

#### Nat Turner's Rebellion:

Nat Turner's Rebellion (aka the Southampton Insurrection) was a slave rebellion that happened in Southampton County, Virginia in 1831. This rebellion, led by Nathaniel Turner, had the highest number of fatalities compared to any other slave uprising in the American South with 55 whites killed. Nat Turner, a very religious man, had visions that told him slaves were meant to rule. He was known by other slaves as "the Prophet" and after a solar eclipse (which he saw as a sign from God) he led the rebellion. Turner assembled a militia of sorts and began to kill whites. The rebellion ended after a significantly larger white militia caught up with them. Nat Turner's Rebellion is important because it led to the fear, distrust, and hatred of blacks as well as harsher slave codes. People were drawn to the issue of slavery and this event was proof to northern abolitionists that slaves in the South were not happy being slaves.

#### Frederick Douglass:

Frederick Douglass was an escaped slave from Maryland who became a leader of the abolitionist movement in the mid-1800s. Douglass wrote several autobiographies, such as *Life and Times of Frederick Douglass* that depicted his time as a slave. Before the Civil War, Douglass was known as a great orator and writer. He proved that slaves could be just as intelligent as whites. He tried to end slavery using politics and united with the Liberty Party (1840), the Free Soil Party (1848), and the Republican Party (1850s). He met with others such as John Brown and William Lloyd Garrison, and with the latter he educated whites and created more abolitionists. After the Civil War he still spoke out for freedom and equality of all Americans. Frederick Douglass is important because he spoke out for equal rights and broke the black stereotype of minstrel shows.

#### The Mudsill Theory:

The Mudsill Theory is a proposition that there must be a lower class for the upper classes to rest upon. This term was first used by South Carolina Senator James Henry Hammond, a Southern plantation owner. He used this term in the mid-1800s during a senate speech in the nation's capital. Hammond argued that slaves and the lower class preferred work that enabled the rich to move civilization forward. According to him, abolishing slavery and promoting equality would hurt civilization as a whole. Many people found this to be a weak explanation for inequality. Southerners were afraid of losing their slaves, abolitionists countered. The Mudsill Theory is important because it was an important pro-slavery argument from the South and an effort to persuade abolitionists that fighting slavery was wrong. The South claimed that they were bettering society by employing the lower classes. This was an indication of Southern attitude at the time.

#### The Alamo:

The Alamo was a historic Franciscan mission near San Antonio where the Battle of the Alamo took place in the mid-1800s. This battle was between Mexican troops, led by General Antonio López de Santa Anna and Texan and Tejano defenders, under the command of Colonel William B. Travis. Key defenders also included Jim Bowie and David Crockett. This battle was fought in order to help defend Texan lands from the Mexican army. The defenders were able to hold off the intruders for a while, but Santa Anna's men eventually broke through and killed all of the men inside the Alamo. The Alamo is important because the men sacrificed themselves for the good of their country and chose to die protecting their freedom. The Alamo became a war cry during later fights. It also motivated Texans to fight for their independence.

### Manifest Destiny:

Manifest Destiny, a term coined by politicians in the mid-1800s, was used to explain the need for westward expansion on the American continent by the United States. People believed that it was their "national destiny" to expand across the continent. Walt Whitman and John O' Sullivan were a few of many individuals who wanted take certain parts of Mexico and add them to the Union. Democrats supported expansion while Whigs believed that Southerners were trying to expand slavery (although this had rarely been the case at this time). James K. Polk explained that since America had technology, democracy, and God on its side it had a "divine right" to do this. Manifest Destiny is important because this idea caused people to spread across the American continent. Westward expansion occurred, and people spread across the continent. People tried to get as much land as possible for the United States, especially land on the west coast due to trading opportunities out there. This also pushed us into many conflicts.

### Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo:

The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was signed in the mid-1800s and ended the Mexican-American War. Mexico and America had been fighting over land claims, and due to ideas of Manifest Destiny, Americans wanted to take Mexican lands such as Texas and California. Although part of Texas had previously been freed, Americans wanted much more land, all the way to the Rio Grande River. Mexico tried to fight, but they were relatively unfit to do so. Proposed under James K. Polk and signed by Santa Anna, this treaty gave America more Texan land, New Mexico, and California. Mexico was given money in return. The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was important because it ended the Mexican-American War and gave America more land, known as the Mexican Cession (California, Nevada, and Utah, as well as portions of Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado, and Wyoming) that would later lead to conflicts over slavery and slave states.

### The Wilmot Proviso:

The Wilmot Proviso was created by David Wilmot in the mid-1800s, after the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and the end of the Mexican-American War. This proposal was trying to prohibit slavery in land acquired from Mexico, including California and New Mexico. This proposal hoped to keep the work and jobs in these areas for white men to benefit from. The proposal was never accepted by both houses in Congress, however. While northern Democrats were for it, southern Democrats strongly disliked anything that tried to limit slavery. The Wilmot Proviso is important because it brought to light issues within the Constitution about whether slavery could be limited or not and questioned whether slaves were human or property. It was one of the main factors that led to the outbreak of the Civil War and led in part to the creation of the Republican Party.