

# Educator Resource

# Emancipation

**Dates & Eras** 1862  
1863  
1864

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**Themes** African Americans, Families, Emancipation, Homefront

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**Grades** 5–7

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**Standards** VS.7  
USI.9  
VUS.7;  
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1

## History Overview

The American Civil War did not begin as a war to end slavery. However, through the actions of several Americans, it gradually became one. Abolitionists, free African-Americans, and antislavery members of Congress had long been pushing for the end of slavery. During the Civil War, Abraham Lincoln spoke of the immorality of slavery, having campaigned against its expansion. Still, he was hesitant to make any move that would cause the Border States to leave the Union. Lincoln also knew that he did not have the authority to do away with an institution protected by the U.S. Constitution.

On September 22, 1862, Abraham Lincoln issued a proclamation that would go into effect on January 1, 1863. Having no actual authority to end slavery, Lincoln, as commander-in-chief, used his power to seize enemy property to strike a blow against slavery. The Emancipation Proclamation strengthened the Union cause by adding a moral purpose to the war, weakening the labor force upon which the South relied, and limiting the chance of foreign recognition of the Confederacy.

People reacted in various ways to the Emancipation Proclamation. Many Northerners felt that the proclamation had changed the reason for the war from preserving the Union to ending slavery. This made abolitionists rejoice, but others upset. Some U.S. soldiers deserted, not wanting to risk their lives to free people they only thought of as slaves. Enslaved African-Americans faced the difficult decision of acting on the proclamation, while African-Americans in free states realized the fight for equality still lay ahead. White Southerners felt even more justified in their decision to leave the Union and feared the proclamation might incite enslaved people to violence. Confederate leaders were angered by the prospect of the Union government arming slaves.

The document featured here, an invitation to an Emancipation celebration, was part of the Museum's collection. Use it to explore one perspective of emancipation.

## Suggested Questions

1. Who wrote this invitation and to whom was it addressed?
2. Why did Monroe Robinson have to leave his mark?
3. Why do you think someone else wrote the invitation for him?
4. What do you find significant about this invitation?

## Suggested Activities

1. Show students the photograph of the Emancipation oak, which stands near the entrance of the Hampton University campus. Early in 1863, African Americans gathered beneath it to hear that they would be “thenceforward and forever free.” This was reputedly the site of the first reading of the Emancipation Proclamation in the South. Have students write a journal entry from the perspective of the tree, witnessing history. To learn more about witness trees, visit the NPS Manassas site. Have your students locate witness trees in your area.
2. Have students write their own interpretations/reviews of the Emancipation Proclamation in a written essay. Require students to cite specific textual evidence to support their analysis and claims. Students will demonstrate their ability to use primary sources and communicate their own ideas.
3. With the use of the picture (Emancipation of the slaves, proclaimed [i.e. proclaimed] on the 22nd September 1862, by Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States of North America) have the students write a 1-2 paragraph reflection on the importance of the image and how it relates to the Emancipation Proclamation.

### Resources

[Emancipation Invitation](#)

[Emancipation Oak](#)

[Emancipation Proclamation Excerpts](#)

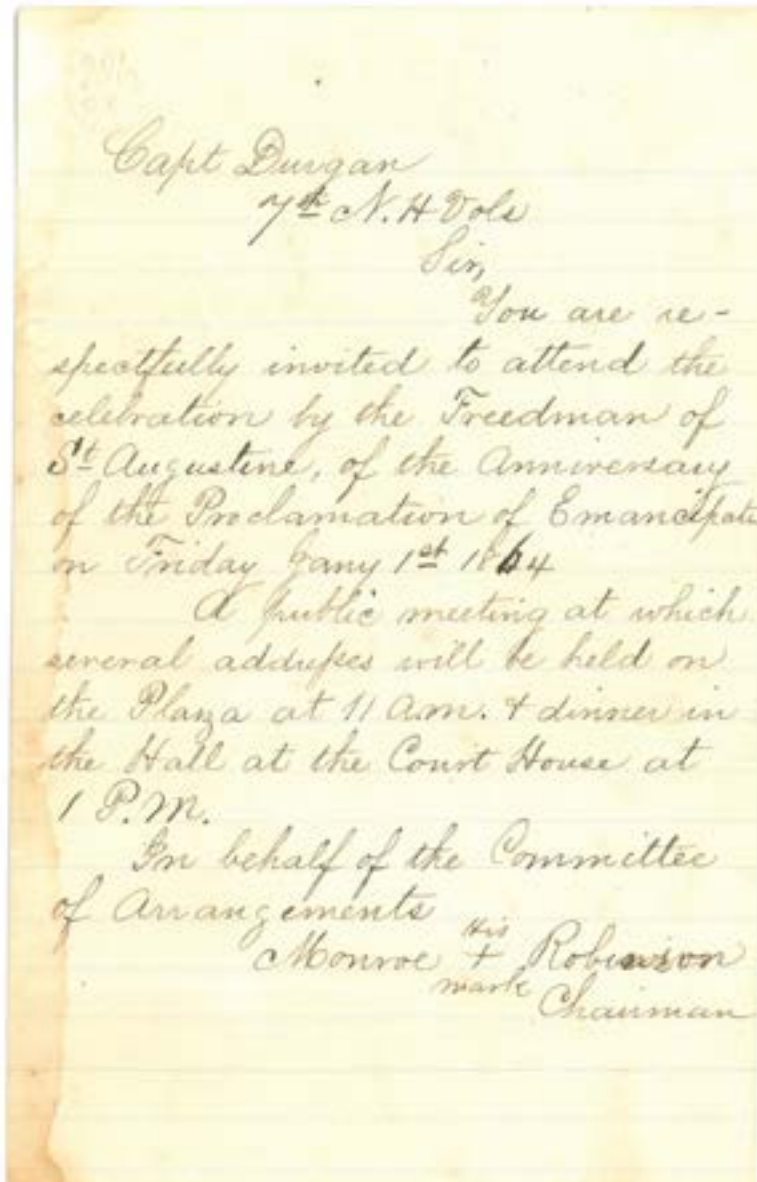
[Full Transcription of Emancipation Proclamation](#)

### Additional Links

[NPS Manassas National Battlefield Park, “Witness Trees”](#)

[Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division](#)

# Emancipation Invitation



Capt Durgan  
y<sup>e</sup> C. H. Dole  
Sir,  
You are re-  
spectfully invited to attend the  
celebration by the Freedman of  
St. Augustine, of the Anniversary  
of the Proclamation of Emancipation  
on Friday Jan'y 1<sup>st</sup> 1864  
A public meeting at which  
several addresses will be held on  
the Plaza at 11 Am. & dinner in  
the Hall at the Court House at  
1 P.M.  
In behalf of the Committee  
of Arrangements  
C. Monroe <sup>his</sup> Roberson  
mark Chairman

Invitation from Monroe Robinson

Eleanor Brockenrough Library  
American Civil War Museum

# Emancipation Oak



Emancipation Oak on the Campus of Hampton University



# Excerpts from the Emancipation Proclamation

That on the first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, 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 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.

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Now, therefore I, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, by virtue of the power in me vested as Commander-in-Chief...as a fit and necessary war measure for suppressing said rebellion, do...designate...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, 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 I hereby **enjoin** upon the people so declared to be free to **abstain** from all violence, unless in necessary self-defence; 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.

**Source:** National Archives and Records Administration. [http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/featured\\_documents/emancipation\\_proclamation/transcript.html](http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/featured_documents/emancipation_proclamation/transcript.html)

**Designate**—to point out the location of.

**Executive Government**—the branch of government, which carries out the laws. **Repress**—to put down by force.

**Enjoin**—to order with authority.

**Abstain**—to keep from an action or practice.

**Suitable**—able or qualified.

**Garrison**—to occupy with troops.

**Man**—to serve as a force or crew.

**Vessels**—a boat or ship bigger than a rowboat.

**Warranted**—sanction or authorized.

**Invoke**—to petition for help or support.

# A Transcription of Emancipation Proclamation

January 1, 1863

By the President of the United States of America:

A Proclamation.

Whereas, on the twenty-second day of September, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-two, a proclamation was issued by the President of the United States, containing, among other things, the following, to wit:

“That on the first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, 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 first 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 first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, and in accordance with my purpose so to do publicly proclaimed for the full period of one hundred 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, 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-defence; 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.

In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

Done at the City of Washington, this first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the eighty-seventh.

[SEAL]

By the President:

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

WILLIAM H. SEWARD, Secretary of State.

**Source:**

“Featured Documents: The Emancipation Proclamation.” National Archives and Records Administration. March 24, 2008. [http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/featured\\_documents/emancipation\\_proclamation/transcript.html](http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/featured_documents/emancipation_proclamation/transcript.html)