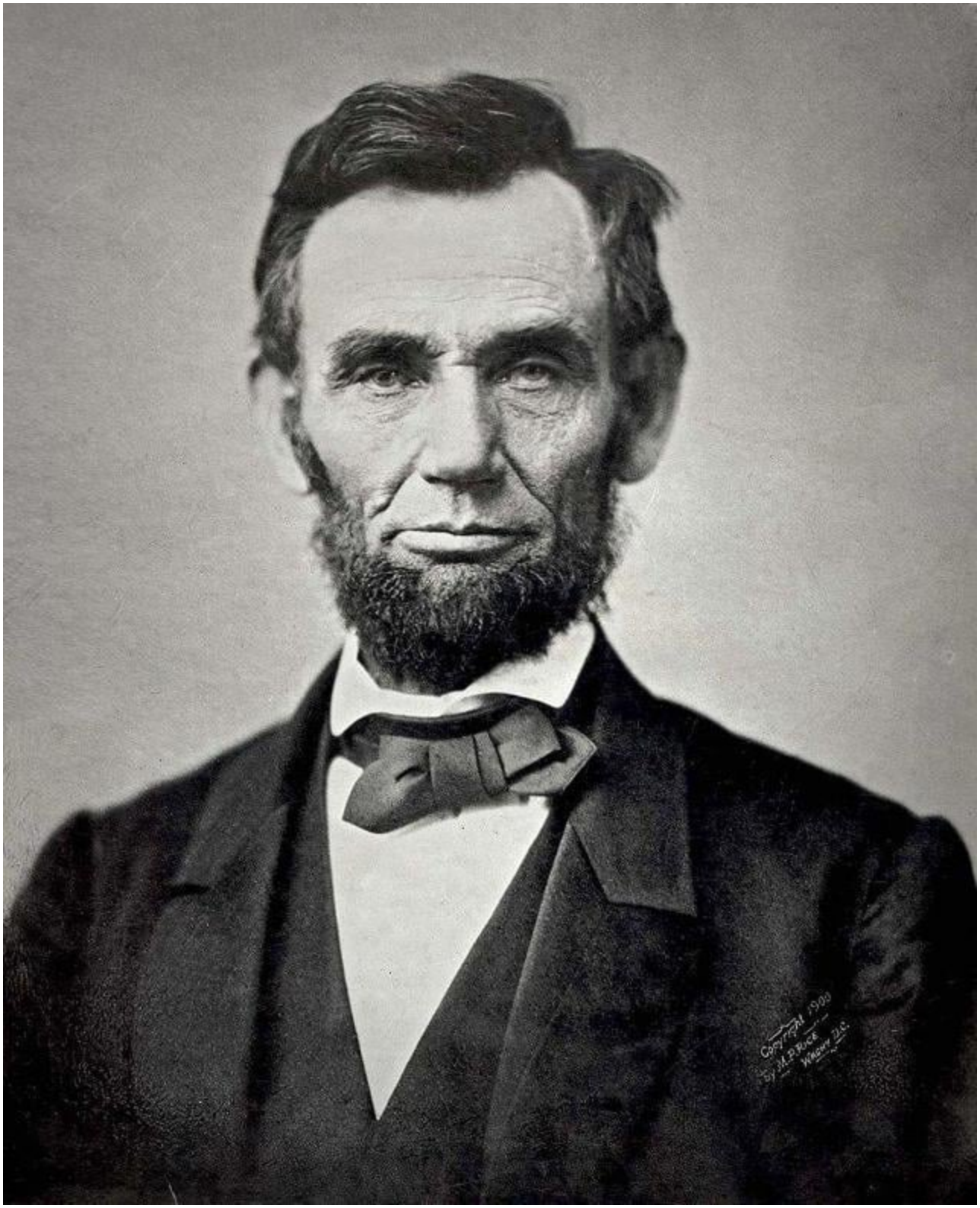
This Day in History: November 6 — Lincoln’s Election, the October Revolution and More

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This Day in History: November 6

On November 6, 1860, Abraham Lincoln was elected president of the United States, bringing a long-running conflict over slavery to a turning point. Lincoln opposed

slavery's expansion into federal territories, and leaders in several Southern states viewed his victory as a threat to their political power and slaveholding society. Secession followed, and civil war began the next spring. The election did not itself abolish slavery, but it set events in motion that led to emancipation and a stronger federal union. Its consequences remain central to understanding citizenship, democratic government, and the history of slavery.

Major Historical Events

The events below follow a chronological path, beginning centuries before Lincoln's election and continuing through later milestones in science, politics, media, and sport.

1528: Cabeza de Vaca reaches the Texas coast

Spanish explorer Álvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca and fellow survivors of the failed Narváez expedition came ashore on an island off present-day Texas, generally identified as Galveston Island. Their expedition had suffered from storms, hunger, disease, and failed attempts to navigate the Gulf Coast.

Cabeza de Vaca subsequently spent years among Indigenous communities before reaching Spanish settlements in Mexico. His account recorded aspects of Indigenous life, trade, and geography, although it reflected his own circumstances and European perspective. It remains an important early written source about the region.

1860: Lincoln wins a divided presidential election

Four major candidates competed in the American presidential election. Divisions among Democrats helped Lincoln, the Republican candidate, secure an Electoral College majority despite winning less than 40 percent of the popular vote.

His support came overwhelmingly from free states. South Carolina seceded in December, followed by other slaveholding states. Although slavery and sectional conflict had developed over generations, the election became the immediate political turning point before the Civil War. The war ultimately ended slavery through the Thirteenth Amendment and preserved the United States as one nation.

1913: Gandhi leads a protest march in South Africa

Mohandas Gandhi led a large group of Indian protesters from Natal into the Transvaal, challenging discriminatory immigration and labor rules. The march formed part of a wider campaign against measures affecting South Africa's Indian population, including a tax on former indentured workers and restrictions on marriage recognition.

Arrests and strikes drew public attention to the campaign. Negotiations eventually produced concessions in 1914, though broader racial discrimination remained. Gandhi's experience in South Africa helped shape the methods of organized nonviolent resistance he later used in India.

1917: The Bolshevik seizure of power begins

On November 6 under the Gregorian calendar, Bolshevik-led forces began taking control of key locations in Petrograd, now St. Petersburg. Russia's provisional government had struggled with military losses, economic disruption, and demands for land and political change.

The government fell the following day. Because Russia still used the Julian calendar, these events became known as the October Revolution. Bolshevik rule led to civil war and eventually the creation of the Soviet Union, reshaping international politics throughout the twentieth century.

1935: The Hawker Hurricane makes its first flight

The prototype Hawker Hurricane flew for the first time from Brooklands, England. Designed under Sydney Camm's leadership, the aircraft represented a major advance over the biplane fighters then serving in Britain's Royal Air Force.

During the Battle of Britain in 1940, Hurricanes formed the larger share of RAF Fighter Command's front-line fighter strength. Their service illustrates how aircraft design, industrial production, maintenance, and pilot training together influenced the outcome of air warfare.

1947: *Meet the Press* begins television broadcasting

The American public-affairs program *Meet the Press* made its television debut after beginning on radio. Created by Martha Rountree and Lawrence Spivak, it brought journalists and public figures together for direct questioning.

The program became a lasting example of the broadcast political interview. Its longevity also reflects television's growing role in helping audiences assess officials through their spoken answers and public appearances.

1962: The United Nations calls for action against apartheid

The UN General Assembly adopted Resolution 1761, condemning South Africa's apartheid policies and calling on member states to take diplomatic and economic measures against the country. It also established a committee to examine those policies.

The resolution was not a binding Security Council order, and responses differed among governments. Nevertheless, it helped build an international framework for sustained pressure against apartheid, alongside resistance within South Africa.

1975: Morocco launches the Green March

Hundreds of thousands of Moroccan civilians entered Spanish-controlled Western Sahara in the Green March, organized by King Hassan II. Morocco sought control as Spain prepared to leave the territory.

Spain subsequently agreed to arrangements transferring administrative responsibilities to Morocco and Mauritania, without resolving Western Sahara's final status. Conflict involving Morocco and the Polisario Front followed. The territory's unresolved status remains a significant issue in North African diplomacy.

1985: Armed attackers seize Colombia's Palace of Justice

Members of Colombia's M-19 guerrilla movement seized the Palace of Justice in Bogotá, taking judges and others hostage. Government forces retook the building during fighting that continued into the next day.

More than 90 people died, including Supreme Court justices. Disappearances and questions about the conduct of the operation led to decades of investigations and legal proceedings. The siege became a defining tragedy in Colombia's prolonged internal conflict.

1986: Alex Ferguson takes charge at Manchester United

Manchester United appointed Alex Ferguson as manager after his successful spell with Aberdeen in Scotland. His early years brought mixed results, but the club later became a dominant force in English football.

Across more than 26 years, Ferguson led United to 13 Premier League titles and two UEFA Champions League victories. His tenure became a notable example of sustained management, squad rebuilding, and youth development.

Notable Births

Suleiman I, born in 1494, became Ottoman sultan in 1520. His reign included major military campaigns, legal reforms, and support for architecture and the arts. Known as “the Magnificent” in Europe and “the Lawgiver” in Ottoman tradition, he ruled during a period of extensive Ottoman influence.

Adolphe Sax, born in 1814, was a Belgian instrument maker who invented the saxophone. Patented in 1846, the instrument found places in military bands, classical music, and eventually jazz, where its expressive range helped shape a major musical tradition.

James Naismith, born in 1861, invented basketball in Massachusetts in 1891 while seeking an indoor winter activity for students. His game spread through schools and athletic organizations, eventually becoming a global sport.

Sally Field, born in 1946, built a television and film career spanning comedy and drama. Her Academy Award-winning performances in *Norma Rae* and *Places in the Heart* helped establish her reputation for portraying determined, complex characters.

Notable Deaths

Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden died in 1632 at the Battle of Lützen during the Thirty Years’ War. His military leadership strengthened Sweden’s European position and influenced the organization and tactics of later armies.

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky died in 1893 in St. Petersburg. Through symphonies, operas, concertos, and ballets such as *Swan Lake* and *The Nutcracker*, the Russian composer created works that remain central to international performance.

Yitzhak Navon died in 2015. Israel’s fifth president, he was also an educator and writer who supported cultural dialogue and helped preserve the language and traditions of Ladino-speaking Jewish communities.

November 6 brings together political turning points, struggles over rights, technical advances, and creative achievement.