Chapter 16

The Agony of Reconstruction
The President Versus Congress

- The North split on reconstructing the South
- White House seeks speedy reconstruction with minimum changes in the South
- Congress seeks slower reconstruction:
  - Demands protection of citizenship rights for freedmen
  - Guarantees that “loyal” men would displace the Confederate elite in positions of power
In 1863, Lincoln announces lenient policy toward Southerners who would give up the struggle and repudiate slavery.

- December 1863 – Proclamation of Amnesty & Reconstruction
- The Ten Percent Plan set up local governments after 10% of voting population took oath of allegiance (by 1864, Louisiana & Arkansas established Union governments).

Congress resents Lincoln’s effort to control & refuses to seat new congressmen.

Republican Congressmen seek to condition readmission to Union on black suffrage

Congress mistrusts white Southerners fearing the old ruling class would return to power.
Congressional Reconstruction

- In July 1864, Congress passed the **Wade-Davis Bill**
  - Required 50% of voters take an oath of loyalty before restoration could begin
  - Those who could swear no willing support of Confederacy could vote in election for delegates to the Constitutional Convention
  - Gave federal courts power to enforce emancipation
- Lincoln exercised a pocket veto, by refusing to sign bill
- Congress and the President remained at a stalemate throughout the rest of the war
Andrew Johnson at the Helm

- Republicans initially support Southern Democrat Johnson as enemy of planter class
  - Only Senator from Confederate state (Tennessee) to remain loyal to Union
  - Supported emancipation, but only as way to destroy planter class

- Johnson, Republicans split on Reconstruction
Andrew Johnson at the Helm

- On May 29, 1865, issued a Reconstruction Policy
  - Appointed provisional governors from prominent Southern politicians opposed to secession, who rendered no conspicuous service to Confederacy
  - Constitutional Conventions called with delegates elected by “loyal” whites
  - Exempted classes to apply for individual presidential pardon

- Johnson instructs Southern conventions to:
  - Declare secession illegal
  - Repudiate Confederate debt
  - Ratify the Thirteenth Amendment

- Southern conventions reluctantly carry out Johnson’s orders
The 13th Amendment

- In 1865, before the war was officially ended, Congress passed the 13th Amendment ending slavery.
  - 2/3 of vote of Congress passed it (all 118 Republicans and 19 of 82 Democrats voted in favor)
  - Though not necessary, Lincoln, was so pleased he signed the amendment also, symbolically showing his approval.

- The Amendment was then ratified by ¾ of the states.

- To commemorate the event Rev. Henry Highland Garnet, a former slave, became the first African American to speak in the halls of Congress.

Garnet served as pastor of the 15th Street Presbyterian Church in Wash., DC, from 1864-1866. The church is shown here as it was in c. 1899.
Immediate Effects of the 13th Amendment

- Shortly afterwards, Republican Senator Charles Sumner nominated black attorney John Rock (also a licensed doctor and dentist) as the first black American to become a member of the U.S. Supreme court bar.

- He then was introduced to the House of Representatives becoming the first African American attorney introduced to Congress.

- Within a year, blacks were registering to vote & forming Republican political parties across the South.

- Since former Rebels were not allowed to vote until they took an oath of loyalty, Republicans became the dominant party for a few years after the Civil War.
Immediate Effects of the 13th Amendment

- Southern legislatures were dominated by Republicans and nearly every one included many black legislatures.
  - Texas elected 42 black Republicans to their State legislature
  - Louisiana elected 95 black representatives, 32 black senators, & a black Lieutenant Governor, P. B. S. Pinchback
  - Alabama elected 103 legislators
  - Mississippi elected 112
  - South Carolina elected 190
  - Virginia elected 46
  - Florida and North Carolina elected 30
  - Georgia elected 41

- Southern Democrats were not pleased
  - Georgia (still maintaining a Democrat majority) ruled that while blacks may have the right to be elected, they did not have the right to serve in office.
Andrew Johnson and the Black Codes

- Conventions pass “Black Codes”
  - Vagrancy & apprenticeship laws forced blacks to work & denied them a free choice of employers
  - In some states they were prevented from testifying in court on same status as whites and subject to separate penal code

- Johnson approves conventions’ actions
  - Granted pardons to old elite and issued amnesty to Conf. V.P. Alexander Stephens & others when elected to Congress

- Congress condemns conventions
Congress Takes the Initiative

- Republicans insists on black suffrage
  - They expect to get black vote
  - Ideological commitment to equal rights, even if some did not believe in racial equality
  - Fear that South would fall under great planter control without black suffrage

"The Situation", a *Harper's Weekly* editorial cartoon shows Secretary of War Stanton aiming a cannon labeled "Congress" to defeat Johnson. The rammer is "Tenure of Office Bill" and cannon balls on the floor are "Justice".
Congress Takes the Initiative

- 1866: Johnson vetoes two bills
  - Extension of Freedmen’s Bureau
  - Civil rights bill to overturn Black Codes
- Republicans pass Fourteenth Amendment
- Johnson’s National Union party runs against Republican congressmen in elections
- Elections of 1866 strengthen Republicans
Congressional Reconstruction Plan
Enacted

- South under military rule until black suffrage fully secured
  - Radical Republicans had wanted to confiscate and redistribute large landholdings among freedmen – NOT DONE
  - And to provide Federal aid for schools to educate blacks and whites for citizenship – NOT DONE

- Split over duration of federal protection
  - Radicals recognize need for long period
  - Most wish military occupation to be short – WON OUT

- Assumption: Black suffrage sufficient to empower freedmen to protect themselves
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amendment</th>
<th>Main Provisions</th>
<th>Congressional Passage (2/3 majority in each house required)</th>
<th>Ratification Process (3/4 of all states required, including ex-Confederate states)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Slavery prohibited in United States</td>
<td>January 1865</td>
<td>December 1865 (27 states, including 8 southern states)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>National citizenship; State representation in Congress reduced proportionally to number of voters disfranchised; Former Confederates denied right to hold office; Confederate debt repudiated</td>
<td>June 1866</td>
<td>Rejected by 12 southern and border states, February 1867; Radicals make readmission of southern states hinge on ratification; ratified July 1868</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Denial of franchise because of race, color, or past servitude explicitly prohibited</td>
<td>February 1869</td>
<td>Ratification required for readmission of Virginia, Texas, Mississippi, Georgia; ratified March 1870</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Impeachment Crisis

- Johnson obstructs Congressional Reconstruction
- Congress limits Presidential power
  - Tenure of Office Act
- February, 1868: Congress impeaches

- Senate refuses to convict Johnson
- Radical Republicans seen as subversive of Constitution, lose public support

Reconstructing Southern Society

- Three contending interests in South:
  - Southern whites seek to keep newly-freed blacks inferior
  - Northern whites seek to make money or to “civilize” the region
  - Blacks seek equality

- Decline of federal interest in Reconstruction permits triumph of reaction and racism
Reorganizing Land and Labor

- Ex-slaves wish to work their own land
- Federal government sometimes grants land
  - The Freedmen’s Bureau had given out land confiscated by Sherman for 3 years, after which black farmers were to be given the option to buy it at low rates
  - “Forty Acres and a Mule”
  - But Johnson pardoned the owners and an effective program of land confiscation and redistribution failed to get through Congress
- Land reverts to white owners under Johnson
Reorganizing Land and Labor

- Slave-owners try to impose contract labor
- Blacks insist on sharecropping
- Sharecropping soon becomes peonage

Sharecroppers at roadside after eviction (1936)
Black Codes: A New Name for Slavery?

- South increasingly segregated after War
- Black Codes designed to return blacks to quasi-slavery
  - Codes overturned by Congress
- Violence and discrimination continued on a large scale
Republican Rule in the South

- **1867:** Southern Republican party organized
  - Businesspeople want government aid
  - White farmers want protection from creditors
  - Blacks form majority of party, want social and political equality

- Republican coalition unstable
- Republicans break up when whites leave

1872 cartoon depiction of Carl Schurz as a Carpetbagger
Republican Rule in the South

- Republicans improve public education, welfare, and transportation

- Republican state legislatures corrupt
  - Whites control most radical state governments
  - African Americans given blame for corruption
Claiming Public and Private Rights

- Freed slaves viewed legalized marriage as an important step in claiming political rights.
- They also formed churches, fraternal and benevolent associations, political organizations, and schools.
- Education for children was a top priority.
Retreat from Reconstruction

- Enormous problems 1868–1876
- Grant’s weak principles contribute to failure
Rise of the Money Question

- Panic of 1873 raises “the money question”
  - Debtors seek inflationary monetary policy by continuing circulation of “greenbacks”
  - Creditors, intellectuals support hard money
- 1875: Government commits to hard money
- 1876: Greenback party formed, makes gains in congressional races
  - Opposed return to bullion-based monetary system, as would allow privately-owned banks & corporations to define prices
  - Gov’t should control monetary system & allow more $ in circulation to foster business & help farmers.
  - Condemned use of militias & private police against union strikes
Wheeler Compromise

- The general economic situation of Louisiana during the latter half of the 19th century was dire.
- Governor Kellogg was accused of corruption and appointing 3 comrades to the Supreme Court.
- The Wheeler Compromise, sometimes known as the Wheeler Adjustment, was the settlement of the disputed election of 1874 in the state of Louisiana.
- The military interfered in the organization of the state's legislature on January 4, 1875 by permitting Governor Kellogg to remain in power while allegations of corruption were arbitrated.
# The Election of 1868

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Popular Vote</th>
<th>Electoral Vote*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grant</td>
<td>Republican</td>
<td>3,013,421</td>
<td>214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seymour</td>
<td>Democratic</td>
<td>2,706,829</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not voted*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Unreconstructed states did not participate in the election.*
Final Efforts of Reconstruction

- 1869: Fifteenth Amendment passed
  - Also enfranchised Northern blacks

- Women’s rights groups were upset that they were not granted the vote

- Northern support for black citizenship waned

1867 drawing depicting the first vote by African Americans
A Reign of Terror Against Blacks

- Secret societies used terror tactics to keep blacks out of the political process and near insurrections against state governments
- 1870s: Congress tries to suppress Ku Klux Klan, other Southern terrorist groups
- By 1876, Republicans control only South Carolina, Louisiana, and Florida
- Northern support for military action wanes

A Harper’s Magazine political cartoon alleging Ku Klux Klan and White League opposition to Reconstruction
Spoilsmen Versus Reformers

- Rumors of corruption during Grant’s first term discredit Republicans
- 1872: Grant wins reelection over Liberal Republican, Democrat Horace Greeley
- Used military to ensure that African Americans could maintain their new electoral status
- Grant’s second term rocked by scandal
### The Election of 1872

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Popular Vote</th>
<th>Electoral Vote*</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grant</td>
<td>Republican and Liberal</td>
<td>3,598,235</td>
<td>286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greeley</td>
<td>Democratic and Liberal</td>
<td>2,834,761</td>
<td>Greeley died before the electoral college voted.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Out of a total of 366 electoral votes. Greeley’s votes were divided among the four minor candidates.*
Reunion and the New South

- North and South reconcile after 1877
- Terms of reconciliation
  - African Americans stripped of political gains
  - Big business interests favored over small farmers
The Compromise of 1877

- Election of 1876 disputed
- Special Congressional commission gives disputed vote to **Rutherford B. Hayes**
- Southern Democrats accept on two conditions:
  - Guarantee of federal aid to the South
  - Removal of all remaining federal troops
- Hayes’ agreement ends Reconstruction
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>Uncontested Electoral Vote</th>
<th>Electoral Total</th>
<th>Popular Vote</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>REPUBLICAN</td>
<td>Rutherford B. Hayes</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>4,036,298</td>
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<tr>
<td>DEMOCRATIC</td>
<td>Samuel J. Tilden</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>4,300,590</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GREENBACK</td>
<td>Peter Cooper</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>81,737</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: 349 states with 8,418,625 votes

*Contested result settled by Special Election Commission in favor of Hayes.
“Redeeming” a New South

- Southern “Redeemers” not ideologically coherent, more power brokers between major interest groups in commerce, manufacturing, and agriculture

- Gain power by doctrine of white supremacy

- Neglect problems of small farmers
The Rise of Jim Crow

- Redeemer Democrats systematically exclude black voters
- Jim Crow laws legalize segregation and restrict black civil rights
- By 1910, the process was complete
- The North and the federal government did little or nothing to prevent it

Cover of music score for "Jim Crow Jubilee", Boston, 1847

An African-American man drinking at a "colored" drinking fountain in a streetcar terminal in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, 1939
The Rise of Jim Crow

- Lynching—187 blacks lynched yearly 1889–1899
- U.S. Supreme Court decisions gut Reconstruction Amendments 1875–1896
- “Reunion” accomplished as North tacitly acquiesces in Southern discrimination

An African American hanged to death in a lynching, 1925

The lynching of Laura Nelson in Okemah, Oklahoma on May 25, 1911; she had tried to protect her son, who was lynched together with her
Henry McNeal Turner and the “Unfinished Revolution”

- Henry McNeal Turner’s career summarized the Southern black experience during and after Reconstruction.
- He supported the Union during the war and was elected to GA legislature in Reconstruction.
- “Redeemed” GA legislature expels him, exemplifying Northerners’ tacit approval of oppression of Southern blacks.
- Turner becomes A.M.E. bishop and major proponent of black emigration to Africa.