

Guide to Reading

Connection

In the previous section, you learned how war became unavoidable and the North eventually defeated the South. In this section, you will discover the obstacles that Reconstruction presented as the country began to rebuild.

Main Idea

- In the months after the Civil War, the nation began the effort to rebuild and reunite. (p. 219)
- Radical Republicans, angered with President Johnson's actions, designed their own policies. (p. 221)
- As African Americans entered politics, some Southerners began to resist Republican reforms. (p. 223)

- Reconstruction came to an end as Democrats regained power in the South and in Congress. (p. 224)

Content Vocabulary

Reconstruction, amnesty, pocket veto, freedman, black codes, impeach, tenant farmer, sharecropper

Academic Vocabulary

infrastructure, circumstance

People and Terms to Identify

Freedmen's Bureau, Andrew Johnson, Fourteenth Amendment, Military Reconstruction Act, Fifteenth Amendment, Compromise of 1877

Reading Objectives

- **Describe** the major features of congressional Reconstruction and its political impact.

- **Discuss** Republican rule in the South during Reconstruction.
- **Explain** how Reconstruction ended, and contrast the New South and the Old South.

Reading Strategy

Taking Notes As you read about Reconstruction, use the major headings of the section to create an outline similar to the one below.

- I. Reconstruction Begins
 A.
 B.
 C.
 D.
 II.

Preview of Events

◆ 1860

1864
 Lincoln vetoes
 Wade-Davis bill

◆ 1865

1866
 Congress passes
 Fourteenth
 Amendment

◆ 1870

1867
 Congress
 passes Military
 Reconstruction Act

◆ 1875

1870
 Fifteenth
 Amendment
 is ratified

1877
 Compromise
 of 1877 reached

The following are the main History–Social Science Standards covered in this section.

11.1 Students analyze the significant events in the founding of the nation and its attempts to realize the philosophy of government described in the Declaration of Independence.

11.1.3 Understand the history of the Constitution after 1787 with emphasis on federal versus state authority and growing democratization.

11.1.4 Examine the effects of the Civil War and Reconstruction and of the industrial revolution, including demographic shifts and the emergence in the late nineteenth century of the United States as a world power.

11.10.2 Examine and analyze the key events, policies, and court cases in the evolution of civil rights, including *Dred Scott v. Sandford*, *Plessy v. Ferguson*, *Brown v. Board of Education*, *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke*, and California Proposition 209.

The Big Idea

Social and economic crises lead to new roles for government. The country faced many challenges during Reconstruction, such as securing the rights of African Americans and repairing the South's devastated economy. President Lincoln hoped to initiate plans that would unite the country and help the South recover. Radical Republicans believed his plans were too lenient. After Lincoln's assassination, Andrew Johnson continued his predecessor's moderate policies. Southern states defied the North by continuing to deny rights to African Americans and electing former Confederate officers to Congress. Dissatisfied Radical Republicans gained support and pushed through their Reconstruction plans. Some Southerners formed secret societies to undermine Republican rule. With the country slipping into a deepening economic depression, Democrats were able to win back control of the House of Representatives and gain seats in the Senate. As the political atmosphere shifted, a "New South" began to develop.

Reconstruction Begins

Main Idea In the months after the Civil War, the nation began the effort to rebuild and reunite.

Reading Connection Think of a war you have studied in a history course. What were the terms of achieving peace, and who benefited? Read on to learn about President Lincoln's policies after Union victory in the Civil War.

No one looked forward to a Union victory more than enslaved African Americans in the South. Only a victory could give them the freedom the Emancipation Proclamation had promised.

★ An American Story ★

Houston Holloway was ready for freedom. By 1865 the 20-year-old enslaved man had toiled under three different slaveholders. President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, delivered in 1863, had freed him—but only in theory. The proclamation freed enslaved persons in the Confederacy, but because the Union could not enforce its laws in Confederate territory, many African American men and women in the South remained enslaved. Holloway knew that his only hope of freedom was a Northern victory in the Civil War.

The time of that victory finally arrived. On the spring day in 1865 when Union troops overran his community in Georgia on their way to defeating the Confederacy, Holloway rejoiced upon reaching true freedom:

“I felt like a bird out of a cage. Amen. Amen. Amen. I could hardly ask to feel better than I did that day. . . . The week passed off in a blaze of glory.”

—quoted in *A Short History of Reconstruction*

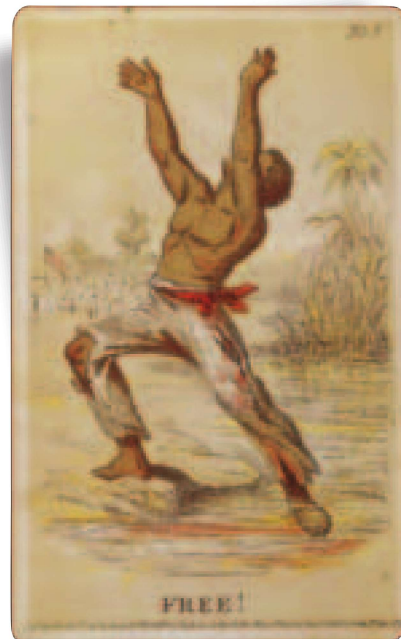
Helping Holloway and other freed African Americans find their way as citizens of the United States was only one of a myriad of problems the nation faced. At the end of the Civil War, the South was a defeated region with a devastated economy. While some Southerners were bitter over the Union military victory, for many the more important struggle after the conflict was rebuilding their land and their lives. Meanwhile, the president and Congress grappled with the difficult task of **Reconstruction**, or rebuilding the nation after the war.

Lincoln and the Radical Republicans In December 1863, President Lincoln set forth his moderate plan for reuniting the country in the Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction. Lincoln wanted to reconcile the South with the Union instead of punishing it for treason. He offered a general **amnesty**, or pardon, to all Southerners who took an oath of loyalty to the United States and accepted the Union's proclamations concerning slavery. When 10 percent of a state's voters in the 1860 presidential election had taken this oath, they could organize a new state government. Certain people, such as Confederate government officials and military officers, could not take the oath or be pardoned.

Resistance to Lincoln's plan surfaced at once among a group of Republicans in Congress known as Radical Republicans. Led by Representative Thaddeus Stevens of Pennsylvania and Senator Charles Sumner of Massachusetts, the radicals wanted to prevent the leaders of the Confederacy from returning to power after the war. They also wanted the Republican Party to become a powerful institution in the South. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, they wanted the federal government to help African Americans achieve political equality by guaranteeing their right to vote in the South.

Congressional Republicans knew that the abolition of slavery would give the South more seats in the House of Representatives. Before the Civil War, enslaved people had only counted in Congress as three-fifths of a free person. Now that African Americans were free, the South was entitled to more seats in

▼ Artist depiction of an emancipated African American



Congress. This would endanger Republican control of Congress, unless Republicans could find a way to protect African American voting rights in the South.

Although the radicals knew that giving African Americans in the South the right to vote would help the Republican Party win elections, most were not acting cynically. Many of them had been abolitionists before the Civil War and had pushed Lincoln into making emancipation a goal of the war.

The Wade-Davis Bill Many moderate Republicans thought Lincoln was being too lenient, but they also thought the radicals were going too far in their support for African American equality and voting rights. By the summer of 1864, the moderates and radicals had come up with a plan for Reconstruction that they could both support. This alternative to Lincoln's plan was the Wade-Davis Bill of 1864, which required the majority of the adult white men in a former Confederate state to take an oath of allegiance to the Union. The state could then hold a constitutional convention to create a new state government. The people chosen to attend the constitutional convention had to take an "ironclad" oath asserting that they had never fought against the Union or supported the Confederacy in any way. Each state's convention would then have to abolish slavery, reject all debts the state had acquired as part of the Confederacy, and deprive all former Confederate government officials and military officers of the right to vote or hold office.

Although Congress passed the Wade-Davis Bill, Lincoln blocked it with a **pocket veto**, that is, he let the session of Congress expire without signing the legislation. While Lincoln sympathized with some of the radical goals, he felt that imposing a harsh peace would only alienate many whites in the South.

Picturing History

War-Shattered City The Civil War wreaked terrible devastation on Richmond, Virginia. **Why do you think the women pictured here are dressed in black?**



The Freedmen's Bureau Lincoln realized that the South was already in chaos, with thousands unemployed, homeless, and hungry. At the same time, the victorious Union armies had to try to accommodate the large numbers of African Americans who flocked to Union lines as the war progressed. As Sherman marched through Georgia and South Carolina, thousands of freed African Americans—now known as **freedmen**—began following his troops seeking food and shelter.

In March 1865, Congress established the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, better known as the **Freedmen's Bureau**. The Bureau was given the task of feeding and clothing war refugees in the South using surplus army supplies. Beginning in September 1865, it issued nearly 30,000 rations a day for the next year.

The Bureau helped formerly enslaved people find work on plantations and negotiated labor contracts with planters. Many Northerners argued that those who were formerly enslaved should receive land to support themselves now that they were free. To others, however, taking land from plantation owners and giving it to freedmen seemed to violate the nation's cherished commitment to individual property rights. As a result, Congress refused to confirm the right of African Americans to own the lands that had been seized from plantation owners and given to them.

Johnson Takes Office Shortly after Congress established the Freedmen's Bureau, Lincoln was assassinated. Although his successor, Vice President **Andrew Johnson**, was a Democrat from Tennessee, he had remained loyal to the Union. Like Lincoln, he believed in a moderate policy to bring the South back into the Union.

In the summer of 1865, with Congress in recess, Johnson began to implement what he called his restoration program, which closely resembled Lincoln's plan. Johnson offered to pardon all former citizens of the Confederacy who took an oath of loyalty to the Union and to return their property. He excluded from the pardon the same people Lincoln had excluded. Like Lincoln, Johnson also required Southern states to ratify the Thirteenth Amendment abolishing slavery.

The former Confederate states, for the most part, met Johnson's conditions. They then organized new governments and elected people to Congress. By the time Congress gathered for its next session in December 1865, Johnson's plan was well underway. Many members of Congress were astonished and angered when they realized that Southern voters had

elected dozens of Confederate leaders to Congress. Moderate Republicans joined with the Radical Republicans and voted to reject the new Southern members of Congress.

Congressional Republicans also were angry that the new Southern state legislatures had passed laws known as **black codes** limiting the rights of African Americans in the South. These codes seemed intended to keep African Americans in a condition similar to slavery. African Americans were generally required to enter into annual labor contracts. Those who did not could be arrested for vagrancy and forced into involuntary servitude. Several codes established specific hours of labor and also required them to get licenses to work in nonagricultural jobs.

 **Reading Check** **Comparing** How did the reconstruction plans of Lincoln and Congress differ?

Congressional Reconstruction

 **Radical Republicans, angered with President Johnson's actions, designed their own policies.**

Reading Connection If you disagree with a political decision, how can you change it? Read on to learn about the Republicans' reaction to Johnson's plan.

With the election of former Confederates to office and the introduction of the black codes, more and more moderate Republicans joined the radicals. Finally, in late 1865, House and Senate leaders created a Joint Committee on Reconstruction to develop their own program for rebuilding the Union.

The Fourteenth Amendment In March 1866, congressional Reconstruction began with the passage of an act intended to override the black codes. The Civil Rights Act of 1866 granted citizenship to all persons born in the United States except for Native Americans. The act guaranteed the rights of African Americans to own property and stated that they were to be treated equally in court. It also gave the federal government the power to sue people who violated those rights. Johnson vetoed the act, arguing that it was unconstitutional and would “[cause] discord among the races.” The veto convinced the remaining moderate Republicans to join with the radicals to override Johnson's veto, and the act became law.

Fearing that the Civil Rights Act might later be overturned in court, however, the radicals introduced the **Fourteenth Amendment** to the Constitution. This



Andrew Johnson ▲

amendment granted citizenship to all persons born or naturalized in the United States and declared that no state could deprive any person of life, liberty, or property “without due process of law.” It also declared that no state could deny any person “equal protection of the laws.” In June 1866, Congress passed the amendment and sent it to the states for ratification. It was ratified in 1868.

President Johnson attacked the Fourteenth Amendment and made it the major issue of the 1866 congressional elections. He hoped Northerners would vote out the Radical Republicans and elect representatives who would support his plan for Reconstruction. Instead, the Republicans achieved an overwhelming victory, winning approximately a three-to-one majority in Congress. They now had the strength of numbers to override any presidential veto and could claim that they had a mandate, or command, from the American people to enact their own Reconstruction program in place of Johnson's plan.

Military Reconstruction Begins In March 1867, Congress passed the **Military Reconstruction Act**, which essentially nullified Johnson's programs. The act divided the former Confederacy, except for Tennessee—which had ratified the Fourteenth Amendment in 1866—into five military districts. A Union general was placed in charge of each district with orders to maintain peace and “protect the rights of persons and property.”

In the meantime, each former Confederate state had to hold another constitutional convention to design a constitution acceptable to Congress. The

Military Districts, 1867



Military District Commander	
	General John Schofield
	General Daniel Sickles
	General John Pope
	General Edward Ord
	General Philip Sheridan
1870	Date of readmission to union



Geography Skills

- 1. Interpreting Maps** Only one former Confederate state was not part of a military district. What was it?
- 2. Applying Geography Skills** How many years after the war was the last Southern state readmitted to the Union?

new state constitutions had to give the right to vote to all adult male citizens, regardless of race. Each also had to ratify the Fourteenth Amendment before it would be allowed to elect people to Congress.

Johnson's Impeachment The Republicans knew that they had the votes to override presidential vetoes, but they also knew that President Johnson could still interfere with their plans by refusing to enforce the laws they passed. To restrict Johnson, Congress passed two new laws: the Command of the Army Act and the Tenure of Office Act. The Command of the Army Act required all orders from the president to go through the headquarters of the general of the army. This was the headquarters of General Grant, whom Congressional Republicans trusted. The Tenure of Office Act required the Senate to approve the president's removal of any government official

whose appointment had required the Senate's consent.

Determined to challenge the Tenure of Office Act, on February 21, 1868, Johnson fired Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton who supported the Republicans. Three days later, the House of Representatives voted to **impeach** Johnson, meaning that they charged him with "high crimes and misdemeanors" in office. They accused Johnson of breaking the law by refusing to uphold the Tenure of Office Act.

As provided in the Constitution, the Senate then put the president on trial. If two-thirds of the senators found the president guilty of the charges, he would be removed from office. In May 1868, the Senate voted 35 to 19 that Johnson was guilty of high crimes and misdemeanors. This was just one vote short of the votes needed for conviction.

The Election of 1868 Although Johnson remained in office, he finished his term quietly and did not run for election in 1868. That year, the Republicans nominated Ulysses S. Grant. During the campaign, Union troops in the South enabled African Americans to vote in large numbers. As a result, Grant won six Southern states and most of the Northern states. The Republicans also retained large majorities in both houses of Congress.

Congressional Republicans now moved rapidly to expand their Reconstruction program. Recognizing the importance of African American suffrage, the Republican-led Congress passed the **Fifteenth Amendment** to the Constitution. This amendment declared that the right to vote "shall not be denied . . . on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude." In March 1870, the Fifteenth Amendment was ratified by the states and became part of the Constitution.

Reading Check Analyzing Why did congressional Republicans pass amendments to the Constitution?