

CIVIL WAR TIMELINE 1863

- Jan. 1 President Abraham Lincoln signs the **Emancipation Proclamation**. It frees all slaves in regions under Confederate control and authorizes the enlistment of black soldiers. Note that it does not outlaw slavery in all areas of the country. Tennessee, which is under Union control (and whose constitution will be among the first to ban slavery); Southern Louisiana, which has remained loyal to the Union; and the border states of Delaware, Maryland, Kentucky, and Missouri are exempt from the Emancipation Proclamation, even though slavery exists in its cruelest forms in all six states. [*See September 5, 1864*]
- “ African Americans in New York City hold a Grand Emancipation Jubilee at Shiloh Church, a night-watch of celebration in anticipation of the Emancipation Proclamation. Hundreds of people attend, almost one-third of them white.
- “ **TN** Lucy Virginia French of McMinnville writes in her journal: “A New Year commenced today—heaven grant that ere it ends peace may reign among us once more.... I rose with new thanksgivings for the victory of yesterday [Stones River]....Old Abe is said to have revoked his Emancipation Proclamation—his message is a ‘funny’ document—the butt and laughing stock of all Europe—in it he recommends ‘gradual’ emancipation.”
- “ **TN** Skirmishes near Clifton as **Forrest** crosses the Tennessee River there, On his way out of West Tennessee; skirmishes at and near LaVergne and at Stewart’s Creek.
- Jan. 2 **TN** C.S. General Breckinridge attacks the Federal position at **Stones River** late in the day. Although initially successful, he is eventually repulsed & withdraws. With 23,000 casualties, **Murfreesboro/Stones River** is the second bloodiest battle fought west of the Appalachians during the Civil War. Rosecrans’ victory goes a long way toward restoring Union morale: Lincoln later writes: “I can never forget ... you gave us a hard-earned victory, which had there been a defeat instead, the nation could scarcely have lived over.” [<http://www.nps.gov/stri/>]
- “ **TN** Fort Donelson: skirmish near Bloods.
- Jan. 3 **TN** Fort Donelson: skirmishes near Cox’s Hill and the Insane Asylum; skirmish near Somerville.
- Jan. 4 **TN** Skirmishes on Manchester Pike; at Monterey; at and near Murfreesboro.
- “ **TN** “Battle of Murfreesboro—Far as the eye could reach stood the two vast armies, silent and motionless, and it almost seemed, instead of foes drawn up for battle, to be some brilliant holiday parade, but at length a volley of musketry from the extreme left told too plainly that the work of death had in reality begun....” [*Murfreesboro Daily Rebel Banner*]
- “ Thirty-nine **Sioux Indians** are executed in St. Paul for their roles in the massacre of several members of a white settlement in Minnesota. [*New York Times*]
- Jan. 5 **TN** Skirmishes at Lytle’s Creek on Manchester Pike; and on Shelbyville Pike. Correspondents from Murfreesboro report that all blacks found in service to the Union Army are immediately shot by Confederate troops. One writer mentions seeing 20 bodies of murdered African Americans lying along Murfreesboro Pike. [*New York Times*.]
- Jan. 7 **TN** The *Philadelphia Press* reports that all the bridges in **East Tennessee** have

CIVIL WAR TIMELINE 1863

been burned. Other reports state that the East Tennessee Railroad has been destroyed, along with a locomotive and two cars, and that raiders have taken a large store of arms, flour, salt, and other supplies. [*Richmond Examiner*]

- Jan. 8 **TN** Skirmish at Knob Creek near Ripley.
- Jan. 8-14 **TN Brigadier Gen. Joseph Wheeler's** cavalry attacks Union **Gen. Rosecrans'** supply train in Tennessee, burning over 450 Union supply wagons and capturing over 2400 Union prisoners.
- Jan. **TN** In his diary, William L. B. Lawrence writes of the "'Reign of Terror' which I hope never to see enacted again, communication between this place & Louisville being cut off giving license to Federal Soldiery to [commit] acts of barbarism unbecoming a civilized people even toward a savage foe....The great & bloody Battle of Stone's River has just been fought & is now a matter of history."
- Jan. 10 **TN** Skirmish near Clifton.
- Jan. 11 **TN** Skirmish at Lowry's Ferry. **Nathan Bedford Forrest** is reported to be in Franklin, "collecting horses, provisions, and conscripts." [*New York Times*]
- Jan. 12 **TN** Affair at Ashland.
- Jan. 13 **TN** Affair at Harpeth Shoals; skirmish at Chamber's Creek near Hamburg.
- “ Fighting near Springfield, Missouri, results in a Union victory but the loss of important telegraph lines. The U.S. House discusses the need for prompt payment of soldiers in the field and the possibility of drafting black soldiers.
- Jan. 14 **TN Lt. Gen. Kirby Smith** is transferred to the command of Trans-Mississippi. **Maj. Gen. Simon Buckner** takes command of the C.S. Department of East Tennessee.
- “ Northern newspapers publish a speech by **Jefferson Davis** in which he comments that the war is longer and more extensive than he had expected.
- Jan. 17 **TN** In Tennessee, **General Bragg** has been replaced by **General Longstreet**, whose army is now at Shelbyville. Forrest is attacking steamboats on the Cumberland River, and 2500 rebel troops are encamped near Savannah, Hardin County. Fighting is reported in Galveston, Texas, and on the Arkansas River.
- Jan. 19 **TN** Skirmish at Woodbury.
- Jan. 20 The Union Army under **General Burnside** surrounds Fredericksburg, Virginia.
- Jan. 21 **TN** Skirmish on Shelbyville Pike; capture of railroad train near Murfreesboro.
- Jan. 22 The **Union blockade of Southern ports** continues to be effective. A steamer loaded with 400 bales of cotton is captured and burned near Charleston. [*NYT*] A few days later the British steamer *Princess Royal* is captured with 400 tons of freight, including 8 Whitworth guns, four steam engines, gunpowder, and a number of rifles.
- Jan. 23 **TN** Skirmishes at Carthage and on Bradyville Pike near Murfreesboro.
- Jan. 25 **TN** Skirmish near Mill Creek.

CIVIL WAR TIMELINE 1863

- “ Following torrential rains, the **Army of the Potomac**, attempting to cross the Rappahannock and gain access to Richmond, is bogged down in the mud – “A magnificent plan foiled by the elements.” [NYT]
- Jan. 26 Abraham Lincoln relieves **Gen. Ambrose Burnside** of his command of the Army of the Potomac, replacing him with **Gen. Joseph “Fighting Joe” Hooker**.
- Jan. 27 **TN** Affair near Germantown.
- Jan. 28 “The House has been filibustering to-day on the bill for organizing and arming Negroes, with the promise of continuing the contest all night.” [NYT]
- “ **TN** Skirmishes near Colliersville, Nashville, and Yorkville.
- Jan. 30 **General U.S. Grant** takes personal command of the **Vicksburg Campaign**.
- Jan. 30-31 **TN** Skirmishes at Dyersburg, Middleton, Rover, and Unionville.
- Jan. 31-Feb.13 **TN** Expedition from Murfreesboro to Franklin.
- Feb. 1 **TN Franklin is occupied** by Union troops under Col. Robert Johnson. Forrest and his staff narrowly escape.
- Feb. 2 The bill sponsored by Pennsylvania Rep. Thaddeus Stevens to allow enlistment by African Americans, “to be armed and equipped as other soldiers,” in units “officered by white men” passes the House after a lengthy debate. [NYT]
- Feb. 3 **TN** Skirmishes at Dover and Cumberland Iron Works; Wheeler and Forrest unsuccessfully attack Ft. Donelson, and are driven off with heavy losses.
- Feb. 3-5 **TN** Expedition from Murfreesboro to Auburn, Liberty, and Alexandria.
- Feb. 4-7 **TN** Series of skirmishes near Murfreesboro. The Army of the Cumberland is still occupying Murfreesboro and the surrounding area, as its mechanics and engineers work to repair roads and bridges. They face constant attacks from Wheeler, Forrest, and Starns. “Contrabands – deserters from Forrest – say that he intends fortifying Columbia, and also to make a dash on Nashville during some of our nights of darkness.” [New York Times, Feb. 5]
- Feb. 8 **TN** Union troops enter Lebanon and capture 600 prisoners.
- Feb. 9 **TN** Affair near Moscow.
- Feb. 10 The marriage of the tiny General Tom Thumb, one of P.T. Barnum’s most popular discoveries, and the even smaller Lavinia Stratton, receives breathless (and endless) attention from the press, distracting readers briefly from the war.
- Feb. 12 **TN** Confederate troops defeat a detachment of the First Cavalry at Bolivar.
- Feb. 13 **TN** Skirmish at Rover. Skirmishes continue at Harper’s Ferry, and at bridges and railroads throughout the South. Troops continue to gather near Vicksburg.
- Feb. 15 **TN** Skirmishes near Auburn, Cainsville, and Nolensville; skirmishing at Nashville and Clarksville. The Army of the Cumberland, now based in Murfreesboro, issues orders on how African Americans can be employed – as teamsters and laborers in Quartermasters’ departments; as cooks, nurses, and hospital attendants; as company cooks and officers’ servants.

CIVIL WAR TIMELINE 1863

- Feb. 16 **TN** Skirmish at Bradyville – Union forces under Gen. Stanley defeat a portion of John Morgan’s division, taking 70 prisoners, including 8 officers, their camp equipage, tents, 300 new saddles, 70 horses, and Basil Duke’s regimental papers.
- “ A report from Nashville mentions that 26 buildings are used throughout the city as hospitals for sick and wounded soldiers.
- Feb. 17-20 **TN** Expedition from Murfreesboro to Liberty.
- Feb. 18 **TN** Skirmish at Moscow. A report from Nashville says the “Cumberland River is cleared of the rebels between Clarksville and Nashville. The river is much swollen, and is rising. The cotton lands are overflown.” [*New York Times*]
- “ Federal gunboats trade fire with three Confederate batteries near Vicksburg.
- Feb. 19 **TN** Skirmish near Rover.
- Feb. 20 **TN** Skirmish on Shelbyville Pike.
- Feb. 20 The *New Bedford Mercury* (Massachusetts): “The recruiting for the Fifty-fourth (colored) regiment is proceeding rapidly. Capt. ROBERT GOULD SHAW, of the second Regiment, has been appointed as its Colonel, and Surgeon LINCOLN R. STONE, of Salem, has also been transferred from the Second to the Fifty-Fourth Over \$5,000 has been subscribed in Boston in aid of the undertaking, including a check of \$500 received from GERITT SMITH.”
- Feb. 22 **TN** Skirmish on Manchester Pike.
- Feb. 23 **TN** Confederate spy **Belle Boyd** is serenaded in Knoxville by the Florida Brass Band. When the crowd outside her home demands her presence, she appears in a window and thanks them for the compliment. [*New York Times*]
- Feb. 25 **TN** Confederate **Gen. Van Dorn** establishes cavalry headquarters at Spring Hill. His command includes Forrest’s brigade.
- Feb. 25 An explosion in the packing-house of DuPont’s powder works in Delaware takes 14 lives and causes many serious injuries. [*New York Times*]
- Feb. 27 **TN** Skirmish near Bloomington on Hatchie River. Fighting takes place at **Vicksburg**, with heavy losses reported on both sides – the gunboat *Indianola* is captured by the Confederates. [*Petersburgh Express*]
- Mar. 1 **TN** Skirmishes at Bradyville and near Woodbury.
- Mar. 2 **TN** Skirmishes at Eagleville and near Petersburg.
- Mar. 3 The **Conscription Act**/Enrollment Act is passed, requiring enrollment of all able-bodied men in the Union Army, although they can purchase their exemption by paying \$300 or by sending a substitute. Only 46,347 of the 776,892 men receiving draft notices will actually wear a uniform. [Lapham]
- “ **TN** Skirmish near Bear Creek.
- Mar. 4 **Gen. Hooker** puts a system of bakers and ovens in place so that every Union soldier can have a fresh loaf of bread every other day. [*NYT*]

CIVIL WAR TIMELINE 1863

- “ **TN** Skirmish near Franklin.
- Mar. 4-5 **TN** Skirmishes at and near Chapel Hill, Unionville, Spring Hill, Thompson’s Station. At Unionville, the 17th Pennsylvania and the 4th Michigan Cavalry attack Russell’s cavalry; the Confederates lose 50 killed and 180 wounded, all by saber strokes; 58 are taken prisoner. At **Spring Hill** Confederate Cavalry under Earl Van Dorn and Nathan Bedford Forrest drive Union Cavalry off on the 4th, then surround and engage the remaining infantry. After heavy fighting on the 5th, the Union garrison surrenders. The Confederate victory disrupts Phil Sheridan’s move against Columbia.
- Mar. 6 **TN** Skirmish at Christiana.
- Mar. 8-9 **TN** Skirmishes at and near Triune and at Thompson’s Station.
- Mar. 9-10 **TN** Skirmishes near Covington.
- Mar. 10 **TN** Skirmishes near Murfreesboro and Moscow.
- “ **Albert Edward, Prince of Wales**, marries Princess Alexandra of Denmark at St. George’s Chapel, Windsor Castle.
- Mar. 10-11 **TN** Skirmish at Rutherford Creek.
- Mar. 10-16 **TN** Scouting party to Lafayette and skirmish there.
- Mar. 11 **TN Van Dorn** withdraws in the face of a superior U.S. force, but stops their advance at the Duck River.
- Mar. 12-20 **TN** Expedition from Columbus KY to Perryville.
- Mar. 13 **TN** Skirmish at Rover.
- “ The *Richmond Examiner* reports that **Gen. Beauregard** has revoked all furloughs and recalled all absentees to their posts.
- Mar. 14 **Adm. Farragut’s** ships pass Port Hudson and seize the central Mississippi River.
- “ The **American Bible Society** makes a grant of 7,000 Bibles for circulation in the Confederate states. They are sent to Richmond for distribution. [NYT]
- “ **TN** Skirmish at Davis’ Mill.
- Mar. 15 **TN** Skirmish at Rover. Frederick Douglass encourages northern blacks to enlist in the Union Army.
- Mar. 16 **TN** “Lincoln is a dictator!” [Lucy Virginia French, journal]
- Mar. 17 **TN** On this date the Frenches host a dinner party for Gen. & Mrs. John Hunt Morgan. Lucy Virginia French remembers the evening in her journal: “I had the richest, clearest, and hottest coffee, light bread, biscuit, and waffles, potato cakes, stewed peaches and apples, cole slaw, chicken salad, pickles sweet and sour, golden butter, a splendidly done turkey, and fine boiled ham, and to crown the repast a very large “snow cake” that would just melt in your mouth, and a stand of the most elegant custard in silver cups. How everybody seemed to enjoy that supper! We had a charming time and everything passed off completely to my satisfaction.... Mrs. Morgan [the former Martha “Mattie” Ready of Murfrees-

CIVIL WAR TIMELINE 1863

boro] was dressed in crimson silk with a black figure in it—point lace and pearls. I wore blue silk—Betty Reid had on a gray and Miss Sophie light blue silk—Mrs. Read a blue silk—Mollie Armstrong looked tawdry as usual”

- Mar. 19 **TN** Skirmishes at Liberty, Richland Station, and Spring Hill; skirmish near College Grove. Rumors spread that a battle is imminent in the neighborhood of **Tullahoma**. (The Tullahoma campaign will occur between June 24 and July 3.)
- Mar. 20 **TN** Action at Vaught’s Hill, near Milton.
- Mar. 21 **TN** Skirmishes at Salem and Triune.
- Mar. 22 **TN** Skirmish near Murfreesboro.
- “ **TN Parson Brownlow** writes a letter to the *Philadelphia Press*, saying: “We hope, in Tennessee, to have the rebel forces driven down into the Cotton States by late in the Spring or early in the Summer, so as to enable us to elect members of the Legislature and a Governor, all of loyal men. Then we shall redistrict the State and elect loyal Congressmen and Senators, so as to have them in Washington next Winter to back up the Administration and the army, and oppose the mad schemes of the Copperheads. We will also elect Judges, organize our Courts, and again put the machinery of civil government in motion.”
- Mar. 23 **TN** Skirmish at Thompson’s Station
- Mar. 24 **TN** Skirmish on Davis’ Mill Road near LaGrange; Forrest attacks Brentwood and captures a Federal garrison.
- Mar. 25 **TN** Confederate cavalry under **Forrest, Wheeler, and Wharton**, cross the Harpeth River six miles above Franklin and attack Union forces at **Brentwood**. Three hundred Union soldiers are taken captive. [NYT]
- Mar. 27 **TN** Skirmish on Woodbury Pike.
- Mar. 29 **TN** Affair at Moscow; action near Belmont.
- Mar. 31 **Gen. Breckinridge** takes issue with **Gen. Bragg’s** reports on the effectiveness of his troops and asks for a Court of Inquiry to investigate Bragg’s command.
- Mar. 31-Apr. 1 **TN** Skirmishes near Franklin and Eagleville.
- Apr. 1 **TN** Skirmish on Columbia Pike.
- Apr. 2 **TN** Skirmish on Carter Creek Pike. Several gunboats on the Cumberland are fired on, but none receive serious damage, although several of their crew are slightly injured.
- Apr. 3 **TN** Skirmish on Smith’s Ford or Snow Hill; skirmish at Liberty.
- Apr. 4 **TN** Skirmishes at Woodbury, on Lewisburg Pike, and on Noconah Creek near Memphis. Reports from Florence, Alabama, say that the Confederates are building bridges and floats for crossing the **Tennessee River** in order to facilitate troop movements through that area.
- Apr. 5 **TN** Skirmish at Davis’ Mill.
- Apr. 6 **TN** Skirmish near Green Hill.

CIVIL WAR TIMELINE 1863

- Apr. 7 Union **Admiral Samuel F. Du Pont**'s fleet tests the power of ironclad ships against land fortifications, as his ships endure a concentric fire from five different positions for nearly two hours, but he fails to break through Charleston's harbor defenses. Meanwhile, troops from both sides continue to gather near Vicksburg.
- “ TN Skirmish at Liberty.
- Apr. 7-11 TN **Wheeler's Raid** on Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad.
- Apr. 8 TN Confederate troops capture and burn the steamers *Saxonia* and *Lovell* near Clarksville.
- “ The American Freedman's Friend Society holds its first public meeting at Henry Ward Beecher's church in Brooklyn; Horace Greeley addresses the gathering.
- Apr. 9 TN Skirmish near Obion River.
- Apr. 10 TN Affair at Antioch Station. Engagement at Franklin, when Van Dorn's forces attack General Granger. Confederate forces 200 strong attack a passenger train on the Nashville & Chattanooga Railroad near LaVergne, killing a number of guards, destroying the train, and tearing up a section of track. [NYT]
- “ Word comes from Richmond that the **food supplies** are running out and that the citizens are rioting for bread. Similar news comes from Raleigh. [NYT]
- Apr. 11 TN **Col. Abel Streight** leaves Palmyra with 1,500 Federals on a raid that ends in Rome, Georgia. Streight's troops are intercepted and harassed by **Forrest's** men until their definitive encounter on April 30.
- Apr. 12 TN Engagement at Stewartsborough.
- Apr. 13 TN Skirmish near Chapel Hill.
- Apr. 16 TN Skirmish near Eagleville.
- Apr. 16-17 The **siege of Vicksburg** begins.
- Apr. 18 TN Skirmish at Hartsville. Skirmish near Memphis.
- Apr. 18 TN U.S. **Col. Benjamin Grierson** leaves LaGrange on a raid into Mississippi.
- Apr. 19 TN Skirmish at Trenton. A report in the *Savannah (GA) News* refers to the threat of general starvation and urges people to grow their own food.
- Apr. 22 TN Skirmish at Hartsville. Col. Wilder's troops take **McMinntown**, capturing food and other supplies, a cotton factory, two mills, and 300 prisoners; and destroying the bridges.
- Apr. 23 TN Skirmish on Shelbyville Pike.
- Apr. 24 The Confederate Congress passes a graduated income tax bill.
- Apr. 26 TN Affair near College Grove; skirmish at Duck River Island or Little Rock Landing.
- Apr. 27 TN Skirmish on Carter Creek Pike, eight miles south of Franklin. A rumor circulates that Gen. Bragg has been shot and killed by Gen. Breckinridge. As

CIVIL WAR TIMELINE 1863

attractive an idea as that might seem to Breckinridge, the rumor is soon proved to be without merit.

- Apr. 27-30 The Army of the Potomac crosses the Rappahannock and Rapidan Rivers. Part of **Hooker's** U.S. force demonstrates against Fredericksburg, while Hooker himself moves against Lee's left, concentrating his forces near Chancellorsville.
- Apr. 28 Gen. **Burnside** issues an order that no member of the army may aid or abet the escape of slaves from their owners, or may employ such persons against the consent of their owners, unless military necessity requires their impressment.
- Apr. 30 **Grant's army** crosses the Mississippi River below Vicksburg. Over the next 17 days, Grant maneuvers his army inland, captures **Jackson**, Mississippi (the state capital), and lays siege to **Vicksburg**.
- “ **TN** Gen. Streight's force is routed at the **Battle of Day's Gap**; Forrest takes Streight prisoner and sends him to Libby Prison. Streight will eventually escape by tunneling out from his barracks and will return to his own lines. Confederate deserters who come across to the Union lines near Murfreesboro speak of fighting on limited food rations – although they have sufficient flour and meal, they get only a quarter ration of bacon.
- May 1 **Battle of Port Gibson, Mississippi.** Grant and McPherson win a decisive victory against Maj. Gen. John Bowen, who destroys his own magazine and heavy artillery to keep them from being captured. The formidable defenses at Grand Gulf will become Grant's central supply depot as he moves inland.
- May 1-6 Although greatly outnumbered, **Robert E. Lee's** forces defeat Hooker's troops at the **Battle of Chancellorsville**, although the Confederates suffer more than 13,000 casualties, one-fourth of their forces. Hooker, whose implementation of his battle plan was severely flawed, will be relieved of his command on June 28, just before Gettysburg. As dark falls, **Stonewall Jackson** is shot by his own troops, mistaking his staff for Federal cavalry. Jackson's left arm and right hand receive severe wounds; doctors amputate the arm in an attempt to save his life.
- May 2 **TN** Skirmish at Thompson's Station.
- May 4 **TN** Affair near Nashville.
- May 5 **TN** Thirty-three members of the **27th New Jersey** Regiment drown in the Cumberland River when the flatboat transporting them sinks. Nineteen of the men are from the same town (Rockaway).
- May 6 **TN** As **Gen. R. S. Granger** assumes command of Nashville, a number of Confederate sympathizers are sent South, among them the Hon. Neill M. Brown, a former governor of Tennessee. [*New York Times*]
- May 7 **Gen. Earl Van Dorn** is murdered in his Spring Hill headquarters by an irate civilian, Dr. Peters of Maury County, who claims Van Dorn has been carrying on an affair with his wife (and who is never brought to trial for the murder).
- May 7-19 **Big Black River Campaign.** Grant drives Joseph Johnson's C.S. troops from Jackson, Mississippi, and then goes after Pemberton at Vicksburg.
- May 9 **TN** Affair near Caney Fork.

CIVIL WAR TIMELINE 1863

- May 10 **Stonewall Jackson** dies of pneumonia and complications from his injuries.
- May 11 **TN** Skirmishes at LaFayette and Lebanon.
- May 12 **TN** Skirmish at Linden, in Perry County. As a military band plays hours of dirges, Stonewall Jackson is buried in Fredericksburg, VA.
- May 13 **TN** Skirmishes near South Union and Woodbury.
- May 14 As part of the movement to take Vicksburg, Grant's troops seize **Jackson, MS**, destroying all facilities that could be of benefit to the Southern war effort. The loss of the state capital is a huge blow to Southern morale.
- May 15 General Rosecrans receives this letter from an indignant private: "General, I have been in the service 18 months, and have never received a cent. I desire a furlough for 15 days, in order to return home and remove my family to the poor-house." Rosecrans grants the furlough. [*New York Times*]
- May 17 **TN** Skirmish on Bradyville Pike.
- May 18 **TN** Skirmish on Horn Lake Creek.
- May 19-July 4 **Grant lays siege to Vicksburg.** It will be six long weeks before Confederate Gen. Pemberton surrenders the city
- May 20 **TN** Skirmish at Collierville.
- May 21 An editorial in the *Richmond Examiner* includes this prediction about the outcome of the war: "From the first day the only reasonable hope of the Confederacy has been the transfer of hostilities to the enemy's territory. If we cannot do that, the progress of invasion, however slow, must, after a time, overwhelm us."
- May 21-22 **TN** Expedition from Murfreesboro to Middleton, and skirmish.
- May 22 The U.S. War Department, with **General Order Number 143**, establishes a "Bureau of Colored Troops" to facilitate the recruitment of black soldiers into the Union Army. Regiments, including infantry, cavalry, light and heavy artillery units, will now be recruited from all states of the Union, to become known as the **United States Colored Troops (USCT)**. Around 175 regiments of over 178,000 free blacks and freed slaves will serve during the last two years of the war, reinforcing the Union war effort at a critical time. By war's end, the USCT will constitute approximately 1/10 of all Union troops. In Tennessee, Andrew Johnson, military governor of the occupation forces, drags his feet about initiating the troops, feeling, among other things, that contraband labor is too essential to pillage for soldiers. [*Hunt*]
- May 22 **TN** Skirmish on Yellow Creek.
- May 24-25 **TN** Skirmishes around Woodbury – Union Col. Wilder chases Col. Breckinridge's troops for several miles, capturing nine prisoners, 25 serviceable horses, and 30 beef cattle.
- May 28 **Governor Curtin of Pennsylvania** leaves for Washington to consult with Lincoln about how to protect the state against invasion. [*New York Times*]

CIVIL WAR TIMELINE 1863

- May 29 After being reviewed on the Boston Common by Gov. Andrew and his staff, the men of the 54th Massachusetts leave Boston for Port Royal, South Carolina, in the steamer *DeMolay*.
- May 29-30 **TN** Skirmishes at Hamburg Landing and Jordan's Store.
- May, n.d. **TN** Affair at Obion Plank Road Crossing.
- June 2 **Gen. Payne** writes from Gallatin to Gen. Rosecrans that he has put into effect a plan to change slave labor in his area to compensated labor: male workers are hired out at \$8 and females at \$5 to their former masters, who "declare that they never had so much work done, nor half so well done, before." [NYT]
- June 3 **Robert E. Lee** begins moving troops northward to invade **Pennsylvania**. Hooker will follow the Confederate movement on June 13.
- " **TN** Skirmish on the Manchester Pike near Murfreesboro.
- June 4 **TN** Skirmishes near Marshall Knob, Snow Hill, and Triune. Heavy cannonading from an engagement at Franklin can be heard in Nashville, when Col. Baird's garrison is attacked by four Confederate brigades led by Forrest. Baird's men fall back into their entrenchments, but rally and drive their opponents off.
- " A New York court grapples with the question of whether a spy is subject to the control of military or civil authorities. [New York Times]
- June 6 **TN** Skirmish on Shelbyville Pike.
- June 7-9 **TN** Skirmishes at Triune and Spring Hill. The railroad bridge over the Little Harpeth River at Brentwood is slightly burned but is repaired within a day. Two spies are caught and hanged at Murfreesboro; one is a cousin of Robert E. Lee.
- June 9 In an all-day cavalry battle at **Brandy Station**, Virginia, **Jeb Stuart's** forces defeat Union troops under Alfred Pleasanton. With 9,000 horsemen on each side, this is the largest cavalry battle ever on American soil. Although a Southern victory, it signals the rise and future domination of Union cavalry in the eastern theater of the war.
- June 11 **TN Forrest** attacks Gen. Mitchell's troops at Triune; **Morgan** departs Alexandria with 2,500 troops for a series of raids into Kentucky, Ohio, and Indiana. Morgan's raids represent the most northern penetration by uniformed Confederate troops at any time during the war.
- June 13 General Lee defeats Union forces at **Winchester**, VA, and, deciding to take the war to the enemy, continues north toward Pennsylvania.
- June 14 **TN** Skirmish near Green Hill.
- " The *Philadelphia Inquirer* carries reports of predicted incursions by Confederate troops into Pennsylvania. Communication lines have been cut between Hagerstown, MD, and Chambersburg, PA, and Harrisburg is bracing for an attack by J.E.B. Stuart's cavalry.
- June 14-24 **TN** Sanders' raid in East Tennessee.
- June 15 Lee crosses the Potomac and moves into Pennsylvania.

CIVIL WAR TIMELINE 1863

- “ **TN** U.S. Col. William Sanders raids East Tennessee; affair near Trenton.
- June 15-17 **TN** Expedition to and skirmish near Lebanon.
- June 17 **TN** Affair at Wartburg. Gen. Bragg has amassed 18 brigades of infantry and cavalry, estimated at 40,000 men, reportedly in preparation of an invasion of Kentucky in cooperation with Buckner, whose troops are currently in Knoxville.
- “ As rebel troops move toward Carlisle, PA, Union forces begin to move toward **Pennsylvania**. Citizens of Harrisburg arm themselves or flee the city.
- June 19 **TN** Action at Triune; affair at Lenoir’s Station – Col. Carter raids East Tenn. with 3,000 cavalry, destroying the Lenoir Bros. factory and some railroad track.
- June 19-20 **TN** Skirmishes at and near Knoxville.
- June 20 **West Virginia** separates itself from Virginia and is admitted as a new Unionist state. Its constitution bans the introduction of slaves into the state, but does not address the issue of emancipating the slaves already there.
- “ **Stuart**’s main cavalry force, 12,000 strong, is in Warrenton, VA; **Lee**’s army is massed near Front Royal in the Shenandoah Valley. Reports indicate that the whole army will probably try to turn Gen. Hooker’s right flank and cross into Maryland, which will give them easy access into southern Pennsylvania.
- “ **TN** Skirmishes at Dixon Springs, Strawberry Plains, and Powder Springs Gap.
- June 21 Confederate troops are said to be concentrating at Sharpsburg, Williamsport, Hagerstown, and South Mountain, MD, having built bridges across the Potomac at Williamsport and Shepherdstown for the purpose of transporting supplies. Residents of Baltimore and Harrisburg prepare to defend their cities.
- June 22 **TN** Skirmish at Powell Valley.
- June 23 **TN Rosecrans** begins a campaign to maneuver **Bragg** out of Tennessee. Skirmish at Uniontown.
- June 23-July 7 **TN Tullahoma Campaign** (also Middle Tennessee Campaign): the Union’s Army of the Cumberland, based in the area of Murfreesboro, Tennessee maneuvers the Confederate Army of Tennessee out of its positions just to the south, near Shelbyville and Wartrace, driving the Southern troops out of middle Tennessee completely and into a fortified garrison in Chattanooga. [http://mtsu32.mtsu.edu:11758/intro_main.html]
- June 24 **TN** Skirmishes at Big Springs Branch and at and near Christiana.
- June 24-26 **TN** Skirmishes at Hoover’s Gap.
- June 24-27 **TN** Skirmish at Liberty Gap.
- June 25 **Ewell**’s division moves steadily into Pennsylvania. Union Gen. **Knipe** hopes to make a stand at Carlisle, while Gen. **Couch** takes up a defensive position at Gettysburg in order to operate on the enemy’s right flank. [*New York Times*]
- June 25-27 **TN** Skirmishes at Fosterville and Guy’s Gap. The Army of the Cumberland has secured Hoover’s, Guy’s, and Liberty gaps. Now outflanked, **Bragg** withdraws.

CIVIL WAR TIMELINE 1863

June 26	TN Skirmish at Beech Grove. Buckner and Burnside meet at Big Creek Gap, in East Tennessee. Buckner retreats and Burnside falls back to cover Knoxville.
Jun.26-Jul.2	J.E.B. Stuart makes a raid around the Federal rear in Maryland. Unfortunately, it will delay his arrival at Gettysburg, handicapping Lee's forces.
June 27	TN Skirmish at Fairfield; action at Shelbyville; Manchester is occupied by Union forces.
June 28	Three days before Gettysburg, Gen. Joseph Hooker is replaced as commander of the Army of the Potomac by Maj. Gen. George Meade , who will get the glory of that important Union victory. Lee, who has joined forces with Longstreet, has crossed the Potomac and concentrated his forces near Cashtown, PA.
June 29	TN Skirmishes near Lexington, Hillsborough, and Decherd.
June 29-30	TN Skirmishes near Tullahoma as Bragg's army abandons Shelbyville and retreats toward Chattanooga.
June 30	Confederate troops under Lee, Longstreet, and A.P. Hill meet U.S. Cavalry at Gettysburg. Opposing armies begin moving toward the area from many locations.
"	TN Skirmish at Butler's Mill.
Summer	TN Nashville has become a surprisingly dynamic city: it provides medical care, maintenance, and supplies for the war effort and the railroads; it attracts refugees, both black and white (including multitudes fleeing Confederate occupation in East Tennessee, and a huge number of contraband workers and their families); and it supplies food, rest, and recreation for military personnel, including "a licensed and medically regulated prostitution district." [Hunt]
July 1	Battle of Gettysburg begins. Confederate forces flank the Federals from the north side of town. Federals take positions on Cemetery Hill and Culp's Hill. Union General John Reynolds is shot from his horse and killed early in the battle.
July 1-2	TN The occupation of Tullahoma by Union forces brings no joy to Rosecrans, who sees Bragg's move to a more defensible position on the Tennessee River as a potential trap. Skirmishes at and near Bethpage Bridge, Elk River.
July 1-3	The Battle of Gettysburg is the only major Civil War battle fought on Northern soil. The number of dead and wounded cannot be agreed upon, but a fair estimate would be 5,000-8,000 dead, with five to six times that many wounded or missing. It can be said that more men actually fought and more men died here than in any other battle in North America before or since. Victorious General George Meade makes a major tactical error by allowing Lee's forces to retreat unchallenged south of the Potomac, prolonging the war for many more months.
July 2	Longstreet attacks Federal left flank south of Gettysburg. Union forces remain anchored on the ridge.
"	TN Skirmishes at Morris's Ford and Rock Creek Ford on the Elk River; other skirmishes at Pelham and Estill Springs.
July 3	Lee attempts to break Meade's center with artillery bombardments and a charge

CIVIL WAR TIMELINE 1863

of four divisions. Because the artillery fire fails to disperse the Union forces, the ensuing Confederate assault, known as Pickett's Charge, is driven back with tragically heavy losses: over 50% of the 12,500 men are lost. Most military historians believe this assault, ordered by Lee over the strenuous objections of Longstreet, was an avoidable mistake, the outcome of which drained the Southern war effort of its self-confidence.

- “ Surrender of Vicksburg. Gen. Pemberton gives up the city and 30,000 men.
- “ **TN** Skirmish at Boiling Fork near Winchester.
- July 4 After a long siege, Confederates surrender Vicksburg to Ulysses S. Grant, thus securing the Mississippi River for the Union. Following the Confederate losses at Tullahoma, Vicksburg, and Gettysburg, many people mistakenly assume the war is nearly over. However, the South is more resilient and the Union less sound than many people believe. Nevertheless, this moment, with major Union wins at both Gettysburg and Vicksburg, is considered the turning point of the Civil War.
- July 4 Lee withdraws from Gettysburg in heavy rain, with surprisingly little Federal pursuit. His ammunition is believed to be nearly exhausted, and over 500 of his wagons (or one-third of his army's transportation) have been destroyed.
- “ **TN** Skirmish near University Depot. Wheeler's Cavalry at Sewanee covers Confederate retreat. Bragg's Army of Tennessee reaches Chattanooga.
- July 5 **TN** Skirmish at Yellow Creek.
- July 6 Generals Sherman and Thomas pursue Bragg's retreating army southward, picking away at his wagon train and rear guard.
- July 9 In association with Grant's offensive against Vicksburg, Gen. Banks attacks and seizes the Confederate garrison at **Port Hudson** on the Mississippi River, thus placing the entire Mississippi River in Union hands and splitting the Confederacy in two.
- July 10 **TN** Skirmish at Bolivar; capture of outpost at Union City.
- July 11 A week after the Battle of Gettysburg, opposition to the new draft and its “rich man's exemptions” sparks a riot in New York City, leading to 4 days of violence. At least 120 are killed (including many African Americans caught in widespread racial violence) – and perhaps many more; up to 8,000 are injured. Fifty buildings, including two churches, are burned to the ground, with property damage totaling as much as \$5 million. Within a few days, similar **draft riots** will occur in Boston as well.
- July 11-26 **TN** Confederate Gen. **John Hunt Morgan** leads his men from Sparta, TN, into Indiana and Ohio on a highly publicized series of raids. Its timing, which coincides with the Vicksburg and Gettysburg campaigns, seems not to be strategically related to the other campaigns, although it does draw thousands of Federal troops away from their normal duties. After July 20 U.S. troops will begin to have greater success in stopping Hunt's advance and taking prisoners.
- July 13-15 **TN** Cavalry skirmish at Jackson; skirmish at Forked Deer River.
- July 14 Gen. Grant paroles 31,000 Confederate prisoners. There will be few additional

CIVIL WAR TIMELINE 1863

prisoner releases or exchanges once Federal commanders realize they can hasten the course of the war by reducing Southern troop strength in this way. Meanwhile Lee's army arrives safely in Virginia, having faced little opposition.

- “ TN Gen. Bragg's army has retreated from Chattanooga to Atlanta.
- July 15 TN Skirmish at Pulaski. Charleston, SC, comes under attack; reports to the *New York Times* claim that all of Morris Island is captured except Fort Wagner.
- July 17 TN Skirmish on Stone's River.
- July 18 The **54th Massachusetts Volunteers**, an all-black unit led by Col. Robert Gould Shaw, lead the attack on **Fort Wagner** in Charleston, SC. Nearly half the Regiment are killed, wounded, or captured. Shaw himself dies early in the attack. Sgt. William H. Carney is the first African American to receive the Congressional Medal of Honor for courage under fire.
- July 18 TN Skirmish near Memphis.
- “ An editorial in the *Richmond Enquirer* admits, “The fall of Vicksburgh, the retreat of Bragg, the repulse of Lee, and the advance on Charleston, are all serious disasters – the most serious that have attended our armies since the beginning of the war.” A new Confederate Act authorizes the conscription of “all white men who are residents of the Confederate States between the ages of eighteen and forty-five years. [*New York Times*]
- July 24 TN Gen. Rosecrans arrives in Nashville, inspecting offices, gunboats, and Hospitals, where he takes time to visit with many convalescing soldiers. [*NYT*]
- July 26 TN John Hunt Morgan and his men, thwarted in their attempts to move south, are captured at West Point in Columbiana County, Ohio. The enlisted men are sent to military prisons; the officers are sent to the Ohio State Penitentiary. Morgan and seven of his men will eventually tunnel out of prison and return to the Confederacy, continuing the raids until his death in September of 1864.
- “ TN Seventy-year-old Sam Houston dies in Huntsville, Texas.
- “ TN Lucy Virginia French writes in her journal from Beersheba Springs, Grundy County: “Scenes enacted here beggar description. Early in the morning the sack of the place began. But a few of the “bushwhackers” were in—the mountain people came in crowds and with vehickles [*sic*] of all sorts and carried off everything they could from both hotel and cottages.... They were emptying Mrs. [Cockrill's] house as we went to the school house, and two rough fellows were in our room playing the melodeon.... [The] scenes we witnessed are indescribable. Gaunt, ill-looking men and slatternly, rough barefooted women stalking & racing To and fro, eager as famished wolves for prey, hauling out furniture—tearing up matting and carpets.”
- July 29 TN Skirmish near Fort Donelson.
- “ TN Lucy French describes the pillaging at her Grundy County residence: “[The Union soldiers] amused themselves by pulling down the chandeliers in the dining room, throwing ink bottles against the wall in the office—setting up bottles of wine upon the long Piazza and rolling nine-pin balls at them—using bottles for pins, (the Piazza floor was crimsoned with claret,) cutting the green cloth from

CIVIL WAR TIMELINE 1863

the elegant billiard tables, one of which they broke to pieces, and divers other capers of like caliber such as distinguish Yankees wherever they may go.”

- July 30 **TN** Skirmish at Grand Junction.
- “ Confederate President Davis announces that black soldiers of the USCT will be treated as escaped slaves and returned to their owners. Lincoln’s response is immediate and harsh: black Union soldiers captured by the Confederate army are to be treated as prisoners of war, not as escaped slaves. [Foner, *Forever Free*]
- Aug. 3 **TN** Skirmish near Denmark. Parson Brownlow makes a speech in Cincinnati in which he comments on “the drawing to a close of this infernal war of rebellion. The thing is pretty near played out. We commenced to celebrate the Fourth of July about three weeks ago, and we have been celebrating it ever since!”
- Aug. 4 In Kentucky, recently placed under martial law by Gen. Burnside, state elections give a strong majority to the Union candidates. [*NYT*]
- Aug. 5 **TN** In her diary Lucy Virginia French reveals that she and her friends have begun calling the bushwhackers “the Gentlemen.” Bushwhackers are army “irregulars,” crude & primitive, who hide in the woods, attack the opposition, and loot the locals. Hearing of their presence, Lucy has hidden her valuables—china, silver, and papers—“out in the bushes on the hanging cliffs below us.”
- Aug. 7 The Richmond newspapers publish an urgent appeal by Jefferson Davis to Confederate officers and soldiers, asking them to return immediately to their various camps, promising amnesty and pardon to absentees and deserters. Rosecrans’ army reports a steady stream of Confederate deserters passing through their camps.
- Aug. 9 **TN** Skirmish at Sparta.
- Aug. 12 **TN** Lucy French’s journal illustrates her despair at finding herself beset not only by the Yankee soldiers but by Confederate “bushwhackers” as well: “On Sunday last when I wrote in my journal I was ... so low down as to persuade myself I didn’t care one jot for the Confederacy or anybody in it—which was a dreadful pass for me to come to. About dark I was walking on the gallery—we were all out there ... when three horsemen dashed by at full speed—we caught our breath, and ‘Bushwhackers!’ was echoed from lip to lip.”
- Aug 16-Sep 22 **TN** 8th Tennessee Cavalry (C.S.) is attacked near Sparta by Col. Minty’s U.S. Cavalry. Rosecrans moves against Chattanooga as the Chickamauga Campaign begins.
- Aug 16-Oct 19 **TN** East Tennessee Campaign.
- Aug. 17 **TN** Skirmish at Calfkiller Creek near Sparta.
- Aug. 19 **TN** Skirmish at Weem’s Springs.
- Aug. 21 Confederate raids produce chaos in Missouri. William Quantrill leads a Southern irregular force against Lawrence, Kansas (a stronghold of Union support), killing 183 men and boys, dragging some from their homes to murder them in front of their families, and then burning much of the city. When Union troops drive the Confederates back, Quantrill flees to Texas, but the raiders break into smaller

CIVIL WAR TIMELINE 1863

guerilla units, who continue their looting and burning raids into Missouri, Kentucky, and elsewhere.

- Aug. 21 **TN** Action at Shellmound (now under Lake Nickajack). Eli Lilly's Battery of the Army of the Cumberland (U.S.) shells Chattanooga.
- Aug. 22 "Slaves command a higher price in Kentucky ... than in any of the Southern States. In Missouri they are sold at from \$40 to \$400, according to age, quality, and ... place. In Tennessee they cannot be said to be sold at all. In Maryland the negroes ... fetched an average price of \$18 a head.... In the farther states of the Southern Confederacy ... we occasionally see boasts from rebel newspapers as to the high prices the slaves bring.... We notice in the *Savannah Republican* of the 5th, a report of a negro sale ... at which two girls of 18 years of age were sold for about \$2,500 apiece, two matured boys for about the same price, a man of 45 for \$1,850, and a woman of 23, with her child of 5, for \$3,950." [NYT]
- Aug. 25 The Army of the Cumberland is on the move, preparatory to planned strikes against Confederate forces at Chattanooga and Knoxville.
- Aug. 26-27 **TN** Skirmishes at Harrison's Landing, and at the Narrows, near Shellmound.
- Aug. 28 **TN** Skirmish at Jacksborough. Burnside (U.S.) advances on Knoxville. Buckner withdraws.
- Aug. 31 **TN** Skirmish at Winter's Cap.
- Sept. 1 **TN** Crittenden's Corps (U.S.) open northern approaches to Chattanooga as Thomas's and McCook's Corps approach from the south. Buckner joins Bragg in Chattanooga.
- “ Fort Smith, Arkansas, falls into the hands of the Union army, who will maintain control of the area until the end of the war.
- Sept. 2-4 **TN Occupation of Knoxville** by Union forces under General Burnside. Generals Grant and Thomas are currently in New Orleans, although Thomas will soon move his troops to Tennessee to support Rosecrans at Chattanooga.
- Sept. 5 **TN** Skirmishes at Tazewell, Conyersville, and Driver's Ferry.
- Sept. 6 **TN** Skirmishes near Sweetwater and Wartrace.
- Sept. 7 **TN** Skirmish in Lookout Valley.
- “ After enduring nearly 60 days of heavy shelling, the Confederates finally abandon **Fort Wagner**, largely because the bodies of soldiers killed in the July 18 assault and buried near the fort have poisoned the fresh water well in the fort.
- Sept. 8 **TN** Action at Limestone Station or Telford's Station, where 300 Union soldiers from the 105th Ohio Volunteers are taken prisoner by Gen. A. E. Jackson's men. Bragg's Army of Tennessee leaves Chattanooga, moving to Lafayette, Georgia.
- Sept. 9 Longstreet's Corps of the Army of Northern Virginia moves by rail to join Bragg in Georgia.
- “ **TN** Skirmish at Friar's Island; **Chattanooga** is occupied by Union forces without a fight.

CIVIL WAR TIMELINE 1863

- Sept. 10 **TN** The Bureau of U.S. Colored Troops opens in Nashville. More than 20,000 of the 180,000 USCT will be from Tennessee, and over 5,000 casualties will occur in the state. [<http://www.tnstate.edu/library/digital/document.htm>] George Luther Stearns, Assistant Adjutant General for the Recruitment of Colored Troops, is put in charge of USCT recruiting in Tennessee. A fervent abolitionist, Stearns was John Brown's largest financial backer and even owned the rifles Brown had used at Harper's Ferry. Recruited the Union's first African American regiment, the 54th Massachusetts and will later be a leader in establishing the Freedmen's Bureau.
- Sept. 10 Little Rock, AR, falls to Union troops under General John W. Davidson.
- Sept. 11 **TN** Lincoln urges Andrew Johnson to establish a civil government in Tennessee. Johnson and Forrest skirmish with Union troops near Dalton, GA.
- Sept. 12-13 **TN** Skirmishes at Rheatown, Clark's Creek church, and Paris.
- Sept. 14 **TN** Skirmish at Henderson.
- Sept. 15 **TN** Sally Wendell Fentress writes in her diary: "Aunt Rebecka Hicks has three sons in the Confederate Army. George Fentress is in the army, too, poor fellow. I feel so sorry for him sometimes. I do not know if he is an imbecile or not, but I am inclined to think him a regular fool."
- Sept. 16 **TN** Skirmish at Montezuma.
- Sept. 18 Hood's Division of Longstreet's Corps reports to Bragg in Georgia.
- “ **TN** Affair near Fort Donelson; skirmishes at Calhoun and Cleveland.
- Sept. 19 **TN** Skirmishes at Bristol and Como.
- Sept. 19 **TN Battle of Chickamauga.** Confederate right attacks Federal Army. Longstreet arrives at midnight to join Bragg at Resaca, Georgia.
- Sept. 20 **TN** At **Chickamauga** the Confederates fail to turn the U.S. left, but Longstreet exploits a gap in the U.S. line, winning a Confederate victory that is the most significant Union defeat in the Western Theater of the Civil War. Rosecrans withdraws to Chattanooga. Only the stand of George Thomas on Horseshoe Ridge keeps this from being a complete rout. The bloodiest two days in U.S. history cost the Federals 1,657 dead, 9,756 wounded, and 4,757 missing for a total of 16,170 casualties out of 58,000 troops. The Confederate losses are 2,312 dead, 14,674 wounded and 1,468 missing – 18,545 out of 66,000 troops.
- “ **TN** Entry in John Berrien Lindsley's journal: "At African church a negro man shot down by the guards engaged in pressing. It is the custom of the Military authorities to go to the colored people's churches on Sunday when they wish to make a big haul of pressed men. The man died afterwards – Briggs attended him."
- “ **TN** Parson Brownlow, overjoyed that Knoxville has fallen into Union hands, announces that he will soon relaunch his newspaper under a new name: *Brownlow's Knoxville Whig and Rebel Ventilator*.
- Sept. 20-21 **TN** Action at Zollicoffer and at Jonesborough.

CIVIL WAR TIMELINE 1863

- ” A large number of women, armed with knives and hatchets, riot in Mobile, AL, breaking into stores and taking food and clothing – “a most formidable riot by a long-suffering and desperate population.” [*New York Times*]
- Sept. 22 **TN** Action at Missionary Ridge and Shallow Ford Gap, both near Chattanooga.
- Sept. 23 **TN** Skirmishes at Cumberland Gap, Lookout Mountain, and Summertown.
- Sept. 23-26 **TN** Skirmishes in front of Chattanooga.
- Sept. 25 **TN** Skirmishes at Charleston.
- Sept. 26 **TN** Skirmishes at Calhoun and Winchester. Gen. Sam Houston dies at his home in Huntsville, Texas. He is 70 years old.
- Sept. 27 **TN** Skirmishes near Philadelphia; skirmish at Locke’s Mill near Moscow.
- Sept. 28 **TN** Skirmishes at Jonesborough and Buell’s Ford. Over 5,000 wounded have been brought to Nashville from the fighting at Chickamauga; about 1,300 Confederate prisoners have also passed through the city on their way to northern prison camps.
- Sept. 29 **TN** Skirmishes at Leesburg and Friendship Church. Grant is sent to Chattanooga, and given the option of replacing Rosecrans with Thomas. Although Grant has no fondness for either man, he will place Thomas in command of the Army of the Cumberland shortly before the Battles for Chattanooga in November.
- Sept. 30 **TN** After being ordered to turn his command over to Wheeler, Forrest is transferred to the West Tennessee/Mississippi area to raise another command. Wheeler raids Rosecrans’ line of communication. Skirmish at Swallow Bluffs.
- Sept.30-Oct.17 **TN** Wheeler & Roddey raid Rosecrans’ line of communications from the Sequatchie Valley almost to Nashville, then back to Decatur, Georgia. Nevertheless. Rosecrans position in Chattanooga is considered impregnable.
- Oct. 1 **TN** Skirmish at Mountain Gap near Smith’s Cross-Roads. The collapse of a stairway in Nashville’s unfinished Maxwell House Hotel, which is being used as a military residence and prison, drops nearly 300 Confederate prisoners three stories, killing six men and injuring nearly 100 more.
- Oct. 2 **TN** Skirmishes at Dunlap, Greeneville, and Valley Road near Jasper. Jefferson Davis insists that “snatching Tennessee from the Abolitionists” is urgent. [*NYT*]
- Oct. 2-8 **TN** Series of skirmishes near Chattanooga.
- Oct. 3 **TN** Skirmish at Bear Creek. The *Richmond Examiner* reports that the Southern victory at Chickamauga gained little for the Confederacy, since “the enemy hold Chattanooga and East Tennessee, which were the prizes of the battle.” The article goes on to say that “Jeff Davis will soon again have to make the mournful confession he made 18 months ago, that the Confederacy ‘has undertaken more than it has the means of achieving.’”
- Oct. 5 **TN** Skirmish at Blue Springs.
- Oct. 5-6 **TN** Skirmishes near Readyville. Confederate troops destroy a large railroad

CIVIL WAR TIMELINE 1863

bridge south of Murfreesboro.

- Oct. 6 **TN** Skirmish at Wartrace. Gen. Lee publishes the official report of his campaign in Pennsylvania & Maryland – it contains surprisingly little detail of the fighting at Gettysburg after the first day. [*New York Times*]
- Oct. 7 **TN** Skirmish at Shelbyville, near Sims' Farm.
- Oct. 9 **TN** Affair at Railroad Tunnel, near Cowan; skirmishes at Sugar Creek and Elk River.
- Oct. 10 **TN** Skirmish at Blue Springs.
- Oct. 10-11 **TN** Skirmishes at Sweetwater.
- Oct. 10-14 **TN** Skirmishes near Hartsville.
- Oct. 11 **TN** Skirmish at Rheatown; action at Colliersville. Quantrill's raiders attack railroads and communication lines in Missouri.
- Oct. 12 **TN** "We are environed by dangers on every side and live as it were on the brink of a precipice. Robberies take place every day or two, and we know not when our turn may come. Lawless men roam at large, all about, belonging to neither, or both armies, but whose only object is rapine and plunder. I see that the Abolition *Nashville Union* exalts in the fact that Warren county has been desolated." [Lucy Virginia French journal]
- Oct. 14 **TN** Skirmish near Loudon.
- Oct. 15 **TN** Skirmish at Bristol.
- Oct. 15 & 20 **TN** Skirmish at Philadelphia.
- Oct. 16 **TN** Skirmish near Island No. 10.
- Oct. 18 Northern newspapers carry the story of the death of Gen. Sherman's 8-year-old son, who contracted a fatal illness while visiting his father in camp. In a letter to his comrades-in-arms, the grief-stricken general describes his son proudly: "The child that bore my name ... had the enthusiasm, the pure love of truth, honor and love of his country, which should animate all soldiers. God only knows why he should die this young." [*New York Times*]
- Oct. 19 **TN** Skirmish at Spurgeon's Mill.
U.S. Grant assumes command of the Armies of the Ohio, the Cumberland, and of Kentucky. George Thomas (U.S.) replaces Rosecrans as commander of the Army of the Cumberland. Rosecrans, ordered to Cincinnati where he will eventually be reassigned, will never again play a major role in the war.
- Oct. 21 **TN** Skirmish at Sulphur Springs.
- Oct. 22 **TN** Skirmishes at New Madrid Bend, Kingston Spring, and Columbia.
- Oct. 23 **TN** Ulysses S. Grant, now commanding U.S. forces in the Western Theater, arrives in Chattanooga. General Leonidas Polk is relieved of his command by Confederate President Jefferson Davis. The Confederates have control of the heights surrounding Chattanooga – Missionary Ridge, Lookout Mountain, and Raccoon Mountain – enabling them to direct long-range artillery fire not only

CIVIL WAR TIMELINE 1863

onto the Union entrenchments around the city, but also onto the major rail and river routes that supply the city.

- Oct. 23, 26-27 **TN** Skirmishes at and near Sweetwater.
- Oct. 25 According to the *Atlanta-Knoxville Register*, Jefferson Davis, feeling East Tennessee is vital to the Confederacy, will abandon Richmond if necessary in order to repossess East Tennessee. "The coming shock of contending armies on the soil of Tennessee will be decisive of the fate of the Confederation." [NYT]
- Oct. 25-26 **TN** Skirmishes at Philadelphia. Bragg's cavalry captures more than 400 Union prisoners, in addition to their artillery, small arms, and other equipment.
- Oct. 26 **TN** Skirmish at Jones' Hill.
- Oct. 27 **TN** Skirmishes at Clinch Mountain & at Brown's Ferry on the Tennessee River.
- Oct. 28-29 **TN** Skirmish at Clarksville. Engagement at Wauhatchie. This relatively minor, and largely accidental, battle is the only Confederate attempt to break Grant's "Cracker Line" feeding food and supplies into Chattanooga.
- Oct. 28 & 30 **TN** Skirmish at Leiper's Ferry on the Holston River.
- Oct. 29 **TN** Skirmish at Centerville. Union troops take 66 prisoners, including a former editor of the Nashville *Union and American*.
- Oct. 29-30 **TN** Grant's troops capture Lookout Mountain, adding strength to Gen. Thomas's position in Chattanooga. However, food is so scarce in the city that the Union soldiers are said to be stealing feed from the horses. Gen. "Baldy" Smith organizes an amphibious assault on Brown's Ferry in order to remove rebel obstructions to steamboat navigation on the Tennessee River. Now the Federals are able to open the "Cracker Line" to supply the besieged army at Chattanooga, bringing in food, blankets, firewood, medicine, and ammunition along the water route from Bridgeport.
- Oct. 31 The *Richmond Examiner* explains the Confederacy's failure to attack Knoxville, while "the hogs of East Tennessee, affording 25 millions of pounds of pork, are now being slaughtered for the Yankee armies," on the Southern army's lack of shoes for their soldiers.
- Nov. 1 **TN** Bragg sends Longstreet's Corps to operate against Burnside at Knoxville. Skirmishes at Eastport and Fayetteville.
- Nov. 2 **TN** Skirmishes at Centerville and Piney Factory.
- Nov. 3 **TN** Skirmish at Lawrenceburg; action at Collierville.
- Nov. 4 **TN** Skirmish at Motley's Ford on the Little Tennessee River. Fifty Confederates are killed or drowned; 40 are captured, including four officers.
- Nov.4-Dec.23 **TN** Knoxville Campaign: Longstreet challenges Burnside's control of Knoxville, which both Lincoln and Davis consider a major objective of the war.
- Nov. 5 **TN** Skirmishes in Loudon County and at Moscow.
- Nov. 6 **TN** Action near Rogersville. Confederate forces seem to be gathering for an

CIVIL WAR TIMELINE 1863

assault on Knoxville – reports from prisoners indicate that 14 rebel brigades have assembled nearby, commanded by Cheatham, Stevenson, Vaughan, and Forrest. Meanwhile, Burnside reports that he has taken over 1,500 prisoners since he came into Tennessee.

- Nov. 8 The *Richmond Examiner* complains that the only prisoner exchanges now allowed are of the sick and wounded, many of whom do not survive the transfer. “We understand very well the policy of the enemy in making so many difficulties about the exchange of prisoners they hope, by degrees, if they have luck, to make our armies dwindle in numbers.”
- Nov. 11 **TN** The Union League of Loyal Women for Memphis (U.L.L.W.) is founded in the city. They sponsor concerts, suppers, raffles, and a Sanitary Fair to benefit sick and wounded soldiers of the city and to help the poor. [Brock, pp. 43-44]
- Nov. 12 **TN** Skirmish near Cumberland Gap.
- Nov. 13 **TN** Skirmishes at Palmyra and at Blythe’s Ferry on the Tennessee River.
- Nov. 14 **TN** Skirmishes at Huff’s Ferry, Maryville, and Little River.
- Nov. 15 **TN** Skirmishes at Pillowville and Stock Creek.
- Nov. 15 The War Department issues a list of grounds of exemption from the draft. They include “manifest imbecility,” insanity, paralysis, cancer, advanced syphilis, blindness, loss of nose or tongue, deafness, excessive and confirmed stammering, loss of sufficient number of teeth to prevent mastication of solid food, excessive obesity, club foot, varicose veins, or loss of an arm, forearm, hand, thigh, leg, foot, thumb, or right index finger. “Pain ... is a symptom of disease so easily pretended that it is not to be admitted as a cause of exemption, unless accompanied with manifest derangement of the general health, wasting or a limb, or other positive sign of disqualifying local disease.”
- Nov. 16 **TN** Longstreet attacks Burnside’s U.S. Army at Campbell’s Station; the Federals are driven back to Knoxville. Skirmish near Knoxville.
- Nov. 16-23 **TN** A series of skirmishes at and near Kingston.
- Nov.17-Dec.4 **TN** **Siege of Knoxville.** Longstreet’s attack, delayed by a wait for reinforcements under Gen. Bushrod Johnson and Col. Alexander, allows the U.S. forces in the city to strengthen their defenses.
- Nov. 19 Lincoln delivers the **Gettysburg Address**.
- Nov. 19 **TN** Skirmishes at Colwell’s Ford, Mulberry Gap, and Meriwether’s Ferry near Union City.
- Nov. 20 **TN** William T. Sherman, commanding the U.S. Army of the Tennessee, arrives in Bridgeport, Alabama. He plans a concealed march on the Confederate right. Skirmish at Sparta.
- Nov. 22 **TN** Skirmish at Winchester.
- Nov. 23 **TN** Skirmishes at Bushby Knob. Battle for Chattanooga. Wood’s Division (U.S.) attacks Confederate position on Orchard Knob. Sheridan’s and Baird’s divisions also attack.

CIVIL WAR TIMELINE 1863

- Nov. 24 **TN** Federals advance against Confederate position on Lookout Mountain. Action at Kingston; skirmish at the foot of Missionary Ridge; skirmish at Sparta.
- Nov. 24-27 **TN** Raid on East Tennessee & Georgia Railroad. Skirmish near Yorktown.
- Nov. 25 **TN Battle of Missionary Ridge.** Sherman attacks north end of Missionary Ridge; Thomas attacks and breaks the center of the Confederate line; Sheridan and Wood storm the ridge. Bragg's Army of Tennessee, reportedly demoralized, retreats to Georgia. The victory at Chattanooga opens the way for Union advancement into the heart of the Confederacy. Grant describes the Confederate retreat to Major-General Halleck: "What is now left of Bragg's boasted army is but a panic-stricken mob rushing like a herd of frightened buffaloes, and apparently perfectly incapable of making any further resistance."
- Nov. 26 **TN** Skirmishes at Sparta, Chickamauga Station, Pea Vine Valley, Charleston, and Pigeon Hill.
- Nov. 27 **TN** Skirmish at Cleveland involves Wheeler's cavalry vs. the Union Colonel, who is gravely wounded. Private Sam Davis (C.S.) hanged as a spy.
- Nov. 28 On a dark and rainy night, Gen. John Morgan and six of his officers escape from the Ohio Penitentiary by digging through the floor of their cells into a sewer line.
- Nov. 29 **TN** Longstreet attacks Fort Sanders at Knoxville, but is unable to take the position. The few men who actually enter the fort are wounded, killed, or captured. The 20-minute attack results in absurdly uneven casualties: 813 Confederate vs. 13 Union. At that point, having learned of Bragg's defeat at Chattanooga, Longstreet moves toward Rogersville, intending to make his winter camp there. A report from Cincinnati claims "The mountains are full of Kentucky and Tennessee deserters trying to get home." [*NYT*, Dec. 3]
- Nov. 30 **TN** Condemned by the Southern press and vilified by the public, Gen. Bragg resigns as commander of the Army of Tennessee (C.S.)
- Nov. 30-Dec. 1 **TN** Skirmishes near Yankeetown and Maynardville.
- Dec. 2 The statue "Freedom" is placed on top of the U.S. Capitol. Sculptor Philip Reid was a slave in a Maryland foundry when the statue was cast.
- “ **TN** Forrest begins raids into West Tennessee, establishes recruiting headquarters at Jackson. Skirmish at Philadelphia. Action at Walker's Ford on the Clinch River. Bragg is replaced as commander of the Army of Tennessee by General Joseph E. Johnston at Dalton, Georgia.
- “ Writing from Washington, Maj.-Gen. Hitchcock explains that despite reports of mistreatment and starvation of Union prisoners in Confederate prisons, the prisoner exchanges have been halted because of the ill treatment of black troops and their white officers, many of whom have been executed rather than detained. [*NYT*] Although he does not explicitly say so, it is clear to many observers that the Confederate army will be severely handicapped by their diminishing forces.
- Dec. 3 **TN** Skirmish at Log Mountain.
- Dec. 3-4 **TN** Action at Wolf Creek Bridge near Moscow when Confederate troops attempt to destroy the railroad bridge. Union troops are able to mount a steady defense,

CIVIL WAR TIMELINE 1863

finally driving off the attackers late in the afternoon.

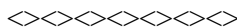
- Dec. 4 **TN** Skirmish near Kingston.
- Dec. 5 **TN** Skirmish at Crab Gap; action at Walker's Ford.
- Dec. 6 **TN** Affair near Fayetteville. Rumors spread that John C. Breckinridge has died of wounds received at Chattanooga, and many newspapers publish glowing obituaries. It will be some time before the rumors are disproved.
- Dec. 7 **TN** Skirmishes at Eagleville and Rutledge. President Lincoln issues a call for national thanksgiving following the Federal victories at Knoxville and Chattanooga.
- Dec. 8 President Lincoln announces the Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction, pardoning Confederates who pledge loyalty to the Union and agree to accept emancipation. A state can begin the process of rejoining the Union as soon as 10% of a Confederate state's voters make the pledge. This fairly loose oath, pledging Union loyalty from the moment the oath is taken, angers black leaders, Southern Unionists, and Congressional Republicans. Lincoln's motive seems more a strategy to disrupt the Confederacy than actually to implement Reconstruction. [Hunt]
- Dec. 9 It is reported that General Meade will soon be relieved of his command. He is expected to be replaced by General Hooker or General Thomas.
- “ Commodore Vanderbilt is seriously injured in a buggy collision near his home. Charleston, SC, is still experiencing constant shelling by Union guns.
- Dec. 9-13 **TN** Skirmishes at and near Bean's Station, on the Holston River.
- Dec. 10 **TN** Skirmishes at Gatlinburg, Long Ford, and Morristown. Nashville's hospitals are filled with soldiers wounded at Chattanooga.
- Dec. 10-13 **TN** Affair at Russellville and ensuing skirmishes.
- Dec. 12 **TN** Skirmish at Shoal Creek near Wayland Springs.
- Dec. 13 **TN** Skirmishes at Farley's Mill on the Holston River, Dandridge's Mill, and LaGrange.
- Dec. 14 **TN** Capture of Union wagon train near Clinch Mountain Gap; skirmishes at Granger's Mill and Morristown. Military authorities seize all the horses and mules in Memphis for army use, "paying the owners a fair price for them."
- Dec. 14-15 **TN** Battle of Bean's Station – Longstreet attempts a pincer action to trap the Union forces in a battle that continues most of the first day. Ultimately, however, he fails to trap the Federals as he had hoped, finding them firmly entrenched at Blain's Cross Roads the next morning. The battle has little significant effect in the long term, except that Longstreet's self-confidence seems to suffer significantly from the failure of the campaign.
- Dec. 15 **TN** Affair near Pulaski; skirmish near Livingston.
- Dec. 16-19 **TN** Skirmishes at and near Blain's Crossroads and Rutledge.

CIVIL WAR TIMELINE 1863

- Dec. 18 **TN** Skirmish at Bean's Station. Gens. Granger and Howard capture Longstreet's ammunition train, running 42 carloads of ammunition and two locomotives into the river at Loudon. Federals begin move against Forrest.
- Dec. 19 **TN** Skirmish at Stone's Mill.
- Dec. 21 **TN** Skirmishes at Clinch River and McMinnville.
- Dec. 22 **TN** Skirmish at Cleveland. Confederate Gen. James Chalmers creates a diversion for Forrest by attacking Memphis.
- Dec. 22-23 **TN** Skirmishes at Dandridge. Gen. Leonidas Polk, recently relieved of his duties, is ordered to take command of the Army of the Mississippi.
- Dec. 23 **TN** Skirmish at Mulberry Village.
- Dec. 24 **TN** Action at Hay's Ferry near Dandridge; skirmishes at Estenaula, Jack's Creek, Mossy Creek Station, and Peck's House near New Market. A number of skirmishes occur as Forrest moves out of Tennessee into Mississippi.
- Dec. 26 **TN** Skirmish near New Castle; action at Mossy Creek.
- Dec. 27 **TN** Skirmishes at Collierville, Grisson's Bridge, Huntingdon, and Talbot's Station.
- “ **TN** Parson Brownlow explains his presence at a war meeting in Cincinnati: “I am in a somewhat awkward position, having recently taken to my heels like a greyhound, and made 300 miles in short time. In the last two years, as you well know, I have done some brave talking, which the rebels remember. Were I not sure I should not be treated as our soldiers taken by them are – incarcerated in their lousy prisons ... I should have stayed; for I could endure the lice. I did not run out of cowardice, but I well knew that if they took me I would have to pull hemp without a foothold. [*Laughter.*] So I ran.” [*NYT*]
- Dec. 28 **TN** Action at Calhoun; skirmish at Charleston.
- Dec. 29 **TN** Action at Mossy Creek; skirmishes at Cleveland and LaVergne; skirmish near Dandridge.
- Dec. 31 At the end of the year the *Richmond Enquirer* carries these stories: the Confederate army in East Tennessee has gone into winter quarters; Longstreet's men are said to be without shoes, despite the fact that the weather is extremely cold and the mountains are covered with snow; 300 cases of smallpox are reported among the Yankee prisoners at Danville.
- “ The *Atlanta Intelligencer* comments: “Our losses [in] East Tennessee ... are incalculable. We are not only deprived of the vast flour mills of that country, which previously supplied the whole army, but also of vast machine shops and depots, which we had extensively organized at Knoxville. Beside this, we are now entirely cut off from the coal, iron and copper mines of that region, which were worth millions to us. The copper rolling mills at Cleveland ... which were burnt by the enemy, formerly turned out 6,000 pounds of copper per day. Over three millions of pounds had been delivered to the Government. This was the only copper rolling mill in the country, and which kept us supplied in copper for

CIVIL WAR TIMELINE 1863

caps and cannon. This is among our losses by the battle of Chattanooga, which are spoken of as merely resulting in a few thousand men and 38 cannon.”



Note: Most Tennessee battles and skirmishes named here have been taken from a list compiled by the State of Tennessee Civil War Centennial Commission, Stanley F. Horn Chairman. Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville, TN, or from “A Survey of Civil War Era Military Sites in Tennessee” by Samuel D. Smith and Benjamin C. Nance, published by the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation, Division of Archaeology, Research Series No. 14, 2003.

Resources:

Brock, Darla K. *Battles of Their Own: Memphis's Civil War Women*. Graduate thesis, 1994.
Durham, Walter. *The State of State History in Tennessee*. Nashville: Tennessee State Library & Archives, 2008.
Foner, Eric. “*The Tocsin of Freedom*”: *The Black Leadership of Radical Reconstruction*. 31st Annual Fortenbaugh Memorial Lecture, Gettysburg College, 1992.
Hunt, Robert E., Department of History, Middle Tennessee State University.
Lauder, Kathy B. “This Honorable Body: African American Legislators in 19th Century Tennessee.” <http://www.state.tn.us/tsla/exhibits/blackhistory/index.htm>

Principal reference sources, Tennessee State Library and Archives:

Bonds of Public Officials – RG 319
Cartmell, Robert H. (1828-1915) Papers, 1849-1915 – II-L-2, 6
Cheairs, N. F., letters. Figuers Family Papers. III-F-4, Box 1-6. Ac. No. 1252.
Cooper, W. F., Cooper Family Papers. V-L-1. Box 3-3.
Donnell, James Webb Smith (1820-1877) Papers, 1829-1932 – THS III-E-3
Drane, James M. Drane Papers, IV-J-3, Box 1-5.
Election Returns, 1859 County Elections – RG 87
Farmer, William F., letter, 5 February 1862. Farmer Collection. III-F-3. Box 1-9. Ac. No. 866.
Fentress, Sally Wendel, Diary, 1863-1866. Talbott-Fentress Family Papers. I-A-6. Box 1-2. Ac. No. 82-106.
French, Lucy Virginia, War Journal. VII-M-2. Box 1, Folder 1. Ac. No. 89-200 & 73-25.
Governor Isham G. Harris Papers, Box 1, f. 5 (1860); Box 3, f. 5 (1861)
Hawkins, Annie Cole, Memoir, ca. 1895, McKenzie, TN. Ms. Files. I-B-7. Ac. No. 94-019(SG)
Henderson, Samuel, Diary, 1834-1876], Manuscript Microfilm #148, one reel, Microfilm Only)
House Journal
Lawrence, William L.B., Diary. Lawrence Family Papers, 1780-1944 – IV-K-1
Lindsley, John Berrien, Diary. Lindsley Family Papers, ca. 1600-1943 – IV-D-3,4
Military Elections – RG 131
Nagy, J. Emerick (1903-1987), Nashville Public Schools Collection 1854-1958 – V-A-B-4; XII-D-6
Nichol, Bradford. Memoir, 1901. I-B-7. Box 2. Ac. No. 99-020.
Public Acts of Tennessee, 1859-1860
Rose, Kenneth D., Music Collection
Senate Journal

Tennessee newspapers consulted:

Appeal, Memphis

CIVIL WAR TIMELINE 1863

Avalanche, Memphis
Banner, Nashville
Brownlow's Tri-Weekly Whig, Knoxville
Daily Appeal, Memphis
Daily News, Nashville
Citizen, Pulaski
Daily Register, Knoxville
Christian Advocate, Nashville
Home Journal, Winchester
Inquirer, Memphis
Union and American, Nashville
Weekly Chronicle, Clarksville

New York *Times*, online archives

TSLA staff researchers and writers who contributed to this time line:

Darla Brock	Trent Hanner
Allison DeFriese	Kathy Lauder
Susan Gordon	Wayne Moore