

## CIVIL WAR TIMELINE 1860

- By 1860      Approximately 300,000 free blacks are now living in Southern states, primarily in Virginia, Kentucky, and South Carolina. [Foner]
- By 1860      The growth of the railroad industry in America will become a significant factor in military tactics and transportation during the Civil War, as the Southern states' 2,000 miles of track in 1850 more than quadrupled (to 8,838) by 1860. [Depew]
- By 1860      16% of Americans live in cities with 2500 or more people; a third of the nation's income comes from manufacturing. Urbanized industry is limited primarily to the Northeast; cotton cloth production is the leading industry, with the manufacture of shoes, woolen clothing, and machinery also expanding. Many new workers are immigrants. Between 1845 and 1855, some 300,000 European immigrants arrive annually. Most are poor and remain in eastern cities, often at ports of arrival. [Walter Licht, *Industrializing America: The Nineteenth Century* (1995)]
- Early 1860      **TN** Slaves currently constitute one-fourth of Tennessee's population ["Slavery." *Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture*.] and about 15% of the national population. [1860 Census] Tennessee slaves are worth \$114,000,000. [Hunt]
- Early 1860      The total value of US slaves is \$3.5 billion, the equivalent of \$1.82 trillion in 2008. The US gross national product is only about 20% higher than the value of the nation's slaves. [*Wall Street Journal*] Of the more than 8 million whites in the American South in 1860, those who own slaves numbered 383,637. Of those, 2,292 are large planters who hold more than 100 slaves. [HistoryNet]
- Early 1860      **TN** Fewer than 20% of Tennessee families own (or can afford to own) slaves. Slave owners in the state hold a median of 15.1 slaves. [<http://www.tnstate.edu/library/digital/document.htm>]
- Early 1860      In this year "only five Northern states, all with tiny black populations, [allow] black men to vote on the same terms as white." [Foner.]
- During 1860      US sailors intercept 3 American slave ships on their way to Cuba. The *Wildfire*, the *William* and the *Bogota* are carrying some 1,432 African slaves from the areas of Benin and the Congo to be sold in Cuba. Plans are made to take the slaves to Key West until they can be returned to Africa.
- Jan. 3      The Cincinnati *Commercial* reports that 36 people have been expelled from Madison County KY for "entertaining and expressing abolition sentiments." One, a school principal tells the sheriff's men who have come to evict him that he has not consciously violated any law of the Commonwealth and will be happy to go to trial. He is informed that his principles are incompatible with the public peace – the charge against him is Abolitionism, the penalty for which is expulsion from the State.
- Jan. 5      **TN** The first chapter of William Walker's *History of Nicaragua* is published in the *New York Times*. The *Times* introduction raves that Walker's "distinguished abilities and . . . antecedents . . . particularly qualify him for this task."
- “      The *Herald*, an underground abolitionist newspaper, creates a stir by printing Theodore Parker's statement that "every slave has a right to kill his master, and it may be the duty of every freeman to help him, if he can thus secure his liberty."
- The      *New York Times* sneers that the *Herald* "has been quite successful in inflaming the South and hurrying matters forward towards that bloody crisis which it is doing everything in its power to bring about."
- Jan. 6      A correspondent from the *New York Herald* writes: "The underground railroad is no

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myth. A regular organization, to which this name has been applied, stretches through every free State in the Union, and has its agents and emissaries on the borders of every slave State and along all routes traveled by fugitive slaves. It is a systemized association of negroes and republican-abolition whites, having for its object the enticing away of the slave property of the South, and its safe transportation into Canada.”

- “ The Secretary of War appoints a Board to test rifle-cannons and projectiles.
- Jan. 7 The Ohio Democratic State Convention declares its support for Stephen Douglas.
- Jan. 10 **TN** The members of the Legislature pay their annual call on Mrs. Polk, the President’s widow, at her home. She welcomes them with “dignity, grace, and courtesy.” [*Daily Nashville Patriot*]
- “ The Pemberton cotton mill in Lawrence, Massachusetts, collapses without warning in “one of the worst industrial calamities in American history.” Many employees are killed when the building falls; many more burn to death in the fire which follows. An estimated 145 workers (many of them women and children) die; 166 are injured. Southern sympathizers point out that “Negro slaves at the South are never shut up six or seven hundred at a time in a rickety factory,” and that industrialists who exploit employees have no business criticizing slave-owners. [*NYT*]
- “ The bill abolishing slavery in the Nebraska Territory, which has passed both Houses of the Legislature, is vetoed by Democratic Governor Samuel W. Black. [*Omaha Nebraskan*]
- Jan. 11 The H.M.S. *Spitfire* captures a slaver at sea. Although members of the crew are in the hold whipping the slaves to keep them quiet, the British sailors discover the slaves below decks and return them to Africa.
- “ An anti-slavery convention in Buffalo, New York, draws up a set of resolutions, proclaiming, among other things, that “Slave-holders have no right to life, liberty, or the pursuit of happiness, and should be regarded as criminals and outlaws, and be compelled to release their prey,” and that “the Governments of the Slave States are but organized bands of thieves and robbers, living by plunder and piracy on the avails of unpaid toil.” [*New York Times*, p. 1]
- Jan. 12 The Ohio Supreme Court rules that the children of Negro parents do not have the right to be admitted into the common schools of the state. [*Daily Nashville Patriot*]
- “ A statement from the Florida House of Representatives declares: “In view of our national affairs, the time for argument has passed, the time for action arrived.” [*New York Times*, p. 4]
- Jan. 13 **TN** Two Memphis buildings are unexpectedly destroyed. Both the “negro mart of Forest, Jones & Co.” and a new building under construction for the Memphis *Appeal* collapse, crushing machinery and catching several individuals inside. Two slaves (valued at \$1800 each) are killed in the collapse of the slave market; two others, as well as a carpenter in the newspaper building, are injured. [*NYT*, p. 4]
- Jan. 14 **TN** A dinner honoring former U.S. Representative Bailie Peyton, one of the founders of the Whig Party, as well as of the Constitutional Union Party (which sponsors John Bell and Edward Everett in the 1860 election), is held at the Philadelphia Academy of Music, with a large number of members of Congress in attendance. [*New York Times*, p. 4]
- Jan 15 The *New Orleans Picayune* reports that 81 free persons of color are leaving the

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- Opelousas parishes on this date to settle in Haiti. Many of them are successful landowners and will be investing considerable capital in the Haitian economy.
- Jan. 16      **TN** Edgar J. Thompson accepts the presidency of the Southern Pacific Railroad, as subscriptions for railroad construction reach \$700,000. [*NYT*, p. 4]
- Jan. 18      The *London Daily News* comments that anti-slavery feeling in the North seems to have deepened since the execution of John Brown. Rumors spread (and are hotly denied) that Southern businesses are withdrawing trade from Northern cities.
- Jan. 20      The Rev. Dr. Robert J. Breckinridge writes an open letter to his relative, Vice President John C. Breckinridge, calling for moderation in resolving the differences between North and South. Memorable among his statements is this one: “Wholly unable to comprehend how it can be to the interest of any State to secede from the Union—or how the right to secede can be considered anything else but purely revolutionary; and sees nothing in the past conduct of the Federal Government to justify secession if it were a constitutional remedy; nothing in the aspect of the times promising anything but disaster to the country, to every seceding State, and most especially to herself, from the application of any such remedy, whether by war, by revolution, by the formation of new confederacies, or by the secession of individual States.” [*New York Times*, p. 2]
- Jan. 24      The citizens of Vicksburg, Mississippi, hold a public meeting to offer sympathy and aid to the people of Lawrence, Massachusetts, after the deadly disaster in the northern city. Many news editors comment favorably on this generous impulse, the *New York Times* remarking: “This instance of Southern magnanimity and generous impulse . . . shows that the sectional estrangement which is so unhappily growing upon both the great divisions of our Confederacy, has not yet become virulent enough to overpower the sentiment of a common origin, or to rupture the bond of fraternal feeling which unites the citizens of States, however remote from one another, as members of one undivided, if not indivisible, Republic.” [p. 4]
- Jan. 25      **TN** Louisville newspapers describe the “Entertainment of the Tennessee and Kentucky Legislatures,” reporting that “The Tennessee and Kentucky Legislatures are partaking of a splendid banquet at Masonic Hall, by invitation of the City of Louisville. They leave tomorrow on a visit to Cincinnati. The city is full of strangers from contiguous states.”
- Jan. 26      The Legislature of Virginia appropriates \$500,000 “to establish and perfect an Armory at Richmond, to manufacture arms for that State.... It further authorizes the purchase of such arms, equipments and munitions as may be required for the immediate use of the State, to be distributed among the militia.” [*Daily Nashville Patriot*] It also appropriates \$150,00 toward the expenses of “crushing the Harper’s Ferry rebellion, ordering all claims to be presented within six months. [*NYT*, p. 2]
- Jan. 27      **TN** Responding to an unexpectedly warm welcome by the Governor and citizens of Ohio, visiting Representatives from Kentucky and Tennessee responded that “all we have to do to keep the Government together is to see each other oftener and know each other better.” [*New York Times*, p. 1]
- Jan. 28      **TN** The Governor and Legislature of New York extend a similar invitation to the legislators of Kentucky and Tennessee “to foster a fraternal feeling between the States.” [*NYT*, p. 4] “The whole affair was well managed – went off well and was undoubtedly the greatest Union demonstration of the season. The railway & steamboat managers showed great liberality as well as the citizens of Louisville and Cincinnati, and the State of Ohio. At Columbus the expenses were defrayed by the

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- State – at Louisville and Cincinnati by voluntary subscriptions.” [Lindsley]
- “ Naval Intelligence reports on the steamers *Sumpter*, *Mystic*, and *San Jacinto* of the African Squadron, which guards against the slave trade: “All well.”[*NYT*, p. 5]
- “ Lectures by spiritualists begin to appear frequently in newspapers. The popular interest in spiritualism will continue throughout the remainder of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.
- Jan. 30 The completion of the Mississippi Central Railroad now provides a through route by rail from New York to New Orleans in 84 hours: beginning with the 7 a.m. train from Jersey City to Washington; then the Orange & Alexandria RR and Virginia & Tennessee RR to Chattanooga; the Memphis & Charleston to Grand Junction; and finally the Jackson & Mississippi RR to New Orleans. [*New York Times*, p. 5]  
The Philadelphia *Public Ledger* points out passages in the U.S. Constitution that expressly provide that “no State shall enter into any alliance, treaty or confederation,” and that “no State shall, without the consent of Congress, keep troops or ships of war in time of peace, or enter into *any agreement or compact with another State*, or with a foreign power.”
- Feb. 1 Morris J. Raphall of New York is the first rabbi to open the House of Representatives. Raphall’s statement that biblical law guarantees the right to own slaves has made him a hero of the pro-slavery faction. [Jewish Virtual Library]
- Feb. 2 The Kansas legislature votes to prohibit slavery in the state.
- Feb. 3 The trials of Stephens and Hazlett, two of the Harper’s Ferry conspirators, continue in Charlestown, Virginia. A public school teacher in New York is taken to court for refusing to read the Bible in his classroom as required by the school system. [*New York Times*, p. 3]
- Feb. 6 The jury in Charlestown finds Andrew Stephens guilty on all counts.
- Feb. 7 The slave ship *Orion* is captured *en route* to Cuba with 1,023 slaves on board.
- Feb. 14 **TN** By an Act passed February 14, 1860, by the General Assembly the sum of \$2500 per annum is appropriated to the library, making altogether a sum of \$12,000 expended on books to the present time, exclusive of the librarian’s salary, “which is small.” In future the annual appropriation will be \$3000 per annum counting the former annual appropriation of \$500 which is still in force. [*Nashville Business Directory* 1860]
- “ The governor of Virginia declines an invitation from South Carolina to attend a conference of Southern states. He feels that legislative action by each individual state will be more effective than decisions made by “an assemblage which can exercise no legislative powers except to debate and advise.” [*New York Times*, p. 1]
- Feb. 15 **TN** South Carolina’s Governor, William H. Gist, relays a resolution from the South Carolina Legislature, sent “to each Executive of the slave-holding states” — “Resolved, unanimously, That the State of South Carolina owes it to her own citizens to protect them and their property from every enemy, and that for the purpose of military preparations for any emergency, the sum of one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) be appropriated for military contingencies.” [Gov. Isham G. Harris Papers]
- “ The Baltimore *Daily Exchange* opposes a bill under legislative consideration that would give free blacks the option of leaving the state or being re-enslaved. Their argument is based on the diminution of the labor force, amounting to 7,000 males in Baltimore County alone: “The withdrawal of such a proportion of the laboring class

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could not but be severely felt by all, and to many of the smaller farmers it would be absolutely ruinous.”

- Feb. 16      TN Andrew Jackson Donelson, a delegate from Memphis to the Tennessee Presidential convention, denounces the Buchanan administration and advocates the nomination of Tennessean John Bell for President. [*Memphis Enquirer*]
- “              The Royal Caledonian Curling Club of Montreal issues a challenge to any American club for an international curling match to be played at “Any convenient place that may be agreed on. [*New York Times*, p. 8]
- “              The Ohio Supreme Court declares unanimously that “persons having a mixture of African blood in their veins, the preponderance being white,” are entitled to vote.
- Feb. 17      Defendants Stephens and Hazlett make speeches proclaiming their innocence but forgiving their prosecutors just before both are sentenced to death by hanging for their roles in the incident at Harper’s Ferry. [*New York Times*, p. 3]
- “              TN Tennessee refrains from following Arkansas’s example of driving free blacks out of the state because of “the energetic remonstrance of Judge Catron, of the Supreme Court of the United States.” [*NYT*, p. 4] John Catron, a Nashville resident, had earlier been chief justice of the Tennessee Supreme Court. Catron, an opponent of secession, had himself fathered at least one half-black child, who was, by this time, free himself. Ironically, Catron’s sponsorship of the Dred Scott ruling that African Americans were property and had no citizenship rights, also applied to his own son. [James Hoobler, NCCA newsletter, Spring 2009]
- “              TN The population of Chattanooga is listed as exceeding 4,000. [*Memphis Weekly Bulletin*, p. 5]
- Feb. 22      Americans celebrate Washington’s birthday with speeches and parades.
- “              Shoe factory workers in Lynn and Natick, Massachusetts, go on strike for higher wages. Their strike will eventually spread throughout New England and involve nearly 20,000 workers, including women. The workers will eventually win all their major demands. [<http://www.timelines.ws/subjects/Labor.HTML>]
- Feb. 24      TN The Honorable T. W. Newman of Franklin County, Speaker of the Tennessee Senate, is charged with attempting to defraud the government by means of forged land claims. Newman denies the charges. [*Nashville Banner*]
- “              The *Chicago Tribune* reports that teachers in Southern schools are being fired for expressing anti-slavery or pro-Northern sentiments when questioned on the subject. As the year passes, more and more northerners will be run out of the South.
- Feb. 27      In a speech at New York’s Cooper Institute, Abraham Lincoln attacks slavery and insists the Federal government has “the power of restraining the extension of the institution.” [<http://showcase.netins.net/web/creative/lincoln/speeches/cooper.htm>]
- Feb. 28      Abraham Lincoln speaks to a large and enthusiastic crowd at Cooper Institute in New York; William Cullen Bryant chairs the event; Horace Greeley’s supportive remarks conclude the evening: “[Mr. Lincoln is] a specimen of what free labor and free expression of ideas [can] produce.” [*New York Times*, p. 1]
- “              TN “Parson” Brownlow writes an open letter on behalf of his son, who is accused of killing a classmate at Emory & Henry College in Emory, Virginia. Brownlow insists his son was acting in self-defense against a much larger opponent, who had bullied him and struck the first blow. [*Knoxville Whig*]

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- Feb. 29      The bill abolishing slavery in Kansas, earlier vetoed by the governor, is passed over his veto by a vote of 30 to 7. [*New York Times*, p. 4]
- Mar. 1      **TN** William B. Stokes, of DeKalb County, later a Union General, speaks to the Opposition State Convention against secession: "It may be mischievous to lull the people into security by proclaiming that the Union cannot be dissolved; ... that the ties of kindred blood, of a common lineage and language will prevent it; ... and that, if nothing else should avail, the magnitude of material interest dependent upon the preservation of the Union will prevent its dismemberment. The Union cannot be saved by such teaching. It should be remembered that the ties of blood and natural affection are often broken by repeated wrongs; that a family quarrel, of all others, when entered upon, is the most bitter and relentless ... No! The safety of the Union depends upon the united action and energies of all good men, North and South, and with the blessing of the God of our fathers upon their efforts, the Union can and will be preserved." [*NYT*, p. 2]
- Mar. 2      **TN** General William Walker announces that he is engaged in writing a book about his exploits. An extract, which has recently surfaced, explains that the purpose of his attempts to invade and conquer Nicaragua is to make that nation a slave state outside of the Union, in order to continue the slave trade, increase the number of available slaves, and, in time, bring them into the new U.S. Territories. [*NYT*, p. 4] Meanwhile, letters from Africa to American newspapers insist that the slave trade is continuing there, and even growing, in spite of naval patrols assigned to control it. Some sources claim that the slave trade from Africa to Cuba has never diminished.
- Mar. 3      **TN** D. M. Dubose, Georgia Commissioner of Deeds, writes to Governor Harris about the Presidential election campaign: "Hon. A. H. Stephens is the choice of the majority of the people of Georgia for President, but he does not seem to seek it . . . . Douglas is quite unpopular with a large number of the democracy of the State, in fact a great many are [bitter]." [Governor Isham G. Harris Papers]
- TN** Governor Isham Harris and Andrew Jackson, Jr., both petition Congress not to move Andrew and Rachel Jackson's remains from the Hermitage to Washington, D.C., citing Jackson's own wishes "to let my remains and that of my dear wife remain together at the Hermitage, a sacred spot to me, there to rest in peace and quiet until the final day of Judgment, when our Lord and Master will call for us." [*NYT*, p. 4]
- Mar. 6      In a campaign speech, Abraham Lincoln defends the right to strike. Meanwhile, Senator Douglas blames the New England shoemakers' strike on the withdrawal of Southern trade from Northern markets. [*NYT*, p. 10] Seward and Douglas seem to be emerging as the front-runners in the election, although Bell, Breckinridge, Lincoln, and a few others continue to attract followers.
- Mar. 8      The American Geographical Society is organizing an expedition to the North Pole. The expedition, to be led by Dr. Isaac Israel Hayes, hopes to confirm the existence or non-existence of an open Polar Sea, as well as to reach the Pole itself. [*NYT*, p. 4]
- The *New York Times* reports on *Reese & wife v. Cornell*, in which a woman injured by a runaway cow sues the cow's owner for damages. The judge concludes the cow, pelted by rocks thrown by unruly boys, was merely frightened and not vicious; he rules for the defendant, a decision which "will probably dispose of other cases now upon the calendar, growing out of the same bovine stampede." [p. 2]

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- Mar. 9           The Missouri legislature passes a bill excluding all free Negroes from the state on penalty of becoming slaves. They had passed a similar bill the previous year, but the governor refused to sign it.
- “               The first Japanese ambassador to the United States, Niimi Buzennokami, and his staff arrive in San Francisco.
- Mar. 13           **TN** Madison County diarist Robert Cartmell pens a spiteful journal entry over the mounting racial tensions on his plantation: “If I had of had the experience when I began that I had now I certainly would follow no business . . . that would throw me into contact with negroes. They are a mean, unprincipled roguish [*sic*] lazy set only fit to fret a man’s life out of him.” [Cartmell]
- Mar. 14           Louisiana resident Frederick Brown asks the state legislature for permission to change his surname to Southgate, since “the acts of old John Brown, of Abolition notoriety, have affixed a stigma to the name of Brown which renders it intolerable to [myself and my] family.” The legislature complies. [*New York Times*, p. 4]
- Mar. 16           Stephens and Hazlett are executed for their part in John Brown’s rebellion. Northern newspapers express outrage at the act: “The justice which hunts down the misguided followers of traitors . . . through months and years is not justice at all, but vengeance – vengeance which has been scornfully defined as ‘the pleasure of fools,’ and which assuredly is very far from being the wisdom of the strength of States.” [*New York Times*, p. 4]
- Mar. 19           William Jennings Bryan, the orator and statesman who will become known as “The Great Communicator,” is born in Illinois. He will play a key role in the 1925 Scopes “Monkey Trial.”
- “               **TN** Governor Sam Houston of Texas writes to the Secretary of War, reporting on incursions into Texas by Mexican troops and asking for Federal help. When help is slow in arriving, Houston writes an emotional letter to Major General Benjamin McCulloch, who is delaying troop action until better weather in the spring: “Sir: There will be stirring times on the Rio Grande ere long! What are you doing? See the President and Secretary of War! Sam Houston” [*New York Times*, p. 5]
- Mar. 20           Governor Stewart of Missouri vetoes a bill requiring all free Negroes to leave the state or face re-enslavement. [*New York Times*, p. 4] In his statement to the press, he quotes from the Constitution, which states that “no *person* shall be deprived of life, liberty or property without due process of law.”
- Mar. 21           **TN** The Tennessee General Assembly adopts a resolution rejecting the South Carolina proposal for a convention of Southern states: “We do not believe there is any necessity for such a convention, and do believe that all such assemblages are calculated to weaken rather than strengthen the ties of the federal Union.” [1859 House Journal, Mar. 12, 1860, p. 968; 1859 Senate Journal, Mar. 21, 1860, p. 733]
- Mar. 24           The shoemakers’ strike in Haverhill, Massachusetts, collapses, and most workers return to work. Union leaders resign in disgust, after denouncing the workers for not holding out for justice. [*New York Times*, p. 8]
- Mar. 27           **TN** Sam Houston writes to the Secretary of War, offering (since the government can’t provide enough troops to hold off attacks on the Texas border) to send in 5,000 Texas volunteers, if the government will ship sufficient arms for them. Replying that the conflict is ended, the Secretary suggests Houston is misinformed, and says no weapons will be forthcoming. [*New York Times*, p. 1]

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- Mar. 30      **TN** Sam Houston sends an inventory of the number of people killed (51) by raids into Texas, referring also to those injured or taken captive, as well as the theft of 1,800 horses. The Secretary of War sends Congress a recommendation for the raising of a regiment of Texas volunteers, which can be put in the field within thirty days. He insists he would have done so sooner but was weighing the possibility of sending a new regiment of cavalry instead. [*New York Times*, p. 1]
- Mar. 31      Dr. E. Y. Robbins embarks on a lecture tour blaming corsets and tight-lacing for the fact that diseases (he mentions cholera and consumption, in particular) kill women at a much higher rate than men. Insisting that the restriction on movement and breathing caused by women's clothing weakens their constitutions, he suggests looser clothing and more exercise. [*New York Times*, p. 11]
- “              The opposing political parties hone their platforms as the Conventions draw near.
- Apr. 2      The crews of several merchant ships claim to have been seized by British war ships while on legitimate voyages, and their officers and crewmen treated with “gross indignity,” as though they were trading in slaves.
- Apr. 3      The US Pony Express mail system begins with a 10½ -day run between California and Missouri. Riders will average 12 miles per hour over 75- to 100-mile segments between more than 150 change stations. Surprisingly, the enterprise will fail after only 18 months, because of mounting financial losses and competition from the expanding telegraph network. [<http://www.xphomestation.com/index.html>]
- Apr. 4      **TN** Having introduced his Homestead Bill to Congress in 1846, hoping to find a way to provide farms for poor families willing to work the land, Andrew Johnson finally sees its passage in both houses.
- Apr. 10      There is much interest in the outcome of the 1860 Census, since it will determine, among other things, representation in Congress of slave and free states, and also clarify the racial breakdown of the population.
- “              Alexander Stephens (GA) takes his name out of consideration for the Presidency. [*New York Times*, p. 4] He will later become Vice President of the Confederacy.
- Apr. 11      Word comes from Utah of a schism among the Mormon sect, as they reject many of Brigham Young's principles and choose Joseph Smith, Jr., as their leader. [*New York Times*, p. 4]
- Apr. 13      While the Wesleyan Methodist Church has declared itself to be against slavery, a survey of its membership discovers that 15,000 Methodists are slave-holders, possessing 100,000 slaves.
- “              A statue of statesman Henry Clay (1777-1852) is unveiled in Richmond, Virginia.
- Apr. 14      **TN** “Friends of Alexander McClure, a slave living in Nashville, helped him into a wooden box, nailed it shut, and shipped him via the new railroad to Hanna M. Johnson, in care of Levi Coffin at Cincinnati. At Seymour, Indiana, trainmen rushing to transfer freight to a Cincinnati-bound train dropped McClure's box, breaking it open and revealing him inside. Law enforcement officers arrested McClure and charged him with violating laws regarding runaway slaves.... He was extradited to Tennessee,” and returned to his owner. [Durham, p. 60] On December 20, 2008, the Jackson County, Indiana, Visitor Center dedicates a historical marker to the memory of Alexander McClure and all other fugitives from slavery. [<http://www.tribtown.com> 12/21/2008]
- Apr. 17      The Memphis *Enquirer* reports that the town of Lewisburg, Conway, County,



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- Arkansas, was entirely destroyed by fire during the preceding week. It also reports on a Tennessee bank failure: "The Lawrenceburg Bank . . . has suspended. The cashier says it will be all right again in a few days."
- Apr. 20 The Missouri & Western Telegraph Company is organized in St. Louis, with plans to extend telegraph service to Omaha, Nebraska, Council Bluffs, Iowa, and Pike's Peak. [*New York Times*, p. 4]
- Apr. 23 The Democratic Convention in Charleston, South Carolina, reaches an impasse over the issue of slavery.
- Apr. 26 **TN** A late frost severely damages the cotton crop in Tennessee. A report from Memphis indicates that the Mississippi River is stationary after a 15-foot rise.
- " A joint resolution of Congress is proposed, appointing a commission to negotiate with the Mormons to move "within a reasonable time from the limits and jurisdiction of the United States . . . , as the history of the Mormons in Missouri and Illinois shows that they cannot, owing to their peculiarities, live on terms of peace and good neighborhood with contiguous settlements." [*NYT*, p. 1]
- Apr. 27 Thomas J. Jackson , who will shortly come to be known as "Stonewall," is assigned the command of Harper's Ferry.
- " Runaway slaves frequently make the news. One of the most exciting stories comes from Troy, New York, where a fugitive slave from Virginia is captured and brought to court. There "an excited crowd of some one thousand persons," both black and white, surrounds the deputies who have him in custody and seize him, carrying him to the river, where a ferryman is waiting to take him to the other side. There he is re-arrested by a constable from West Troy, who takes him to a Justice's office. Another crowd breaks into that office and steals him away again, racing him away in a carriage. "Blows, pistol shots, and knockdowns occurred during the affair, but no one, fortunately, was seriously injured....The greatest excitement exists here in regard to the affair." [*New York Times*, p. 5]
- Apr. 28 Delegates to the Democratic Convention in Charleston battle over the platform, as the split in the party over slavery continues to widen.
- May 1 "Upon the adoption of the Minority [Northern] Platform, the delegations from Alabama, Louisiana, South Carolina, Mississippi, Texas, Arkansas and Florida, embodying 37½ votes, retired from the [Democratic] Convention, after filing with the Clerk protests which had evidently been prepared with great care in advance. Great confusion attended their departure. The delegates, forgetful of all the proprieties of the place, and the solemnity of the crisis, hooted and shouted in deafening uproar. The Delaware, Georgia and Virginia members withdrew to consult." [*New York Times*, p. 1] All that remains is to nominate a Presidential candidate, and most observers expect that Douglas will get the nomination. It is assumed at this point that the defectors from the Convention will nominate their own slate of candidates.
- " **TN** Three steamers, the *Calhoun*, the *A.T. Lacey*, and the *Tennessee Bell*, have exploded and burned in recent days, with considerable injury, property damage, and loss of life.
- " Several strong earthquakes terrify the residents of Haiti and the Dominican Republic and cause considerable damage to buildings there.
- May 4 The Democratic Convention adjourns without having chosen a candidate after 57

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- ballots. They will reconvene in Baltimore on June 18.
- “ New Orleans newspapers report on a meeting called to protest against any action committing New Orleans to secession.
- “ The Methodist General Conference, meeting at Buffalo, appoints a committee on slavery; some believe slaveholding should be a disqualification from membership.
- May 6 Giuseppe Garibaldi sets sail from Genoa to the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies.
- May 8 Twenty-nine children drown during a picnic near Camden, South Carolina, when their boat sinks in the middle of a pond.
- May 10 The Baltimore Convention of the Constitutional Union Party (the Union Party unites Whigs and Know-Nothings uncomfortable with both the Democrats and the Republicans) begins, with all states represented except South Carolina and Oregon.
- May 11 **TN** At the Union Convention in Baltimore, the delegates nominate John Bell of Tennessee for President, and Edward Everett for Vice President.
- “ Alexander Stephens announces to a Georgia newspaper that he disapproves of the Southern secession at the Charleston Democratic Convention and recommends that Georgia send delegates to the Baltimore Convention. Nevertheless, most onlookers fear that the Democratic Party is fractured beyond repair.
- “ Four hundred women gather at the Cooper Institute to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the Woman’s Rights Association. Wendell Phillips quips that, now that New York has granted women the right to be hanged, it is only a matter of time before the state grants them the right to vote, as well. [*New York Times*, p. 8]
- May 12 The Mormon group who have rallied behind the new Prophet, Joseph Smith Jr., make plans to settle in Florence, Nebraska. [*New York Times*, p. 10]
- May 15 Republican delegates begin to assemble in Chicago. The strongest candidate at this point seems to be William H. Seward of New York, followed by Salmon P. Chase of Ohio, Edward Bates of Missouri, Simon Cameron of Pennsylvania, and William Dayton of New Jersey. Other names mentioned are William P. Fessenden, Nathaniel Banks, Abraham Lincoln, and even Californian John C. Fremont, whose home states have high hopes for them, although all are considered dark horses.
- May 17 The Methodist Church reaffirms its anti-slavery position: that slave-holding is contrary to the laws of God and Nature, the Golden Rule, and the existing General Rules of the Discipline. [*New York Times*, p. 1]
- “ The Republican Convention spends the day designing the party platform: delegates call the African slave trade “a crime against humanity,” refuse to permit slavery to spread any further than the current law allows, promise to impose tariffs to protect industry, and promise to produce a homestead law which will grant free farm land to western settlers. All provisions of this platform will be deeply distasteful to the South and will contribute to Lincoln’s selection, since, in order to earn sufficient electoral votes, they must appeal strongly to Western voters.
- May 18 On the first ballot at the Republican Convention in Chicago, with 233 votes needed to win, the leaders in the voting are Seward with 173.5 votes; Lincoln with 102, Cameron with 50.5, Chase with 49, and Bates with 48. Seven other candidates receive 14 or fewer votes.
- May 18 The second ballot gives Seward 184.5, Lincoln 181, Chase 42.5, and Bates 35.

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- “ On the third ballot, Lincoln receives 231.5, and Seward 180. Seeing how close Lincoln has come to the 233 votes needed, an Ohio delegate switches 4 votes from Chase to Lincoln, triggering an avalanche of changed votes. The final count gives dark-horse Lincoln 364 votes out of 466 cast.
- “ In the Vice Presidential balloting, Hannibal Hamlin of Maine holds a substantial lead over second-place Cassius M. Clay of Kentucky after the first ballot; Hamlin easily wins the second ballot with 367 votes.
- May 19 The nation is fascinated by the Lincoln victory. The *New York Times* opens its lead article with these words: “The work of the Convention is ended. The youngster who, with ragged trousers, used barefoot to drive his father’s oxen and spend his days in splitting rails, is risen to high eminence, and ABRAM LINCOLN, of Illinois, is declared its candidate for President by the National Republican Party.... Western pride is gratified by this nomination, which plainly indicates the departure of political supremacy from the Atlantic States.” [p. 1]
- “ The publication of a new edition of Walt Whitman’s *Leaves of Grass* draws much editorial attention. Some reviewers comment on the poet’s “heartly human sympathy, his wonderful intensity, his fullness of epithet,” while other see him as “reckless and vulgar” or “uncultured, rude, defiant and arrogant.” [NYT, p. 9]
- May 21 President Buchanan receives three Japanese princes and other officials from the embassy with an imposing ceremony at the White House. [NYT, p. 5] The public is fascinated by the manners and clothing of these foreign visitors.
- May 22 *Le Nord* publishes the details of a trade treaty recently concluded between Russia and Japan. Once every week or two, a report has surfaced about the capture of a slave ship by British or American sailors – most slavers seem to be carrying a cargo of roughly 500 Africans.
- “ A massive tornado two miles wide takes more than 100 lives and leaves at least a million dollars worth of property damage along the Ohio River from Louisville to Marietta, including significant damage to every steamboat on that stretch of the river. Cincinnati alone reports half a million dollars of damage. One witness calls it “the most destructive tornado ever known.”
- May 23 **TN** A meeting is held in Memphis in support of those who seceded from the Charleston Convention.
- “ A Pony Express rider is killed in California by Indians, but the mail is saved, arriving in St. Joseph, Missouri, only 36 hours later than scheduled. [NYT, p. 4]
- May 25 William H. Seward writes to the Republican Central Committee, pledging his “sincere and earnest support” of the Lincoln-Hamlin slate. Within a few days his backers likewise pledge their support.
- May 26 Garibaldi occupies Palermo, Italy
- May 30 Sam Houston writes to a friend expressing his willingness to accept a nomination for the Presidency should his name be entered into the race. [NYT, p. 8]
- June **TN** Return Jonathan Meigs, the first State Librarian of Tennessee, announces his resignation. As a longtime Union sympathizer (he incorporated the Colonization of the Free Negroes as early as 1831), he no longer feels he can serve the state effectively. Remaining in his post for another year, he will leave for Washington, D.C., in June of 1861. Appointed by Lincoln to be clerk of the Supreme Court of the District of Columbia, he will hold that post for 28 years, until his death.

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- June 2 The citizens of Denver meet to make plans to withstand Indian attacks, having learned that a number of tribes are camped near their city, and having heard of a recent massacre in Nevada. [NYT, p. 5]
- June 5 A destructive tornado completely demolishes two towns, takes more than 150 lives, and injures scores of people along the Iowa-Illinois border. [NYT, p. 4]
- June 6 **TN** General William Walker and several officers set sail from New Orleans to Central America. [New York Times, p. 8]
- June 8 U.S. Troops are sent to northern California, where 75 people have been killed in Indian attacks. Several newspapers blame the Mormons for the attacks. [NYT, p. 2]
- June 9 The first dime novel: *Malaeska: The Indian Wife of the White Hunter*, written by Ann Sophia Stephens (1813-1886), is published by Beadle and Adams in NYC.
- “ Lincoln and Hamlin send letters to the Republican National Convention, accepting the party’s nominations for President and Vice-President.
- June 12 San Francisco newspapers announce the departure of the whaler *Syren*, which has set sail for New Bedford and Boston carrying 8,417 gallons of sperm oil, 121,437 gallons of whale oil, and 39,595 pounds of whale bone.
- June 13 A convention of Southern Democrats at Richmond meets prior to the Baltimore Convention. Most political observers believe the meeting is intended as a means of intimidating the North into accepting their terms and conditions, which include a complete repudiation of Douglas and his platform and a promise to protect slave property in the territories. [New York Times, p. 4]
- “ Three Pony Express employees are killed by Indians, and a story arrives from Salt Lake that an emigrant train was cut off in Ruby Valley, Nevada, and nearly all of the party murdered. A command of 200 soldiers are sent to investigate, and the Pony Express hires an armed guard of 100 men to protect the mails.
- June 14 An American steamer captures a slave ship in the Gulf of Mexico. The 400 slaves aboard are taken to an internment camp in Key West, where they join 1700 other individuals released from earlier ships. Witnesses describe emotional reunions that occur when new arrivals discover family members in the camp. [NYT, p. 5]
- June 18 The Democrats reconvene in Baltimore to select a nominee. Everyone expects this to be a stormy session, although the Douglas supporters expect their candidate to win by the third or fourth ballot. [NYT, p. 4]
- June 19 The Committee on Credentials spends a great deal of time deciding which slate of delegates to admit from the states that seceded earlier from the Charleston Convention. Many states have sent more delegates than are allowed; some did not hold state conventions before returning. The Mississippi delegation, even if admitted, is not expected to remain. South Carolina has sent no delegates at all.
- “ **TN** Andrew Johnson withdraws his name from consideration for President.
- June 20 The mayor of Clinton, Iowa, appeals for aid for victims of the June 5 tornado – 2,500 people are still homeless; hundreds still require medical care; the town is destitute of resources to help its citizens. [New York Times, p. 2]
- June 21 Several of the seceding delegates continue to meet in Richmond each day, merely

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- calling themselves to order and then recessing until the next day. They say they intend to keep delegates on hand until the results of the Baltimore Convention are known. [*New York Times*, p. 5]
- June 22 After the Committee on Credentials presents Majority and Minority Reports on which delegates – mostly pro-Douglas – will be permitted to remain, the anti-Douglas delegates storm out of the Democratic convention. The remaining members promptly change the floor rules to require a 2/3 vote of the members present to make decisions. Thus, the election of Douglas is virtually ensured.
- June 23 The Democratic Convention nominates Stephen Douglas for President. The *New York Times* comments: “The Baltimore Convention has closed its labors. It met to nominate a Presidential candidate, and to adopt a platform; it has ended by giving the party two of each. Its ostensible object was to harmonize the party,—to compromise points of difference, —to reconcile jealousies and distrusts,—and to nominate a candidate who should unite the sentiment and support of the party, and thus secure a victory in the coming canvass. It has accomplished exactly the opposite of all those things. It has divided and demoralized the party,—sharpened and made more prominent its differences of principle,—aggravated its sectional and personal hatreds, and nominated two candidates, each of whom will aim, specially and primarily, to defeat the other.”
- “ Much editorial discussion occurs across the country on the best way to return the Africans in Key West to their homes. Some suggest sending them in ships with steam propellers, to make the trips faster and reducing the chances of their being captured and re-enslaved during the voyage back to Africa.
- June 24 President Buchanan vetoes the Homestead Bill. Although many Southern leaders have objected to the bill, much of the American public have hoped for its passage. This is one more event that will further split the Democratic vote.
- June 25 Stephen A. Douglas is serenaded in Washington, as rumors circulate that Breckinridge will refuse to run against him.
- June 26 Some of the Africans rescued from slave ships are shipped back to Africa. Some of the more thoughtful editorial writers question the practice of returning these people to their destroyed villages or to the chiefs that sold them into slavery in the first place; few approve of the idea of returning all such individuals to Liberia. [*NYT*]
- June 29 Photographer Matthew Brady is hired to take a group photograph of the members of the U.S. House of Representatives. [*New York Times*, p. 2]
- June 30 **TN** Governor Isham Harris requests that Governor Denison of Ohio arrest two people charged with stealing a slave in Tennessee. Denison replies, “The crime of negro stealing, not being known to either the Common Law or the Criminal Code of this State ... is not of that class of crimes ... for the commission of which I am authorized, as the Executive of this State, to surrender a fugitive from the justice of a sister State; and hence I decline to issue a warrant.” [*New York Times*, p. 2]
- Summer **TN** “In the year 1860, the papers were full of secession talk.... Some were slow to accept or believe the suggestions of a coming war while others less confident looked with ominous dread on the gathering cloud that was destined ere long to drench our fair southern land with blood.” [Hawkins memoir, p. 2]
- July 1 Charles Goodyear (b.1800), inventor of the vulcanization process for rubber, dies.
- July 2 “New York – Fifth Avenue Hotel – Senator Douglas spoke a few words from the

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- balcony – great crowd.” [Lindsley]
- July 3 Astronomers around the world herald the appearance of a previously unknown comet, which will come to be known as the Great Comet of 1860.
- “ Correspondents from the West send word of renewed conflicts between the Mormons and Federal troops. [*New York Times*, p. 2]
- July 6 State political organizations are meeting across the country in order to plot their electoral strategies.
- July 7 Douglas supporters hold an anti-Breckinridge rally in Louisville in which they assert that the major issue of the election is whether union or disunion will prevail.
- July 9 A correspondent to the *New York Times* predicts that Lincoln will win the coming election – he suggests that Bell will take second place if Douglas tickets are run in the South, and that Breckinridge will if they aren’t. He suggests the possibility that Douglas may not take a single state.
- July 12 President Buchanan, in what he declares to be his last political speech, endorses the Breckinridge-Lane ticket. [*New York Times*, p. 4] Breckinridge’s supporters send out an urgent appeal for donations. [*New York Times*, p. 2]
- July 14 An attempt is made to steal the Africans held at Key West, with the intention of selling them into slavery throughout the South, but the plot is thwarted. [*NYT*, p. 5]
- “ Senator Wigfall of Texas expresses his anxiety for the survival of the Union if Lincoln is elected. He is concerned that a Republican administration will not find qualified nominees from slave states who are willing to accept appointments to government posts, from postmasters and district attorneys to cabinet members.
- July 16 The town of Adams, Massachusetts, is sued for \$25,000, the value of Columbus, an elephant that died when a bridge collapsed beneath its weight. The town says it is under no obligation to maintain roads and bridges safe for the driving of elephants over them. The judge finds for the plaintiff. [*New York Times*, p. 2]
- “ An effort to organize a Douglas party in Delaware is abandoned when no one shows up for the meeting. [*New York Times*, p. 4]
- July 17 Naval Intelligence in Norfolk reports the launch of a new gunboat, making a total of 22 steamers and 17 sailing craft currently in commission. [*New York Times*, p. 5]
- “ The *Missouri Republican* reports that the Indian tribes on the upper Missouri River seem to be engaged in a war of extermination. Government Indian agents call for the establishment of a new military outpost to quell the violence.
- July 18 “Witnessed the great eclipse.” [Lindsley] The total eclipse of the sun on this date is regarded by astronomers “as the most important which will be witnessed during the present century.” The *Times* describes it as “a black belt seventy miles wide, traveling at the speed of 1,850 miles an hour, or four times the velocity of a cannon-ball.” [p. 2] In the evening an enthusiastic ratification meeting is held in Baltimore for Bell and Everett. [p. 8]
- July 19 A steamship brings 23 African field hands into New Orleans, where they are quickly sold at auction, despite the laws against importing slaves. [*NYT*, p. 2] The first railroad reaches Kansas. [*historyorb.com*]
- “ Birth of Lizzie Borden, who, in 1892, will become one of America’s most famous murder suspects.

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- July 23      The *Houston Republic* reports that a huge fire, which started in a drug store on July 8, has destroyed the entire town of Dallas – all the stores, hotels, and private residences have been lost. No one was killed, but most residents escaped with little more than the clothes they were wearing. Within a few days the fire will be blamed on an abolitionist plot to cripple the South. [NYT ]
- “      A huge meteor is seen throughout the Northeast, “giving as much light as a full moon” over a path at least 1,000 miles long. In the commencement exercises at Haverford College, an honorary Master of Arts is presented to Quaker poet John Greenleaf Whittier.
- July 24      **TN** Southern states are suffering from a serious drought which threatens the cotton crop. Some areas have seen no rain since early April. The first bales of cotton appearing in the markets are described as “fair.” Tornados leave a trail of damage in Louisville and Cleveland.
- July 25      The 1st US intercollegiate billiard match is held between Harvard and Yale. Harvard wins. More than 50 convicts escape from the Missouri State Penitentiary. Three are killed, and seven wounded; most of the rest are quickly recaptured.
- July 26      The newspapers are full of speeches by the various candidates and their supporters. Rumors swirl of a Bell-Douglas coalition.
- July 28      Word arrives of the massacre of Christians in Syria. At least 500 are believed dead in Damascus. [NYT, p. 1]
- July 30      Rioting occurs in St. Louis, the crowds breaking into and destroying a large number of bars and houses of ill-repute. [New York Times, p. 5]
- August 1      Letters from Dr. David Livingstone about his African experiences during the past 20 years fascinate newspaper readers across the country.
- August 2      The political campaigns crisscross the country. James B. Clay and Jefferson Davis endorse Breckinridge, although it appears that he will not win the support of his home state of Kentucky; Douglas receives a warm welcome in his native Vermont. [New York Times, p. 2] Lincoln makes very few speeches. A letter from Sam Houston indicates he has no idea of withdrawing his name from consideration.
- “      **TN** According to the *Nashville Gazette*, “About 10 o’clock last night the city was brilliantly illumined with a meteor that passed from southeast to northwest. The streets were so completely lit up from the reflection of the meteor that a pin could have been readily discovered. We were in the house at the time, and thought for the moment that it was the most brilliant lightning we had ever seen.”
- August 3      Newspapers discuss a recent diphtheria epidemic. As many as 17,000 children will die of the disease each year before a vaccine is developed in the early 1900s.
- August 4      The British and American governments negotiate with China over the “coolie trade,” the exportation of Chinese laborers abroad. [NYT, p. 4]
- August 7      The colorful U.S. Zouave Cadets complete their triumphant tour of the United States with a review by the President before returning to Chicago. [NYT, p. 5]  
**TN** William Walker sets sail for Nicaragua with five ships and 500 men. [p. 4]
- August 8      The third and final ship of slaves leaves Key West for Sinon, Liberia. [NYT, p. 3]
- August 13      The three ring leaders of the plot to burn Dallas and poison its inhabitants are carted through the ruins of the town and hanged on the riverbank. [New York Times, p. 5]  
The bodies of 300 Pottowatomies and Delawares are found killed and scalped near

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- Fort Riley, Kansas. Signs indicate a huge battle, probably with other tribes. [p. 8]
- August 18 Muslim attacks on Christians in Syria have left 4,000 dead, 25,000 homeless, and schools, churches, and villages destroyed. [*New York Times*, p. 1]
- August 20 **TN** In response to a letter accusing him of turning Democrat, Parson Brownlow fires back that he will join the Democratic Party “Never! so long as there are insects in churches—weeds in gardens—fleas in hog pens—dirt in victuals—disputes in families—wars with nations—water in the ocean—bad men in America, or base women in France!”
- August 21 **TN** William Walker’s troops take Truxillo, Honduras, but lose one of their ships to the British. [*New York Times*, p. 5] The next day an editorial writer calls him “that pestilent and persevering filibuster,” and insists “a vessel of war should be dispatched instantly to pursue the filibusters and bring them home for trial.” [p. 4]
- August 24 After a ship carrying 364 Africans wrecks off the Bahamas, reports surface of other ships carrying slaves to be sold in the U.S. [*New York Times*, p. 1] The Prince of Wales, traveling in Canada, accepts an invitation to visit New York. Rumors are circulated that if Lincoln is elected, South Carolina will secede.
- August 28 The Bell-Everett strategists predict that they will carry the South except for Mississippi and South Carolina (which they expect Breckinridge will win) and Missouri and California (which they cede to Douglas). Their strategy is to concentrate on winning New York, believing that if they win those votes, they can defeat Lincoln. [*New York Times*, p. 1]
- August 29 The *Boston Courier* announces that “Lincoln is already defeated,” being convinced that another, unspecified, candidate will carry New York.
- August 30 The Radical Abolitionist Party, meeting in Syracuse, New York, nominates Gerrit Smith for President. [*New York Times*, p. 1]
- Sept. 1 The towns of Henderson and Mt. Vernon, Texas, are burned, and attempts are made to destroy other towns. A number of people are caught and hanged for these crimes, but residents become more and more fearful. [*NYT*, p. 4]
- Sept. 3 Sam Houston finally withdraws his name from contention for the Presidency and suggests that the other Democratic candidates should do the same and unite behind a single candidate (whom he does not name) who can defeat Lincoln. [*NYT*, p. 4]
- Sept. 4 An 1837 statement Abraham Lincoln made to the Illinois legislature is uncovered, surprising opponents who are looking for evidence of his abolitionist sentiments. It states his belief “that the institution of slavery is founded on both injustice and bad policy; but that the promulgation of Abolition doctrines tends rather to increase than to abate its evils. . . [and] that the Congress of the United States has no power, under the Constitution, to interfere with the institution of Slavery in the different States.”[*New York Times*, p. 4]
- Sept. 6 Word comes from Honduras that William Walker’s men are under attack by a combined force of 700 Honduran and British troops. [*New York Times*, p. 5]
- Sept. 7 An excursion steamer, *Lady Elgin*, sinks in Lake Michigan, drowning 340 people.
- Sept. 14 Two thousand French troops land to quell the disturbances in the Middle East.
- Mid- Sept. A four-way party split causes a messy and complicated election: the Democrats have split into two factions, represented by John C. Breckinridge (South) and Stephen A. Douglas (North); the Whig candidate, John Bell, carries Tennessee,



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Kentucky, and Virginia; and Abraham Lincoln represents the Republicans. The failure of the political system to hold the country together sets the stage for inevitable civil conflict.

- Sept. 18      **TN** The British war steamer *Icarus* captures William Walker and all 70 of his men and delivers them to the Honduran government. Most of the men are sick and “in a deplorable state,” and the government permits them to return to the U.S. on the condition of never again engaging in an expedition against Central America. Gen. Walker and Col. Ruttler [Rudler] are expected to be executed. [NYT, p. 7]
- Sept. 19      **TN** William V. Archer, Tennessee Commissioner of Deeds, writes to a colleague in Philadelphia: “I sincerely hope the Lincoln party will be defeated in the coming struggle and the spirit of intolerance coined by them towards their Southern brethren crushed out.” [Governor Isham G. Harris Papers]
- Sept. 20      Amos Kendall, Andrew Jackson’s Postmaster General and trusted friend, who has never expressed sympathy with the anti-slavery movement, declares that all attempts to break up the Union are treasonable and should be put down by force. [New York Times, p. 4]
- “              The Prince of Wales (Edward VII) arrives in the United States. The 19-year-old is the first member of the British royal family ever to visit the U.S.
- Sept. 21      **TN** Word comes from Honduras that William Walker and his first officer were executed by a firing squad on September 12. [Note: *In fact, Rudler was spared. The government of Honduras will grant him a pardon in December.*] Although some people mourn Walker as a hero, the consensus among newspaper editors is that he got what he deserved, and that if U.S. courts had appropriately “punished his violations of international law and of our own statutes,” he would never have caused so much terror in Central America. [New York Times, p. 4]
- Sept. 25      New York produces a Union electoral ticket for voters who are opposed to Lincoln’s nomination. It will send eighteen Douglas, ten Bell & Everett, and seven Breckinridge electors. [New York Times, p. 8]
- Sept. 27      As a speaker addresses a St. Louis meeting of Breckinridge supporters, a group of Douglas enthusiasts attempt to break up the meeting. In the ensuing melee, two Breckinridge Democrats are “slightly stabbed.” [New York Times, p. 4]
- Oct. 2        **TN** Further word comes from Honduras about the death of William Walker. The Honduras authorities had quickly released everyone in the Walker party who stated they were American citizens. “Walker and Rudler, however, would not consent to claim the protection of the United States flag. They claimed to be citizens of Nicaragua .... It is said, positively, that had they claimed to be American citizens, they would also have been given up with the rest.” [New York Times, p. 2] In a few days, when his noble last words are published, newspapers will commend the Honduran government for their mercy to the “gratuitous disturbers of the tranquility of the country,” and remark, “It is a great pity that a man capable of such sentiments should have led a life during which he caused so many disasters to humanity.”
- Oct. 4        The slave ship *Erie* is captured off the coast of Africa with 897 captives on board. Edward Albert, the Prince of Wales, arrives in Washington, D.C., where he meets with President Buchanan. [New York Times, p. 4]
- Oct. 8        Newspapers are filled with campaign news as the various Democratic candidates

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criss-cross the country talking to voters. The first telegraph line opens between Los Angeles and San Francisco.

- Oct. 9 A huge gathering of Lincoln opponents takes place at the Cooper Institute with the purpose of forming a Union party. Attendees cheer a large number of speeches, many resolutions, even a campaign song. [*New York Times*, p. 1]
- Oct. 12 The New Orleans *Picayune* reports on damage from a recent destructive hurricane, which has “scarcely been equaled for many years” – facilities for processing sugar cane have been hard hit, much of the cotton crop is destroyed, and buildings are damaged in cities and towns all along the coast.
- Oct. 13 The first U.S. aerial photograph is taken . . . from a balloon over Boston.
- Oct. 15 11-year-old Grace Bedell of Westfield, NY, writes a letter to presidential candidate Abraham Lincoln, suggesting he might improve his appearance by growing a beard.
- Oct. 17 The Army tests a 15-inch gun with a 300-pound shell and a range of more than a mile. The Secretary of War orders the trials to continue. [*NYT*, p. 5]
- “ The first professional golf tournament – the British Open – is held at Scotland’s Prestwick Club. Willie Park wins with a 164.
- Oct. 18 New York City military recruiting offices report the registration of the largest number of recruits in their history. [*New York Times*, p. 2] The Adjutant General of Virginia is granted \$500,000 to buy armaments for his state. [p. 4]
- Oct. 19 Reports of slave insurrections come from Kentucky, Mississippi, and Virginia.
- Oct. 22 Senator Douglas hotly denies the rumors that he is the author of the LeCompton Constitution. [*NYT*, p. 2]
- Oct. 23 **TN** Robert Cartmell writes this journal entry: “Heard Stephen A. Douglas, candidate for President of the U. States speak in Jackson today. I think the largest crowd I ever saw in the place was there today. He spoke near 2 hours to a remarkably attentive audience.” [Cartmell]
- Oct. 24 A huge demonstration of Democratic Fusion supporters (advocating that the supporters of Douglas, Breckinridge, Bell, and Everett come together behind one candidate) results in a march of 25,000 people through New York City. [*NYT*, p. 1]
- Oct. 25 **TN** Bell supporters (dubbed the “tinkle-tinkle party” by others) hold a huge rally and barbecue in Murfreesboro.
- “ Meanwhile, in the North, 400,000 members of a drilled and uniformed Republican paramilitary group known as the “Wide-Awakes” serve as political police in escorting party speakers and in preserving order at public meetings, and hold torchlit parades, often late at night, in support of Lincoln and other Republican candidates. [*New York Herald*.] (Note: When Lincoln calls out all militia groups in April 1861, the Republican Wide Awakes, the Democratic “Douglas Invincibles,” and similar parade groups, though adversaries before the election, will volunteer en masse for the Union army.)
- “ Much of Kansas is in the grip of a severe famine.
- Oct. 26 **TN** Samuel Henderson, a Williamson County medical doctor and farmer, who lives near Franklin, writes in his diary: “This day went to Nashville to hear Douglass the little Giant speak\_While in the crowd had my pocket picket\_ [*sic*]” [Samuel Henderson Diary, 1834-1876]

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- Nov. 1 Newspapers carry rumors of a Disunion Plot, centered in the Office of the Department of the Treasury. Critics blame the treasonous talk on the weakness and immorality of the Buchanan Administration. The *Washington Star* claims that rumors of Disunion can only be quieted by Mr. Lincoln “at once satisfying the South that he designs making a conservative Whig Administration, rather than the Republican Abolition Administration his Northern and Eastern supporters demand at his hands.”
- “ The *Charleston Mercury* blames what it perceives as Southern apathy on “the absence of that great middle class which cannot exist in a country where the population is divided into lords of the soil and serfs.”
- “ A boiler explosion on the steamship *H.R.W. Hill*, bound from Memphis to New Orleans, kills 30 people and scalds 50 more. [NYT, p. 4]
- “ Theatrical manager Laura Keene wins a lawsuit over production rights of the play *Our American Cousin*. This show will later become infamous as the play Lincoln was watching on the night of his assassination. [Philadelphia Ledger]
- Nov. 3 TN “Grand Breckinridge blowout.” [John Berrien Lindsley diary, Nashville]
- Nov. 5 TN “Grand Bell blowout.” [Lindsley]
- “ Virginia holds a muster and parade of troops in Richmond. Many conjecture that the South is arming for the coming conflict. The *Charleston Mercury* comments that South Carolina is expected to take the lead in any secession movement, but that other Southern states, particularly border states, will not rush to follow.
- Nov. 6 Federal troops take possession of the Arsenals at Augusta, Georgia, and Fayetteville, North Carolina, as the election begins. [NYT, p. 5]
- “ A 4-way party split causes a complicated election: the two Democratic factions are represented by John C. Breckinridge (who will carry most Southern states) and Northern candidate Stephen A. Douglas (winning only Missouri and New Jersey); the Whig candidate, John Bell, will win Tennessee, Kentucky, and Virginia; Abraham Lincoln alone represents the Republicans. Lincoln’s victory will be determined by the electoral college, where he wins by a wide margin. The failure of the political system to hold the country together sets the stage for inevitable civil conflict. However, it will be many days before all the votes are counted, the Electoral College can meet, and the entire country can be notified of the outcome.
- “ TN “Election passed off quietly. About 10 P.M. known that Kentucky had gone for Bell. Tennessee looks that way.” [Lindsley]
- Nov. 7 TN “Wednesday – 9 A.M. – New York, Pennsylvania for Lincoln – his election conceded. Missouri for Douglas. Maryland for Breckinridge.” [Lindsley]
- Nov. 8 TN “Maryland for Bell now. Virginia claimed by Bell & Breckinridge. Tennessee pretty much conceded to Bell. New Jersey against Lincoln.” [Lindsley]
- Nov. 9 Abraham Lincoln is officially elected President of the United States.
- “ TN “Maryland for Breckinridge.” [Lindsley]
- Nov. 13 With Lincoln’s election, the secession debate becomes more intense, as powerful speakers across the nation argue about whether the Union will survive. South Carolina’s legislature calls a special convention to consider secession. Virginia, Mississippi, Maryland, and North Carolina insist they will not secede, whatever other states decide. A few Southern Senators resign. Senator Douglas is struck by a

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- barrage of rotten eggs in Montgomery, Alabama, where the citizens are demonstrating increasing support for secession. [*New York Times*]
- “ **TN** Headlines in the Nashville *Banner* exclaim, “The Federal Union—It Must and Shall Be Preserved!” The Nashville *Patriot* suggests “South Carolina [should] adjourn their Legislature as soon as it fixes up the electoral business, and then go home, strap down their pantaloons, and hire somebody to hold them until old ABE gets to meddling with matters that don’t concern him, and *then* feather in upon him and wear him out!” The Memphis *Enquirer* contends that no state other than South Carolina is likely to secede.
- “ The Philadelphia *Press* literary critic announces the issuance of Charles Dickens’ new novel, *Great Expectations*, which is being serialized in *Harper’s Weekly*.
- Nov. 15 **TN** “Still doubtful whether Missouri is for Douglas or Bell – and Virginia for Breckinridge or Bell.” [Lindsley] (Modern voters cannot realize how long it took in the 1800s for news of the outcome of the election to reach distant areas.)
- “ An 1851 letter from Henry Clay concerning secession is widely quoted in the newspapers: “The power, the authority, and the dignity of the Government ought to be maintained, and resistance put down at every hazard. The duty of executing the laws and suppressing insurrections is without limitation of qualification; it is coextensive with the jurisdiction of the United States. No human Government can exist without the power of applying force, and the actual application of it in extreme cases. My belief is that if it should be applied to South Carolina, in the event of her secession, she would be speedily reduced to obedience, and that the Union, instead of being weakened, would acquire additional strength.” [*New York Times*, p. 1]
- Nov. 16 There is growing interest in the number of U.S. troops stationed in various locations around the South: eight companies of Artillery at Fort Monroe, Va.; one company at Fayetteville Arsenal, N.C.; two companies at Fort Moultrie, S.C.; one company at Augusta, Ga.; one company at Key West, Fla.; one company at Barancas Barracks, near Pensacola, Fla.; one company at Baton Rouge, La. The total is about 800 men, plus 120 U.S. Marines at Norfolk and Pensacola. [*New York Times*, p. 4]
- Nov. 17 **TN** Samuel Kirkman, St. Louis, formerly of North Alabama, writes to Gov. Harris, urging him to “invite the South to a conference at Nashville on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of January – this will quiet the South & its united voice would be heard & all reasonable demands conceded by the North.” [Governor Isham G. Harris Papers] Meanwhile, Paul Octave Herbert, a former Democratic Governor of Louisiana, urges secession throughout the South. [*New York Times*, p. 1]
- Nov. 19 The Georgia legislature passes a bill appropriating \$1,000,000 to arm and equip the state. The Florida legislature has passed a resolution promising “decided action” in case of the election of a Republican President, requiring the Governor to convene the legislature. [*New York Times*, p. 1]
- Nov. 20 **TN** “Virginia for Bell.” [Lindsley]
- Nov. 21 President Buchanan and his cabinet speak out firmly against secession.
- Nov. 21 A huge Republican jubilee is held in Springfield, Illinois, Lincoln’s hometown. Lincoln himself speaks briefly to the “immense crowd.” All the public buildings and “a vast number of stores and dwellings are ablaze with fantastic devices.” [*New York Times*, p. 1] Neighboring Missouri agrees to stand by the Union.

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- Nov. 23      Montgomery's Marauders (led by James Montgomery) and Charles Jennison terrorize Kansas. The Army sends 500 men to Fort Scott to destroy them. Missouri prepares to defend its border against the raiders. [NYT]
- Nov. 26      Official reports on the election results are received from New York and Philadelphia, which have given the majority of their votes to Lincoln, as has California as well, where the results were much closer. [NYT] In an effort to avoid secession, Georgia suggests a compromise involving a change in the Fugitive Slave laws.
- Nov. 28      Winter storms in the Great Lakes region cause a number of shipwrecks with a considerable loss of lives and cargo. [New York Times, p. 1]
- Dec. 1      TN A correspondent for the *New York Times* reports on his trip through the South: "On reaching Nashville, I found the cockade fever quite prevalent, but confined to the younger portion of the community ... few of whom dreamed or cared for the fatal consequences that must fall upon them, more especially in the event of a dissolution of this union ... I found the older and more reliable members of society preparing themselves for what they termed a dreaded future ... In Tennessee business is almost entirely suspended. On the principal thoroughfares of the capital, it seemed to my eye as a Sabbath-day. The banks refuse accommodation to all alike ... In Memphis I found business about the same but people much more of the fire-eating order than were those of Nashville. This can be readily accounted for from the proximity of Memphis to the states of Arkansas, Mississippi and Louisiana." [p. 8]
- Dec. 2      In his final speech to Congress, President Buchanan anticipates the impending Southern secession, arguing that secession is clearly unconstitutional (as opposed to the right of revolution), but that a Union of consent cannot rest on force. In other words, no state has the right to oppress another state – if a single state secedes, the Union is dead. [Hunt]
- Dec. 3      In a letter ex-President Franklin Pierce expresses great sadness at the possible dissolution of the Union. "Can it be that this flag, with all the stars in their places, is no longer to float at home, abroad, and always as an emblem of our *united* power, common freedom, and unchallenged security? Can it be that it is to go down in darkness, if not in blood, before we have completed a single century of our independent national existence?" [New York Times, p. 1]
- “      “A large and excited meeting was held [in Memphis], at which resolutions were passed accepting the ‘irrepressible conflict’; calling upon the Governor to convene the Legislature: directing that a State Convention be called, and telling the Southern States that Tennessee will stand by the action of the Southern Convention for weal or woe.” [New York Times, p. 1]
- Dec. 6      The South Carolina House of Representatives passes a bill providing for an armed military force and calling up 10,000 volunteers. Meanwhile, the states cast their Electoral votes and post them to Washington – New York & Pennsylvania for Lincoln, Maryland & Delaware for Breckinridge, Virginia & Tennessee for Bell, New Jersey is split – 4 for Lincoln, 3 for Douglas ... A rumor circulates that Lincoln will offer Bell a position in his cabinet.
- Dec. 7      TN Governor Harris calls an extra session of the Legislature “to consider the present condition of the country.”
- “      The Mobile *Register* announces that Capt. West, who had gone to Truxillo to

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retrieve the remains of William Walker, has returned without the body, because the laws of Honduras strictly forbid exhumation.

- Dec. 8 A New York slaver is captured with 700 Africans on board.
- Dec. 9 The only real outcome of a meeting of Southern Senators in Washington, D.C., is the assurance that eight states are likely to secede. A letter to the editor of the *New York Times* speaks of the possible secession of Texas as “the blackest blot of ingratitude on the page of history. Her independence and annexation alone cost the United States about 50,000 men and \$60,000,000, and, in addition, the United States afterward paid off her debt, amounting to some \$8,000,000 more.”
- Dec. 11 Many sources suggest a revision of the Fugitive Slave Bill in order to avert the coming conflict; unfortunately, the suggested revisions are unfocused, running the gamut from eliminating the bill to enlarging its scope.
- Dec. 12 Increased activity at various South Carolina fortifications is viewed with alarm; 400 Federal troops are said to be engaged in strengthening the fortifications at Fort Sumter. A number of Naval officers from Southern states express their intention to resign in case of secession, rather than to serve “a foreign state.” [NYT, p. 8]
- Dec. 14 The Charleston *Courier* believes any compromise at this point to be impossible. The South Carolina Senate adopts a report appropriating half a million dollars for the exigencies which secession may create. Many Southern newspapers now refer to secession as a foregone conclusion, although a few still seem to believe that the Constitution will secure the South all its rights.
- Dec. 15 Secretary of State Cass resigns, amid speculation that other cabinet members will follow; rumors circulate that President Buchanan will actually abdicate before the end of his term. [NYT] Editorial writers conjecture that England and France’s support for Lincoln’s anti-slavery views would isolate a Southern confederacy. Britain is reportedly looking for another cotton supply to reduce its dependence upon the United States.
- Dec. 17 A fugitive slave is extradited from Canada and turned over to U.S. authorities.
- Dec. 19 The North Carolina Senate passes a \$300,000 appropriations bill to arm the state. As South Carolina initiates its secession from the Union, news correspondents from Washington, D.C., insist there will be no civil war.
- “ Explorer David Livingstone writes from the interior of Africa that he has located a suitable location for his mission. [New York Times, p. 2]
- Dec. 20 The Romney (Va.) *Argus* reports a substantial fall in the value of slaves, who are now bringing little more than half their prices from a year earlier. “In the Frontier States rates are better maintained than further southward, for the reason that there is less danger of servile revolt there than in the Cotton States.”
- “ TN In a convention called by John C. Calhoun to consider secession, **South Carolina’s representative delegates vote 169-0 to withdraw from the Union.** This move, foreshadowed by the demands of the Fire-Eaters (led by Edmund Ruffin, William Yancey, and others) during the 1850 Nashville Convention, has intensified in the face of growing Southern opposition to Jacksonian politics and to Northern abolition and feminist movements. A Virginia convention of Minute Men pledge 100 of their number to South Carolina as soon as their services are required.
- Dec. 21 Reports circulate that President Buchanan has ordered Major Anderson to surrender

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the Charleston forts if they are attacked. The *New York Times* proposes that if such reports are true, impeachment proceedings must be begun upon a President “who shall thus betray the Government he was sworn to administer.” [p. 4]

- Dec. 24      **TN** Sen. Andrew Johnson is burned in effigy in Memphis on this Saturday night.
- Dec. 25      **TN** More and more people sense impending conflict. William Luther Bigelow Lawrence, a lawyer in Nashville before the Civil War and a struggling school-master afterwards, writes this in his diary on Christmas Day: “I am of the opinion that our beloved Union is drawing to an ignominious end. Lincoln has been elected President & the whole South is shaken from center to circumference—God grant that we may be preserved from civil war & a servile insurrection.” [William L. B. Lawrence Diary]
- Dec. 26      Major Robert Anderson, under cover of darkness, concentrates his small federal force at Ft. Sumter, South Carolina.
- Dec. 27      Governor Sam Houston announces an extraordinary session of the legislature to open on January 21 in order “to consider the present crisis ... The secession feeling is in the ascendant.” [*New York Times*, p. 1]
- Dec. 28      An 1858 Lincoln speech is widely quoted in newspapers across the country. Among other things, it says, “All legal distinctions between individuals of the same community, founded in any such circumstances as color, origin and the like, are hostile to the genius of our institutions, and incompatible with the true history of American liberty. Slavery and oppression must cease, or American liberty must perish.” [*New York Times*, p. 4]
- “      **TN** Memphis: “An immense and enthusiastic Union meeting was held here to-day. It was addressed by Hon. Neill S. Brown and others. Resolutions were passed opposing separate State secession; against coercion; and favoring a Convention of the Southern States to demand their rights, and if refused to take immediate action.” [*New York Times*, p. 1]
- Dec. 31      **TN** South Carolina troops take possession of the Charleston Arsenal, which contains many thousand arms and military stores. Volunteers have arrived from other Southern states, among them officers of the Army and Navy and West Point graduates. Capt. S. M. Morgan, of Tennessee, has offered his services and been accepted. [*New York Times*, p. 1]

Important fact: Baled cotton remained the number one American export item from 1860 to 1900, rising from \$192 million to \$243 million. During the period its proportion of total exports dropped from approximately 60 percent to about 17 percent, as sales of meat, grain, petroleum products and machinery grew.

Notable people born in 1860:

- Jane Addams, social reformer, pacifist, and founder of Hull House in Chicago; she will be the first American woman to receive the Nobel Peace Prize (1931);

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- Anton Chekhov (d.1904), Russian playwright and short story writer;
- Willem Einthoven, Dutch physiologist, inventor of the electrocardiogram;
- Edward Albert Filene, the merchant who established the U.S credit union movement;
- Hamlin Garland, American author;
- William Keith Kellogg, founder of the W.K. Kellogg cereal company in Battle Creek, Michigan;
- Juliette Low, founder of the Girl Scouts;
- Gustav Mahler, Austrian composer;
- Joseph Carey Merrick, the "Elephant Man";
- Annie Oakley, sharpshooter and entertainer;
- John J. Pershing (d.1948), aka "Black Jack," who would lead the campaign against Pancho Villa in Mexico and command the American Expeditionary Force in France during World War I;
- Anna Marie Robertson (Grandma Moses, d.1953), American folk painter, best known for her paintings of rural life – she first began painting at the age of 78.

### Other important facts and events from 1860:

- In Britain Queen Victoria decrees that men who choose to remain unmarried will not be welcome in Her Majesty's Rifle Corp. She holds that "normal married life improves a man's marksmanship."
- Svend Foyn invents the harpoon cannon for whaling.
- Nathaniel Hawthorne publishes *The Marble Faun*, the last of his four major romances. Set in Italy, the novel's theme is guilt and the fall of man.
- Ralph Waldo Emerson publishes a new collection of essays, *The Conduct of Life*.
- George Eliot, aka Mary Ann Evans, writes her novel *The Mill on the Floss*.
- Charles Dickens writes his novel *Great Expectations*.
- Henry Wadsworth Longfellow publishes his poem "Paul Revere's Ride," (The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere).
- English inventor Frederick Walton makes "linoleum" out of linseed oil.
- The martini cocktail is invented.
- The British Open is 1st held at the Old Course in St. Andrew's. The prize is a red leather belt with a silver buckle. The belt is retired in 1872 and replaced with a silver claret jug.
- Golf balls begin to be made of gutta percha, a tree sap.
- Milton Bradley starts a lithograph company in Springfield, Massachusetts. In 1866 Bradley launches the board-game industry in North America with "The Checkered Game of Life," which is based on earlier representations of life as a board game. By 1880 he will have expanded into manufacturing jigsaw puzzles.
- TN Sewanee Mining Co. is reorganized and incorporated as Tennessee Coal and Rail-road Company.
- The release of carbon into the atmosphere is estimated to have been about 93 million tons. Today the United States alone releases over 6 billion metric tons annually, and that is only about 22% of the total carbon release for the entire world. Between 1860 and 1958 industry burned fossil fuel at a rate that doubled every two decades or so, injecting a total of more than 76 billion tons of carbon into the air.



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