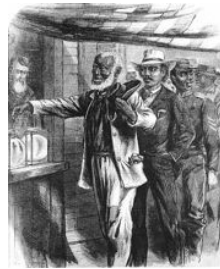
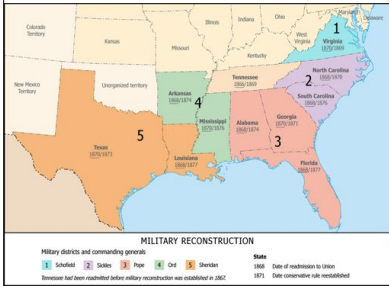


# Reconstruction

1865-1877



# Reconstruction

"Give me your hand master, now that I have got a good hold of this tree I can help you out of your trouble..."



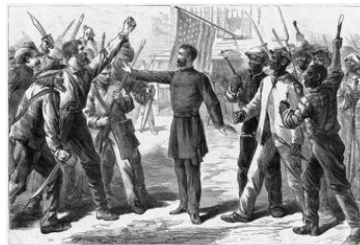
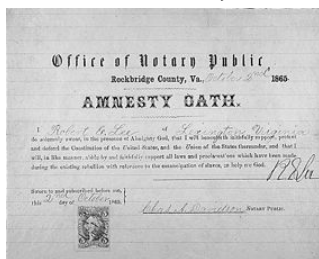
"My friend I think you had better use all means to get ashore, even it if is a black man that saves you..."

You go to thunder! Do you think I'll let an infernal nigger take me by the hand? No sir-ree - this is a white man's government..."



# Reconstruction

1865-1877; the rebuilding of America right after the Civil War



## Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction

the name of Lincoln's plan:  
he wanted to reunite the country  
quickly and painlessly

granted pardons to Confederates who would  
swear allegiance to the Union

*Confederate officials and those accused of war crimes  
were not pardoned as part of this plan*

each former Confederate state would be allowed  
to form a government and petition to rejoin the  
Union once 10% of the voters  
registered in 1860 swore to follow the  
Constitution

## Wade-Davis Bill

the name of the

Congress's plan:

Radical Republicans were Northern  
politicians who wanted to punish former  
Confederates (especially slave owners) and  
give Southern blacks full citizenship

their plan said that Confederate states could  
rejoin the Union once a majority  
of those on the 1860 voting lists took an oath  
to uphold the Constitution  
would also have to swear that they never  
supported the Confederacy in any way

## Freedmen's Bureau



federal organization created to provide  
food, clothing, shelter,  
fuel, and advice on negotiating labor contracts to  
newly freed blacks  
*(but unfortunately no medical help)*

also attempted to oversee relations between  
freedmen and their former masters

the Bureau was authorized to sell confiscated  
Confederate land in portions of up to  
40 acres per buyer

*(a myth was that slaves had been promised  
40 acres and a mule, but this was not so)*

With the Freedmen's Bureau's help, the recently freed slaves began voting  
*(700,000 blacks voted for Grant in the 1868 election, helping him to become the next President)*

the Bureau was unable to protect the slaves from the KKK,  
who terrorized freedmen for trying to vote, hold a political office, or own land

*fun fact: the Freedmen's Bureau was headed by Headed by Union Army General Oliver O. Howard,  
born in Leeds, Maine; he attended Monmouth Academy, North Yarmouth Academy, and Kents Hill School and graduated  
from Bowdoin College; graduated fourth in his class from the United States Military Academy and fought valiantly for the  
Union in the Civil War, losing his arm and earning the Medal of Honor*

## Black Codes



“rules that created  
a twilight zone between slavery and freedom”

blacks *could* legally marry, own property,  
sue in court, and go to school

blacks *could not* serve on juries,  
carry weapons, testify against or  
marry whites, or start their own businesses  
they also had to obey curfews and needed  
permits to travel

many were unjustly arrested and placed in work  
camps, used for their labor

## Jim Crow Laws

established a pattern of segregation  
in all public facilities

blacks and whites were separated in railway cars, schools,  
hospitals, restaurants, parks, playgrounds, water fountains, etc.  
began in 1870 and by 1890 existed throughout the entire South



## Sharecropping and Tenant Farming



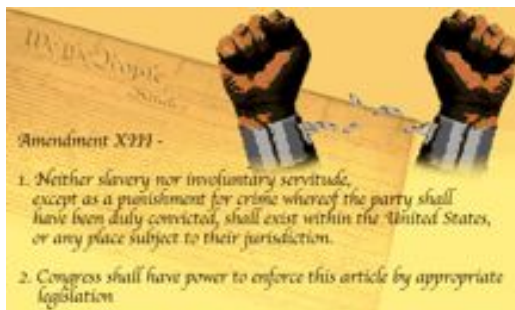
“ sharecroppers ” were blacks and poor whites lived on and worked land they did not own  
they gave the owner a portion of the harvest in return for allowing them to farm the land  
in theory, they could save money and eventually rent the land from the owner or buy it outright  
they could keep all of their harvest each year (*this rarely happened*)

after crops were shared and they paid their debts there was usually no money left

“ tenant ” farmers owned their own mules and equipment

(*sharecroppers were poorer and of lower status*)

# Constitutional Assistance



## The Thirteenth Amendment

(ratified by December, 1865)

although slaves had been declared free by the Emancipation Proclamation

in 1863, it was only in

“areas in rebellion” against the Union

the 13th Amendment abolished slavery and “involuntary servitude” throughout the nation  
*(again, an amendment is more permanent)*

## The Fourteenth Amendment

(passed by Congress June 13, 1866; ratified in 1868)

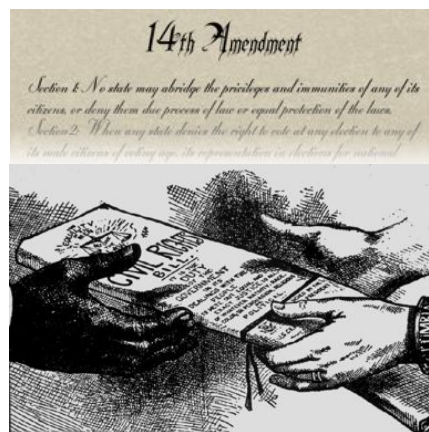
in 1866, Johnson vetoed one bill that would have provided civil rights to blacks and another that would have continued to fund the Freedmen’s Bureau

angry Radical Republicans overrode Johnson’s vetoes

they drafted the 14th Amendment to take the place of the Civil Rights Bill  
*(again, an amendment is more permanent)*

the 14th Amendment stated that all US citizens were entitled to equal protection under the law

*it also said that any state that stopped black people from voting would lose their representatives in Congress!*



# Voting Rights

disenfranchisement occurs when someone’s right to vote is taken away from them

at first, racist Southern whites controlled black voters in poorer “white counties” so they let them vote once blacks started voting for themselves (and for black candidates) the racist whites started passing local voting laws that made it more difficult for blacks to vote:



added a two year residency requirement : newly-freed blacks were moving around, trying to find a good living situation; they weren’t usually in one place for two years at a time

men convicted of certain crimes couldn’t vote

instituted the “understanding clause :”

a voter had to read and interpret a portion of the Constitution the level of “understanding” was decided by a voting clerk  
*(usually white - sometimes illiterate themselves!)*

instituted a “grandfather clause :”

if your grandfather voted, then you could

instituted a Poll Tax : a yearly tax paid to vote and had to bring receipt with you

the “Eight-Box Ballot Act of 1882” (SC):

there were separate ballots and ballot boxes for each candidate or issue illiterate voters couldn’t tell which box to use - boxes were even moved around!

The Fifteenth Amendment of 1870

granted African American men the right to vote

*“the right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude”*

*(only fully realized when the Voting Rights Act was passed in 1965)*



# Reconstruction Ends

the focus of Reconstruction began to shift from  
social (equality) needs to economic (income) needs

Southerners really resented the presence of federal troops and other northerners in the South

Scalawags :  
white Southerners who  
worked with Northern  
businessmen and  
politicians  
considered traitors in  
the South



Carpetbaggers :

Northerners who moved to the South after the war  
some teachers and ministers felt a moral duty to help  
some business people wanted to start new industries  
some were dishonest, stealing from the locals  
*supposedly carried all their belongings in a bag made of carpet*

## Election of 1876

Republican Rutherford B. Hayes v. Democrat Samuel J. Tilden  
(supported by the north) (supported by the south)

elections in some southern states were disputed: both Democrats *and* Republicans claimed victory

the House of Representatives set up an electoral commission to figure it out  
comprised of 8 Republicans and 7 Democrats

the commission (by majority [Republican] vote) gave all the disputed votes to Hayes (of course)

Southerners weren't happy, so the House created the Compromise of 1877 :

- Southern states would accept Hayes as the winner if:
- > Southern states received funds for railroads, roads, bridges, etc.
- > federal troops were withdrawn from the South

Reconstruction is essentially over (especially for the blacks)

# Plessy v. Ferguson

(1896)



Louisiana passed the Separate Car Act in 1892,  
legally segregating railroad cars

30-year-old Homer Plessy, an “octoroon”  
(1/8<sup>th</sup> black), sat in white section of a railroad car  
was arrested for violating the segregation law

his case was appealed all the way to the Supreme Court

in 1896, the Supreme Court upheld the Louisiana segregation as constitutional

Justice Henry Brown wrote:

*“The object of the Fourteenth Amendment was undoubtedly to enforce the absolute equality of the two races before the law, but in the nature of things it could not have been intended to abolish distinctions based upon color, or to enforce social, as distinguished from political equality, or a commingling of the two races upon terms unsatisfactory to either.”*

the Plessy decision set the precedent that “separate” facilities for blacks and whites  
were constitutional as long as they were “equal” (*they never were*)

the “separate but equal” doctrine was quickly extended to cover many  
areas of public life, such as restaurants, theaters, restrooms, and public schools

facilities for blacks, however, were always inferior to those for whites

not until the 1954 Brown v. Board of Education case would  
“separate but equal” be struck down