

Legacy and Reconstruction

Civil War and Reconstruction
(1850–1877)



Legacy of the Civil War

Reconstruction

The end of Reconstruction

Thematic Icons



Economics and business



Geography and environment



Historical concepts and questions



Politics, government and citizenship



Society and culture



War, diplomacy and foreign policy

Icons: For more detailed instructions, see the *User Guide*



Flash activity (these activities are not editable)



Teacher notes included in the Notes page



By the end of this section, you will know the importance of the following events, people or situations following the Civil War:

- President Lincoln's assassination
- President Andrew Johnson
- economic, political and social changes in the South
- the freedmen.



Looking back timeline



Use this timeline to recap key historical events and contextualize Reconstruction. Either press on a date, or drag the pointer along the timeline to read about what happened in each year.

Press **start** to begin.

start





The Union's victory proved the supremacy of the federal government. Never again would a state secede.



War taxes and the draft demonstrated how much impact the government could have on its citizens. Many wondered how Lincoln's administration would deal with the Confederacy.

Throughout the war, Abraham Lincoln had advocated lenience for the South. Generals Grant and Sherman's generosity to surrendering troops made many hope for a peaceful reunion.

How would you treat former Confederates?



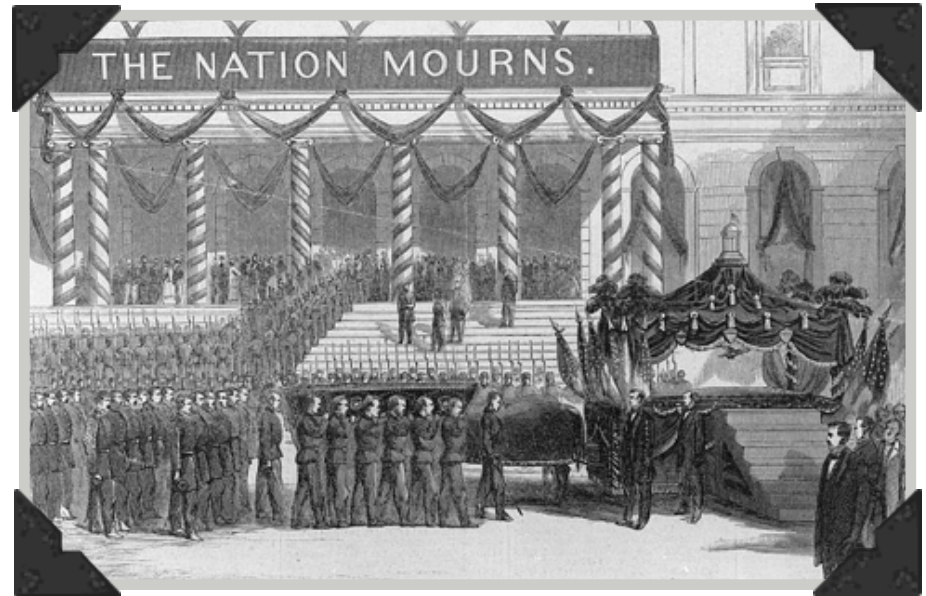
Assassination of Lincoln

On April 14, five days after General Lee's surrender, President Lincoln and his wife attended a play at Ford's Theater.

During the third act, actor and Southern sympathizer John Wilkes Booth crept into the president's box and shot him in the head.

Lincoln died the next morning. It was the first time an American president had been assassinated.

The shocked nation was left to rebuild the Union without its wartime leader.





The Civil War dramatically transformed economic, political and social structures in the South. If Reconstruction was to succeed, new systems were required to replace those that had existed before the war.

Press **start** to begin.

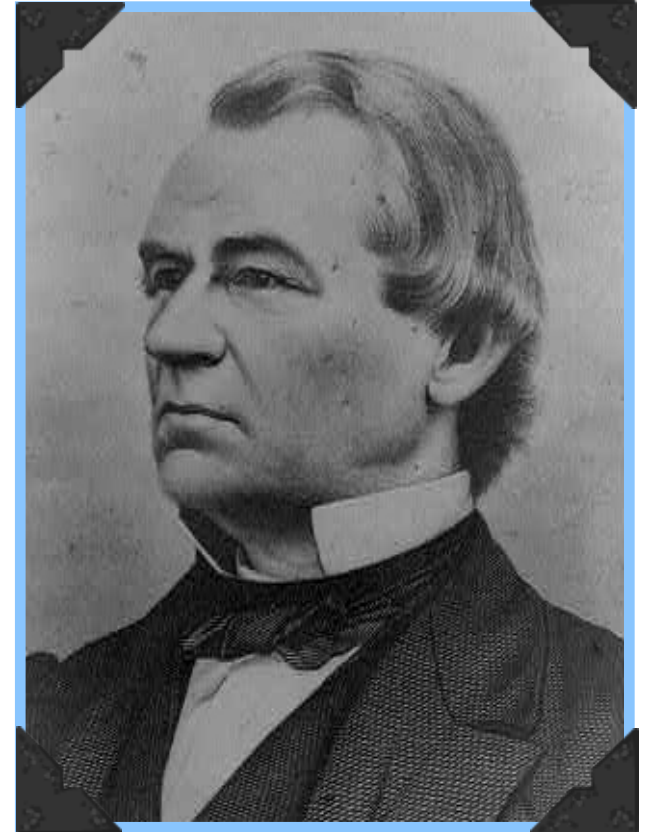
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Lincoln was succeeded in office by his vice president, **Andrew Johnson**.
Johnson was:

- a pro-Union Democrat
- a former slaveholder and governor of Tennessee
- raised in poverty and hated the wealth-based “**slaveocracy**” of the South
- sympathetic to poor Southern whites
- rigid and uncompromising.



Are these good qualities for a Reconstruction president?



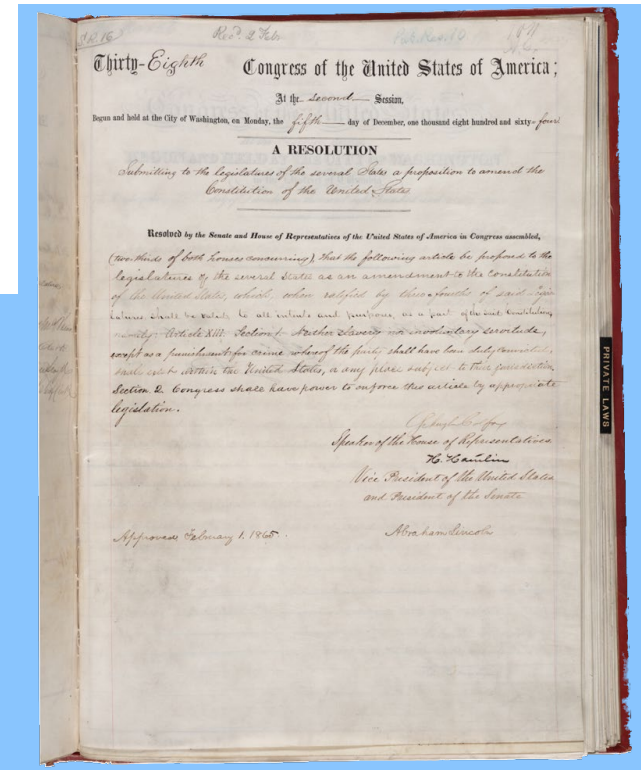
Thirteenth Amendment



During the war, Republicans drafted the **Thirteenth Amendment** to abolish slavery throughout the United States.

Lincoln's administration promised House Democrats jobs in exchange for voting in favor of the Amendment. It passed in January of 1865, four months before Lincoln's assassination.

“Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.”





In the immediate aftermath of the Civil War, freedmen pursued two main goals:

- ending injustices of slavery such as separation of families, restricted movement and lack of education
- economic independence from whites.



Thousands of freed slaves moved to cities in search of work. However, many stayed in rural areas, hoping to earn their living by farming.

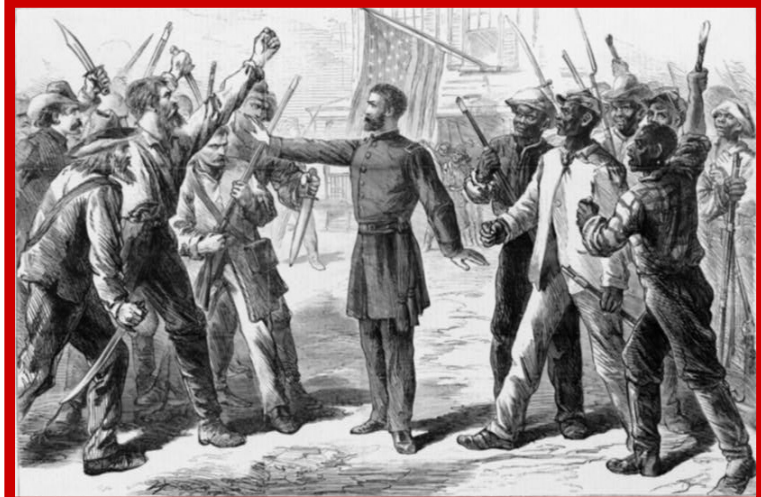
This proved impossible for many who lacked the resources to purchase land or tools.

What did “freedom” mean for former slaves?



Lincoln created the **Freedmen's Bureau** in 1865 to provide emergency relief to freed slaves and white war refugees.

The Bureau, headed by ex-Union general **Oliver O. Howard**, struggled with broad responsibilities and limited resources.

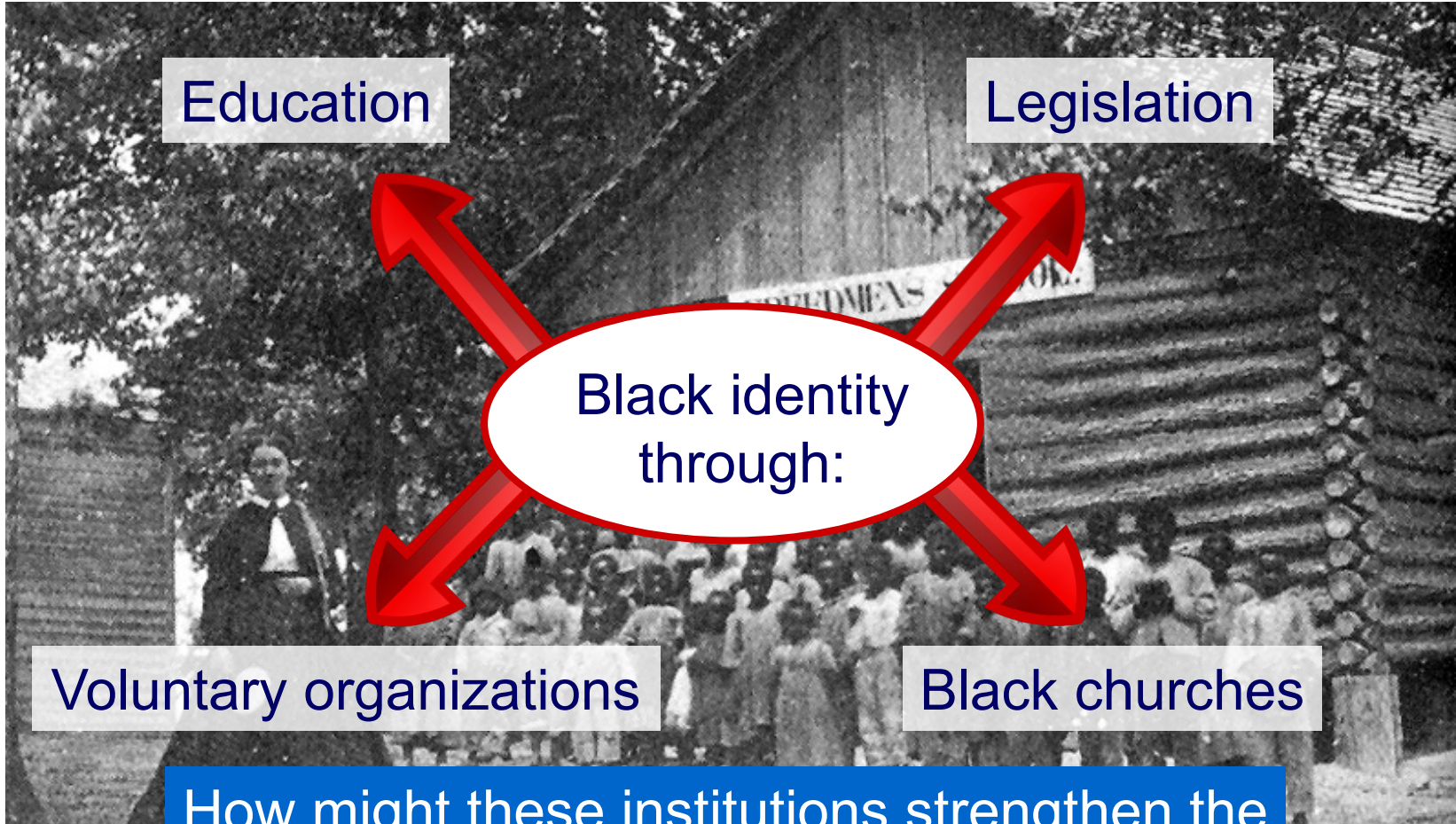


In addition to mediating between blacks and whites in the South, the Bureau created over 3,000 integrated freedmen schools. Before the war, it had been illegal for slaves to learn to read and write. Now, hundreds of thousands of freed slaves enrolled in elementary schools.





The freedmen worked to establish their independence and cultural identity in several ways:



Education

Legislation

Black identity through:

Voluntary organizations

Black churches

How might these institutions strengthen the black community?

