

# First Step to Freedom: The Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation

Jennifer Lemak, Ph.D.  
Chief Curator of History  
New York State Museum



Slavery in New York

## *Fifty Dollars Reward.*

RAN away from the subscriber, in Canajohary, Montgomery County, on the 3d day of June, 1805, a Negro Man, named HARRY; between five feet four and eight inches high, yellow complexion, <sup>is about 25 years of age</sup> has a scar across his right cheek, middling straight built, and speaks Dutch and English. It is supposed he is in New-England. Whoever will apprehend the said Negro, and confine him in goal, either at Albany, Troy or Johnstown, shall have the above reward; ~~or if any person will confine him in any goal, and give information to the subscriber, he shall receive Thirty Dollars.~~

JOHN DIEFENDORFF.



CANAJOHARY, March, 1806.

ALBANY.—PRINTED BY ROBERT PACKARD.

*MS. I will pay the above reward if any person delivers  
said Negro Harry to me in Albany*  
John Diefendorff



# DOWN WITH ABOLITION

Fellow citizens, A foul Abolitionist; a "Child of the Devil," will hold forth to day at the Presbyterian Church, at 11 o'clock A. M.  Let every good citizen attend to **KEEP ORDER.**   
April 27.

Many copies of this were  
stuck up in Ithaca  
the morning after day  
I spoke there in Apr.  
1837-

Broadside, 1837  
(Syracuse University)









Abraham Lincoln, unknown artist,  
oil on canvas, c.1860

New York was divided over the 1860 election. Abraham Lincoln received only 53 percent of the vote in the state while Stephen A. Douglas received 46 percent.

New York State Museum, H-1943.7.1



*Our Banner in the Sky* (1861), by Frederick Church

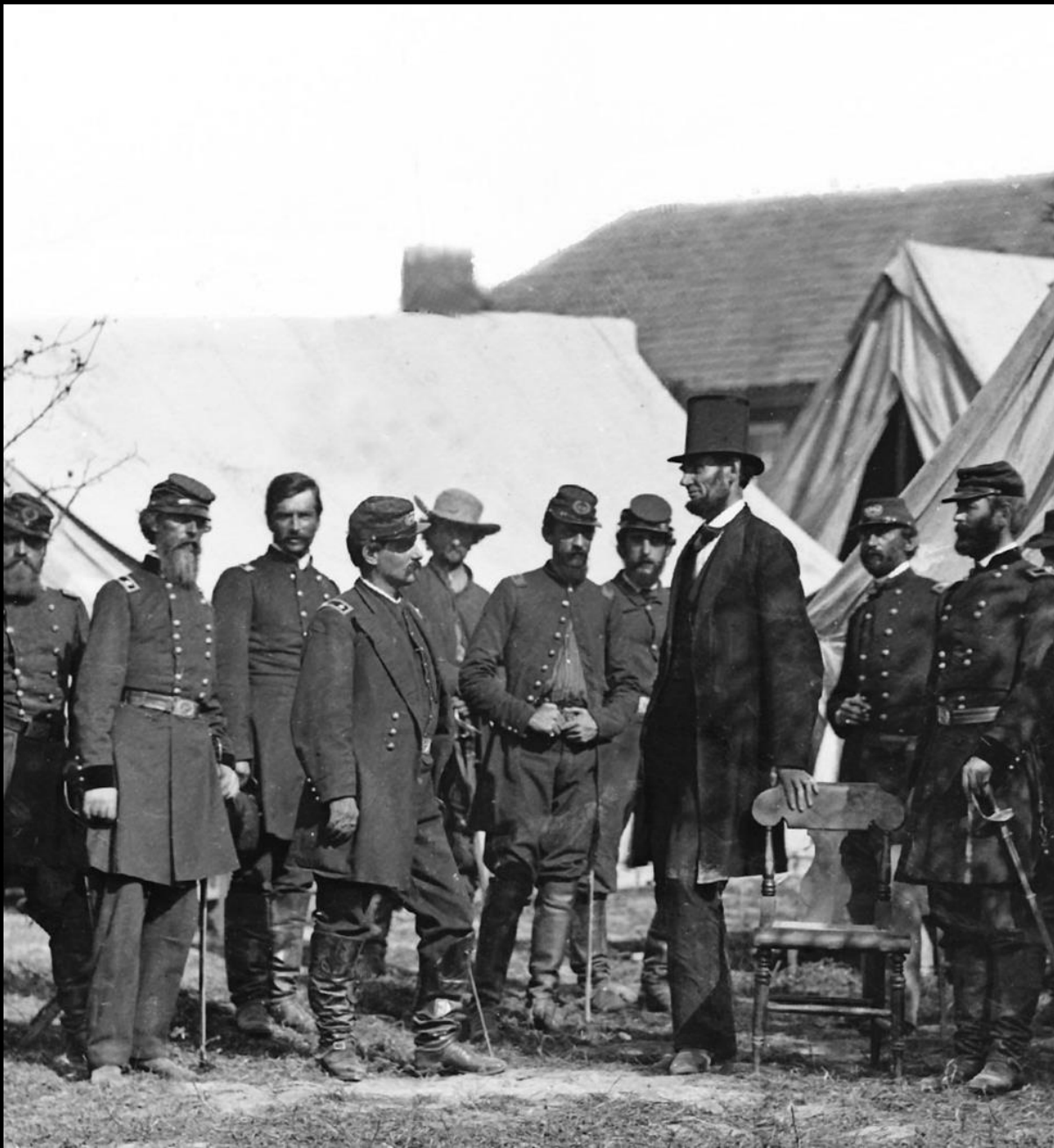
New York artist Frederick Church painted this work in response to the patriotism that swept across the North in the wake of the attack on Fort Sumter.

New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation



1863 photo shows an extended family of contraband slaves after their escape into Union lines (LOC)





President Lincoln at the Antietam battlefield with troops, September 1862



By the President of the  
United States of America  
Abraham Lincoln

I, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States of America, and Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy thereof, do hereby proclaim and declare that hereafter, as heretofore, the war will be prosecuted for the object of practically restoring the constitutional relation between the United States, and each of the States, and the people thereof, in which States that relation ~~is~~ may be suspended, or disturbed.

That it is my purpose, upon the next meeting of Congress to again recommend the adoption of a practical measure tendering pecuniary aid to the free acceptance or rejection of all slave States, so called, the people whereof may not then be in rebellion against the United States, and which States, may then have voluntarily accepted, or thereafter may voluntarily accept, immediate, or gradual abolition of slavery within their respective limits; and that the effort to colourize persons of African descent upon this continent, or elsewhere, will be continued.

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, thereupon, and forever free; and the executive government, intending the military and naval authority, and the government of the United States, will, ~~during the war~~ ~~maintain in office of the present incumbent, and~~ ~~and maintain the persons of~~ ~~recognize, such persons, as being free, and will~~ do no act or acts to oppress 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.

That attention is hereby called to an Act of Congress entitled "An Act to make an additional Article of War" approved March 13, 1862, and which Act is, in the words and figures following:

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That hereafter the following shall be promulgated as an additional article of war for the government of the army of the United States, and shall be obeyed and observed as such:  
Article — All officers or persons in the military or naval service of the United States are prohibited from employing any of the forces under their respective commands for the purpose of returning fugitives from service or labor, who may have escaped from any persons to whom such service or labor is claimed to be due, and any officer who shall be found guilty by a court-martial of violating this article shall be dismissed from the service.  
Sec. 2. And it is further enacted, That this act shall take effect from and after its passage.

Also to the sixth and tenth sections of an Act entitled "An Act to suppress Insurrections, to punish Treason and Rebellion, to seize and confiscate property of rebels, and for other purposes," approved July 17, 1862, and which sections are in the words and figures following:

"Sec. 9. And it is further enacted, That all slaves of persons who shall hereafter be engaged in rebellion against the government of the United States, who shall in any way give aid or comfort thereto, occupying any public service, and taking refuge within the lines of the army, and all slaves captured from such persons or disloyal by them, and found in the control of the government of the United States, and all slaves found on (or) being taken from any State occupied by rebel forces and abettors, captured, seized, and taken from any State occupied by rebel forces and abettors, shall be forever free, and shall be forever free, and shall not again be held as slaves."

Sec. 10. And it is further enacted, That no slave captured into any State, Territory, or the District of Columbia, from any other State, shall be delivered up, or in any way impeded or hindered of his liberty except for crime, or crime offered against him here, unless the person claiming said fugitive first take oath that he will give him his service or service as upon the United States in the person's rebellion, and in any case, if in service of the United States shall, under any person whatever, assist in the rebellion, or the validity of the claim of any person to the service or labor of any other person, or surrender up any such person to the claimant, or with or being concerned in the rebellion."

And I do hereby enjoin upon and order all persons engaged in the military and naval service of the United States to observe, obey, and enforce, within their respective spheres of service, the act, and sections above recited.

And the executive will recommend that all citizens of the United States, who shall have remained loyal thereto throughout the rebellion, shall (upon the restoration of the constitutional relation between the United States, and the people, if that relation shall have been suspended, or disturbed) be compensated for all losses by acts of the United States, including the loss of slaves.

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 twenty-second day of September, in the year of our Lord, one thousand eight hundred and sixty-two, and of the Independence of the United States, the eighty-seventh.  
Abraham Lincoln.

By the President  
William C. Chase,  
Secretary of State

Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, September 22, 1863  
New York State Library













ARMY RELIEF BAZAAR,  
AT ALBANY, N. Y.

Published by Churchill & Deane, 322 Broadway, Albany, N. Y.



# THE FIRST STEP TO FREEDOM

## The Preliminary EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION

FEBRUARY 11 – MARCH 1

NEW YORK STATE MUSEUM  
222 MADISON AVENUE, ALBANY, NY



*Honoring the Memory of Judith Johnson  
Regent, 9th Judicial District*