



## Journal Divided – “Why Lincoln Won in 1860”

Excerpt from Chapter 16 of Michael Burlingame’s *Abraham Lincoln: A Life* (pgs 1859-1862)

### Link to full Chapter Sixteen

<http://www.knox.edu/documents/pdfs/LincolnStudies/Burlingame,%20Vol%201,%20Chap%2016.pdf>

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The Republicans triumphed because of their party’s unity and the bitter split within the Democracy; because of the rapidly growing antislavery feeling in the North, where the Lecompton Constitution and the Dred Scott decision outraged many who had not voted Republican in 1856; because of the North’s ever-intensifying resentment of what it perceived as Southern arrogance, high-handedness, and bullying; because Germans defected from the Democratic ranks; because the Republican economic program appealed both to farmers (with homestead legislation) and to manufacturers and workers (with tariffs) far more than the Democratic economic policies adopted in response to the Panic of 1857; because the rapidly improving economy blunted fears of businessmen as they contemplated a Republican victory; and because of public disgust at the corruption of Democrats, most notably those in the Buchanan administration. Lincoln did especially well among younger voters, newly eligible voters, former nonvoters, rural residents, skilled laborers, members of the middle class, German Protestants, evangelical Protestants, native-born Americans, and most especially former Know Nothings and Whig-Americans.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> \*Huston, *Panic of 1857*, 231-75; Glyndon G. Van Deusen, “Why the Republican Party Came to Power,” in George Harmon Knoles, ed., *The Crisis of the Union, 1860-1861* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1965), 3-20; William E. Gienapp, “Who Voted for Lincoln?” 50-77; William E. Gienapp, “Nativism and the Creation of a Republican Majority in the North before the Civil War,” *Journal of American History* 72 (1985): 529-59; Thomas W. Kremm, “Cleveland and the First Lincoln Election: The Ethnic Response to Nativism,” *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 8 (1977): 69-86; Richard J. Carwardine, “Lincoln, Evangelical Religion, and American Political Culture in the Era of the Civil War,” *Journal of the Abraham Lincoln Association* 18 (1997): 27-56; Richard J. Carwardine, “Methodists, Politics, and the Coming of the American Civil War,” *Church History* 69 (2000): 578-609; Richard J. Carwardine, *Evangelicals and Politics in Antebellum America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), 196-307; Daniel Walker Howe, “The Evangelical Movement and Political Culture in the North during the Second Party System,” *Journal of American History* 77 (1991): 1216-39; Frederick C. Luebke, ed., *Ethnic Voters and the Election of Lincoln* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1971), *passim*. In four southern Indiana townships where a majority of voters were German, the Democratic presidential vote declined from 80% in 1856 to 53% in 1860. In that region the Know Nothing vote of 1856 went heavily to the Republicans four years later. Elbert, “Southern Indiana Politics on the Eve of the Civil War,” 217, 220. A resident of Fort Wayne reported that “there are 3 German converts for any other.” David Davis to Thurlow Weed, Bloomington, 3 September 1860, Weed Papers, University of Rochester. Precinct returns suggest that Iowa Germans voted heavily but not exclusively for Lincoln. Charles Wilson Emery, “The Iowa Germans in the Election of 1860,” *Annals of Iowa*, 3rd series, vol. 22 (1940): 421-52.