John Breckenridge of Kentucky
- Republicans nominated Abraham Lincoln
- The Republican platform stated that slavery would not be addressed where it already existed, but would not be allowed to spread to any new territory or state.
- Lincoln won the Electoral vote, even though his name didn't even appear on most Southern ballots. He won all Northern states.

- Lincoln was able to win because the Democratic Party was divided (split) into two factions. Also, the more populous North had “outvoted” the South.

Two Viewpoints

- Lincoln states that the Union **cannot** be dissolved. He also reiterates his viewpoint that slavery is the only substantive issue at hand that has driven a wedge into the nation. He places the “next move” of an impending civil war at the discretion of the South.
- Jefferson Davis, president of the Confederacy, states that it’s a **necessity** for the South to separate from the Union. He also says the South should be free to conduct its own affairs and wishes to remain peaceful with the Union- but will fight if provoked to a confrontation.

The South Secedes

- Although the Republicans promised not to disturb slavery where it already existed, many in the South didn't believe them.
- December 20, 1860; South Carolina secedes from the Union
- Secession for the South was based on the issue of states' rights

Attempt at Compromise

- Leaders in Washington, D.C. tried to pass legislation to preserve the Union, including Crittenden's proposal to add amendments to the Constitution and preserve the 36/30 line stated in the Missouri Compromise.
- Lincoln and the Republicans rejected the plan, as did many in the South. "We spit upon every plan to compromise."
- "No human power can save the Union."

The Confederacy

- **The Confederate States of America (CSA)** was formed on Feb. 4, 1861.
- At this point it included South Carolina, Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida, and Georgia. Jefferson Davis was chosen as their president.
- CSA justified secession on the principle of states' rights

Reactions to Secession

- Reaction in the South was mixed- some joyous, some sad/fearful.
- “I see only that a fearful calamity is upon us.” -Lee
- Some Northern abolitionists were okay with Southern secession.
- Most Northerners (especially Lincoln) believed strongly that the Union must be preserved.

Presidential Responses

- As his inauguration neared, Lincoln faced a monumental task- should he authorize the use of force to keep the Southern states who had seceded in the Union? What would happen to the other slave holding states that hadn't left the Union yet? Sheesh....
- In his Inaugural, Lincoln eloquently mixed tough with peaceful. Secession would not be permitted. Vowed to hold federal property in the South, including enforcing federal laws in the South. Pleaded with the South for reconciliation.

Fort Sumter; The Civil War begins

- Lincoln received a military dispatch from Ft. Sumter, a U.S. military installation guarding Charleston Harbor, South Carolina. It was low on supplies, and the Confederates had demanded its surrender.
- Lincoln informed the governor of South Carolina that he was sending an unarmed expedition of men with supplies to Ft. Sumter. He also said that the Union troops were not seeking a confrontation and would only use force if they were fired upon.
- The Confederates decided to attack Ft. Sumter before the supplies had arrived- the first shots of the Civil War. **April 12, 1861**
- Union troops surrendered April 14. None dead; CSA fully formed