

## Civil War January 1864

The relationship between Lincoln and his military commanders was tested in January 1864 when the president commuted a death sentence passed on a Union deserter. Union generals believed that such a move would undermine discipline in the Union armies. Later in the same month Lincoln did the same thing.

- Jan 1** The weather greatly hindered nearly all forms of military activity. Sub-zero temperatures occurred as far south as Memphis, Tennessee.
- Jan 2** General Banks led his campaign against Galveston by moving along the Texan coast.
- Jan 3** Chronic inflation hit the South especially hard. Basic foodstuffs were 28 times more expensive in the South than in 1861. During the same period, wages only went up by 3 to 4 times.
- Jan 4** Lee was given permission by Jefferson Davis to commandeer food in Virginia. Such a measure may have helped his troops but not the people of the state.
- Jan 5** General Banks was encouraged by General Halleck to be more aggressive during his offensive. Halleck envisaged Union troops in Galveston by the spring.
- Jan 7** Lincoln commuted the death sentence imposed on a Union deserter. His move, as commander-in-chief, was not well received by the Union's military hierarchy who felt that it would undermine discipline even more. Union desertion was at an all-time high, especially in the Army of the Potomac. The problems were many but one of them was that men were paid a bounty to enlist. Many did then deserted only to enlist again to collect another bounty. Also if your name came up in a draft for your town/city you could exempt yourself by paying \$300. Or you could get a substitute to do your draft for you. Big cities saw a major growth area in "substitute brokers" who, for a fee, would find a substitute for someone.
- Jan 8** David O Dodd, convicted of being a Confederate spy, was hanged in Little Rock, Arkansas.
- Jan 10** The Confederacy responded to its economic plight by printing more money. Foreign governments were unwilling to lend money to it and only accepted gold for the payment of weapons. The North made matters worse for the South by printing counterfeit Confederate notes, which made confusion endemic.
- Jan 11** Senator John Henderson (Missouri) proposed within the Senate that slavery should be abolished throughout the USA.
- Jan 18** Protest meetings were held in North Carolina regarding the conscription policy of the Confederacy. All white males between 18 and 45 were required to enlist – shortly to increase to all males between 17 and 60.
- Jan 19** Pro-Union supporters met at Little Rock, Arkansas.
- Jan 21** Pro-Union supporters met in Nashville, Tennessee.
- Jan 23** Lincoln approved a plan that allowed plantation owners to hire those who had previously worked as slaves on their plantations.
- Jan 26** Lincoln commuted another 9 planned executions, as he did not want to "add to the butchering business". On the same day he approved a plan to improve trade between the Union and those parts of the Confederacy now under Union control. Lincoln was already thinking beyond the end of the war and wanted to 'normalize' internal trade as much as possible.
- Jan 31** Lincoln stated that he hoped all former slaves who wanted to fight for the Union would swear the oath but that it was not an absolute requirement. The same was true for those men who had been in Confederate ranks – swearing loyalty to the Union was preferred but was not absolute.