

# The Struggle Over Slavery

Chapter 1, Lesson 3

EQ: How were the states struggling over slavery?

## Missouri Compromise

In 1819 there were 11 free states and 11 slave states. The people of Missouri asked to become a slave state. Southern states agreed with the people of Missouri. Northern states did not. Some Southern leaders believed in states' rights and felt that states should decide whether to allow slavery. The Missouri Compromise was a solution. Missouri became a slave state, and Maine became a free state. New states north of a line drawn westward would be free states and those south of it could allow slavery.

## The Compromise of 1850

California asked to become free state in 1849. Then there would be more free states than slave states. **The Compromise of 1850** allowed California to become a free state. In return Northern states had to pass the **Fugitive Slave Law**. The compromise also affected people in the territories won from Mexico. These people could vote on whether they wanted to allow slavery.

## "Bleeding Kansas"

In 1854 Nebraska was split into two territories—the Nebraska Territory and the Kansas Territory. Congress passed the **Kansas-Nebraska Act**. The people of Kansas voted for slavery. Many voters were not from Kansas. Northerners claimed the vote was illegal, and violence broke out.

## A Divided Country

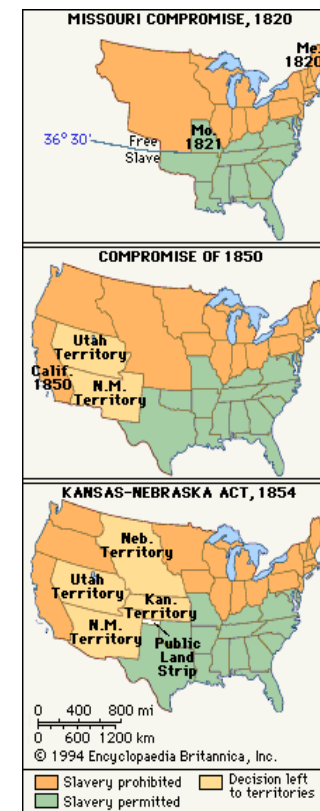
Other events caused a deeper split between the North and South. One was the court case of Dred Scott in 1857. Dred Scott was a slave. He claimed he was free. The Supreme Court ruled that he was not free. The court decided that African Americans had no rights. In 1859 an abolitionist name John Brown tried to lead an attack on slave owners in Virginia. He was caught and hanged.

## A New Political Party

Ideas about slavery caused the Whig political party to split apart. Members of the Whigs who were against slavery helped form the Republican Party. Abraham Lincoln was a Republican opposed to the spread of slavery. Yet he did not want the country to go to war over slavery.

## Lincoln is Elected President

Abraham Lincoln was elected President in 1860, but he did not get any Southern electoral votes. Southerners were afraid that Lincoln would end slavery. They were also afraid that their opinions would not matter to the new government.



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EQ: How were the states struggling over slavery?

1. How did the Missouri Compromise keep the balance of free and slave states?

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2. How did the Compromise of 1850 affect slavery in California and the territories gained from Mexico?

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3. **Critical Thinking: Making Inferences**- What was more important to Abraham Lincoln, abolishing slavery or preserving the nation? Explain.

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