

## Winter 2015-16 History & Heritage -- #2

(A Seasonal Catechism for the Study of Western and American Civilization)

### **The Secret Six --- (Johnson; *North Against South*, pp. 55-61)**

**This Northeast cabal** aided and abetted zealot John Brown's terror plot (1859) targeting first the federal arsenal in Harper's Ferry, Virginia? A doctor, a writer, a philanthropist, and two clergymen were among the conspirators, cultural elites who irresponsibly supported a slave insurrection likely to kill a multitude including slaves themselves. Shocking to say the least were the prominence and power of Brown's backers, not to mention their favorable comparisons of the killer to Jesus Christ.

### **The Deep South Weighs Secession --- (Johnson; *North Against South*, pp. 67-70)**

**This heading** indicates the political process by which South Carolina followed by MS, AL, GA, FL, LA, and TX withdrew from the Union in the winter of 1860-61? The process itself relied on special conventions composed of delegates, the majority of whom were neither absolute secessionists nor absolute unionists. Secession nonetheless won the day when Lincoln and the Republicans would not agree to any compromises, so long as they conceded to slavery even an inch of earth beyond where it already existed.

### **CSA Constitution --- (Johnson; *North Against South*, pp. 70-74)**

**This 1861 document** sheds light on the South's understanding of the U.S. Constitution and her rationale for secession from the Union? Generally, Southerners approved strongly of the 1787 Constitution as written and ratified, but not of what they believed were subsequent Northern misinterpretations of the original. Thus, in their own system they sought to clarify and affirm State sovereignty, strict limitations on centralized taxing and spending, and safeguards against governmental captivity to special interests.

### **The Old South Shows its Spirit --- (Johnson; *North Against South*, pp. 70-74)**

**This heading** identifies, in Johnson's words, that pattern "of society, of government, and of life" derived from Old England and transplanted to 1600's Tidewater Virginia? The pattern was centered in planter-patriarchs, men whose word was law to their immediate and extended families (along with black servants) and whose influence often extended beyond their farms to counties, colonies, and the continent. Above all, "pride of place" and independent self-rule (later "States' Rights") were hallmarks of the tradition.

### **Election of 1860 --- (Johnson; *North Against South*, pp. 61-66)**

**This 19th-century presidential contest** went to the Republican nominee (Lincoln, IL) among four featured contenders? Two Democrats, Douglas (IL) the Northern favorite and Breckinridge (KY) the Southern, and Constitutional Unionist John Bell (TN) joined Lincoln in a race in which the winner tallied less than 40% of the popular vote. Tragically, four varying views of territorial slavery eclipsed all other issues, though the number of slaveholders/slaves in the West (20/46) was minuscule at the time.