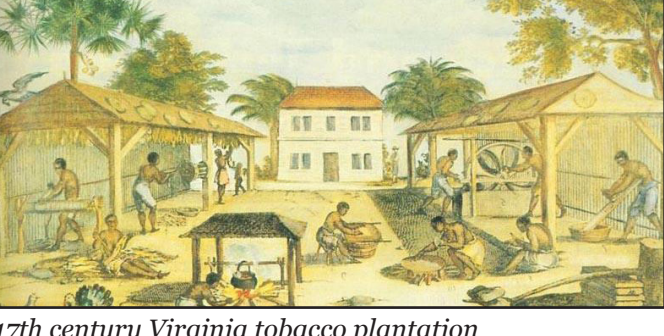
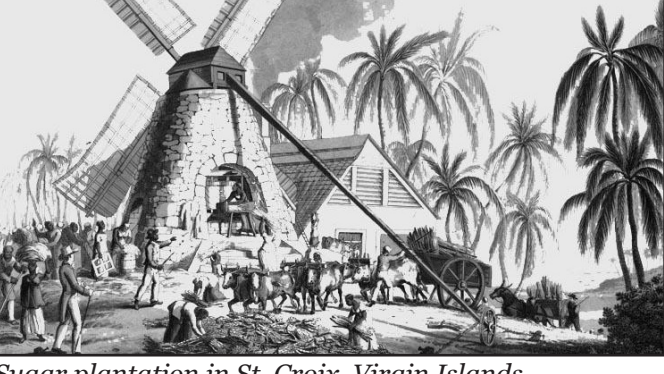


# The Amistad Event: Setting Context



17th century Virginia tobacco plantation



Sugar plantation in St. Croix, Virgin Islands



MA 54th Regiment, Robert Gould Shaw Memorial



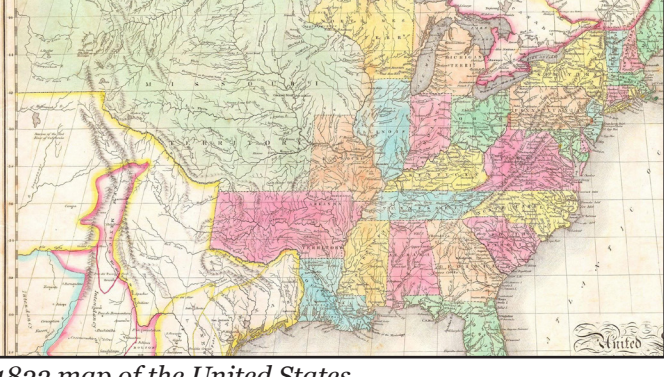
"The Old Plantation" circa 1785-1795



Cape Coast Castle, where enslaved Africans were held and sent to British territories (David Stanley)



"Action off Cartagena" before 1772



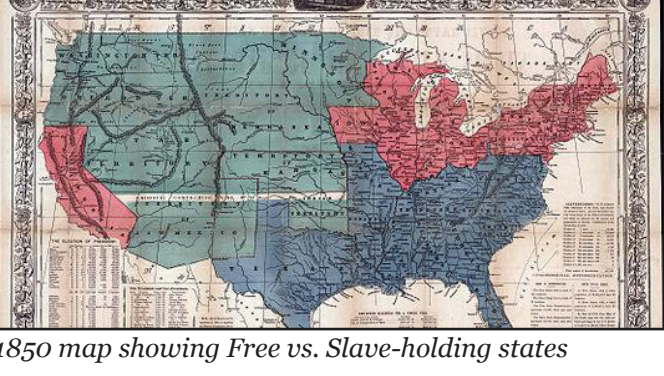
1823 map of the United States



Enslaved Africans depicted in front of the US Capitol



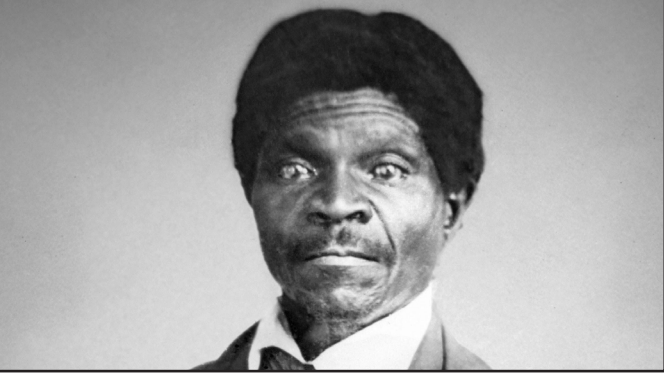
Oil painting of the Amistad



1850 map showing Free vs. Slave-holding states



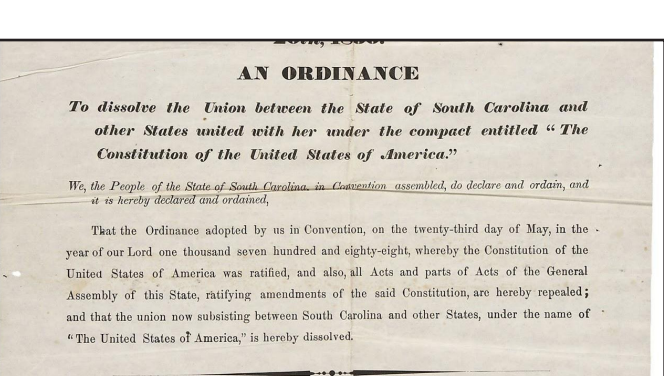
A cartoon criticizing the Kansas-Nebraska Act



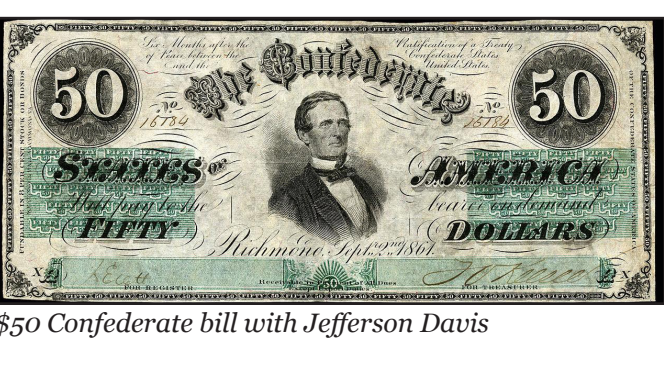
Dred Scott circa 1857



John Brown circa 1856



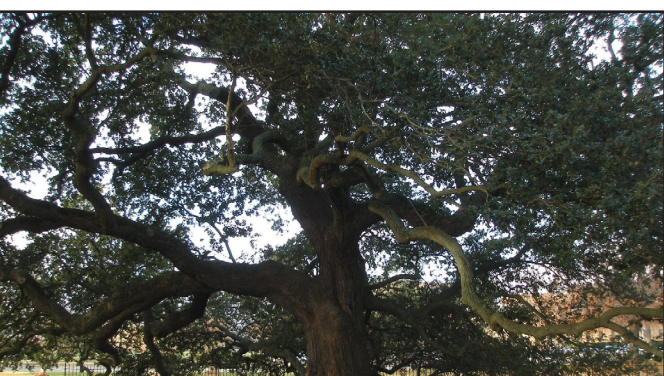
The first publication announcing SC's secession



\$50 Confederate bill with Jefferson Davis



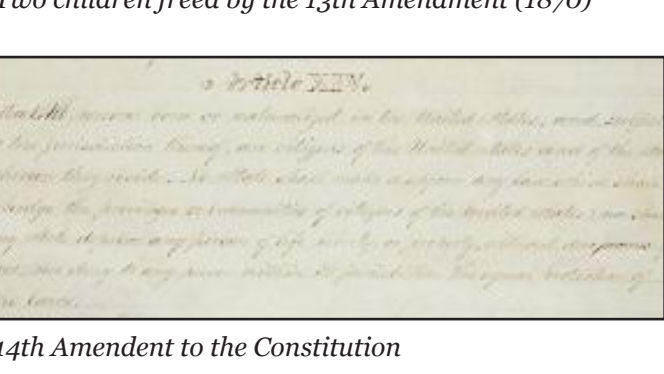
"Bombardment at Fort Sumter", 1861 (?)



Emancipation Oak at Hampton University



Two children freed by the 13th Amendment (1870)



14th Amendment to the Constitution



"The First Vote" appeared in Harpers Weekly in 1867

## 1619

First enslaved Africans brought to Virginia.

## 1640 - 1680

Major increase of African captive labor in the British Caribbean for sugar production.

## 1780

Massachusetts Constitution adopted with freedom clause interpreted as prohibiting slavery.

## 1789

U.S. Constitution ratified with clause equating enslaved Africans to 3/5ths of a white citizen. Includes provision that international slave trade would end within 20 years.

## 1807

Great Britain abolishes slave trade.

## 1819

U.S. law equates slave trading with piracy, punishable by death.

## 1820

Missouri is admitted to Union as a slave state, and Maine as a free state. Includes agreement to bar slavery from northern federal territories.

## 1836

"Gag rule" implemented by House of Representatives to table abolitionist petitions in response to petitions to abolish slavery in District of Columbia.

## 1839-1841

The Mende are kidnapped from Africa, sold into slavery in Cuba, and eventually seize a ship to secure their freedom. They are arrested by the US government and their story leads to a Supreme Court trial, after which they return to Africa as free men. For more information, please consult the detailed timeline.

## 1850

The Compromise of 1850 admits California as free state, eliminates slave trade in the District of Columbia, establishes Utah and New Mexico without restrictions on slavery, and requires return of fugitive captives.

## 1854

The Kansas-Nebraska Act repeals the Missouri Compromise, allowing popular sovereignty to determine slave-or free-state status of territories seeking statehood, which increases sectional divisions within the U.S. and breaks down the traditional two-party system, giving rise to the Republican Party.

## 1857

The Dred Scott decision by the Supreme Court denies any possibility of citizenship for African Americans, imperils fugitive enslaved Africans and sets back the cause of abolition.

## 1859

John Brown's unsuccessful Harper's Ferry, Virginia, raid to incite slave rebellion heightens tension over slavery.

## December 20, 1860

South Carolina secedes from the Union after Abraham Lincoln's election as president, followed by 10 other states through May 1861.

## February 1861

The seceding states establish the government of the Confederate States of America and create a constitution endorsing slavery but prohibiting the international slave trade.

## April 1861

When Confederate forces fire on U.S. troops at Fort Sumter in the harbor of Charleston, South Carolina, President Lincoln calls for troops to put down the "insurrection" in the South, beginning the Civil War.

## September 22, 1862

President Lincoln issues the Emancipation Proclamation, granting freedom to enslaved Africans in areas of the South in active rebellion on January 1, 1863.

## 1865

Slavery abolished in the U.S. by the 13th Amendment to the Constitution.

## 1866

14th Amendment to the Constitution defines a citizen as anyone born in the U.S. (except Native Americans) or naturalized, thereby extending all rights of citizenship to African Americans. The American Missionary Association (formerly the Amistad Committee) founds Fisk University, among other historically black colleges.

## 1870

The 15th Amendment to the Constitution is ratified. It gives African American men the right to vote, stating that the "right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any state on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude."