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PROCLAMATIONS BY PRESIDENT LINCOLN

Thanksgiving Day as it is now observed grew out of the Civil War. It was the result of a proclamation in 1863 setting apart the last Thursday in November as Thanksgiving Day. In 1864 another proclamation was issued calling for the observance of the same day of the year which established the precedent of an annual Thanksgiving Day on the last Thursday in November.

This appears to be an opportune time to tabulate all of the proclamations issued by Lincoln during his administration. No less than eight of them were proclamations of prayer and thanksgiving.

1861

April 15—Calls for 75,000 militia and the convening of Congress in an extra session.

April 19—Orders a blockade affecting the ports of South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Florida, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas.

April 27—A blockade established closing the ports of Virginia and North Carolina.

May 3—A call issued for 42,034 volunteers.

May 10—The writ of *habeas corpus* suspended in Florida.

August 12—The last Thursday in September set apart as a day of "public prayer, humiliation and fasting."

August 16—Commercial intercourse with disloyal states forbidden.

1862

February 19—Washington's birthday to be observed with the reading of the "immortal farewell address" at the services.

April 10—The Sunday following the date of the proclamation to be observed as a day of thanksgiving for victories and of invocation for divine guidance to "hasten the establishment of fraternal relations among all the countries of the world."

May 12—Blockades are relaxed in the ports of Beaufort, N. C., Port Royal, S. C., and New Orleans.

May 19—The proclamation issued by General Hunter with respect to the emancipation of slaves is revoked and the "gradual abolition of slavery" urged.

June 20—The president calls for 150,000 extra troops.

July 1—A call issued for 300,000 volunteers.

July 1—The tax situation in rebellious states set forth.

July 25—The act on forfeiture and seizures as relating to insurrection and rebellion is proclaimed.

September 22—The preliminary Emancipation Proclamation issued with respect to slavery to become effective January 1, 1863.

September 24—Warning against disloyal practices and the writ of *habeas corpus* suspended in respect to all persons arrested.

1863

January 1—The final Emancipation Proclamation issued.

February 28—An order calling for a special session of Congress to convene on March 4th.

March 10—Soldiers absent without leave are granted amnesty if they return to their respective regiments by April first.

March 30—National fast day appointed for Thursday, April 30, looking to "the pardon of our national sins and the restoration of our now divided and suffering country to its former and happy condition of unity and peace."

April 2—Commercial intercourse with loyal citizens of rebellious states allowed in a former proclamation now revoked.

April 20—West Virginia is admitted into the Union, act to take effect and be in force after sixty days.

May 8—The liability of aliens towards the government set forth.

June 15—A call for 100,000 militia to serve for six months.

July 15—Thursday, August 6, set as a day for thanksgiving and to invoke the Holy Spirit "to subdue the anger which has produced and so long sustained a needless and cruel rebellion."

September 15—Writ of *habeas corpus* is suspended throughout the United States.

September 24—The port of Alexandria is opened to trade.

October 3.—The first annual Thanksgiving Day established on the last Thursday of November: "The year that is drawing to its close has been filled with the blessings of fruitful fields, and healthful skies, etc."

October 17—A call for 300,000 volunteers.

December 8—Amnesty granted upon taking oath and reconstruction plans.

December 16—Acts imposing discriminating duties on tonnage and import suspended.

1864

February 1—Order for draft of 500,000 men to serve for three years or during the war.

February 18—Port of Brownsville, Texas opened.

March 26—Further details about Amnesty Proclamation of December 8, 1863.

July 5—The suspension of the writ of *habeas corpus* made effectual in Kentucky.

July 7—Upon the request of Congress, Lincoln proclaims a day of prayer. The first Thursday of August is set apart for "national humiliation and prayer."

July 8—Aid promised to loyal people in any states where reconstruction is under way.

July 18—A call for 500,000 volunteers.

August 18—Order concerning commercial regulations with reference to Newport, Vermont.

September 3—The following Sunday be observed as a day of thanksgiving for victories of the fleet and army.

October 20—Second annual Thanksgiving Proclamation setting aside the last Thursday in November as a day of thanksgiving: "It has pleased Almighty God to prolong our national life another year, etc."

October 31—Nevada admitted to the Union.

November 19—Blockade removed at Norfolk, Va., Fernandina and Pensacola, Fla.

December 19—Call for 300,000 volunteers to serve for one, two, or three years.

1865

January 10—The port of St. Albans, Vermont open to exportation.

February 17—Proclamation convening the United States Senate on March 4th.

March 11—Deserters from army returning to their respective companies by May 10, 1865, will be pardoned.

March 17—A proclamation concerning hostile Indians.

April 11—Blockade of ports to be continued.

The port of Key West, Florida to remain open to foreign and domestic commerce.

April 11—A proclamation demanding the equal trade privileges of American vessels with foreign vessels.