

# EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION

1862

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Abraham Lincoln

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In the time leading up to the Civil War, many southern states had left the Union. During the war, President Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, which pronounced the slaves in the unoccupied Confederate states to be free. Although Lincoln had no real power over the states that had left the Union, the Proclamation clearly stated Lincoln's goals. The Proclamation convinced thousands of African Americans to join the Union army, caused Britain and France to refuse to assist the Confederate cause, and led to the eventual end of slavery in 1865.

## READING FOCUS:

What effect did the Emancipation Proclamation have on the Civil War?

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*Whereas*, on the 22nd day of September, in the year of our Lord 1862, a proclamation was issued by the President of the United States, containing, among other things, the following, to wit:

That on the 1st day of January, in the year of our Lord 1863, all persons held as slaves within any state or designated part of a state, the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States, shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free; and the executive government of the United States, including the military and naval authority thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of such persons and will do no act or acts to repress such persons, or any of them, in any efforts they may make for their actual freedom.

That the executive will, on the 1st day of January aforesaid, by proclamation, designate the states and parts of states, if any, in which the people thereof, respectively, shall then be in rebellion against the United States; and the fact that any state, or the people thereof, shall on that day be, in good faith, represented in the Congress of the United States by members chosen thereto at elections wherein a majority of the qualified voters of such State shall have participated shall, in the absence of strong countervailing testimony, be deemed conclusive evidence that such state and the people thereof are not then in rebellion against the United States.

Now, therefore, I, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, by virtue of the power in me vested as commander in chief, of the Army and Navy of the United States in time of actual armed rebellion against the authority and government of the United States, and as a fit and necessary war measure for suppressing said rebellion, do, on this 1st day of January, in the year of our Lord 1863, and in accordance with my purpose so to do, publicly proclaimed for the full period of 100 days from the day first above mentioned, order and designate as the states and parts of states wherein the people thereof, respectively, are this day in rebellion against the United States the following, to wit:

Arkansas, Texas, Louisiana, (except the Parishes of St. Bernard, Plaquemines, Jefferson, St. John, St. Charles, St. James Ascension, Assumption, Terrebonne, Lafourche, St. Mary, St. Martin, and Orleans, including the City of New Orleans) Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, and Virginia, (except the forty-eight counties designated as West Virginia, and also the counties of Berkley, Accomac, Northampton, Elizabeth City, York,

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Princess Ann, and Norfolk, including the cities of Norfolk and Portsmouth), and which excepted parts, are for the present left precisely as if this proclamation were not issued.

And by virtue of the power and for the purpose aforesaid, I do order and declare that all persons held as slaves within said designated states and parts of states are, and henceforward shall be, free; and that the executive government of the United States, including the military and naval authorities thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of said persons.

And I hereby enjoin upon the people so declared to be free to abstain from all violence, unless in necessary self-defense; and I recommend to them that, in all cases when allowed, they labor faithfully for reasonable wages.

And I further declare and make known that such persons of suitable condition will be received into the armed service of the United States to garrison forts, positions, stations, and other places, and to man vessels of all sorts in said service.

And upon this act, sincerely believed to be an act of justice, warranted by the Constitution upon military necessity, I invoke the considerate judgment of mankind and the gracious favor of Almighty God.

From "Emancipation Proclamation" by Abraham Lincoln. Reprinted in *The Annals of America: Volume 9, 1858-1865*. Copyright © 1976 by Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc.

### Analysis Questions:

1. What did President Lincoln offer to the slaves freed by the Emancipation Proclamation?
2. How did Lincoln hope the newly-freed slaves would interact with their former owners?
3. What was the impact of this executive order?
4. Using another resource, find and report an interesting fact about the Emancipation Proclamation not listed here. (cite source)

## Women's Experiences during the Civil War

**Directions:** The following passages detail women's experiences from the most common to the least common: middle-class women from the Union, farmers, working-class women, slaves, plantation owners, nurses, soldiers, and spies. Read each section, and summarize it in your own words.

### 1. Middle-class women from the Union

Kristin Leahy explains in her introduction to an online collection of diaries:

Most women were affected by the war in some way. Some leapt into the war effort working for various organizations, including the Ladies Hospital Aid Society, the Union Volunteer Refreshment Saloon, and the United States Christian Commission. Others performed activities on a more personal level, such as sewing individual items to be shipped to soldiers they knew. Such women's efforts certainly attest to the idea that women fought the war in their own ways on the home front and in doing so played a crucial role in helping the war effort.<sup>1</sup>

Leahy goes on to describe one such woman, Mary Ashhurst, as "a typical example of an older woman's approach to helping the war effort." Ashhurst's husband was a businessman and a banker; her extensive journals describe much of her life, including events during and after the Civil War. Journal entries from 1863 make it clear that Ashhurst kept up to date with news about the war. She wrote about Vicksburg and Gettysburg, about Generals Grant and Meade.

Ashhurst worried about the possibility that the South would attack Philadelphia; she deeply admired President Lincoln, and her journal begun in 1864 expresses her happiness about his reelection. Besides staying informed and praying, Ashhurst contributed to the war effort by sewing clothes and sending them to Union soldiers.

### 2. Farmers

Many women and children took to the fields in order to maintain family farms. Women had long performed farm labor, from cooking, washing and cleaning to taking part in the planting and harvesting of crops. In 1862 a Department of Agriculture report concluded that "in the civilization of the latter half of the nineteenth century, a farmer's wife, as general rule, is a laboring drudge . . . on three farms out of four the wife works harder, endures more, than any other on the place. . ."

Rural women often lived amidst great loneliness. Without even their husbands' company, these women labored on isolated farms. Women's increased responsibilities in wartime led some social critics to object that hard work would demean the fairer sex, harden their bodies, and disrupt American gender roles. Women responded that the demands of war and family represented a higher calling than such notions.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Kristin Leahy, "Guide to Women During the Civil War." *The Historical Society of Pennsylvania*. <<http://www.hsp.org/default.aspx?id=129>> (15 September 2010).

<sup>2</sup>Drew E. VandeCreek, "Women and Gender Roles in Civil War Illinois and the North," *Northern Illinois University Library: Illinois During the Civil War Digitization Project*, <<http://dig.lib.niu.edu/civilwar/women.html>> (15 September 2010).

### 3. Working-class women

Many women took over so-called men's work and made ammunition; as noted in the following excerpt from "Pittsburgh's Bloodiest Day," about an explosion in September 1862, the results were sometimes tragic.

The explosions were heard all over the city. At first many thought that it was an enemy attack, but they soon realized the truth. The people of Lawrenceville were the first to reach the arsenal. The men of the village joined the arsenal workers in fighting the fire. Lawrenceville's new fire engine, which had arrived from its manufacturers only five days before, was pulled by hand through the streets of Lawrenceville to fight its first fire. The men fought desperately to put out the fire and rescue victims from the inferno. Their work was made more difficult by the 125, 000 cartridges and 175 rounds of field ammunition, that day's production, which continued to explode as the building burned. . . .

For two days family members visited the arsenal trying to identify the dead. It was difficult work, for many of the bodies were burned beyond recognition. One woman was finally identified by her false teeth; another by a piece of dress that remained unscorched. In many cases there were no bodies. Several victims had been torn apart by the explosions and body parts were found throughout the arsenal grounds. One young girl's finger, all that was found of her, was identified by her ring. A foot found outside the gate was recognized by its shoe. It was even harder to give names to those who were trapped inside the laboratory. The fire was so hot that everything burned, and all that the rescuers found of the women were piles of white ash surrounded by the steel wire of the hoops they had been wearing.

Gradually a list of the dead was compiled. It contained seventy-eight names, seventy-two of them women and girls. Among the victims were Robert Smith, Joseph Bollman, Kate McBride, cartridge rollers David Gilliland and Mary Murphey, Agnes and Mary Davison. On the afternoon of Thursday, September 18, in plain black coffins issued by the government, thirty-nine victims were laid to rest in a common grave in Allegheny Cemetery. At the same time, Father Gibbs buried six identified victims from his parish in the adjacent St. Mary's Cemetery.<sup>3</sup>

### 4. Slaves

During the Civil War, [Harriet] Tubman worked for the Union army as a nurse, a cook, and a spy. Her experience leading slaves along the Underground Railroad was especially helpful because she knew the land well. She recruited a group of former slaves to hunt for rebel camps and report on the movement of the Confederate troops. In 1863, she went with Colonel James Montgomery and about 150 black soldiers on a gunboat raid in South Carolina. Because she had inside information from her scouts, the Union gunboats were able to surprise the Confederate rebels. . . .

At first when the Union Army came through and burned plantations, slaves hid in the woods. But when they realized that the gunboats could take them behind Union lines to freedom, they came running from all directions, bringing as many of their belongings as they could carry. Tubman later said, "I never saw such a sight." Tubman played other roles in the war effort, including working as a nurse. Folk remedies she learned during her years living in Maryland would come in very handy.

<sup>3</sup>"Pittsburgh's Bloodiest Day," *Civil War Interactive*, <<http://www.civilwarinteractive.com/ArticlePittsburghBloodyDay.htm>> (15 September 2010).

Tubman worked as a nurse during the war, trying to heal the sick. Many people in the hospital died from dysentery, a disease associated with terrible diarrhea. Tubman was sure she could help cure the sickness if she could find some of the same roots and herbs that grew in Maryland. One night she searched the woods until she found water lilies and crane's bill (geranium). She boiled the water lily roots and the herbs and made a bitter-tasting brew that she gave to a man who was dying—and it worked! Slowly he recovered. Tubman saved many people in her lifetime. On her grave her tombstone reads "Servant of God, Well Done."<sup>4</sup>

## 5. Plantation owners

Editors Isabella D. Martin and Myrta Lockett Avary wrote the following information in their introduction to Mary Boykin Miller Chesnut's 1905 publication titled *A Diary from Dixie*:

In Mrs. Chesnut's *Diary* are vivid pictures of the social life that went on uninterrupted in the midst of war; of the economic conditions that resulted from blockaded ports; of the manner in which the spirits of the people rose and fell with each victory or defeat, and of the momentous events that took place in Charleston, Montgomery, and Richmond. But the *Diary* has an importance quite apart from the interest that lies in these pictures.

Mrs. Chesnut was close to forty years of age when the war began, and thus had lived through the most stirring scenes in the controversies that led to it. In this *Diary*, as perhaps nowhere else in the literature of the war, will be found the Southern spirit of that time expressed in words which are not alone charming as literature, but genuinely human in their spontaneousness, their delightfully unconscious frankness. . . .

In making more clear the unyielding tenacity of the South and the stern conditions in which the war was prosecuted, the *Diary* has further importance. At the beginning there was no Southern leader, in so far as we can gather from Mrs. Chesnut's reports of her talks with them, who had any hope that the South would win in the end, provided the North should be able to enlist her full resources. The result, however, was that the South struck something like terror to many hearts, and raised serious expectations that two great European powers would recognize her independence. The South fought as long as she had any soldiers left who were capable of fighting. . . . The North, so far as her stock of men of fighting age was concerned, had done scarcely more than make a beginning, while the South was virtually exhausted when the war was half over.

Unlike the South, the North was never reduced to extremities which led the wives of Cabinet officers and commanding generals to gather in Washington hotels and private drawing-rooms, in order to knit heavy socks for soldiers whose feet otherwise would go bare: scenes like these were common in Richmond, and Mrs. Chesnut often made one of the company. Nor were gently nurtured women of the North forced to wear coarse and ill-fitting shoes, such as negro cobblers made, the alternative being to dispense with shoes altogether. Gold might rise in the North to 2.80, but there came a time in the South when a thousand dollars in paper money were needed to buy a kitchen utensil. . . .

As her *Diary* constantly shows, Mrs. Chesnut was a woman of society in the best sense. She had love of companionship, native wit, an acute mind, knowledge of books, and a searching insight into the motives of men and women. She was also a notable housewife, much given to hospitality; and her heart was of the warmest and tenderest, as those who knew her well bore witness. . . .

<sup>4</sup>Library of Congress, "Tubman During the Civil War," *America's Story from America's Library* <[http://www.americaslibrary.gov/aa/tubman/aa\\_tubman\\_spy\\_1.html](http://www.americaslibrary.gov/aa/tubman/aa_tubman_spy_1.html)> (15 September 2010).

Mrs. Chesnut was a conspicuous example of the well-born and high-bred woman, who, with active sympathy and unremitting courage, supported the Southern cause. Born and reared when Nullification was in the ascendant, and acquiring an education which developed and refined her natural literary gifts, she found in the throes of a great conflict at arms the impulse which wrought into vital expression in words her steadfast loyalty to the waning fortunes of a political faith, which, in South Carolina, had become a religion. . . .<sup>5</sup>

## 6. Nurses

Clara Barton established an agency to obtain and distribute supplies to wounded soldiers. In July 1862, she obtained permission to travel behind the lines, eventually reaching some of the worst battlefields of the war. She worked as a nurse during the sieges of Petersburg and Richmond. Barton delivered aid to soldiers of both the North and South. The following is an excerpt from a letter to her cousin Vira, December 12, 1862:

It is the night before a battle. The enemy, Fredericksburg, and its mighty entrenchments lie before us, the river between—at tomorrow's dawn our troops will assay to cross, and the guns of the enemy will sweep those frail bridges at every breath.

The moon is shining through the soft haze with a brightness almost prophetic. For the last half hour I have stood alone in the awful stillness of its glimmering light gazing upon the strange sad scene around me striving to say, "Thy will Oh God be done."

The camp fires blaze with unwanted brightness, the sentry's tread is still but quick—the acres of little shelter tents are dark and still as death, no wonder for us as I gazed sorrowfully upon them. I thought I could almost hear the slow flap of the grim messenger's wings, as one by one he sought and selected his victims for the morning. Sleep weary one, sleep and rest for tomorrow toil. Oh! Sleep and visit in dreams once more the loved ones nesting at home. They may yet live to dream of you, cold lifeless and bloody, but this dream soldier is thy last, paint it brightly, dream it well. Oh northern mothers wives and sisters, all unconscious of the hour, would to Heaven that I could bear for you the concentrated woe which is so soon to follow, would that Christ would teach my soul a prayer that would plead to the Father for grace sufficient for you, God pity and strengthen you every one.

Mine are not the only waking hours, the light yet burns brightly in our kind hearted General's tent where he pens what may be a last farewell to his wife and children and thinks sadly of his fated men.<sup>6</sup>

## 7. Soldiers

Some women—approximately four hundred—pretended to be men and enlisted in the army during the Civil War. DeAnne Blanton explains:

It is an accepted convention that the Civil War was a man's fight. Images of women during that conflict center on self-sacrificing nurses, romantic spies, or brave ladies maintaining the home front in the absence of their men. The men, of course, marched off to war, lived in germ-ridden camps, engaged in heinous battle, languished in appalling prison camps, and died horribly, yet heroically. This conventional picture of gender roles during the Civil War does not tell the entire story. . . .

Both the Union and Confederate armies forbade the enlistment of women. Women soldiers of the Civil War therefore assumed masculine names, disguised themselves as men, and hid the fact they were female. Because they passed as men, it is impossible to know with any certainty how

<sup>5</sup>Mary Boykin Miller Chestnut, *A Diary from Dixie*, ed. Isabella D. Martin and Myrta Lockett Avery (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1905), xiii–xxii.

<sup>6</sup>"Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park: Clara Barton at Chatham," *National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior*, <<http://www.nps.gov/frsp/barton.htm>> (15 September 2010).

many women soldiers served in the Civil War. Estimates place as many as 250 women in the ranks of the Confederate army. . . .

The existence of soldier-women was no secret during or after the Civil War. The reading public, at least, was well aware that these women rejected Victorian social constraints confining them to the domestic sphere. Their motives were open to speculation, perhaps, but not their actions, as numerous newspaper stories and obituaries of women soldiers testified.

Most of the articles provided few specific details about the individual woman's army career. For example, the obituary of Satronia Smith Hunt merely stated she enlisted in an Iowa regiment with her first husband. He died of battle wounds, but she apparently emerged from the war unscathed. An 1896 story about Mary Stevens Jenkins, who died in 1881, tells an equally brief tale. She enlisted in a Pennsylvania regiment when still a schoolgirl, remained in the army two years, received several wounds, and was discharged without anyone ever realizing she was female. The press seemed unconcerned about the women's actual military exploits. Rather, the fascination lay in the simple fact that they had been in the army. . . .<sup>7</sup>

## 8. Spies

Rose O'Neal Greenhow came from a wealthy and influential Maryland family; from 1861 until her accidental death in 1864, she worked to assist the Confederate side.

The following is an excerpt from a letter to Jefferson Davis, 16 July 1863:

The only thing to mark the journey was the excitement and anxiety manifested by all classes to hear the news from Richmond, and especially from Lee's army, and many a sigh of relief was uttered. When I spoke of his calm confident tone, I endeavored also to impress upon every one your conviction as to the necessity of reinforcing the army by the most rigorous means.

Just as I left Richmond news of the fall of Fort Hudson had been received which was confirmed by the intelligence of the wayside. On reaching Wilmington the situation of Charleston became the engrossing subject of conversation and of interest, which was not diminished by the accounts received from time to time by passengers who got on the principle portion of whom were from Charleston or the vicinity. Doubt and anxiety as to the result was the general tone of the people, and occasionally severe animadversions upon the conduct of the military affairs, especially instancing the supineness, in the construction of the defenses. . . . And I now resume my letter, feeling that I can confidently state the result, and only wish that I could honestly make a more cheering exposition. The impression here that Charleston is in great danger is sustained by the opinion of the Military Authorities. I saw Genl. Beauregard who came to call upon me, and had a very long conversation with him, and he is deeply impressed with the gravity of the position. . . . He said that they had built a tower of some 80 feet upon some hill, which completely overlooked Charleston and his position and thus so soon as they found that he had sent off a portion of his forces south they commenced re-inforcing believing him weaker than he even was—that if he had had the force in the first instance when they landed on Morris Island he could have prevented it. *Many say that he could have done it and should do so yet, even now that his loss will be heavy.* The skirmishing continues active on both sides. Their enemys shells being principally directed to Fort Wagner—I am told just now by a *reliable party* that the enemy has commenced throwing up works in the middle of the Island and have commenced to dig and that Fort Wagner is *greatly endangered thereby*. . . . I know

<sup>7</sup>DeAnne Blanton, "Women Soldiers of the Civil War," *Prologue: Quarterly of the National Archives and Records Administration* (Spring 1993): 1-2, internal footnotes omitted.

you to be too wise to be unduly influenced by the best founded gossip, without more substantial grounds. But of one thing be assured that every body is wide awake just now—and no one ignorant of the danger to the Palmetto City. . . . The Yankee guns are of greatly improved range. Their guns larger and ther Iron Clads far more formidable than at first[.] Some of their shells pass over Fort Sumpter. The attack is evidently in earnest and made with more method and determination, and with greatly improved practice. . . . Gov. Bonham asked me if I thought that you would intrust the affairs of the Navy to Mallory at this crisis. I replied that it was my impression that you would, save in its minor details, intrust the affairs of no one of the departments to any head however able that you were too fully possessed of the responsibilities of your position to allow them to be decided by other than your own judgement, even tho your physical health was all unequal to such an amount of labor. He said you gave him great satisfaction—He is a wonderful man, but can he stand it? . . .<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup>Rose O'Neal Greenhow Papers: Letter to Jefferson Davis, July 16, 1863," *Special Collections Library, Duke University*, <<http://scriptorium.lib.duke.edu/greenhow/1863-07-16/1863-07-16.html>> (15 September 2010).