VOLUME 1

Building the American Republic

A NARRATIVE HISTORY TO 1877

Harry L. Watson

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CHAPTER 15

Reconstructing the Republic, 1865–1877

Easter Sunday morning, April 13, 1873, was not a day of peace in the tiny hamlet of Colfax, the seat of government in Grant Parish, Louisiana. Two rival governments of Louisiana, one supported by ex-Confederate Democrats and the other by black Republicans and their white allies, had emerged from a racially charged election dispute. In Grant Parish, each set of claimants demanded the surrender of the other, and both sides were preparing to fight.

Grant Parish lies in north-central Louisiana, between the Red River and Bayou Darro. In 1873, its black population lived on waterfront cotton and sugar plantations while most white families lived on smaller upland farms, leaving the parish almost evenly divided between white and black. The Red River country had a rough reputation for African American slaves, but conditions there had radically changed since the antebellum days. Freed by the Civil War, the black men of Grant could vote in 1873 and swore to defend their chosen government by force if necessary. As a New Orleans newspaper put it, "The years of freedom which they have enjoyed have had their effect on them, as well as the military education which many of them received in the United States Army. The time is past, if ever it existed, when a handful of whites could frighten a regiment of colored men."

When Republicans and Democrats both claimed victory in the state elections of 1872, black Republicans expelled white Democrats from the Colfax courthouse, but whites recruited their neighbors to fight back. "When that Tytantic Black Hand was sweeping over the Red River Valley in 1873 we Catahoula Parish boys—then known as the Old Time Ku Klux Klan—were called to the Test of White Supremacy and rescue of the town of Colfax," one participant remembered much later. When sufficient forces arrived—variously estimated at 125–300

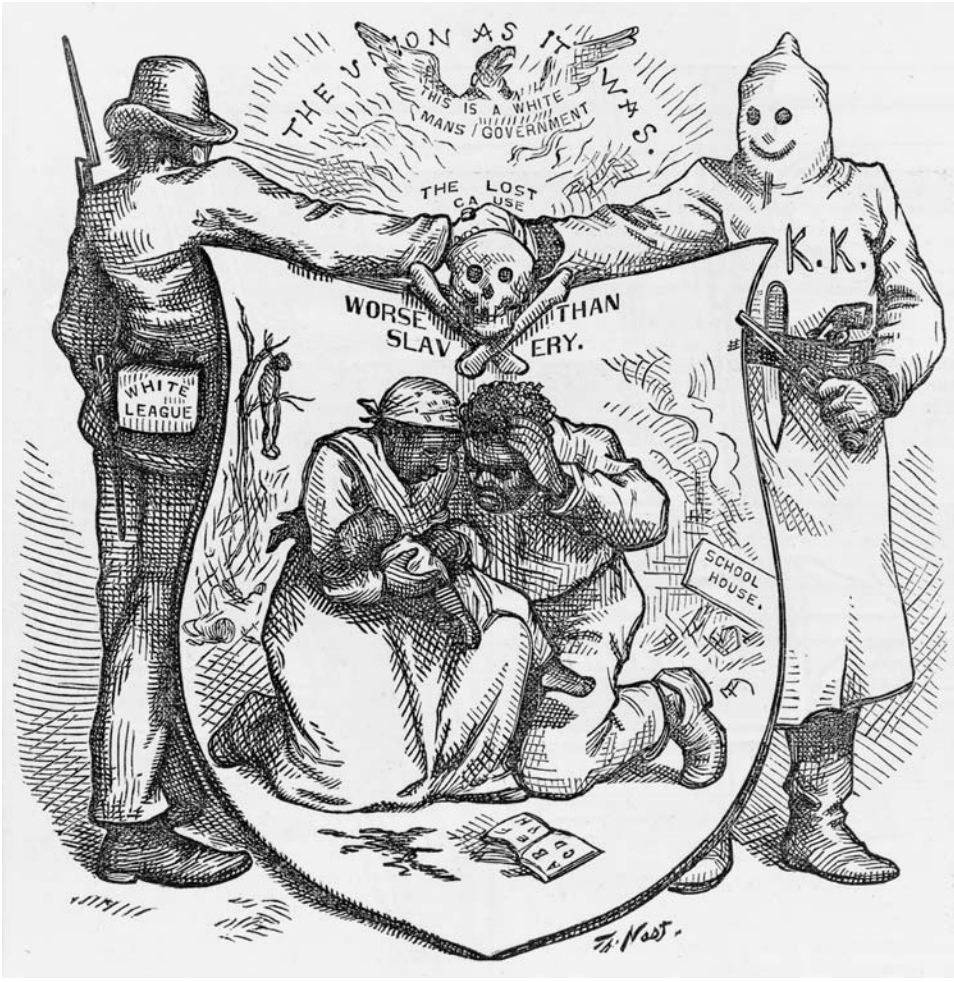

FIGURE 11. As northern support for Reconstruction faded in the 1870s, violence by the Ku Klux Klan and similar groups brought former Confederates back to power in the southern states, and reversed many of the gains won by freed people. Miscellaneous Items in High Demand, Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress, LC-USZ62-128619.

men—white sheriff Columbus Nash summoned black organizer Levi Allen for a parley.

"I give you two hours to get your negro women and children and all the negroes who do not want to fight out of town," Nash demanded. "We are going to get 'em." Astride his handsome horse and flourishing an impressive sword, Allen remained defiant. "I'll see you when you get 'em," he shot back and galloped to his lines. The contenders traded

rifle and cannon fire for two hours without effect until 30 white men slipped around the defenders and attacked from the rear. Caught in a cross fire, the black fighters fell back to the courthouse and kept shooting until the whites set its roof ablaze.

Then the killing began in earnest. According to the recollections of white participants, fleeing blacks "were ridden down in the open fields and shot without mercy," while bayonet thrusts dispatched the wounded. Fighting finally ceased around 4:00 p.m., and white leaders decided to hold the 40 or so black survivors for a later trial. But after most whites had gone home, a band of "young, reckless, and irresponsible men," filled up with liquor, decided not to wait for courtroom justice. With gunshots crackling "like popcorn in a skillet," they killed their prisoners on the spot. No one can be sure how many died in Colfax that day, but New Orleans police later buried over 60 bodies, and families buried others privately. The Colfax Massacre was the bloodiest single incident in the violence-torn years that followed the Civil War, the era of America's Reconstruction.

How was the Colfax Massacre possible? Why was the control of local government worth so much bloodshed? How, only ten years after the Emancipation Proclamation, had African American men won the power to carry arms and cast ballots? All these questions were central to the issues raised by the effort to reconstruct the Union after the Civil War.

The struggle in Grant Parish was part of a much wider conflict between whites and blacks, southerners and northerners, Democrats and Republicans, over how to rebuild American society. Even before the Civil War began, Americans had used the word "reconstruction" to describe the process of bringing the seceding states back into the Union. They continued this legal usage at war's end, but the end of slavery meant that full reconstruction would include social and economic transformation as well as political and constitutional reunification. As the battle in Colfax illustrated, social and political change blended, for participants could not implement their visions for a post-slave society without invoking local, state, and national governments.

In the spring of 1877, conservative white southerners won a major political victory, as blacks lost support from northern white Republicans and the federal government abandoned formal efforts to remake the South. Despite the withdrawal of federal troops and the formal readmission of the seceding states, the society and economy of the South were still profoundly changed from the days of legalized slavery. Social, economic, and even political questions were not fully settled

in 1877, and struggles continued until 1900 and beyond as Americans wrestled over the structure and traditions of their transformed republic for generations to come.

Binding Up the Nation's Wounds

Putting the United States back together again was a monumental task. The seceding and border states suffered serious physical damage that needed repair. More profoundly, emancipation had overturned the South's fundamental institution but left the practical meaning of freedom unclear. White northerners, white southerners, and the four million former slaves all differed over what should replace slavery. Black Americans' role in the new national order became a deeply charged political issue with profound consequences for the postwar world.

War and emancipation had also strained the nation's constitutional fabric. If secession was illegal (as the North had always insisted), were the former Confederates guilty of treason? If so, how should they be punished? Or forgiven? Did the seceding states still have "states' rights," or were they more like conquered provinces? Who should determine the meaning of black freedom—white northerners, white southerners, or blacks themselves? And who should settle these questions—Congress or the president? Debates over these issues would lead to more violence and the first impeachment of a president of the United States.

FREEDOM AND DESTRUCTION

War's end brought widespread rejoicing for the victors, mingled with grief and anger over the death of President Abraham Lincoln on April 15, 1865, just five days after the major Confederate surrender at Appomattox Court House in Virginia. As fighting sputtered out, Union generals Ulysses S. Grant and William T. Sherman brought their armies to Washington for a grand victory parade, and most of their soldiers soon left for their homes. A small number of Union troops, many of them black, remained behind to police the defeated South. Stretched very thin and kept under constant political pressure, they would be responsible for protecting the fragile experiment of Reconstruction.

Returning Union veterans knew they were lucky to be alive. Just over 2.2 million men—about half of those eligible—had worn blue uniforms, but at least 360,000 had died in service, and 275,000 had suffered wounds. These casualties were an immense sacrifice by the

standards of earlier and later wars. The 4,800 Americans who died in one day at the Battle of Antietam, for example, had exceeded the 4,000 battle deaths in the entire Revolutionary War. As many as 750,000 Americans perished in the Civil War, almost twice the number who died in World War II. Unlike their Confederate counterparts, former Union soldiers would receive generous federal pensions in the years ahead, though southern state governments would do what they could for their aging veterans.

Historians once believed that the Civil War enriched the North, as large military expenditures stimulated the production of iron and steel and fostered the growth of a powerful industrial economy. In fact, these developments had begun before the war, and the destruction of lives and property probably did more to slow economic growth than hasten it. After a sharp recession caused by the cancellation of military contracts, growth resumed by the beginning of 1868 as railroad construction boomed, cities expanded, European immigration continued to expand, and settlers flocked to the Great Plains. In the decades to come, northern workers would feel the sting of poverty and deprivation as their employers struggled to keep costs down and profits up, and protests would reverberate through northern society, but most northern Americans would escape the grinding want that afflicted many black and white southerners.

In politics, northern voters split unevenly between a Republican majority and a Democratic minority. The Republicans had formed in 1854 to oppose the Kansas-Nebraska Act and the spread of slavery to the territories, and their victory in the presidential election of 1860 had sparked southern secession. Strongly appealing to Union veterans and native-born, middle-class whites, Republicans had fervently supported the war for the Union and wanted to protect what their sacrifices had achieved. Especially in Congress, a small but determined group of Radical Republicans pressed for strong antislavery measures in wartime and active aid to the newly freed thereafter. Moderate Republicans preferred to move more gradually but often became more radical when white southerners resisted even limited change.

Like their southern counterparts, northern Democrats praised white men's equality, states' rights, and a weak federal government. Many had southern sympathies and strongly objected to emancipation and racial equality as wartime goals. Their party was popular among foreign-born urban workers and native-born Americans—often midwesterners with southern roots—from isolated or underdeveloped rural districts. The war's political legacy gave a strongly partisan cast

to Reconstruction policies. Especially among Republicans, the war's goals had changed over time. At first, most northerners had fought to restore "the Union as it was." As the war continued, many realized that they could not restore the old Union and had to establish a new one without slavery, the cause of the Union's rupture. Even before the war, slavery had shaped rival visions for America, and northerners now expected their own vision to prevail. Without entirely realizing it, they wanted southerners to concede a moral as well as a military victory, to surrender their principles along with their guns and admit they had been wrong. To do so, northerners wanted southerners to renounce slavery completely, reject their secessionist leaders, embrace surviving unionists, and treat their ex-slaves fairly. Few ex-Confederates could willingly pass this test of loyalty.

Defeated Confederates faced a far different future from their Union counterparts, and despair gripped many. "We have nothing on earth to look forward to," mourned Sarah Hine of Savannah, Georgia. "We have no future, no country, we are slaves to the will of others & must do their bidding. . . . May God forgive me for there are times when . . . I feel as if I could not accept his will in the matter." Physical destruction alone surpassed anything felt in most parts of the North. Advancing and retreating armies had burned bridges, factories, and homes. Mile after mile of railroad track had been heated in bonfires and twisted around trees to make "Sherman's neckties," and the condition of most railway bridges and rolling stock was no better. Assault and capture left nothing but forests of blackened chimneys and charred walls across Atlanta, Charleston, Columbia, and Richmond. Rival armies had demolished many of the Confederacy's new arsenals and factories and put an end to the South's ambitious efforts at government-sponsored industrialization.

Outside southern cities, four years of combat had left barns, fences, ditches, fields, and farm equipment to the forces of weeds and decay. The armies had taken thousands of horses and mules, and grain and other livestock had fed the hungry. Family valuables had disappeared, and Confederate bonds and currency were worthless. Their capital gone, southern banks collapsed and left merchants without credit to reopen their businesses. The South's farms suffered less than its cities, but the crucial question of farm labor remained unanswered.

The South's human casualties were more serious than its property damage. While roughly half of northern men remained civilians, almost every southern white male of military age—as many as 1.5 million men between the ages of 17 and 55—had entered Confederate service

in some form or another. Of these, at least 250,000 were now dead and 225,000 more had suffered wounds. The number of amputees was so great that the largest single item in the Mississippi state budget for 1866–1867 was an appropriation of $30,000 to purchase artificial legs for the survivors.

Northern observers reported that the South had accepted its defeat, but the end of fighting was not the same as a change of heart. New York journalist Whitelaw Reid toured the South in the summer of 1865 and agreed that the former Confederates had submitted to defeat. But "question them as to everything for which the war was fought," he warned, "the doctrine of secession, the rightfulness of slavery, the wrongs of the South, and they are found as full of the sentiments that made the rebellion as ever." Carl Schurz, another touring northern Republican, found that "the loyalty of the masses and most of the leaders of the southern people consists in submission to necessity. There is, except in individual instances, an entire absence of that national spirit which forms the basis of true loyalty and patriotism." Republicans ambitious to remake the South would soon find that this degree of submission was less than what they had hoped for.

Despite the war's destruction, peacetime brought jubilation to one key group of Americans. The wartime Emancipation Proclamation promised freedom to most African Americans, though the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution, abolishing slavery throughout the United States, was not ratified until December 1865. As Union troops advanced and slavery crumbled, planters usually asked their former chattels to remain at work, promising them wages at harvest time. Many agreed, but some struck out immediately. Almost 200,000 African American men had joined the Union Army or Navy. Like the black veterans in Colfax, military service strengthened their determination to defend and assert their liberty in peacetime, and bolstered their claim to full civic and political equality. The newly freed also began to travel, some seeking work or lost family members, others simply tasting liberty and hoping to see the world a bit. As a cook explained to her protesting former owner, "No, Miss, I must go. If I stay here I'll never know I'm free."

PLANNING FOR RECONSTRUCTION

Reconstruction had started informally during wartime, when Union commanders had begun to administer the occupied parts of the Confederacy. President Lincoln sought to formalize this process in Decem-

ber 1863. Though the Constitution defined treason as "making war on the United States," he offered to pardon all but a few Confederate leaders if they would accept the end of slavery and swear future loyalty to the United States. Under this offer, when 10 percent of a state's electorate had taken this oath, they could reestablish a state government and reenter the Union.

Lincoln tried out his Ten Percent Plan in parts of Virginia, Tennessee, Arkansas, and especially Louisiana, which was mostly under Union control by 1864, but the resulting governments still resisted the end of slavery. On July 2, 1864, Congress responded with a new law known as the Wade-Davis Bill after Radical Republican senator Ben Wade of Ohio and Congressman Henry Winter Davis of Maryland. It allowed a state to elect a constitutional convention when half its electorate swore loyalty to the Union, but limited convention membership to those who swore an "iron-clad oath" that they had never supported the Confederacy in any way. If the convention wrote a new state constitution that abolished slavery, repudiated (that is, forever refused to repay) the Confederate debt, and barred high-ranking Confederates from holding office, Congress and the president could recognize the new government and restore it to the Union. Hoping that his much more tolerant Ten Percent Plan would persuade Confederates to lay down their arms, Lincoln refused to sign the Wade-Davis Bill, and plans for political reconstruction remained deadlocked.

In the meantime, Congress created the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands in March 1865, better known as the Freedmen's Bureau, and gave it jurisdiction over all matters related to the former slaves. In the immediate aftermath of war, the Freedmen's Bureau established hospitals, schools, and settlement camps for the homeless and distributed some 13 million emergency rations to both whites and blacks. Its agents' most important duties were helping blacks make wage labor contracts with white farmers, but whites often criticized it for treating the freed people too generously. Some bureau agents were abolitionists who sympathized with the former slaves; some sided with former masters and others tried to be impartial, but whites who still expected the prerogatives of ownership resented all their activities.

From Thomas Jefferson to Abraham Lincoln, American leaders had once believed that free blacks could never live peacefully or equally with whites, so African Americans would have to emigrate if slavery ever ended. By war's end, however, most Americans had abandoned

this idea. The sheer size of the black population, the enormous costs of colonization, the economic importance of black labor, and the freed people's almost universal unwillingness to move all discouraged mass colonization. Most now realized that African Americans would remain in the United States and press for their own definition of freedom in a racially mixed society. But what should this mean in practice?

Southern whites, northern whites, and African Americans all differed widely in their expectations for black freedom. Many ex-Confederates still believed that slavery had benefited both blacks and whites, so black "freedom" should be very much like bondage. One former agent of the Freedmen's Bureau later remembered, "Many of the planters seemed to be unable to understand that work could be other than a form of slavery, or that it could be accomplished without some prodigious binding and obligating of the hireling to the employer." For these ex-masters, only some form of forced labor would allow the South to regain prosperity and tranquility, and anything like legal equality for freed people seemed inconceivable. As they saw it, the South's traditional leaders should quickly return to power and impose special laws to govern black conduct. If Negroes must be free, they reasoned, their "freedom" must be a kind of tutelage or serfdom under the control of their former masters.

Northern whites differed among themselves about the future of African Americans. Many northern Democrats sympathized with the racial views of white southerners. Former abolitionists often thought that the freedmen should enjoy absolute legal equality with whites, including the right to vote and hold office. Some, like Pennsylvania congressman Thaddeus Stevens, wanted to punish the southern ruling class by confiscating their plantations and distributing the land to their former slaves, but few other Republicans agreed. They assumed instead that free blacks would work for wages like other laborers, doing the same tasks as before, and enjoying equal rights to move about, choose employers, change jobs, acquire property, make contracts, sue and be sued, and testify in court. They distinguished this *legal* equality from what they called *political* equality, which included the right to vote, hold office, and serve on juries, and also from *social* equality, meaning the right to be received equally in private social circles and, above all, to marry white people.

The former slaves had their own notions of freedom. Over and over, they spurned the accusation of laziness. "The necessity of working is perfectly understood by men who have worked all their lives," a black

editor remarked tartly. They certainly rejected any system of forced labor, but even working for wages reminded them too much of slavery itself. Instead, they wanted lands of their own. "We have a right to the land where we are located," Virginia freedman Bayley Wyat insisted. "Our wives, our children, our husbands, has been sold over and over again to purchase the lands we now locates upon; for that reason, we have a divine right to the land." Ex-slaves also gathered in state-level meetings over the summer of 1865 to demand legal and political equality. Some simply asked for the legal rights supported by most northern whites, but others wanted the right to vote, which Virginia representatives called "our inalienable right as freemen, and which the Declaration of Independence guarantees to all free citizens of this government." In the end, the structure of black "freedom" did not match the expectations of southern whites, northern whites, or the freed people themselves, but blended all three.

LAND AND LABOR

The first task of most freed people was to support themselves. Even before formal emancipation, the Union Army and the Freedmen's Bureau had helped refugees with emergency shelter, meals, and medical attention. Some help continued into peacetime, but military and civilian authorities tried to end it as soon as possible. Hopes for widespread black land ownership sagged in the fall of 1865, when President Johnson revoked the allocation of 40-acre tracts to formerly enslaved families in South Carolina and Georgia and returned the land to its previous owners. Affected families protested bitterly. "Why do you take away our lands?" they wept. "You take them from us who have always been true to the Government! You give them to our all-time enemies! That is not right." Fearing black self-sufficiency, planters also tried to prevent blacks from renting their own lands. A convention of South Carolina planters demanded that the army force freed people back to work on their old plantations and resolved "that under no circumstances whatsoever will we rent land to any freedmen."

Denied their own farms, most freed people negotiated annual work contracts with a white landowner, often with the help of a Freedmen's Bureau agent. Typical agreements offered food and rations very similar to those provided to slaves, and wages that ranged from about $10 per month for adult men down to a small fraction of that for children. Typical contracts required workers to be "respectful to [the planter]

and his family or Superintendent," as a North Carolina agreement put it, while imposing stiff fines for "time lost by idleness or absence without leave," partial payment of wages until harvest, and forfeiture of all back wages if the worker quit. Assisted by these agreements, southern farmers planted spring crops in 1865 and began to restore the South's agricultural economy.

The contract system quickly collapsed. Northern farmhands faced no such restrictions, and southern workers despised them. Laborers and employers quarreled over the work of family members, with many black women refusing field labor to care for their own children. Above all, field hands resented the return to gang labor under the strict gaze of an overseer and complained that many planters still used the whip. According to a plantation journal of 1869, free workers were "anxious to rid themselves of all supervision on the part of the white race, and look upon it as a sort of continual badge, or remembrancer, of their former condition of servitude."

The alternative was a system of tenancy known as sharecropping. Instead of working directly under the planter's supervision, each black family leased a small plot of land for one year, and their landlord supplied seed, tools, fertilizer, a work animal, and a house in return for half the crop. Tenants who managed to supply some or all of these necessities themselves could increase their share to as much as three-fourths of what they grew. Sharecropping contracts required the tenant to plant a staple crop, usually cotton, which the tenants could not eat but commanded a ready sale.

Tenancy allowed families to control their own time and decide who would or would not work in the fields, but carried a burden of its own. Sharecroppers raised little or no food but purchased necessities on credit from the country stores that sprang up at every crossroads, frequently paying exorbitant rates of interest and offering their own shares of the growing crop as collateral. When the time came to settle up, the landlord took his half of the crop as rent and the merchant took all or most of the rest in payment for his loan. As landowners opened stores and storekeepers bought farmland, moreover, the landlord and merchant might become the same person. Left with little or nothing at the end of the year, the tenant had to sign up for another round, beginning each January with no more savings than the last. Sharecropping left most African Americans impoverished and dependent on white landlords and storekeepers, and trapped large portions of the rural South in a seemingly hopeless cycle of poverty. Ten-

ancy combined some aspects of black, northern white, and southern white conceptions of freedom by allowing some family autonomy (as blacks wanted), creating a nominally free labor market (as northerners wanted), and leaving ultimate power with the old planter class (as white southerners wanted). In the declining farm economy of the late nineteenth century, moreover, millions of white yeoman families lost their lands and entered sharecropping as well.

FAMILY, SCHOOL, AND CHURCH

Another crucial goal for African Americans was to reestablish and protect their families. State laws had not recognized slave marriages, sales had divided husbands and wives from each other and parents from children, and the first thought of many freed people had been to find lost loved ones. Couples also flocked to ministers or government officials for legally binding weddings and struggled with former masters for custody of their children.

Within black families, free husbands could claim patriarchal authority that once belonged to masters. As blacks chose surnames, most wives adopted the names of their husbands, just as whites did. Some wives refused to work outside the home, preferring to care for their own children and avoid sexual exploitation in the workplace, while others challenged the power of their husbands and asked federal officials to settle their disputes. Unlike white women, no one had taught black women that politics lay beyond their "sphere," so they freely joined public meetings. The law favored men, however, and black men eventually claimed the same gender privileges as white men.

Regardless of age or family status, all northern observers agreed that the freed men, women, and children of the South were desperately eager for education. Most slave states had made it a crime to teach slaves to read, so learning was a prized symbol of liberty as well as an invaluable survival skill. "Too much cannot be said of the desire to learn among this people," reported an Alabama agent of the Freedmen's Bureau. "Everywhere to open a school is to have it filled." With bureau support, abolitionists, philanthropists, and previously freed blacks responded with organizations like the New England Freedmen's Aid Society and the American Missionary Association to supply money, teachers, and books for freed people's education.

Without state funds, communities combined charity and self-help to pay for schools. Classes could number as many as a hundred pupils

of all ages in a barn or similar makeshift structure. Teachers faced furious white hostility and violence, as southern communities refused to accept them, churches denied them membership, and night riders attacked their homes and schoolhouses. The pursuit of education persisted, however, as black communities struggled to create and perpetuate institutions to serve the race. Over time, communities, churches, and philanthropic groups not only prepared for black inclusion in state public school systems but also for historically black colleges and universities, including Hampton University, Howard University, Tuskegee University, Fisk University, and many others.

African Americans also transformed their religious life by withdrawing from predominantly white congregations, creating their own churches, and worshiping freely. The Baptist denomination remained the most popular, but northern-based and all-black variants of Methodism also grew rapidly, including the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church and the related AME Zion Church. The AME Church exploded dramatically, from 20,000 members in 1856 to 400,000 in 1880, and other denominations grew proportionately. Though often struggling to erect the simplest buildings and to pay thinly stretched ministers, churches became central institutions of the black community, enforcing a strict code of morality among their members and anchoring other community activities, from education, charity, and women's leadership to political organizing.

Early in Reconstruction, African American leaders expressed hope that time, patience, and good behavior would lessen white antagonism and promote racial harmony. "We have not come together in battle array to assume a boastful attitude and to talk loudly of high-sounding principles," explained a South Carolina gathering in 1865. "We come together . . . in a spirit of meekness and patriotic good-will toward all the people in the State." The chairman of a North Carolina convention agreed. "We and the white people have to live here together," he pointed out. "The best way is to harmonize our feelings as much as possible and to treat all men respectfully. Respectability will always gain respect."

Unfortunately, many whites did not reciprocate. Steeped in the customs of slavery, former masters attempted to cheat ex-slaves of their wages, to seize custody of their children, to molest black women, to harass black schools and churches, and to assault or murder blacks who defied them. Under these circumstances, African Americans concluded that they needed full political rights to protect the reality of

emancipation. Northern journalist Whitelaw Reid captured this basic democratic insight from a North Carolina black man even while black leaders in the state were still counseling moderation. "I tell you sah," he told the reporter, "we ain't noways safe, 'long as dem people makes the laws we's got to be governed by. We's got to hab a voice in the 'pintin' of the law-makers." The need to protect freedom in African Americans' private lives thus led directly toward public affairs and into the intricate political history of Reconstruction.

Andrew Johnson's Approach

Enraged by northern victory and the prospect of black suffrage, the popular stage actor and southern sympathizer John Wilkes Booth took his revenge on April 14, 1865, with a shot that killed Abraham Lincoln and gave the presidency to Vice President Andrew Johnson of Tennessee. Like Lincoln, the new president assumed that reconstructing the Union was a military and executive task that belonged to him. He did not call a special session of Congress to deal with the sudden challenges of peace but attempted to govern the occupied states by presidential decree. The period when Johnson controlled reunion policy is known as Presidential Reconstruction.

THE TENNESSEE UNIONIST

Much like Abraham Lincoln, Andrew Johnson had grown up in severe poverty, serving as a tailor's apprentice in North Carolina before escaping to freedom in the hills of eastern Tennessee. He did not learn to read until he reached adulthood, yet he rose through minor political offices until he reached the House of Representatives, the governorship, and finally the US Senate. A lifelong Democrat, Johnson proudly represented the nonslaveholding yeomen of the upland South and denounced the region's elite as antirepublican aristocrats. The only southern senator who did not resign his seat when his state seceded, Johnson remained fiercely loyal to the Union and joined Lincoln on the National Union Party ticket in 1864 in a show of trans-sectional and bipartisan solidarity. When Lincoln's tragic death suddenly lifted him to the presidency, however, Andrew Johnson revealed that he sadly lacked the tact, flexibility, and wisdom that so distinguished his predecessor.

Once in office, Andrew Johnson was torn by conflicting feelings.

Acutely sensitive to his own humble origins, he burned with resentment of planter aristocrats and longed to call them to account. "Treason must be made odious, and traitors must be punished and impoverished," he swore repeatedly, highly gratifying Radical Republicans who longed to remake the South. But Johnson himself was not even a Republican, much a less a radical one, and he had no sympathy for Radical Republican notions of racial equality. At heart, Andrew Johnson remained devoted to the principles of President Andrew Jackson, his fellow Tennessean who had made states' rights, limited government, and white man's democracy cornerstones of the early Democratic Party. Since his best chances for election as president in his own right lay with the Democrats rather than Republicans, he soon realized that his own Reconstruction policy should emphasize forgiveness rather than punishment of the secessionists, a speedy restoration of the southern state governments, and reliance on states' rights to decide the fate of the freed people.

JOHNSON'S POLICIES

Six weeks after taking office, Johnson launched a surprisingly lenient Reconstruction policy. He did not mention treason trials or confiscations. Instead, he pardoned all Confederates who renounced secession and accepted emancipation, except for major Confederate leaders and the owners of $20,000 in taxable property. A second proclamation named a provisional governor for North Carolina and required him to call a special convention to write a new state constitution. Unpardoned Confederates could neither serve in this convention nor vote for its delegates, but the state's other suffrage laws remained in effect, so black men (and all women) could not vote. The other seceded states received similar instructions. Once a state had renounced secession, accepted emancipation, repudiated the Confederate debt, and written these changes into a new constitution, Johnson decided, it could elect its own governor, legislature, and members of Congress. When the House and Senate admitted the new representatives, legal Reconstruction would be over.

Southern voters signaled their sentiments through the delegates they chose to these constitutional conventions. They mostly avoided ardent ex-Confederates and strict ex-unionists. They turned instead to so-called Conservatives—often members of the old Whig Party—who resisted secession initially, supported the Confederacy eventu-

ally, and felt entitled to lead their states without submitting to social change. White voters may have thought that choosing Conservative leaders meant rejecting Confederate diehards, but northerners who viewed the "iron-clad oath" as the true test of loyalty could only see that former rebels were returning to power.

In their conventions, these ambivalent ex-Confederates quickly revealed that they had not grasped the limits of their autonomy. As former unionists, they felt sadly vindicated rather than discredited by the war's outcome and saw no reason why they or their states should suffer further. Instead of thanking the president for his lenity, Conservatives bargained over terms and revived the old slogans of "honor" and "states' rights." Some demanded payment for their lost slaves or declined to ratify the Thirteenth Amendment. Many protested the repudiation of state bonds. Others refused to brand disunion as illegal (as Johnson demanded) and would only repeal the ordinances of secession. Allowing blacks to testify against whites was highly unpopular, and no state would permit them to vote.

With constitutions complete, the new legislatures assembled and turned northern irritation into anger. Assuming that blacks would never work or obey the laws voluntarily, the states adopted special laws, known as Black Codes, to regulate their conduct. Mississippi required all blacks to have a year-long contract on January 1 that bound them to a specific employer, punished them for changing jobs, and penalized employers who tried to lure away contracted workers with better job offers. Every southern state soon had "vagrancy" statutes that punished unemployment with a term of forced labor for a private employer. Other provisions restored slave regulations that banned black preachers, prohibited black social or political gatherings, and barred blacks from hunting, fishing, carrying weapons, and leaving a plantation without permission. Apprenticeship laws allowed courts to bind black children to white masters without their parents' permission. The Conservative legislatures made clear they intended to return blacks to near servitude, candidly calling them inferiors who could not be ruled another way.

The former masters' actions were as harsh as their laws. Every day brought new reports of unfair labor contracts and efforts to replicate slavery. The worst disputes ended in whippings, robbery, rape, or even death. "We are murdered with impunity in the streets," ran a typical plea from Newberry, South Carolina, "and the murderers are walking at large and no notice taken of them. We have no law. We pray to the Government for protection."

Northern anger boiled over when President Johnson began pardoning high-ranking Confederates by the hundreds and southern voters chose them for high offices. Despite his earlier threats to punish and impoverish traitors, the president now seemed willing to return the South's elite to power, if only its members would humble themselves to seek his personal forgiveness. For most Confederate leaders, that was a small price to pay. The new governors of Mississippi, South Carolina, and North Carolina had been a Confederate general, a Confederate senator, and the Confederate state treasurer, respectively. Georgia even sent former Confederate vice president Alexander H. Stephens to the US Senate. "There seems in many of the elections," the president admitted, "something like defiance, which is all out of place at this time." Congress was more emphatic. Using their constitutional power to judge the fitness of their own members, the Senate and House both refused to admit the new representatives in December 1865, barring the South's return to the Union and blocking the president's Reconstruction policy.

REPUBLICANS REACT

Congress reacted to abuses of former slaves by extending the life of the Freedmen's Bureau past its original one-year term and leaving federal troops in the South to enforce its decrees. A second measure, the Civil Rights Bill, countered the Black Codes by granting US citizenship to all native-born Americans of every race (except Native Americans living under tribal governments), with the right "to full and equal benefit of all laws and proceedings for the security of person and property, as is enjoyed by white citizens." This central feature overturned the *Dred Scott* case of 1857, which restricted citizenship to whites. Contrary to modern principles, the Civil Rights Bill of 1866 did not secure political activities like the right to vote, hold office, or serve on juries, but guaranteed the citizen's right to move from place to place, earn a living, make contracts, conduct lawsuits, and testify in court. Moderates assumed that President Johnson would support these steps as part of a minimal program to safeguard the results of the Civil War.

Much to the moderates' dismay, however, Andrew Johnson vetoed both the Freedmen's Bureau Bill and the Civil Rights Bill in February and March of 1866. He called the Freedmen's Bureau unnecessary because, he said, the freed people should learn to take care of themselves. If they needed official protection, they should seek it from their state governments. He criticized Congress for providing more bene-

fits to blacks than it ever offered "our own people" and for legislating for the South while it lacked representatives in Congress. He likewise denounced the Civil Rights Bill for expanding federal power at the expense of states' rights. Defending the principle of racial discrimination, Johnson warned that federal guarantees of nonpolitical civil rights could lead irresistibly to political equality. Even laws against racial intermarriage—a special fear of Johnson's—could be vulnerable. "In fact," he argued, "the distinction of race and color is by the bill made to operate in favor of the colored and against the white race."

Shocked by Johnson's blindness to southern realities and his strident defense of states' rights and racial inequality, congressional Republicans enacted the Civil Rights and Freedmen's Bureau Bills over his veto. Soon afterward, further public violence confirmed their suspicions of the South's new governments. In early May, a routine Memphis traffic accident sparked a battle between black soldiers and city policemen, followed by three days of bloodshed, the deaths of 46 blacks and 2 whites, the rape of at least 5 black women, and the arson of hundreds of black homes and churches. At the end of July, street fighting broke out in New Orleans when members of the state constitutional convention gathered to consider granting suffrage to black men and stripping it from Confederate leaders. White policemen poured rifle fire into the hall as terrified delegates waved white flags of surrender. In the words of General Philip Sheridan, this "absolute massacre" took the lives of 34 blacks and 3 white Republicans. Together with the Memphis riot, it also belied President Johnson's claim that southern conditions had returned to normal and existing governments would protect the rights of blacks and their supporters.

Congress Takes Charge

Andrew Johnson's angry refusal to monitor southern governments or preserve public order convinced moderate Republicans that Presidential Reconstruction had failed and that further inaction would allow ex-Confederates to regain power and nullify the northern victory. Over the spring of 1866, they accepted Radical Republican arguments that Johnson could not be trusted and reluctantly decided to take control of Reconstruction themselves, remove the president's Conservative state governments, and start over with full protection for the war's ostensible winners. The ensuing period is sometimes called Congressional Reconstruction, or Radical Reconstruction, though moderate Republicans made the key decisions throughout.

THE FOURTEENTH AMENDMENT

Congress spelled out its own terms for Reconstruction in a new constitutional amendment that a presidential veto or shifting party politics could not reverse. The Fourteenth Amendment went directly to the states for ratification, since proposed amendments do not require a presidential signature. Ratified in 1868, its provisions immediately became central to Reconstruction policy and have remained crucial to US law and politics ever since.

The amendment's first section wrote the basic features of the Civil Rights Act of 1866 into the Constitution by making all US-born persons "citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside." In a brief set of ringing phrases that judges still struggle to interpret, it also barred states from limiting "the privileges and immunities" of US citizens, forbade them from taking any person's "life, liberty, or property without due process of law," and guaranteed "equal protection of the laws" to all persons. These phrases banned blatantly discriminatory laws like the Black Codes, but what else? Future courts would agonize over what "due process of law" required in trials and other legal proceedings. Later courts would decide that the Fourteenth Amendment not only protected "natural persons" but also "artificial persons" like corporations. What would due process mean for them? What were the "privileges and immunities" of US citizens? Were they legally the same as "rights?" And what exactly was "equal protection of the laws"? It certainly meant that states could not make explicitly different laws for each race. But did it outlaw other forms of racial discrimination, like "separate but equal" schools? Or rules for corporations that did not apply to individuals? Or discrimination based on sex or disability? In 1866, Congress did not debate these questions, but all of them would eventually become the subjects of intense political and constitutional disputes in future decades.

The amendment's second section tried to correct an anomaly arising from emancipation. The original Constitution had allotted electoral votes and congressional seats according to a state's free population plus three-fifths of its slaves. The end of slavery thus required the government to count *all* blacks for electoral purposes and reward the South's rebellion by increasing its numbers in the House of Representatives. The second section responded by declaring that states which denied some adult male citizens the right to vote would face a proportionate reduction in their congressional delegations. This provision did not require black suffrage but rewarded states that allowed it. The

third section declared that officials who had once sworn to support the US Constitution but then served the Confederacy could no longer vote or hold state or federal office without congressional permission. This feature stripped political power from most of the South's old elite and its current Conservative leadership.

Republicans hoped that the Fourteenth Amendment would establish a fair but reasonably painless process for legal Reconstruction. Southern states could regain their political rights if they ratified the amendment, purged their governments of ex-Confederates, and gave black men the ballot or accepted fewer seats in the House. Instead, the South's Conservative leaders rejected the bargain completely, for they had no intention of leaving office, allowing black suffrage, or accepting fewer congressmen. Strongly encouraged by the president, all the seceding states but Tennessee refused to ratify the Fourteenth Amendment in the summer and fall of 1866. In reply, northern voters returned a two-thirds Republican majority to both houses of Congress in the fall elections of 1866 and set the stage for a more radical reunion.

THE RECONSTRUCTION ACTS

On March 2, 1867, the new Congress responded to the South's rejection of the Fourteenth Amendment by passing the first of four statutes, collectively known as the Reconstructions Acts, that imposed a far stricter Reconstruction policy. President Johnson immediately vetoed this bill and its successors, and just as quickly, Congress overrode him. As Radical Republicans wished, the new law divided the ten nonratifying states into five military districts, each under a general who could overrule the existing state governments, and ordered them to call new conventions to rewrite their constitutions once again. To ensure loyal outcomes, it granted all adult black men the right to vote for and serve as convention delegates, but barred the ex-Confederates proscribed by the Fourteenth Amendment. It required the new constitutions to do the same and promised that the new state governments could reclaim their seats in Congress if they ratified the Fourteenth Amendment. The second, third, and fourth statutes (passed in March 1867, July 1867, and March 1868) basically tightened and fine-tuned the first. Contemporaries agreed that black male suffrage was a radical step, but the new policy did not apply to the North and did not promise lengthy federal supervision or military support.

Even so, the Reconstruction Acts had revolutionary possibilities.

They overthrew the South's planter-politicians and gave control of the region to freed slaves and common whites. If they remained united, these citizens could use their new power to transform southern society. Without economic strength, political experience, or military muscle, however, their hold on power might be brief. It was a breathtaking challenge for the inhabitants of what had been America's most undemocratic region.

THE IMPEACHMENT AND TRIAL OF ANDREW JOHNSON

Andrew Johnson detested the goal of racial equality as embodied in the Reconstruction Acts, but he could not defy them because Congress had vested enforcement in the War Department. To regain control of Reconstruction policy, Johnson would have to fire Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton, a reliable Republican holdover from Lincoln's cabinet. To prevent him from doing so, Congress passed the Tenure in Office Act, banning the dismissal of officials whom the Senate had confirmed. Regarding the law as unconstitutional (he was probably right), Johnson fired Stanton anyway. Immediately afterward, on February 24, 1868, the House of Representatives voted to impeach Andrew Johnson of "high crimes and misdemeanors" and remove him from office.

Impeachment occurred because Congress and the president were utterly deadlocked. Radical Republicans had demanded Johnson's removal for months, but moderates had resisted, fearing a backlash from voters. When House moderates realized that Johnson would undo all their handiwork by removing Stanton and other key officials, they resolved to remove him first and adopted eleven articles of impeachment based around his defiance of the Tenure in Office Act. These articles constituted a kind of formal accusation, or indictment. As directed by the Constitution, the trial would take place before the Senate, with the chief justice presiding and a two-thirds vote required for conviction.

At the trial, Johnson's attorneys argued that the president had committed no crime; he only sought to create an ordinary test case against a law he believed to be unconstitutional. The argument seemed plausible, and pragmatic politicians also worried about Johnson's replacement. Without a vice president, the designated successor was Benjamin Wade of Ohio, president pro tempore of the Senate and an

active Radical Republican who might seem extreme to some voters and hurt Republicans in the next election. Desperately bargaining for acquittal, moreover, Johnson promised to drop his obstructionism and abide by Congress's policies. With these reassurances, seven Republicans joined all the Senate's Democrats in voting for acquittal in May 1868, and Andrew Johnson escaped conviction by exactly one vote. Before his term ended, Johnson sought but failed to win the Democratic nomination for president in 1868. He spent most of the rest of his life in political obscurity, except for a brief stint in the US Senate shortly before his death in 1875.

Reconstruction and Resistance

Congressional Reconstruction allowed Republican coalitions of blacks, native whites, and northern newcomers to take control of all the southern states but Virginia. They used the opportunity to broaden southern democracy, expand public services, and spread black voting and office holding across the former slave states. Like other state and local governments of the era, however, some Reconstruction regimes were vulnerable to corruption, especially in connection with railroad construction.

Radical reforms sparked violent resistance. Terrorist groups like the Ku Klux Klan used assault and murder to intimidate Republican voters and officials and to recapture southern communities. Fearing these groups might undo everything they had accomplished, Republicans tried to protect black voting with the Fifteenth Amendment to the Constitution, but they could not safeguard the Reconstruction governments indefinitely.

THE REPUBLICAN EXPERIMENT IN THE STATES

War hero Ulysses S. Grant won election as the Republican candidate for president in 1868, and Congressional Reconstruction moved forward with his full support. In every affected state, military authorities conducted a new registration of voters and then held elections for new state constitutional conventions. In response to their new opportunity, southern blacks and their white supporters organized the Republican Party in the southern states and vied with Democrats (as Conservatives were coming to call themselves) for control of state governments. Branches of the Union League, a wartime patriotic organization, also

spread widely through the South and worked closely with Republicans to mobilize and educate black voters.

The South's new Republicans came from three groups. Most were former slaves who saw Republicans as the party of liberation and Democrats as tools of their former masters. Next came native white opponents of the planter class. Often condemned as renegades, or "scalawags," southern white Republicans typically came from the yeoman, or poor, white classes, from the nonslaveholding upland districts, or from business interests anxious to transform the southern economy. A few, like Governor James L. Alcorn of Mississippi, had been Whig members of the antebellum elite who accepted the war's outcome and wanted the South to start afresh. Finally there were northern newcomers, both black and white, who had moved south during or following the war, often with the Union Army, the Freedmen's Bureau, or private relief agencies, or as businessmen looking for investment opportunities. Quickly dubbed "carpetbaggers" by those who saw them as fortune-hunting riffraff who carried all their possessions in cheap suitcases made of carpeting, northern Republicans in the South were a diverse group who rarely deserved their unsavory reputations. Many were sincere if inexperienced idealists, others were practical men of affairs, and a few turned out to be scoundrels. The names "scalawag" and "carpetbagger" both have unfairly negative connotations, but historians continue to use them for the lack of simple alternatives. Of the three groups of Republicans, the native whites were the least committed and might be pushed or persuaded to rejoin their fellow whites in a white majority government.

Republicans dominated the new state conventions. Most were native whites led by a small number of carpetbaggers. Blacks formed a majority of delegates in South Carolina and Louisiana, but only a small minority in most states. Democrats and Conservatives represented the South's pro-Confederate whites, even though the Reconstruction Acts barred most Confederate leaders from this round of constitution making.

The new constitutions differed markedly from their antebellum counterparts. Up-country voters gained more-equal representation in state assemblies. Voters rather than legislatures chose most state officials. Appointed local governments became elective. The wealthy faced higher taxes. Public schools, poor relief, mental hospitals, and orphanages became required where they once had not existed. Prison sentences replaced slavish punishments like whipping, branding, and

cropping of ears. Most states expanded the property rights of women and liberalized divorce laws. Seeking to win white support, moreover, most Republican governments quickly relaxed prohibitions on political participation by ex-Confederates.

Most new charters won voter approval in 1868. The affected states then elected Republican governors and state legislatures, ratified the Fourteenth Amendment, and chose mostly Republican congressmen. Details varied by state, but Congress was usually satisfied with these results and seated the new senators and representatives. By 1870, all the seceding states had reentered the Union, though federal troops still occupied parts of them.

At one time, many historians were extremely critical of the Republican governments in Reconstruction, accusing them of incompetence, waste, corruption, and "Negro domination." Much of this criticism was based on racial and partisan prejudice, often drawn directly from the rhetoric of whites who eventually overthrew the Reconstruction governments. In fact, blacks did not capture any legislative majority, except briefly in South Carolina's lower house. Two black men, Blanche K. Bruce and Hiram Revels, both of Mississippi, won election as US senators, and other African Americans joined them in the US House of Representatives. Perhaps most significant to ordinary freed people, blacks also served as state legislators, city council members, county commissioners, justices of the peace, sheriffs, and policemen, putting sympathetic faces on local public authority in the South for the very first time. The critical importance of having officials committed to black freedom at the grass roots had much to do with the willingness of blacks and whites to fight so fiercely for control of local government in incidents like the Colfax Massacre.

Corruption did plague many Reconstruction governments, but the same was true in northern states and in those controlled by Democrats. Republican officeholders suffered from inexperience and a lack of economic power at all levels, but their records in office generally stand a fair comparison with those of their Democratic rivals.

Republicans tried to use state governments to reconstruct the South's society as well as its laws. Legislatures eliminated the vestiges of the Black Codes and other forms of state-sponsored discrimination. They strengthened the rights of tenants and employees against the power of landlords and employers. Several fought to integrate public accommodations like railroads, streetcars, hotels, restaurants, and theaters, without mixing the races in the public schools. Most in-

creased expenditures for education, health care, penitentiaries, and poor relief, and raised taxes accordingly.

Above all, the Reconstruction governments supported economic development through railroad construction. The slave South had lagged in building roads, canals, and railways, and both parties resolved to catch up. Lacking private capital, governments endorsed the bonds of private companies, agreeing to take over their roads and service their debts if they failed. Unfortunately, some states endorsed too many bonds and chartered impractical projects. Rival promoters competed feverishly for public subsidies and many offered bribes for favorable treatment. Hard-pressed for funds, legislators of both races and parties gave in to temptation. Even more damaging, some corporations laid few tracks but diverted borrowed money to their managers and directors. These scams collapsed when economic depression struck in 1873, leaving taxpayers with huge debts and few resources for repayment. Even if both parties were guilty, voters blamed the party in power and listened when Democrats faulted black lawmakers and all state development projects.

WHITE VIOLENCE AND THE KU KLUX KLAN

Corruption, high taxes, and railroad frauds were choice issues for the opposition, but not enough to expel the Republicans. Soon after the adoption of black suffrage in 1868, secret terrorist organizations began to attack the new regimes, using such names as the White Brotherhood, the Knights of the White Camellia, and the Constitutional Union Guard. The Ku Klux Klan was the deadliest and most widespread.

Founded in 1866 as a social club for Confederate veterans in Pulaski, Tennessee, the Ku Klux Klan took its name from *kuklos*, the Greek word for "circle," and spread rapidly when its members realized how their hooded costumes could disguise acts of persecution and terror. Acting independently, loosely organized Klan cells launched midnight raids to beat and intimidate Republican officeholders and the leaders of Union League branches, black schools, and black churches. When considered necessary, murder took the place of whipping or tarring and feathering. Often functioning as the military arm of the local Democratic Party, the Klan sought to reestablish "white supremacy" by driving black and white Republicans underground. Deeply aggrieved by emancipation and black suffrage, Klansmen sometimes suggested that blacks were the tools of unscrupulous whites. "Our warfare was only

against the Carpet bagger, Scalawag, [and] Provost Marshals," remembered one white participant in the Colfax Massacre, who had been a member of both the Knights of the White Camellia and the Ku Klux Klan. "[They] were leading the poor negroes in their efforts to overrule the White Citizen for Power and Equality."

The Klan became most active in politically and racially divided neighborhoods like Colfax, Louisiana, where shrewdly applied violence could tip the political scale. Ohio-born judge Albion W. Tourgée counted 12 murders, 9 rapes, 14 cases of arson, and over 700 assaults in one such North Carolina district. Protected by the local sheriff, Klansmen stabbed and strangled a white Republican state senator inside one county courthouse there and hanged a Union League president outside another. Several southern counties each experienced more than 100 political murders in the nine years between 1867 and 1876.

Like the black leaders of Colfax, Republicans fought back across the South. New laws forbade traveling in disguise or conspiring to intimidate others, but enforcement was not easy, especially where the Klan controlled the local government. Anxious to attract white support, governors hesitated to use black soldiers to get control of predominantly white areas. In North Carolina, Republican governor William W. Holden proclaimed martial law and recruited a militia of mountain whites to enforce it. The governor of Tennessee did the same, while Texas and Arkansas restored order with integrated militias. Holden's tactic had limited success, however, for North Carolina Democrats used ensuing white outrage to win legislative elections, impeach him, and remove him from office in 1870.

THE FIFTEENTH AMENDMENT

Beleaguered southern Republicans looked to the federal government. In response, President Grant endorsed a constitutional amendment to guarantee black men the right to vote throughout the nation. Congress had long feared a northern backlash to this measure, but more was at stake than Reconstruction alone, for Democrats had recovered strength everywhere, so the national Republican majority now depended on black votes. Congress accordingly approved the Fifteenth Amendment in 1869 and it won state ratification a year later. This amendment barred all states—including those in the North—from limiting the right to vote by reason of race or slavery, but it did not protect the right to hold office, nor did it prevent disenfranchisement

for nominally nonracial reasons like illiteracy or the nonpayment of taxes. These omissions would cripple its later effectiveness, but the Fifteenth Amendment was ultimately crucial to the civil rights movement of the 1960s and afterward.

The Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments angered Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, and others in the small but determined band of reformers who wanted votes for women and blacks as part of a broad program for racial and gender equality. They were especially outraged that the Fourteenth Amendment inserted the word "male" into the Constitution for the first time. When the Fifteenth Amendment also failed to provide women's suffrage, some reformers acquiesced, including black abolitionist Frederick Douglass, editor Horace Greeley, and suffragist Lucy Stone, who argued that insisting on votes for women might imperil votes for black men. Stanton, Anthony, and their supporters vehemently disagreed and called for defeat of the Fifteenth Amendment. By failing to include women, they argued, it put an "an aristocracy of sex" in the Constitution, based on the idea that all men were superior to all women. In 1869, the two wings of the women's suffrage movement formed rival organizations, the National Woman Suffrage Association, led by Stanton and Anthony, and the American Woman Suffrage Association, led by Lucy Stone and abolitionist Julia Ward Howe, and did not reunite until 1890. Their cause slowly gathered momentum, however, and in 1869, Wyoming became the first American state or territory to give voting rights to women, closely followed by Utah in 1870.

Though Stanton continued to support suffrage for women and men of all races, she began to argue that "pure" women were better qualified to vote than "degraded" men, especially those from "inferior" races. "American women of wealth, education, virtue and refinement," she warned, "if you do not wish the lower orders of Chinese, Africans, Germans and Irish, with their low ideas of womanhood to make laws for you and your daughters . . . demand that women too shall be represented in government." The dispute over women's suffrage revealed deep divisions between the movements for racial equality and women's rights that frequently erupted in subsequent decades.

Leading Republicans hoped the Fifteenth Amendment would complete the work of Reconstruction by allowing southern blacks to defend themselves with ballots and dispense with northern help. They also sought support from moderate white southerners who would give black suffrage a chance. They found few takers, but widely publicized

cases of corruption and factionalism in southern state governments made many wonder if southern state governments were really worth saving. In many cases, moreover, Republican coalitions remained too weak and white violence remained too strong for the Fifteenth Amendment to fulfill its purpose without federal enforcement. Here President Grant faced a political tightrope, for nineteenth-century Americans were still very uncomfortable with federal intervention in local affairs. If he failed to protect black ballots with federal troops, white Democrats would overthrow Republicans and undo Reconstruction. If he used federal troops too aggressively, opponents would freely call him a military despot who would keep his party in office by force. Grant tried to respond judiciously, sending troops in flagrant cases like Louisiana, but holding back when force seemed unnecessary or useless. The nearly inevitable result was that federal policy looked vacillating, or indecisive, further undermining northern support for Reconstruction policy. "It is the general feeling," reflected an Ohio Republican as the Fifteenth Amendment went into effect, "that we have done enough, gone far enough in governmental reconstruction, and that it is best for all that the southern communities should be left to manage themselves."

Still unwilling to give up, Congress backed up the Fifteenth Amendment with the Enforcement Acts to allow federal oversight of state elections in cases of suspected violence, fraud, or intimidation. The 1871 Ku Klux Klan Act made it a federal crime to interfere with a citizen's political rights, including voting, office holding, jury service, and equal protection, and Attorney General Amos T. Ackerman used it to arrest hundreds of suspected Klansmen in Tennessee, Mississippi, and the Carolinas. By 1872, the Ku Klux Klan itself had mostly collapsed, but groups known as "White Leagues," "Red Shirts," and "rifle clubs" continued its violent practices. The Colfax violence claimed the greatest number of victims, but between 1873 and 1875, other incidents took dozens of black lives in Red River Parish, Louisiana; Vicksburg, Mississippi; Clinton, Mississippi; and Hamburg, South Carolina. President Grant condemned these incidents unsparingly, denouncing "the butchery of citizens" at Colfax "which in bloodthirstiness and barbarity is hardly surpassed by any acts of savage warfare." In practice, however, there was less and less that he could do.

These episodes inevitably left their mark. Taxes and corruption had already alienated many moderate white southerners who once tolerated Republican rule. Year after year, the combination of disillusion-

ment and intimidation increased Democratic votes and decreased those of the Republicans. Beginning with North Carolina in 1870, Republicans lost control across the region as white conservatives vowed to "redeem" the southern states with permanent Democratic majorities. By 1876, these self-styled Redeemers had recaptured all the former Confederacy but South Carolina and Louisiana, and nothing protected those states from Democratic takeover but federal troops around their statehouses. And during the second Grant administration, other problems made it increasingly unlikely that federal protection would endure.

Constructing the West

As the high drama of Reconstruction unfolded in the South, a complex set of seemingly separate developments was transforming the western territories. In the 1840s, the acquisitions of Texas, Oregon, and the Mexican Cession extended the United States' boundaries to the Pacific Ocean. Debates over these territories eventually led to the Civil War itself, but events in the West had not stood still while the war raged and Congress and the president wrestled over peacetime policies. The Johnson administration even enlarged the "West" still more when Secretary of State William Seward negotiated the purchase of Alaska from Russia in 1867, though decades passed before Alaska experienced the kinds of changes that were already transforming the trans-Mississippi region. The experiences of the South and West appeared to be very different, but underlying questions of racial justice, economic development, and national unification bedeviled them both.

WAR IN THE WEST

Most members of the so-called Five Civilized Tribes of the Indian Territory, or modern Oklahoma (Choctaws, Chickasaws, Cherokees, Creeks, and Seminoles), had sided with the Confederacy in the Civil War, both because they blamed the federal government for their earlier expulsion from the Southeast and because most of their leaders held African American slaves. Early in the war, all five tribes transferred their allegiance to the Confederacy, which pledged to assume the Union's treaty obligations to them. Though the Creeks and Cherokees also had pro-Union factions, all five tribes contributed troops to the Confederacy, most of them led by the Cherokee brigadier gen-

eral Stand Watie. Smaller groups in the Indian Territory took similar steps, as did several bands of Comanches and Kiowas farther west. At war's end, the Union resumed its treaty relations with the tribes of the Indian Territory but punished Confederate allies with land seizures. It required slaveholding tribes to relinquish slavery and accept their former slaves as tribal members.

Elsewhere in the West, the Civil War had sharpened the contest between whites and Indians, beginning with events in 1862. Early that year, a southern expeditionary force attempted to secure the Southwest's mineral resources for the Confederacy, only to meet defeat at Glorieta Pass, New Mexico, the war's westernmost battle. In the fall, the Lakota, or Sioux, people of southwest Minnesota attacked neighboring white settlements over stolen land and annuity payments, and in the aftermath, President Lincoln approved the hanging of 38 tribal leaders, the largest mass execution in US history. Also that year, Congress passed the Homestead Act and chartered the Union Pacific and Central Pacific Railroads, both crucial components of western transformation.

The Civil War had originated in struggles over the western territories, and the Union and Confederate governments remained eager to secure their lands and mineral riches. The Union proved more successful in recruiting white westerners' support, however, and organized military forces throughout the area to defend its claims. As the Confederate campaign for the West faltered, these Union soldiers often shifted their attention to fighting Indians. In 1864, for example, a party of local militiamen attacked an encampment of unarmed and sleeping Cheyenne and Arapahoe at Sand Creek, Colorado, killing and mutilating more than 150, mostly women and children. The Sand Creek Massacre brought retaliatory attacks throughout the region that became excuses for wider warfare.

During Reconstruction, President Grant tried to end this violence with an Indian "Peace Policy" that revived earlier plans for changing the cultures of Native Americans. Soon after taking office, he appointed Ely Parker, a Seneca Indian and wartime associate, to be commissioner of the Bureau of Indian Affairs and asked a committee of ten leading Protestants to oversee Indian relations. Their assignment was to persuade the Plains hunters to settle on large reservations, convert to Christianity, and support themselves by farming. Corruption plagued the implementation of this policy, however, and most reservation lands were unfit for cultivation, so warfare soon resumed, most

spectacularly in 1876, when the Lakota fighters of Sitting Bull and others completely destroyed the command of Lieutenant Colonel George Armstrong Custer at the Battle of the Little Bighorn.

Eliminating Indian food supplies by wiping out the buffalo herds was an active military tactic. Having moved from Civil War duties to the West, General William T. Sherman called for a "Grand Buffalo hunt" in 1868 to eliminate the animals from the paths of the Union Pacific and Kansas Pacific Railroads. "Until the Buffalo and consequent[ly] Indians are out [from between] the Roads we will have collisions and trouble," he advised a subordinate. Colonel Richard Dodge was blunter. "Kill all the buffalo you can," he told his troops. "Every buffalo dead is an Indian gone." Soldiers did their best to comply and facilitated parties of eastern and European "sportsmen" who wanted to join the fun. The herds were vulnerable because Indians had already overhunted them to supply the commercial market for skins, and military and civilian hunters nearly finished the job. By 1900, the American bison, or buffalo, was almost extinct.

NEW SETTLERS

A vigorous process of railroad construction aided the settlement process. Railroads could not expect to make profits while building through empty lands, so Congress provided support for transcontinental railroads in 1862 by offering to lend them between $16,000 and $48,000 per mile, depending on topography. It also gave them the right-of-way, or the path of the track itself, and as many as 20 "sections," or square miles, of public land in a checkerboard pattern along the right-of-way. Thirty years later, the two railroads repaid these loans, but through a highly favorable method of calculating interest payments, they amounted to a bountiful cash subsidy from the taxpayers. The assistance succeeded when the tracks of the Union Pacific and Central Pacific Railroads met at Promontory Point, Utah, in 1869. The Northern Pacific, the Southern Pacific, and the Santa Fe lines quickly followed, and by 1871 the five had received loans of nearly $65 million and grants of 130 million acres, or 9.5 percent of the public domain, to finance their ventures. Individual states added as many as 50 million acres of their own, and total US railroad mileage increased from 9,000 to 87,000 miles between 1850 and 1885. Extensive corruption eased the way for this legislative bounty, but the railroads used it successfully. Their workers performed heroic feats of construction

through towering mountains and blistering deserts at daily rates that could range from eight feet through solid rock to five miles across open prairie.

Population quickly followed the tracks under the encouragement of the Homestead Act, which granted 160 acres to every settler who remained for five years. State agencies encouraged immigration with guides in multiple European languages. Promoters promised recklessly that "rain followed the plow," so the arid prairies would soon blossom like the East. Believers flocked in, driving up state populations by hundreds of percentage points. Huddled on treeless plains in houses made of sod, the newcomers planted wheat and hoped for the best. When their crops came in, flour milling forged the cities of Minneapolis and Chicago.

From the early days of Spanish settlement, cattle ranching had long been a mainstay of the western economy. Texas ranchers had developed a hardy breed of longhorn cow that thrived in the ecological niche left by the vanishing buffalo and was capable of surviving harsh conditions and the tick-borne Texas fever. States near the Mississippi banned Texas cattle to protect their own animals from tick infestations, so the longhorns could not supply eastern markets until cattlemen discovered that a hard northern winter would kill the ticks and fatten the cows a bit. Thus began the legendary western cattle drives, featuring crews of white and black Texas cowboys who drove vast herds over the famed Chisholm Trail and similar routes to winter on the central plains before they took the railroad east from cow towns such as Abilene, Wichita, and Dodge City in Kansas. The cow towns kept moving westward along the tracks to keep ahead of farmers' anti-tick measures until breeds improved and tough, stringy longhorns fell from favor. The cattle business grew even more after 1882, when the refrigerated railroad car made it to possible to slaughter cows in Chicago or Kansas City and then sell them cheaply in eastern cities. Centered on the stockyards of the South Side of Chicago, the Swift and Armour companies created a meatpacking monopoly founded on western cattle.

The people who flocked to the West joined one of the most varied ethnic medleys in America. White southerners and midwesterners had sparked the Texas Revolution, and more kept coming in the postwar years. The California gold rush had attracted prospectors from all over the world, including Mexico, Chile, Australia, China, eastern America, and all parts of Europe. Elsewhere in the West, newcomers

railed against the Indians, but some Native Americans remained behind when their tribes accepted reservations. Hispanic inhabitants, many with ancient roots in the region, also remained when Mexico withdrew. Mostly Irish work crews built the railroads as they headed west. Chinese workers, mostly men who planned to save their earnings and go back home, toiled on the lines that headed east from the Pacific. About a third of western cowboys were black. Other African Americans served as "buffalo soldiers" in the Plains Indian wars, and formerly enslaved "Exodusters" found land in Kansas when conditions in the Reconstruction South became too threatening.

RACE AND GOVERNMENT

Like the biracial South, this polyglot West posed a "race problem" for white Americans. The late nineteenth century was the heyday of "scientific racism," and learned scholars were quite sure that measurements of the skull and other body parts proved how white Americans were superior to all others, especially nonwhites or "mixed breeds" like Mexicans. Just to be sure, officials and army officers collected thousands of Indian skulls for racist scholars to evaluate. Just as in the South, white authorities agonized over how the West could be truly unified with the rest of the country when its people were so diverse. Official policy rejected the outright extermination of Indians, but as they did at Sand Creek, local authorities could act otherwise with impunity. The United States had promised to protect private landholdings in the Mexican Cession, but legal chicanery transferred thousands of acres to Anglo owners in the aftermath of annexation. Blacks faced racial segregation and exclusion, and the Chinese endured endless persecution. Laws barred them from public schools, public jobs, and testifying in court, while anti-Chinese riots periodically threatened their lives. Fearing their impact on wages, labor unions denied the Chinese membership and boycotted their employers. In 1882, the federal government responded with the Chinese Exclusion Act, the first law to ban the immigration of an entire ethnic group.

The cultural and political riddles posed by western settlement did not stop with race. Free-soil advocates had wanted the West to serve as an outlet and safety valve to protect freedom and opportunity for free citizens, always understood as independent white men and their families. The conviction that the Union existed to protect opportunities for such citizens had underpinned the North's commitment to Civil

War victory. In reality, however, opening the West to free white men required massive and expensive government investments for Indian warfare, railroad subsidies, and free homesteads, to only name a few. Later generations of westerners would demand further investments in water, energy, and highways, as well as support for powerful mining and timber companies. In the midst of all this government intervention and massive private enterprise, what would happen to the free individuals it supposedly benefited?

From this perspective, the South was clearly not the only region to struggle over the proper relationship between government and individuals or between race and citizenship in the Reconstruction era, for these issues disturbed Americans across the continent. Indeed, issues involving economic development, political corruption, and the proper use of government power tied the West and South together and raised pervasive challenges for a reconstructed nation.

Redeemers Triumphant

By the middle of the 1870s, voters who once demanded southern transformation were tiring of the task's demands. Reconstructing the South had dragged on for over a decade yet the challenge remained immense. Northern whites had never accepted the Radical Republican call for a lengthy undertaking, including prolonged use of federal troops, expensive education programs, and the redistribution of land. When southern Republicans proved too poor and inexperienced to resist their enemies successfully, many blamed racial inferiority and concluded that white supremacy was inevitable. Over the course of President Grant's administration, a number of developments reinforced northern reluctance to continue the Reconstruction process, including government corruption, political factionalism, adverse court decisions, and economic depression.

"GRANTISM"

Ulysses S. Grant came into office determined to protect and carry out the victory his troops had gained on the battlefield. As president, Grant conscientiously sought to protect black rights but was increasingly unsuccessful. He also found that civilian leadership demanded skills different from military prowess, and here the successful general stumbled badly. His most notorious shortcoming was an inability to

prevent corruption. Following the Civil War, citizens in every section longed for the joys of peace and prosperity, and industrial growth began to spread from the Northeast. Factories expanded and governments vied to construct more railroads. Just like their southern counterparts, lobbyists promised instant wealth to legislatures in return for special privileges. In the carnival atmosphere that some critics dubbed "the Great Barbecue" and satirists Mark Twain and Charles Dudley Fields called the "Gilded Age," political morality collapsed along with common sense, as lawmakers from all sections and parties helped themselves to bribes, favors, and public funds.

The most conspicuous scandal of the Grant era concerned the Crédit Mobilier, a railroad construction firm owned by the officers of the Union Pacific Railroad. Using large government subsidies, they paid the company to build the road, but inflated its costs, spent minimal amounts on actual construction, and paid themselves the difference. Handsome gifts of stock silenced complaining congressmen until the scandal broke in 1872–1873.

President Grant played no role in this swindle, but his personal friends and advisors were deeply implicated in others. Two leading financiers, Jay Gould and Jim Fiske, conspired with Grant's brother-in-law to corner, or monopolize, the New York gold market and drive up gold's price. They briefly succeeded until the brother-in-law leaked information warning them to sell out and escape ruin just before government sales drove prices back down again. In another incident, William W. Belknap, Grant's secretary of war, resigned to escape impeachment when Congress discovered a kickback system in the licensing of Indian trading posts. The so-called Whiskey Ring conspired to evade the collection of federal excise taxes and avoid discovery by bribing Grant's friend and personal secretary. Grant never engaged in graft himself, but he certainly made poor appointments and the public called the corruption problems "Grantism."

WAVERING REPUBLICANS

Corruption was only one of several factors that threatened Grant's reelection in 1872. Southern and border state Republicans split deeply over their future. Should they still champion black equality, or should they imitate northern Republicans by serving railroads and businessmen? In most states, factionalism pitted blacks and carpetbaggers against scalawags, or native whites. Differences in principle played

their part, but an unmistakable hunger for government salaries also influenced the rivalry, for party leaders had little hope of nonpolitical employment, especially if they were black. Patronage battles split every state Republican organization and weakened their resistance to Democrats. A Republican faction backed Democrats in the Louisiana election of 1872, for example, followed by the disputes that created two rival state governments there in the months before the Colfax Massacre.

Republican factionalism reached the presidential level in 1872. A group called the Liberal Republicans believed their party was badly corrupted by business interests and the spoils system of awarding government jobs to pay for political services. Distrusting professional politicians, Liberal Republicans thought the "best men" from well-educated and affluent families of the East and Midwest would put principles ahead of sordid personal interests. They also thought the "best men" should include planter aristocrats but not African Americans, whom they distrusted as susceptible to manipulation. They wanted to fill government jobs through civil service exams instead of the spoils system, but they opposed efforts to overturn race relations or enforce the Reconstruction amendments.

Splitting their party, Liberal Republicans nominated Horace Greeley for president in 1872. Greeley was an ex-Whig and founding editor of the nation's most respected Republican newspaper, the *New York Tribune*. Desperate to topple Grant, most Democrats endorsed Greeley instead of their own candidate, but he was painfully incompetent on the stump and Grant sailed to an easy victory. Even so, the breakaway movement showed that many Republicans were tiring of Reconstruction, questioned government efforts to reform society, and trusted elites over ordinary citizens. Once raised, moreover, the issues of civil service reform and the spoils system did not disappear but agitated state and national politics for the rest of the Gilded Age.

Important Supreme Court decisions also hampered Reconstruction and revealed a shifting national mood. In the *Slaughter-House Cases* of 1873, a group of New Orleans butchers complained that the city's publicly owned slaughterhouse hurt their businesses and violated the Fourteenth Amendment by abridging the "privileges and immunities" of US citizens. They even accused the public facility of violating the Thirteenth Amendment by reducing them to "involuntary servitude." The court disagreed and denied that the Thirteenth Amendment applied to anything but genuine bondage. Going further, it insisted that

the Fourteenth Amendment only protected the "privileges and immunities" that stemmed from *national* citizenship, like the right to run for federal office or the right to travel abroad, and not those of *state* citizenship, like the right to run a butcher shop. By the same token, the court's reasoning meant that the Fourteenth Amendment would not protect other local rights like the right to equal treatment on trains and streetcars or in public facilities like schools or restaurants. This decision virtually destroyed the power of the Fourteenth Amendment to defend significant black rights under actual conditions in the Reconstruction South.

Events in Colfax played a crucial role in *U.S. v. Cruikshank* (1876). After the 1873 massacre, federal troops and New Orleans police occupied Grant Parish. Most white perpetrators fled, but the authorities made a few arrests and a lower court convicted William Cruikshank and two others of violating the Enforcement Act of 1870. When Cruikshank appealed his conviction, the Supreme Court freed him and ruled that the Enforcement Act was unconstitutional because the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments prohibited *states* but not *individuals* (like Cruikshank) from violating the rights of blacks. The decision not only freed all white participants in the Colfax Massacre; it also closed the federal courts to other victims of racist violence.

Reconstruction suffered another blow in 1873 when a powerful panic, or economic crisis, hit the nation's financial markets, triggering a deep and long-lasting depression. The Panic of 1873 brought wage cuts, collapsing crop prices, widespread unemployment, and numerous business failures. Voters punished Republicans by shifting to the Democrats, by supporting one of several third parties, like the Labor Reform Party and the Greenback Party, or simply by staying home on Election Day.

Endangered Republicans moved in opposite directions. To honor the death of Radical Republican war-horse Charles Sumner, they tried to shore up black support with an 1875 Civil Rights Act that banned racial segregation in boats, trains, theaters, hotels, and eating places (but not public schools). The Supreme Court struck it down in 1883 on the grounds that its legal protections made African Americans "the special favorite of the laws." To mollify Liberal Republican dissidents, however, mainstream Republicans promised to lighten enforcement of existing Reconstruction laws. When President Grant sought renewal of the expired Ku Klux Klan Act, Congress refused.

THE COMPROMISE OF 1877

The Reconstruction experiment in racial equality hung by a thread as the 1876 presidential election approached. Democratic victory would certainly end the federal search for racial equality, but Republicans might abandon the unpopular project as well. The Republican presidential candidate was Rutherford B. Hayes, a respectable Union war veteran with a clean record as governor of Ohio. The Democrats chose New York's governor Samuel J. Tilden, who had prosecuted and jailed his fellow Democrat "Boss" William M. Tweed of New York City's notoriously corrupt "Tweed Ring." Democrats campaigned against "Grantism," while Republicans mostly "waved the bloody shirt" by blaming Democrats for the Civil War's carnage. They also pandered to ethnic and religious passions by stirring up Protestant fears of Roman Catholic immigrants, who often lived in urban poverty, allegedly tolerated corruption, and usually voted Democratic.

Alarmist tactics were not enough. Tilden won a majority of 300,000 in the popular vote, but only 184 of the 185 votes he needed to carry the Electoral College. Hayes had clearly taken 165 electoral votes, but 20 votes remained in dispute, chiefly from the states of Florida, South Carolina, and Louisiana. In these areas, fraud and corruption by both parties and violent intimidation by White Leagues and Red Shirts had hopelessly confused the results, leading rival electoral canvassing boards from each party to claim the victory. Most independent observers thought that Tilden deserved at least some of the disputed ballots, but if Hayes kept all 20, Republicans would keep the White House by a single electoral vote.

Congress appointed a special commission to weigh the doubtful votes and settle the election. This supposedly balanced body gained a Republican majority, however, when its sole independent member accepted an irresistible seat in the Senate. By strictly party line votes, the commission then gave all the disputed ballots—and the presidency—to Hayes.

It was not certain that Democrats would accept this dubious result, but the potential for a settlement seemed obvious. Republicans could allow Democrats to "redeem" the South if they could accept Hayes's election, crack down on white extremists, end electoral violence, and allow blacks to live and vote peacefully as tolerated but subordinate members of the South's political community. Republicans could then celebrate their final victory over slavery and secession while the Re-

deemers enjoyed "home rule," racial dominance, and economic power. Ideally, budding southern industrialists would imitate their northern counterparts by joining the Republican Party and replacing Radical Republican carpetbaggers at its helm.

Negotiations supposedly climaxed at Washington's Wormeley House Hotel in a February 1877 meeting between southern Democrats led by Kentucky editor Henry Watterson and Ohio Republicans led by Hayes spokesman (and future president) James A. Garfield. No complete record of these talks ever surfaced, but Republicans supposedly promised that President Hayes would withdraw the last federal troops from South Carolina and Louisiana. Without military protection, the last carpetbagger regimes would inevitably fall, and Republicans would abandon their efforts to remake the South. In return, white southerners would acquiesce in Hayes's victory and respect blacks' legal rights. Additional details gave the South a member of Hayes's cabinet and federal subsidies for a southern transcontinental railroad, while Garfield got promises of support in his upcoming bid for Speaker of the House.

This was the Compromise of 1877. Some historians have suggested that it settled the disputes of the Civil War era and fixed the terms of sectional reconciliation. In fact, Hayes would have won the presidential election even without the Wormeley House agreement, and the terms of the "compromise" were never enforced. No federal aid appeared for the promised railroad, no southern Democrats voted to make Garfield Speaker, and southern businessmen showed no interest in the Republican Party. Most conspicuously, southern Democrats did not protect black rights. Instead, they ignored racial violence when they did not practice it, tirelessly warned of "Negro rule" and the "horrors of Reconstruction," and won the white majority by preserving "white supremacy."

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The inauguration of Rutherford B. Hayes in 1877 still marked a decisive turning point in the Civil War's aftermath. The new president did withdraw troops from South Carolina and Louisiana and conceded those states to the Redeemers. As he did so, most northern leaders and citizens were turning away from the unfinished business of Reconstruction to focus on dramatic changes in their own economy and society, including a surge of industrialization, dramatic growth of cities, con-

tinued European immigration, and labor unrest. To a lesser degree, southern leaders would also embrace the promise of cities and industrialization, and tried to shape a "New South" that upheld white supremacy but focused more on economic development than antebellum nostalgia.

The end of the Civil War had presented the American republic with staggering challenges. The nation not only faced enormous losses of life and property but also the destruction of one of its core institutions, African American slavery. Rebuilding the republic with a new set of laws and values was essential, but the United States undertook that task with republican traditions developed for a simpler, more homogeneous society and a much weaker state. It also faced the reality that the racial beliefs used to justify slavery were far more resilient than the Peculiar Institution itself.

President Andrew Johnson led the first efforts of Reconstruction, drawing on the lessons of states' rights and minimal government he had learned as a Jacksonian Democrat. Congress ultimately dismissed his efforts as inadequate and instituted a far more radical version of Reconstruction based on the assertive use of federal power to promote social change. The most extensive reforms of Congressional Reconstruction ultimately fell before northern fatigue and a wave of violent resistance, as in the Colfax Massacre. Older traditions of white supremacy and limited government obviously survived, but reform-minded Americans had also reworked and expanded those traditions to establish a new and fuller conception of the common good.

The South and North of 1877 had changed a great deal since 1860. If African Americans and their allies did not ultimately preserve all the changes they sought, they did prove that the American republic could change far more than anyone had previously expected, and they forged new traditions to support future changes. Above all, the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments remained in the Constitution as sleeping monuments to the crusading zeal of Reconstruction activists. In another, later century, they would reemerge as indispensable weapons for the Second Reconstruction of American society.