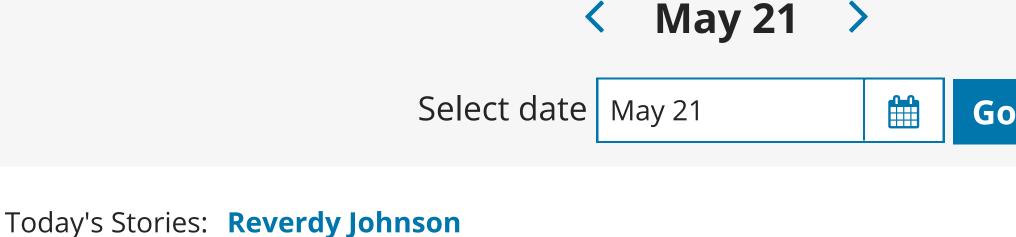


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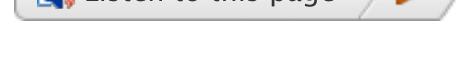
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Today in History - May 21



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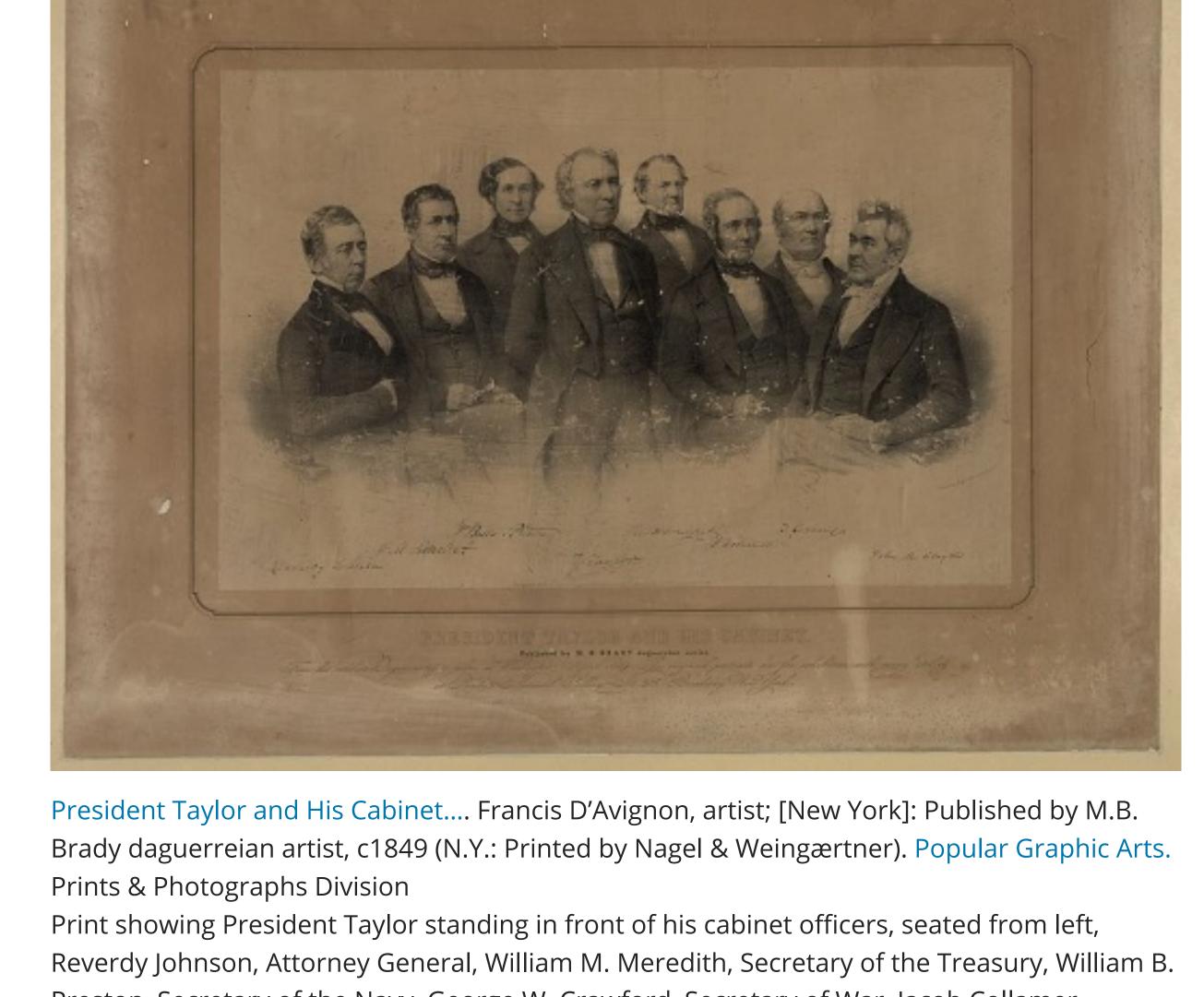


On May 21, 1796, attorney and statesman Reverdy Johnson was born in Annapolis,

Reverdy Johnson

line, as a Whig, in the U.S. Senate from 1845-49 and again following the Civil War as a Democrat from 1863-68. Under President Zachary Taylor, he served as attorney general from 1849 until Taylor's death in 1850. Johnson was considered a brilliant constitutional lawyer and won an 1854 Supreme Court decision in favor of a patent for the McCormick reaper.

Maryland. Johnson represented Maryland, a slaveholding state south of the Mason-Dixon



Preston, Secretary of the Navy, George W. Crawford, Secretary of War, Jacob Collamer, Postmaster General, Thomas Ewing, Secretary of the Interior, and John M. Clayton, Secretary of State.



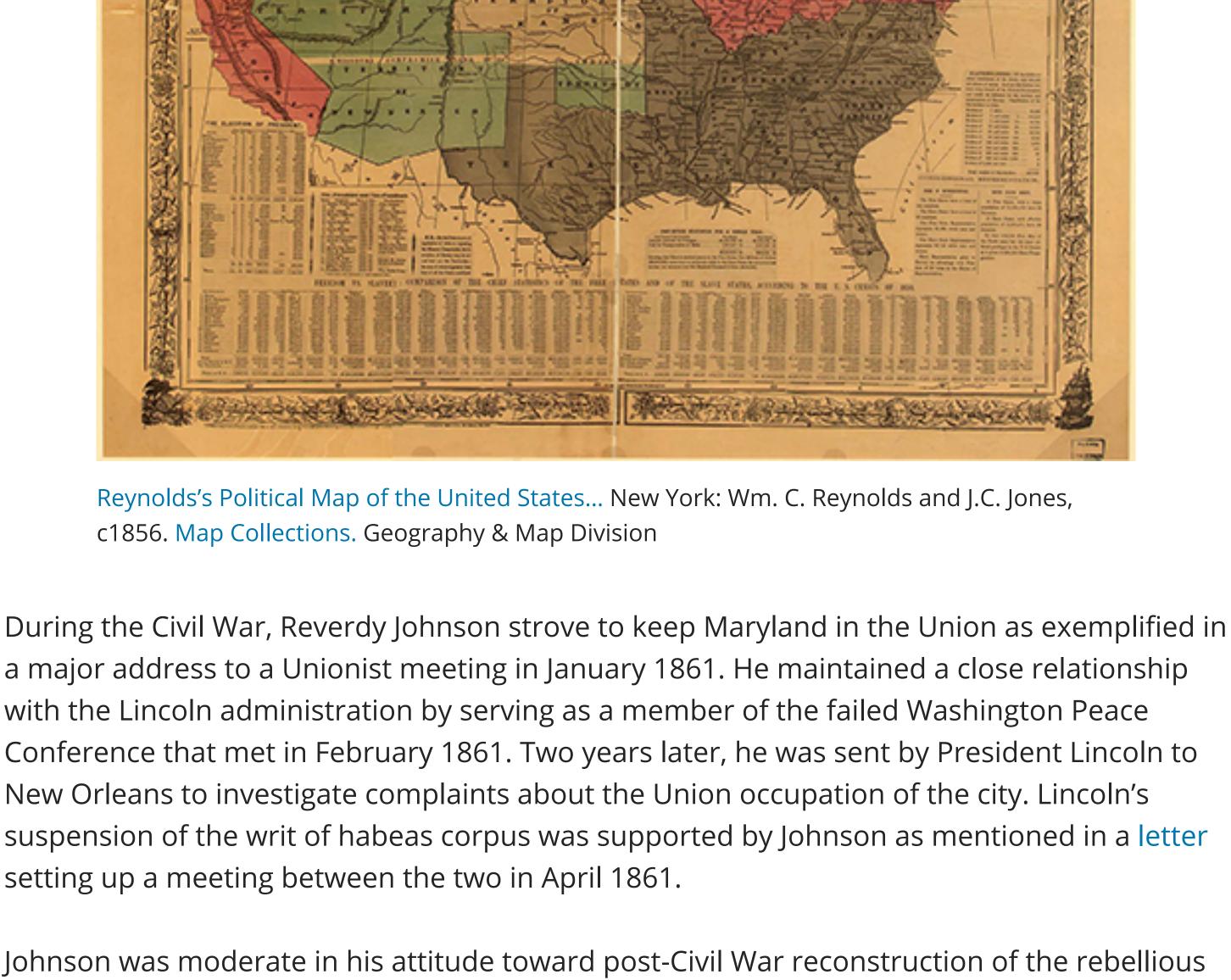
ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment prohibiting slavery.

The map below depicts free states in pink and slave states in dark green. The light green area

United States. The court's decision intensified antislavery sentiment in the North and fed the

antagonism that sparked the Civil War. In 1865, the ruling was made obsolete with the

in the West was composed of a number of territories at that time.



• The Library's Manuscript Division holds the largest collection of Reverdy Johnson papers with correspondence relating to his early law career, Congressional terms, the 1862 investigation of General Benjamin Franklin Butler, and service as U.S. Minister to the Court of St. James. View the online finding aid to learn more about what is included

• Search the Abraham Lincoln Papers to find correspondence with Reverdy Johnson.

• See the Special Presentation on the impeachment trial of President Andrew Johnson

included in A Century of Lawmaking for a New Nation: U.S. Congressional Documents

Southern states. When impeachment proceedings were brought against Andrew Johnson,

Following a two-year appointment as minister to Great Britain from 1868-69, Johnson

returned to his law practice in Annapolis where he died in 1876 as a result of a fall.

the president's acquittal.

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in this collection.

largely for his lenient treatment of the South, Reverdy Johnson was instrumental in securing

and Debates, 1774-1875. • Visit the online exhibition The African American Odyssey: A Quest for Full Citizenship

which explores black America's quest for equality from the early national period

Library-wide resource guide to the institution's African-American collections including books, periodicals, prints, photographs, music, film, and recorded sound covering 500 years of history. • Search on keyword *Dred Scott* in Slaves and the Courts, 1740 to 1860 to read more

about this famous law case. Read, for example, The Case of Dred Scott in the United

through the twentieth century. Also available is The African-American Mosaic, the first

- States Supreme Court. See the presentation titled "The Dred Scott Case" mounted by the National Park Service in conjunction with Gateway Arch National Park and St. Louis' Old Courthouse, where the first two trials of the Dred Scott case were held.
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