

0. THE EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION - Story Preface

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4. THE EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION

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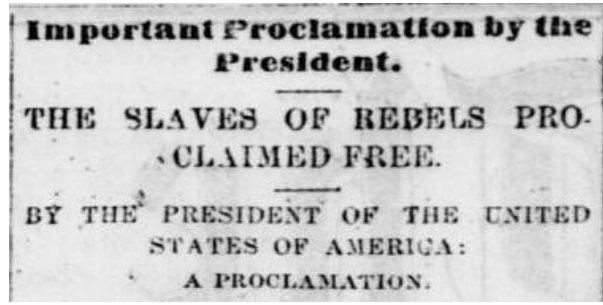
6. BAD DECISIONS MAKE BAD LAW

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The Alleghanian, a Pennsylvania newspaper based in Ebensburg, ran a story about President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation in its [September 25, 1862 issue](#). This is a headline from that article. Online courtesy "Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers," at the Library of Congress.

One of the greatest documents in America's history, Lincoln's copy of the original Proclamation did not survive. It was destroyed in the [Great Fire of Chicago \(1871\)](#).

Fortunately the original [document](#) is maintained in the National Archives. It provides, in pertinent part:

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.

The President then welcomed freed slaves into the U.S. military, where liberated men would serve as future liberators:

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.

Each [page](#) of the Proclamation echoes Lincoln's [desire](#) for America to be forever rid of what he called this "peculiar institution." As Lincoln [signed](#) his [name](#), his [intent](#) was for slaves to [endure](#) no further oppression.

If only the future had unfolded that way!

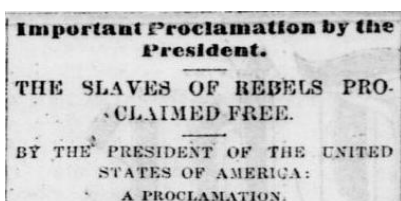
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Media Stream



THE EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION

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