

## The Election of 1860

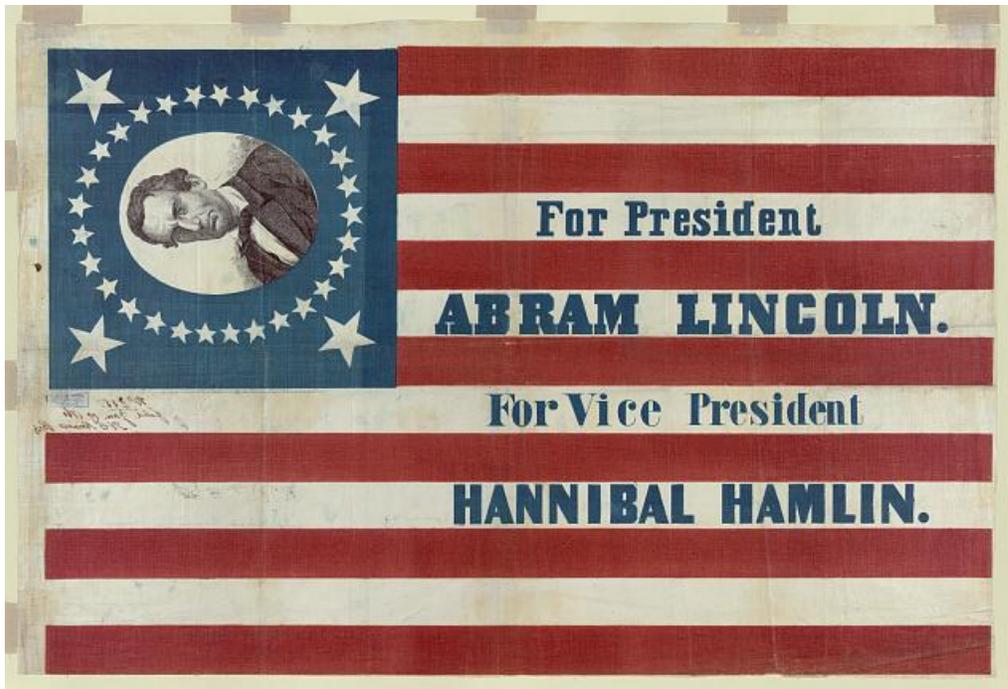
The Election of 1860 set the stage for the Civil War in the United States. The 1850s were a struggle for the free and slave states and arguments had gone on for a while about slavery in new western states, well before the election in 1860.

Industrialization had taken hold in the north and in the south with the cotton gin allowing for greater cotton production. This also meant that in the north, more jobs were opening in free states and in the states, slaves were more valuable to keep up with more cotton being produced. Railroads were to be built to the west with people moving west to create new homes in the new states that were forming. The new states were still open to be either slave states or free states.

By the time for the election of 1860, four political parties were formed, with the Democratic Party (which had now the Northern and Southern divisions), a new Constitutional Union Party, and the Republican Party of the North. Each party had its own ideas for the country at the time. Each party nominated their own candidate for the office of President of the United States. The Northern Democratic Party nominated Stephen Douglas from Illinois (a free state), whose platform was to allow slavery in the western new states as settlers needed. The Southern Democratic Party nominated John C. Breckenridge, a Kentuckian, pro-slavery candidate who was holding the current position as Vice-President under President James Buchanan. The Constitutional Union Party nominated John Bell, former senator from Tennessee (a slave state). This party did not last beyond the 1860 election. They wanted to keep the Union and Constitution of the United States intact. The last party was the Republican Party who nominated inexperienced Abraham Lincoln of Illinois (a free state). Lincoln argued against slavery in his debates with Douglas.

The Republican Party of the North eventually won the electoral

vote with Abraham Lincoln. The southern states did not have a strong enough effect on the electoral votes, which led to President Lincoln's election to office in 1860. Before President Lincoln was inaugurated, the state of South Carolina wanted to secede from the United States.



The president at that time, President James Buchanan, would not allow it on the grounds of secession as illegal. Before Lincoln took office, several other southern states did end up seceding with South Carolina, these included Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, and Texas. These states then began their own Confederacy with their own government.

References:

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Title: For president, Abram Lincoln. For vice president, Hannibal Hamlin

URL: <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2003656570/>

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