

## The Debate Over Slavery

### Chapter 14, Section 1

## Fugitive Slave Act (1850)

- Sought b/c of the loss of runaway slaves
  - About 1,000/yr. out of the 4 million slaves in 1850
    - Mostly from the border states
    - Less than those who gained freedom thru self-purchase or voluntary emancipation
  - Assisted by the Underground Railroad
    - "Stations" → anti-slavery homes
    - "Passengers" → runaway slaves
    - "Conductors"
      - White or black abolitionists
      - Harriet Tubman
        - ↳ Most famous "conductor" of Underground RR
        - ↳ Made over 19 trips and assisted over 300 runaway slaves
        - ↳ Earned the title "Moses"

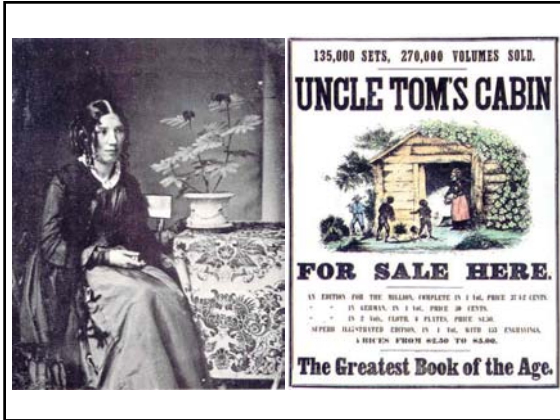


## Fugitive Slave Act (1850)

- Required northerners to assist in capture and return of runaway slaves
  - Anyone assisting slaves w/ heavy fines and imprisonment.
  - Fate of runaway slaves up to federal commissioners
    - Pd. \$5 for every runaway freed
    - Pd. \$10 for every runaway returned to the S.
- Caused a great deal of outrage in the N.
  - Known as the "Bloodhound Bill" and "Man-Stealing Law"

## Uncle Tom's Cabin (1852)

- Written by Harriet Beecher Stowe
  - To protest the Fugitive Slave Act
- Proved enormously popular
  - 10,000 copies sold in 1<sup>st</sup> week.
  - 300,000 copies sold in 1<sup>st</sup> year.
- Caused further sectional division
  - Won a great deal of sympathy for slaves in the N.
  - Outraged the S.
  - Caused Lincoln to comment upon meeting Stowe, "So you're the little woman who wrote the book that made this great war."



## Eyes on the Caribbean

- Motives
  - Desire for new slave territories
    - To help regain balance btw. free and slave states
  - Need to improve communications w/ W. Coast
    - W/ the rapid and sudden growth of California
    - Aroused interest for potential canal thru Central Am.
- Clayton-Bulwer Treaty (1850)
  - Stipulated that neither Britain nor the U.S. would sole control over any Central Am. canal
  - Aimed at halting the British in the area
  - Ultimately hamstrung American efforts in the area

## Eyes on the Caribbean

- Cuba
  - Strategic stronghold in the Caribbean
    - Needed to protect any Central Am. Canal
  - Where slavery and plantation ag. already thrived
  - Invaded 2x's in 1850-51 by rogue southerners
    - Both failed
  - Ostend Manifesto
    - Urged the U.S. to purchase Cuba for up to \$120 million
    - Asserted right of U.S. to seize island if Spain refused to sell
    - Leaked out to the public
      - Outraged northerners as a "slaveholders' plot"
      - Shocked Europeans
      - Ended all efforts to seize Cuba

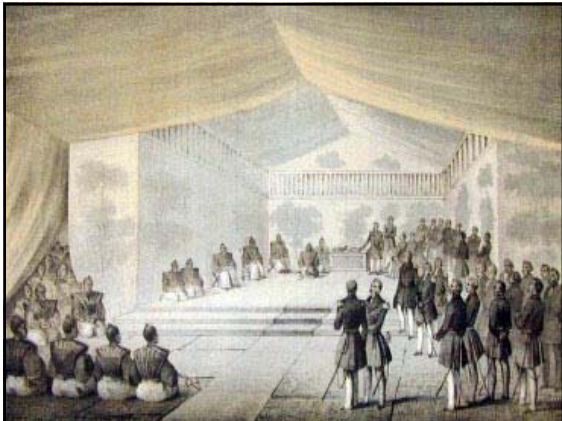
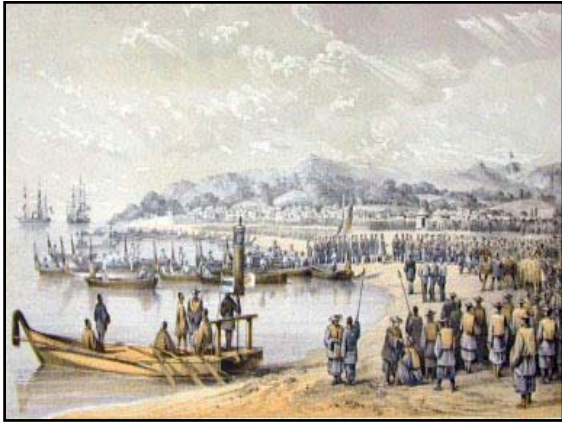
## Eyes on the Caribbean

- Nicaragua
  - Potential route for canal
  - Seized by Wm. Walker in 1854
    - Acting on his own
    - Named himself pres.
    - Ousted in 1856
    - Executed in 1860


## Japan

- Had been a closed society for centuries
  - To protect "superior" Japanese culture
  - From degradation by foreigners
- Matthew C. Perry
  - Dispatched to Japan to open kingdom up to U.S. commercial interests
  - Succeeded w/ show of impressive naval power





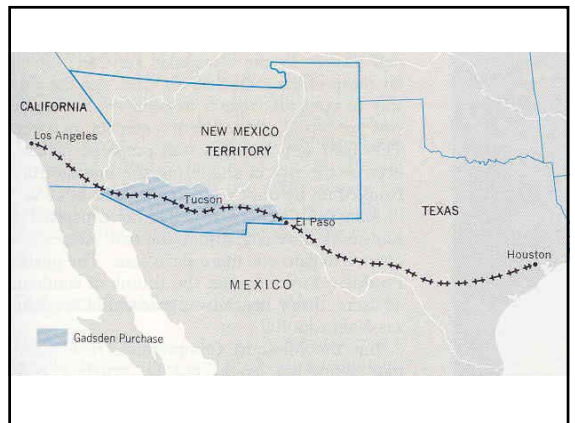
### **Stephen A. Douglas**

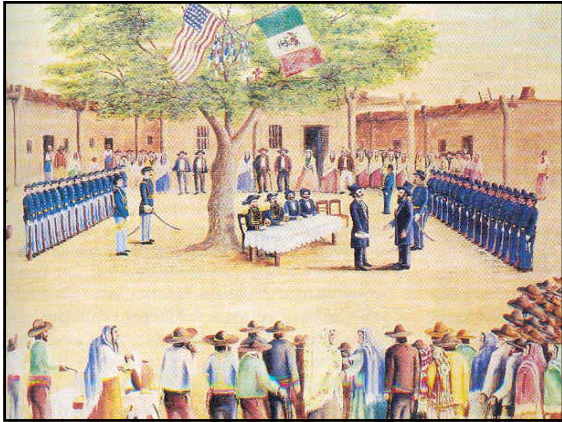


- Known as the "Little Giant"
- Senator from IL
- Became leading congressman of the 1850s
  - Mainly b/c of his work on the Compromise of 1850

### **Transcontinental Railroad**

- Would link the Atlantic to the Pacific
  - Helping to unify the country
  - Cutting down on travel time and cost
- Proposed routes
  - Southern route
    - Would start in Memphis or New Orleans
    - Necessitated the Gadsden Purchase (1854)
      - 29,000 sq. miles S. of the Gila R.
      - Completed the territorial boundaries of the continental U.S.

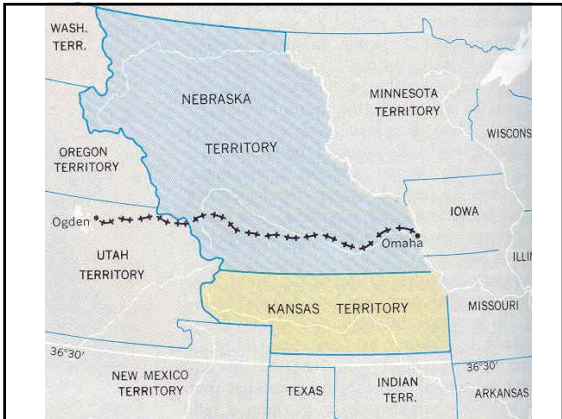




## Transcontinental Railroad

### - Northern route

- Would start in Chicago
- Favored by Douglas
  - Would benefit IL
  - Would benefit Douglas
    - ❖ Director of IC
    - ❖ Land speculator heavily invested in Chicago
- Opposed by southerners
  - Encourage settlement of Louisiana Territory N. of 36°30'
  - Would tip the balance against slave states in the Senate



## Kansas-Nebraska Act

- Intro. by Douglas
  - To help win southern support for northern route
- Divided unorganized territory into two territories
  - Kansas + Nebraska
- Attempted to repeal Missouri Compromise
  - Which prohibited slavery N. of 36°30'
  - To be replaced w/ "popular sovereignty"
    - Allowing settlers to decide whether or not to permit slavery
      - Motivated by unofficial understanding that . . .
        - Kansas would be opened to slavery.
        - Nebraska would be closed to slavery.
- Passed in May 1854
  - Igniting the slavery controversy once again