



8-4.3 Notes - Causes of Secession: Why South Carolina Left the Union

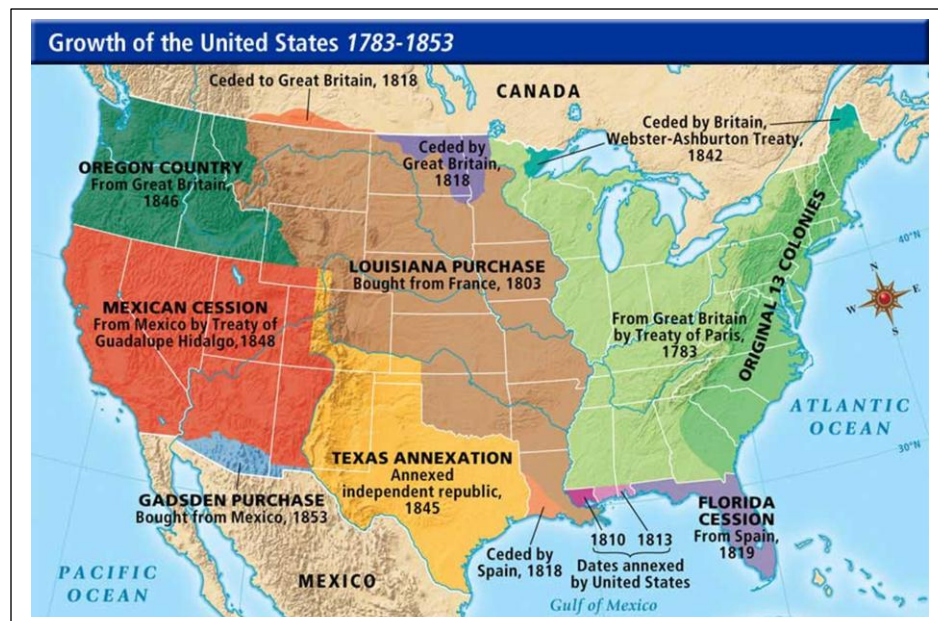
Objectives - Analyze key issues that led to South Carolina's secession from the Union, including the nullification controversy and John C. Calhoun, the extension of slavery and the compromises over westward expansion, the Kansas-Nebraska Act, the Dred Scott decision, and the election of 1860.

Westward Expansion

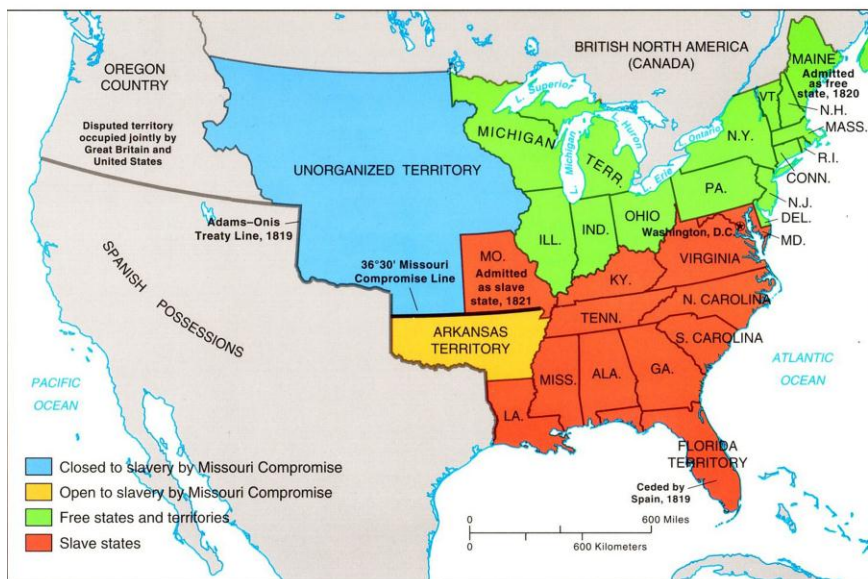
By the early 1800s many of the states on the East Coast had been developed and some Americans were moving out West to land that was undeveloped or even unexplored. This movement out West was supported by the idea of *Manifest Destiny*, or the God given right for Americans to control all land from the Atlantic shore to the Pacific shore. As these areas of land became developed and grew in population, they began to be added to the Union as new states. Missouri was the first territory that applied to become a state from the land that was gained in the Louisiana Purchase. However this caused some controversy when the North and South argued over whether it would be admitted as a slave state or a free state.

The Missouri Compromise

If Missouri was added to the Union it would upset the balance of the free and slave states. At this point there were an equal number of states on both sides which meant an equal number of votes in the Senate. Whoever, added Missouri to their side would have more votes in the Senate and House and thus more power. The Missouri Compromise settled the dispute between the North and the South.



The Missouri Compromise of 1820 also prohibited any future territories north of the 36 30' latitude line to be added as a slave state. This way they could avoid any future controversy when a territory applied to become a state.



Answer the questions based on the map.

Find and circle the 36 30' line from the Missouri Compromise.

Compare this map with a map of the United States. Which current states would not be added as slave states due to the Missouri Compromise?

The Compromise of 1850

The North and South debated once again when California tried to enter the union as a state. Settlers flocked to the territory in 1849 with the discovery of gold but many people did not want to compete with slave owners using their slaves to help them mine the valuable natural resource. Therefore California applied to become a free state, but again this would upset the balance of free and slave states. The Compromise of 1850 gave free state supporters California and outlawed the slave trade in Washington DC. Slave state supporters were promised that any states added from the territory gained after the Mexican War would decide whether they would become a free or slave state through a vote (*popular sovereignty*). Residents in each territory would vote on whether they would allow slavery or not. They also were given a strengthened *Fugitive Slave Law* that allowed them to go north and capture any escaped slaves. The law also stated that any northerner who did not return an escaped slave could receive a harsh fine or imprisonment. This law upset many northerners who felt these escaped slaves should be protected.

The Kansas-Nebraska Act

Once again there was competition over adding new territories in the West, this time with Kansas and Nebraska. The problem was that they were above the 36 30' latitude line from the Missouri Compromise that would not allow slave states north of that line. However, there were politicians wanting to build a *transcontinental railroad* that would cross through Kansas, but before they could they would need southern support. The Kansas-Nebraska Act repealed the 36 30' line but allowed citizens in both territories to decide whether they would be added to the union as a free or slave state based on a vote.

Even with the compromise, Northerners and Southerners could not avoid conflict. In order to affect the vote, abolitionists from the north and southern slave owners temporarily moved to each territory. Fighting soon broke out between both sides which led to the area being called "Bleeding Kansas."

**"We cross the prairie as of old
The fathers crossed the sea,
To make the West, as they the East,
The homestead of the free.
We go to rear a wall of men
On Freedom's southern line,
And plant beside the Cotton tree
The rugged northern pine.
We're flowing from our native hills
As our free rivers flow,
The blessing of our mother land
Is on us as we go.
We go to plant the common school
On distant prairie swells,
And give the Sabbaths of the wilds
The music of her bells.
Upbearing, like the ark of God.
The Bible in our van.
We go to test the truth of God
Against the fraud of man."**

The text in bold above is a song by John Greenleaf Whittier called “Song of the Kansas Emigrant.” Whittier a northerner was signing about the abolitionists moving to Kansas hoping to affect the vote. Answer the following questions based on the text above.

What is Whittier saying about their goal when he sings “And plant beside the Cotton tree, The rugged northern pine?”

Based on the last four lines of the song, why do the abolitionists feel they have the right to make Kansas a free state?

The Nullification Crisis

Even with the compromise, the North and South still found issues to argue about, such as *protective tariffs*. A protective tariff is a tax that is added to imports. This helped businesses in America because it raised the prices of foreign goods so they became more expensive than goods produced in America. Therefore, people were more likely to buy the cheaper goods produced in the United States. The problem was that while the protective tariffs benefited the industries in the North it hurt southern states like South Carolina because they were mainly agricultural and had to import many products.

In 1828 Congress tried to pass a higher protective tariff but it was met with much protest in the South. Vice President John C. Calhoun anonymously wrote *South Carolina Exposition and Protest* that declared it was a state’s right to nullify any act passed by Congress on grounds that it was unconstitutional. Many southern states supported the idea of state’s rights at the nullification process but northern states felt it upset the unity of the country and took power away from the Supreme Court.

The issue became really heated in 1832 when John C. Calhoun resigned from the vice presidency and entered the state Senate. There he spoke harshly of the protective tariff and supported the idea of nullification. That same year the South Carolina legislature called a meeting to nullify the tariff. President Andrew Jackson responded by urging Congress to pass a Force Bill. This would allow him to send troops into South Carolina and force the collection of the tariff.

Again a compromise was reached. This time South Carolina agreed to pay the tariff as long as Congress agreed to lower the tariff. South Carolina got in the last word by nullifying the Force Bill that President Jackson supported. There were no disagreements over this because the Force Bill had not been passed but it supported the idea that states had the right to declare an act of Congress unconstitutional. Shortly later the nullification crisis would become very important when it led to the idea that states could *secede* from the union.

The Dred Scott Decision

The Dred Scott case was an attempt by the Supreme Court to end any controversy surrounding the ability of free states to determine the status of the enslaved, however, if anything it created more controversy. The case was over a slave named Dred Scott who attempted to sue his master for his freedom. Scott had moved with his master from a slave state to a free state and with the help of abolitionists tried to argue in court that because he was in a free state he should no longer be a slave. Scott claimed that, “once free, always free.” The Supreme Court decided that Scott had no right to sue his master in court because African Americans were not citizens of the United States. They also ruled that slaves were property and the government had no right to take away anyone’s property. The court did not stop there; they also ruled that the Missouri Compromise and the Kansas-Nebraska Act were unconstitutional because they denied an owner the right to take his property anywhere.

Northerners were furious over the last part of the decision because they felt it would end the idea of popular sovereignty and as a result limit democracy. One man who spoke out about the Dred Scott Decision was Abraham Lincoln. As the presidential election of 1860 approach, Lincoln's popularity soared as he debated the decision and other topics concerning slavery. With tensions high after the Dred Scott Decision another incident made matters even worse. John Brown, an abolitionist living in Virginia decided to lead a small group of 20 men to capture a federal arsenal at Harper's Ferry.



John Brown's Raid on Harper's Ferry

Brown hoped to use the weapons to help start a slave rebellion that would spread across Virginia. John Brown's Raid on Harper's Ferry in October of 1859 was unsuccessful as Brown and his followers were killed or captured before they could ignite a rebellion. However, Brown became a *martyr* for the abolitionist cause. The raid also put fear in many southerners who were now convinced that the North would stop at nothing to end slavery in the South.

The Election of 1860

By 1860 the tensions between the North and South were at a breaking point. Compromises were reached for many issues but very rarely were both sides happy with the outcomes. The compromises were simply quick fixes to a larger problem that kept getting worse. The tipping point came during the presidential election of 1860. Abraham Lincoln was campaigning as a supporter of "free soil." This meant he believed slavery should not be allowed to expand to new territories in the United States. The South were very outspoken against Lincoln and feared that if he was elected it would be the end of slavery in the United States. Lincoln easily won the election in the North while the South split their votes among several candidates. Once Lincoln was elected South Carolina quickly called a special convention and signed the Articles of Secession. They felt that the federal government would not protect their rights with Lincoln in office.

Check Your Understanding

Definitions

Use your understanding of the text to define the following terms in your own words:

Manifest Destiny –

Popular Sovereignty –

Fugitive Slave Law –

Protective Tariff –

Secede -

Recall

Using the reading above, answer the following questions in your own words.

What were the three compromises that settled disputes over new western territories being added to the union and what was the outcome of each?

Why were the Southern States, especially South Carolina, so upset over the Protective Tariffs being passed by Congress?

Why was Dred Scott unable to sue his master for his freedom in court?

What was the final event that pushed South Carolina to secede from the union and why?

Evaluate

Use the reading to help you answer the following questions.

Based on the information in the reading rank the top 5 causes of the southern states secession. Explain your reasoning for placing each cause in your ranking.

Over the course of the early 1800s there were many compromises between the North and South which means both sides tried to meet in the middle. Do you think both sides could have somehow reached an agreement, how? If you think it was necessary that the South secede, why?

Expansion

Click on the link on Edmodo and watch the video on the Transcontinental Railroad and answer the questions below.

What was the transcontinental railroad?

What was the impact of the transcontinental railroad?

What modern innovation do they compare the transcontinental railroad to?