

0. EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION LIMITATIONS - Story
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This political cartoon was published in the December 20, 1862 issue of *Harper's Weekly* (at page 816). It was about 12 days before the Emancipation Proclamation was to take effect, and the cartoon not-so-subtly references the Proclamation's limitations. The following words appear underneath the drawing: "Sensation among 'Our Colored Brethren' on ascertaining that the Grand Performance (Emancipation Proclamation) to which they had been invited on New Year's Day, was unavoidable [unavoidably] postponed until the year 1900!" Click on the image for a better view.

As President, Abraham Lincoln had the power to issue the Emancipation Proclamation. But it was an executive order, not a legislative mandate. The President declared the slaves free, but he had no power to regulate how former "masters" would treat former "possessions."

Presidents execute laws - they don't make them. And, significantly, Lincoln's Proclamation only freed slaves in the Confederate states. (Slaves in states which remained in the Union were not freed until the 13th Amendment was ratified, in December of 1865.)

What force of law would the Proclamation have in states that were no longer part of the United States? Not much, if you were a slave-owner living in a Confederate state. Not much, if your President was Jefferson Davis.

Lincoln said former slaves could fight in the Civil War, and be fully paid for it - and they did. After the President signed the Proclamation, Union recruiters actively sought African-American men to serve as soldiers. According to the Library of Congress, by war's end one out of every eight Northern soldiers was a black man.

But ... who would make sure those soldiers, and their families, were safe once they returned home from battle?

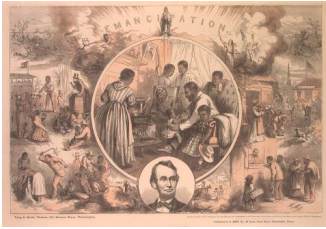
And ... since Congress never passed any laws to create a process by which former slaves would become fully-participating citizens, there was room - lots of room - for future problems.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/EMANCIPATION-PROCLAMATION-LIMITATIONS-Jim-Crow-Laws>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/EMANCIPATION-PROCLAMATION-LIMITATIONS-Jim-Crow-Laws>



Celebrating Emancipation Day

Thomas Nast

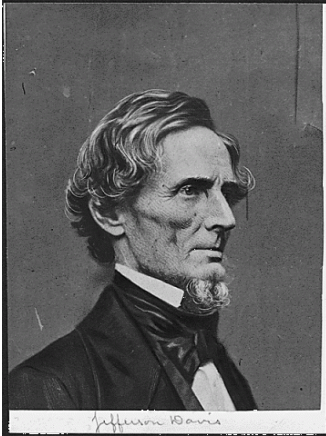
Emancipation

Philadelphia: S. Bott, 1865

Wood engraving

Courtesy, Library of Congress

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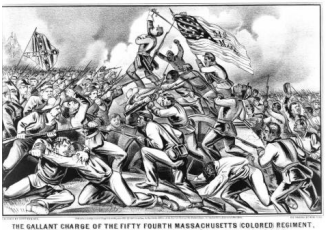


Jefferson Davis - President of Confederacy

Image online, courtesy the U.S. National Archives.

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Former Slaves in Battle - Charge of the 54th Massachusetts

Image online courtesy the U.S. Library of Congress.

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Former Slaves Serve as Union Soldiers

William R. Pywell.

Slave Pen in Alexandria, Va.

1862

Copyprint.

Image, Library of Congress.

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