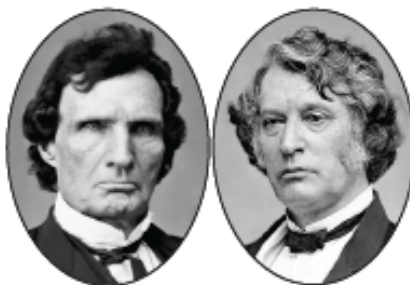


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When the Civil War was coming to an end, Abraham Lincoln knew there needed to be a plan in place to reunite the North and South and help the 4 million newly freed slaves. Lincoln had a plan for Reconstruction, but he was assassinated before he could fully implement it. In December 1863, he announced his Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction, also known as the Ten-Percent Plan. Lincoln believed that secession was constitutionally impossible, and therefore it never happened. He also placed the blame on individuals and not the whole state for the rebellion. He believed the Constitution gave him, as president, the power to **pardon** individuals. He wanted a quick reunification of the country, so his plan was lenient towards the South. His plan pardoned all Confederates if they swore **allegiance** to the Union. However, this did not apply to Confederates who were high-ranking officials nor those accused of crimes against prisoners of war. If at least ten percent of the voters within a state took an oath of allegiance, that state could form a new state government, gain representation in Congress, and rejoin the Union.

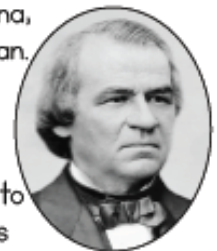


Thaddeus Stevens

Charles Sumner

Not all Republicans agreed with Lincoln's plan, though. **Radical Republicans** wanted a more severe punishment for the South. This small group was led by Massachusetts Senator Charles Sumner and Pennsylvania Representative Thaddeus Stevens. They wanted to remove political power from all former slaveholders. They also wanted African Americans to be given full citizenship and the right to vote. This was a very radical idea at the time because no other country had abolished slavery and gave former slaves the right to vote. In July 1864, the Radicals passed the Wade-Davis Bill. This bill proposed that Congress was responsible for Reconstruction, not the president. This bill also declared that the majority of the voters within a state must take an oath of allegiance, not just ten percent. Lincoln used a pocket veto to prevent the bill from passing, which angered the Radicals.

When Lincoln was assassinated in April 1865, Andrew Johnson became the 17th president of the United States and took over Reconstruction. Unlike Lincoln, Johnson was a Democrat and had often said Confederate leaders should be punished severely. As a result, many white Southerners viewed Johnson as a traitor. In May 1865, Johnson announced his own plan. It was called Presidential Reconstruction. Arkansas, Louisiana, Tennessee, and Virginia had already been readmitted to the Union under Lincoln's Ten-Percent Plan. In order for the remaining Confederate states of Alabama, Georgia, Florida, South Carolina, North Carolina, Mississippi, and Texas to be readmitted, several conditions had to be met. Each state had to withdraw its secession, swear allegiance to the Union, pay off Confederate war debts, and ratify the **Thirteenth Amendment**, which abolished slavery. Johnson's plan was similar to Lincoln's, which angered the Radicals. Johnson thought each state should make their own decisions and not the federal government. The Radicals wanted a plan that would address the needs of former slaves with regards to land rights, voting rights, and protection under the law. Johnson supported strong states' rights and a weaker federal government, an idea many white Southerners held. Johnson supported abolition but did not agree with voting rights for African Americans. Johnson also pardoned over 13,000 Confederates because he believed that "white men alone must manage the South."



Andrew Johnson

The remaining Confederate states agreed to Johnson's plan and began to create new state constitutions, set up new state governments, and elect representative to Congress. In December 1865, the newly elected Southern representatives arrived in Washington, D.C.. However, not all states followed through with Johnson's requirements. For example, Mississippi did not ratify the Thirteenth Amendment. Fifty-eight of the Southern representatives had sat in the Congress of the Confederacy, six had served on the Confederate cabinet, and four fought against the Union as Confederate generals. Johnson had pardoned them all. The Radicals were

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furious, and African Americans felt betrayed. When Congress reconvened later that month, Johnson declared that Reconstruction was complete. Stevens and the Radicals disagreed. They did not believe the Southern states were different than before the war. Congress refused to admit the Southern representatives. Not only were the Radical Republicans upset with Johnson, but the moderate Republicans were, too. The moderate Republicans wanted to improve Johnson's plan, so in February Congress voted to enlarge the US Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, also called the **Freedman's Bureau**. The bureau was established in March 1865 by Congress, and it helped former slaves and poor whites affected by the war in the South get food and clothing after the war ended. It had opened more than 40 hospitals, 4,000 schools, 61 industrial institutes, and 74 teacher-training centers. The bureau also tried to resettle former slaves on Confederate lands that were confiscated or abandoned during the war. However, most of this land was given back to the original owners, so the former slaves could no longer live on those lands. It eventually closed in 1872 from lack of funding and the turmoil of Reconstruction.



A man representing the Freedman's Bureau stands in between groups of whites and African Americans (1865).

In April, Congress passed the Civil Rights Act of 1866, which gave African Americans citizenship and forbade state governments from passing laws that discriminated against them. In 1865, Mississippi and Alabama had already passed **black codes**, which restricted African Americans' lives, and other Southern states began to do the same. These black codes varied from state to state but restored many of the restrictions of slavery. Some black codes prohibited African Americans from carrying weapons, serving on juries, marrying whites, traveling without permits, testifying against whites, and owning land. Many states required African Americans to sign yearly labor contracts. If they refused, they could be arrested as a **vagrant** and fined or forced into unpaid labor. South Carolina law prohibited African Americans from having any job other than a farmer or servant unless they paid an annual tax of \$10-\$100. These black codes were enforced by state militia forces, often made up of Confederate veterans. Congress saw these black codes as proof the South did not want to abolish slavery, and many Northerners were angered. Even though the black codes were repealed by the end of 1866, they had laid the foundation for the Jim Crow Laws that would support white supremacy. Beginning in 1874, the Jim Crow Laws were passed to separate whites and African Americans. These laws created 'separate but equal' treatment for African Americans, but often African American facilities were inferior to those provided to whites.



Propaganda spread by Johnson supporters.

Just as Congress was putting actions into place to ensure African Americans were offered the same rights as whites, Johnson vetoed both the Freedman's Bureau Act and the Civil Rights Act of 1866. Moderate Republicans were shocked at Johnson's actions because they were trying to improve his plan, and Radicals were angered that he seemed to be supporting the South by denying rights to African Americans. In the past the moderate Republicans and the Radicals argued, but now they decided to work together against Johnson. They wanted Congress to be in charge of Reconstruction. In mid-1866, Congressional Reconstruction began. Congress overruled the president's vetoes and passed the Freedman's Bureau Act and the Civil Rights Act of 1866.

Congress also drafted the **Fourteenth Amendment**, which made all persons born or naturalized in the country US citizens. This amendment gave every citizen equal protection of the law, and no state could deprive any person of life, liberty, or property without due process of law. However, the Fourteenth Amendment did not apply to Native Americans. This amendment also did not give African Americans the right to vote. However, it did declare that if any state prevented any of its male citizens from voting, the state would lose a percentage of its congressional seats equal to the percentage of males who were not allowed to vote. The last part of this amendment did not allow most of the Confederate leaders to hold a federal or state office

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unless Congress voted a two-thirds majority to allow them. Congress told the Southern states if they accepted the amendment, they would be accepted back into the Union. Johnson advised the Southern states to reject the amendment because he did not think the states should accept an amendment they had no part in writing. All the Southern states except Tennessee rejected it. The Fourteenth Amendment would not be ratified until 1868.



Scenes from the race riot in Memphis, Tennessee.

In 1866, congressional elections were held, and Johnson traveled to different states asking voters to elect representatives that agreed with his plan. Johnson met angry crowds, and there were violent riots in Memphis, Tennessee, and in New Orleans, Louisiana, that left 80 African Americans dead. Many Northern voters felt the federal government needed to intervene to protect the rights of former slaves. As a result, the Republicans won two-thirds of the seats in Congress. This meant they would be able to override Johnson's vetoes. The moderate and Radical Republicans passed the Reconstruction Act of 1867. This act did not recognize ten of the Southern states' governments created under Lincoln's or Johnson's plans. Tennessee was the only Southern state's government recognized because Tennessee had ratified the Fourteenth Amendment and already been readmitted to the Union. Congress also wanted to prevent black codes from being enforced, so this act also divided the other ten Southern states into five military zones, each headed by a Union general. They were allowed to use the military to protect African Americans and their property. In order for a Southern state to be readmitted to the

Union, all voters, including African American men, would elect delegates to draft new state constitutions. The new constitution had to ensure African American men had the right to vote, and the state had to ratify the Fourteenth Amendment. Johnson tried to veto the act because he thought it was unconstitutional, but Congress overrode the veto. Johnson then tried to sabotage the act. He removed military generals who tried to enforce the act. Radicals felt he was not upholding his constitutional duty to enforce the Reconstruction Act, so they began to look for a way to **impeach** him. They wanted to charge him with misconduct while in office.



The five military districts



President Johnson's impeachment trial.

The Secretary of War was Edwin Stanton, and he was an ally of the Republicans. They wanted to ensure he would stay in his position, so Congress passed the Tenure of Office Act in March 1867. This act declared that the president could not remove cabinet officers that were appointed during that president's term without the consent of the Senate. Johnson felt the act was unconstitutional, so he decided to force it to go to court. He fired Stanton. The House of Representatives charged Johnson with eleven counts of misconduct. Nine of the charges were based on violation of the Tenure of Office Act. Johnson's lawyers argued that since Stanton was appointed by Lincoln, the act did not apply. Johnson's trial lasted from March to May 1868. There needed to be 36 Senate votes to impeach Johnson. There were only 35. Johnson was not removed from his presidency, but the Democrats knew they would not win the 1868 presidential election with Johnson as their candidate. They nominated Horatio Seymour, the governor of New York during the war, to run against Ulysses S. Grant, the Republican candidate. Grant won the November election and became the 18th president of the US. About 500,000 southern African Americans had voted, and most had voted for Grant. About 90% of African American voters supported the Republican Party.

By the end of 1868, Florida, Arkansas, Tennessee, Alabama, Louisiana, North Carolina, and South Carolina had been readmitted to the Union. The remaining states rejoined in 1870. Even after all the Confederate states rejoined, Congress continued Reconstruction. Political tension and violence remained in the South. Most Democrats did not agree with the Reconstruction plan. They called white Southerners who had joined the

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Republican Party and supported Reconstruction **scalawags**. Some scalawags hoped to be voted into a political office by African American votes, and then use their position for selfish reasons. Other scalawags believed the Republican's plan would help the South rebuild and become industrialized like the North. Most scalawags were farmers who wanted to improve their own economic and political position and prevent wealthy plantation owners from regaining power. There were also Northerners who moved South during Reconstruction. Democrats called them **carpetbaggers**. Most white Southerners believed carpetbaggers wanted to get rich in the South. There were some who did want to exploit the South. However, others truly wanted to help the former slaves. They worked for the Freedman's Bureau. Others were teachers and ministers. Some wanted to buy land and start new industries to help the South rebuild.



Carpetbaggers were seen unfavorably in the South.



The 15th Amendment being signed. A portrait of John Brown hangs on the wall.

Even though there was some Republican support in the South, over time most scalawags become less concerned with civil rights for African Americans. Some returned to the Democratic Party. Some Southerners continued to support Reconstruction, but many white Southerners did not. They also did not like the idea of equal rights for African Americans. The Radicals were worried Southern states would try to limit African American voting rights, so they passed the **Fifteenth Amendment**, which declared no one can be prohibited from voting based on race, color, or previous condition of servitude. Many Northern states had also prevented African Americans from voting, so this amendment affected them, too.

The Fifteenth Amendment was ratified in 1870, and it caused more violence. An increasing number of Southern whites targeted local Republican leaders and African Americans. Congress reacted by passing the Enforcement Act of 1870, which gave the federal government more power to punish white supremacists who tried to prevent African Americans from exercising their rights or used violence against them. Congress was attempting to protect the rights of African Americans.

The number of African Americans involved in politics increased during Reconstruction. They held offices in local, state, and federal government. However, there were far fewer African Americans in political offices than whites, even though there were almost as many African American citizens as white citizens. South Carolina was the only state that had more African Americans in its state legislature, and only 16 of the 125 Southern congressional members were African American. In 1870, Hiram Revels became the first African American elected to the



Hiram Revels

Senate, and in 1872, P.B.S. Pinchback of Louisiana became the first African American governor. African Americans pushed for equal rights, and in 1871, Texas passed a law preventing railroads from segregating train cars. Many states passed similar laws, but most were not enforced. African Americans began to focus on building up their own community instead of trying to become integrated with whites.

Up until 1872 the Republican Party held the power. However, events would occur that began to shift power to the Democratic Party. In May 1872, Congress passed the Amnesty Act. This allowed about 150,000 former Confederates the right to vote and hold political office. Many were Democrats, and they had been denied the right to vote and hold office by the

Fourteenth Amendment. There were also scandals that hurt the Republican Party. Grant was an honest man, but he was not a politician. He often used poor judgement when he appointed people to positions. A small group of Republicans formed the Liberal Republican Party, and they wanted to prevent Grant winning reelection. Grant did win reelection, but the Republican Party was weakened. Corruption continued to plague Grant's administration, and he chose not to seek reelection in 1876. During the 1870s, the Supreme Court began to undermine previous



P.B.S. Pinchback

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laws that protected African American's rights, including the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments. The ruling of the *Slaughterhouse* case of 1873 declared that most civil rights were state rights and were unprotected by the Fourteenth Amendment. Two cases in 1876 caused further setbacks for Reconstruction. In the *US vs. Cruikshank* case, the Supreme Court ruled that the Fourteenth Amendment did not give the federal government power to punish whites who oppressed African Americans. The court also ruled in the *US vs. Reese* case that the Fifteenth Amendment did not grant the right to vote to anyone. The amendment instead restricted voter discrimination. Even though these rulings were later overturned, the damage to African American civil rights had been done.

During this time, many Northern voters began to focus more on the economic problems of the country and the corruption in Grant's administration. As many Northerners became less interested in Reconstruction, the Republican Party also began to back off. Sumner and Stevens, the leaders of the Radicals, had died, and Republicans began to believe the government could not enforce the moral and social changes needed for former slaves to progress in the South. Reconstruction was coming to an end.



Campaign charts of 1876

By 1875, Democrats were back in control of the state governments of Georgia, Alabama, Arkansas, North Carolina, Tennessee, Mississippi, Virginia, and Texas. Democrats called this their **redemption**. Democrats looked to win the 1876 presidential election. Republican Rutherford B. Hayes ran against Democrat Samuel J. Tilden. Tilden won the popular vote but did not get the electoral votes needed to win. He was one short, and 20 of the votes he won were disputed. Congress appointed a Republican-majority commission to resolve the problem. The Democratic-majority House of Representatives would have to approve the election results. The country was on the verge on another civil war. However, Southern

Democrats agreed to Hayes becoming president if the Republicans agreed to a list of demands. First, federal troops were to be removed from Louisiana and South Carolina. Second, they wanted federal money to build a railroad from Texas to the west coast and to improve Southern rivers, harbors, and bridges. Last, Hayes had to appoint a Democratic Southerner to his cabinet. Hayes was inaugurated after this Compromise of 1877, and Reconstruction officially ended. After the election of 1876, Democrats controlled all Southern states, and they had achieved their goal of home rule: they wanted to run their state governments without any federal interference. These redeemers wanted to rescue the South from what the Republicans had done, so they passed laws that restricted the rights of African Americans, took away social programs, cut taxes, and shut down public schools.

Some parts of Reconstruction had failed. Congress did not protect the rights of African Americans, and the Supreme Court undermined them. Perhaps more importantly, Radicals failed to understand the deeply rooted racism that existed in the South and the violence it would bring. However, some parts of Reconstruction did succeed. The Thirteenth Amendment abolished slavery, the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments remained part of the Constitution, many organizations for African Americans were established, and the percentage of literate African Americans increased. It also inspired future generations to start the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 60s.