

TO COLORED MEN!

FREEDOM, Protection, Pay, and a Call to Military Duty!

On the 1st day of January, 1863, the President of the United States proclaimed FREEDOM to over THREE MILLIONS OF SLAVES. This decree is to be enforced by all the power of the Nation. On the 21st of July last he issued the following order:

PROTECTION OF COLORED TROOPS.

“WAR DEPARTMENT, ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE,
WASHINGTON, July 21.”

“General Order, No. 233.

“The following order of the President is published for the information and government of all concerned:—

EXECUTIVE MANSION, WASHINGTON, July 30.

“It is the duty of every Government to give protection to its citizens, of whatever class, color, or condition, and especially to those who are duly organized as soldiers in the public service. The law of nations, and the usages and customs of war, as carried on by civilized powers, permit no distinction as to color in the treatment of prisoners of war as public enemies. To sell or enslave any captured person on account of his color, is a relapse into barbarism, and a crime against the civilization of the age.

“The Government of the United States will give the same protection to all its soldiers, and if the enemy shall sell or enslave any one because of his color, the offense shall be punished by retaliation upon the enemy's prisoners in our possession. It is, therefore, ordered, for every soldier of the United States, killed in violation of the laws of war, a rebel soldier shall be executed; and for every one enslaved by the enemy, or sold into slavery, a rebel soldier shall be placed at hard labor on the public works, and continued at such labor until the other shall be released and receive the treatment due to prisoners of war.

“ABRAHAM LINCOLN.”

“By order of the Secretary of War.

“E. D. TOWNSEND, Assistant Adjutant General.”

That the President is in earnest the rebels soon began to find out, as witness the following order from his Secretary of War:

“WAR DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON CITY, August 8, 1863.

“Sir: Your letter of the 3d inst., calling the attention of this Department to the cases of Orin H. Brown, William H. Johnston, and Wm. Wilson, three colored men captured on the gunboat Isaac Smith, has received consideration. This Department has directed that three rebel prisoners of South Carolina, if there be any such in our possession, and if not, three others, be confined in close custody and held as hostages for Brown, Johnston and Wilson, and that the fact be communicated to the rebel authorities at Richmond.

“Very respectfully your obedient servant,

“EDWIN M. STANTON, Secretary of War.

“The Hon. GIDEON WELLES, Secretary of the Navy.”

And retaliation will be our practice now—man for man—to the bitter end.

LETTER OF CHARLES SUMNER,

Written with reference to the Convention held at Foughkeeps, July 15th and 16th, 1863, to promote Colored Enlistments.

BOSTON, July 13th, 1863.

“I doubt if, in times past, our country could have expected from colored men any patriotic service. Such service is the return for protection. But now that protection has begun, the service should begin also. Nor should relative rights and duties be weighed with nicety. It is enough that our country, aroused at last to a sense of justice, seeks to enrol colored men among its defenders.

“If my counsels should reach such persons, I would say: enlist at once. Now is the day and now is the hour. Help to overcome your cruel enemies now battling against your country, and in this way you will surely overcome those other enemies hardly less cruel, here at home, who will still seek to degrade you. This is not the time to hesitate or to hizzle. Do your duty to our country, and you will set an example of generous self-sacrifice which will conquer prejudice and open all hearts.

“Very faithfully yours,

“CHARLES SUMNER.”

"Who Would Be Free, Themselves Must Strike the Blow"

\$200  **\$200**

COLORED MEN
Of Burlington Co.

Small text describing the advertisement for colored men, mentioning the Board of Freeholders of Burlington Co.

NOW IS YOUR TIME!

Small text describing the advertisement for colored men, mentioning the Board of Freeholders of Burlington Co.

The Board of Freeholders of Burlington Co.

\$200 CASH! \$200
\$10 PER MONTH

GEO. SNYDER,
Attorney, Agent & General Treasurer of the Board.

Black volunteers

THE GOVERNMENT TOOK A CENSUS the year before the Civil War. It showed there were fewer than 500,000 "free Negroes" in the United States. But there were almost 4 million blacks held in slavery. After the war started, the U.S. Congress did not allow free blacks or escaped slaves to join the Union army. Then President Lincoln issued his final Emancipation Proclamation in January, 1863. The decree stated that all slaves living in Confederate states were to be considered free. This document encouraged Congress to pass a law allowing black men to volunteer for Union military service. Soon there were close to 200,000 blacks serving in the Northern army and navy. These men were paid less than white soldiers and were often given worn uniforms and poor equipment. They could not become officers. If they were captured, they were shot or enslaved. However, these risks did not stop black men from taking part in combat. Several black soldiers won the Union's highest award for bravery, the Medal of Honor.

A CALL TO ARMS

Many Northern communities wanted to raise units of black volunteers, but not all of them had large black populations. Posters were displayed throughout whole counties in hopes of raising a full hundred-man company.



FLAGS FOR A BLACK REGIMENT

Black regiments were called U.S. Colored Troops, or U.S.C.T. for short. When they were presented with flags to carry off to war, there was often a large ceremony. Here, the men of the 20th U.S.C.T. are given flags in front of a cheering New York City crowd in 1864. These were proud patriotic moments. When regiments returned from the war, their flags were displayed in places of honor by the state and federal governments.

FIGHTING MEN

Some prejudiced Northerners believed that black volunteers could do heavy labor and small tasks in the army, but they were not sure these volunteers would fight. When given the chance, though, black fighting men proved their bravery in combat. Many posed for photographs like this one, demonstrating that they had combat training and fighting skills.



A SLAVE HERO

Robert Smalls was a slave who worked around Confederate Navy vessels in Charleston, South Carolina. One day he hijacked a ship loaded with new Confederate cannons. Also onboard were Smalls's wife and children, as well as several slave friends and their families. Smalls turned the Southern ship and its cargo of guns over to the Union navy and was rewarded. He, his family, and the others were also freed from slavery. Smalls's act of daring made him famous in the North. Following the war, he was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives. This photograph is from the postwar years.



A REJECTED VOLUNTEER

Attitudes about race were not the same all over the South. In lower Louisiana, for instance, there had been a tradition of black military service already. Free black volunteers had fought to defend the city of New Orleans during the War of 1812. When the Civil War broke out, free New Orleans blacks raised the Louisiana Native Guards regiment and volunteered to defend their city once again. Some, like this regiment member, even had their photographs taken in uniform. But the government of the Confederacy could not overcome its racial prejudice. It would not allow the Native Guards into its army.