

MILESTONES AND KEY FIGURES IN AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY

1619-1865





INDENTURED SERVANTS

- The “headright” system enabled Chesapeake tobacco farmers to obtain both land and labor by importing workers from England
- English indentured servants were the chief source of agricultural labor in Virginia and Maryland before 1675
 - Accounted for 75% of the 130,000 English immigrants to Virginia and Maryland during the 17th century





BACON'S REBELLION, 1676

- Exposed tensions between backcountry farmers and the tidewater gentry
- Prompted the tidewater gentry to reevaluate their commitment to the system of indentured servants





THE BEGINNING OF SLAVERY

- Profitable cultivation of tobacco required inexpensive labor
- Slave labor in colonial Virginia and Maryland spread rapidly in the last quarter of the 17th century
 - Blacks displaced White indentured servants in the tobacco fields





1690-1754

GROWTH OF PLANTATION ECONOMIES AND SLAVE SOCIETIES



THE SLAVE TRADE

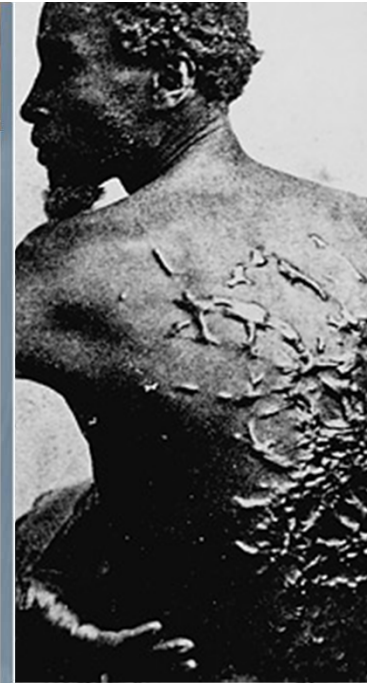
- In 17th and 18th centuries, the vast majority of Africans who survived the transatlantic passage ended up working on plantations in Brazil and the Caribbean
- The fewest slaves were brought into British North America





SLAVERY IN THE AMERICAN COLONIES

- Slavery was legally established in all 13 colonies by the early 1700s
- Although enslaved, Africans maintained cultural practices brought from Africa
- Most important cash crops
 - Tobacco in the Chesapeake colonies
 - Rice in South Carolina





SLAVERY IN THE AMERICAN COLONIES

- Factors responsible for the development of slavery in the Southern colonies:
 - Supply of indentured servants from England became insufficient by the late 17th century
 - Spread of tobacco cultivation westward created a demand for labor
 - Few 17th and early 18th century White colonists viewed human bondage as morally unacceptable
 - As its maritime power increased, England wanted to compete in the profitable slave trade begun by the Portuguese and Dutch





THE STONO REBELLION, 1739

- One of the earliest known acts of rebellion against slavery in America
- Organized and led by slaves living south of Charleston, SC
 - Slaves tried unsuccessfully to flee to Spanish Florida, where they hoped to gain their freedom



1776-1815

GROWTH OF SLAVERY AND FREE BLACK COMMUNITIES





THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

- Did not call for the abolition of the slave trade





THE NORTHWEST ORDINANCE OF 1787

- Excluded slavery north of the Ohio River
- The first national document containing a prohibition of slavery





THE CONSTITUTION

- As written in 1787, the U.S. Constitution explicitly guaranteed the legality of slavery in every state
- The Three-Fifths Compromise
 - An agreement between the Southern and Northern states
 - Three-fifths of the population of slaves would be counted for enumeration purposes
 - the distribution of taxes
 - the apportionment of the members of the U.S. House of Representatives
- The Fourteenth Amendment invalidated the Three-Fifths Compromise
 - Specifically states, “Representatives shall be apportioned . . . counting the whole number of persons in each state.”





THE HAITIAN SLAVE REBELLION, 1790S

- Prompted an increased fear of slave revolts in the South
- Led by Toussaint L'Ouverture





FREE AFRICAN AMERICANS

- The free African American population grew due to:
 - The gradual emancipation laws of individual states
 - Manumission granted for Revolutionary War service
 - Manumission granted by slaveholders' wills
 - Natural increase among free African Americans



1816-1860

PLANTERS AND SLAVES IN THE ANTEBELLUM SOUTH





KING COTTON

- Cotton became the most important cash crop due to:
 - Invention of the cotton gin
 - Made it possible to harvest short-staple cotton
 - Rich new farmland in the Deep South opened to the cultivation of cotton
 - By 1850, geographic center of slavery was moving southward and westward
 - Rise of textile manufacturing in England created enormous demand for cotton





SOUTHERN SOCIETY

- A majority of White adult males were small farmers rather than wealthy planters
- The majority of White families in the antebellum South owned no slaves
- A small minority of planters who owned 20 or more slaves dominated the antebellum South
- The cost of slave labor rose sharply between 1800 and 1860





SLAVE SOCIETY

- Despite forced separations, slaves maintained social networks among kindred and friends
- The dramatic increase in the South's labor force was due to the natural population increase of American-born slaves
- During the antebellum period, free African Americans were able to accumulate some property in spite of discrimination





SLAVE SOCIETY

- Slaves were generally able to marry
 - Southern legal codes did not uniformly provide for the legalization and stability of slave marriage
 - Institution of marriage was common on Southern plantations
- The majority of slaves adapted to the oppressive conditions imposed on them by developing a separate African American culture
- Slave revolts were infrequent
 - Most southern slaves resisted their masters by feigning illness and working as slowly as possible



1820-1860

TERRITORIAL EXPANSION AND SLAVERY





THE MISSOURI COMPROMISE, 1820

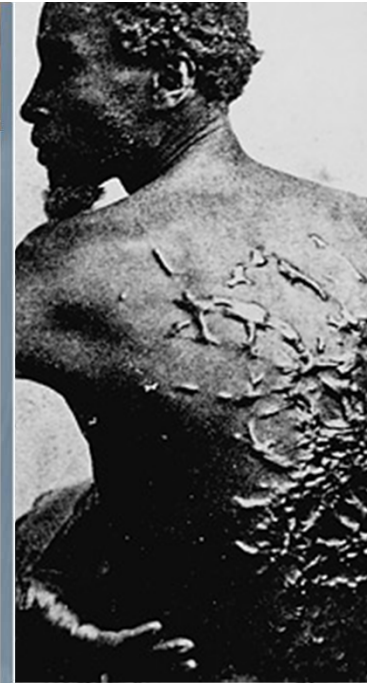
- Provisions included the following:
 - Maine would enter the Union as a free state
 - Missouri would enter the Union as a slave state
 - The remaining territory would be closed to slavery above latitude $36^{\circ} 30'$





THE MISSOURI COMPROMISE, 1820

- Consequences included:
 - The number of Northerners and Southerners in the Senate remained the same
 - Most of the Louisiana Purchase was closed to slavery
 - The first major 19th century conflict over slavery was settled
 - Slavery was temporarily defused as a national political issue





TEXAS

- President Jackson resisted the admission of Texas into the Union in 1836
 - He feared that the debate would ignite the controversy over slavery
- Following a joint resolution of Congress, Texas joined the Union in December 1845





THE WILMOT PROVISIO

- Specifically provided for the prohibition of slavery in lands acquired from Mexico in the Mexican War
- Congress did NOT pass the Proviso





THE COMPROMISE OF 1850

- California was admitted to the Union as a free state
- Slave trade (but not slavery) was abolished in the District of Columbia
- Territorial governments were created in New Mexico and Utah without an immediate decision as to whether they would be slave or free
- The Fugitive Slave Act was enacted
 - Proved to be the most controversial and divisive component of the Compromise





OSTEND MANIFESTO, 1854

- A proposal to seize Cuba by force
- Enraged antislavery Northerners prevented it from being implemented





THE KANSAS-NEBRASKA ACT, 1854

- Provisions included:
 - The proposed Territory of Nebraska would be divided into two territories
 - Kansas
 - Nebraska
 - The status of slavery would be settled by popular sovereignty
 - Meant that the settlers in a given territory would have the sole right to decide whether or not slavery would be permitted





THE KANSAS-NEBRASKA ACT, 1854

- Senator Stephen A. Douglas was the leading proponent of popular sovereignty

"The great principle is the right of every community to judge and decide for itself whether a thing is right or wrong. . . . It is no answer to this argument to say that slavery is an evil, and hence should not be tolerated. You must allow the people to decide for themselves whether it is a good or an evil."

--Stephen A. Douglas





THE KANSAS-NEBRASKA ACT, 1854

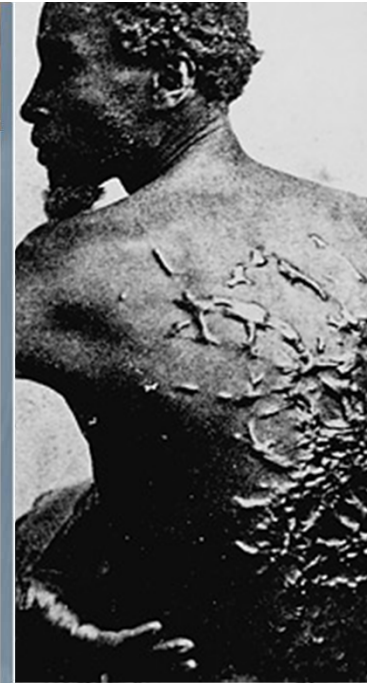
- Consequences included:
 - Repealed the Missouri Compromise
 - Heightened sectional tensions
 - Led to the demise of the Whigs
 - Led to the rise of the Republican Party and Abraham Lincoln
 - Became the first test of popular sovereignty





THE DRED SCOTT DECISION, 1857

- Supreme Court ruled that Black people were not citizens of the United States
 - Could not petition the Court
- Established the principle that national legislation could not limit the spread of slavery into the territories
- Repealed the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 and the Missouri Compromise of 1820 by stating that Congress had no right to prohibit slavery in the territories
- Became a contentious issue during the Lincoln-Douglas debates





THE POSITIONS OF THE REPUBLICANS AND DEMOCRATS ON SLAVERY

- Democratic Party
 - Divided over the issue of expanding slavery in the territories
- Republican Party
 - Opposed the extension of slavery into the territories
 - Acknowledged that slavery should be protected in the states where it already existed





1830-1860

ABOLITION AND THE ABOLITIONISTS



THE SECOND GREAT AWAKENING

- Religious spirit increased public awareness of the moral outrages perpetuated by slavery
- Contributed to the growth of the abolitionist movement





AMERICAN COLONIZATION SOCIETY

- Goal was the return of freed slaves to Africa
- Leaders were middle-class men and women





WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON

- Issued the first call for the “immediate and uncompensated emancipation of the slaves”

“Let Southern oppressors tremble. . . I will be as harsh as Truth and as uncompromising as Justice. . . I am in earnest—I will not retreat a single inch—and I WILL BE HEARD!”





FREDERICK DOUGLASS

- Most prominent Black abolitionist during the antebellum period
- Autobiography exposed Americans to the horrors and inhumanity of slavery
 - *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*
 - Published in 1845
- Also championed equal rights for women and Native Americans

“I would unite with anybody to do right and with nobody to do wrong.” —Frederick Douglass





HARRIET BEECHER STOWE

- Wrote *Uncle Tom's Cabin*
 - Intensified Northern opposition to slavery
 - Only the Bible sold more copies





1861-1865

EMANCIPATION AND THE ROLE OF AFRICAN AMERICANS IN THE CIVIL WAR



THE EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION, 1863

- Issued only after the Civil War had been in progress for almost two years
 - President Lincoln refrained from taking action to emancipate slaves to retain the loyalty of the Border States
- Union victory at Antietam gave Lincoln the opportunity to issue the Emancipation





THE EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION, 1863

- Only freed slaves in the rebellious states
- Did NOT free slaves in the Border States
- Immediate effect was to strengthen the moral cause of the Union





AFRICAN AMERICANS AT WAR

- For most of the Civil War, African American soldiers were paid less than White soldiers of equal rank
- The South considered African Americans serving in the Union army as contraband

