

A Nation Dividing

Essential Question

How did popular sovereignty lead to violence in Kansas?

Reading Guide

Content Vocabulary

popular sovereignty (p. 454) civil war (p. 455)

border ruffians (p. 455)

Academic Vocabulary

network (p. 453) inevitable (p. 455)

Key People and Events

Fugitive Slave Act (p. 453)

Kansas-Nebraska Act (p. 454)

John Brown (p. 455)

Reading Strategy

Taking Notes Use a diagram like the one below to note reactions to the Kansas-Nebraska Act. Also, summarize the reasons for these reactions.

Kansas-Nebraska Act

Antislavery:

Pro-slavery:

American Diary

On May 24, 1854, the people of Boston erupted in outrage. Federal officers had seized Anthony Burns, a runaway enslaved African American who lived in Boston, to return him to slavery. Abolitionists tried to rescue Burns from the federal courthouse, and city leaders attempted to buy his freedom. All efforts failed. Federal troops escorted Burns to a ship that would carry him back to Virginia and into slavery. In a gesture of bitter protest, Bostonians draped buildings in black and hung the American flag upside down.

The Underground Railroad by James Michael Newell

The Fugitive Slave Act

Main Idea The Fugitive Slave Act required all citizens to help catch runaways, yet many Northerners refused to cooperate.

History and You Have you ever tried to protect someone from a bully? Read how Northerners tried to thwart the efforts of slave hunters.

As part of the Compromise of 1850, Senator Henry Clay of Kentucky convinced Congress to pass the **Fugitive Slave Act** as an attempt to pacify slaveholders. The Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 required all citizens to help catch runaways. Anyone who aided a fugitive could be fined or imprisoned. People in the South believed the law would force Northerners to recognize the rights of Southerners. Instead, enforcement of the law convinced more people in the North of the evils of slavery.

After the passage of the Fugitive Slave Act, slaveholders stepped up their efforts to catch runaway enslaved people. They even tried to capture runaways who had lived in freedom in the North for years. Sometimes they seized African Americans who were not trying to escape and forced them into slavery.

History ONLINE

Student Web Activity Visit glencoe.com and complete the Chapter 15 Web Activity about the Underground Railroad.

In spite of the penalties, some Northerners refused to cooperate with the law. They justified their opposition on moral grounds. In his 1849 essay "Civil Disobedience," Henry David Thoreau wrote that if the law "requires you to be the agent [cause] of injustice to another, then I say, break the law."

The Underground Railroad, a **network**, or interconnected system, of free African Americans and whites, helped runaways make their way to freedom. Antislavery groups tried to rescue African Americans who were being pursued or to free those who were captured. In Boston, members of one such group followed federal agents shouting, "Slave hunters—there go the slave hunters." People contributed funds to buy the freedom of African Americans. Northern juries refused to convict those accused of violating the Fugitive Slave Act.

Reading Check **Explaining** What was the purpose of the Underground Railroad?

Primary Source Reward Poster

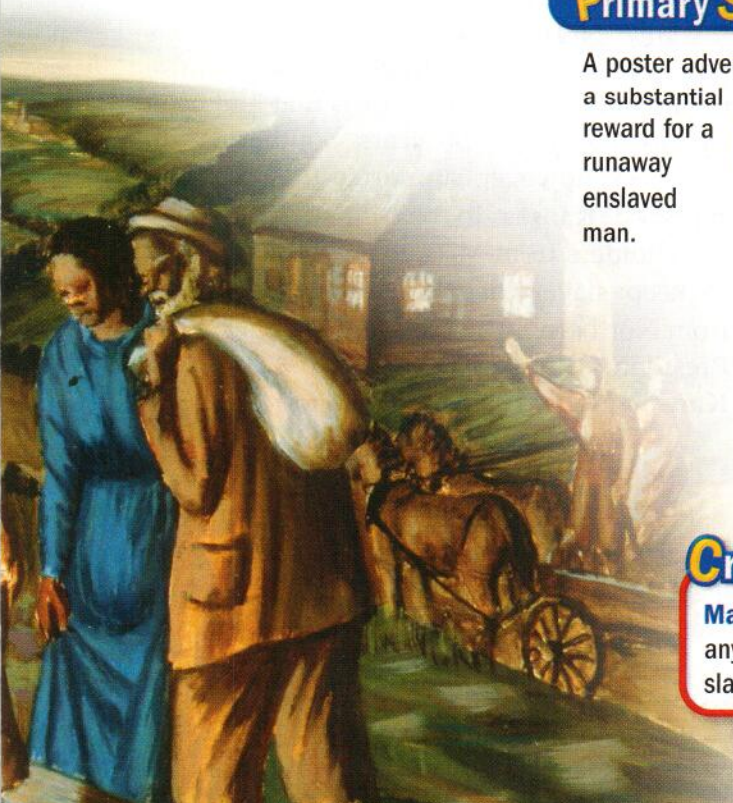
A poster advertises a substantial reward for a runaway enslaved man.

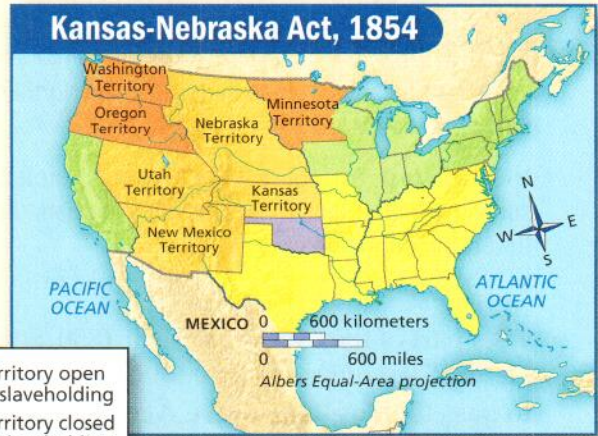
\$150 REWARD

RANAWAY from the subscriber, on the night of the 2d instant, a negro man, who calls himself *Henry May*, about 22 years old, 5 feet 6 or 8 inches high, ordinary color, rather chunky built, bushy head, and has it divided mostly on one side, and keeps it very nicely combed; has been raised in the house, and is a first rate dining-room servant, and was in a tavern in Louisville for 18 months. I expect he is now in Louisville; trying to make his escape to a free state, (in all probability to Cincinnati, Ohio.) Perhaps he may try to get employment on a steamboat. He is a good cook, and in any capacity as a house servant. Had on when he left, a dark and dark striped cassinet pantaloons, new—he had other clothing. Reward if taken in Louisville: 100 dollars if taken out of State, and 150 dollars if taken out of the State, and 150 dollars if taken out of the State.

Critical Thinking

Making Inferences Under the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, any citizen might be required to help capture a runaway slave. Why do you think some people condemned this law?





Free states	Territory open to slaveholding
Slave states	Territory closed to slaveholding
Indian Territory	



▶ Stephen Douglas sponsored the controversial Kansas-Nebraska Act.

Map Skills

Regions What territories were non-slaveholding in 1854?

Maps in Motion See StudentWorks™ Plus or glencoe.com.

The Kansas-Nebraska Act

Main Idea The Kansas-Nebraska Act resulted from another dispute over slavery in Congress.

History and You Do you recall how the Missouri Compromise limited slavery in the territories? Read how this agreement fell apart in the 1850s.

Franklin Pierce, a New Hampshire Democrat, became president in 1853. Pierce intended to enforce the Fugitive Slave Act.

In 1854 Stephen A. Douglas, the Illinois senator who forged the Compromise of 1850, introduced a bill in Congress. He proposed organizing the region west of Missouri and Iowa as the territories of Kansas and Nebraska. Douglas hoped his plan to expand the nation would be acceptable to both the North and the South.

Because of their location, Kansas and Nebraska seemed likely to become free states. Both lay north of 36°30'N latitude, the line set in the Missouri Compromise as the limit of slavery. Douglas knew Southerners would object to admitting Kansas and Nebraska as

free states because it would give free states more votes in the Senate. As a result, Douglas proposed abandoning the Missouri Compromise and letting the settlers in each territory vote on whether to allow slavery. He called this **popular sovereignty**—allowing the people to decide.

Passage of the Act

Many Northerners protested. Douglas's plan to repeal the Missouri Compromise would allow slavery into areas that had been free for more than 30 years. Southerners in Congress, however, supported the bill. They expected Kansas to be settled mostly by slaveholders from Missouri who would vote to keep slavery legal. With some support from Northern Democrats and the backing of President Pierce, Congress passed the **Kansas-Nebraska Act** in 1854.

Conflict in Kansas

Right after the law passed, pro-slavery and antislavery groups rushed into Kansas. When elections took place, a pro-slavery legislature was elected.

Although only about 1,500 voters lived in Kansas at the time, more than 6,000 people cast ballots. Thousands of pro-slavery supporters from Missouri crossed the border just to vote in the election. These Missourians traveled in armed groups and became known as **border ruffians**.

Soon, the new Kansas legislature passed laws supporting slavery. One law even restricted political office to pro-slavery candidates.

The antislavery people refused to accept these laws. Instead they armed themselves, held their own elections, and adopted a constitution that banned slavery. By January 1856, rival governments existed in Kansas—one for and one against slavery.

“Bleeding Kansas”

With both sides arming themselves, an outbreak of violence became **inevitable**, or unavoidable. In May 1856, 800 slavery supporters attacked the town of Lawrence, a stronghold of antislavery settlers. The attackers burned the Free State Hotel and destroyed two newspaper offices and many homes. Soon after, antislavery forces retaliated.

John Brown, a fervent abolitionist, believed God chose him to end slavery. The attack on Lawrence enraged Brown. He vowed to “strike terror in the hearts of the pro-slavery people.” One night Brown led a group along Pottawatomie Creek, where they seized and killed five supporters of slavery.

Armed bands soon roamed the territory. Newspapers referred to “Bleeding Kansas” and “the Civil War in Kansas.” A **civil war** is a conflict between citizens of the same country. In October 1856 the territorial governor sent federal troops to stop the bloodshed.

Violence also broke out in Congress. Senator Charles Sumner of Massachusetts lashed out against pro-slavery forces in Kansas. He also criticized pro-slavery senators, such as Andrew P. Butler of South Carolina. Two days later, Butler’s cousin, Representative Preston Brooks, walked into the Senate chamber and hit Sumner with a cane. Sumner fell to the floor, unconscious and bleeding. This incident and the Kansas feud revealed the rising hostility between North and South.



Reading Check

Explaining What events led to “Bleeding Kansas”?

Section 2 Review

History ONLINE
Study Central™ To review this section, go to glencoe.com.

Vocabulary

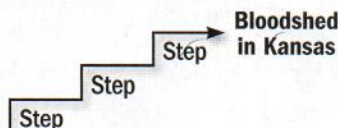
1. Use each of these terms in a sentence that will help explain its meaning: **network**, **popular sovereignty**, **border ruffians**, **inevitable**, **civil war**.

Main Ideas

2. **Listing** What were some ways that Northerners defied the Fugitive Slave Act?
3. **Explaining** How would the issue of slavery in Kansas and Nebraska be decided under the Kansas-Nebraska Act?

Critical Thinking

4. **Contrasting** How did Southerners expect Northerners to react to the Fugitive Slave Act? How did Northerners actually react?
5. **Sequencing** Use a diagram like the one below to list the steps leading to bloodshed in Kansas.



6. **Persuasive Writing** Decide whether you would have been for or against the Kansas-Nebraska Act and the concept of popular sovereignty. Then write a newspaper editorial arguing your position.

Answer the Essential Question

7. How did popular sovereignty lead to violence in Kansas?