

## SELECTED CIVIL WAR CHRONOLOGY

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### 1860

**November 6** - Abraham Lincoln elected President of the United States.

**December 14** - A call issued in Georgia for a convention to deliberate on a Southern Confederacy.

**December 20** - South Carolina seceded from the Union.

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### 1861

**January 9** - Mississippi seceded from the Union.

**January 10** - Florida seceded from the Union.

**January 11** - Alabama seceded from the Union.

**January 19** - Georgia seceded from the Union.

**January 21** - The legislature of New York and other free states pledge support to the Union.

**January 26** - Louisiana seceded from the Union.

**January 29** - Kansas admitted to the Union.

**February 1** - Texas seceded from the Union.

**February 4** - Seceded states held a Convention in Montgomery, Alabama.

**February 8** - Convention being held in Montgomery adopted a Confederate Constitution.

**February 9** - Jefferson Davis elected president of the Confederate States.

**February 18** - Jefferson Davis inaugurated as President of the Confederacy. After taking the

oath of office as the Vice President of the Confederacy, Alexander H. Stephens, a former Congressman from Georgia, stated that: "Our new government is founded on the opposite idea of the equality of the races . . . Its corner stone rests upon the great truth that the Negro is not equal to the white man. This . . . government is the first in the history of the world, based on this great physical and moral truth."

**March 4** - Abraham Lincoln inaugurated as sixteenth President of the United States.

**April 12** - The Confederates fired upon Fort Sumter, South Carolina.

**April 15** - An announcement was made by President Abraham Lincoln that an insurrection was in progress and the call went out to loyal states to supply troops.

**April 17** - Virginia seceded from the Union.

**April 19** - A projected trip to Haiti was canceled by Frederick Douglass and he called for the recruitment of Black troops.

**May 6** - Arkansas seceded from the Union.

**May 20** - North Carolina seceded from the Union.

**May 24** - General Benjamin Butler coined the phrase "contraband of war" and refused to surrender slaves who had sought refuge in his command at Fort Monroe, Virginia.

**July 22** - The Crittenden Resolution passes the U.S. House of Representatives, affirming the fact that the war was being fought to preserve the Union and not to interfere with slavery.

**July 25** - Crittenden Resolution approved by the U.S. Senate on motion by Andrew Johnson of Tennessee. He later became Governor of Tennessee and Vice-President and President of the United States.

**August 14** - General John C. Fremont declared "martial law" in St. Louis, Missouri. Confederate sentiment was widespread in the area.

**August 16** - Confederate states declared to be in a state of insurrection by President Lincoln.

**August 30** - General Fremont issued an order confiscating property of Confederates and emancipation of their slaves. The order caused wide protest and was disavowed by President Lincoln.

**October 2** - General Fremont relieved of command by President Lincoln.

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## 1862

**January 15** - A letter was written by General Thomas Sherman requesting the War Department send teachers to Port Royal, South Carolina to teach ex-slaves left on plantations under control of Union forces. Edward L. Pierce submitted a plan which subsequently began the Port Royal Experiment.

**February 4** - The enrolling of free Blacks in the Confederate Army was debated in the Virginia House of Delegates. No action was taken.

**April 3** - The U.S. Senate voted 29-14 to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia.

**April 11** - The U.S. House of Representatives voted 93-39 to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia.

**May 1** - General Benjamin Butler takes command of the Military Department of the Gulf in New Orleans, Louisiana.

**May 9** - General David Hunter, Commander of the Department of the South (Georgia, Florida, and South Carolina), issued an Emancipation Proclamation freeing all slaves in those states and also authorized the arming of able-bodied ex-slaves. Shortly thereafter, he organized the 1st South Carolina Colored Regiment. The unit was subsequently disbanded except for one company.

**May 13** - Robert Small sails the Confederate gunboat Planter from Charleston and delivers it to Union Navy.

**May 19** - President Lincoln repudiates General David Hunter's Emancipation Act of May 9 and disavows his order.

**July 17** - Adoption of the Second Confiscation Act and Militia Act by the Administration which authorized emancipation and the employment of fugitive slave labor as weapons of war. The two Act declared "forever free" all captured and fugitive slaves of the Confederates and authorized the mobilization of Blacks in "any military or naval service for which they may be found competent."

**August 11** - General Ulysses S. Grant issued an order in Corinth, Mississippi utilizing the services of all fugitive slaves behind his lines.

**August 14** - President Lincoln advocated the colonization of Blacks in Central America during a meeting with a delegation of free Blacks.

**August 21** - Union Generals David Hunter and John Phelps denounced by Confederate President because of their wish to recruit slaves for the Union Army.

**September 16** - Abolitionist Frederick Douglass rejected the proposal by President Lincoln to colonize free Blacks in Central America.

**September 22** - The first draft of Emancipation Proclamation read to the cabinet by President Lincoln.

**September 27 - November 24** - The 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Louisiana Native Guard Regiments (African Descent) organized and mustered into the Union Army in New Orleans.

**October 10** - Confederate President Jefferson Davis requested the state of Virginia to draft 4500 Blacks to build fortifications around Richmond.

**October 27-28** - The 1st Kansas Colored Volunteer Regiment engage the Confederates at Island Mound, Missouri. The regiment was organized by General Jim Lane and engaged the enemy prior to being mustered into the Union Army.

**December 23** - A proclamation issued by Confederate President Jefferson Davis declared that General Benjamin Butler's soldiers be considered "robbers and criminals, deserving death." The statement was interpreted by Confederate soldiers as justifying the massacre of Black Union soldiers.

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## 1863

**January 1** - President Lincoln issues Emancipation Proclamation. The document was directed only to the states that seceded from the Union. Slaves states that remained with the Union was not affected.

**January 12** - The Confederate Congress approved President Jefferson Davis' proclamation of December 23, 1862.

**January 20** - Governor John A. Andrew of Massachusetts was authorized by Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton to recruit and organize Black soldiers.

**January 26** - The 1st South Carolina Volunteer Regiment (African Descent) engage the enemy at Township, Florida, shortly after being mustered in at Beaufort.

**March 21** - Frederick Douglass issues a declaration, Men of Color, To Arms. He began to recruit troops, including his sons Charles and Lewis.

**March 26** - The Secretary of War issued an order directing Adjutant General Lorenzo Thomas to organize black regiments in the Mississippi Valley.

**March 30** - 54th Regiment Massachusetts Volunteers mustered in to serve with the Union Army.

**April 2** - Confederate government disturbed by "Bread Riot" in Richmond, Virginia.

**May 18** - 1st Kansas Colored Volunteer Regiment engage the enemy at Sherwood, Missouri.

**May 22** - The War Department established of Colored Troops to handle the recruitment, organization, and service of the newly organized black regiments commanded by white officers.

**May 22 - July 8** - Battle of Port Hudson, Louisiana. In the Union forces were 2 Louisiana Native Guard and 6 Corps D'Afrique Regiments.

**May 28** - Newly organized 54th Massachusetts Volunteers depart Boston for an assignment in South Carolina.

**June 7** - Battle of Milliken's Bend, Louisiana. Union forces were 1250 contrabands recently mustered in the 9th and 11th Louisiana Colored Volunteer and the 1st Mississippi Colored Volunteer Regiments, and 160 whites from the 23rd Iowa Regiment. The battle fought mainly with bayonets and rifle butts was said to have been one of the bloodiest of the war. Hundreds were killed on both sides.

**July 13** - New York City draft riots - numerous Blacks were killed and others fled the city.

**July 17** - Battle of Honey Springs (Elk Creek), Indian Territory, (Gettysburg of the West). 1st Kansas Colored Volunteer Regiment fought with Union forces. Indian regiments fought on both sides.

**July 18** - Assault on Fort Wagner, South Carolina by the 54th Massachusetts Volunteers in which heavy losses occurred.

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## 1864

**February 20** - Battle of Olustee (Florida). Heavy losses suffered by the Union forces that included the 54th Massachusetts Volunteers, the 8th and 35th United States Colored Infantry Regiments. The Union forces were defeated.

**April 8** - Thirteenth Amendment passes the U.S. Senate by a vote of 38-6.

**April 12** - Massacre of Union Soldiers, Black enlisted and White officers, at Fort Pillow, Tennessee.

**June 15** - Thirteenth Amendment falls short of the required two-thirds majority in the U.S.

House of Representatives by a vote of 96-66.

**July 8** - President Lincoln announces support of the Thirteenth Amendment.

**September 12** - A letter was written by General Robert E. Lee to President Jefferson Davis stating that Blacks should be used in support services in the Confederate Army.

**September 29** - Battle of Chaffin's Farm (New Market Heights), Virginia. Twelve U.S. Colored Infantry Regiments and one Cavalry Regiment charged into battle. Thirteen men serving with the United States Colored Infantry Regiments were awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor.

**November 7** - President Jefferson Davis proposed that the Confederate purchase slaves for army support work and freeing them on discharge.

**November 8** - President Lincoln re-elected.

**November 30** - Battle of Honey Hill, South Carolina. Participating were the 54th and 55th Massachusetts Volunteers, the 32nd, 35th, and 102nd U.S. Colored Infantry Regiments.

**December 3** - The 25th Army Corps organized. (The first and only army corps made up of all-Black infantry regiments.)

**December 6** - President Lincoln in the Annual Message to Congress requested reconsideration of the Thirteenth Amendment.

**December 16** - General William T. Sherman departs Atlanta and begins the March to the Sea. Two days later President Jefferson Davis ordered the use of Blacks to build obstructions to the advancing army.

**December 21** - Second Grierson Raid launched from Memphis enroute to Vicksburg, Mississippi with the 3rd U.S. Colored Cavalry often leading the charge.

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## 1865

**January 1** - The U.S. House of Representatives began to debate the Thirteenth Amendment.

**January 31** - Thirteenth Amendment passes the House of Representatives by a vote of 119-56.

**March 4** - President Lincoln inaugurated.

**March 13** - Recruitment of Black soldiers approved by the Confederate Congress and signed by President Jefferson Davis. Troops were enlisted under this act.

**March 31 - April 9** - Battle of Fort Blakely, Alabama and participating were 9 U.S. Colored Infantry Regiments plus 2 U. S. Colored Infantry Regiments serving as Engineer units.

**April 2** - Confederate government abandons Richmond, Virginia and the city is occupied by Union soldiers the next day.

**April 9** - General Robert E. Lee surrenders to General Ulysses S. Grant at Appomattox Courthouse, Virginia. Three of the 17 units that moved toward Appomattox from the west to block General Lee's army were U.S. Colored Infantry Regiments. Three other U. S. Colored Infantry Regiments were positioned in the rear. Thirty-six Black Confederates were paroled at Appomattox.

**April 14** - President Lincoln was shot and he died the next day. Andrew Johnson became President.

**May 12** - General O. O. Howard appointed to head the Freedman's Bureau.

**December 18** - Thirteenth Amendment ratified after approval by twenty-seven states. (Delaware, Kentucky, New Jersey, and Mississippi rejected the amendment.)

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