



# Our Kansas Stories

Abraham Lincoln, Kansas-Nebraska Act,  
and the National Debate Over Slavery

YOUR  
STORIES | KANSAS  
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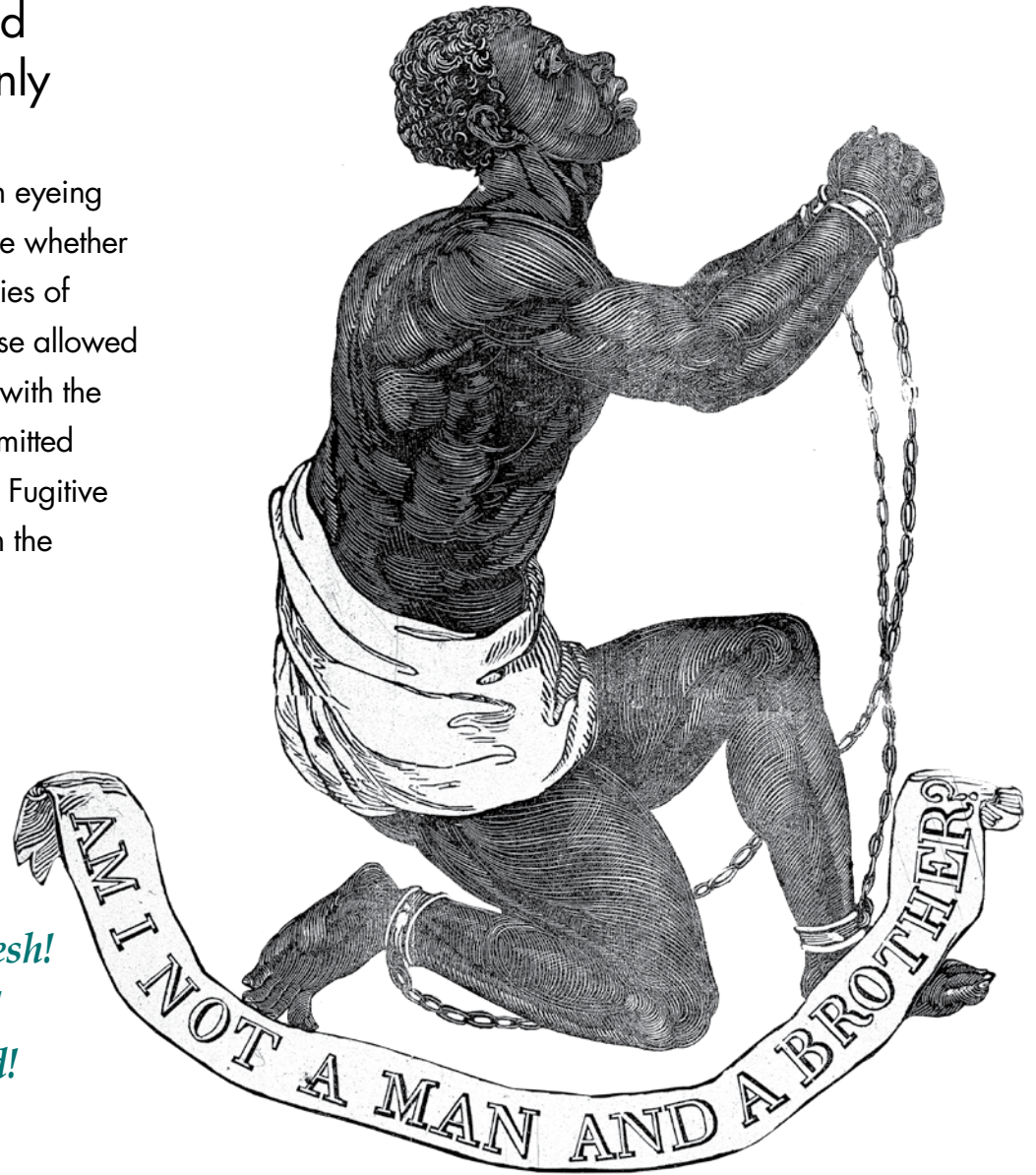
HONOR | KANSAS  
EDUCATE | HISTORICAL  
INSPIRE | FOUNDATION

By 1820 the original 13 states had grown to 22. The states were evenly split on the issue of slavery.

Once territories from the Louisiana Purchase began eyeing statehood the United States Congress had to decide whether to allow slavery in the new territories. Initially a series of compromises were made. The Missouri Compromise allowed Missouri to enter the Union as a slave state, along with the free state of Maine. The Compromise of 1850 admitted California as a free state but in exchange a stricter Fugitive Slave Act would require all U.S. citizens to assist in the recovery of runaway slaves.

*What, ho! our countrymen in chains!  
The whip on woman's shrinking flesh!  
Our soil yet reddening with the stains  
Caught from her scourging, warm and fresh!  
What! mothers from their children riven!  
What! God's own image bought and sold!  
Americans to market driven,  
And bartered as the brute for gold!*

—John Greenleaf Whittier, 1842



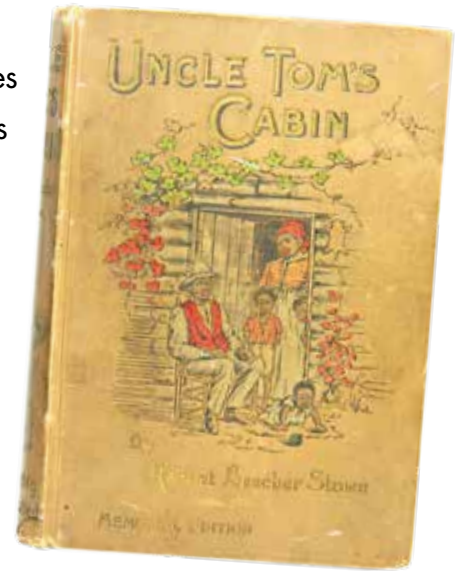
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Dear Mother

The course in Boston has not yet been announced and I think should be glad of your assistance, in I think with Mr. Edwards. The course is not gotten up by the Anti Slavery Party technically but is an attempt to bring out the sentiments of religious men on Slavery as a moral question — of course, political <sup>is</sup> also since <sup>practical</sup> <sup>in</sup> <sup>fact</sup> <sup>it</sup> <sup>is</sup> <sup>not</sup> <sup>possible</sup> <sup>to</sup> <sup>separate</sup> <sup>the</sup> <sup>two</sup> <sup>questions</sup> <sup>of</sup> <sup>action</sup>.

The idea of the "floating ice berg" is at all times cooling & consolatory to my mind — but the same reflection applies to every form of social evil, — & if course you cannot suppose that there is to be no direct conflict with

Harriet Beecher Stowe's antislavery novel, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, sold thousands of copies and is credited with influencing the attitudes of many Americans. In this letter Stowe is writing to her brother, Congregational clergyman Henry Ward Beecher, who became known for touting the Sharps rifle as an antidote to slavery. Beecher and his congregation sent rifles and Bibles to the Beecher Bible Rifle Colony in Wabaunsee, Kansas Territory.



## TIMELINE

- 1803** | United States purchases the Louisiana Territory, including most of Kansas
- 1820** | Missouri Compromise prohibits slavery north of Arkansas
- 1850** | Compromise of 1850 allows California to enter the Union as a free state and the Fugitive Slave Act is enacted
- 1851** | Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is published

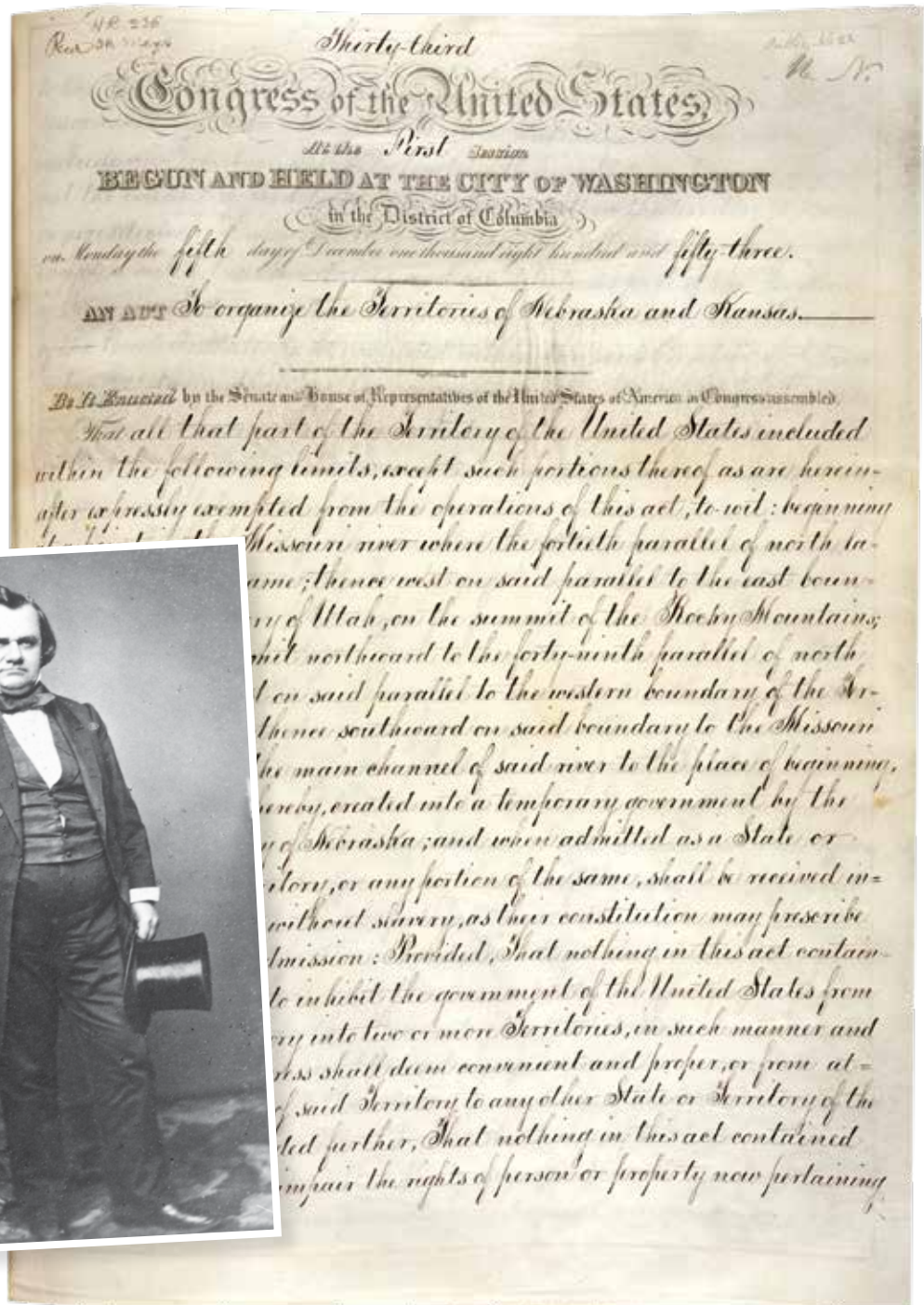
*The course is not gotten up by the Anti Slavery Party technically but is an attempt to bring out the sentiments of religious men on slavery as a moral question — of course politically also...*

*Harriet Beecher Stowe*

—Harriet Beecher Stowe, about 1850

Stephen A. Douglas, the U.S. senator from Illinois, was the powerful chair of the committee on territories.

He championed the belief that the United States should expand its boundaries to include much of the continent. The Southern states had blocked all attempts to allow settlement of the Louisiana Territory, fearing loss of control over the issue of slavery.



To gain the support of the South Senator Douglas proposed a possible compromise. The Kansas and Nebraska territories would be open for settlement and the people who resided in the new territories could decide for themselves on the issue of slavery. This idea of popular sovereignty satisfied Southerners for the moment and the Kansas-Nebraska Act was passed.



With the passing of the Kansas-Nebraska Act, Kansas was open to settlement. The land had belonged to native peoples long before Americans and immigrants were encouraged to move here. This map was published the same year as the Kansas-Nebraska Act. Originally both territories were much larger than the eventual states that shared their names.

## TIMELINE

- 1853** | Stephen Douglas introduces bill in U.S. Senate with provision for popular sovereignty
- 1854** | Kansas-Nebraska Act is passed repealing the Missouri Compromise restriction on slavery north of Arkansas
- 1854** | Kansas Territory open for settlement

Those who opposed slavery also opposed the Kansas-Nebraska Act, objecting to the spread of slavery into the new territories.

So strong were their feelings that the Republican Party was founded to make their voices heard.

Many believed the concept of popular sovereignty was pushing the nation into civil war. Perhaps the best-known opponent of the Kansas-Nebraska Act was Abraham Lincoln, from Illinois.

*The doctrine of self-government is right—absolutely and eternally right—but it has no just application, as here attempted. Or perhaps I should rather say that whether it has such just application depends upon whether a Negro is not or is a man. . . . if the Negro is a man, is it not to that extent, a total destruction of self-government, to say that he too shall not govern himself? When the white man governs himself that is self-government; but when he governs himself, and also governs another man, that is more than self-government—that is despotism. If the Negro is a man, why then my ancient faith teaches me that “all men are created equal;” and that there can be no moral right in connection with one man’s making a*

*slave of another. . . What I do say is, that no man is good enough to govern another man, without that other’s consent. . . . The master not only governs the slave without his consent; but he governs him by a set of rules altogether different from those which he prescribes for himself. Allow ALL the governed an equal voice in the government, and that, and that only is self-government.*

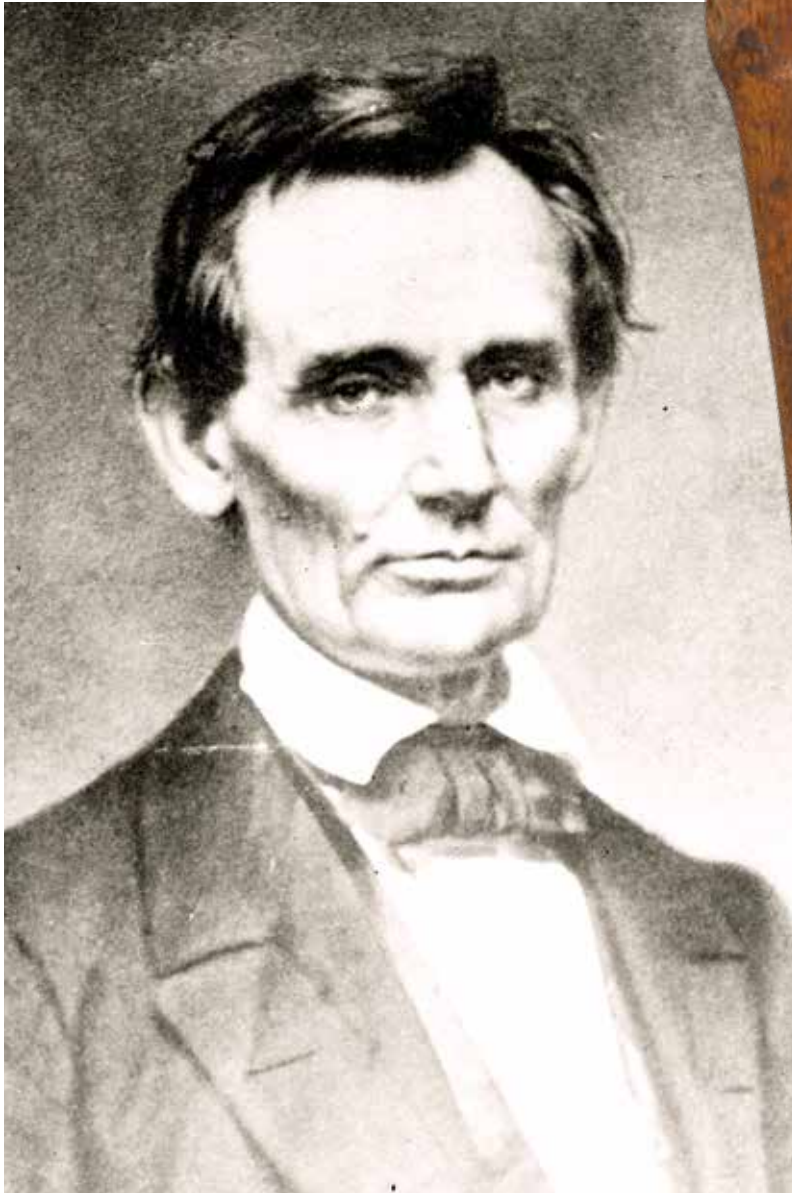
A handwritten signature of Abraham Lincoln in cursive script, written in dark ink on a light background.

—Speech in Peoria, Illinois  
Four and a half months after the  
passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act

## TIMELINE

- 1834** | Abraham Lincoln elected to the Illinois State Legislature
- 1846** | Lincoln elected to the U.S. House of Representatives
- 1854** | Republican Party is formed to oppose the concept of popular sovereignty and the spread of slavery
- 1854** | Lincoln delivers a key speech in Peoria, Illinois, against the expansion of slavery

This cane is believed to have been made from a branch gathered by Abraham Lincoln from a tree near the tomb of George Washington. Lincoln visited the estate in 1848 while serving in the U.S. House of Representatives. He later gave the walking stick to William Henry, a U. S. representative from Vermont. The cane passed through Henry's family, who donated it to the Kansas Historical Society.

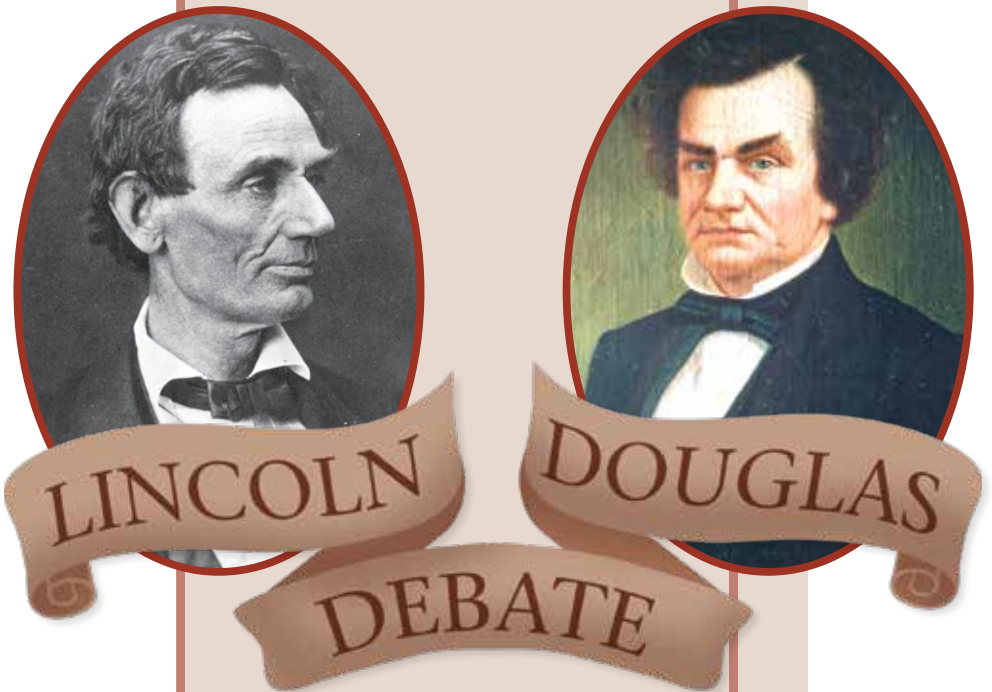


## Abraham Lincoln ran against Stephen Douglas for the U.S. Senate seat in Illinois.

At that time U.S. senators were chosen by state legislatures, not by popular elections. Therefore, Lincoln and Douglas were campaigning for their parties' legislative candidates. The two agreed to a series of seven debates, which ultimately focused on the issues of slavery and popular sovereignty. Due to the intense emotions that surrounded the issues, people from neighboring states poured into Illinois to watch the debates. There was also extensive coverage in the press.

*There is no reason in the world why the Negro is not entitled to all the natural rights enumerated in the Declaration of Independence, the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. I hold that he is as much entitled to these as the white man.*

—Abraham Lincoln, first debate,  
Ottawa, Illinois, August 21, 1858





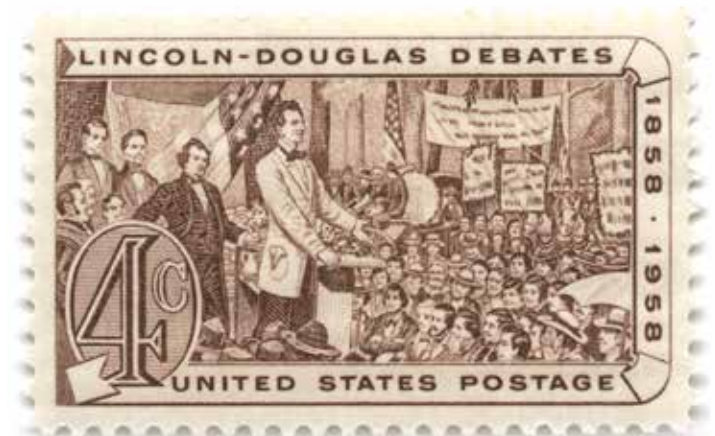
## TIMELINE

**1858** | Lincoln challenges Douglas for the U.S. Senate seat from Illinois; Douglas wins the election

By today's standards Lincoln and Douglas were marathon speakers. During the debates the first candidate had 60 minutes for opening remarks, then the other candidate took the stage for 90 minutes, followed by the first candidate's 30-minute rebuttal. The Lincoln-Douglas debates pushed Lincoln into the national spotlight. In 1958 the U. S. Postal Service issued a stamp to commemorate the Lincoln-Douglas debates.



During one of the debates the Republican student delegation at Lombard University, Illinois, met Lincoln as he arrived in town and presented him with this banner. Lincoln gave the banner to his friend Mark Delahay from Leavenworth when he visited Kansas. In the end Lincoln lost the senate seat to Douglas.



In Kansas Territory the antislavery settlers organized the Free State Party.

Four years later it became the Kansas Republican Party. When the fourth and final state constitutional convention met in Wyandotte, John A. Martin was elected secretary of the convention. Martin, an Atchison journalist, later commented,

*We have formed a Republican Constitution, adopted it with Republican votes, sent a Republican delegate to bear it to the National Capital, [and] elected Republican State Officers and a Republican State Legislature.*

No place was as thoroughly Republican as Kansas.

Abraham Lincoln regretfully declines an invitation to attend the Kansas convention to formally organize the Republican Party in Kansas. With regard to creating a political platform Lincoln warns

*I think, the only danger will be the temptation to lower the Republican Standard in order to gather recruits. In my judgement such a step would be a serious mistake—would open a gap through which more would pass out than pass in.*

Mark Delahay, the recipient of the letter, knew Lincoln when they were both lawyers in Springfield, Illinois. The two became friends when they worked together to organize the national Republican Party.

Copy.  
H. W. Delahay, Esq.  
Springfield Ills May 25/56.  
My Dear Sir:  
I find it impossible for me to attend your Republican Convention at Casswater on the 8th. It would have afforded me much personal gratification to see your fine new Country and to meet the good people who have cast their lot there; and still more, if I could thereby contribute anything to the Republican cause. You probably will adopt resolutions in the nature of a platform; and as I think the only danger will be the temptation to lower the Republican Standard in order to gather recruits. In my judgement such a step would be a serious mistake—would open a gap through which more would pass out than pass in. And this would be in deference to Douglasism, or to the Southern opposition. Either would surrender the object of Republican organization—the preventing the spread and Nationalization of Slavery. This object surrendered, the organization would go to pieces. I do not mean by this, that no Southern man must



The year after losing the U.S. Senate race, Abraham Lincoln was urged to come to Kansas to support Republican candidates running for office in connection with the antislavery Wyandotte Constitution.

Arriving slightly before the election, Lincoln spends seven days in Kansas. The following year, Lincoln writes to a young lawyer seeking his counsel on where to practice. Lincoln's advice, *If I went West, I think I would go to Kansas.*

Mark Delahay of Leavenworth writes to his friend Abraham Lincoln offering opinions on Lincoln's chances for the Republican nomination for president in 1860. Delahay believes Kansans will support Lincoln's candidacy, especially if he visits Kansas. Sixteen days later Lincoln arrives in Kansas Territory.

*... if you would only discard a little modesty and not distrust your own Powers, and strike boldly and for the next 6 months cease to be a [modest] man you are more likely in my Judgment to fill the Bill [for president than] any man I can think of— You have always distrusted your own ability too much, the only advantage Douglas ever possessed over you was that of an impudence.*

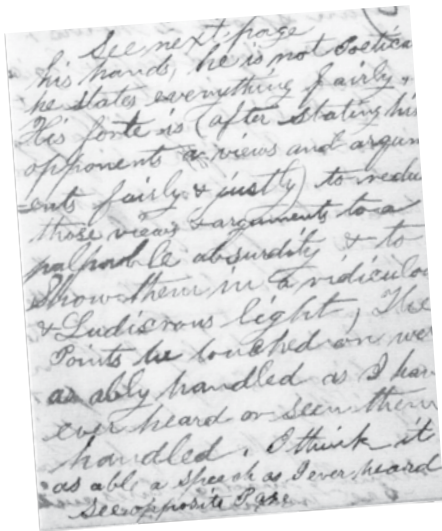
—Mark W. Delahay to Abraham Lincoln,  
November 14, 1859

*Confidential*  
Leavenworth, Mo. Nov 14<sup>th</sup> 1859  
Hon A Lincoln  
my friend  
Your last favor placed me again under obligation to you, and I take this occasion to make the proper acknowledgements; the late election in New York has gone so nearly against us that it <sup>will</sup> ~~has~~ few the Prestige of the Hon W. Seward any for the Presidency that election being the last one in New York before nominations will take place next year; will be referred to as an index of the strength, or weakness of Mr Seward in his own State; by a truly and determined stand by the Base of Illinois for you, as a Western man, and Representative man of the West; the fact also that when you followed Seward this year his influence was counteracted by a healthy and large Republican gain; and the fact that you carried the popular vote largely against him last year in Illinois; and the fact that you as an old line Clay, to his (Seward in Ky) would satisfy the American element of the Country, and arrant us New York and Illinois; and your able Championship upon the Tariff question in Illinois year ago, would induce me to take you on truly upon that question, (I am frank and do not intend to flatter you) But to say if you would only discard a little modesty and not distrust your own Powers, and strike boldly

2063

On November 30, 1859, Lincoln travels by train to St. Joseph, Missouri. From there he crosses the Missouri River by ferry and arrives in Elwood, Kansas Territory. That evening he delivers his first Kansas speech at the Great Western Hotel, speaking against slavery and popular sovereignty. Daniel Wilder, editor of the *Elwood Free Press*, writes of Lincoln's appearance,

*They were legs you could fold up. The knees stood up like the hind joints of a Kansas grasshopper's legs. He wore a hat of stovepipe shape. . . The buttons were off his shirt.*



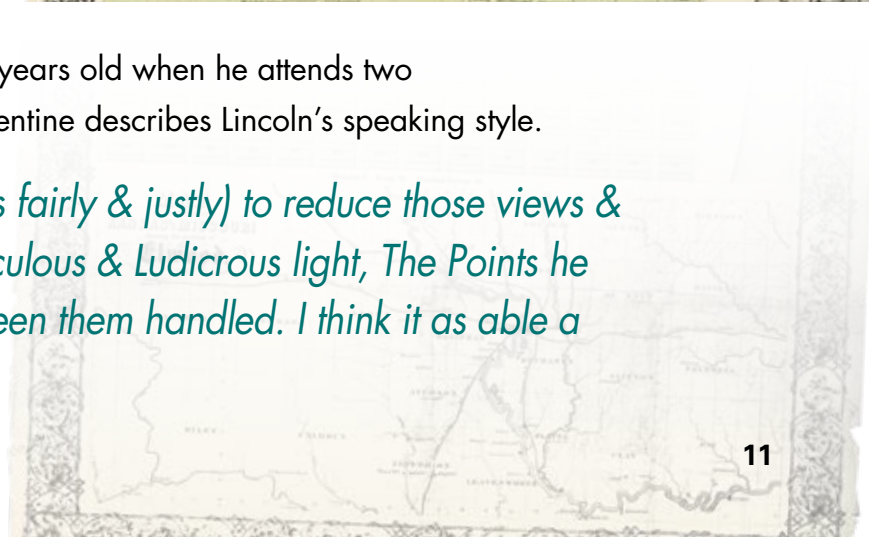
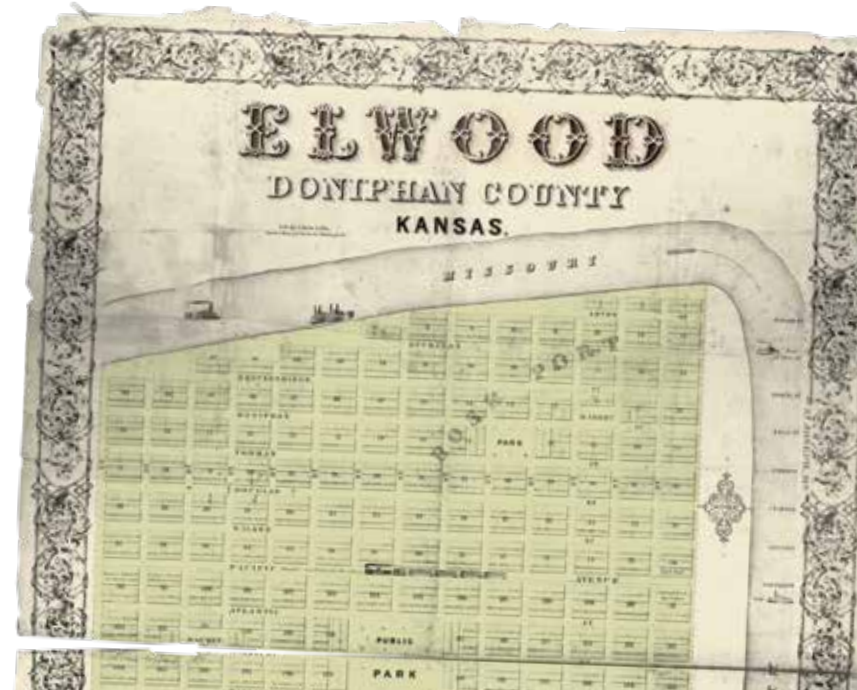
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his hands, he is not ostentatious  
he states everything fairly &  
his forte is (after stating his  
opponents views and argum-  
ents fairly & justly) to reduce  
those views & arguments to a  
palpable absurdity & to  
show them in a ridiculous  
& Ludicrous light. The  
Points he touched on were  
as ably handled as I have  
ever heard or seen them  
handled. I think it  
as able a speech as I ever heard  
See opposite page

Daniel Valentine, Leavenworth, is 28 years old when he attends two of Lincoln's speeches. In his diary Valentine describes Lincoln's speaking style.

*His forte is (after stating his opponents views and argum-ents fairly & justly) to reduce those views & arguments to a palpable absurdity & to show them in a ridiculous & Ludicrous light, The Points he touched on were as ably handled as I have ever heard or seen them handled. I think it as able a speech as I ever heard.*

## TIMELINE

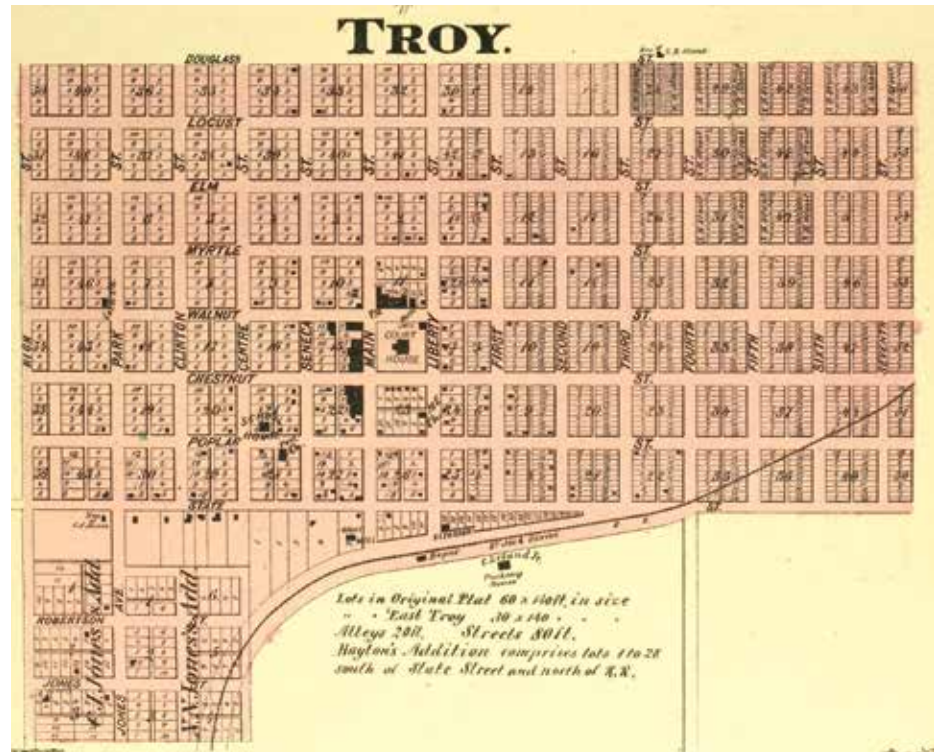
1859 | November 30, Abraham Lincoln arrives in Kansas Territory and visits Elwood



The next morning Lincoln travels to Troy where he speaks to an appreciative crowd for nearly two hours.

A *New York Daily Tribune* reporter writes of Lincoln's speech,

*He argued the question of slavery in the territories, in the language of an average Ohio or New York farmer. I thought "If the Illinoisans consider this a great man their ideas must be very peculiar." But in ten or fifteen minutes I was unconsciously and irresistibly drawn by the clearness and closeness of his argument.*



Troy, named for the ancient city, was platted just four years before Abraham Lincoln came to Kansas. Upon arrival Lincoln would have noticed that Troy had but few buildings, the town was in its infancy. He eats at the Smith hotel and stagecoach stop where he has several servings of Johnny cakes, or cornmeal pancakes. He then walks across the street to the one-story courthouse and speaks for one hour and 45 minutes to approximately 40 people. His focus is on stopping the expansion of slavery into the territory.

Later in the day Lincoln travels south to Doniphan, delivers a speech, and spends the night. It is believed that the Doniphan hotel was a stop on the Underground Railroad. Before turning in for the night Lincoln engages the owner's 14-year-old son in discussion about the enslaved people he has encountered. The Underground Railroad was made of a series of safe houses to shelter escapees on their journey. Abolitionist John Brown helped people escape Missouri farmsteads

by ushering them through Kansas Territory and north to freedom. On one such trip Brown stopped at a farm in Brown County for food and shelter. Accompanying Brown were 10 liberated African Americans. Since there were few places to sleep in the one-room cabin Brown was offered this wooden chair for the night.



## TIMELINE

- 1859 | January, John Brown arrives in Brown County escorting slaves he liberated from Missouri
- 1859 | December 1, Lincoln visits Troy and spends the night in Doniphan, Kansas Territory

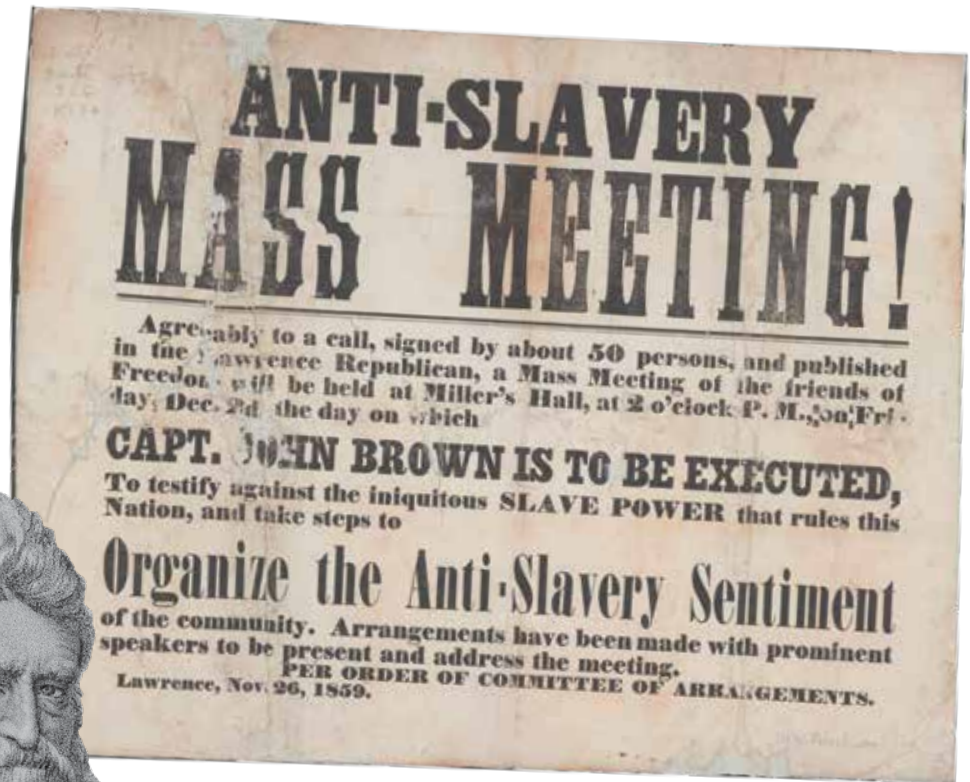
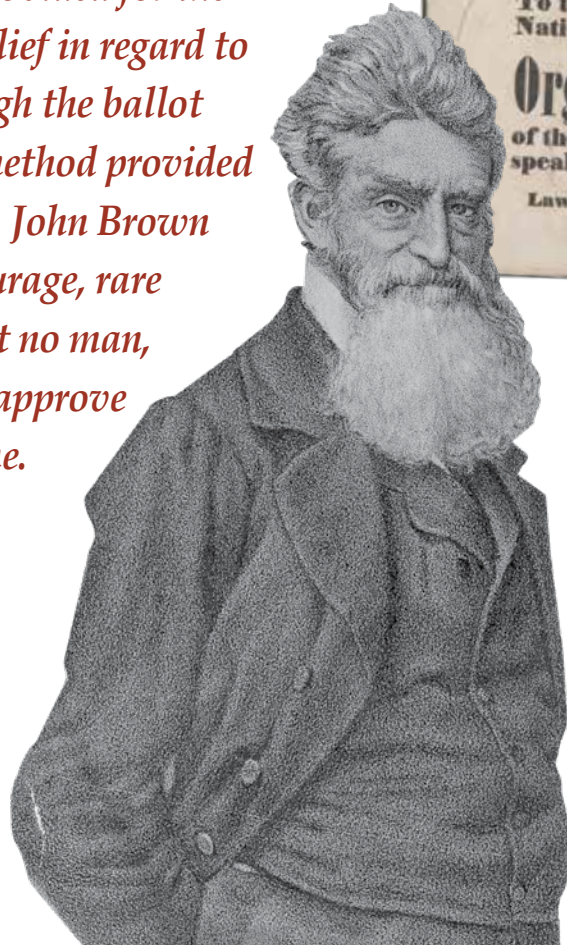


Overnight the weather turns extremely cold. Lincoln rides into Troy in an open carriage. A newspaper reporter offers Lincoln his buffalo robe. One of the carriages Lincoln boards on his trip to Kansas can be seen at the Frontier Army Museum in Leavenworth.

Arriving in Atchison the next afternoon Lincoln receives news that John Brown has been hanged for treason.

With Brown's association to Kansas Territory it was natural for Lincoln to comment on the news. In Elwood two days earlier Lincoln says of Brown's actions,

*We have a means provided for the expression of our belief in regard to slavery—it is through the ballot box—the peaceful method provided by the Constitution. John Brown has shown great courage, rare unselfishness . . . But no man, north or south, can approve of violence and crime.*



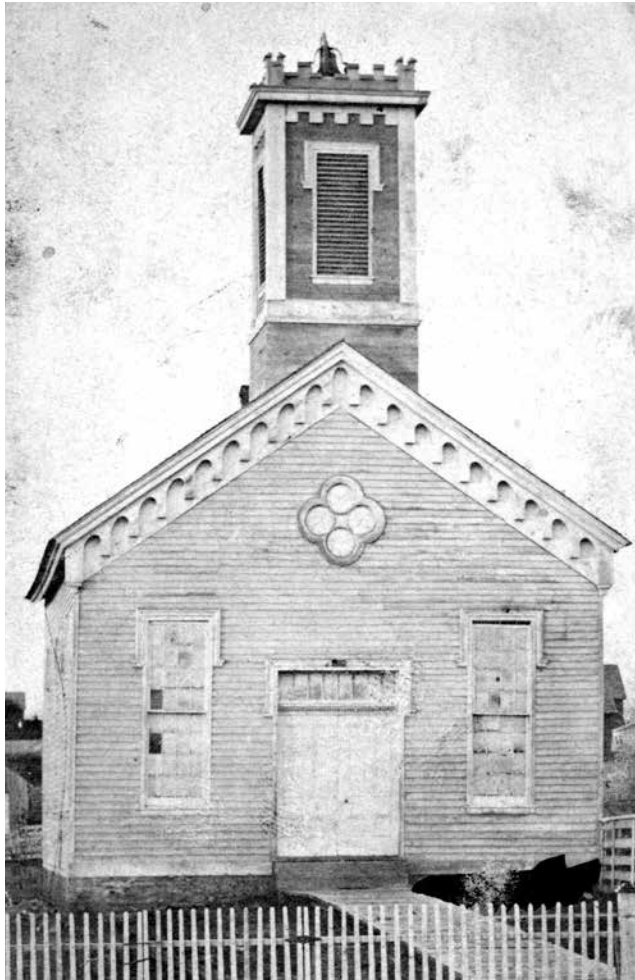
The day after Brown's execution, Lincoln speaks in Leavenworth commenting,

*Old John Brown has just been executed for treason against a state. We cannot object, even though he agreed with us in thinking slavery wrong. That cannot excuse violence, bloodshed, and treason. It could avail him nothing that he might think himself right.*



When Abraham Lincoln arrives in Atchison he sees a thriving city. That night Lincoln addresses a large crowd at the Methodist church, speaking for two hours and 20 minutes. The foreman of the *Freedom's Champion* newspaper wrote of Lincoln's Atchison speech,

*At first many seemed much disappointed in him. But this was owing, no doubt, to the rather uncouth appearance he presented. . . .*



*Only a little while after Mr. Lincoln began his talk . . . the audience, almost to a man, realized it had been mistaken.*

After his speech Lincoln checks into the Massasoit House. The four-story structure, completed just months before his visit, sat at the northwest corner of Second and Main streets. That night many citizens come to talk and shake Lincoln's hand. The hotel was destroyed by fire 14 years after Lincoln's visit.

**1859** | December 2, Lincoln visits Atchison, Kansas Territory

**1859** | December 2, John Brown is hanged in Charlestown, now West Virginia

John Brown's half-sister, Florella, and her husband, the Reverend Samuel Adair, lived near Osawatimie. Five of John Brown's sons also moved to Kansas Territory. "Old Man" Brown followed his sons to Kansas. Brown was a catalyst for much of the turmoil that came to be known as "Bleeding Kansas." The Pottawatomie Creek massacre in Franklin County, in which five proslavery men were killed by Brown and his men, gained national attention and was denounced by both antislavery and proslavery forces.

## A brass band escorts Lincoln to the Mansion House in Leavenworth.

Speaking that evening, Lincoln keeps to his message that slavery should not be allowed to spread into the territory. Daniel Anthony, a local newspaper editor, socializes with Lincoln and others that evening.

According to Anthony,

*Lincoln sat there for hours, his feet against the stove, and his chair tilted back. His reputation as a storyteller is deserved, for he was the leader in swapping tales that night. . . . He was made up of head, feet, and length. The lines that gave his face and figure a majesty of sadness were yet to come.*



*Ladies and Gentlemen: You are, as yet, the people of a Territory; but you probably soon will be the people of a State of the Union. . . . You will have to bear a part in all that pertains to the administration of the National Government. That government, from the beginning, has had, has now, and must continue to have a policy in relation to domestic slavery. . . . And that policy must, of necessity, take one or two directions. It must deal with the institution as being wrong or as not being wrong. . . . You the people of Kansas, furnish the example of the first application of [popular sovereignty]. At the end of about five years, after having almost continual struggles, fire and bloodshed, over this very question, and having formed several State Constitutions, you have, at last, secured a Free State Constitution, under which you will probably be admitted into the Union. You have at last, at the end of all this difficulty, attained what we, in the old North-western Territory, attained without any difficulty at all. Compare, or rather contrast, the actual working of this new policy with that of the old, and say whether, after all, the old way—the way adopted by Washington and his compeers—was not better.”*

—Abraham Lincoln, Leavenworth,  
Kansas Territory, December 3, 1859

## TIMELINE

1859 | December 3, Lincoln visits  
Leavenworth, Kansas Territory



The Leavenworth Planters Hotel opened its doors in December 1856 at the corner of Main and Shawnee. It was considered one of the best hotels in the West, with 100 available rooms. Lincoln speaks from the steps of the hotel in Leavenworth.

## Abraham Lincoln spends three more nights in Leavenworth.

On Sunday he visits his friends Mark and Louisiana Delahay. On Monday he walks up and down the streets of Leavenworth campaigning in offices and local businesses that welcome him. On Tuesday Lincoln observes the results of the election for state officers under the Wyandotte Constitution. For governor, Charles Robinson, the antislavery Republican candidate, defeats the Democrat incumbent territorial governor Samuel Medary. Republicans also win 86 of 100 seats in the legislature. Lincoln is no doubt pleased by these results. Early Wednesday morning Lincoln begins his journey home arriving in Springfield, Illinois, that evening.

Mark Delahay was a Democrat, believing strongly in popular sovereignty, when he moved his family to Kansas Territory. His opinion soon would change. He started the *Kansas Territorial Register*, an outspoken antislavery newspaper. Delahay, like other free-state residents, was threatened due to his antislavery beliefs. While he attended a free-state convention his printing office was ransacked and his printing press thrown into the Missouri River. The Delahay family fled for a short time to Illinois but returned to Kansas Territory when Delahay started the *Wyandotte Register* with a new press.

Shortly after Lincoln is elected President of the United States Mark Delahay receives at least one letter requesting he make a recommendation to Lincoln for consideration of political appointment. On December 1, 1860, Delahay responds,

*My Dear Sir... I have been an old friend of Mr. Lincoln and he is a relative of my wife—I have every confidence he will do all he can for the People of Kansas, and should he ask me into his councils in order to learn of our Republicans I shall take pleasure in giving your wishes a fair presentation to him; I have too much regard for him to intrude the claims of friends upon him at this time . . .*



*be one of them, But whether  
such will be the case I am  
wholly unprepared to say, I  
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I shall take pleasure in giving  
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to him; I have too much regard  
for him to intrude the claims  
of friends upon him at this  
time for office as I very well  
know he will not now give  
Kansas appointments any  
consideration—  
Very truly yours  
M. Delahay*



## TIMELINE

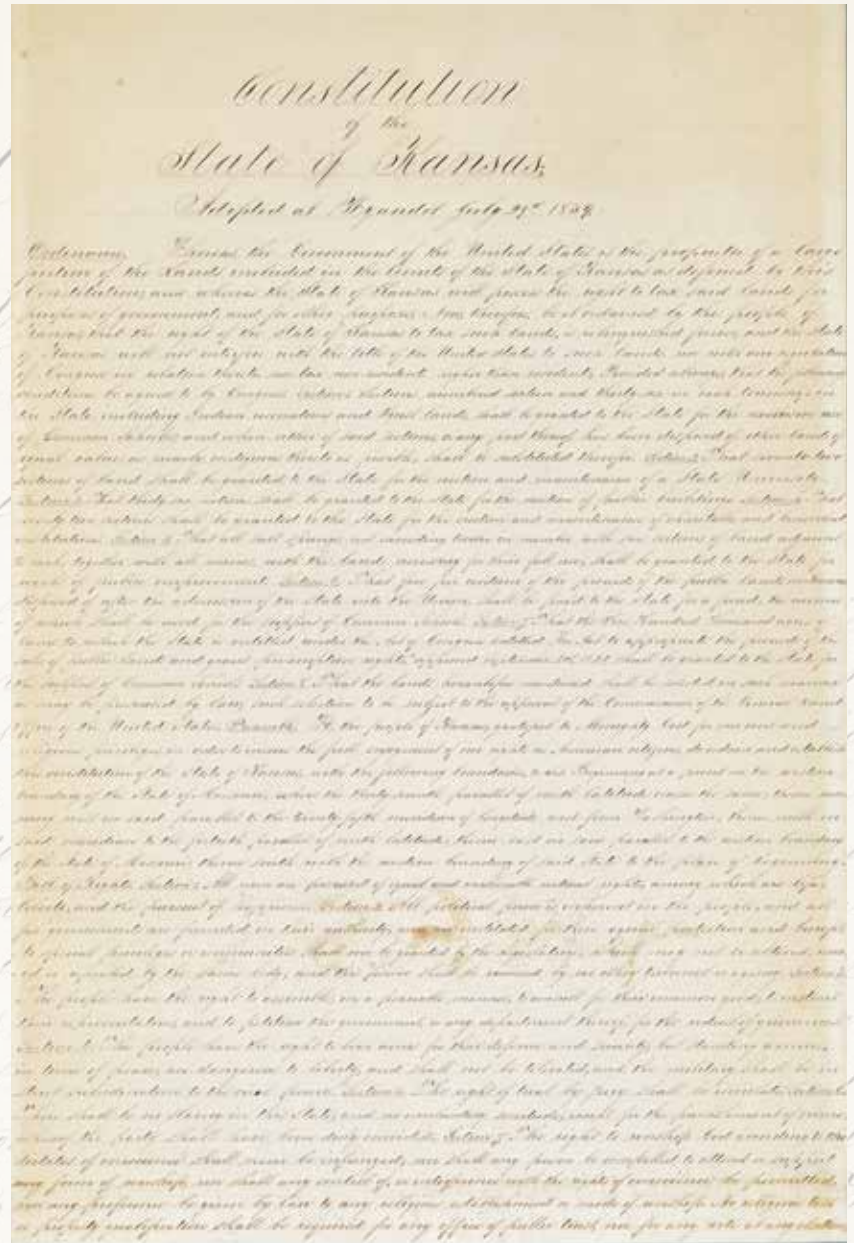
- 1855 | Mark Delahay moves to Kansas Territory
- 1861 | Abraham Lincoln becomes 16th U.S. President
- 1861 | Delahay appointed surveyor general of the U. S. district of Kansas and Nebraska
- 1864 | Delahay appointed judge of U.S. district court of Kansas
- 1873 | Delahay resigns appointment as judge of district court

Just 56 days after Abraham Lincoln is sworn into office as President of the United States Delahay receives an appointment from Lincoln as U.S. surveyor general for the district of Kansas and Nebraska. Approximately three years later Delahay receives another appointment as judge of the U.S. district court of Kansas.

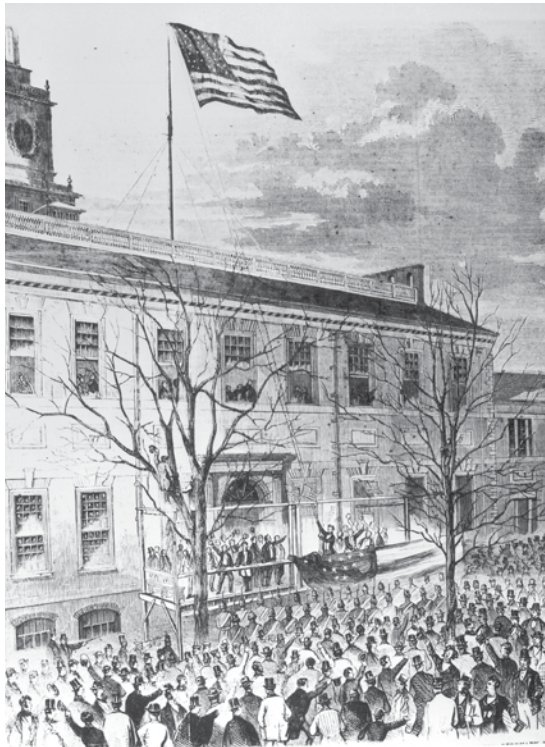
Lincoln apparently felt some obligation to Delahay because of personal and professional ties, and he rewarded the Kansan for his loyalty. Many felt Delahay did not possess the right amount of experience, *was not famous for hard sense*, and was *distressingly impecunious and awfully bibulous*, implying that he was often without money and tended to drink to excess. Delahay is eventually forced to resign.

Kansas sent official copies of the free-state Wyandotte Constitution to the U.S. president, the president pro tempore of the U. S. Senate, and the speaker of the U. S. House of Representatives.

The house acts first and a bill for Kansas' admission to the Union is introduced and passed within two months. The vote is 134 to 73 in favor of Kansas' admission to the Union. A separate bill is introduced in the senate, but a coalition of Southern states manages to block its vote. The Kansas admission bill is carried over to the next session.



After the election of Abraham Lincoln as president Southern states began to leave the Union and opposition to Kansas' admission as a state decreased. The last six Southern senators left their seats on January 21, 1861, and later that same day the U.S. Senate passed the Kansas bill. A week later the U.S. House did the same and the bill was sent to President James Buchanan for his signature. Kansas became the 34th state to enter the Union.



Abraham Lincoln was inaugurated President of the United States as Southern states continued to secede. On February 22, 1861, on the way to his inaugural, Lincoln stopped at Independence Hall, Philadelphia, to raise the U. S. flag bearing a 34th star, honoring Kansas as the newest state. In Kansas the conflict was over with a victory for antislavery forces. On March 26 the first state legislature convened. In less than a month South Carolina troops fired on Fort Sumter. That battle, waged over Kansas, engulfed the entire nation.

## TIMELINE

- 1860** | February 12, bill to admit Kansas to the Union as a free state is introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives
- 1860** | February 21, bill to admit Kansas to the Union as a free state is introduced in the U.S. Senate
- 1860** | November 6, voters choose Lincoln in four-way election
- 1861** | January 29, Kansas becomes the 34th state in the Union
- 1861** | March 4, Lincoln is sworn in as 16th President of the U.S.
- 1861** | March 26, First state legislature in Kansas convenes
- 1861** | April 12, Civil War begins

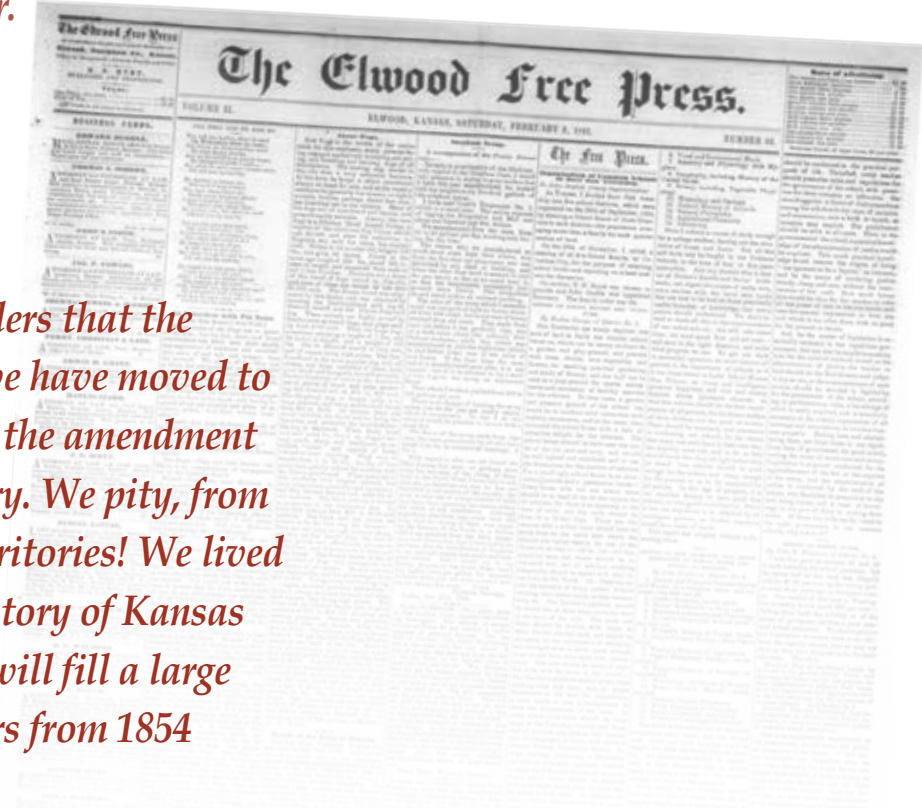
When Kansas achieved statehood many Kansans saw it as the end to a long battle.

Popular sovereignty had severe consequences for the people of Kansas Territory, which were soon to be repeated for the nation. These difficulties impressed on many Kansans an understanding of their role in history. According to the January 21, 1861, edition of the *Leavenworth Daily Times*,

*We trust that our history as a State may be as brilliant as the struggles and trials of our Territorial condition have been severe and aggravated. If such shall be the case, Kansas will stand in the records of the future without a peer.*

Newspapers in Kansas captured the mood of the people of the territory as they became citizens of the United States. The editor of the *Elwood Free Press* reported on February 2, 1861,

*We are pleased at being able to announce to our readers that the FREE PRESS is published in the State of Kansas—we have moved to America. The House of Representatives concurred in the amendment of the Senate, and Kansas has ceased to be a Territory. We pity, from the bottom of our heart, the poor devils living in Territories! We lived in one once for four years—don't do it again. The history of Kansas Territory, and the complications arising therefrom, will fill a large space in the history of the United States, for the years from 1854 to 1861.*





John A. Martin, editor of the *Atchison Freedom's Champion*, published an obituary of Kansas Territory on the same day. Squatter's sovereignty was a term used by Southern proslavery forces to show their contempt for popular sovereignty. The term was used as the title of a proslavery newspaper in Atchison considered by many to be the most radical and widely-read proslavery press.

**DIED.**

*Of Chronic Worthlessness, on the 28th ult., at his father's house in Washington, the child "K. T.," aged six years. His father was the notorious Squatter Sovereignty, and his mother the infamous Slavery Extension. The child had been an orphan for some time past, his father having been killed at the election of 1857, and his mother murdered in November last by the people headed by one A. Lincoln. Peace to his manes.*

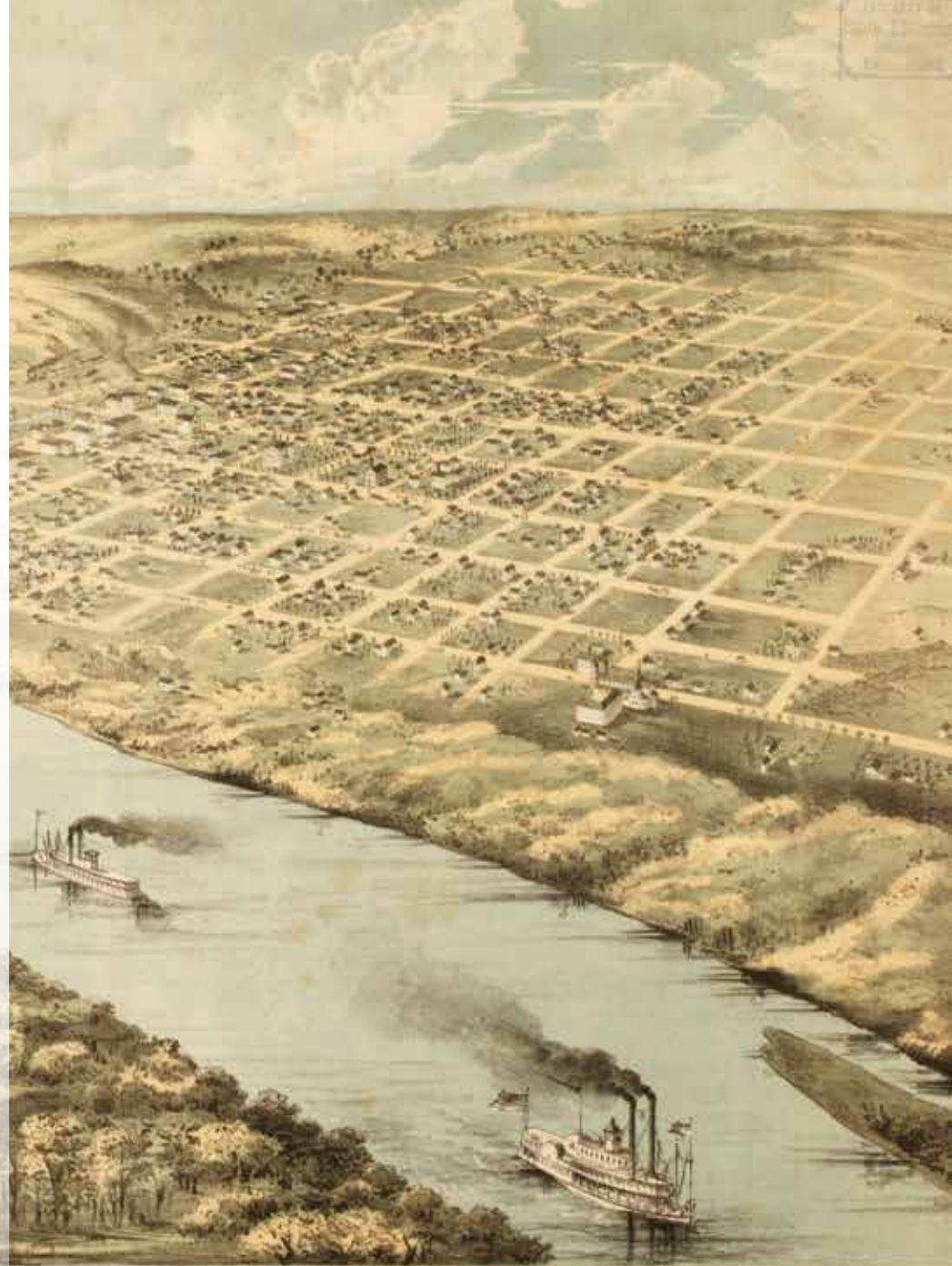


Old Kickapoo was used by proslavery forces against Kansas Territory. The cannon was captured by Leavenworth residents tired of the weapon being used against them. On the day Kansas became a state the citizens of Leavenworth pointed Old Kickapoo toward Missouri and loaded the barrel with copies of the proslavery laws that had been enacted in the early days of Kansas Territory. The cannon was lit and the documents were sent flying across, or into, the Missouri River.



## The boundaries of the state of Kansas were set by the Wyandotte Constitution.

Many advocated for a bigger Kansas that included the Kansas Territory gold fields near Pike's Peak and the annexation of the fertile farmlands south of the Platte River in Nebraska Territory. Various arguments were given by those who favored a smaller Kansas, but the conflict may have boiled down to a political fight. The fight to gain an antislavery, or Republican-favored, constitution occurred in the eastern portion of Kansas Territory. Support of voters was needed for passage of the constitution. If the miners in the far west or the farmers of the Platte River valley were to be included in the Kansas borders, their votes would be needed for passage. Delegates feared their inclusion would delay the process, risk loss of control, and jeopardize the antislavery majority. Most decisions in Kansas Territory were informed by the fight over slavery, including the state's final boundaries.





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Kansas played a primary role in the fight over slavery. With the creation of the Kansas-Nebraska Act and its explosive idea of popular sovereignty Kansas Territory became a spark that helped ignite the nation in civil war. But first it caught the attention of Abraham Lincoln and helped propel him into the U.S. presidency. Lincoln is only a part of the story of Kansas Territory. What events fueled the conflict here labeled “Bleeding Kansas?” What happened to the native peoples once Kansas Territory was open for settlement? When Kansas became a state how did its population grow? These are questions we will discuss in the next few issues of *Our Kansas Stories*.

Most of the collection items featured can be found at [kansasmemory.org](http://kansasmemory.org). For more information on these topics visit [kshs.org](http://kshs.org). To receive this publication quarterly we invite you to become a member.

ON THE COVER: Admit Me Free flag used during Abraham Lincoln’s 1860 presidential campaign in support of Kansas’ admittance to the Union as a free state.

