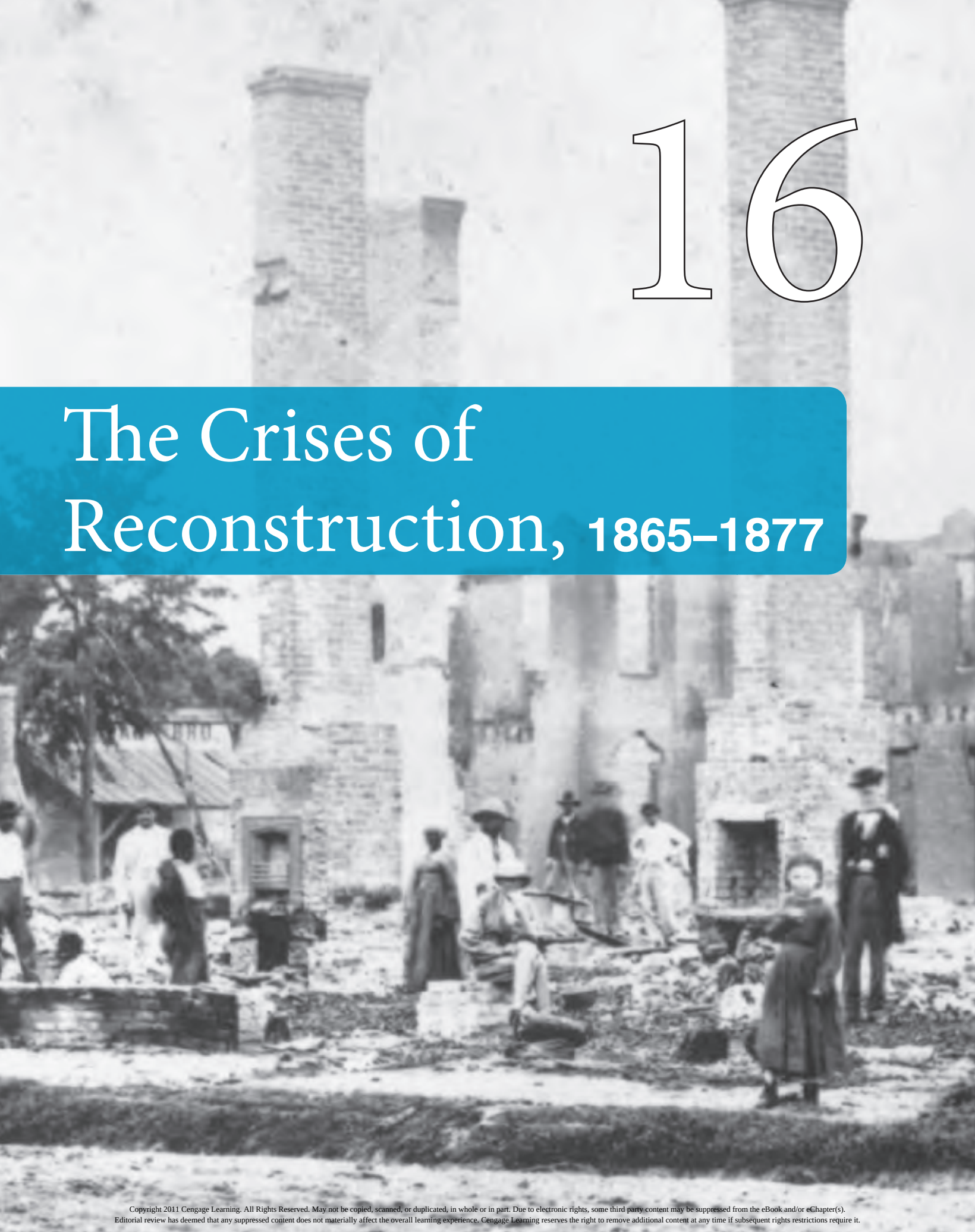
16

The Crises of Reconstruction, 1865–1877



KATIE ROWE IN 1937 *(Library of Congress)*

"I NEVER FORGET de day we was set free," former slave Katie Rowe recalled. "Dat morning we all go to de cotton field early. After a while de old horn blow up at de overseer's house, and we all stop and listen, 'cause it de wrong time of day for de horn." Later that day, after several more blasts of the horn, a stranger "with a big broad hat lak de Yankees wore" addressed the slaves. "'Today you is free, just lak I is,' de man say," Katie Rowe declared. "'You is your own bosses now.'" The date was June 4, 1865.

Born at midcentury, Katie Rowe grew up on a cotton plantation with two hundred slaves near Washington, Arkansas. The slaves had "hard traveling" on her plantation, she told an interviewer in 1937. The owner, Dr. Isaac Jones, lived in town, and an overseer ran the place harshly. Dr. Jones was harsh, too. When Union and Confederate forces clashed nearby in 1862 at Pea Ridge, Arkansas, Dr. Jones announced that the enemy would never liberate his slaves because he would shoot them first ("line you up on de bank of Bois d' Arc Creek and free you wid my shotgun"). Soon after, an explosion of the boiler of his steam-powered cotton gin incinerated Dr. Jones. "Later in de war Yankees come in all around and camp, and de overseer git sweet as honey in de comb," Katie Rowe observed. "But we know dey soon be gone."

Emancipation in June 1865 brought an era of transition for the former slaves. "None of us know whar to go," Katie Rowe remembered, "so we all stay and he [the overseer] split up de fields and show us which part we got to work in, and we go on lak we was . . . but dey ain't no horn after dat day." Still, the labor system proved unsatisfactory. The overseer charged the former slaves "half de crop for de quarter and all de mules and tools and grub," Katie Rowe noted. His replacement offered better arrangements: "[W]e all got something left over after dat first go-out." But new changes occurred. The next year the former owner's heirs sold the plantation, "and we scatter off." With her mother, teenage Katie Rowe left for Little Rock to "do work in de town."

Katie eventually married Billy Rowe, a Cherokee, and moved with him to Oklahoma. Interviewed decades later in Tulsa, Oklahoma, where she lived with her youngest daughter, Katie Rowe recalled the days of "hard traveling" and the joyful moment when slavery ended. "It was the fourth day of June in 1865 that I begins to live," Katie Rowe declared. "I know we living in a better world. . . . I sho' thank de good Lawd I got to see it."

THE DEVASTATED SOUTH After the Civil War, parts of the devastated Confederacy resembled a wasteland. Homes, crops, and railroads had been destroyed; farming and business had come to a standstill; and uprooted southerners wandered about. Here, ruins of homes in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. *(Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collection, C-31LSU Libraries, Louisiana State University)*

For the nation, as for Katie Rowe, the end of the Civil War was an instant of uncharted possibilities and a time of unresolved conflicts. While former slaves exulted over freedom, the postwar mood of ex-Confederates was often as grim as the wasted southern landscape. Unable to face "southern Yankeedom," some planters considered emigrating to the American West or to Europe, Mexico, or Brazil, and a few thousand did. The morale of the vanquished rarely concerns the victors, but the Civil War was a special case, for the Union had sought not merely military triumph but the return of national unity. The federal government in 1865 therefore faced unprecedented questions.

First, how could the Union be restored and the defeated South reintegrated into the nation? Would the Confederate states be treated as conquered territories, or would they quickly rejoin the Union with the same rights as other states? Who would set the standards for readmission—Congress or the president? Most important, what would happen to the more than 3.5 million former slaves? The future of the freedmen constituted the crucial issue of the postwar era, for emancipation had set in motion a profound upheaval. Before the war, slavery had determined the South's social, economic, and political structure. What would replace it? The end of the Civil War, in short, posed two problems that had to be solved simultaneously: how to readmit the South to the Union and how to define the status of free blacks in American society.

Between 1865 and 1877, the nation met these challenges, but not without discord and turmoil. Conflict prevailed in the halls of Congress as legislators debated plans to readmit the South to the Union; in the former Confederacy, where defeated southerners and newly freed former slaves faced an era of turbulence; and in the postwar North, where economic and political clashes arose. Indeed, the crises of Reconstruction—the restoration of the former Confederate states to the Union—reshaped the legacy of the Civil War.

FOCUS Questions

- How did Radical Republicans gain control of Reconstruction politics?
- What impact did federal Reconstruction policy have on the former Confederacy and on ex-Confederates?
- How did the newly freed slaves reshape their lives after emancipation?
- What political and economic problems arose in the North during the era of Reconstruction?
- What factors contributed to the end of Reconstruction in 1877?

Reconstruction Politics, 1865–1868

At the end of the Civil War, President Johnson might have exiled, imprisoned, or executed Confederate leaders and imposed martial law indefinitely. Demobilized Confederate soldiers might have continued armed resistance to federal occupation forces. Freed slaves might have taken revenge on former owners and other white southerners. But none of this occurred. Instead, intense *political* conflict dominated the immediate postwar years. National politics produced new constitutional amendments, a presidential impeachment, and some of the most ambitious domestic legislation ever enacted by Congress, the Reconstruction Acts of 1867–1868. The major outcome of Reconstruction politics was the enfranchisement of black men, a development that few—black or white—had expected when Lee surrendered.

In 1865, only a small group of politicians supported black suffrage. All were Radical Republicans, a minority faction that had emerged during the war. Led by Senator **Charles Sumner** of Massachusetts and Congressman **Thaddeus Stevens** of Pennsylvania, the Radicals had clamored for the abolition of slavery and a demanding reconstruction policy. But the Radicals, outnumbered in Congress by other Republicans and opposed by the Democratic minority, faced long odds. Still, they managed to win broad Republican support for parts of their Reconstruction program, including black male enfranchisement. Just as civil war had led to emancipation, a goal once supported by only a minority of Americans, so Reconstruction policy became bound to black suffrage, a momentous change that originally had only narrow political backing.

Lincoln's Plan

Conflict over Reconstruction began even before the war ended. In December 1863, President Lincoln issued the Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction, which enabled southern states to rejoin the Union if at least 10 percent of those who had cast ballots in the election of 1860 would take an oath of allegiance to the Union and accept

emancipation. This minority could then create a loyal state government. Lincoln's plan excluded some southerners from oath-taking, such as Confederate officials and military officers. Such persons would have to apply for presidential pardons. Also excluded were blacks, who had not been voters in 1860. Lincoln hoped to undermine the Confederacy by establishing pro-Union governments within it and to build a southern Republican party.

Radical Republicans in Congress, however, envisioned a slower readmission process that would bar even more ex-Confederates from political life. The Wade-Davis bill, passed by Congress in July 1864, provided that a military governor would rule each former Confederate state; after at least half the eligible voters took an oath of allegiance to the Union, delegates could be elected to a state convention that would repeal secession and abolish slavery. To qualify as a voter or delegate, a southerner would have to take a second, "ironclad" oath, swearing that he had never voluntarily supported the Confederacy. Like the 10 percent plan, the congressional plan did not provide for black suffrage, a measure then supported by only some Radicals. Unlike Lincoln's plan, however, the Wade-Davis scheme would have delayed the readmission process almost indefinitely.

Claiming he did not want to bind himself to any single restoration policy, Lincoln pocket-vetoed the Wade-Davis bill (failed to sign the bill within ten days of the adjournment of Congress). The bill's sponsors, Senator Benjamin Wade of Ohio and Congressman Henry Winter Davis of Maryland, blasted Lincoln's act. By the war's end, the president and Congress had reached an impasse. Arkansas, Louisiana, Tennessee, and parts of Virginia under Union army control moved toward readmission under variants of Lincoln's plan. But Congress refused to seat their delegates, as it had a right to do. What Lincoln's ultimate policy would have been remains unknown. But after his assassination, on April 14, 1865, Radical Republicans turned with hope toward his successor, **Andrew Johnson** of Tennessee.

"Treason is a crime and must be made odious."

Presidential Reconstruction Under Johnson

The only southern senator to remain in Congress when his state seceded, Andrew Johnson had served as military governor of Tennessee from 1862 to 1864. Defying the Confederate stand, he had declared that "treason is a crime and must be made odious." Above all, Johnson had long sought the destruction of the planter aristocracy. A self-educated man of humble North Carolina origins, Johnson had moved

RADICAL REPUBLICAN LEADERS Charles Sumner, left, senator from Massachusetts, and Thaddeus Stevens, congressman from Pennsylvania, led the Radical Republican faction in Congress. *(Library of Congress)*

"What can be hatched from such an egg but another rebellion?"

to Greenville, Tennessee, in 1826. He had entered politics in the 1830s as a spokesman for non-slave-owning whites and rose rapidly from local official to congressman to governor to senator. Once the owner of eight slaves, Johnson reversed his position on slavery during the war. When emancipation became Union policy, he supported it. But Johnson neither adopted abolitionist ideals nor challenged racist sentiments. He hoped mainly that the fall of slavery would injure southern aristocrats. Johnson, in short, had his own political agenda, which, as Republicans would soon learn, did not duplicate theirs. Moreover, he was a lifelong Democrat who had been added to the Republican, or National Union, ticket in 1864 to broaden its appeal and who had become president by accident.

In May 1865, with Congress out of session, Johnson shocked Republicans by announcing in two proclamations his own program to bring back into the Union the seven southern states still without reconstruction governments—Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Texas. Almost all southerners who took an oath of allegiance would receive a pardon and amnesty; all their property except slaves would be restored. Oath takers could elect delegates to state conventions, which would provide for regular elections. Each state convention, Johnson later added, would have to proclaim the illegality of secession, repudiate state debts incurred when the state belonged to the Confederacy, and ratify the Thirteenth Amendment, which abolished slavery. (Proposed by an enthusiastic wartime Congress early in 1865, the amendment would be ratified in December of that year.) As under Lincoln's plan, Confederate civil and military officers would still be disqualified, as would well-off ex-Confederates—those with taxable property worth $20,000 or more. This purge of the plantation aristocracy, Johnson said, would benefit "humble men, the peasantry and yeomen of the South, who have been decoyed … into rebellion." Poorer whites would now be in control.

Presidential Reconstruction took effect in the summer of 1865, but with unforeseen consequences. Disqualified Southerners applied in droves for pardons, which Johnson handed out liberally—some thirteen thousand of them. Johnson also dropped plans to punish treason. By the end of 1865, all seven states had created new civil governments that in effect restored the status quo from before the war. Confederate army officers and large planters assumed state offices. Former Confederate generals and officials—including Alexander Stephens of Georgia, the former Confederate vice president—won election to Congress. Some states refused to ratify the Thirteenth Amendment or to repudiate their Confederate debts.

Most infuriating to Radical Republicans, all seven states took steps to ensure a landless, dependent black labor force: they passed **"black codes"** to replace the slave codes, state laws that had regulated slavery. Because Johnson's plan assured the ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment, all states guaranteed the freedmen some basic rights—to marry, own property, make contracts, and testify in court against other blacks—but the codes harshly restricted freedmen's behavior. Some established racial segregation in public places; most prohibited racial intermarriage, jury service by blacks, and court testimony by blacks against whites. All codes included provisions that effectively barred former slaves from leaving the plantations. South Carolina required special licenses for blacks who wished to enter nonagricultural employment. Mississippi prohibited blacks from buying and selling farmland. Most states required annual contracts between landowners and black agricultural workers; blacks without contracts risked arrest as vagrants and involuntary servitude.

The black codes left freedmen no longer slaves but not really liberated either. In practice, many clauses in the codes never took effect: the Union army and the Freedmen's Bureau (a federal agency that assisted former slaves) suspended the enforcement of racially discriminatory provisions of the new laws. But the black codes revealed white southern intentions. They showed what "home rule" would have been like without federal interference.

Many northerners denounced what they saw as southern defiance. "What can be hatched from such an egg but another rebellion?" asked a Boston newspaper. Republicans in Congress agreed. When Congress convened in December 1865, it refused to seat delegates of ex-Confederate states. Establishing the Joint (House-Senate) Committee on Reconstruction, Republicans prepared to dismantle the black codes and lock ex-Confederates out of power.

Congress Versus Johnson

Southern blacks' status now became the major issue in Congress. Radical Republicans like Congressman Thaddeus Stevens—who hoped to impose black suffrage on the former Confederacy and delay southern readmission—were still a minority in Congress. Conservative Republicans, who favored Johnson's plan, formed a minority too, as did the Democrats,

who also supported the president. Moderate Republicans, the largest congressional bloc, agreed with Radicals that Johnson's plan was too feeble, but they wanted to avoid a dispute with the president. None of the four congressional blocs could claim the two-thirds majority needed to overturn a presidential veto. But ineptly, Johnson alienated a majority of moderates and pushed them into the Radicals' arms.

Two proposals to invalidate the black codes, drafted by a moderate Republican, Senator Lyman Trumbull of Illinois, won wide Republican support. Congress first voted to continue the Freedmen's Bureau, started in March 1865, whose term was ending. This federal agency, headed by former Union general O.O. Howard and staffed mainly by army officers, provided relief, rations, and medical care; built schools for freed blacks; put them to work on abandoned or confiscated lands; and tried to protect their rights as laborers. Congress extended the bureau's life for three years and gave it new power to run special military courts, to settle labor disputes, and to invalidate labor contracts forced on freedmen by the black codes. In February 1866, Johnson vetoed the Freedmen's Bureau bill. The Constitution, he declared, did not sanction military trials of civilians in peacetime, nor did it support a system to care for "indigent persons."

In March 1866, Congress passed a second measure proposed by Trumbull, a bill that made blacks U.S. citizens with the same civil rights as other citizens and authorized federal intervention in the states to ensure black rights in court. Johnson vetoed the civil rights bill also. He argued that it would "operate in favor of the colored and against the white race." In April, Congress overrode his veto; the **Civil Rights Act of 1866** was the first major law ever passed over a presidential veto. In July, Congress enacted the Supplementary Freedmen's Bureau Act over Johnson's veto as well. Johnson's vetoes puzzled many Republicans because the new laws did not undercut presidential Reconstruction. The president insisted, however, that both bills were illegitimate because southerners had been shut out of the Congress that passed them. His stance won support in the South and from northern Democrats. But the president had alienated moderate Republicans, who now joined Radicals to oppose him. Johnson had lost "every friend he has," one moderate declared.

Some historians view Andrew Johnson as a political incompetent who, at this crucial juncture, bungled both his readmission scheme and his political future. Others contend he was merely trying to forge a centrist coalition. In either case, Johnson underestimated the possibility of Republican unity. Once united, the Republicans took their next step: the passage of a constitutional amendment to prevent the Supreme Court from invalidating the new Civil Rights Act and block Democrats in Congress from repealing it.

The Fourteenth Amendment, 1866

In April 1866, Congress adopted the **Fourteenth Amendment,** which had been proposed by the Joint Committee on Reconstruction. To protect blacks' rights, the amendment declared in its first clause that all persons born or naturalized in the United States were citizens of the nation and of their states and that no state could abridge their rights without due process of law or deny them equal protection of the law. This section nullified the *Dred Scott* decision of 1857, which had declared that blacks were not citizens. Second, the amendment guaranteed that if a state denied suffrage to any of its male citizens, its representation in Congress would be proportionally reduced. This clause did not guarantee black suffrage, but it threatened to deprive southern states of some legislators if black men were denied the vote. This was the first time that the word *male* was written into the Constitution; to the women's rights advocates, woman suffrage seemed a yet more distant prospect. Third, the amendment disqualified from state and national office *all* prewar officeholders—civil and military, state and federal—who had supported the Confederacy, unless Congress removed their disqualifications by a two-thirds vote. In so providing, Congress intended to invalidate Johnson's wholesale distribution of amnesties and pardons. Finally, the amendment repudiated the Confederate debt and maintained the validity of the federal debt.

Johnson had lost "every friend he has," one moderate declared.

The most ambitious step Congress had yet taken, the Fourteenth Amendment revealed growing Republican receptivity to Radical demands, including black male enfranchisement. The amendment's passage created a firestorm. Abolitionists decried the second clause as a "swindle" because it did not explicitly ensure black suffrage. Southerners and northern Democrats condemned the third clause as vengeful. Southern legislatures, except for Tennessee's, refused to ratify the amendment, and President Johnson denounced it. His defiance solidified the new alliance between moderate and Radical Republicans, and turned the congressional elections of 1866 into a referendum on the Fourteenth Amendment.

Over the summer, Johnson set off on a whistlestop train tour from Washington to St. Louis and

Chicago and back. But this innovative campaign tactic—the "swing around the circle," as Johnson called it—failed. Humorless and defensive, the president made fresh enemies and doomed his hope of sinking the Fourteenth Amendment, which Moderate and Radical Republicans defended.

Republicans carried the congressional elections of 1866 in a landslide, winning almost two-thirds of the House and four-fifths of the Senate. They had secured a mandate for the Fourteenth Amendment and their own Reconstruction program, even if the president vetoed every part of it.

KING ANDREW This Thomas Nast cartoon, published in *Harper's Weekly* just before the 1866 congressional elections, conveyed Republican antipathy to Andrew Johnson. The president is depicted as an autocratic tyrant. Radical Republican Thaddeus Stevens, upper right, has his head on the block and is about to lose it. The Republic sits in chains. *(Harper's Weekly, 1866)*

Congressional Reconstruction, 1866–1867

Congressional debate over reconstructing the South began in December 1866 and lasted three months. Radical Republican leaders called for black suffrage, federal support for public schools, confiscation of Confederate estates, and an extended period of military occupation in the South. Moderate Republicans accepted parts of the plan. In February 1867, after complex legislative maneuvers, Congress passed the **Reconstruction Act of 1867.** Johnson vetoed the law, and on March 2, Congress passed it over his veto. Later that year and in 1868, Congress passed three further Reconstruction acts, all enacted over presidential vetoes, to refine and enforce the first (see Table 16.1).

The Reconstruction Act of 1867 invalidated the state governments formed under the Lincoln and Johnson plans. Only Tennessee, which had ratified the Fourteenth Amendment and had been readmitted to the Union, escaped further reconstruction. The new law divided the other ten former Confederate states into five temporary military districts, each run by a Union general (see Map 16.1). Voters—all black men, plus those white men who had not been disqualified by the Fourteenth Amendment—could elect delegates to a state convention that would write a new state constitution granting black suffrage. When eligible voters ratified the new constitution, elections could be held for state officers. Once Congress approved the state constitution, once the state legislature ratified the Fourteenth Amendment, and once the amendment became part of the federal Constitution, Congress would readmit the state into the Union.

The Reconstruction Act of 1867 was far more radical than the Johnson program because it enfranchised blacks and disfranchised many ex-Confederates. It fulfilled a central goal of the Radical Republicans: to delay the readmission of former Confederate states until Republican governments could be established and thereby prevent an immediate rebel resurgence. But the new law was not as harsh toward ex-Confederates as it might have been. It provided for only temporary military rule; it did not prosecute Confederate leaders for treason, permanently bar them from politics, or provide for confiscation or redistribution of property.

During the congressional debates, Radical Republican congressman Thaddeus Stevens had argued for the confiscation of large Confederate estates to "humble the proud traitors" and to provide for former slaves. He had proposed subdividing such confiscated property into forty-acre tracts to be distributed among the freedmen and selling

TABLE 16.1 MAJOR RECONSTRUCTION LEGISLATION

Law and Date of Congressional Passage	Provisions	Purpose
Civil Rights Act of 1866 (April 1866)*	Declared blacks citizens and guaranteed them equal protection of the laws.	To invalidate the black codes.
Supplementary Freedmen's Bureau Act (July 1866)*	Extended the life of the Freedmen's Aid Bureau and expanded its powers.	To invalidate the black codes.
Reconstruction Act of 1867 (March 1867)*	Invalidated state governments formed under Lincoln and Johnson. Divided the former Confederacy into five military districts. Set forth requirements for readmission of ex-Confederate states to the Union.	To replace presidential Reconstruction with a more stringent plan.
Supplementary Reconstruction Acts		To enforce the First Reconstruction Act.
Second Reconstruction Act (March 1867)*	Required military commanders to initiate voter enrollment.	
Third Reconstruction Act (July 1867)*	Expanded military commanders' powers.	
Fourth Reconstruction Act (March 1868)*	Provided that a majority of voters, however few, could put a new state constitution into force.	
Army Appropriations Act (March 1867)*	Declared in a rider that only the general of the army could issue military orders.	To prevent President Johnson from obstructing Reconstruction.
Tenure of Office Act (March 1867)*	Prohibited the president from removing any federal official without the Senate's consent.	To prevent President Johnson from obstructing Reconstruction.
Omnibus Act (June 1868)†	Readmitted seven ex-Confederate states to the Union.	To restore the Union, under the term of the First Reconstruction Act.
Enforcement Act of 1870 (May 1870)‡	Provided for the protection of black voters.	To enforce the Fifteenth Amendment.
Second Enforcement Act (February 1871)	Provided for federal supervision of southern elections.	To enforce the Fifteenth Amendment.
Third Enforcement Act (Ku Klux Klan Act) (April 1871)	Strengthened sanctions against those who impeded black suffrage.	To combat the Ku Klux Klan and enforce the Fourteenth Amendment.
Amnesty Act (May 1872)	Restored the franchise to almost all ex-Confederates.	Effort by Grant Republicans to deprive Liberal Republicans of campaign issue.
Civil Rights Act of 1875 (March 1875)§	Outlawed racial segregation in transportation and public accommodations and prevented exclusion of blacks from jury service.	To honor the late senator Charles Sumner.

* Passed over Johnson's veto.

† Georgia was soon returned to military rule. The last four states were readmitted in 1870.

‡ Sections of the law declared unconstitutional in 1876.

§ Invalidated by the Supreme Court in 1883.

MAP 16.1 THE RECONSTRUCTION OF THE SOUTH The Reconstruction Act of 1867 divided the former Confederate states, except Tennessee, into five military districts and set forth the steps by which new state governments could be created.

the rest, some 90 percent of it, to pay off war debts. Stevens's land-reform bill won Radical support but never made progress; most Republicans held property rights sacred. Tampering with such rights in the South, they feared, would jeopardize those rights in the North. Moreover, Stevens's proposal would alienate southern ex-Whigs, antagonize other white southerners, and thereby endanger the rest of Reconstruction. Thus land reform never came about. The "radical" Reconstruction acts were a compromise.

Congressional Reconstruction took effect in the spring of 1867, but Johnson, as Commander in Chief, impeded its enforcement by replacing pro-Radical military officers with conservative ones. Republicans seethed. More suspicious than ever, congressional moderates and Radicals again joined forces to block Johnson from further obstructing Reconstruction.

The Impeachment Crisis, 1867–1868

In March 1867, Republicans in Congress passed two laws to curb presidential power. The **Tenure of Office Act** prohibited the president from removing civil officers without Senate consent. Cabinet members, the law stated, were to hold office "during the term of the president by whom they may have been appointed" and could be fired only with the Senate's approval. The goal was to bar Johnson from dismissing Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton, a Radical ally. The other law, a rider to an army appropriations bill, barred the president from issuing military orders except through the commanding general, Ulysses S. Grant, who could not be removed without the Senate's consent.

The Radicals' enmity toward Johnson, however, went further: they began to seek grounds on which to impeach him. The House Judiciary Committee, aided by private detectives, could at first find no valid charges against Johnson. But Johnson again rescued his foes by providing the charges they needed.

In August 1867, with Congress out of session, Johnson suspended Secretary of War Stanton and replaced him with General Grant. In early 1868, the reconvened Senate refused to approve Stanton's suspension, and Grant, sensing the Republican mood, vacated the office. Johnson then removed Stanton and replaced him with another general. Johnson's defiance forced Republican moderates, who had at first resisted impeachment, into yet another alliance with the Radicals: the president had "thrown down the gauntlet," a moderate charged. The House approved eleven charges of impeachment, nine based on violation of the Tenure of Office Act. The other charges accused Johnson of being "unmindful of the high duties of office," seeking to disgrace Congress, and not enforcing the Reconstruction acts.

Johnson's trial in the Senate, which began in March 1868, riveted public attention for eleven

weeks. Seven congressmen, including leading Radical Republicans, served as prosecutors or "managers." Johnson's lawyers maintained that he was merely seeking a court test by violating the Tenure of Office Act, which he thought was unconstitutional. They also contended, somewhat inconsistently, that the law did not protect Secretary Stanton, an appointee of Lincoln, not Johnson. Finally, they asserted, Johnson was guilty of no crime indictable in a regular court.

The congressional "managers" countered that impeachment was a political process, not a criminal trial, and that Johnson's "abuse of discretionary power" constituted an impeachable offense. Although Senate opinion split along party lines, some Republicans wavered, fearful that removal of a president would destroy the balance of power among the three branches of the federal government. They also distrusted Radical Republican Benjamin Wade, the president pro tempore of the Senate, who, because there was no vice president, would become president if Johnson were thrown out.

Late in May 1868, the Senate voted against Johnson 35 to 19, one vote short of the two-thirds majority needed for conviction. Despite intense pressure, seven Republicans had risked political suicide and sided with the twelve Senate Democrats against removal. In so doing, they set a precedent: their vote discouraged impeachment on political grounds for decades to come. But the anti-Johnson forces had also achieved their goal: Andrew Johnson had no future as president. Serving out the rest of his term, Johnson returned to Tennessee, where he was reelected to the Senate five years later. Republicans in Congress, meanwhile, pursued their last major Reconstruction objective: to guarantee black male suffrage.

The Fifteenth Amendment and the Question of Woman Suffrage, 1869–1870

Black suffrage was the linchpin of congressional Reconstruction. Only with the black vote could Republicans secure control of the ex-Confederate states. The Reconstruction Act of 1867 had forced southern states to enfranchise black men in order to reenter the Union, but much of the North rejected black suffrage. Congressional Republicans therefore had two aims. The **Fifteenth Amendment,** proposed by Congress in 1869, sought to protect black suffrage in the South against future repeal by Congress or the states, and to enfranchise northern and border-state blacks, who would presumably vote Republican. The amendment prohibited the denial of suffrage by the states to any citizen on account of "race, color, or previous condition of servitude."

Democrats argued that the proposed amendment violated states' rights by denying each state leverage over who would vote. But Democrats did not control enough states to defeat the amendment, and it was ratified in 1870. Four ex-Confederate states—Mississippi, Virginia, Georgia, and Texas—that had delayed the Reconstruction process were therefore forced to approve the Fifteenth Amendment, as well as the Fourteenth, in order to rejoin the Union. Some southerners appreciated the new amendment's omissions: as a Richmond newspaper pointed out, it had "loopholes through which a coach and four horses can be driven." What were these loopholes? The Fifteenth Amendment neither guaranteed black office holding nor prohibited voting restrictions such as property requirements and literacy tests. Such restrictions might be used—and ultimately were used—to deny blacks the vote.

The debate over black suffrage drew new participants into the political fray. In 1866, when Congress debated the Fourteenth Amendment, women's rights advocates tried to join forces with abolitionist allies to promote both black suffrage and woman suffrage. Most Radical Republicans, however, did not want to be saddled with the woman-suffrage plank; they feared it would impede their primary goal, black enfranchisement.

This defection provoked disputes among women's rights advocates. Some argued that black suffrage would pave the way for the women's vote and that black men deserved priority. "If the elective franchise is not extended to the Negro, he is dead," explained Frederick Douglass, a longtime women's rights supporter. "Woman has a thousand ways by which she can attach herself to the ruling power of the land that we have not." But women's rights leaders Elizabeth Cady Stanton and **Susan B. Anthony** disagreed. In their view, the Fourteenth Amendment had disabled women by including the word *male*, and the Fifteenth Amendment failed to remedy this injustice. Instead, Stanton contended, the Fifteenth Amendment established an "aristocracy of sex" and increased women's disadvantages.

> "If the elective franchise is not extended to the Negro, he is dead. Woman has a thousand ways by which she can attach herself to the ruling power of the land that we have not."

The battle over black suffrage and the Fifteenth Amendment split women's rights advocates into two rival suffrage associations, formed in 1869. The Boston-based

ANTHONY AND STANTON, CA. 1870 Women's rights advocates Susan B. Anthony (left) and Elizabeth Cady Stanton began to promote woman suffrage when the issue of black suffrage arose in 1866. They subsequently assailed the proposed Fifteenth Amendment for excluding women. By the end of the 1860s, activists had formed two competing suffragist organizations. *(Schlesinger Library)*

American Woman Suffrage Association, endorsed by reformers such as Julia Ward Howe and Lucy Stone, retained an alliance with male abolitionists and campaigned for woman suffrage in the states. The New York-based and more radical National Woman Suffrage Association, led by Stanton and Anthony, condemned its former male allies and promoted a federal woman suffrage amendment.

Throughout the 1870s, the rival woman suffrage associations vied for constituents. In 1869 and 1870, independent of the suffrage movement, two territories, Wyoming and Utah, enfranchised women. But suffragists failed to sway legislators elsewhere. When Susan B. Anthony mobilized about seventy women to vote nationwide in 1872, she was indicted, convicted, and fined. One woman who tried to vote, Missouri suffragist Virginia Minor, brought suit with her husband against the registrar who had excluded her. The Minors claimed that the Fourteenth Amendment enfranchised women. In *Minor v. Happersett* (1875), however, the Supreme Court declared that a state could constitutionally deny women the vote. Divided and rebuffed, woman suffrage advocates braced for a long struggle.

By 1870, when the Fifteenth Amendment was ratified, Congress could look back on five years of achievement. Since the start of 1865, three constitutional amendments had broadened the scope of American democracy: The Thirteenth Amendment abolished slavery, the Fourteenth expanded civil rights, and the Fifteenth prohibited the denial of suffrage on the basis of race (see Table 16.2). Congress had also readmitted

TABLE 16.2 THE RECONSTRUCTION AMENDMENTS

Amendment and Date of Congressional Passage	Provisions	Ratification
Thirteenth (January 1865)	Prohibited slavery in the United States.	December 1865.
Fourteenth (June 1866)	Defined citizenship to include all persons born or naturalized in the United States. Provided proportional loss of congressional representation for any state that denied suffrage to any of its male citizens. Disqualified prewar officeholders who supported the Confederacy from state or national office. Repudiated the Confederate debt.	July 1868, after Congress made ratification a prerequisite for readmission of ex-Confederate states to the Union.
Fifteenth (February 1869)	Prohibited the denial of suffrage because of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.	March 1870; ratification required of Virginia, Texas, Mississippi, and Georgia for readmission to the Union.

the former Confederate states into the Union. But after 1868, congressional momentum slowed, and the theater of action shifted to the South, where tumultuous change occurred.

Reconstruction Governments

During the unstable years of presidential Reconstruction, 1865–1867, the southern states had to create new governments, revive the war-torn economy, and face the impact of emancipation. Crises abounded. War costs had devastated southern wealth, cities and factories lay in rubble, plantation labor systems disintegrated, and racial tensions flared. Beginning in 1865, freedmen organized black conventions, political meetings at which they protested ill treatment and demanded equal rights. A climate of violence prevailed. Race riots erupted in major southern cities, such as Memphis in May 1866 and New Orleans two months later. Even when Congress imposed military rule, ex-Confederates did not feel defeated. "Having reached bottom, there is hope now that we may rise again," a South Carolina planter wrote in his diary.

Congressional Reconstruction, supervised by federal troops, took effect in the spring of 1867. The Johnson regimes were dismantled, state constitutional conventions met, and voters elected new state governments, which Republicans dominated. In 1868, most former Confederate states rejoined the Union, and two years later, the last four states—Virginia, Mississippi, Georgia, and Texas—followed.

But Republican rule was very brief, lasting less than a decade in all southern states, far less in most of them, and on average under five years. Opposition from southern Democrats, the landowning elite, thousands of vigilantes, and, indeed, most white voters proved insurmountable. Still, the governments formed under congressional Reconstruction were unique, because black men, including exslaves, participated in them. In no other society where slaves had been liberated—neither Haiti, where slaves had revolted in the 1790s, nor the British Caribbean islands, where Parliament had ended slavery in 1833—had freedmen gained democratic political rights.

A New Electorate

The Reconstruction laws of 1867–1868 transformed the southern electorate by temporarily disfranchising 10 to 15 percent of potential white voters and by enfranchising more than seven hundred thousand freedmen. Outnumbering white voters by one hundred thousand, blacks held voting majorities in five states.

The new electorate provided a base for the Republican Party, which had never existed in the South. To scornful Democrats, southern Republicans comprised three types of scoundrels: northern "carpetbaggers," who had allegedly come south seeking wealth and power (with so few possessions that they could be stuffed into traveling bags made of carpet material); southern "scalawags," predominantly poor and ignorant whites, who sought to profit from Republican rule; and hordes of uneducated freedmen, who were ready prey for Republican manipulators. Although the "carpetbag" and "scalawag" labels were derogatory and the stereotypes they conveyed inaccurate, they remain in use as a form of shorthand. Crossing class and racial lines, the hastily established Republican Party was in fact a loose coalition of diverse factions with often contradictory goals.

To northerners who moved south after the Civil War, the former Confederacy was an undeveloped region, ripe with possibility. The carpetbaggers' ranks included many former Union soldiers who hoped to buy land, open factories, build railroads, or simply enjoy the warmer climate. Albion Tourgee, a young lawyer who had served with the New York and Ohio volunteers, for example, relocated in North Carolina after the war to improve his health; there he worked as a journalist, politician, and Republican judge. Perhaps no more than twenty thousand northern migrants like Tourgee—including veterans, missionaries, teachers, and Freedmen's Bureau agents—headed south immediately after the war, and many soon returned north. But those who remained held almost one out of three state offices and wielded disproportionate political power.

Scalawags, white southerners who supported the Republicans, included some entrepreneurs who applauded party policies such as the national banking system and high protective tariffs as well as some prosperous planters, former Whigs who had opposed secession. Their numbers included a few prominent politicians, among them James Orr of South Carolina and Mississippi's governor James Alcorn, who became Republicans in order to retain influence and limit Republican radicalism. Most scalawags, however, were small farmers from the mountain regions of North Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, and Arkansas. Former Unionists who had owned no slaves and felt no loyalty toward the landowning elite, they sought to improve their economic position. Unlike carpetbaggers, they lacked commitment to black rights or black suffrage;

"We'd walk fifteen miles in wartime to find out about the battle," a Georgia freedman declared. "We can walk fifteen miles and more to find how to vote."

most came from regions with few blacks and cared little whether blacks voted or not. Scalawags held the most political offices during Reconstruction, but they proved the least stable element of the southern Republican coalition: eventually, many drifted back to the Democratic fold.

Freedmen, the backbone of southern Republicanism, provided eight out of ten Republican votes. Republican rule lasted longest in states with the largest black populations—South Carolina, Mississippi, Alabama, and Louisiana. Introduced to politics in the black conventions of 1865–1867, the freedmen sought land, education, civil rights, and political equality, and remained loyal Republicans. As an elderly freedman announced at a Georgia political convention in 1867, "We know our friends." Although Reconstruction governments depended on African-American votes, freedmen held at most one in five political offices. Blacks served in all southern legislatures but constituted a majority only in the legislature of South Carolina, whose population was more than 60 percent black. In the House of Representatives, a mere 6 percent of southern members were black, and almost half of these came from South Carolina. No blacks became governor, and only two—Hiram Revels and Blanche K. Bruce, both of Mississippi—served in the U.S. Senate. (Still, the same number of African-Americans served in the Senate throughout the entire twentieth century.)

Black officeholders on the state level formed a political elite. They often differed from black voters in background, education, and wealth. A disproportionate number were literate blacks who had been free before the Civil War. In the South Carolina legislature, most black members, unlike their constituents, came from large towns and cities; many had spent time in the North; and some were well-off property owners or even former slave owners. Color differences were evident, too: 43 percent of South Carolina's black state legislators were mulattos (mixed race), compared to only 7 percent of the state's black population.

Black officials and black voters often had different priorities. Most freedmen cared mainly about their economic future, especially about acquiring land; black officeholders cared most about attaining equal rights. Still, both groups shared high expectations and prized enfranchisement. "We'd walk fifteen miles in wartime to find out about the battle," a Georgia freedman declared. "We can walk fifteen miles and more to find how to vote."

REPUBLICANS IN THE SOUTH CAROLINA LEGISLATURE, CA. 1868 Only in South Carolina did blacks comprise a majority in the legislature and dominate the legislative process during Reconstruction. This photographic collage of "Radical" legislators, black and white, suggests the extent of black representation. In 1874, blacks won the majority of seats in South Carolina's state senate as well. *(Museum of the Confederacy)*

Republican Rule

Large numbers of blacks participated in American government for the first time in the state constitutional conventions of 1867–1868. The South Carolina convention had a black majority, and in Louisiana half the delegates were freedmen. The conventions forged democratic changes in their state constitutions. Delegates abolished property qualifications for office holding, made many appointive offices elective, and redistricted state legislatures more equitably. All states established universal manhood suffrage.

But no state instituted land reform. When proposals for land confiscation and redistribution

arose at the state conventions, they fell to defeat, as they had in Congress. Hoping to attract northern investment to the reconstructed South, southern Republicans hesitated to threaten property rights or to adopt land-reform measures that northern Republicans had rejected. South Carolina did set up a commission to buy land and make it available to freedmen, and several states changed their tax structures to force uncultivated land onto the market, but in no case was ex-Confederate land confiscated.

Once civil power shifted from the federal army to the new state governments, Republican regimes began ambitious programs of public works. They built roads, bridges, and public buildings; approved railroad bonds; and funded institutions to care for orphans, the insane, and the disabled. They also expanded state bureaucracies, raised pay for state employees, and formed state militia, in which blacks were often heavily represented. Finally, they created public-school systems, almost nonexistent in the South until then.

These changes cost millions, and taxes skyrocketed. State legislatures increased poll taxes or "head" taxes (levies on individuals); enacted luxury, sales, and occupation taxes; and imposed new property taxes. Before the war southern states had taxed property in slaves but had barely taxed landed property. Now state governments assessed even small farmers' holdings; propertied planters felt overburdened. Although northern tax rates still exceeded southern rates, southern landowners resented the new levies. In their view, Reconstruction punished the propertied, already beset by labor problems and falling land values, in order to finance the vast expenditures of Republican legislators.

To Reconstruction's foes, Republican rule was wasteful and corrupt, the "most stupendous system of organized robbery in history." A state like Mississippi, which had an honest government, provided little basis for such charges. But critics could justifiably point to Louisiana, where the governor pocketed thousands of dollars of state funds and corruption permeated all government transactions (as indeed it had before the war). Or they could cite South Carolina, where bribery ran rampant. Besides government officials who took bribes, postwar profiteers included the railroad promoters who doled them out. Not all were Republicans. Nor did the Republican regimes in the South hold a monopoly on corruption. After the war, bribery pervaded government transactions North and South, and far more money changed hands in the North. But critics assailed Republican rule for additional reasons.

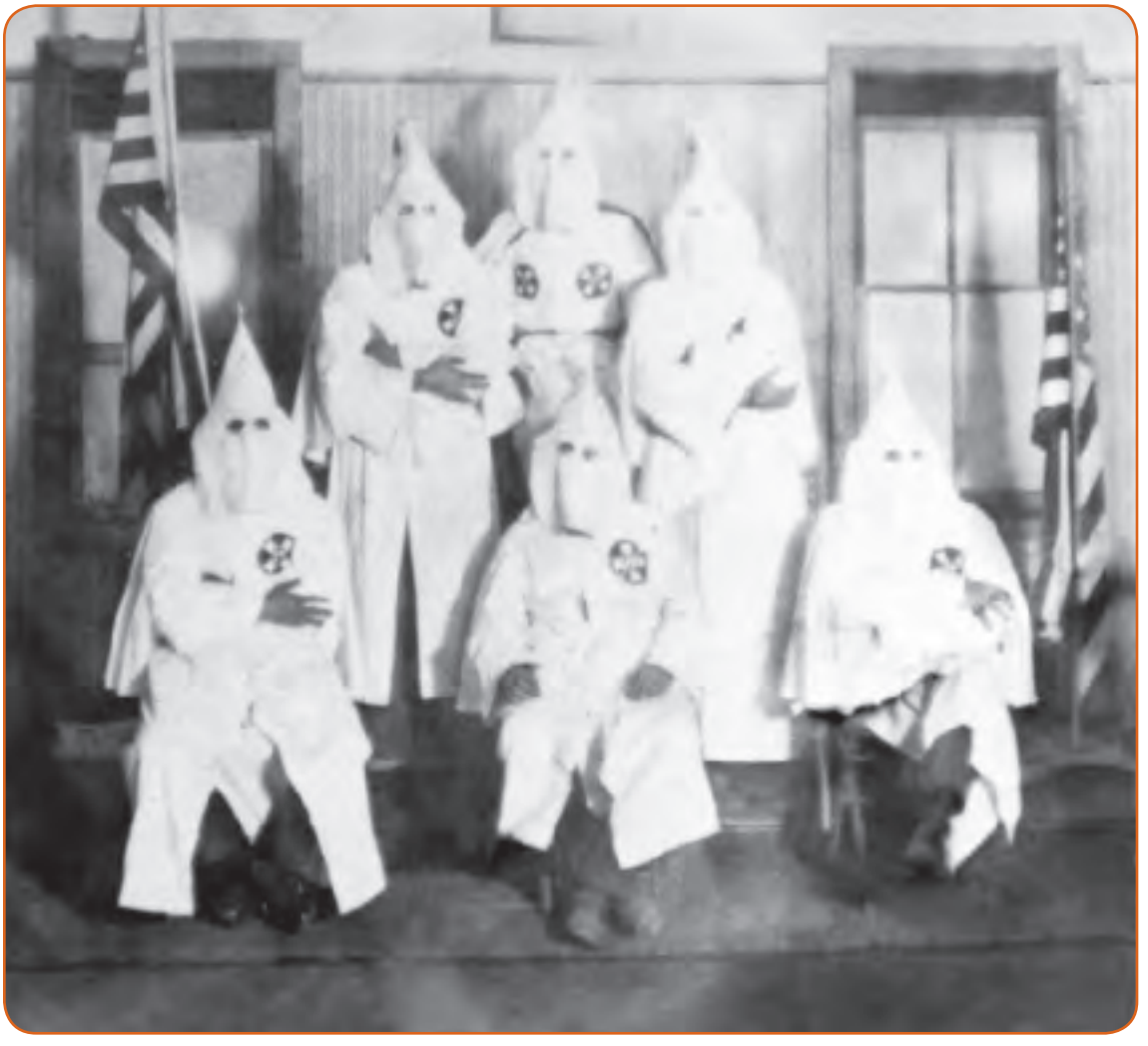
Counterattacks

Ex-Confederates spoke with dread about black enfranchisement and the "horror of Negro domination." As soon as congressional Reconstruction took effect, former Confederates campaigned to undermine it. Democratic newspapers assailed delegates to North Carolina's constitutional convention as an "Ethiopian minstrelsy" and called Louisiana's constitution "the work of ignorant Negroes cooperating with a gang of white adventurers."

Democrats delayed mobilization until southern states were readmitted to the Union, and then swung into action. At first, they sought to win black votes; but when that failed, they tried other tactics. In 1868–1869, Georgia Democrats challenged the eligibility of black legislators and expelled them from office. In response, the federal government reestablished military rule in Georgia, but determined Democrats still undercut Republican power. In every southern state, they contested elections, backed dissident Republican factions, elected some Democratic legislators, and lured scalawags away from the Republican Party.

Vigilante efforts to reduce black votes bolstered the Democrats' campaigns to win white ones. Antagonism toward free blacks, long a motif in southern life, resurged after the war. In 1865, Freedmen's Bureau agents itemized outrages against blacks, including shooting, murder, rape, arson, and "inhuman beating." Vigilante groups sprang up spontaneously in all parts of the former Confederacy under names like moderators, regulators, and, in Louisiana, Knights of the White Camelia. One group rose to dominance. In the spring of 1866, six young Confederate war veterans in Tennessee formed a social club, the **Ku Klux Klan,** distinguished by elaborate rituals, hooded costumes, and secret passwords. By the election of 1868, when black men could first vote, Klan dens had spread to all southern states. Klansmen embarked on night raids to intimidate black voters. No longer a social club, the Ku Klux Klan was now a terrorist movement and a violent arm of the Democratic Party.

The Klan sought to suppress black voting, reestablish white supremacy, and topple Reconstruction governments. Its members attacked Freedmen's Bureau officials, white Republicans, black militia units, economically successful blacks, and black voters. Concentrated in areas where black and white populations were most evenly balanced and racial tensions greatest, Klan dens adapted their tactics and timing to local conditions. In Mississippi, the Klan targeted black schools; in Alabama, it concentrated on Republican officeholders. In Arkansas,



THE KU KLUX KLAN Disguised in long white robes and hoods, Ku Klux Klansmen sometimes claimed to be the ghosts of Confederate soldiers. The Klan, which spread rapidly after 1867, sought to end Republican rule, restore white supremacy, and obliterate, in one southern editor's words, "the preposterous and wicked dogma of Negro equality." *(Tennessee State Archives/Picture Research Consultants & Archives)*

terror reigned in 1868; in Georgia and Florida, Klan strength surged in 1870. Some Democrats denounced Klan members as "cutthroats and riffraff." But Klansmen included prominent ex-Confederates, among them General Nathan Bedford Forrest, the leader of the 1864 Fort Pillow massacre, in which Confederate troops who captured a Union garrison in Tennessee murdered black soldiers who had surrendered. Vigilantism united southern whites of different social classes and drew on Confederate veterans' energy. In areas where the Klan was inactive, other vigilante groups took its place.

Republican legislatures passed laws to outlaw vigilantism, but as state militia could not enforce them, state officials sought federal help. Between May 1870 and February 1871, Congress passed three **Enforcement Acts,** each progressively more stringent. The First Enforcement Act protected black voters, but witnesses to violations were afraid to testify against vigilantes, and local juries refused to convict them. The Second Enforcement Act provided for federal supervision of southern elections, and the Third Enforcement Act, or Ku Klux Klan Act, strengthened punishments for those who prevented blacks from voting. It also empowered the president to use federal troops to enforce the law and to suspend the writ of *habeas corpus* in areas that he declared in insurrection. (The writ of *habeas corpus* is a court order requiring that the detainer of a prisoner bring that person to court and show cause for his or her detention.) The Ku Klux Klan Act generated thousands of arrests; most terrorists, however, escaped conviction.

By 1872, the federal government had effectively suppressed the Klan, but vigilantism had served its purpose. Only a large military presence in the South could have protected black rights, and the government in Washington never provided it. Instead, federal power in the former Confederacy diminished. President Grant steadily reduced troop levels in the South; Congress allowed the Freedmen's Bureau to die in 1869; and the Enforcement acts became dead letters. White southerners, a Georgia politician told congressional investigators in 1871, could not discard "a feeling of bitterness, a feeling that the Negro is a sort of instinctual enemy of ours." The battle over Reconstruction was in essence a battle over the implications of emancipation, and it had begun as soon as the war ended.

The Impact of Emancipation

"The master he says we are all free," a South Carolina slave declared in 1865. "But it don't mean we is white. And it don't mean we is equal." Emancipated slaves faced daunting handicaps. They had no property, tools, or capital; possessed meager skills; and more than 95 percent were illiterate. Still, the exhilaration of freedom was overwhelming, as slaves realized, "Now I am for myself" and "All that I make is my own." Emancipation gave them the right to their own labor and a new sense of autonomy. Under Reconstruction, they sought to cast off white control and shed the vestiges of slavery.

Confronting Freedom

For former slaves, liberty meant mobility. Some moved out of slave quarters and set up dwellings elsewhere on their plantations; others left their plantations entirely. Landowners found that one freed slave after another vanished, with house servants and artisans leading the way. "I have never in my life met with such ingratitude," one South Carolina mistress exclaimed when a former slave ran off. Field workers, who had less contact with whites, were more likely to stay behind. Still, flight remained tempting. "The moment they see an opportunity to improve themselves, they will move on," diarist Mary Chesnut observed.

Emancipation stirred waves of migration within the former Confederacy. Some freed slaves left the Upper South for the Deep South and the Southwest—Florida, Mississippi, Arkansas, and Texas—where planters desperately needed labor and paid higher wages. More left the countryside for towns and cities. Urban black populations sometimes doubled or tripled after emancipation; the number of blacks in small rural towns grew as well. Many migrants eventually returned to their old locales, but they tended to settle on neighboring plantations rather than with former owners. Freedom was the major goal. "I's wants to be a free man … and nobody say nuffin to me, nor order me roun,'" an Alabama freedman told a northern journalist.

Efforts to find lost family members prompted much movement. "They had a passion, not so much for wandering as for getting together," a Freedmen's Bureau official commented. Parents sought children who had been sold; husbands and wives who had been separated by sale, or who lived on different plantations, reunited; and families reclaimed youngsters from masters' homes. The Freedmen's Bureau helped former slaves get information about missing relatives and travel to find them. Bureau agents also tried to resolve conflicts that arose when spouses who had been separated under slavery married other people.

"The master he says we are all free. But it don't mean we is white. And it don't mean we is equal."

Reunification efforts often failed. Some fugitive slaves had died during the war or were untraceable. Other exslaves had formed new relationships and could not revive old ones. Still, success stories abounded. Once reunited, freed blacks quickly legalized unions formed under slavery, sometimes in mass ceremonies of up to seventy couples. Legal marriage affected family life. Men asserted themselves as household heads; wives of able-bodied men often withdrew from the labor force to care for homes and families. "When I married my wife, I married her to wait on me and she has got all she can do right here for me and the children," a Tennessee freedman explained.

Black women's desire for domestic life caused labor shortages. Before the war, at least half of field workers had been women; in 1866, a southern journal claimed, men performed almost all the field labor. Still, by Reconstruction's end, many black women had returned to agricultural work as part of sharecropper families. Others took paid work in cities, as laundresses, cooks, and domestic servants. (White women often sought employment, too, for the war had incapacitated many white breadwinners, reduced the supply of future husbands, and left families impoverished.) However, former slaves continued to view stable, independent domestic life, especially the right to bring up their own children, as a major blessing of freedom. In 1870, eight out of ten black families in the cotton-producing South were two-parent families, about the same proportion as among whites.

FORMER SLAVES ON PLANTATION IN WARREN COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI Emancipation brought the possibility of movement. Some freed people on big plantations (like this one in Warren County, Mississippi) remained where they were; some moved off to find work on other plantations; and others gravitated toward towns and cities. "[R]ight off colored folks started on the move," one former slave recalled. "They seemed to want to get closer to freedom so they'd know what it was—like a place or a city." *(Old Court House Museum, Vicksburg, Mississippi)*

African-American Institutions

Freed blacks' desire for independence also fostered growth of black churches. In the late 1860s, some freedmen congregated at churches operated by northern missionaries; others withdrew from white-run churches and formed their own. The African Methodist Episcopal church, founded by Philadelphia blacks in the 1790s, gained thousands of new southern members. Negro Baptist churches sprouted everywhere, often growing out of plantation "praise meetings," religious gatherings organized by slaves.

"[R]ight off colored folks started on the move. They seemed to want to get closer to freedom so they'd know what it was—like a place or a city."

Black churches offered a fervent, participatory experience. They also provided relief, raised funds for schools, and supported Republican policies. Black ministers assumed leading political roles, first in the black conventions of 1865–1866 and later in Reconstruction governments. After southern Democrats excluded most freedmen from political life at Reconstruction's end, ministers remained the main pillars of authority in black communities.

Black schools played a crucial role for freedmen, too; exslaves eagerly sought literacy for themselves and above all for their children. At emancipation, blacks organized their own schools, which the Freedmen's Bureau soon supervised. Northern philanthropic societies paid the wages of instructors, about half of them women. In 1869, the bureau reported more than four thousand black schools in the former Confederacy. Within three years, each southern state had a public school system, at least in principle, generally with separate schools for blacks and whites. Advanced schools for blacks opened to train tradespeople, teachers, and ministers. The Freedmen's Bureau and northern organizations like the American Missionary Association helped found Howard, Atlanta, and Fisk universities (1866–1867) and Hampton Institute (1868).

However, black education remained limited. Few rural blacks could reach freedmen's schools located in towns. Underfunded black public schools, similarly inaccessible to most rural black children, held classes only for short seasons and sometimes drew

vigilante attacks. At the end of Reconstruction, more than 80 percent of the black population was still illiterate, though literacy rose steadily among youngsters (see Table 16.3).

School segregation and other forms of racial separation were taken for granted. Some black codes of 1865–1866 had segregated public-transportation and public accommodations. Even after the invalidation of the codes, the custom of segregation continued on streetcars, steamboats, and trains as well as in churches, theaters, inns, and restaurants. In 1870, Senator Charles Sumner of Massachusetts began promoting a bill to desegregate schools, transportation facilities, juries, and public accommodations. After Sumner's death in 1874, Congress honored him by a new law, the **Civil Rights Act of 1875,** which included his proposals, save for the controversial school-integration provision. But in 1883, in the *Civil Rights Cases*, the Supreme Court invalidated the law; the Fourteenth Amendment

TABLE 16.3 PERCENTAGE OF PERSONS UNABLE TO WRITE, BY AGE GROUP, 1870–1890, IN SOUTH CAROLINA, GEORGIA, ALABAMA, MISSISSIPPI, AND LOUISIANA

Age Group	1870	1880	1890
10–14			
Black	78.9	74.1	49.2
White	33.2	34.5	18.7
15–20			
Black	85.3	73.0	54.1
White	24.2	21.0	14.3
Over 20			
Black	90.4	82.3	75.5
White	19.8	17.9	17.1

Source: *Roger Ransom and Richard Sutch,* One Kind of Freedom. *(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 30.*

HAMPTON INSTITUTE Founded in 1868, Hampton Institute in southeastern Virginia welcomed newly freed African-Americans to vocational programs in agriculture, teacher training, and homemaking. These students, photographed at the school's entrance around 1870, were among Hampton's first classes. *(Archival and Museum Collection, Hampton University)*

did not prohibit discrimination by individuals, the Court ruled, only that perpetrated by the state.

White southerners rejected the prospect of racial integration, which they insisted would lead to racial amalgamation. "If we have social equality, we shall have intermarriage," one white southerner contended, "and if we have intermarriage, we shall degenerate." Urban blacks sometimes challenged segregation practices; black legislators promoted bills to desegregate public transit; and some black officeholders decried all forms of racial separatism. "The sooner we as a people forget our sable complexion," said a Mobile official, "the better it will be for us as a race." But most freed blacks were less interested in "social equality," in the sense of interracial mingling, than in black liberty and community. The new postwar elite—teachers, ministers, and politicians—served black constituencies and therefore had a vested interest in separate black institutions. Rural blacks, too, widely preferred all-black institutions. They had little desire to mix with whites. On the contrary, they sought freedom from white control. Above all, they wanted to secure personal independence by acquiring land.

Land, Labor, and Sharecropping

"The sole ambition of the freedman," a New Englander wrote from South Carolina in 1865, "appears to be to become the owner of a little piece of land, there to erect a humble home, and to dwell in peace and security, at his own free will and pleasure." Indeed, to freed blacks everywhere, landownership signified economic independence; "forty acres and a mule" (a phrase that originated in 1864 when Union general William T. Sherman set aside land on the South Carolina Sea Islands for black settlement) promised emancipation from plantation labor, white domination, and cotton, the "slave crop.".

"You must begin at the bottom of the ladder and climb up."

But freedmen's visions of landownership failed to materialize, for, as we have seen, neither Congress nor the southern states imposed large-scale land reform. Some freedmen obtained land with the help of the Union army or the Freedmen's Bureau, and black soldiers sometimes pooled resources to buy land, as on the Sea Islands of South Carolina and Georgia. In 1866, Congress passed the Southern Homestead Act, which set aside 44 million acres of public land in five southern states for freedmen and loyal whites. This acreage contained poor soil, and few former slaves had the resources to survive even until their first harvest. About four thousand blacks resettled on homesteads under the law, but most were unable to establish farms (poor whites fared little better.) By Reconstruction's end, only a small minority of former slaves owned working farms. In Georgia in 1876, for instance, blacks controlled a mere 1.3 percent of total acreage. Without large-scale land reform, obstacles to black landownership remained overwhelming.

What were these obstacles? First, most freedmen lacked the capital to buy land and the equipment needed to work it. Furthermore, white southerners generally opposed selling land to blacks. Most important, planters sought to preserve a black labor force. Freedmen, they insisted, would work only under coercion, and not at all if the possibility of landownership arose. As soon as the war ended, the white South took steps to ensure that black labor would remain available on plantations.

During presidential Reconstruction, southern state legislatures tried to curb black mobility and preserve a captive labor force through the black codes. Under labor contracts in effect in 1865–1866, freedmen received wages, housing, food, and clothing in exchange for field work. With cash scarce, wages usually took the form of a very small share of the crop, often one-eighth or less, divided among the entire plantation work force. Freedmen's Bureau agents promoted the new labor system; they saw black wage labor as an interim arrangement that would lead to economic independence. "You must begin at the bottom of the ladder and climb up," Freedmen's Bureau head O.O. Howard exhorted a group of Louisiana freedmen in 1865.

But freedmen disliked the new wage system, especially the use of gang labor, which resembled the work pattern under slavery. Planters had complaints, too. In some regions the black labor force had shrunk to half its prewar size or less, due to the migration of freedmen and to black women's withdrawal from fieldwork. Once united in defense of slavery, planters now competed for black workers. But the freedmen, whom planters often scorned as lazy or inefficient, did not intend to work as long or as hard as they had labored under slavery. One planter claimed that workers accomplished only "two-fifths of what they did under the old system." As productivity fell, so did land values. Plummeting cotton prices and poor harvests compounded planters' woes. By 1867, an agricultural impasse had been reached: landowners lacked labor, and freedmen lacked land. But free blacks, unlike slaves, had the right to enter into contracts—or to refuse to do so—and thereby gained some leverage.

Planters and freedmen began experimenting with new labor schemes, including the division of plantations into small tenancies (see Map 16.2). **Sharecropping,** the most widespread arrangement, evolved as a compromise. Under the sharecropping system, landowners subdivided large plantations into farms of thirty to fifty acres, which they rented to freedmen under annual leases for a share of the crop, usually half. Freedmen preferred sharecropping to wage labor because it represented a step toward independence. Household heads could use the labor of family members. Moreover, a half-share of the crop far exceeded the fraction that freedmen had received as wages under the black codes. Planters often spoke of sharecropping as a concession, but they benefited, too. They retained power over tenants, because annual leases did not have to be renewed; they could expel undesirable tenants at the end of the year. Planters also shared the risk of planting with tenants: if a crop failed, both suffered the loss. Most important, planters retained control of their land and in some cases extended their holdings. The most productive land, therefore, remained in the hands of a small group of owners, as before the war. Sharecropping forced planters to relinquish daily control over the labor of freedmen but helped to preserve the planter elite (see Going to the Source).

Sharecropping arrangements varied widely. On sugar and rice plantations, the wage system continued; strong markets for those crops enabled planters to pay workers in cash—cash that cotton planters lacked. Some freedmen remained independent renters. Some landowners leased areas to white tenants, who then subcontracted with black labor. But by the end of the 1860s, sharecropping prevailed in the cotton South, and continued to expand. A severe depression in 1873 drove many black renters into sharecropping. Thousands of independent white farmers became sharecroppers as well. Stung by wartime losses and by the dismal postwar economy, they sank into debt and lost their land to creditors. Many backcountry residents, no longer able to get by on subsistence farming, shifted to cash crops like cotton and suffered the same fate. At Reconstruction's end, one-third of white farmers in Mississippi, for instance, were sharecroppers.

By 1880, 80 percent of the land in the cotton-producing states had been subdivided into tenancies, most of it farmed by sharecroppers, white and black (see Map 16.3, page 490). Indeed, white sharecroppers now outnumbered black ones, although a higher proportion of southern blacks, about 75 percent, were involved in the system. Changes in marketing and finance, meanwhile, made the sharecroppers' lot increasingly precarious.

Toward a Crop-Lien Economy

Before the Civil War, planters had depended on factors, or middlemen, who sold them supplies, extended credit, and marketed their crops through urban merchants. These long-distance credit arrangements were backed by the high value and liquidity of slave property. When slavery ended, the factorage system collapsed. The postwar South, with hundreds of thousands of tenants and sharecroppers, needed a far more localized credit network.

Into the gap stepped the rural merchants (often themselves planters), who advanced supplies to tenants and sharecroppers on credit and sold their crops to wholesalers or textile manufacturers. Because renters had no property to use as collateral, the merchants secured their loans with a lien, or claim, on each farmer's next crop. Exorbitant interest rates of 50 percent or more quickly forced many tenants and sharecroppers into a cycle of indebtedness. Owing part of the crop to a landowner for rent, a sharecropper also owed a rural merchant a large sum (perhaps amounting to the rest of his crop, or more) for supplies. Illiterate tenants who lost track of their financial arrangements often fell prey to unscrupulous merchants. "A man that didn't know how to count would always lose," an Arkansas freedman later explained. Once a tenant's debts or alleged debts exceeded the value of his crop, he was tied to the land, to cotton, and to sharecropping.

By Reconstruction's end, sharecropping and crop liens had transformed southern agriculture. They bound the region to staple production and prevented crop diversification. Despite plunging cotton prices, creditors—landowners and merchants—insisted that tenants raise only easily marketable cash crops. Short of capital, planters could no longer invest in new equipment or improve their land by crop rotation and contour plowing. Soil depletion, land erosion, and agricultural backwardness soon locked much of the South into a cycle of poverty.

Trapped in perpetual debt, tenant farmers became the chief victims of the new agricultural order. Raising cotton for distant markets, for prices over which they had no control, remained the only survival route open to poor farmers, regardless of race. But low income from cotton locked them into sharecropping and crop liens, from which escape was difficult. African-American tenants saw their political rights dwindle, too. As one southern regime after another returned to Democratic control, freedmen could look for protection to neither state governments nor the federal government; northern politicians were preoccupied with their own problems (see Beyond America).

GOING TO THE SOURCE

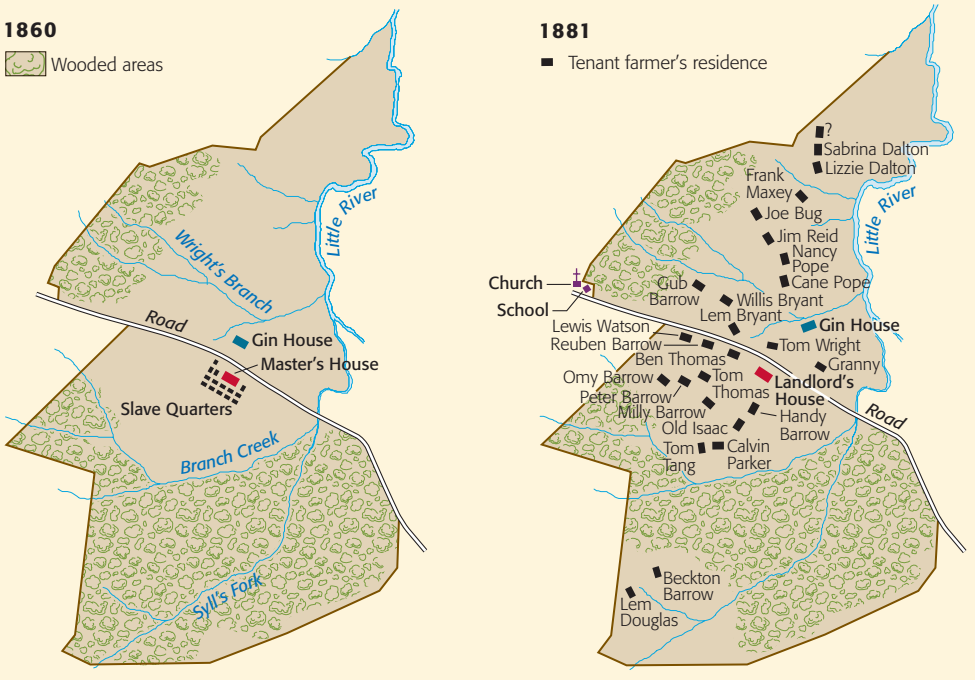
The Barrow Plantation

David Crenshaw Barrow (1852–1929), who grew up on his family's 2,000-acre plantation in Oglethorpe County, Georgia, described in an 1881 article the changes that occurred there after the Civil War, as former slaves became tenant farmers. His father, landowner David C. Barrow, Sr., once a slaveholder, now rented out plots of land to tenant families, with a total of 162 members, who raised cotton and other crops. The younger Barrow in 1881 taught mathematics at the University of Georgia; he later served for many years as chancellor. His article, aimed at a national audience, seeks to assure northern readers that postwar changes in southern labor worked "thoroughly well."

In Georgia, the Negro has adapted himself to his new circumstances, and freedom fits him as if it had been cut out and made for him.…

One of the first planters in Middle Georgia to divide his plantations into farms was Mr. Barrow of Oglethorpe. The plantation upon which he now lives… with the exception of a single acre, [used by tenants] for church and school purposes, is the same size it was before the war. Here, however, the similarity ceases. Before the war everything on the place was under the absolute rule of an overseer (Mr. Barrow living then on another place).… [A]ll the Negro houses were close together, forming "the quarter." The house in which the overseer lived was close to the quarter.… This all has been so changed that the place would now hardly be recognized by one who had not seen it during the past sixteen years.

The transformation has been so gradual that almost imperceptibly a radical change has been effected. For several years after the war, the force on the plantation was divided into two squads.… Each of these squads was under the control of a foreman.… [T]he laborers were paid a portion of the crop as their wages, which did much toward making them feel interested in it.…



MAP 16.2 THE BARROW PLANTATION, 1860 AND 1881 The transformation of the Barrow plantation illustrates the striking changes in southern agriculture during Reconstruction. Before the Civil War, about 135 slaves worked on the plantation; after the war, the former slaves who remained signed labor contracts with owner David C. Barrow, Sr. Supervised by a hired foreman, the freedmen grew cotton for wages in competing squads, but disliked the new arrangement. In the late 1860s, Barrow subdivided his land into tenancies and freedmen moved their households from the old slave quarter to family farms. Among Barrow plantation tenants in 1881, one out of four families was named Barrow.

This was the first change made, and for several years it produced good results. After a while, however, even the liberal control of the foremen grew irksome, each man feeling the very natural desire to be his own "boss" and farm to himself. As a consequence of this feeling, the two squads split into smaller and then still smaller squads, still working for part of the crop… [But this system proved unsatisfactory].

[T]he present arrangement…while it had difficulties in inception, has been found to work thoroughly well. Under it our colored farmers are tenants, who are responsible only for damage to the farms they work and for the prompt payment of their rent. [They] farm on a small scale, only two of them having more than one mule.… [T]he location of the houses caused considerable inconvenience and so it was determined to scatter them.…

The labor of the farm is performed by the man, who usually does the plowing, and his wife and children, who do the hoeing, under his direction.… [T]heir landlord interferes only far enough to see that sufficient cotton is made to pay the rent.… The usual quantity of land planted is between twenty-five and thirty acres, about half of which is in cotton and the rest in corn and [vegetable] patches.…

The slight supervision which is exercised over these tenants may surprise those ignorant of how completely the relations between the races at the South have changed. Mr. Barrow lives on his plantation, and yet there are some of his tenants' farms which he does not visit as often as once a month.…

[The tenants] have become suited to their new estate, and it to them. I do not know of a single Negro who has swelled the number of the "exodus."

Source: *David Crenshaw Barrow, "A Georgia Plantation,"* Scribners Monthly *XXI (April 1881) pp. 830–836.*

QUESTIONS

1. What changes in labor arrangements occurred on the Barrow plantation in the sixteen years after the Civil War? What remained the same?
2. Do you think Barrow's role as a member of landowning family shaped his account of postwar changes? If so, how?

Go to the website at www.cengage.com/history/boyerenduring7e for additional primary sources on this period.

Beyond America

GLOBAL INTERACTIONS

Freedom's Impact: Serfs, Slaves, and Land

In 1861, Tsar Alexander II of Russia emancipated the Russian serfs by decree. Of Russia's 74 million people, about 47 million were serfs (unfree labor bound to the land on which they worked). The Tsar, who had held the throne since 1855, hoped to modernize Russia and make it more like Western Europe. Most of his subjects agreed that serfdom impeded economic growth, that Russia's defeat in 1856 in the Crimean war made reform imperative, and that change was inevitable. Even landowning nobles *(pomeshchiki)*, who dragged their feet, reluctantly gave way: They preferred legal change to violent change. As the Tsar told Moscow nobles: "Better that the reform should come from above than wait until serfdom is abolished from below."

Complex regulations shaped emancipation of the serfs. The Tsar's decree freed about half the serfs, who gained legal rights and eventual title to the land that they worked or its equivalent. If they accepted one quarter of that, they owed nothing. If not, they took on a long-term debt to the state; the state, in turn, compensated noble landowners, many of them absentee owners. Some years later, Russia emancipated millions more serfs who worked on government-owned estates. The emancipation process was long-term, lasting almost five decades; by 1870, only two-thirds of the serfs had begun the process. After emancipation, no former serf fully owned land. Each peasant commune or village received land in communal ownership with collective responsibility for redemption payments. Officials of the *mir*, or village commune, apportioned land plots, determined taxes, and regulated the lives of former serfs, who could not leave the commune or sell their land without permission.

The emancipation of Russian serfs differed in significant ways from emancipation of slaves in the United States. In Russia, where by 1861 many had long expected serfdom to expire, the state imposed emancipation without using force. Russian nobles did not suffer military defeat; they exerted some leverage in setting the rules for emancipation, received compensation, lost little social or economic power, and retained their former authority. In the United States in 1861, in contrast, few expected emancipation to occur. The institution of slavery (unlike Russian serfdom) had flourished in the 1850s; demand for slaves grew and prices rose. American slavery ended only violently, due to civil war. Though various legal measures shaped emancipation in the United States—the two compensation acts, the Emancipation Proclamation, and ultimately the Thirteenth Amendment—it was the Union Army's victory that truly freed the slaves. Compared to Russia, where the emancipation process dragged on for decades, emancipation in the United States was sudden and abrupt. Unlike Russian nobles, southern slaveowners did not affect the terms of emancipation, received no recompense for financial loss, and faced a postwar era of strife and upheaval. During Reconstruction, stringent measures brought rights to former slaves, including the exceptional right to male suffrage. Male enfranchisement made the status of freedmen in the United States unique among former slaves, such as those in Haiti and in the British Caribbean, and different from that of former Russian serfs as well. Reconstruction, briefly, had revolutionary potential.

But the emancipation of Russian serfs and American slaves had some similarities, too, especially as the radical thrust of Reconstruction in the United States was short-lived. In both instances, sooner or later, landowners regained authority over labor, sought profit from agricultural production, and held social advantage. In both post-emancipation societies, landowners and agricultural workers remained distinct castes that differed in dress, speech, and customs. In neither case did social structure drastically or permanently change. Special laws, too, affected the newly freed. In Russia, the *mir's* power to restrict movement and impose taxes fueled peasant discontent. Rural African Americans resented lack of mobility and limited rights. Most important, freed serfs, like former slaves, remained poor, exploited, and dependent on former masters, especially in regard to labor and land.

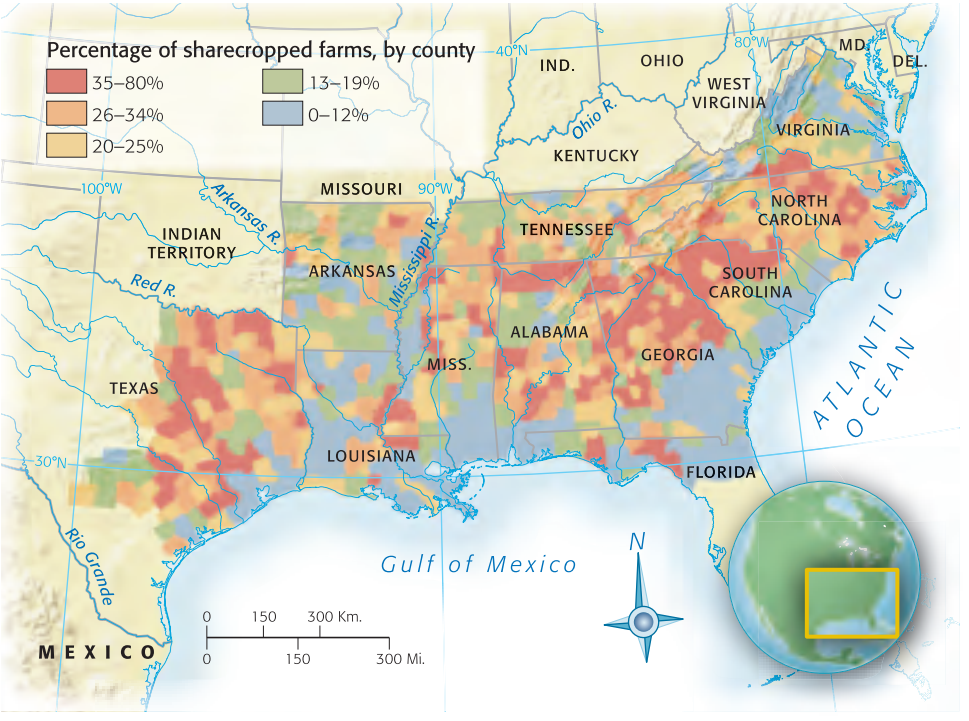
In both Russia and the American South, large numbers of former bondspeople remained tied to the land. In Russia, big landowners retained 60 percent of the land. Peasants who gained land received only small plots and survived only by laboring on large estates, either for wage payments or on a sharecropping basis. Thus landowners retained the service of former serfs. A similar situation prevailed in the ex-Confederate states, where former slaveowners almost never ceded land. Within a decade, sharecropping and

FREEING THE SERFS A Russian official in 1861 reads the Tsar's decree of emancipation to serfs on an estate near Moscow. *(Sovfoto/Eastfoto)*

debt peonage bound many former slaves to the land they farmed. In neither region did agricultural methods change or productivity rise. In both Russia and the ex-Confederate states, enduring patterns of land ownership and regulation of labor squelched the one-time high hopes of former bondspeople. "He who was a slave is now at best but a serf," wrote Adelbert Ames, the Maine carpetbagger who served as governor of Mississippi during Reconstruction, to a friend in 1913. "His road to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness seems endless—thanks to the attitude of our Christian nation of this day and generation."

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

- In what ways did the process of emancipation differ in Russia and United States in the 1860s?
- To what extent were the legacies of emancipation similar? Why?



MAP 16.3 SOUTHERN SHARECROPPING, 1880 The depressed economy of the late 1870s caused poverty and debt, increased tenancy among white farmers, and forced many renters, black and white, into sharecropping. By 1880, the sharecropping system pervaded most southern counties, with the highest concentrations in the cotton belt from South Carolina to eastern Texas.

Source: U.S. Census Office, Tenth Census, 1880, *Report of the Production of Agriculture* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1883), Table 5.

New Concerns in the North, 1868–1876

The nomination of Ulysses S. Grant for president in 1868 launched a chaotic era in national politics. Grant's two terms in office saw political scandals, a party revolt, massive depression, and steady retreat from Reconstruction policies. By the mid-1870s, northern voters cared more about the economic climate, unemployment, labor unrest, and currency problems than about the "southern question." Responsive to the shift in popular mood, Republicans became eager to end sectional conflict and turned their backs on the freedmen of the South.

SHARECROPPERS DURING RECONSTRUCTION By the end of the 1870s, about three out of four African-Americans in the cotton-producing states had become sharecroppers. Here, sharecroppers pick cotton in Aiken, South Carolina. *(© Collection of the New York Historical Society)*

Grantism

Republicans had good reason to bypass party leaders and nominate the popular Grant. A war hero, Grant was endorsed by Union veterans and widely admired throughout the North. To oppose Grant, the Democrats nominated New York governor Horatio Seymour, arch-critic of the Lincoln administration in wartime and now a foe of Reconstruction. Grant ran on personal popularity more than issues. Although he carried all but eight states, the popular vote was close; in the South, newly enfranchised freedmen provided Grant's margin of victory.

A strong leader in war, Grant proved a passive president. Although he lacked Johnson's instinct for disaster, he had little political skill. Many of his cabinet appointees were mediocre if not unscrupulous; scandals plagued his administration. In 1869, financier Jay Gould and his partner Jim Fisk tried to corner the gold market with the help of Grant's brother-in-law, a New York speculator. When gold prices tumbled, investors were ruined and Grant's reputation suffered. Then, before the president's first term ended, his vice president, Schuyler Colfax, was found to be linked to the Crédit Mobilier, a fraudulent scheme to skim off the profits of the Union Pacific Railroad. Discredited, Colfax was dropped from the Grant ticket in 1872.

More trouble lay ahead. Grant's private secretary, Orville Babcock, was unmasked in 1875 after taking money from the "whiskey ring," distillers who bribed federal agents to avoid paying millions in taxes. In 1876, voters learned that Grant's secretary of war, William E. Belknap, had taken bribes to sell lucrative Indian trading posts in Oklahoma. Impeached and disgraced, Belknap resigned.

Although uninvolved in the scandals, Grant defended his subordinates. To his critics, "Grantism" came to stand for fraud, bribery, and political corruption—evils that spread far beyond Washington. In Pennsylvania, for example, the Standard Oil Company and the Pennsylvania Railroad controlled the legislature. Urban politics also provided rich opportunities for graft and swindles. The New York City press revealed in 1872 that Democratic boss William M. Tweed, the leader of Tammany Hall, led a ring that had looted the city treasury and collected at millions in kickbacks and payoffs. When Mark Twain and coauthor Charles Dudley Warner published their satiric novel *The Gilded Age*

BOSS TWEED Thomas Nast's cartoons in *Harper's Weekly* helped topple New York Democratic boss William M. Tweed, who, with his associates, embodied corruption on a large scale. The Tweed Ring had granted lucrative franchises to companies they controlled, padded construction bills, practiced graft and extortion, and exploited every opportunity to plunder the city's funds. *(Brown Brothers and Harper's Weekly, 1871)*

(1873), readers recognized the book's speculators, self-promoters, and opportunists as familiar types in public life. (The term "Gilded Age" was subsequently used to refer to the decades from the 1870s to the 1890s.)

Grant had some success in foreign policy. In 1872, his administration engineered the settlement of the *Alabama* claims with Britain. To compensate for damage done by Confederate-owned but British-built ships, an international tribunal awarded the United States $15.5 million. But Grant's administration faltered when it tried to add non-adjacent territory to the United States. In 1867, Johnson's secretary of state, William H. Seward, had negotiated a treaty in which the United States bought Alaska from Russia at the bargain price of $7.2 million. Although the press mocked "Seward's Ice Box," the purchase kindled expansionists' hopes. In 1870, Grant decided to annex the eastern half of the Caribbean island of Santo Domingo (today called the Dominican Republic); the territory had been passed back and forth since the late eighteenth century among France, Spain, and Haiti. Annexation, Grant believed, would promote Caribbean trade and provide a haven for persecuted southern blacks. American speculators anticipated windfalls from land sales, commerce, and mining. But Congress disliked Grant's plan. Senator Charles Sumner denounced it as an imperialist "dance of blood." The Senate rejected the annexation treaty and further diminished Grant's reputation.

As the election of 1872 approached, dissident Republicans expressed fears that "Grantism" at home and abroad would ruin the party. The dissidents took action. Led by a combination of former Radicals and other Republicans left out of Grant's "Great Barbecue" (a disparaging reference to profiteers who feasted at the public trough), the president's critics formed their own party, the **Liberal Republicans.**

"Anything to Beat Grant."

The Liberals' Revolt

The Liberal Republican revolt split the Republican Party and undermined support for Republican southern policy. (The label "liberal" at the time meant support for economic doctrines such as free trade, the gold standard, and the law of supply and demand.) Denouncing "Grantism" and "spoilsmen" (political hacks who gained party office), Liberals demanded civil service reform to bring the "best men" into government. Rejecting the "regular" Republicans' high-tariff policy, they espoused free trade. Most important, Liberals condemned "bayonet rule" in the South. Even some once-Radical Republicans claimed that Reconstruction had achieved its goal: blacks had been enfranchised and could now manage for themselves. Corruption in government, North and South, posed greater danger than Confederate resurgence, Liberals claimed. In the South, they said, corrupt Republican regimes remained in power because the "best men"—the most capable politicians—were ex-Confederates barred from office holding.

For president, the new party nominated *New York Tribune* editor Horace Greeley, who had inconsistently supported both a stringent reconstruction policy and leniency toward former rebels. The Democrats endorsed Greeley as well; their campaign slogan was "Anything to Beat Grant." Horace Greeley campaigned so diligently that he worked himself to death making speeches from the back of a train, and died a few weeks after the election.

Grant, who won 56 percent of the popular vote, carried all the northern states and most of the sixteen southern and border states. But division among Republicans affected Reconstruction. To deprive the Liberals of a campaign issue, Grant Republicans in Congress, the "regulars," passed the Amnesty Act, which allowed all but a few hundred ex-Confederate officials to hold office. A flood of private amnesty acts followed. In Grant's second term, Republican desires to discard the "southern question" mounted as depression gripped the nation.

The Panic of 1873

The postwar years brought accelerated industrialization, rapid economic growth, and frantic speculation. Investors rushed to profit from rising prices, new markets, high tariffs, and seemingly boundless opportunities. Railroads led the speculative boom. In May 1869, railroad executives drove a golden spike into the ground at Promontory Point, Utah, joining the Union Pacific and Central Pacific lines. By 1873, almost four hundred railroad corporations crisscrossed the Northeast, consuming tons of coal and miles of steel rail from the mines and mills of Pennsylvania and neighboring states. Transforming the economy, the railroad boom led entrepreneurs to overspeculate, with drastic results.

Philadelphia banker Jay Cooke, who had helped finance the Union effort with his wartime bond campaign, had taken over a new transcontinental line, the Northern Pacific, in 1869. Northern Pacific securities sold briskly for several years, but in 1873

the line's construction costs outran bond sales. In September, Cooke defaulted on his obligations, and his bank, the largest in the nation, shut down. A financial panic began; other firms collapsed, as did the stock market. The Panic of 1873 triggered a five-year depression. Banks closed, farm prices plummeted, steel furnaces stood idle, and one out of four railroads failed. Within two years, eighteen thousand businesses went bankrupt; 3 million were unemployed by 1878. Wage cuts struck those still employed; labor protests mounted; and industrial violence spread. The depression of the 1870s revealed that conflicts born of industrialization had replaced sectional divisions.

The depression also fed a dispute over currency that had begun in 1865. During the Civil War, Americans had used greenbacks, a paper currency not backed by a specific weight in gold. To stabilize the postwar currency, "sound money" supporters demanded withdrawal of greenbacks from circulation. Their opponents, "easy money" advocates, such as farmers and manufacturers dependent on easy credit, wanted an expanding currency, that is, more greenbacks. Once depression began, demands for such "easy money" rose. The issue divided both major parties and was compounded by another one: how to repay the federal debt.

In wartime, the Union government had borrowed what were then astronomical sums, mainly by selling war bonds. Bondholders wanted repayment in coin, gold or silver, even though many had paid for bonds in greenbacks. To pacify bondholders, Senator John Sherman of Ohio and other Republicans pressed for the Public Credit Act of 1869, which promised repayment in coin. With investors reassured, Sherman guided legislation through Congress that swapped the old short-term bonds for new ones payable over the next generation. In 1872, another bill in effect defined "coin" as "gold coin" by dropping the silver dollar from the official coinage. Through a feat of compromise, which placated investors and debtors, Sherman preserved the public credit, the currency, and Republican unity. His Specie Resumption Act of 1875 promised to put the nation on the gold standard in 1879.

But Sherman's measures did not satisfy the Democrats, who gained control of the House in 1875. Many Democrats and some Republicans demanded restoration of the silver dollar in order to expand the currency and relieve the depression. These "free-silver" advocates secured passage of the Bland-Allison Act of 1878, which partially restored silver coinage by requiring the Treasury to buy several million dollars worth of silver each month and turn it into coin. In 1876, other expansionists formed the **Greenback Party,** which adopted the debtors' cause and fought to keep greenbacks in circulation, though with little success. As the depression receded in 1879, the clamor for "easy money" subsided, only to resurge in the 1890s. The controversial "money question" of the 1870s, never resolved, gave politicians and voters another reason to forget about the South.

The controversial "money question" of the 1870s gave politicians and voters another reason to forget about the South.

Reconstruction and the Constitution

The Supreme Court of the 1870s also played a role in weakening northern support for Reconstruction. In wartime, few cases of note had reached the Court. After the war, however, constitutional questions arose.

First, would the Court support congressional laws to protect freedmen's rights? The decision in *Ex parte* Milligan (1866) suggested not. In *Milligan*, the Court declared that a military commission established by the president or Congress could not try civilians in areas remote from war where the civil courts were functioning. Thus special military courts to enforce the Supplementary Freedmen's Bureau Act were doomed. Second, would the Court sabotage the congressional Reconstruction plan, as Republicans feared? In *Texas v. White* (1869), the Court ruled that although the Union was indissoluble and secession was legally impossible, the process of Reconstruction was still constitutional. It was grounded in Congress's power to ensure each state a republican form of government and to recognize the legitimate government in any state.

But in the 1870s, the Court backed away from Reconstruction. In the **slaughterhouse cases** of 1873, the Supreme Court chipped away at the Fourteenth Amendment. The cases involved a business monopoly, not freedmen's rights, but provided an opportunity to interpret the amendment narrowly. In 1869, the Louisiana legislature had granted a monopoly over the New Orleans slaughterhouse business to one firm and closed down all other slaughterhouses in the interest of public health. The excluded butchers brought suit. The state had deprived them of their lawful occupation without due process of law, they claimed; such action violated the Fourteenth Amendment, which guaranteed that no state could "abridge the privileges or immunities" of U.S. citizens. The Supreme Court upheld the Louisiana legislature by issuing a doctrine of "dual citizenship." The Fourteenth Amendment, declared the Court, protected only the rights of *national* citizenship, such as the right of interstate travel, but not those rights

that fell to citizens through *state* citizenship. The *Slaughterhouse* decision vitiated the intent of the Fourteenth Amendment—to secure freedmen's rights against state encroachment.

The Supreme Court again backed away from Reconstruction in two cases in 1876 involving the Enforcement Act of 1870, enacted to protect black suffrage. In *United States* v. *Reese* and *United States* v. *Cruikshank*, the Supreme Court undercut the act's effectiveness. Continuing its retreat from Reconstruction, the Supreme Court in 1883 invalidated both the Civil Rights Act of 1875 and the Ku Klux Klan Act of 1871. These decisions cumulatively dismantled the Reconstruction policies that Republicans had sponsored after the war and confirmed rising northern sentiment that Reconstruction's egalitarian goals could not be enforced.

Republicans in Retreat

The Republicans did not reject Reconstruction suddenly but rather disengaged from it gradually, a process that began with Grant's election to the presidency in 1868. Not an architect of Reconstruction policy, Grant defended it. But he believed in decentralized government and hesitated to assert federal authority in local and state affairs.

In the 1870s, as northern military force shrank in the South, Republican idealism waned in the North. The Liberal Republican revolt of 1872 eroded what remained of radicalism. Among "regular" Republicans, who backed Grant, many held ambivalent views. Commercial and industrial interests now dominated both wings of the party, and few Republicans wished to rekindle sectional strife. After the Democrats won the House in 1874, support for Reconstruction became a political liability.

"We are in a very hot political contest just now, with a good prospect of turning out the carpetbag thieves by whom we have been robbed for the past six to ten years."

By 1875, the Radical Republicans, so prominent in the 1860s, had vanished. Chase, Stevens, and Sumner were dead. Other Radicals had lost office or conviction. "Waving the Bloody Shirt"—defaming Democratic opponents by reviving wartime animosity—now seemed counterproductive. Republican leaders reported that voters were "sick of carpetbag government" and tiring of both the "southern question" and the "Negro question." It seemed pointless to continue the unpopular and expensive policy of military intervention in the South to prop up Republican regimes that even President Grant found corrupt. Finally, few Republicans shared the egalitarian spirit that had animated Stevens and Sumner. Politics aside, Republican leaders and voters generally agreed with southern Democrats that blacks, although worthy of freedom, were inferior to whites. To insist on black equality would be thankless, divisive, politically suicidal—and would quash any hope of reunion between the regions. The Republicans' retreat from Reconstruction set the stage for its demise in 1877.

Reconstruction Abandoned, 1876–1877

"We are in a very hot political contest just now," a Mississippi planter wrote to his daughter in 1875, "with a good prospect of turning out the carpetbag thieves by whom we have been robbed for the past six to ten years." Similar contests raged through the South in the 1870s, as the white resentment grew and Democratic influence surged. By the end of 1872, the Democrats had regained power in Tennessee, Virginia, Georgia, and North Carolina. Within three years, they won control in Texas, Alabama, Arkansas, and Mississippi (see Table 16.4). By1876, Republican rule survived in only three states—South Carolina, Florida, and Louisiana. Democratic victories in state elections of 1876 and political bargaining in Washington in 1877 abruptly ended what little remained of Reconstruction.

"Redeeming" the South

Republican collapse in the South accelerated after 1872. Congressional amnesty enabled ex-Confederate officials to regain office; divisions among the Republicans weakened their party's grip on the southern electorate; and attrition diminished Republican ranks. Carpetbaggers returned North or became Democrats. Scalawags deserted in even larger numbers. Tired of northern interference and finding "home rule" by Democrats a possibility, Scalawags concluded that staying Republican meant going down with a sinking ship. Scalawag defections ruined Republican prospects. Unable to win new white votes or retain the old ones, the always-fragile Republican coalition crumbled.

Meanwhile, Democrats mobilized once-apathetic white voters. The resurrected southern Democratic party was divided: businessmen who envisioned an industrialized "New South" opposed an agrarian faction called the Bourbons—the old planter elite. But Democrats shared one goal: to

TABLE 16.4 THE DURATION OF REPUBLICAN RULE IN THE EX-CONFEDERATE STATES

Former Confederate States	Readmission to the Union Under Congressional Reconstruction	Democrats (Conservatives) Gain Control	Duration of Republican Rule
Alabama	June 25, 1868	November 14, 1874	6½ years
Arkansas	June 22, 1868	November 10, 1874	6½ years
Florida	June 25, 1868	January 2, 1877	8½ years
Georgia	July 15, 1870	November 1, 1871	1 year
Louisiana	June 25, 1868	January 2, 1877	6½ years
Mississippi	February 23, 1870	November 3, 1875	6½ years
North Carolina	June 25, 1868	November 3, 1870	2 years
South Carolina	June 25, 1868	November 12, 1876	8 years
Tennessee	July 24, 1866[1]	October 4, 1869	3 years
Texas	March 30, 1870	January 14, 1873	3 years
Virginia	January 26, 1870	October 5, 1869[2]	0 years

Source: John Hope Franklin, Reconstruction After the Civil War *(Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962), 231.*

[1] Admitted before start of congressional Reconstruction
[1] Democrats gained control before readmission.

oust Republicans from office. Tactics varied by state. Alabama Democrats won by promising to cut taxes and by getting out the white vote. In Louisiana, the "White League," a vigilante organization formed in 1874, undermined Republicans. Intimidation also proved effective in Mississippi, where violent incidents—like the 1874 slaughter in Vicksburg of about three hundred blacks by rampaging whites—terrorized black voters. In 1875, the "Mississippi plan" took effect: local Democratic clubs armed their members, who dispersed Republican meetings, patrolled voter-registration places, and marched through black areas. "The Republicans are paralyzed through fear and will not act," the anguished carpetbag governor of Mississippi wrote to his wife. "Why should I fight a hopeless battle?" In 1876, South Carolina's "Rifle Clubs" and "Red Shirts," armed groups that threatened Republicans, continued the scare tactics that had worked so well in Mississippi.

Intimidation did not completely squelch black voting, but Democrats deprived Republicans of enough black votes to win state elections. In some counties, they encouraged freedmen to vote Democratic at supervised polls where voters publicly placed a card with a party label in a box. In other instances, economic pressure impeded black suffrage. Labor contracts included clauses barring attendance at political meetings; planters used eviction threats to keep sharecroppers in line. Together, intimidation and economic pressure succeeded.

"Redemption," the word Democrats used to describe their return to power, brought sweeping changes. Some states called constitutional conventions to reverse Republican policies. All cut back expenses, wiped out social programs, lowered taxes, and revised their tax systems to relieve landowners of large burdens. State courts limited the rights of tenants and sharecroppers. Most important, the Democrats, or "redeemers," used the law to ensure a stable black labor force. Legislatures restored vagrancy laws, revised crop-lien statutes to make landowners' claims superior to those of merchants, and rewrote criminal law. Local ordinances in heavily black counties often restricted hunting, fishing, gun carrying, and ownership of dogs and thereby curtailed freedmen's everyday activities. States passed severe laws against trespassing and theft; stealing livestock or wrongly taking part of a crop became grand larceny with a penalty of up to five years at hard labor. By Reconstruction's end, black convict labor was commonplace.

For the freedmen, whose aspirations rose under Republican rule, redemption was devastating. The

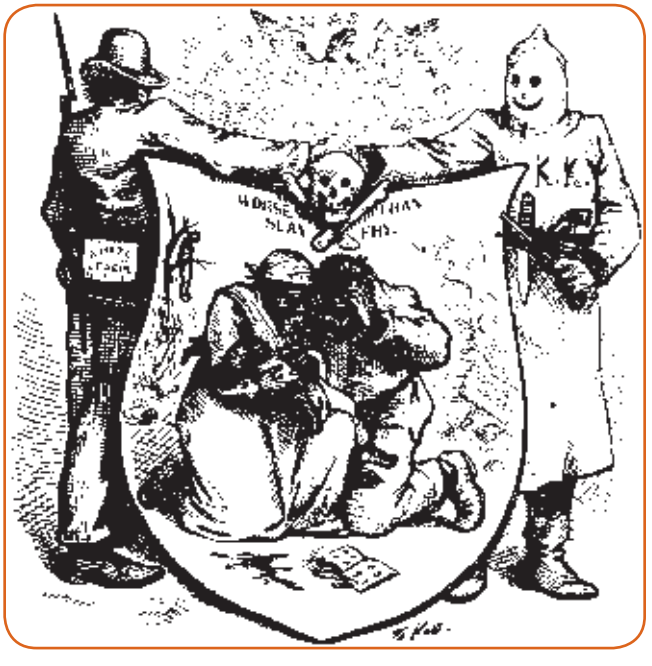
new laws, Tennessee blacks contended at an 1875 convention, would impose "a condition of servitude scarcely less degrading than that endured before the late civil war." In the late 1870s, as the political climate grew more oppressive, an "exodus" movement spread through Mississippi, Tennessee, Texas, and Louisiana. Some African-Americans became homesteaders in Kansas. After an outbreak of "Kansas fever" in 1879, four thousand **"exodusters"** from Mississippi and Louisiana joined about ten thousand who had reached Kansas earlier in the decade. But the vast majority of freedmen, devoid of resources, had no migration options or escape route. Mass movement of southern blacks to the North and Midwest would not gain momentum until the twentieth century.

The Election of 1876

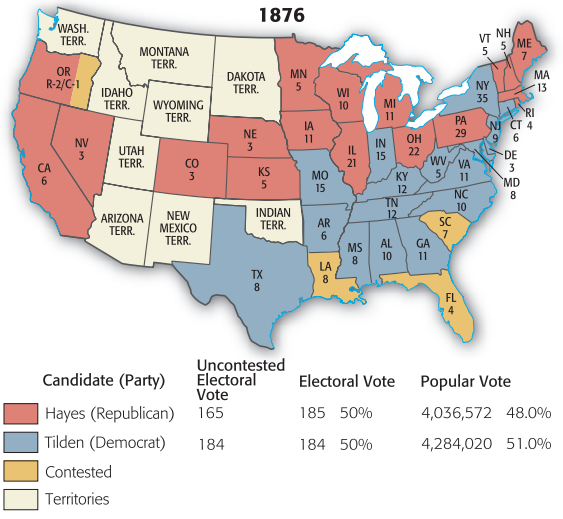
By the autumn of 1876, with redemption almost complete, both parties sought to discard the heritage of animosity left by the war and Reconstruction. Republicans nominated Rutherford B. Hayes, three times Ohio's governor, for president. Untainted by the Grant-era scandals and popular with all factions in his party, Hayes presented himself as a "moderate" on southern policy. He favored "home rule" in the South and a guarantee of civil and political rights for all—two contradictory goals. The Democrats nominated Governor Samuel J. Tilden of New York, a millionaire corporate lawyer and political reformer, known for his assaults on the Tweed Ring that had plundered New York City's treasury. Both candidates favored sound money, endorsed civil-service reform, and decried corruption, an irony since the 1876 election would be extremely corrupt.

Tilden won the popular vote by a 3 percent margin and seemed destined to capture the 185 electoral votes needed for victory (see Map 16.4). But the Republicans challenged the pro-Tilden returns from South Carolina, Florida, and Louisiana. If they could deprive the Democrats of these nineteen electoral votes, Hayes would triumph. The Democrats, who needed only one of the disputed electoral votes for victory, challenged (on a technicality) the validity of Oregon's single electoral vote, which the Republicans had won. Twenty electoral votes, therefore, were in contention. But Republicans still controlled the electoral machinery in the three unredeemed southern states, where they threw out enough Democratic ballots to declare Hayes the winner.

The nation now faced an unprecedented dilemma. Each party claimed victory in the contested states, and each accused the other of fraud. In fact, both sets of southern results involved fraud: the Republicans had discarded legitimate Democratic ballots, and the Democrats had illegally prevented freedmen from voting. In January 1877, Congress created a special electoral commission—seven Democrats, seven Republicans, and one independent—to decide which party would



THE WHITE LEAGUE Alabama's White League, formed in 1874, strove to oust Republicans from office by intimidating black voters. To political cartoonist Thomas Nast, such vigilante tactics suggested an alliance between the White League and the outlawed Ku Klux Klan. (*Harper's Weekly, October 24, 1874*)



Candidate (Party)	Uncontested Electoral Vote	Electoral Vote		Popular Vote	
Hayes (Republican)	165	185	50%	4,036,572	48.0%
Tilden (Democrat)	184	184	50%	4,284,020	51.0%
Contested					
Territories					

MAP 16.4 THE DISPUTED ELECTION OF 1876 Congress resolved the contested electoral vote of 1876 in favor of Republican Rutherford B. Hayes.

THE EXODUS TO KANSAS Benjamin "Pap" Singleton, a one-time fugitive slave from Tennessee, returned there to promote the "exodus" movement of the late 1870s. Forming a real estate company, Singleton traveled the South recruiting parties of freed people who were disillusioned with the outcome of Reconstruction. These "exodusters" (top), awaiting a Mississippi River boat, looked forward to political equality, freedom from violence, and homesteads in Kansas. The second photo shows African-American emigrants in Nicodemus, Kansas in 1885. *(Kansas State Historical Society and Library of Congress)*

get the contested electoral votes. When the independent resigned, Congress replaced him with a Republican, and the commission gave Hayes the election by a vote of 8 to 7.

Congress now had to certify the new electoral vote. But Democrats controlled the House, and some threatened to obstruct debate and delay approval of the electoral vote. Had they done so, the nation would have lacked a president on inauguration day, March 4. Room for compromise remained, for many southern Democrats accepted Hayes's election: former scalawags with commercial interests still favored Republican financial policies; railroad investors expected Republican support for a southern transcontinental line. Other southerners did not mind conceding the presidency as

"When you turned us loose, you turned us loose to the sky, to the storm, to the whirlwind, and worst of all… to the wrath of our infuriated masters."

long as the new Republican administration would leave the South alone. Republican leaders, although sure of eventual triumph, were willing to bargain as well, for candidate Hayes desired not merely victory but southern approval.

Informal negotiations ensued, at which politicians exchanged promises. Ohio Republicans and southern Democrats, who met at a Washington hotel, agreed that if Hayes won the election, he would remove federal troops from South Carolina and Louisiana, and Democrats could gain control of those states. In other bargaining sessions, southern politicians asked for federal patronage, federal aid to railroads, and federal support for internal improvements. In return, they promised to drop the filibuster, to accept Hayes as president, and to treat freedmen fairly. With the threatened filibuster broken, Congress ratified Hayes's election. Once in office, Hayes fulfilled some of the promises his Republican colleagues had made. He appointed a former Confederate as postmaster general and ordered federal troops who guarded the South Carolina and Louisiana statehouses back to their barracks. Federal soldiers remained in the South after 1877 but no longer served a political function. Democrats, meanwhile, took over state governments in Louisiana, South Carolina, and Florida. When Republican rule toppled in these states, the era of Reconstruction finally ended.

But some of the bargains struck in the **Compromise of 1877,** such as Democratic promises to treat southern blacks fairly, were forgotten, as were Hayes's pledges to ensure freedmen's rights. "When you turned us loose, you turned us loose to the sky, to the storm, to the whirlwind, and worst of all…to the wrath of our infuriated masters," Frederick Douglass had charged at the Republican convention in 1876. "The question now is, do you mean to make good to us the promises in your Constitution?" The answer provided by the 1876 election and the 1877 compromises was "No."

CHRONOLOGY 1865–1877

1863	President Abraham Lincoln issues Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction.
1864	Wade-Davis bill passed by Congress and pocket-vetoed by Lincoln.
1865	Freedmen's Bureau established. Civil War ends. Lincoln assassinated. Andrew Johnson becomes president. Johnson issues Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction. Ex-Confederate states hold constitutional conventions (May–December). Black conventions begin in the ex-Confederate states. Thirteenth Amendment added to the Constitution. Presidential Reconstruction completed.
1866	Congress enacts the Civil Rights Act of 1866 and the Supplementary Freedmen's Bureau Act over Johnson's vetoes. Ku Klux Klan founded in Tennessee. Tennessee readmitted to the Union. Race riots in southern cities. Republicans win congressional elections.
1867	Reconstruction Act of 1867. William Seward negotiates the purchase of Alaska. Constitutional conventions meet in the ex-Confederate states. Howard University founded.
1868	President Johnson is impeached, tried, and acquitted. Omnibus Act. Fourteenth Amendment added to the Constitution. Ulysses S. Grant elected president.
1869	Transcontinental railroad completed.
1870	Congress readmits the four remaining southern states to the Union. Fifteenth Amendment added to the Constitution. Enforcement Act of 1870.
1871	Second Enforcement Act. Ku Klux Klan Act.
1872	Liberal Republican party formed. Amnesty Act. *Alabama* claims settled. Grant reelected president.
1873	Panic of 1873 begins (September–October), setting off a five-year depression.
1874	Democrats gain control of the House of Representatives.
1875	Civil Rights Act of 1875. Specie Resumption Act.
1876	Disputed presidential election: Rutherford B. Hayes versus Samuel J. Tilden.
1877	Electoral commission decides election in favor of Hayes. The last Republican-controlled governments overthrown in Florida, Louisiana, and South Carolina.
1879	"Exodus" movement spreads through several southern states.

CONCLUSION

Between 1865 and 1877, the nation experienced a series of crises. In Washington, conflict between President Johnson and Congress led to a stringent Republican plan for restoring the South, a plan that included the radical provision of black male enfranchisement. President Johnson ineptly abetted the triumph of his foes by his defiant stance, which drove moderate Republicans into an alliance against him with Radical Republicans. In the ex-Confederate states, Republicans took over and reorganized state governments. A new electorate, in which recently freed African-Americans were prominent, endorsed Republican policies. Rebuilding the South cost millions, and state expenditures soared. Objections to taxes, resentment of black suffrage, and fear of "Negro domination" spurred counterattacks on African-Americans by former Confederates.

Emancipation reshaped black communities where former slaves sought new identities as free people. African-Americans reconstituted their families; created black institutions, such as churches and schools; and participated in government for the first time in American history. They also took part in the transformation of southern agriculture. By Reconstruction's end, a new labor system, sharecropping, replaced slavery. Begun as a compromise between freedmen and landowners, sharecropping soon trapped African-Americans and other tenant farmers in a cycle of debt; black political rights waned as well as Republicans lost control of the southern states.

The North, meanwhile, hurtled headlong into an era of industrial growth, labor unrest, and financial crises. The political scandals of the Grant administration and the impact of depression after the Panic of 1873 diverted northern attention from the South. By the mid-1870s, northern politicians were ready to discard the Reconstruction policies that Congress had imposed a decade before. Simultaneously, the southern states returned to Democratic rule, as Republican regimes toppled one by one. Reconstruction's final collapse in 1877 reflected not only a waning of northern resolve but a successful ex-Confederate campaign of violence, intimidation, and protest that had started in the 1860s.

Reconstruction's end gratified both political parties. Although unable to retain a southern constituency, the Republican Party no longer faced the unpopular "southern question." The Democrats, now empowered in the former Confederacy, remained entrenched there for over a century. To be sure, the South was tied to sharecropping and economic backwardness as securely as it had once been tied to slavery. But "home rule" was firmly in place. Reconstruction's end also signified a triumph for nationalism and reunion. As the nation applauded reconciliation of South and North, Reconstruction's reputation sank. Looking back on the 1860s and 1870s, most late-nineteenth-century Americans dismissed the congressional effort to reconstruct the South as a fiasco—a tragic interlude of "radical rule" or "black reconstruction" fashioned by carpetbaggers, scalawags, and Radical Republicans.

With the hindsight of a century, historians continued to regard Reconstruction as a failure, though of a different kind. No longer viewed as a misguided scheme that collapsed because of radical excess, Reconstruction is now widely seen as a democratic experiment that did not go far enough. Historians cite two main causes. First, Congress did not promote freedmen's independence through land reform; without property of their own, southern blacks lacked the economic power to defend their interests as free citizens. Property ownership, however, does not necessarily ensure political rights nor invariably provide economic security. Considering the depressed state of postwar southern agriculture, the freedmen's fate as independent farmers would likely have been perilous. Thus the land-reform question remains a subject of debate. A second cause of Reconstruction's collapse evokes less dispute: the federal government neglected to back congressional Reconstruction with military force. Given the choice between protecting blacks' rights at whatever cost and promoting reunion, the government opted for reunion. As a result, the nation's adjustment to the consequences of emancipation would continue into the twentieth century.

The Reconstruction era left some significant legacies, including the Fourteenth and Fifteenth amendments. Although neither amendment would be used to protect minority rights for almost a century, they remain monuments to the democratic zeal that swept Congress in the 1860s. The aspirations and achievements of Reconstruction also left an indelible mark on black citizens. After Reconstruction, many Americans turned to their economic futures—to railroads, factories, and mills, and to the exploitation of the country's bountiful natural resources.

KEY TERMS

Charles Sumner (p. 468)
Thaddeus Stevens (p. 468)
Andrew Johnson (p. 469)
Presidential Reconstruction (p. 470)
"black codes" (p. 470)
Civil Rights Act of 1866 (p. 471)
Fourteenth Amendment (p. 471)
Reconstruction Act of 1867 (p. 472)
Tenure of Office Act (p. 474)
Fifteenth Amendment (p. 475)
Susan B. Anthony (p. 475)
Ku Klux Klan (p. 479)
Enforcement Acts (p. 480)
Civil Rights Act of 1875 (p. 483)
sharecropping (p. 485)
Liberal Republicans (p. 492)
Greenback Party (p. 493)
slaughterhouse cases (p. 493)
"exodusters" (p. 496)
Compromise of 1877 (p. 498)

FOR FURTHER REFERENCE

David W. Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory* (2001). Explores competing views on the significance of the Civil War in the Reconstruction era and the decades that followed.

Garrett Epps, *Democracy Reborn: The Fourteenth Amendment and the Fight for Civil Rights in Post-Civil War America* (2006). Examines the struggle to protect citizenship for African Americans.

Carol F. Faulkner, *Women's Radical Reconstruction: The Freedmen's Aid Movement* (2004). A study of abolitionist teachers and women's rights advocates, their impact on federal policy, and their interactions with former slaves.

Eric Foner, *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution, 1863–1877* (1988). A thorough exploration of Reconstruction that draws on recent scholarship and stresses the centrality of the black experience.

Steven Hahn, *A Nation Under Our Feet: Black Political Struggles in the Rural South from Slavery to the Great Migration* (2003). How African-American communities shaped politics during and after Reconstruction.

Tera W. Hunter, *To' Joy My Freedom: Southern Black Women's Lives and Labors After the Civil War* (1997). Explores the experience of women workers in Atlanta from Reconstruction into the twentieth century.

Peter Kolchin, *A Sphinx on the American Land: The Nineteenth-Century South in Comparative Perspective* (2003). Includes a comparative approach to emancipation and its impact.

Nicholas Lemann, *Redemption: The Last Battle of the Civil War* (2006). Explores the role of ex-Confederate resistance in Reconstruction's demise.

Leon Litwack, *Been in the Storm So Long: The Aftermath of Slavery* (1979). A comprehensive study of the black response to emancipation in 1865–1866.

Heather Cox Richardson, *The Death of Reconstruction: Race, Labor, and Politics in the Post-Civil War North, 1865–1901* (2001). Explores northern disenchantment with Reconstruction policies and the dwindling of northern support for freed blacks in the South.

See our interactive eBook for larger maps and other study/review materials.