

□ A Record of Engagement, Not a Claim – Part II

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There is a principle that appears again and again throughout this series: timeline, like numbers, does not lie.

When one steps back from opinion, interpretation, and ideology – and simply looks at the sequence of recorded events – a pattern emerges that is difficult to ignore. Not because it confirms any particular belief, but because it raises questions that deserve careful, unhurried attention.

This part of the series does not attempt to prove a theory. It traces a documented sequence of historical events and invites the reader to observe what shifted, when it shifted, and what

followed.

The source material for this timeline draws heavily from the original research compiled by Geoffrey Jacob Caputo for the State Nationals Association, with additional commentary by Anna Maria Riezinger, and published through The American States Assemblies. Their work represents decades of careful historical analysis, and it is presented here with respect and attribution.

□ **Before the Shift: A Plural Landscape**

Before the American Civil War, the political structure of the United States reflected something closer to the plural model described in Part I of this series.

Citizenship was understood primarily as a state-level designation. One was a citizen of Virginia, or of New York, or of Massachusetts – and through that singular state allegiance, one was recognized as part of the broader union. The phrase “citizen of the United States” referred not to a unified national identity, but to the collective of those individual state affiliations.

As the court observed in *Ex Parte Knowles* (1855): to conceive of a citizen of the United States who was not first a citizen of one of the states was considered foreign to the very idea itself.

The states, in this earlier arrangement, held the power to confer their own citizenship. The federal government’s role in this matter was limited to establishing a uniform rule of

naturalization – not to defining or overriding the citizenship granted by individual states.

This was, in the language of this series, a landscape in which more than one lane subsystem of engagement was visible and acknowledged.

⚡ **1861–1865: The Fracture**

The Civil War changed the trajectory of American governance in ways that extended far beyond the battlefield.

What is often presented as a simple conflict between North and South was, upon closer examination, a far more layered event. The House Journal of July 22, 1861, and the Senate Journal of July 25, 1861, both record the Crittenden Resolution, which stated clearly that the war was not waged for the purpose of conquest or subjugation, nor for overthrowing or interfering with the rights or established institutions of the states. Its stated objective was to preserve the Union with all the dignity, equality, and rights of the several states unimpaired.

That resolution represented an intention. What followed, however, diverged significantly from that stated purpose.

President Lincoln was assassinated on April 15, 1865. The last shot of the Civil War was fired on June 22, 1865, by the CSS Shenandoah in the Bering Sea. President Johnson proclaimed the end of hostilities on land on May 10, 1865, and by April 2, 1866, proclaimed the insurrection at an end in all Southern states, noting that civil authority was to be restored.

The war, by all official accounts, was over.

What came next, however, was not restoration. It was reconstruction – and the distinction between those two words carries enormous weight.

□ **1865–1868: The Reconstruction Acts**

The timeline that follows is drawn directly from the historical record, as compiled by Geoffrey Jacob Caputo and annotated by Anna Maria Riezinger.

On December 4, 1865, members of the 39th Congress suggested the denial of seats in the House and Senate to Southern states on the allegation that they had no legal governments and were in rebellion. By March 3, 1866, this denial was formally resolved.

Yet President Johnson had already proclaimed civil authority restored. The courts of the Southern states were open. The 13th Amendment had been ratified. The conditions that might have justified extraordinary measures appeared, by the record, to have been resolved.

Despite this, on June 16, 1866, the 14th Amendment – referred to as Article XIV – was proposed by the 39th Congress to the legislatures of the several states.

Between October 1866 and 1867, numerous states – both Southern and non-Southern – rejected the proposed amendment. Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, Louisiana, Mississippi, and others declined ratification.

What followed was a series of Reconstruction Acts:

The First Reconstruction Act was passed on March 2, 1867.

President Johnson vetoed it. The Second Reconstruction Act followed on March 23, 1867. President Johnson vetoed it. The Third Reconstruction Act came on July 19, 1867. President Johnson vetoed it again. The Fourth Reconstruction Act was passed on March 11, 1868.

Each veto was overridden.

On June 25, 1868, states that had previously rejected the 14th Amendment were declared “re-admitted” to the Union – but only upon the condition that they ratify the amendment. On July 9, 1868, the 14th Amendment was declared ratified.

□ The Constitutional Questions

The Caputo research identifies specific constitutional provisions that appear to conflict with the actions taken during this period. These are presented here not as conclusions, but as observations drawn from the historical record.

Article V of the Constitution states that no state, without its consent, shall be deprived of its equal suffrage in the Senate. The denial of seats to Southern states raises questions against this provision.

Article III, Section 3 defines treason narrowly as levying war against the United States or adhering to their enemies. The blanket declaration of guilt applied to entire state populations through the Reconstruction Acts extends beyond this definition.

The Supreme Court’s decision in *Ex Parte Milligan* (1866) established that martial law provisions under the Constitution cannot apply to civilians when civil courts are open and

functioning. The 39th Congress had no evidence that the states were still in rebellion – civil authority had been restored, courts were operational, and the 13th Amendment had been ratified.

Article IV, Section 4 guarantees to every state a republican form of government. The Reconstruction Acts, by establishing military governance over states whose civil authority had already been restored, raise questions against this guarantee.

Article I, Section 8, Clause 17 limits Congressional authority to exclusive legislation over the District of Columbia and specifically purchased federal enclaves. The Reconstruction Acts extended legislative authority well beyond these defined boundaries.

Article IV, Section 3 states that no new state shall be formed or erected within the jurisdiction of any other state without the consent of the legislatures of the states concerned. The Caputo research observes that new governmental structures were established within existing states without such consent.

⚡ A New Kind of Citizenship

Perhaps the most consequential outcome of this period was the transformation of what “citizen of the United States” meant.

Before the 14th Amendment, as noted earlier, this phrase referred to one’s affiliation through a particular state. After the amendment, a new form of national citizenship was introduced – one that did not flow upward from state allegiance, but was conferred downward from the federal level.

The political discussions of the era make this intention explicit. The 39th Congress stated its aim to make citizenship national – to reverse the prior arrangement so that one would no longer be a citizen of the United States because one was a citizen of a state, but rather a citizen of any state because one was first defined as a national citizen.

This created what the historical record describes as a dual nationality arrangement: federal citizenship conjoined with state residency. The distinction between “citizen” and “resident” – between one who belongs to a state and one who merely sojourns within it – became blurred.

For those who already held singular state citizenship – the original political status predating this amendment – the new arrangement presented an unasked question: did they wish to be reclassified under this new federal designation?

The Caputo research observes that no process of informed consent accompanied this reclassification. No disclosure was provided. No choice was offered. The change was applied broadly, and those who did not actively distinguish their status were presumed to fall under the new federal definition.

□ What the Record Shows

It is not the purpose of this series to declare these events lawful or unlawful, valid or invalid. That determination belongs to each reader’s own study and discernment.

What the timeline does show, clearly and sequentially, is the following:

A war ended. Civil authority was restored. A constitutional amendment was proposed. Multiple states rejected it. Military governance was imposed. Ratification was made a condition of re-admission. The amendment was declared ratified. A new form of citizenship was established. And the prior arrangement – singular state-based identity – receded from common awareness.

Whether one views these events as necessary reforms, constitutional violations, or something in between, the factual sequence remains the same.

The timeline does not change based on interpretation.

□ The Foundation of What Followed

Understanding this period is essential to understanding everything that followed – including the events of 1930–1933, which will be examined in Part III of this series.

The post-Civil War restructuring did not simply alter political boundaries or settle a military conflict. It introduced a new operational framework – a new interpreter, in the language of Part I – that would gradually become the dominant mode of engagement for nearly all Americans.

The American States Assemblies, whose research informs much of this timeline, have dedicated decades to documenting this sequence and its consequences. Their work, along with the original research of Geoffrey Jacob Caputo and the commentary of Anna Maria Riezinger, provides a foundation for anyone seeking to trace these events for themselves.

The invitation is not to accept a conclusion. It is to read the

record – slowly, carefully, and without assumption – and to observe what it reveals.

□ **Closing Reflection**

Timelines do not argue. They do not persuade. They simply present what happened, in the order it happened, and leave the rest to the observer.

What this particular timeline reveals is a period of extraordinary transition – one that reshaped the relationship between individuals, states, and the federal structure in ways that continue to echo into the present day.

One does not need to agree with any particular interpretation of these events to recognize that they occurred. And one does not need to reach a final conclusion today to begin the process of careful observation.

The record is there. It has always been there.

The only question is whether one chooses to read it.

Next: □ Part III – The Great Fraud of 1930–33: When the Legal Lane SubSystem Took Over

This article is not legal advice. It is an observational framework based on lived experience, independent research, and historical records compiled by Geoffrey Jacob Caputo for the State Nationals Association, with additional commentary by Anna

Maria Riezinger, and published through The American States Assemblies. No claim of superiority, exemption, or jurisdiction is being made.