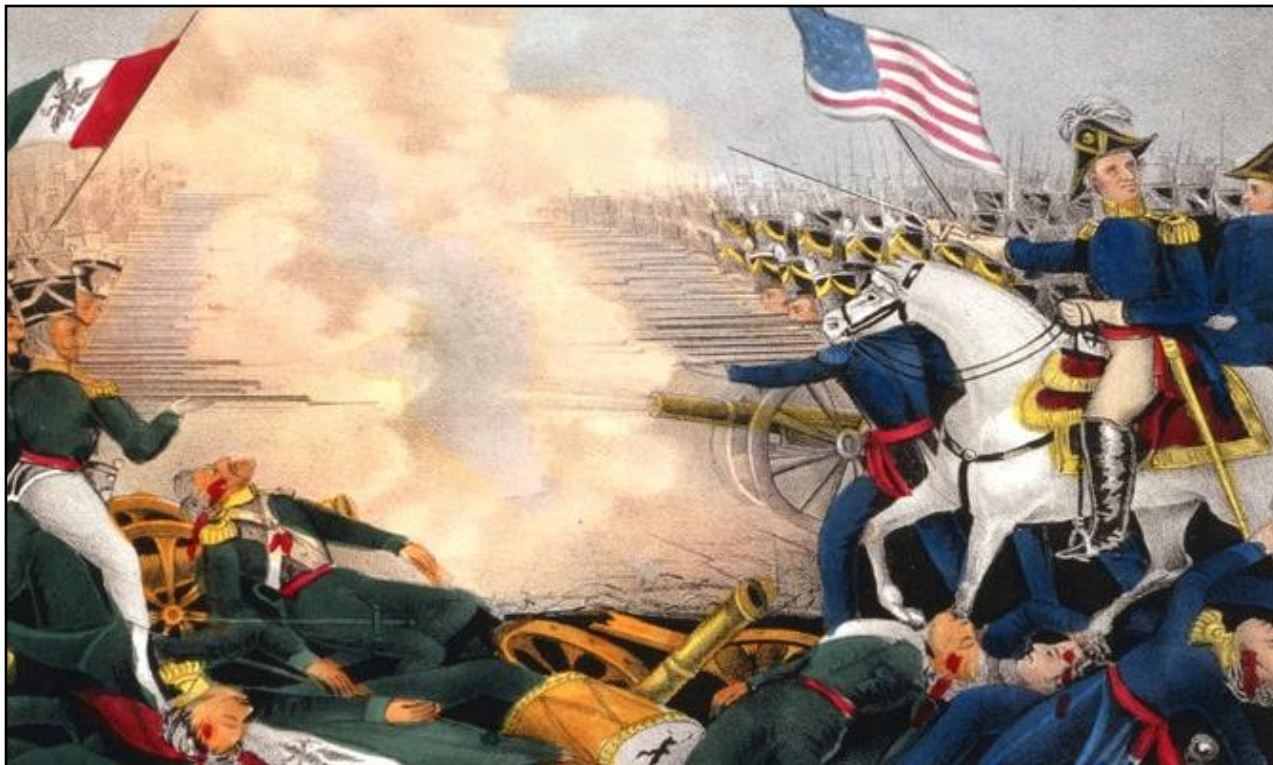


A historical painting depicting a frontier settlement. In the foreground, several people are gathered around horses. In the middle ground, a cluster of white tents is pitched on a sandy plain. To the left, there is a simple wooden building. The background is filled with a line of trees under a pale sky. The overall scene suggests a temporary encampment in a new, undeveloped area.

# The Big Issue



# Impact of the War With Mexico

The aftermath of the Mexican-American War significantly influenced the debate over slavery expansion

The proposal of the Wilmot Proviso by Representative David Wilmot highlighted the conflict between Northern and Southern interests regarding the status of slavery in the newly acquired territories

Despite fierce opposition from the South, the passage of the Wilmot Proviso in the House of Representatives underscored the growing divide over the issue of slavery

The emergence of the Free-Soil Party marked a critical moment in American politics, as it represented a coalition of abolitionists and Northern opponents of slavery who sought to prevent its spread into the western territories

By selecting Martin Van Buren as their candidate and adopting the slogan "Free soil, free speech, free labor, and free men," the Free-Soilers demonstrated their commitment to preserving the integrity of free soil in the West, setting the stage for future political realignments

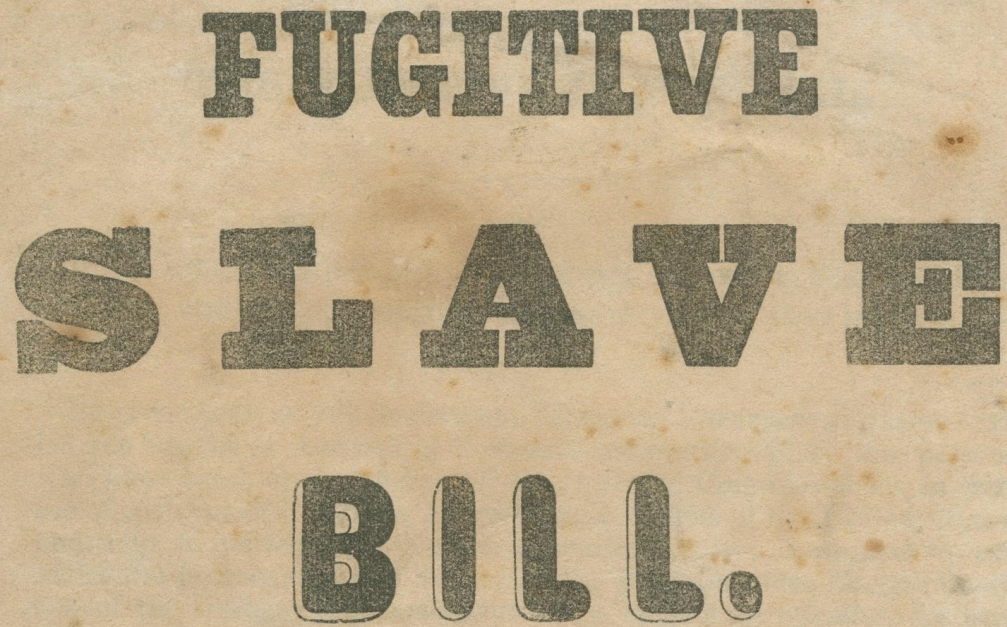
# Formation of the Free-Soil Party

# Congress Struggles for a Compromise

The California Gold Rush precipitated a crisis over the admission of California as a free state, prompting Congress to grapple with the issue of slavery expansion

Henry Clay's Compromise of 1850 aimed to address the sectional tensions by offering concessions to both the North and South

However, the passage of the compromise measures merely served to temporarily alleviate tensions rather than resolve the underlying conflict over slavery

The image shows the title page of a document, likely a bill or act, printed on aged, yellowish paper. The text is arranged in three lines, centered horizontally. The first line reads "FUGITIVE" in large, bold, serif capital letters. The second line reads "SLAVE" in the same large, bold, serif capital letters. The third line reads "BILL." in a slightly smaller, bold, serif capital font. The paper shows signs of age, including some foxing and discoloration.

**FUGITIVE  
SLAVE  
BILL.**

# **The Fugitive Slave Act**

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The enactment of the Fugitive Slave Act as part of the Compromise of 1850 intensified Northern opposition to the institution of slavery

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The law required citizens to aid in the capture of runaway slaves and denied accused individuals the right to testify in their defense, leading to widespread outrage and resistance in the North

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Figures like Frederick Douglass emerged as vocal critics of the Fugitive Slave Act, advocating for civil disobedience as a means of opposing unjust laws



# The Underground Railroad

- The Underground Railroad played a crucial role in facilitating the escape of enslaved individuals to freedom in the North and Canada
- Led by courageous conductors like Harriet Tubman, the network provided clandestine routes and safe havens for escaping slaves, challenging the institution of slavery and highlighting the moral imperative of abolitionism



# New Territorial Troubles

The passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act by Congress reignited the debate over slavery expansion in the territories

Stephen A. Douglas's doctrine of popular sovereignty, which allowed settlers to determine the status of slavery in their respective territories, sparked violent conflicts in Kansas between pro-slavery and anti-slavery forces

The Act's repeal of the Missouri Compromise line further polarized the nation and contributed to the disintegration of the political parties

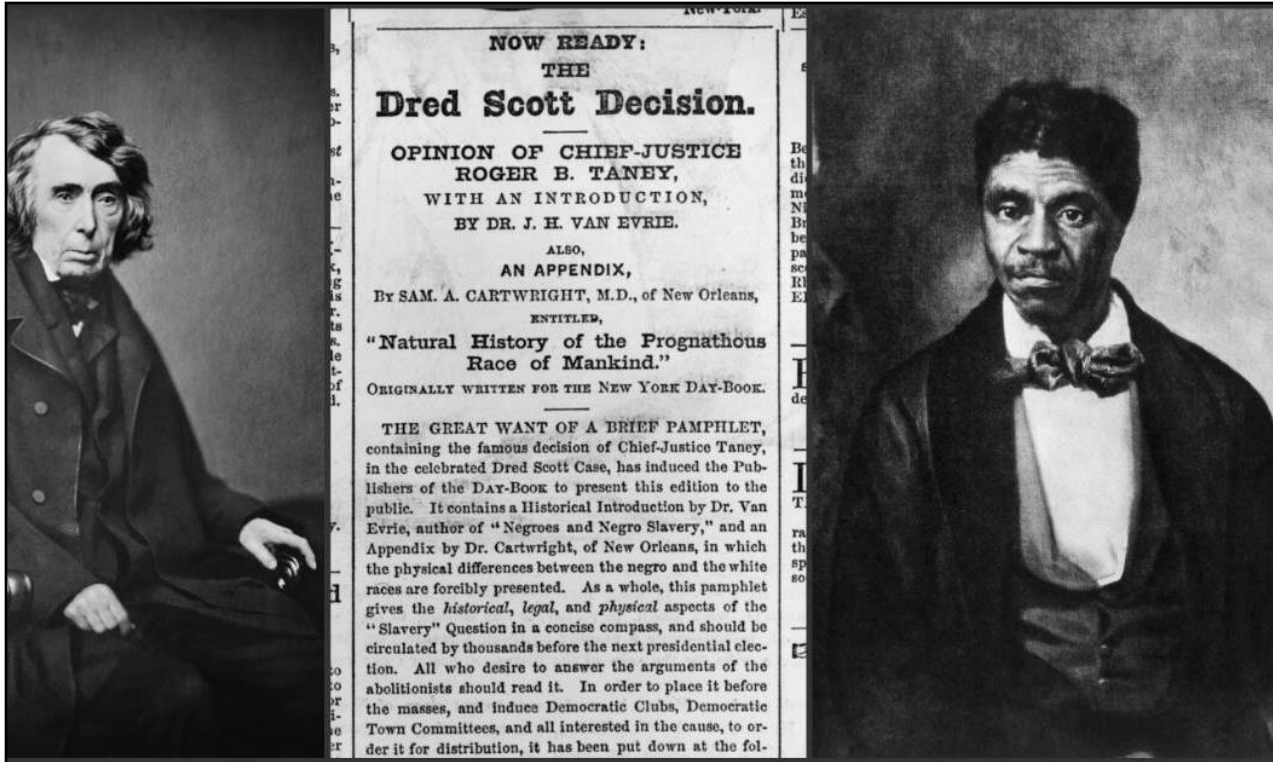
# Bleeding Kansas



"Bleeding Kansas" became a battleground for competing visions of the West, as pro-slavery and anti-slavery settlers clashed over the future of the territory

The fraudulent elections and violent confrontations underscored the intensity of the sectional conflict and foreshadowed the broader struggles that would culminate in the Civil War





# Dred Scott Decision

The Supreme Court's ruling in the Dred Scott case dealt a significant blow to the anti-slavery movement by declaring that Congress lacked the authority to prohibit slavery in the territories

Chief Justice Roger B. Taney's assertion that African Americans were not entitled to citizenship further entrenched racial divisions and heightened tensions between North and South



- The Election of 1860:  
The election of 1860 underscored the deepening divisions within the nation, as Abraham Lincoln's victory on a platform opposed to slavery expansion triggered Southern secession

# Formation of the Republican Party

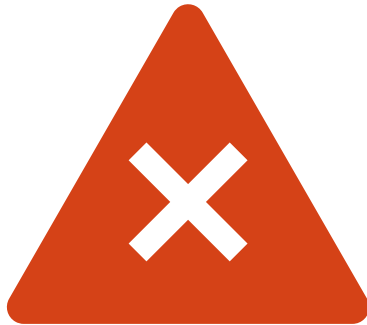
# Secession

The secession of Southern states in response to Lincoln's election marked a decisive rupture in the Union

The formation of the Confederate States of America and the subsequent declaration of secession underscored the irreconcilable differences between North and South and set the stage for the outbreak of civil war



# Failed Compromises



Efforts at compromise, such as Crittenden's Compromise, ultimately proved futile in the face of entrenched sectionalism and ideological divisions



Abraham Lincoln's refusal to compromise on the issue of slavery highlighted the irreconcilable nature of the conflict and paved the way for the dissolution of the Union

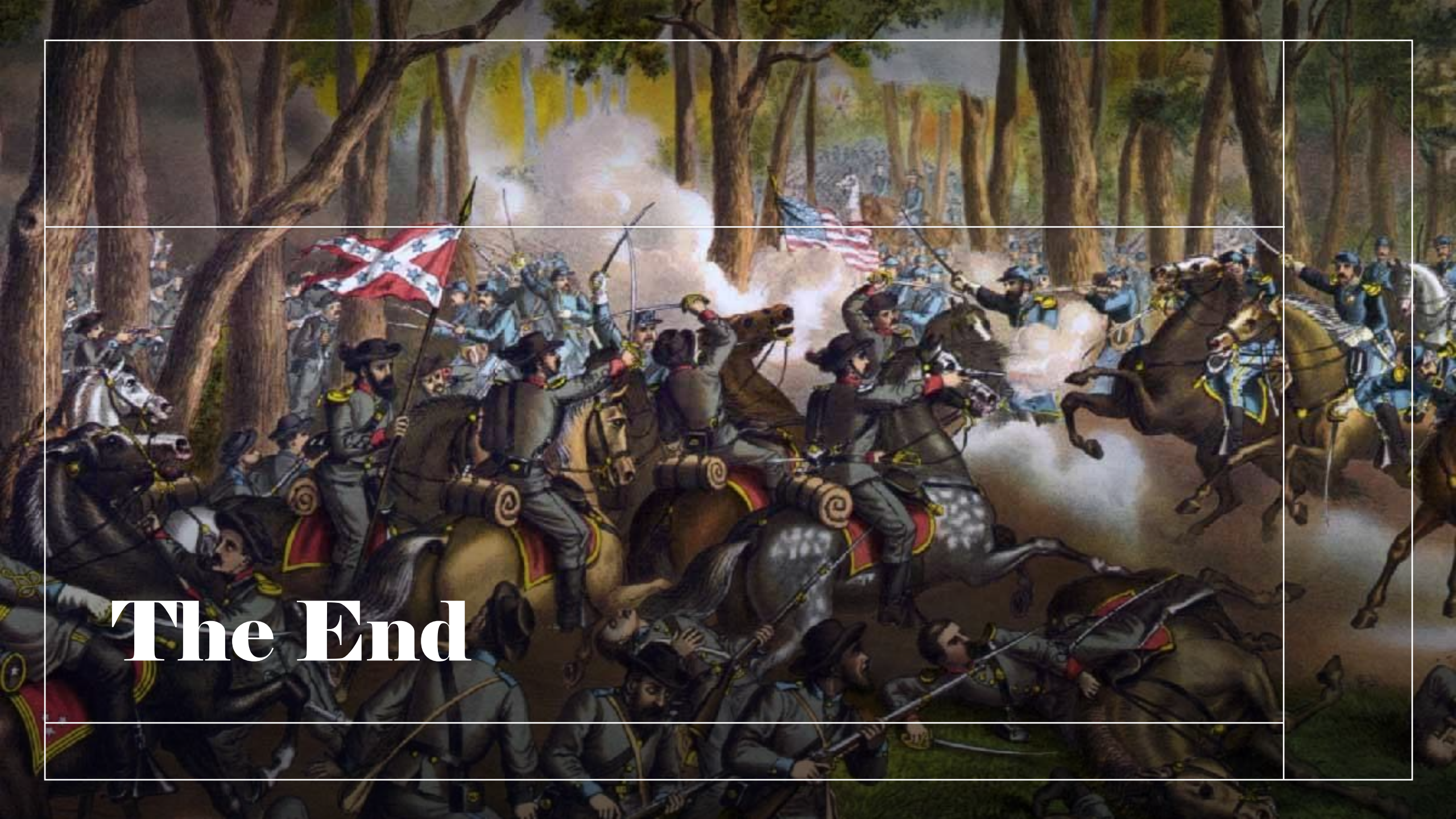
# Conclusion

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In conclusion, the escalating tensions over slavery and western expansion laid bare the deep-seated divisions within American society

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Despite attempts at compromise, the fundamental issue of slavery ultimately proved to be irreconcilable, leading to the eruption of the Civil War and the profound transformation of the nation



**The End**