



A Web quest: produced by Teacher-Ranger-Teacher, Mark Neaves

Black Soldiers During the Civil War

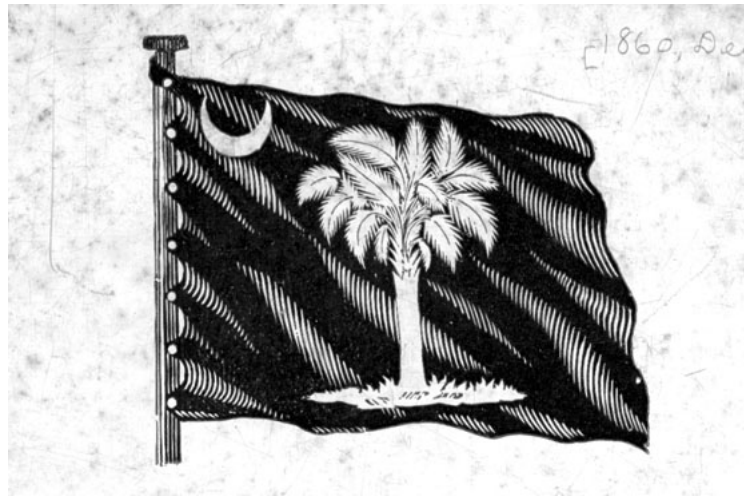


2nd Light U.S. Colored Artillery

Secession

- Due to the election of Abraham Lincoln South Carolina voted to secede from the Union on December 20th, 1860. Ten other southern states followed South Carolina's lead, and the Confederate States of America were soon formed. War was just around the corner. Click on the link below, watch the video, and answer the questions on your handout.

<http://www.history.com/topics/confederate-states-of-america/videos#america-divided>



Drawing of the South Carolina flag as it appeared in 1861.

Causes of the War

- The causes of the war were much debated and have continued to be debated until the present day. Many people claim that states' rights lie at the center of the controversy. Define states' rights using the link below. <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/states'%20rights>

However, most historians agree that slavery at the center of the struggle for states' rights.

According to Lincoln's own words he would have welcomed the Southern states back into the Union in order to preserve the country without the abolishment of slavery.

Lincoln said,

"If I could save the Union without freeing any slave I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing all the slaves I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing some and leaving others alone I would also do that.... I have here stated my purpose according to my view of official duty; and I intend no modification of my oft-expressed personal wish that all men everywhere could be free."

Abraham Lincoln
August 22, 1862





Fort Sumter

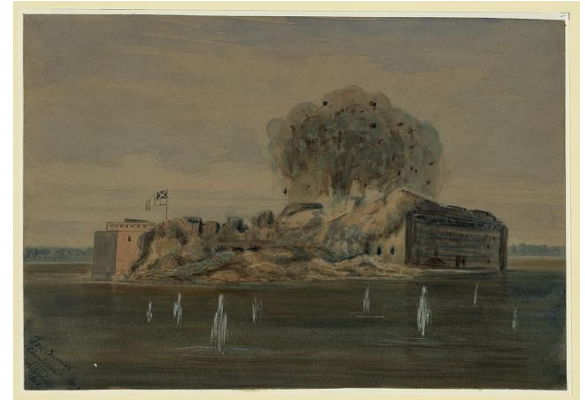
- Watch the video that can be accessed by the hyperlink below and answer the following questions.
- When did the battle take place?
- What prompted the Confederate army to fire on Fort Sumter?
- Who commanded the Confederate troops outside the fort?
- Who commanded the United States troops inside the fort?
- How long did the battle last and who won?
- Who gave the first orders to fire on the fort?
- How many people were killed in the battle?
- List the major outcomes of this battle.
- <http://video.pbs.org/video/1832507650/>



(left)
Gen. P.G.T. Beauregard



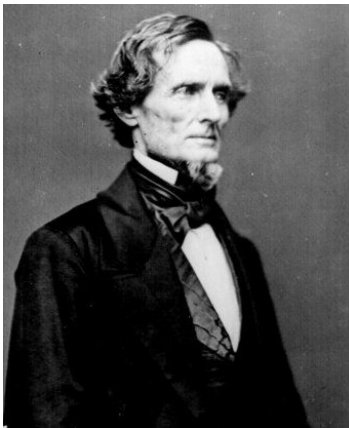
(Left)
Major Robert Anderson



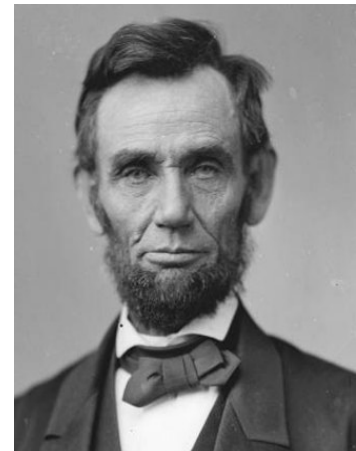
of Ft. Sumter

Need for Soldiers

- Both sides, Union and Confederate, desperately needed men to fill the ranks, because the battles following Fort Sumter were hard and bloody. Using the Civil War time line link below determine which battle of the Civil War was the bloodiest day of fighting.
- <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/timeline/death/>
- Shortly after the war began Lincoln and Jefferson Davis, President of the Confederacy, called for volunteers and the ranks were quickly filled by men hoping to defend their country. Very soon after the start of the war both sides realized that the number of volunteers did not prove to be enough, which left both sides searching to fill their shortages in man power. Conscription or the drafting of men into military service was one way that both sides put rifles into the hands of men who were capable of fighting. There was still one question for both sides that remained unanswered, "Do we allow blacks to fight?"



(left) Jefferson Davis,
President
Confederate States
of America

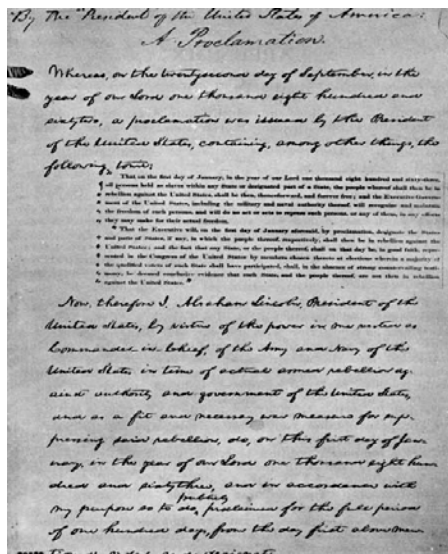


(right) Abraham Lincoln,
President of the United States of
America

The Emancipation Proclamation

- The Emancipation Proclamation is one of the most well known of all American documents, but how much do people actually know about the document itself? What did the document do? Why was it issued and did it free all slaves? Using the printout that your teacher passed out answer the questions using the link below.

http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/featured_documents/emancipation_proclamation/



Lincoln issued the Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation (left) on September 22, 1862, just five days after the Battle of Antietam (right).

Black Soldiers

- Believe it or not! Both sides during the war, Confederate and Union, used black soldiers on the field of battle. Near the end of the war, as a desperate measure, on March 13, 1865, the Confederacy passed a legislation which allowed blacks to serve in the Confederate military. However it was a little too late for the south considering that the North had already mustered into the army and navy almost 200,000 black soldiers and sailors. Patrick Cleburne, a Confederate General, had suggested the use of blacks in the army much earlier, but his requests were denied. However, there are reports that suggest that black soldiers fought for both sides prior to the Emancipation Proclamation and the passage of the Confederate legislation passed in March of 1865.



C.S.A. General
Patrick Cleburne

Click on the
speaker icon to
the right to hear
the bugle call
Boots and
Saddles



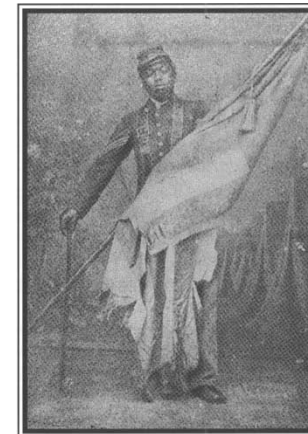
54th Massachusetts



- One question loomed large over the formation of black troops for battle during the Civil War, “Would they fight or run?” The question was answered with a resounding, Yes they will fight!, when the 54th led an attack on Fort Wagner, a Confederate strong hold.
- Click on the link below, watch the video, and answer the questions on your handout. Also use the appropriate space in order to theorize why people on both sides North and South doubted the abilities of the black soldiers.
- <http://www.history.com/topics/african-american-soldiers-in-the-civil-war/videos#blacks-in-the-military>



SERGEANT
WILLIAM H.
CARNEY
RECEIVED
THE MEDAL
OF HONOR
FOR HIS
PARTICIPATIO
N IN THE
BATTLE OF
FORT
WAGNER.
Pictured Right



Battle of Brices Cross Roads

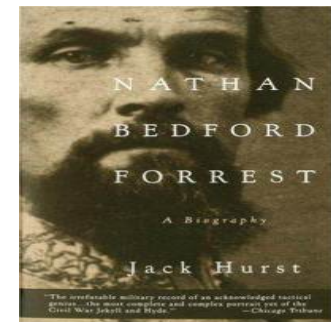
- Despite the bravery of the 54th many people still doubted the black soldiers' abilities in the heat of the battle. A battle in Northeast Mississippi at a small town named Baldwyn, Mississippi, would give the 59th and 55th United States Colored Infantry and the 2nd United States Colored Artillery a chance to prove themselves again.
- With Sherman planning to march toward Atlanta, leaving a path of destruction in his wake, he needed to ensure that his supply lines were clear and unharmed. However, there was one main problem, and his name was Nathan Bedford Forrest. Forrest had plagued the Union Army with his hit and run attacks, making him one of the most wanted generals of the Confederacy.
- In order to deal with Forrest, Sherman gave a General Samuel Sturgis one last chance to prove himself by allowing him to go after Forrest.



Member of
the 59th USCT



William T. Sherman



Battle of Brices Cross Roads Slide 2

- The 55th and 59th United States Colored Infantry – they joined the Union Army at LaGrange, Tennessee, and many of them were slaves who were taken as contraband by the Union army- were guarding the supply wagons when the fighting broke out. With the Yankees on the run General Forrest give an unusual command to his chief of artillery, John Morton, by saying, “Fetch up the artillery!” This is the only time during the war that artillery (cannons) were used as offensive weapons.
- Fearing Morton’s artillery and seeing their men falling all around them the white Union troops broke and ran. Seeing the white troops sloshing through the mud and muck Colonel Edward Bouton, commander of the black troops, sprang into action and formed the USCT into a line of battle.
- *Below is part of a post Battle report by Colonel Bouton*
- **The right and center of our line, embracing most of the Fifty-ninth Regiment, here rallied and charged, driving the enemy back with bayonets and clubbed muskets nearly 400 yards, leaving great numbers of his dead on the ground. Up to the time of making this charge Colonel Wilkin, of the Ninth Minnesota, had conformed somewhat to our movements on our left, but, as well as I could judge, his men retreated about the time my right charged. It now being quite dark, my left cut off, flanked and broken, my right flanked by great numbers and in danger of being entirely surrounded, my remaining forces retreated in good order, nine companies of the Fifty-ninth Regiment preserving their company organization. At the time of retreating, being on the extreme right with a few skirmishers endeavoring to keep the enemy on our flank from closing in our rear as my column moved out, I was left entirely cut off and surrounded by several hundred of the enemy. My men, gathering around me, fought with terrible desperation. Some of them, having broken up their guns in hand-to-hand conflict, unyielding, died at my feet, without a thing in their hands for defense. I escaped from this Unpleasant position about 9 p.m., and by making a large circuit through the woods joined the retreating column on the Ripley road about 11 p.m.**

Brices Cross Roads Slide 3

- Many historians agree that Bouton's men saved Sturgis' command from being completely destroyed. Using the map below answer the questions on your handout.



Brices Cross Roads Slide 4



- The Union forces suffered 2,240 killed, wounded, and missing while the Confederate casualties numbered only 493. The defeat of the Union troops left Sturgis's military career in jeopardy. In shame Sturgis was sent West to fight the Indians. His son was later killed battling the Sioux alongside General Custer at the Battle of the Little Big Horn.
- Forrest was proving to be a bigger problem for Union General William T. Sherman than he imagined. The Black troops had fought bravely at Brices Cross Roads having been driven from the battlefield, but it wouldn't be long before the Union and Confederacy would clash again in Northeast Mississippi at the Battle of Tupelo (Also known as the Battle of Harrisburg).



Painting of The
Battle of Little Big
Horn

The Battle of Tupelo



July 14th, 1864, the heat was almost unbearable as the Union troops dug in at Tupelo waiting on the Confederates to attack. About 7:30 A.M. the peaceful morning was disrupted by the sound of gunfire and the battle began. The Confederates in a drastic attempt charged the Federal lines only to be repulsed. Due to bad planning the Union General Smith found that his men hadhardtack full of worms and low ammunition supplies.

Colonel Edward Bouton found himself and his United States Colored Troops (the 59th and the 61st Regiments) stationed at the right to protect the supply wagons. The 61st was engaged in heavy fighting throughout the day while the 59th USCT reported only one soldier killed, ten wounded, and three missing.

Colonel Bouton praised the efforts of his men, saying, "I think the work done by my brigade in rear of column, on the 13th, was a severe test of the soldierly qualities and power of endurance of my men."

Due to the lack of supplies General Smith called for his men to move back toward Memphis. The next day on July 15th the Union and Confederate clashed along Old Town Creek. Forrest was wounded in the foot and was out of commission for three weeks.

<http://www.c-spanvideo.org/program/109467-1> Click on the link and watch the video

End of the War



- On April 9, 1865, after four years of the bloodiest war in American History, Robert E. Lee surrenders to Ulysses S. Grant bringing an end to the divided nation. America will never be the same again. As for the 55th USCT they were mustered out (paid and released from army service) on January 31st, 1866.
- The 61st Regiment was allowed to muster out in December of 1865. At least one of them returned to LaGrange, TN, where they were mustered into the army, and purchased land on which to live. Christmas Hurt, a private with the 61st, is buried just 2 miles west of town.
- Many of the men from the 1st Brigade returned to scrap out meager livings as share croppers, because the opportunities for them, in the North and South, would still be limited for many years to come.
- Because of their service, African-Americans have a legacy to pass on to future generations that does not entirely center around slavery during the Civil War. Their bravery in the face of battle was proven time and time again. Fifteen African Americans received the Congressional Medal of Honor serving in the USCT during the Civil War.



General Robert E. Lee pictured to the left



Pictured to the left Gen. Ulysses S. Grant



"The Surrender" by contemporary artist, Keith Rocco, is based upon research by National Park Service historians and curators"

National Parks Service

- If you would like to see if you had ancestors who fought in the Civil War visit the National Park Website- <http://www.nps.gov/civilwar/soldiers-and-sailors-database.htm>
- Also you can collect your Civil War to Civil Rights Trading Cards from the National Parks Service when you visit one of the locations listed on the link below.
- <http://www.nps.gov/fomr/forkids/upload/Trading-Card-NPS-Sites.pdf>

