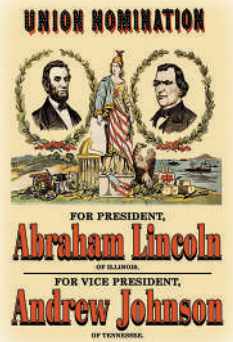




GRADE 7 LOUISIANA SOCIAL STUDIES

Lincoln-Johnson administration



# Reconstructing the Nation

## Student Volume

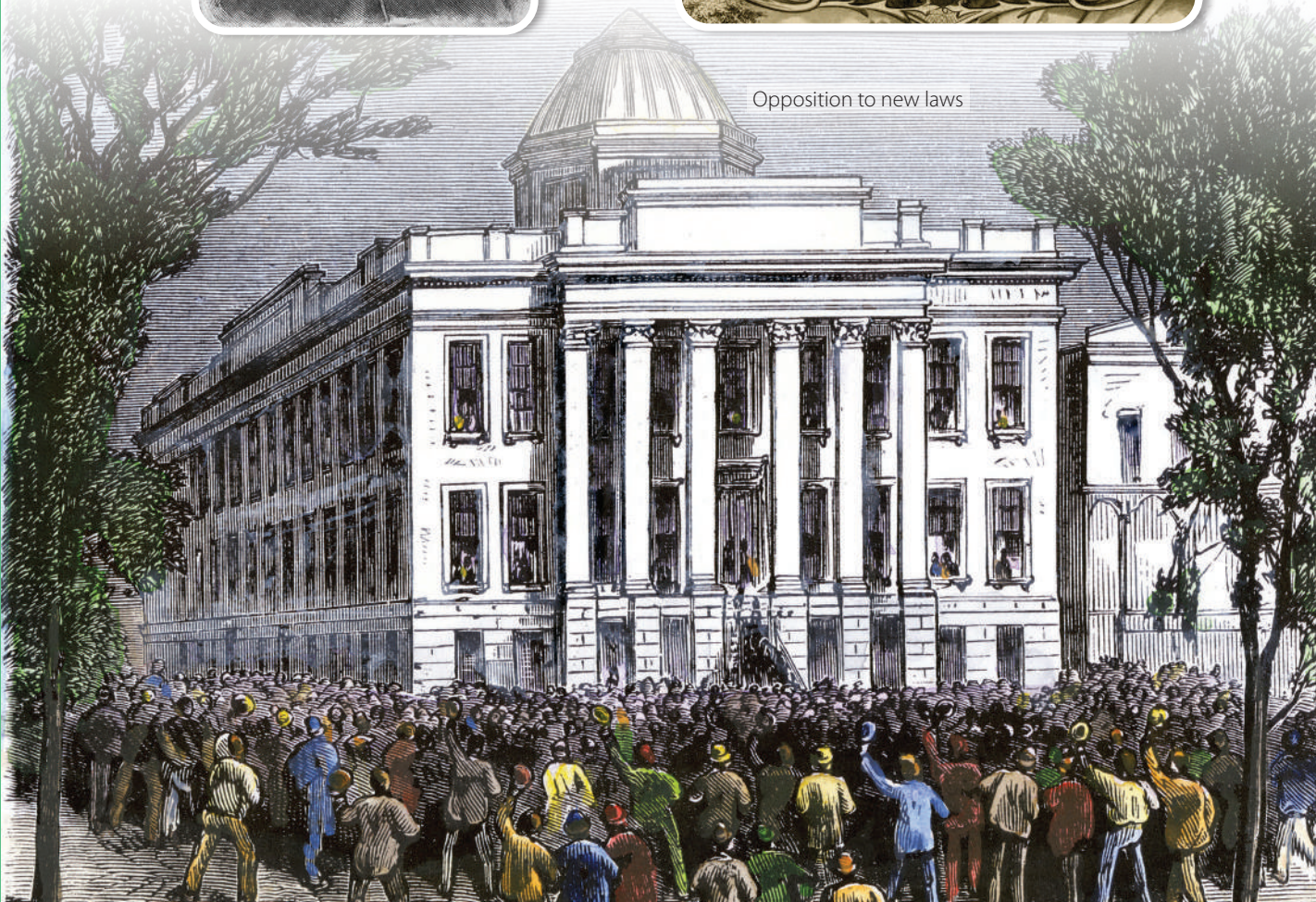
P. B. S. Pinchback



Fifteenth Amendment



Opposition to new laws



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# Reconstructing the Nation

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# Reconstructing the Nation

## Table of Contents

01	Chapter 1: Plans for Reconstruction .....	2
02	Chapter 2: Reconstruction in the United States .....	20
03	Chapter 3: The End of Reconstruction and Its Immediate Aftermath .....	38
	Glossary .....	49





# Chapter 1

## Plans for Reconstruction

### The Framing Question

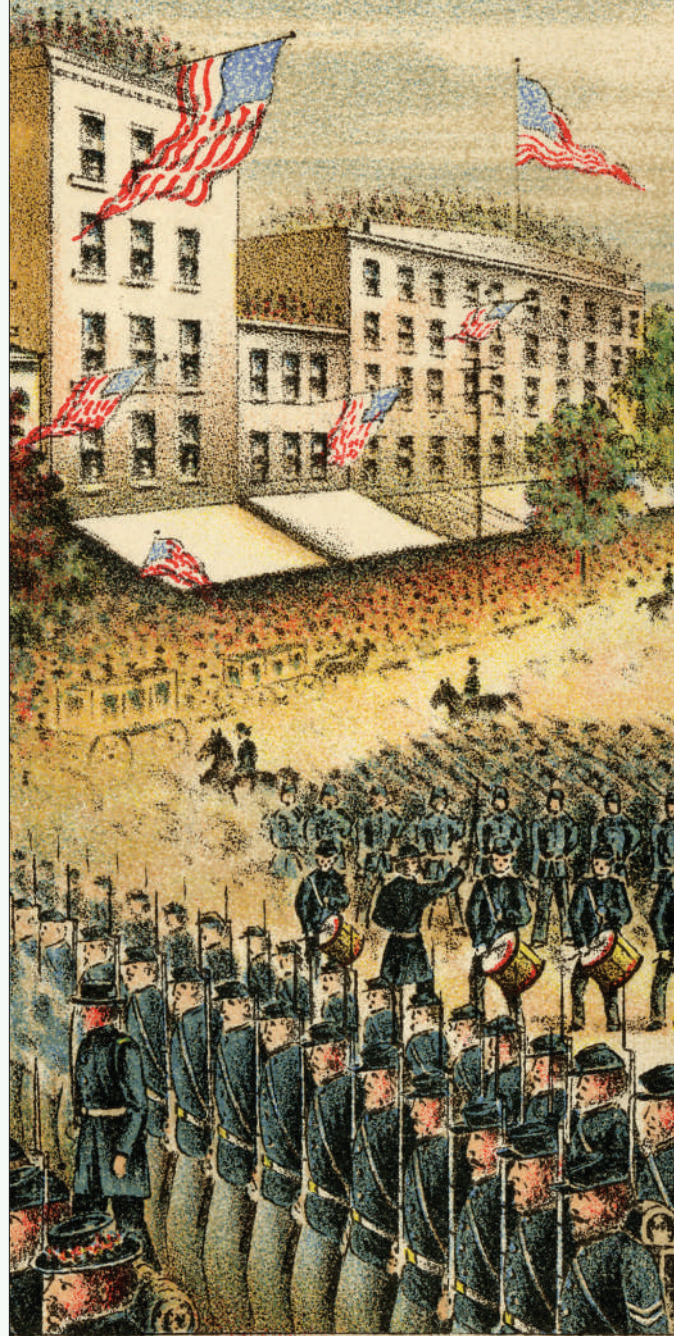
What issues did Congress face in its plans to reunify the nation after the Civil War?



### New Points of Conflict

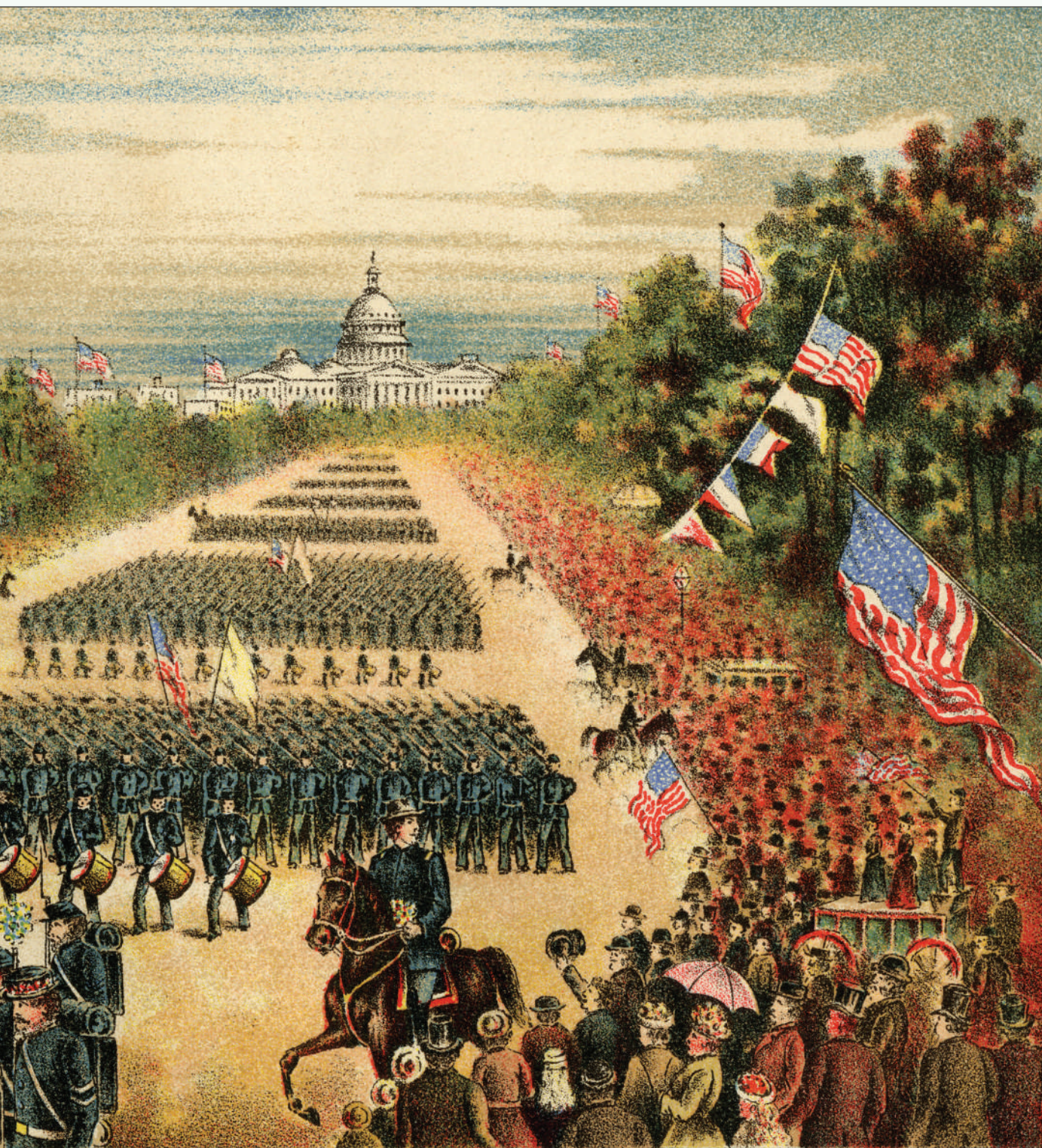
*Even though the nation was no longer engaged in a civil war, many issues remained unresolved after General Robert E. Lee's surrender to General Ulysses S. Grant on April 9, 1865. What should be done with the states that had tried to leave the Union? Should they have to earn back their rights as states? Should it be easy for them to return to normal statehood, or should they be punished? And who had the right to decide these questions: the president or Congress?*

To celebrate the Union's victory in the Civil War, a review of the armies took place in May 1865 on Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, D.C.



Grand Review  
M.





of the Armies—Washington,  
May 23-24, 1865.



Even before the Confederate surrender at Appomattox Court House in April 1865 signaled an end to the Civil War, President Lincoln had been wrestling with how to heal the fractured country. In December 1863, while the war was still raging, Lincoln announced a plan called the Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction that granted pardon and restoration of property to any former Confederate who met certain conditions. Lincoln argued that the South was in a state of rebellion and that it had not left the Union. Therefore, the two sections of the Union should be **reconciled** as quickly as possible.

Not everyone agreed with Lincoln. One of the consequences of the long and bloody

war was that many people on both sides were bitter. Families had lost loved ones; fortunes had been destroyed; veterans had sustained permanent injuries. People were not eager to reconcile with those they believed had hurt them.

### Think Twice



Would you have wanted to treat the South more harshly after the war ended, or would you have wanted an easier path to reunification? Why?

### Vocabulary

**reconcile**, v. to return to a friendly relationship after a conflict



## Early Proposals

Lincoln's 1863 Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction was generous. He offered to pardon Confederates who would pledge loyalty to the Union and agree to accept emancipation. It would become known as the Ten Percent Plan because if only 10 percent of a state's voters took the pledge, that state would be allowed to set up a new state government.

Many of Lincoln's political opponents felt his offer was too lenient. Instead, Congress passed its own bill in July 1864, known

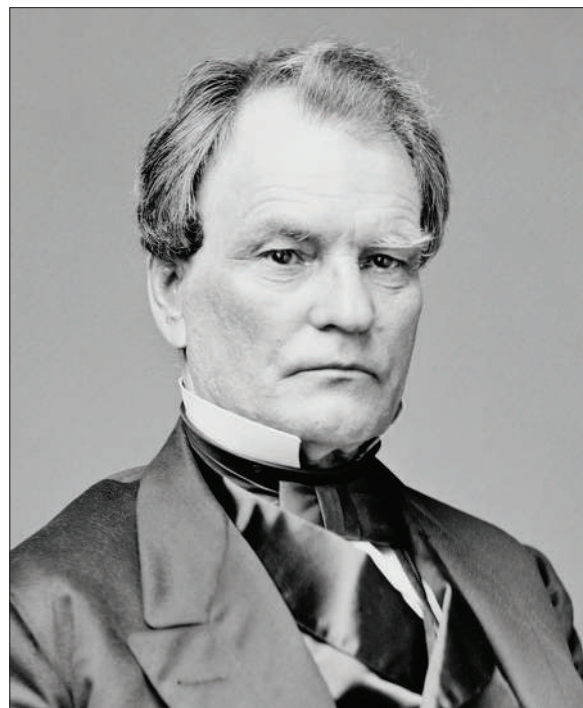


President Abraham Lincoln proposed a plan to pardon former Confederates.



as the Wade-Davis Bill. The requirements were much stricter. The 10 percent figure was changed to a majority of voters in a state, and former Confederates would be limited in their political participation. The bill also specified that African Americans were to receive equal rights under the law. Lincoln did not sign the bill, so it did not become law.

Lincoln's main reason for fighting the war in the first place had been to preserve the Union. Most Northerners had agreed that saving the Union was worth fighting for. But they had not all necessarily agreed that freeing the enslaved was worth



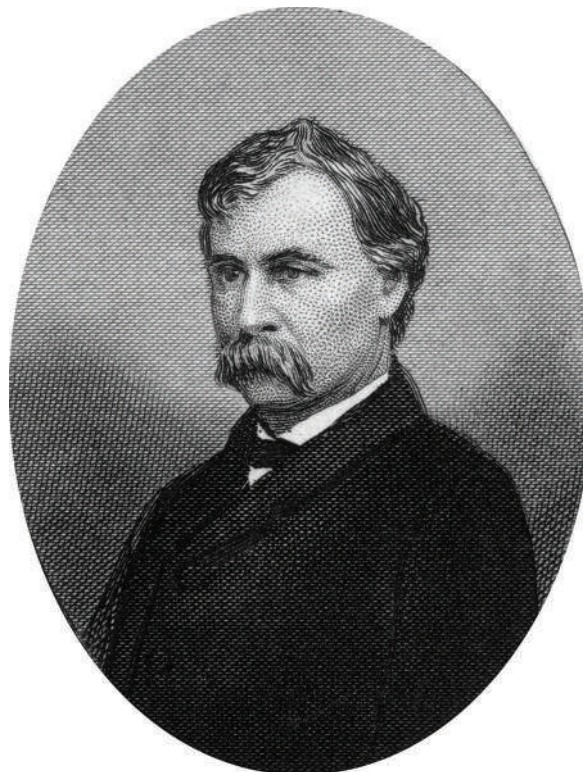
### Border States

In 1861, when the state of Virginia seceded from the Union, people in the northwestern region of the state disagreed. A group of delegates from thirty-nine counties organized to begin the process of forming their own state. Although Virginia was a slaveholding state, these thirty-nine counties remained loyal to the Union. On June 20, 1863, West Virginia was recognized as a slaveholding state and became the fifth border state.



### Think Twice

If you were a member of Congress, would you have voted for the Ten Percent Plan? Why?



Senator Benjamin Wade of Ohio and Representative Henry Winter Davis of Maryland sponsored the Wade-Davis Bill, which placed much stricter requirements on the South for reunification.

going to war. Being against slavery was one thing; being willing to go to war to end it was another.

And as you may recall, although Lincoln opposed slavery, he did not initially state that ending slavery was the reason for the Civil War. Four slave states on the border between North and South—Missouri, Kentucky, Maryland, and Delaware—had remained part of the Union. If they had believed the Union’s goal was to end slavery, they would almost certainly have joined the Confederacy. The Union would have lost access to their resources, the Confederacy would have been strengthened, and the war would undoubtedly have gone on for longer.

## The Death of President Lincoln

Despite remaining differences, Americans were relieved that the war was over. But tragically, within days of General Robert E. Lee’s surrender at Appomattox Court House, Virginia, the nation would be challenged again.

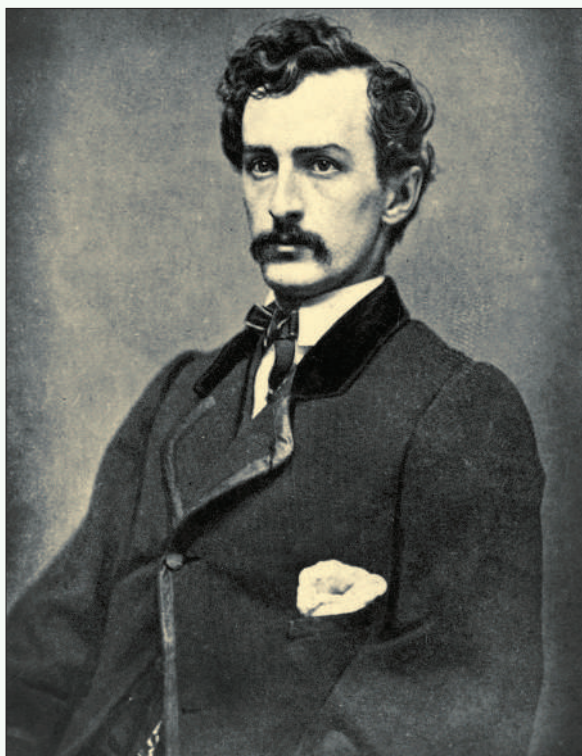
On April 11, 1865, in celebration of the end of the war, a crowd gathered at the White House and called for President Lincoln to make a speech. In the crowd outside the White House was an actor named John

Wilkes Booth. When President Lincoln finished speaking, Booth turned to a friend and snarled, “That’s the last speech he will ever make.”

Booth was a racist. He believed that the Confederate cause had been a just one. During the war, he had served as a **secret agent** for the Confederacy. In his mind, no one was more responsible for the defeat of his beloved South than President Lincoln. And for that, Lincoln had to pay.

### Vocabulary

**secret agent**, n. a spy; a person who collects and reports secret information about other governments or countries



John Wilkes Booth



On Friday, April 14—three days after giving his speech—President Lincoln and his wife, Mary, attended a play at Ford's Theatre. Sitting in the special presidential box just to the side of the stage, the president seemed to enjoy the show. During the third act, Booth approached the door at the back of the presidential box.

The guard who was supposed to be there had left his post. Booth entered, raised his pistol, and, from six feet away, fired into the back of the president's head.

Booth then moved quickly to the railing of the box. He jumped down onto the stage. Booth broke his leg when he landed on the stage but still managed to escape. He avoided capture for nearly two weeks, but he was finally found hiding in a barn and was shot.

As for the wounded president, he was carried to a house across the street, where friends and a doctor tried to make him comfortable. But there was no hope that he would live. The following morning,

War Department, Washington, April 20, 1865,

**\$100,000 REWARD!**

**THE MURDERER**

Of our late beloved President, Abraham Lincoln,  
**IS STILL AT LARGE.**

**\$50,000 REWARD**

Will be paid by this Department for his apprehension, in addition to any reward offered by Municipal Authorities or State Executives.

**\$25,000 REWARD**

Will be paid for the apprehension of JOHN H. SURREAT, one of Booth's Accomplices.

**\$25,000 REWARD**

Will be paid for the apprehension of David C. Harold, another of Booth's accomplices.

**LIBERAL REWARDS:** will be paid for any information that shall conduce to the arrest of either of the above-named criminals, or their accomplices.

All persons harboring or secreting the said persons, or either of them, or aiding or assisting their concealment or escape, will be treated as accessories in the murder of the President and the attempted assassination of the Secretary of State, and shall be subject to trial before a Military Commission and the punishment of DEATH.

Let the stain of innocent blood be removed from the land by the arrest and punishment of the murderers.

All good citizens are exhorted to aid public justice on this occasion. Every man should consider his own conscience charged with this solemn duty, and rest neither night nor day until it be accomplished.

**EDWIN M. STANTON, Secretary of War.**

**DESCRIPTIONS.**—BOOTH is Five Feet 7 or 8 inches high, slender build, high forehead, black hair, black eyes, and wears a heavy black mustache.

JOHN H. SURREAT is about 5 feet, 9 inches. Hair rather thin and dark; eyes rather light; no beard. Would weigh 145 or 150 pounds. Complexion rather pale and clear, with color in his cheeks. Wore light clothes of fine quality. Shoulders square; cheek bones rather prominent; chin narrow; ears projecting at the top; forehead rather low and square, but broad. Parted high hair on the right side; neck rather long. His lips are firmly set. A slim man.

DAVID C. HAROLD is five feet six inches high, hair dark, eyes dark, eyebrows rather heavy, full face, nose short, hand short and fleshy, feet small, instep high, round bodied, naturally quick and active, slightly closes his eyes when looking at a person.

**NOTICE.**—In addition to the above, State and other authorities have offered rewards amounting to almost one hundred thousand dollars, making an aggregate of about **TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS.**



A \$100,000 reward was offered to anyone who could capture John Wilkes Booth.

President Lincoln's coffin was paraded through the streets of New York City ten days after his assassination.

April 15, 1865, he breathed his last. "Now," said his secretary of war, Edwin Stanton, "he belongs to the ages."

Booth believed he was striking a blow for the South. He could not have been more mistaken. It was Lincoln who had said, in his second inaugural address, "With **malice** toward none; with charity for all." It was Lincoln who held out the best hope for a peace without bitterness or revenge. It was Lincoln who spoke of bringing the Southern states back into the Union as quickly as possible.

And now Lincoln was gone.

### Vocabulary

**malice**, n. a desire to hurt another person

### Writers' Corner



Imagine you are a journalist reporting on President Lincoln's assassination and funeral. Use your research to write a newspaper article on the events that occurred.



### Who's in Charge?

After the assassination of President Lincoln, Andrew Johnson of Tennessee became

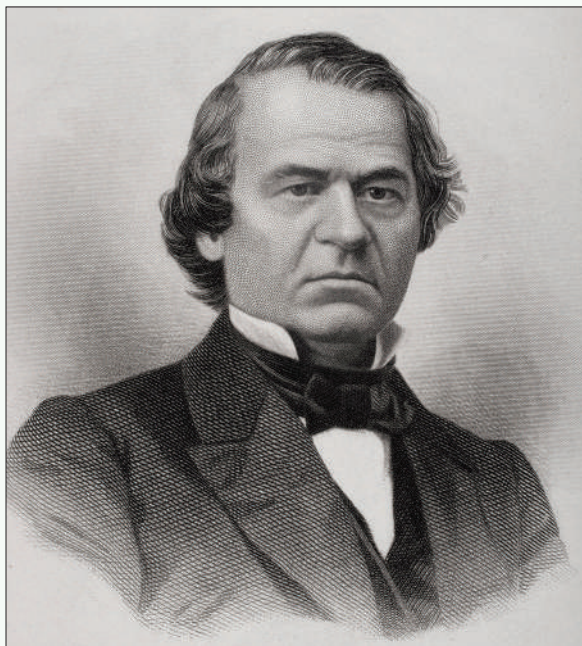
the next president. Johnson had grown up poor in North Carolina and later made his living as a tailor in Greenville, Tennessee.

Although he had never been to school, he taught himself the basics of reading and writing, and with the help of his wife, Eliza, he became quite good at both.

His neighbors elected him to the Tennessee **legislature** in 1835, and he later served as congressman, governor, and senator for that state. Although Johnson was a

### Vocabulary

**legislature**, n. the part of the government responsible for making laws



Andrew Johnson

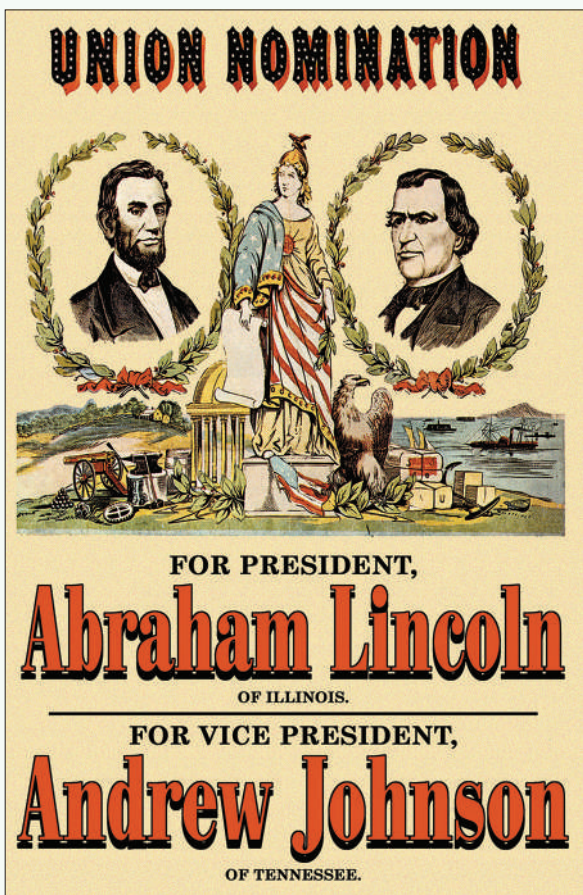


slaveholder himself, he strongly disliked the wealthy slaveholders of the South.

Most important, Andrew Johnson was a strong believer in the Union. When Tennessee joined the Confederacy in 1861, Johnson refused to follow his state and remained in the U.S. Senate. He was the only senator from a Confederate state to do so. When President Lincoln ran for reelection in 1864, he chose Johnson to

run for the vice presidency with him, even though Lincoln was a Republican and Johnson was a Democrat.

At first, some in Congress who opposed Lincoln's plan for restoring the Union thought that Johnson would side with them. However, they had guessed wrong. Johnson believed that the Union should be restored quickly, and apart from abolishing slavery, he felt that the South should not be forced to make other major changes.



Andrew Johnson was the first vice president to reach the presidency following the assassination of the president.

### Think Twice



Why did Lincoln, the Republican presidential candidate, choose Johnson, a Democrat, as his running mate?

In May of 1865, Johnson announced that he would follow Lincoln's plan, with just a few changes. For example, Lincoln's plan would have restored voting rights to white adult males other than former Confederate military officers and government officials, but Johnson's plan would also exclude wealthy Southern landowners from voting. Those excluded would have to come to Washington, D.C., and petition Johnson in person to receive a presidential pardon to regain their political rights—including the right to vote.

Johnson's plan would also give Southern white landowners the right to reclaim property lost during the war, except for enslaved people, who were considered no longer as property but finally as humans.

This blended plan to restore the Union quickly became known as Presidential Reconstruction. By the end of 1865, most of the Southern states had agreed to the plan. Enough Southern voters had taken the loyalty pledge and accepted emancipation. Their states could now qualify for restoration to the Union. That took care of the matter, as far as President Johnson was concerned. However, his leniency led to a political battle with members of Congress.



## Congress and Radical Reconstruction

---

Congress disagreed with President Johnson and with Presidential Reconstruction. To begin with, Congress asked, why was it up to the president to decide on a path for Reconstruction? Shouldn't that be the right of Congress, not that of the president? Basically, it was saying that

there would be no reconstruction of the Union until *Congress* said so, and only on certain terms and conditions.

Furthermore, Congress wanted Reconstruction to be much harder on the South than the president did. Some members of Congress pointed out that the Southern states had shown no sign of regret about the war. After all the pain the war had caused, some believed the Southern states should not be allowed back into the Union so easily.

Congress also believed that while Southern states had given up slavery, they had not changed their attitudes toward African Americans. The Thirteenth **Amendment**, ratified in 1865, had banned private ownership of enslaved individuals, also known as chattel slavery. However, beginning that same year, almost immediately after the Thirteenth Amendment was signed, every one of the Southern states passed **Black Codes**

### Vocabulary

---

**amendment**, n. an official change or addition

**Black Code**, n. any of the laws enacted in 1865 and 1866 in former Confederate states that preserved white supremacy



to limit the new freedom of African Americans. In addition, all Southern states adopted so-called vagrancy laws that allowed authorities to arrest unemployed African Americans. If unable to pay their fines, unemployed African Americans would be hired out by local sheriffs as laborers. Freedom was nowhere to be

found in these new laws. Congress was concerned that if states with such laws were allowed to return to the Union under the Presidential Reconstruction plan, there would be no way to protect the rights of African Americans in the South.

Black Codes were laws passed in Southern states specifically targeting African



A provision of the Black Code in Monticello, Florida, allowed for the sale of a person's labor if they could not pay a fine. Three months' labor would equal about one hundred dollars in fines. This law effectively allowed some formerly enslaved African Americans to be bought and sold even after the end of the Civil War.

Americans after the Civil War. These laws were intended to keep African Americans as close to enslavement as possible by limiting their rights to own property, buy or lease land, conduct business, and move freely through public spaces. One Southern state, for example, allowed African Americans to work only on farms or as housekeepers. Another state said that African Americans could not change jobs or travel from place to place. In another state, they weren't allowed to own land in a city.

Congress demanded a more **radical** plan for Reconstruction. *Radical* often means extreme, but here it meant getting to the root of the problem by changing the laws of the South and the nation. Supporters of this view were known as Radical Republicans.

By late 1865, Johnson had pardoned many former high-ranking Confederates, who were then elected to Congress or high state offices. Upset and frustrated, Congress refused in December to admit these new representatives from the South. President Johnson and those in favor of Radical Reconstruction argued angrily over what to do about the South. The following spring, Congress passed the **Civil Rights** Act of 1866. The purpose

of this act was to protect the rights of formerly enslaved people against the Black Codes. President Johnson **vetoed** it, but Congress passed it over the president's veto. The Civil Rights Act became law. Johnson's Presidential Reconstruction was blocked.

In the summer of 1866, Congress passed one of the most important of all amendments to the Constitution. The Fourteenth Amendment made all formerly enslaved people citizens of the United States. Also known as the due process amendment, it prevents states from making any law limiting the civil rights of African Americans; prohibits states from taking away a person's life, liberty, or property unfairly; and requires states to treat all people equally under the law. After Congress submitted the amendment, it was up to

### Vocabulary

**radical**, adj. favoring large or widespread changes

**civil right**, n. any of the liberties and freedoms citizens are supposed to have according to the Constitution and its amendments

**veto**, v. to reject or refuse to approve a law



the states to **ratify** it and make it a part of the Constitution.

When elections were held for Congress in 1866, many more Radical Republican candidates were voted into office. That finished Presidential Reconstruction. From then on, the Radical Republicans made it clear that they would be in charge of Reconstruction.

### Vocabulary

**ratify**, v. to approve

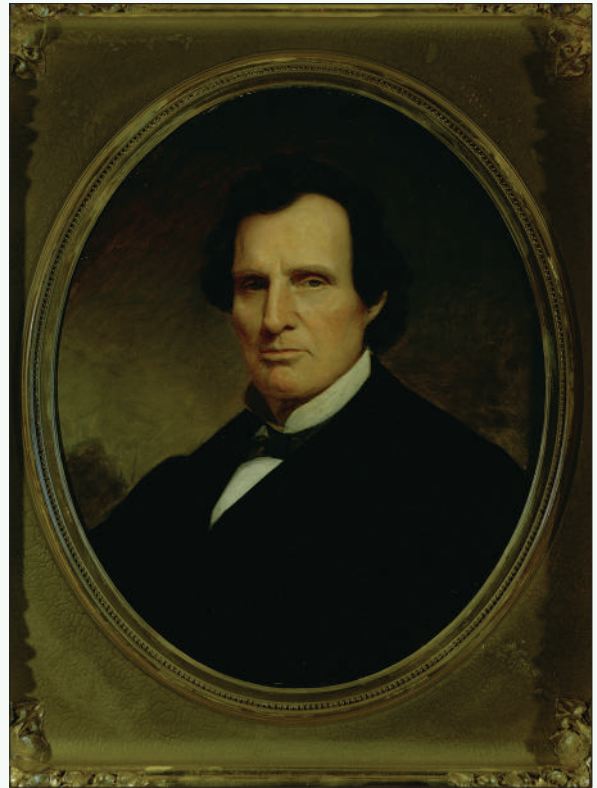


### Find Out the Facts

Research the Fourteenth Amendment to find out more about its main points.

## Congressional Reconstruction

An influential leader of the Radical Republicans, Thaddeus Stevens provides a good example of this group's beliefs. Although he grew up in poverty, Stevens became a successful and wealthy lawyer. But he never lost his sympathy for the poor and the **underdog**. He believed in the words of Thomas Jefferson in the Declaration of Independence—"that all



Thaddeus Stevens

men are created equal" and that among their "unalienable rights" are "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

One of Stevens's main goals in life was to secure those unalienable rights for African Americans. He was an abolitionist, and he had used his skills as a lawyer on behalf of fugitive enslaved people. Stevens believed, as did the other

### Vocabulary

**underdog**, n. a person or group that is not likely to win

Radical Republicans in Congress, that Reconstruction would be a failure unless it made African Americans equal to white people.

In the spring of 1867, with the Radical Republicans in control, Congress passed its plan for Reconstruction. It began by throwing out everything done under Presidential Reconstruction—the new state constitutions, the new state governments and all the laws they had passed (including the Black Codes), and all Southern representatives elected to Congress. The Reconstruction Act of 1867 meant that Reconstruction would start all over again. And this time, the Radicals claimed, they would do it right.

Under Congressional Reconstruction, the U.S. Army was put in charge of the Southern states until they were allowed to reenter the Union. Before the states could reenter, they had to do many things. They had to write new state constitutions, but this time, African Americans must also be allowed to take part in writing them. They had to elect new state governments, but this time, African Americans had to be allowed to vote and to hold office. African Americans had to have equal rights.

People who had supported the rebellion against the United States were not allowed to take part in any of these activities.

This included the hundreds of thousands who had served in the Confederate Army. They had no say in writing their state constitutions. They could neither vote nor hold political office.

### Think Twice



How did President Johnson's view of Reconstruction differ from that of the Radical Republicans?

After a state adopted its new constitution and elected a new government, it also had to ratify the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Once a state had done all these things, then and only then would it be received back into the Union. Then and only then would U.S. troops leave that state.

Radical Republicans said that ratifying the Fourteenth Amendment should be the price each Southern state must pay to reenter the Union. President Johnson, though, was opposed to this amendment. Although Tennessee had already ratified the amendment and been readmitted to the Union in 1866, Johnson quietly told the other Southern states that once he won the struggle with Congress, they wouldn't have to ratify it. Those states took Johnson's advice and refused to ratify the amendment. It was a big mistake.

That, the Radical Republicans said, was their plan for Reconstruction. That was



### Comparison of Reunification Plans

Reconstruction Plan	Ten Percent Plan	Presidential Reconstruction	Congressional Reconstruction
Who proposed it?	Abraham Lincoln	Andrew Johnson, based on Lincoln's proposal	Radical Republicans in Congress
Who had the authority to direct the plan?	President	President	Congress
What did states have to do?	Pledge loyalty to the Union; accept emancipation	Pledge loyalty to the Union; accept emancipation	Accept emancipation; ratify the Fourteenth Amendment; elect a new government; write a new constitution that conformed to the U.S. Constitution
Who could vote?	White adult male citizens, excluding former Confederate military officers and government officials	White adult male citizens, excluding former Confederate military officers, government officials, and wealthy landowners unless pardoned individually by Johnson	All adult males born in the United States, including formerly enslaved men but excluding anyone who had supported the rebellion
What proportion of a state's voters had to pledge loyalty to the Union?	10 percent	10 percent	Majority
What was the result?	Never fully implemented	Black Codes and ex-Confederates in office	African American citizenship and a temporary empowerment of African American voters

what they insisted the South must do. And woe to anyone who tried to stand in their way. The “anyone” the Radicals especially had in mind was President Andrew Johnson.



## The Impeachment of President Johnson

Because of its distrust of President Andrew Johnson, Congress, led by

Republicans such as Thaddeus Stevens, passed a series of laws to limit the powers of the presidency. President Johnson believed those laws were unconstitutional. He decided to ignore them. When he did that, in February of 1868, the House of Representatives voted to **impeach** him.

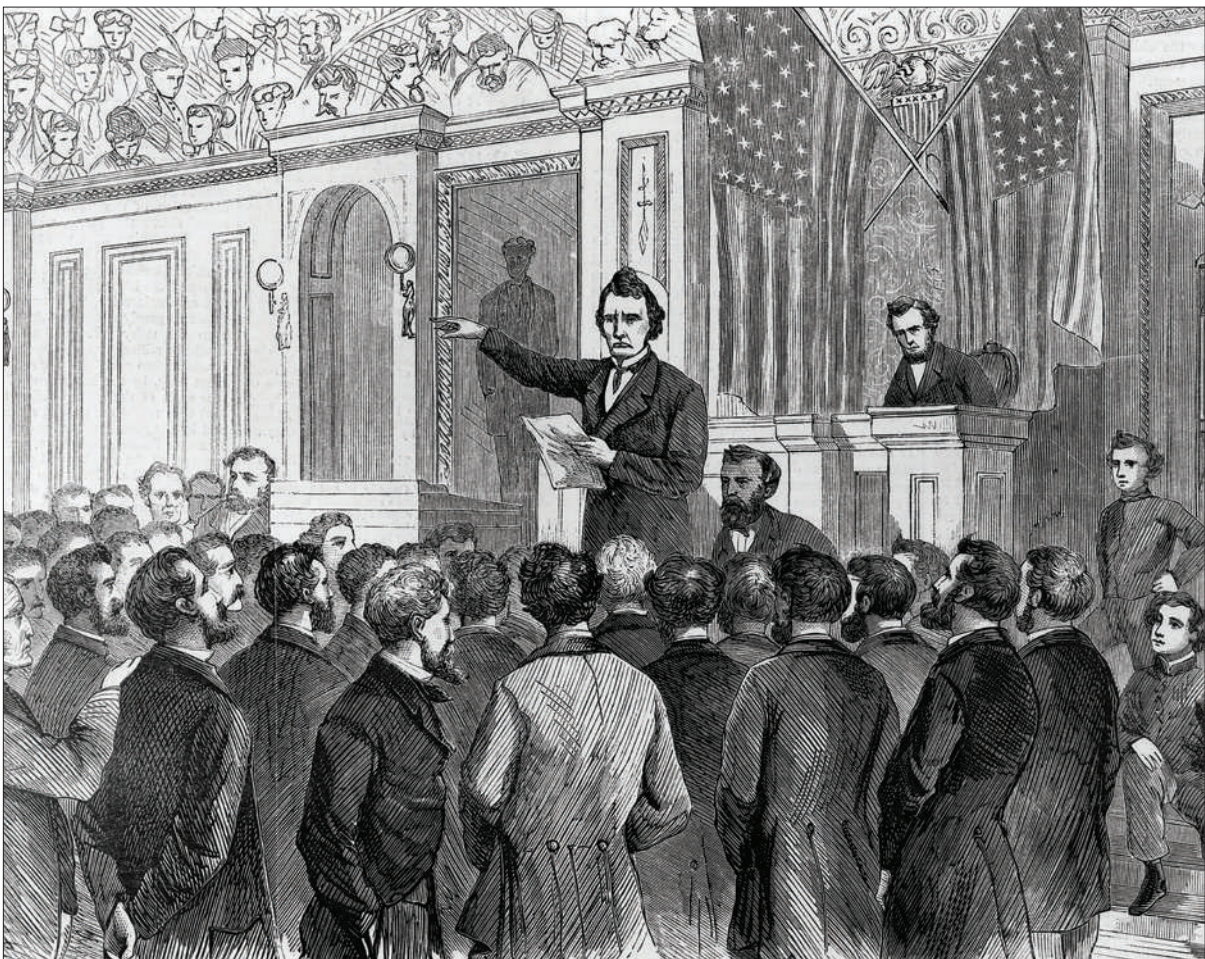
### Vocabulary

**impeach**, v. to charge a government official with doing something wrong or improper

Impeachment is a way of getting rid of officeholders before their term is over if they have committed a serious offense. Under the U.S. Constitution, it is the job of the House of Representatives to impeach a president who is thought to be guilty of serious wrongdoing, or “high crimes and misdemeanors.” If the House of Representatives votes to impeach, or bring charges against, the president,

then the president is put on trial before the U.S. Senate. If two-thirds of the senators find the president guilty of the charges, the president is removed from office.

Some Radical Republicans, such as Thaddeus Stevens of Pennsylvania, had wanted to impeach Johnson for a long time. But they couldn’t impeach the president just because they didn’t like his proposals. They needed a better reason



Thaddeus Stevens spoke out in favor of impeaching President Andrew Johnson.





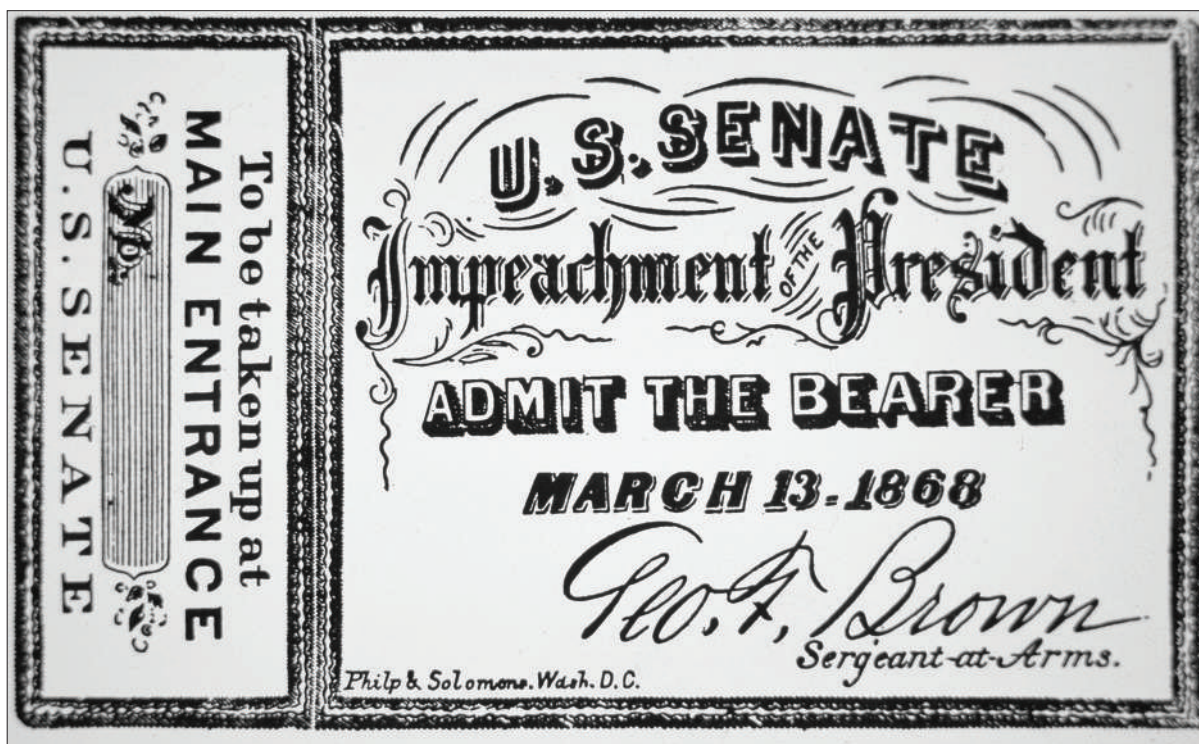
### Think Twice

Why did Thaddeus Stevens and the Radical Republicans decide to impeach Andrew Johnson?

than that. Now that Johnson had ignored the laws, they had one.

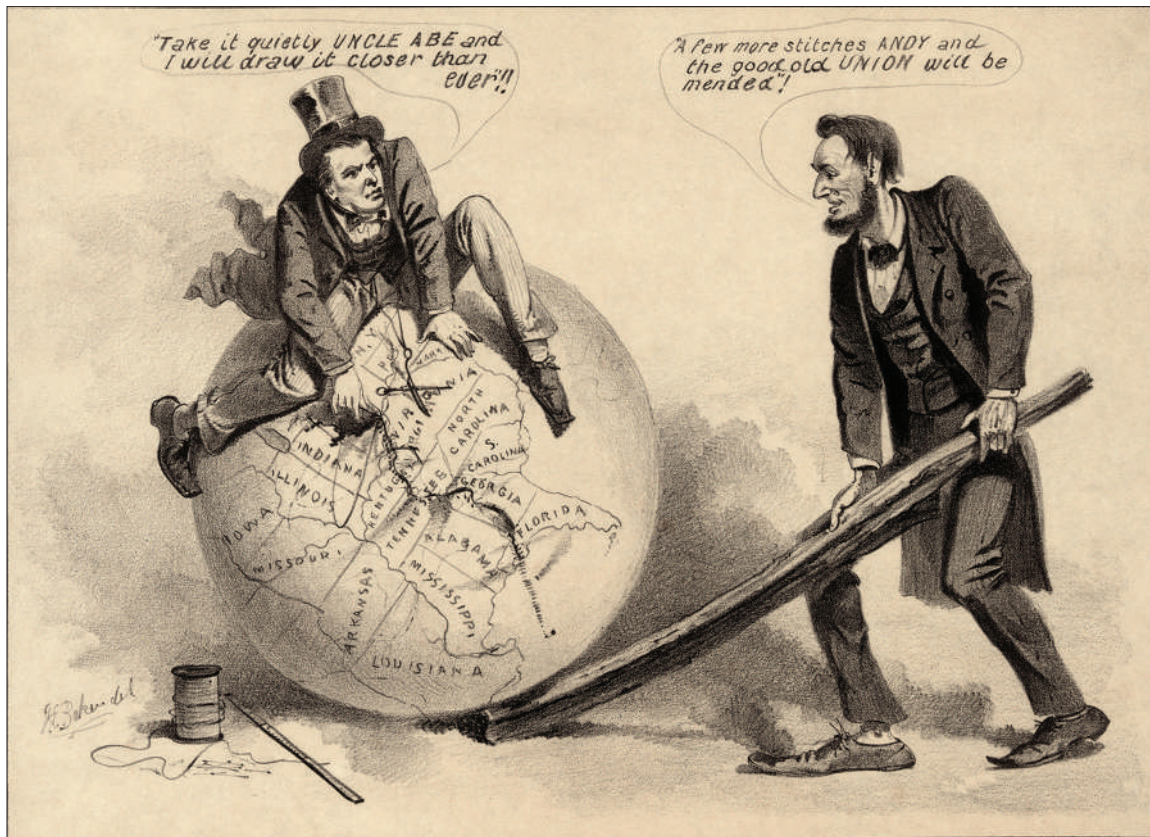
The impeachment and trial of President Johnson lasted for two months in early 1868. While it lasted, it was the best show in town. The government printed tickets for admission, and people fell all over each other to get them.

To no one's surprise, the House of Representatives voted to impeach the president. The case then moved to the Senate. There, it would take a two-thirds majority, or thirty-six senators, to vote guilty as charged in order to remove Johnson from office. The vote was extremely close. But the final count was thirty-five in favor of guilty, nineteen in favor of not guilty—one vote short of the number needed to remove the president from office. So, by that slim margin, Andrew Johnson was able to finish his term.



Ticket for the impeachment of President Andrew Johnson

## PRIMARY SOURCE: THE RAIL SPLITTER REPAIRING THE UNION (1865)





## PRIMARY SOURCE: PRESIDENT ANDREW JOHNSON'S PROCLAMATION GRANTING AMNESTY TO PARTICIPANTS IN THE REBELLION

To the end, therefore, that the authority of the Government of the United States may be restored, and that peace, order and freedom may be established, I, Andrew Johnson, President of the United States, do proclaim and declare, that I hereby grant to all persons who have directly or indirectly participated in the existing rebellion, except as hereinafter excepted, amnesty and pardon, with restoration of all rights of property, except as to slaves, and except in cases where legal proceedings, under the laws of the United States providing for the confiscation of property of persons engaged in rebellion, have been instituted, but on the condition, nevertheless, that every such person shall take and subscribe to the following oath. . . .

I, — —, do solemnly swear, (or affirm) in presence of Almighty God, that I will henceforth faithfully support and defend the Constitution of the United States and the Union of the States thereunder, and that I will, in like manner, abide by and faithfully support all laws and proclamations which have been made during the existing rebellion with reference to the emancipation of slaves. So help me God. . . .

Provided, That special application may be made to the President for pardon by any person belonging to the excepted classes, and such clemency will be liberally extended as may be consistent with the facts of the case, and the peace and dignity of the United States.

**Source:** Johnson, Andrew. "Prest. Johnson's Amnesty Proclamation," 1865. Printed Ephemera Collection, Library of Congress.

# Chapter 2

## Reconstruction in the United States

### The Framing Question

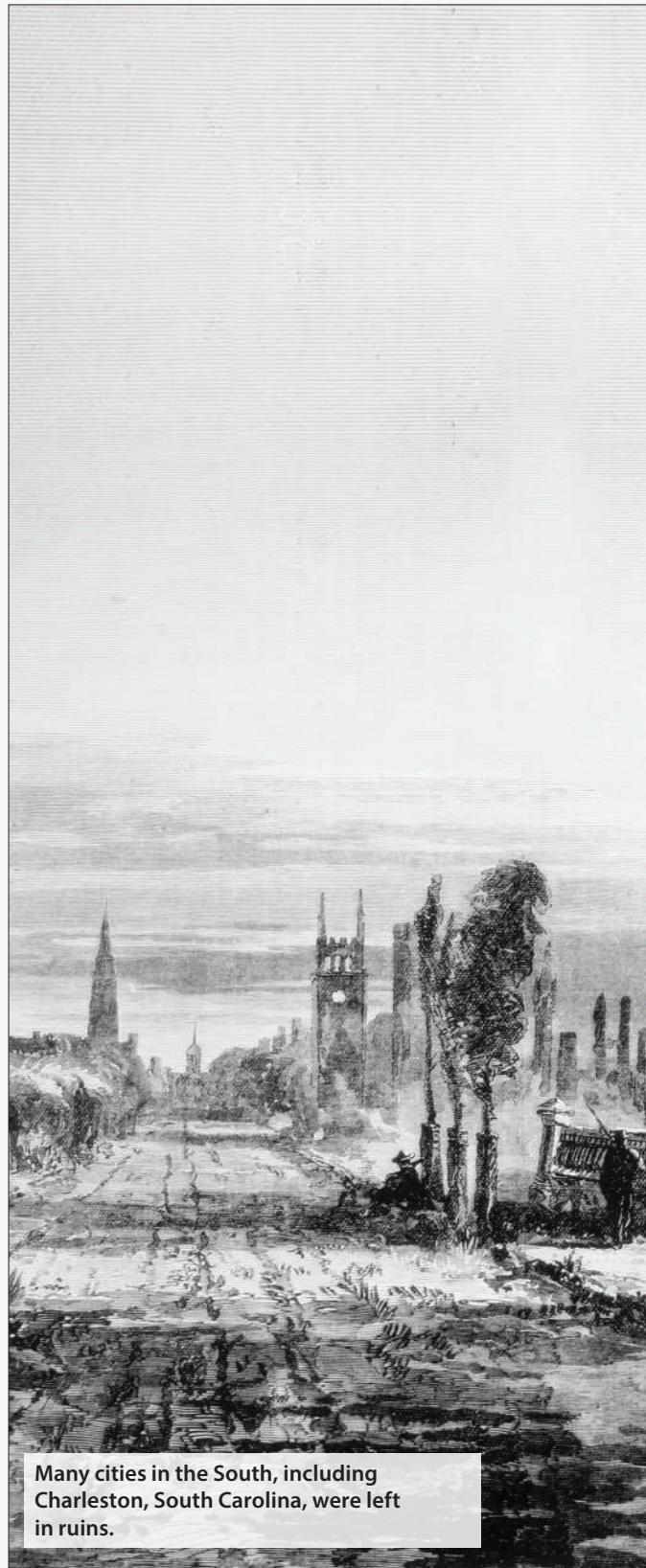
What were the major accomplishments and setbacks during Reconstruction in the South?



### The South in Ruins

*At the end of the Civil War, the South was a devastated land. Fields that once produced fine harvests of cotton, tobacco, and grain were covered with weeds. Small farms were destroyed. Nearly half of the South's farm animals were gone. Railroad tracks were torn up. Whatever factories the South had before the war were now mostly destroyed.*

*Many Southerners, both white and African American, were without food, clothing, or any way to make a living.*



Many cities in the South, including Charleston, South Carolina, were left in ruins.





Travelers to the region were shocked by what they saw. Wherever General Sherman's army had marched in Georgia and South Carolina, wrote one traveler, the countryside "looked for many miles like a broad black streak of ruin." In other words, so much had been burned. In Tennessee, one visitor stated, "the trail of war [was] visible . . . in burnt-up [cotton] gin-houses, ruined bridges, mills, and factories." And in Virginia, wrote another, "the barns were all burned, chimneys standing without houses and houses standing without roofs, or doors, or windows."

The human losses were even worse. Close to one-third of all soldiers who put on the gray uniform of the Confederacy had died during the war. Even more were wounded, some so badly they would never be the same again. In 1866, the year after the war ended, the state of Mississippi spent one out of every five tax dollars it collected to buy artificial arms and legs for its veterans.

### Writers' Corner

Imagine you are a Southerner (of any race) and the war has just ended. Write a letter telling someone about an experience you had.





Many newly free people left their old plantations to find family members or to start new lives.

As for the formerly enslaved people, the war brought them freedom. In the first months after the war, a good many African Americans left their old plantations just so they could experience their newfound freedom. They wanted to know what it was like to go wherever they wanted without having to get permission. One woman told her former slaveholder that she just could not stay and continue to cook for her. "If I stay here," she said, "I'll never know I am free."

Many newly free people had an even more important reason for taking to the road. They hoped to find family members who had been sold and separated from them.

But most of the formerly enslaved people stayed right where they were. This may seem surprising, but they had to make a living. Their best chance of doing that was to either get hired as paid workers on the same land or rent some of the land as tenant farmers. Even though they were now



free and could keep some of the fruits of their labor, their lives didn't improve much.

## The Freedmen's Bureau

Even while the war was going on, Congress realized it would have to help people get back on their feet. Just a month before the war's end, Congress created the Freedmen's Bureau. *Freedmen* was another name for formerly enslaved people. The Freedmen's Bureau provided food, clothing, fuel, and

medical supplies to needy Southerners, both Black and white.

The Freedmen's Bureau had its greatest success in education. It set up more than four thousand schools where formerly enslaved people could learn to read and write. Northern churches sent thousands of dedicated people to teach in these schools. Before the Civil War, enslaved people were usually forbidden to learn literacy skills. Now Southern African Americans flocked to these schools—not just children but adults, too. Many of



This Freedmen's Bureau school was opened in Richmond, Virginia, after the Civil War.

the adults were deeply religious people who had long wanted to read the Bible for themselves.

One thing the Freedmen's Bureau did not do, however, was give formerly enslaved people their own land. With their own land, African Americans would have had a chance to support themselves and become truly independent. As one man said, "All I want is to get to own four or five acres of land, that I can build me a little house on and call my home." Another said, "Give us our own land and we take care of ourselves. But without land, the old masters can hire us or starve us, as they please."

For a time, African Americans in the South were excited by a promise made by General William T. Sherman in January of 1865. The promise was that formerly enslaved people would receive forty acres of land in Georgia and South Carolina. Forty thousand African Americans quickly moved onto the promised land. But President Johnson overturned Sherman's order later that year and returned the land to its original owners.



### Think Twice

If freed African Americans had been given their own land, rather than turning to sharecropping, how might their lives have been different?



## Sharecropping

While many of the formerly enslaved people continued to farm the lands of their former slaveholders, a big problem had to be worked out first. When the Confederacy collapsed, all of its money immediately became worthless. Southern banks also went out of business. Few Southerners had U.S. money. Owners of the land had no money to pay wages to their workers, and freedmen had no money to pay rent.

The problem was solved by developing a system called sharecropping, which was different from tenant farming. Whereas a tenant farmer had to pay rent in cash, the sharecropper did not need to have available money. Sharecropping worked this way: The landowners let the workers use some of their land; gave them seed; lent them plows, tools, and mules to work with; and told them what to grow. In return, the workers gave the landowners a share of the crops they raised. Usually they split the crops half and half. Nine out of ten formerly enslaved families became sharecroppers in the South, and many poor white families did, too.

### Think Twice

What were the differences between a tenant farmer and a sharecropper?







Many freed African Americans became sharecroppers on the same land they had farmed while enslaved.

## New Governments

Even though President Johnson escaped removal from office, he was powerless to stop Congressional Reconstruction. Congress had already passed the Civil Rights Act of 1866 over his veto. As you read in Chapter 1, the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution granted citizenship to all African Americans born on American soil. It took two years, but the amendment was

finally ratified by twenty-eight of the thirty-seven states and became part of the U.S. Constitution in 1868. All over the South, Southerners—this time including African American citizens as well as white citizens—began the job of writing new state constitutions, holding elections, and starting up their state governments again. The process took several years.

### Find Out the Facts

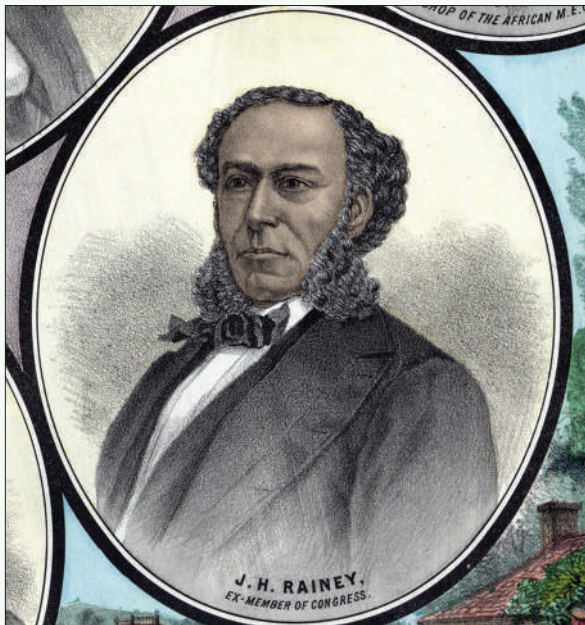


When did Louisiana ratify the Fourteenth Amendment? What happened when it did?

Congressional Reconstruction led to big changes in the South. Once African American men were allowed to vote and hold office, the racial makeup of governing bodies changed drastically. In each of the former Confederate states, African Americans were elected to serve in their state legislatures. In some states, African Americans were elected to higher offices, such as **lieutenant governor**. Many African American men were also elected to serve in the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate.

### Vocabulary

**lieutenant governor**, n. an official in state government who ranks second to the governor



Joseph Hayne Rainey was the first African American to serve in the House of Representatives and the second to serve in Congress.

Half of these African American officials were free persons before the war. Some of them were well-educated Northerners who moved to the South after the war ended. But about half of them had been enslaved only a few years before.

## African American Officeholders

In each of the former Confederate states, African American men were elected to serve in their state legislatures. Each man had his own unique story, and each one contributed to the reconstruction of the South.

**Oscar James Dunn** (1825–71), Louisiana’s first African American lieutenant governor, served from 1868 to 1871. As a Republican, he demanded rights for African Americans, including legal equality, male suffrage, free education, and land ownership. In 1868, he was nominated as running mate for Republican gubernatorial candidate Henry Clay Warmoth. Dunn was reluctant because he felt that Warmoth, a white man, would only use him as a tool to gain African American votes. However, when Republicans won the election, Dunn presided over the Louisiana legislature’s civil rights bills and ratification of the Fourteenth Amendment.



Dunn died in 1871 under questionable circumstances, becoming violently ill after a public dinner. His death was listed as “congestion to the brain and lungs,” but several of the attending physicians reported signs of arsenic poisoning. His funeral procession was attended by some fifty thousand people, a record number for New Orleans.

**Pinckney Benton Stewart Pinchback** (1837–1921), the first African American governor of Louisiana, was the son of a white Mississippi planter and a



P. B. S. Pinchback served as acting state governor of Louisiana.



Oscar Dunn was the first African American lieutenant governor.

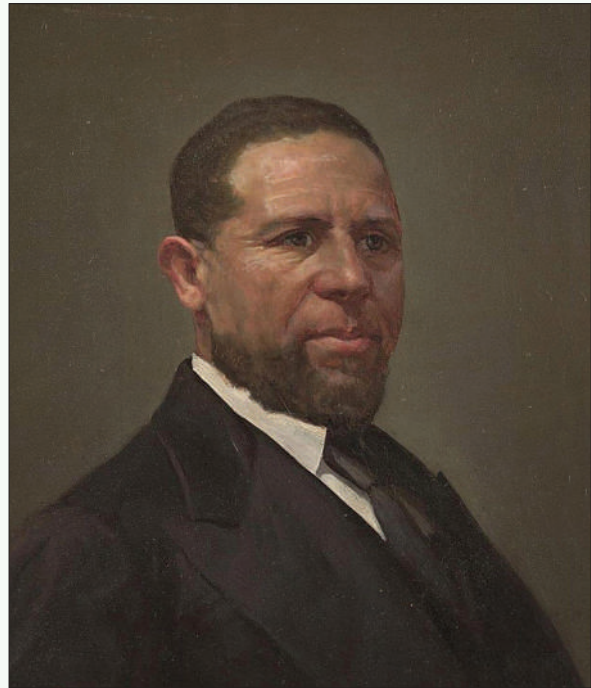
woman whom his father had freed. His comfortable childhood was interrupted when his father died and Pinckney became sole provider for his mother and siblings. He served as a Union officer during the Civil War, then moved to New Orleans and became a political organizer and leader. During Reconstruction, Pinchback was a delegate to Louisiana’s constitutional convention, and he was elected to the state senate in 1868. Upon Oscar Dunn’s death in 1871, Pinchback became lieutenant governor. A year later, Governor Henry Clay Warmoth was impeached, and Pinchback became acting governor. He was the first African



Blanche Kelso Bruce served as a senator and was appointed to three federal positions in Washington, D.C.

American to serve as governor of any state.

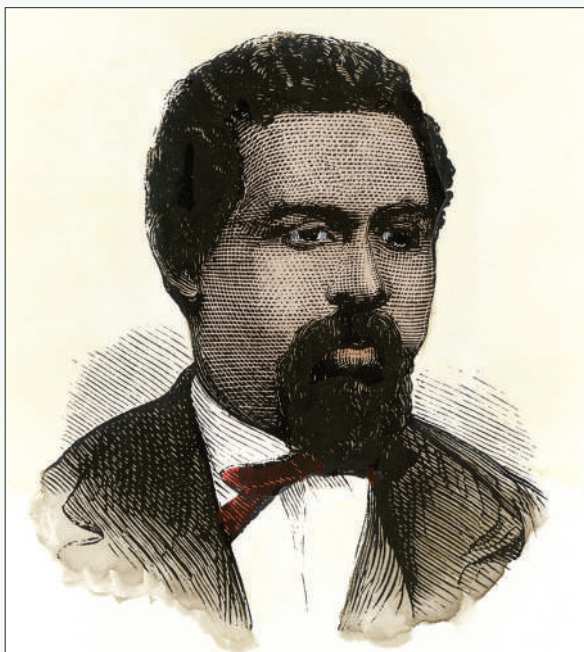
**Blanche Kelso Bruce** (1841–98) was the second African American senator from Mississippi and the first to serve a full term (1875–81). He had the distinction of being appointed by three presidents to positions in Washington, D.C. He was appointed register of the Treasury by President James Garfield in 1881, President Benjamin Harrison named him recorder of deeds for the District of Columbia in 1889 and 1893, and President William McKinley returned him to the position of register of the Treasury in 1895.



Hiram Rhodes Revels served as the first African American member of Congress.

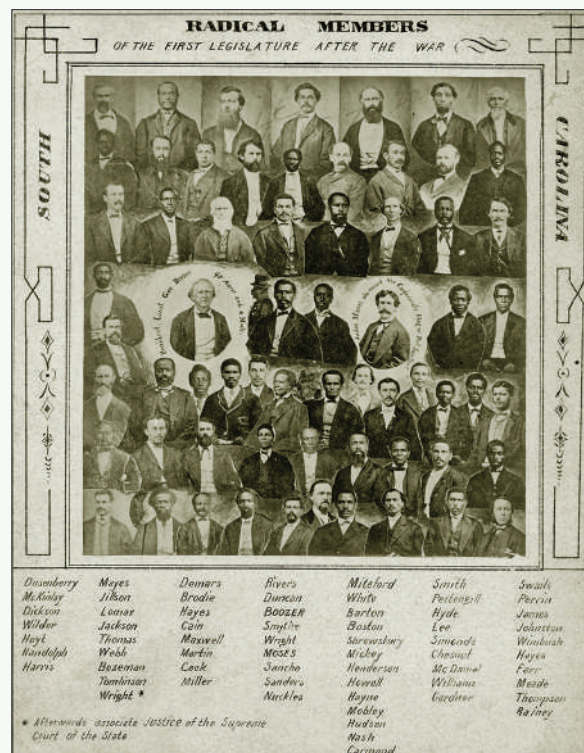
**Hiram Rhodes Revels** (1827–1901) was the first African American member of the U.S. Congress. He served as a senator from Mississippi. Revels was not welcomed by the Democrats. Pointing out that the Constitution states that senators must have been citizens for at least nine years, Democrats insisted that Revels had been a citizen only since the Fourteenth Amendment of 1868. Revels's fellow Republicans argued that Revels was born a free man in the United States and had lived there all his life. Just because the law had only recently recognized African American men's citizenship didn't mean he was a "new" citizen.





Robert Smalls served five terms in the U.S. House of Representatives.

**Robert Smalls** (1839–1915) was a Civil War hero before becoming a congressman during Reconstruction. When the Civil War broke out, he was an enslaved crewman on a Confederate steamship carrying guns and ammunition. He and other enslaved crew members took control of the ship and delivered it to the U.S. Navy. He became a national celebrity and, in 1863, was appointed the first African American ship captain in the U.S. Navy. After the war, Smalls was a delegate to the 1864 convention that nominated President Lincoln for reelection and to the 1868 South Carolina state constitutional convention. After serving in the state legislature, he was elected to the U.S.



Jonathan Jasper Wright was a South Carolina state senator and the first African American judge to serve on a state supreme court.

House of Representatives, where he served five terms.

**Jonathan Jasper Wright** (1840–85) became the first African American to serve on a state supreme court. Wright's political and judicial career took some surprising turns. As an attorney and adviser to the Freedmen's Bureau, he gave legal aid to formerly enslaved people. During his tenure as a state senator, he helped with the creation of new state laws for the rights of African Americans in South Carolina. He was a delegate to the South Carolina constitutional convention.

In 1870, the state legislature elected Wright to the South Carolina Supreme Court. Unfortunately, his influence there had limits. When Democrats petitioned the supreme court to bar investigation into a contested election, the petition was granted despite Wright's dissent. As a result of this and a related decision in which Wright was also the lone dissenter, a Democrat became governor. This effectively ended Reconstruction in South Carolina.

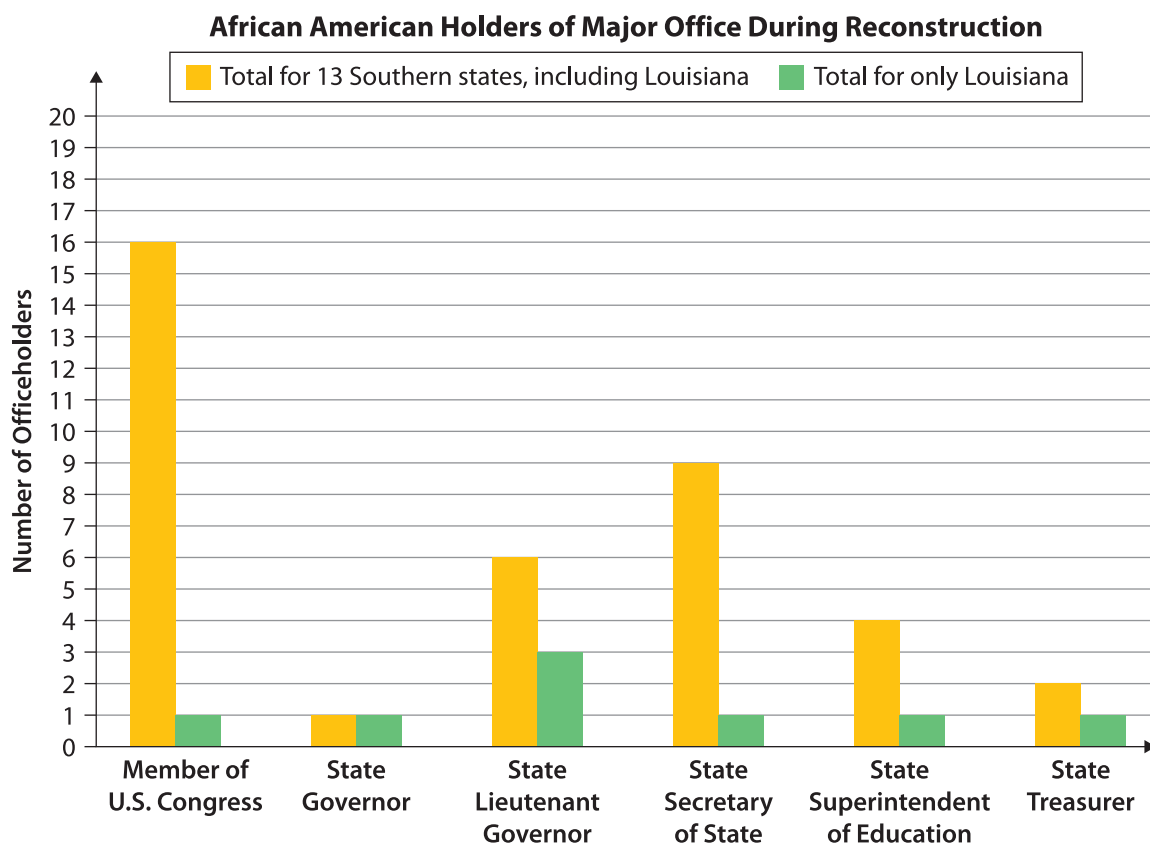
Louisiana's record for African Americans in elected office compares favorably with the

### Writers' Corner

Select one African American officeholder during Reconstruction, and imagine you are interviewing him. Write up the interview. (The person you select does not have to be one mentioned in this chapter.)



other Southern states. The total number for the South was 1,517 officeholders, or an average of 116 per state. The total for Louisiana alone was 210. The following chart gives comparisons for major offices such as governor or congressperson.





## Carpetbaggers and Scalawags

Even though there were many African American officials and lawmakers during Reconstruction in the South, African Americans did not actually control these Southern states. Even under Congressional Reconstruction, most officeholders in the South continued to be white men.

Some of the white lawmakers and officials in the new Southern governments were actually Northerners who had gone south after the war. They went south for various reasons: to start farms or businesses, to help freedmen as teachers or ministers, or just to see whether they could make money from the South's troubles.

Former Confederates disliked these Northerners. They had an insulting name for them: carpetbaggers. A carpetbag is a cheap suitcase made of pieces of carpet. Southerners said these people came to



### Find Out the Facts

Research one of the Northern carpetbaggers who became famous as Southern politicians: John Thomas Deweese, William H. Snow, or Albion W. Tourgee.



Southerners called Northerners carpetbaggers because many had come to the South hoping to get rich.

the South with all their belongings in a carpetbag, which they hoped to fill with riches.

Most of the white people in the new governments, though, had lived in the South all their lives. Some had never been in favor of secession. Some were business leaders. A good number were poor folk who were getting their first chance to gain power over the big planters who had ruled the South. They thought the South would be better off if it changed some of its old ways.

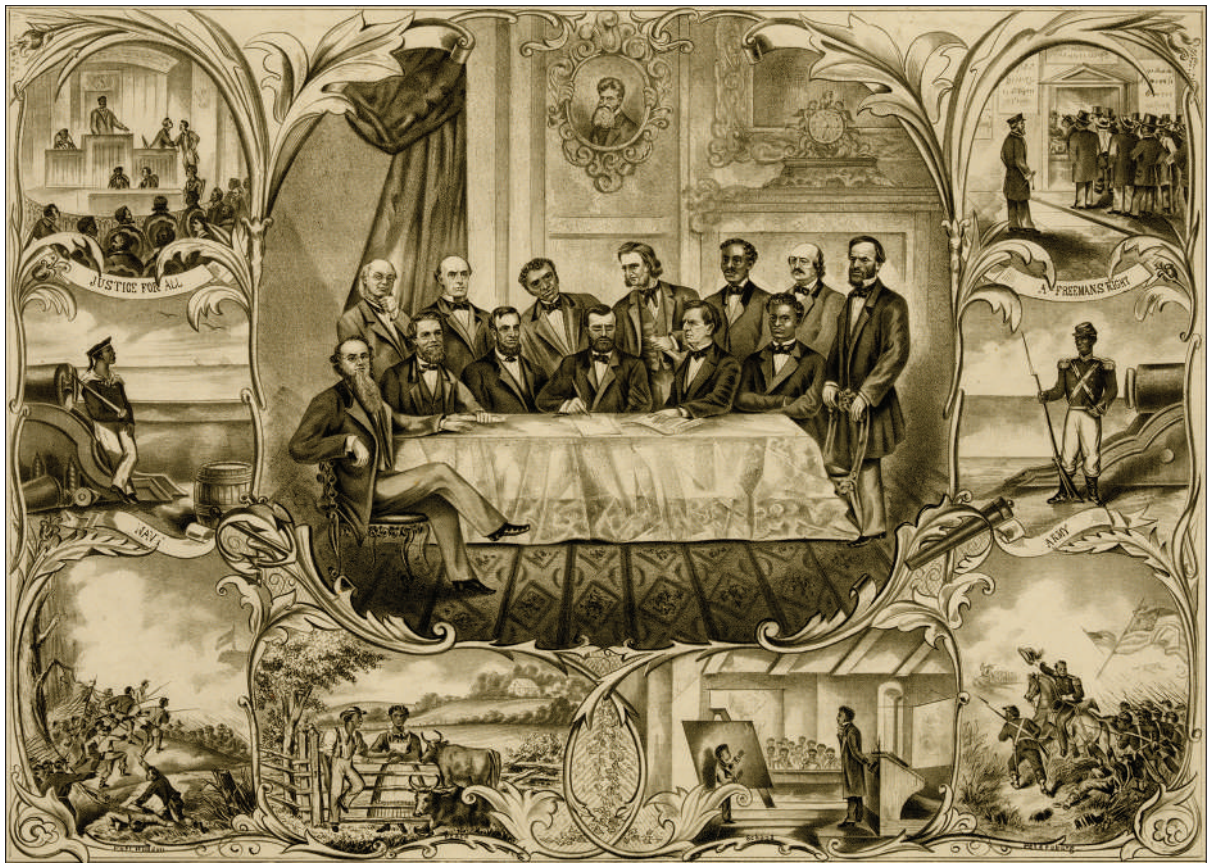
Southerners who wanted to stick with the old ways had an insulting name for these people, too. They called them scalawags. That was the name Southerners gave to small, worthless farm animals.

Not all reformers were part of these groups. When it came to governing the South, the insults didn't matter anyway. Serving together, the African American and white officials brought many improvements to their states. They rebuilt roads, railroads, and buildings that had been destroyed during the war. They helped the Southern economy recover little by little. They also built hospitals and orphanages.

Probably most importantly, they started the first major public school system in

the South. There had been a few public schools in the South before the Civil War, but not many. In several of the Southern states, there were no public schools at all before the war. Now, in South Carolina alone, twelve thousand children went to public schools.

These African American and white officeholders, acting together, did one more thing. They ratified another amendment. The Fifteenth Amendment guaranteed African American men the right to vote in 1870. But this victory did



This image shows President Grant signing the Fifteenth Amendment. The men clustered around him are identified below the image.



### **President Ulysses S. Grant.**

Ulysses S. Grant was the eighteenth president of the United States. President Grant served from 1869 to 1877 and was elected twice. Grant became president during the period of Reconstruction. Like President Lincoln, he wanted to bring the North and the South together. He agreed with pardoning Confederate military leaders, but he also sent troops to the South to quell discontent among former Confederates. He worked to improve relations with other countries, in particular the United Kingdom. President Grant died on July 23, 1885. Hundreds of thousands of people watched his funeral procession.

not last long. Local and state governments found ways around it in order to prevent African American men from voting. They, along with all women, would have to wait many years for their full voting rights to be granted.



## **Reunification**

The Reconstruction Act of 1867 divided the South into five military districts governed by the United States. Only Tennessee was exempt, because it had already satisfied all the requirements for readmission to the Union. One by one, the other former Confederate states were readmitted to the Union by fulfilling the requirements of the act. To do this, they had to do the following:

- register all male citizens over age twenty-one, “of whatever race, color, or

previous condition,” to elect delegates to a state constitutional convention (except for certain former Confederates)

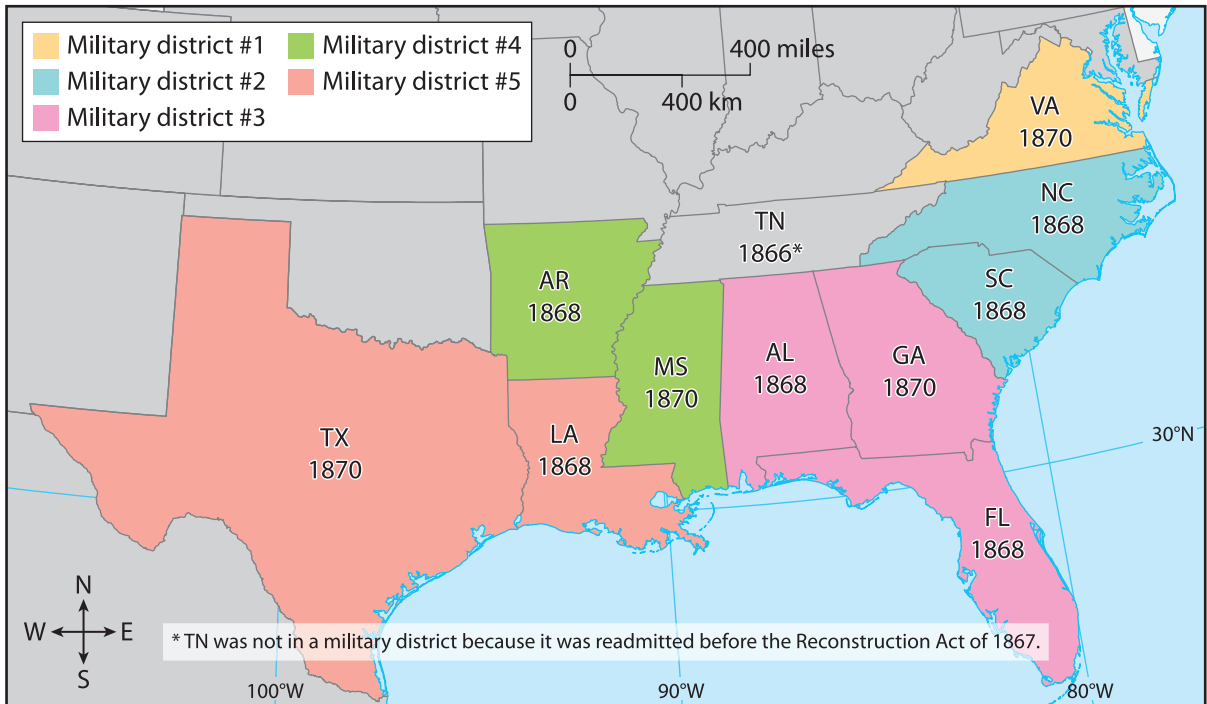
- hold a constitutional convention of elected delegates to draft a state constitution
- write and ratify a state constitution “in conformity with the Constitution of the United States in all respects”
- ratify the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution
- guarantee voting rights to all male citizens (except for certain former Confederates)

### **Find Out the Facts**



Find out what the Reconstruction Act of 1867 meant by “in conformity with the Constitution of the United States.”

## Readmission to the Union During Reconstruction



The Reconstruction Act of 1867 told Southern states what they had to do to be readmitted to the Union.

### Louisiana's New Constitution

Back in 1863, when Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, thirteen **parishes** in the state of Louisiana had been under Union control. The Emancipation Proclamation did not apply to Union-held territory, so slavery was still legal there. When the war ended,

#### Vocabulary

**parish**, n. a civil division in Louisiana, comparable to a county in other states

the state was divided in its loyalties. Some citizens welcomed the chance to rejoin the Union, while others were strongly opposed to any reconciliation. In response to Lincoln's Ten Percent Plan, Louisiana selected delegates to a constitutional convention. After much debate, the delegates wrote a constitution. It was the first state constitution passed after the end of the war.

The new constitution abolished slavery and did not pay former slaveholders for their perceived loss of property. However, other parameters were put in place largely to prolong the plantation economy.



Plantation owners often offered poor wages to formerly enslaved people so they would continue providing labor.

The 1864 Louisiana constitution nevertheless gave African Americans the rights to acquire and own property, make contracts, and testify in court. Although it did not give all African American men the right to vote, it did grant voting rights to those who fought for the Union, owned property, or were literate. As it was the first state constitution following Lincoln's offer, it was the leading test case for Reconstruction policy.

Louisiana's 1864 constitution was written before the Reconstruction Act of 1867, and it did not meet the new criteria set by the act. Another constitutional convention was held in 1868. By now, slavery had been abolished for years, and all African American men were allowed to vote

in Louisiana. The constitutional convention had ninety-eight delegates: forty-nine white and forty-nine African American.

Louisiana's new 1868 constitution granted civil rights to African Americans, established an integrated free public school system and property rights for married women, and included a bill of rights. The Black Codes of 1865 were removed, and voting rights were denied to many former Confederates.

At the time, Louisiana's constitution of 1868 was one of the most forward-looking constitutions in the country. However, it could not prevent racial discrimination in everyday life, and its provisions were rarely tested in court.

### Find Out the Facts



Find out how many constitutions Louisiana has had.

# PRIMARY SOURCE: RECONSTRUCTED CONSTITUTION OF THE STATE OF LOUISIANA





## PRIMARY SOURCE: EXCERPTS FROM THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY PLATFORM OF 1868

The Democratic party, in National Convention assembled, . . . recognizing the questions of slavery and secession as having been settled, for all time to come, by the war or the voluntary action of the Southern States in constitutional conventions assembled, and never to be renewed or reagitated, do, with the return of peace, demand:

1. Immediate restoration of all the States to their rights in the Union under the Constitution, and of civil government to the American people.
  2. Amnesty for all past political offences, and the regulation of the elective franchise in the States by their citizens. . . .
  6. Economy in the administration of the Government; the reduction of the standing Army and Navy; the abolition of the Freedman's Bureau and all political instrumentalities designed to secure [African American] supremacy. . . .
- . . . Instead of restoring the Union, [Congress] has, so far as in its power, dissolved it, and subjected ten States, in time of profound peace, to military despotism and [African American] supremacy. . . .

**Source:** *The National Platforms of the Republican and Democratic Parties from 1856 to 1880 Inclusive*. 1880, pp. 13–14.

# Chapter 3

## The End of Reconstruction and Its Immediate Aftermath

### The Framing Question

How did Reconstruction fail to provide equality for African Americans?



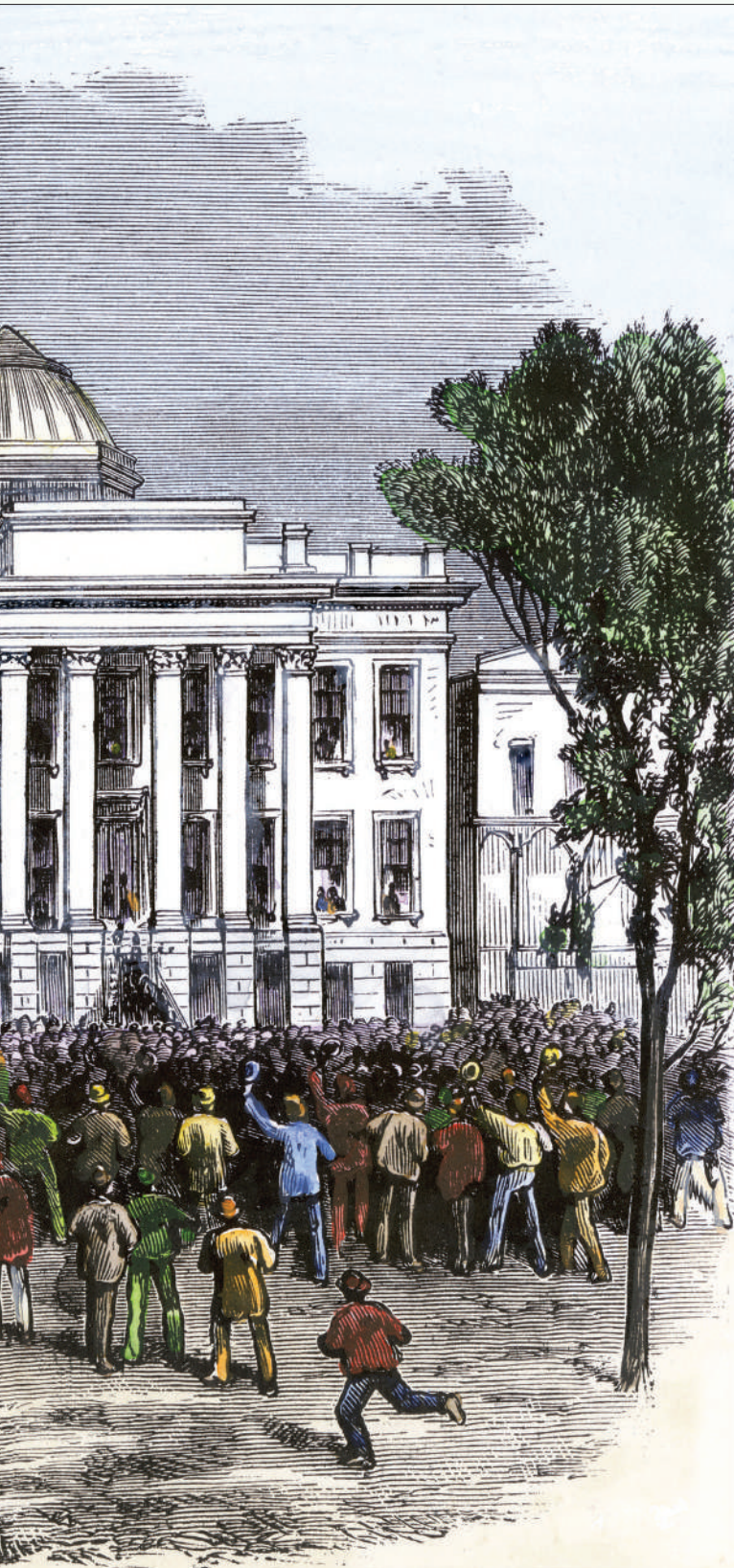
### Backlash and Reaction

*The goodwill embedded in the Congressional Reconstruction plan lasted for only a few years mainly because many white Southerners opposed the new state governments. They were outraged that people who were once enslaved were now voting, holding office, and making laws. They opposed paying taxes for public schools that would educate African American children, even though public schools also educated their own children.*



Many white Southerners opposed the new state governments that allowed formerly enslaved people to vote, hold office, and make laws.





Although the Fifteenth Amendment said that no state could deny a person's right to vote on account of their race, Southern states found ways to get around that. They passed laws that made it nearly impossible for African Americans to vote—and many poor white people also. One such law required everyone who wanted to vote to pay a **poll tax** of two dollars. For many poor African Americans, and for poor whites too, two dollars was nearly one week's wages!

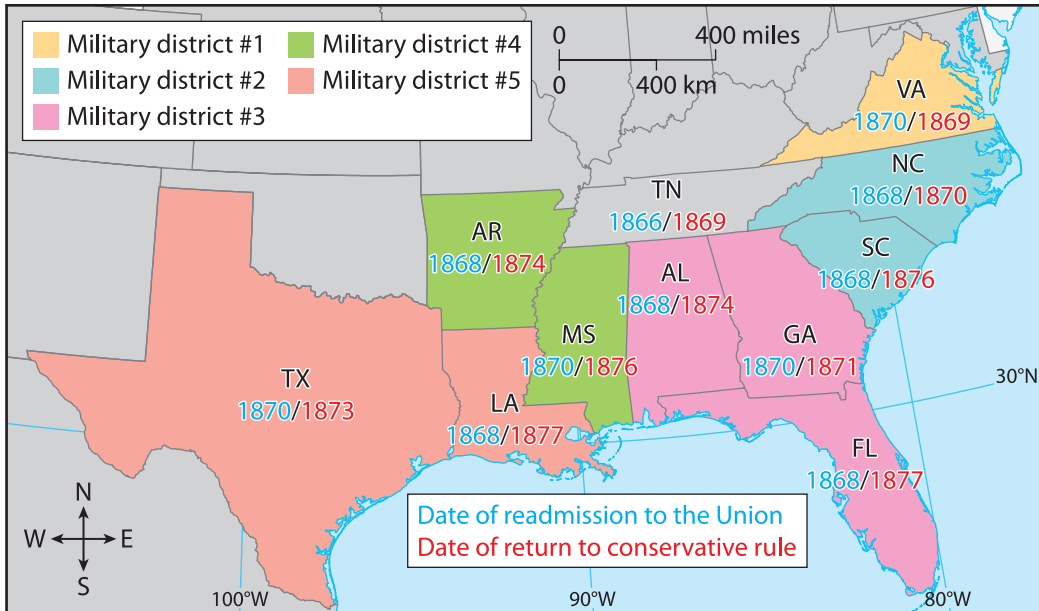
One law that stopped African American men from voting but still allowed poor white men to vote was the "grandfather clause." This stated that if a person, their father, or their grandfather could vote before the Civil War, then they could too. Most African Americans didn't meet this requirement.

Yet another law said that in order to vote, people had to pass a literacy test to prove they could read and understand the state's constitution. It was up to a local official to decide who passed the test and who didn't. Generally, that local official

### Vocabulary

**poll tax**, n. a fee that a person has to pay before they can vote

## Dates of Readmission to the Union and Return to Conservative Rule



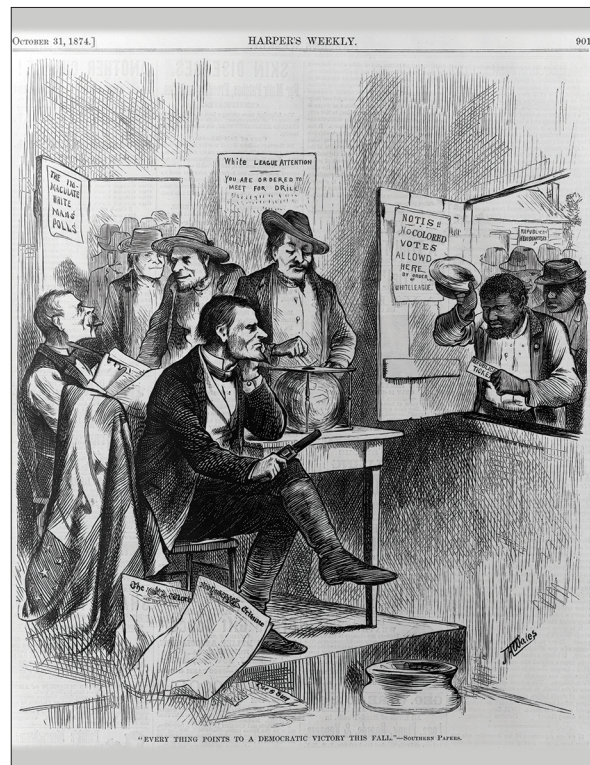
Soon after being readmitted to the Union, the Southern states returned to conservative rule.

was a white man who was determined to keep African Americans from voting. So no matter how well an African American potential voter could read, he often was not allowed to pass the literacy test. More leniency was given to white men

### Writers' Corner



Imagine that you are somewhere in the South in the 1870s, watching an election worker collect a poll tax or give a literacy test. Write an opinion column on why the poll tax made it nearly impossible for African Americans and poor white people to vote, or write an opinion column on how the literacy test is unfairly administered.



This cartoon from 1874 shows how African American men were often discriminated against at the polling booths and not allowed to vote.



with poor reading skills. And for any African American man still thinking about casting a vote, there remained the threat of violence.

## Violence and Intimidation

Southerners who were determined to win back control of their states formed secret societies such as the Ku Klux Klan. Wearing white sheets and hoods, members of the Ku Klux Klan rode through the countryside on horseback. They were violent and terrifying.



### Think Twice

Why do you think some people in the South aimed to prevent free African American men from voting?

In the late 1860s and early 1870s, the federal government sent troops to stop the Ku Klux Klan and other secret groups like it. The government was successful, and the Klan almost disappeared. Sadly, it would reappear more than forty years later.

Putting an end to the Klan during Reconstruction did not mean putting an end to white resistance to Congressional Reconstruction. Southerners formed other groups to keep African Americans

from voting. These groups were not secret societies but societies that operated right out in the open. They warned that African Americans who voted would lose their jobs. They would not be able to buy goods on credit in the farm stores. They also threatened violence. On election days, white men armed with rifles hung around the voting places. They sent a message to African American voters: go ahead and vote if you are ready to risk your life. Before long, there were few African American voters in the South and no African American officeholders.

The White League first appeared in Opelousas, Louisiana, in April 1874 and was followed by similar clubs in nearby parishes. The movement spread throughout the state quickly, reaching New Orleans by late June. It quickly shifted



African Americans in the South were threatened by groups like the Ku Klux Klan.

from a political club to a **paramilitary** group. The White League was responsible for widespread violence against Republicans, both white and African American, in Louisiana and Mississippi. After all, it was the Radical Republicans who had forced them to ratify the Fourteenth Amendment.

### Vocabulary

**paramilitary**, adj. relating to a group of civilians organized in a military fashion

After the Klan was broken up by federal troops, a number of loosely organized groups arose. Calling themselves “Red Shirts,” they claimed to be social clubs but were heavily armed and fiercely loyal to the Democratic Party.



### Turning Points

The violence and intimidation perpetrated by these paramilitary groups boiled into full-blown massacres in a number of places throughout the South. Two of the worst massacres took place in Louisiana, in the towns of Opelousas and Colfax.

The Opelousas riot grew from a seemingly minor incident involving a

newspaper editorial. In the spring of 1868, Republicans had won many local and state elections in St. Landry Parish. In the summer that followed, African Americans were intimidated and even killed for their perceived role in taking power away from Democrats. Local Democratic newspaper editors wrote of impending trouble if Republicans kept winning elections. There was a constant threat of violence against African Americans.

In early September, local Democrats and Republicans reached an agreement allowing members of either party to peacefully attend each other’s political meetings. On September 13, African American Republicans and armed white Democrats gathered to talk, and the event ended peacefully. However, on September 19, the white editor from the North of a Republican newspaper in Opelousas published an editorial denouncing the Democrats. He wrote, “The assembly of armed men from all parts of the parish did not indicate peaceful intentions, but a total blindness to the interests of the people.” The editorial went on to condemn the Democrats for violence and intimidation. Days later, on September 28, a white mob attacked the editor at a Methodist church, where he was teaching a class of African

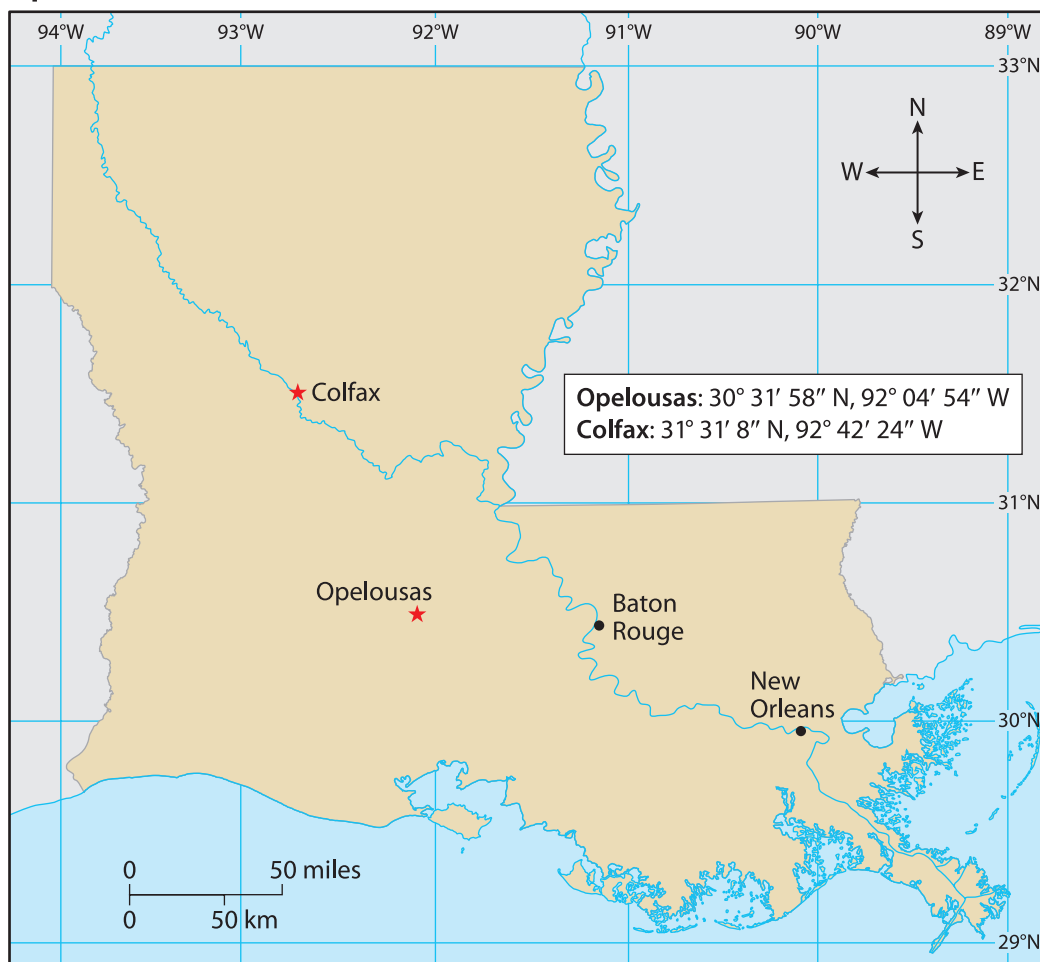


American children. He was beaten but escaped and fled to New Orleans. White mobs then destroyed the newspaper office and continued on a rampage that lasted for two weeks. African Americans who surrendered were either shot or arrested and then executed. The total number of dead remains unclear, but the Republicans estimated that between two hundred and three hundred

African Americans died; the Democrats claimed twenty-five to thirty. An army investigation put the number at 233.

The rioters achieved their purpose of suppressing the Republican presence in the parish. In the presidential election of 1868, just over a month later, not a single Republican vote was cast. The Republican Party in St. Landry Parish was disabled for the rest of Reconstruction.

### Opelousas and Colfax, Louisiana



The towns of Opelousas and Colfax in Louisiana were the sites of deadly massacres in 1868 and 1873, respectively.

Five years later and ninety miles (145 km) away, white Democrats in Colfax, Louisiana, staged their own takeover of the local government. On Easter Sunday in 1873, a mob of white men armed with rifles and a cannon surrounded the parish courthouse. The men claimed that Democrats controlled the state after a recent hotly contested election. They demanded that African American Republican officials leave town. When the African Americans refused, the white Democrats opened fire, set the courthouse ablaze, and massacred those who fled. The violence spread across town, and victims included people who had not been at the courthouse. As at Opelousas, the exact number of African American deaths is not certain, with estimates ranging from 60 to 150. And again, many of the bodies were never found.



### Think Twice

Why do you think the Opelousas and Colfax massacres were turning points in the course of Reconstruction?



## The End of Reconstruction

Those who wanted to get rid of the Reconstruction governments in the

South eventually succeeded in doing so. People in the North had their own concerns. They were growing weary of hearing about the trouble in the South and being asked to do something about it. Strong leaders such as Thaddeus Stevens were gone. After a few years, the U.S. government gave back the vote to most of those who had served in the Confederate Army. At the same time, white Southerners continued to use threats and violence to keep African Americans from voting.

In one Southern state after another, carpetbaggers, scalawags, other reformers, and African Americans were voted out of office. They were replaced by local white Democrats who wanted to return to the old ways.

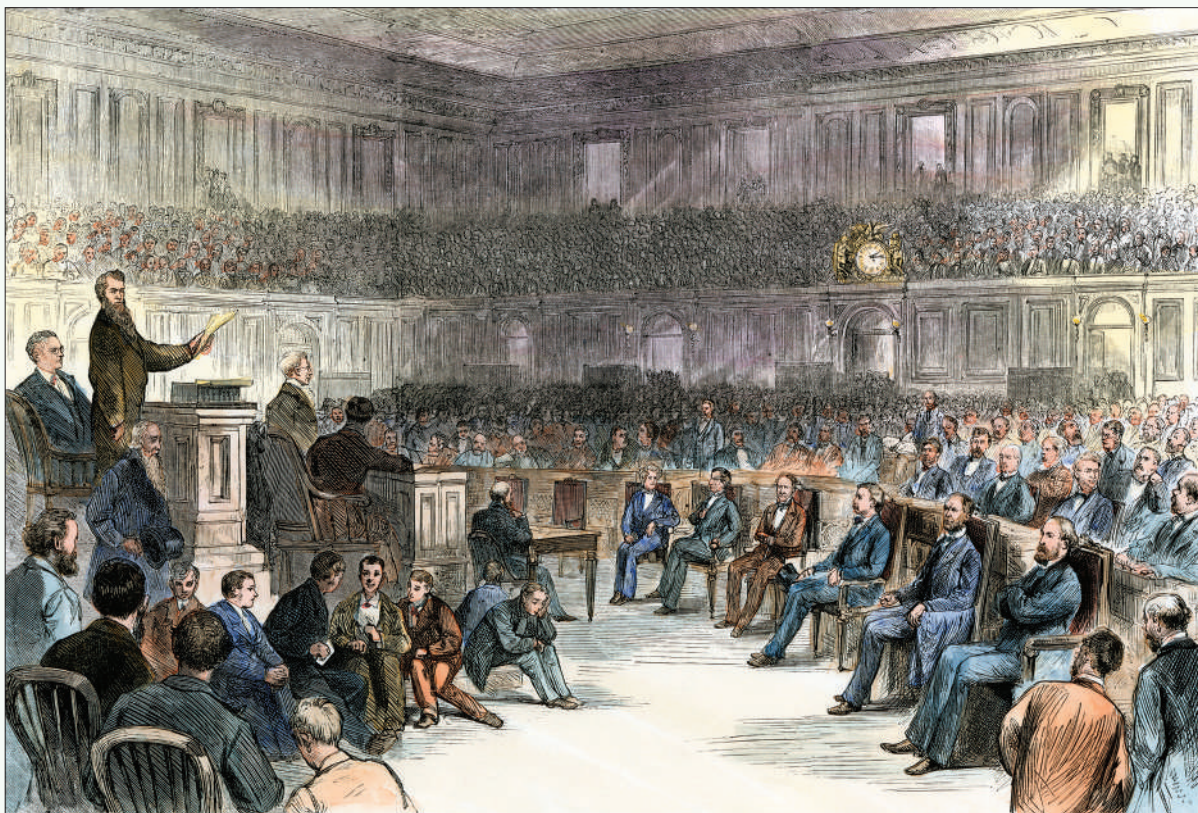
### Think Twice



Why do you think Southerners were so opposed to carpetbaggers and scalawags in the government?

These issues came to a head in the presidential election of 1876. The Democratic candidate, Governor Samuel Tilden of New York, won the most popular votes, but he did not have quite enough electoral votes to beat the Republican candidate, Governor Rutherford B. Hayes of Ohio. Nineteen electoral votes from





Counting of the electoral votes during the presidential election of 1876

Southern states were in dispute, forcing Congress to decide the election.

When a congressional commission awarded all the disputed electoral votes to Hayes, Tilden's supporters were furious and threatened to block Hayes's inauguration. After further meetings, the two sides made a deal, known as the Compromise of 1877. The Democrats would accept Hayes as president. In exchange, the Republicans would remove all federal troops from the Southern states and would not interfere with local politics. The Compromise of 1877 marked the end of Reconstruction.

Even after Reconstruction ended, episodes of racist violence continued. In November 1897, the Red Shirts staged a **coup d'état** in Wilmington, the second-largest city in North Carolina. A mob of armed white men destroyed the office of the local African American newspaper, then attacked African Americans throughout the city. They forced local elected officials

### Vocabulary

**coup d'état**, n. a sudden and illegal takeover of government by force

to resign and replaced them with their own leaders, ending the Republican Party in the area.

Over the next several years after the Compromise of 1877, African Americans in the South lost nearly every right they had won during Reconstruction. And as the white-controlled South continued to rebuild its roads, bridges, and towns, it did so using a cheap labor force often made up of incarcerated African American men. The struggle for racial equality was clearly not over.

With Reconstruction ended, Southern states passed segregation laws. These laws, put in place from the late 1870s onward, required the separation of white and African American people from each other. African Americans could no

longer use the same restaurants, hotels, streetcars, theaters, and other public places that white people used. Or if they could, they had to sit in separate sections. These laws were known as Jim Crow laws. Segregation was informally practiced in much of the North, too, even though few Northern states had Jim Crow laws.

African Americans would have to wait many more years before they could really exercise the equal rights that the Declaration of Independence and the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments promised them.

### Think Twice



Do you think Reconstruction was more of a success or a failure overall? Why?



## PRIMARY SOURCE: EXCERPT FROM *UNITED STATES v. CRUIKSHANK* (1876)

*Following the Colfax massacre in 1873, William J. Cruikshank and sixteen other members of the white mob were tried for violating the 1870 Enforcement Act, under which it was a felony to deprive anyone of their civil rights. However, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the Fourteenth Amendment's due process and equal protection clauses applied only to state actions, not to actions of individuals. This created a precedent that in effect gave white Southerners permission to continue their violent suppression of African Americans.*

The fourteenth amendment prohibits a State from denying to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws; but this provision does not . . . add any thing to the rights which one citizen has under the Constitution against another.

The equality of the rights of citizens is a principle of republicanism. Every republican government is in duty bound to protect all its citizens in the enjoyment of this principle, if within its power. That duty was originally assumed by the States; and it still remains there. The only obligation resting upon the United States is to see that the States do not deny the right. This the amendment guarantees, but no more. The power of the national government is limited to the enforcement of this guaranty.

No question arises under the Civil Rights Act of April 9, 1866 (14 Stat. 27), which is intended for the protection of citizens of the United States in the enjoyment of certain rights, without discrimination on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude, because, as has already been stated, it is nowhere alleged in these counts that the wrong contemplated against the rights of these citizens was on account of their race or color. . . .

Inasmuch, therefore, as it does not appear in these counts that the intent of the defendants was to prevent these parties from exercising their right to vote on account of their race, &c., it does not appear that it was their intent to interfere with any right granted or secured by the constitution or laws of the United States. We may suspect that race was the cause of the hostility; but it is not so averred.

**Source:** *United States v. Cruikshank et al.*, 92 U.S. 542, 554–556 (1876).

## PRIMARY SOURCE: EXCERPT FROM FREDERICK DOUGLASS'S DECORATION DAY SPEECH (1878)

I am not here to revive old issues, or to stir up strife between races; but no candid man, looking at the political situation of the hour, can fail to see that we are still afflicted by the painful sequences both of slavery and of the late rebellion. In the spirit of the noble man whose image now looks down upon us, we should have "charity toward all, and malice toward none." In the language of our greatest soldier, twice honored with the Presidency of the nation, "Let us have peace." Yes, let us have peace, but let us have liberty, law and justice first. Let us have the Constitution, with it[s] thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth amendments, fairly interpreted, faithfully executed, and cheerfully obeyed in the fullness of their spirit and the completeness of their letter. Men can do many things in this world, some easily and some with difficulty; but there are some things men cannot do or be. When they are here they cannot be there. When the supreme law of the land is systematically set at naught; when humanity is insulted and the rights of the weak are trampled in the dust by a lawless power; when society is divided into two classes, as oppressed and oppressor, there is no power, and there can be no power, while the instincts of manhood remain as they are, which can provide solid peace.

**Source:** Douglass, Frederick. Speech delivered in Madison Square, New York, NY, Decoration Day, 1878. Frederick Douglass Papers: Speech, Article, and Book File, 1846–1894; Speeches and Articles by Douglass, 1846–1894. Manuscript Division, Library of Congress.



## Glossary

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### A

**amendment, n.** an official change or addition (10)

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### B

**Black Code, n.** any of the laws enacted in 1865 and 1866 in former Confederate states that preserved white supremacy (10)

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### C

**civil right, n.** any of the liberties and freedoms citizens are supposed to have according to the Constitution and its amendments (12)

**coup d'état, n.** a sudden and illegal takeover of government by force (45)

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### I

**impeach, v.** to charge a government official with doing something wrong or improper (15)

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### L

**legislature, n.** the part of the government responsible for making laws (8)

**lieutenant governor, n.** an official in state government who ranks second to the governor (26)

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### M

**malice, n.** a desire to hurt another person (8)

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### P

**paramilitary, adj.** relating to a group of civilians organized in a military fashion (42)

**parish, n.** a civil division in Louisiana, comparable to a county in other states (34)

**poll tax, n.** a fee that a person has to pay before they can vote (39)

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### R

**radical, adj.** favoring large or widespread changes (12)

**ratify, v.** to approve (13)

**reconcile, v.** to return to a friendly relationship after a conflict (4)

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### S

**secret agent, n.** a spy; a person who collects and reports secret information about other governments or countries (6)

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### U

**underdog, n.** a person or group that is not likely to win (13)

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### V

**veto, v.** to reject or refuse to approve a law (12)

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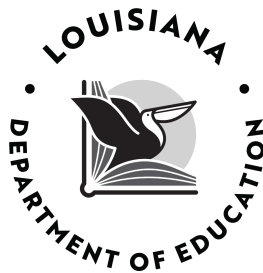


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