

# The civil war was slavery history essay



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Civil War, a historic moment in history that would change the development of the United States. A war between the Union of the North and the Confederates of the South which was caused by economic differences, state's rights, some say the election of Abraham Lincoln, and a big cause of the Civil War was slavery. But the war would never stop and there needed to be a plan to shorten the war and begin to heal what damage has been done and attempt to make peace in the United States. That plan was called Reconstruction, the period during which the states that had seceded to the Confederacy were controlled by the federal government before being readmitted to the Union. There were many policies of Reconstruction that affected the political, social, and economic problems during and after the war.

The story starts with the creation of the Emancipation Proclamation created by President Abraham Lincoln in September of 1862 which freed all slaves in states that rebel against the federal government. On his mission to stop slavery President Lincoln issues his Proclamation of Amnesty in December of 1863 which allowed for a full pardon for and restoration of property to all engaged in the rebellion with the exception of the highest Confederate officials and military leaders, it allowed for a new state government to be formed when 10 percent of the eligible voters had taken an oath of allegiance to the United States, and the southern states admitted in this fashion were encouraged to enact plans to deal with the freed slaves so long as their freedom was not compromised. Lincoln was trying to seize the initiative for reconstruction from Congress. On July of 1864, Congress passes the Wade-Davis Bill, which would have allowed a Southern state to be

readmitted to the Union only after 50 percent of those who voted in 1860 signed a loyalty oath, but President Abraham Lincoln pocket vetoed the Wade-Davis Bill because he thought it was too harsh and preferred his 10 percent plan. After Lincoln gets reelected President in November of 1864 and the passing of the 13th Amendment (abolishing slavery in the United States) in January of 1865, in March, the US Department of War issues the Freedman's Bureau, which a federal agency authorized to assist the former slaves in their transition to freedom by distributing clothing, food, fuel, and medical care and to help coordinate the establishment of black schools. In April, five days after the Confederates surrendered and ended the war, Abraham Lincoln was assassinated by Southern actor, John Wilkes Booth, and thus former Vice-President Andrew Johnson was made President.

In May of 1865, President Johnson issued his 10 percent Proclamation of Amnesty, which granted amnesty and pardon to all persons who directly or indirectly participated in the rebellion except people with taxable property worth more than \$20,000, civil and diplomatic officials, officers above the rank of colonel, anyone who left the U. S. military to fight for the Confederacy, anyone educated in the U. S. military academies, anyone who left homes in the North to go South, and many others. Southerners held conventions under Johnson's plans and put in a law called the Black Codes, which granted certain basic civil rights to blacks the right to marry, to own personal property, and to sue in court. They also provided for the segregation of public facilities and placed severe restrictions on the freedman's status as a free laborer, his right to own real estate, and his right to testify in court. The Freedmen's Bureau prevented enforcement of the

codes, which were later repealed by the radical Republican state governments. By December of 1865, President Johnson believed the Reconstruction plan was finished, but Congress disagreed and thus refused to seat the new Southern representatives and senators. In January of 1866, in attempts to elect former Confederates into the US Senate, Johnson gets rejected to do so by Congress. But later Congress gets dominated by Radical Republicans and issued the Civil Rights Act of 1866, which guarantees that all persons born in the United States, except for Native Americans, are to be considered U. S. citizens with full protection of “ person and property” under the law. This caused a race riot in Memphis, TN, and in the end 46 blacks died.

After the passing of the 14th Amendment in June, which makes it illegal for any state to deny equality before the law to any male citizen, in July, Johnson tries to veto the Amendment, but Congress passes a bill extending the life and expanding the powers of the Freedmen’s Bureau. Soon after that there was another race riot in New Orleans that ended up 34 blacks and 3 whites being killed. In August President Johnson chooses to have a speaking tour about how republicans should not be in Congress but in November the Republicans win by a landslide in the midterm elections and were now in control of the Northern state legislature and government. Later on in March of 1867, Congress passes a 51 percent plan known as their Congressional Reconstruction plan, which divides the South into five military districts, to be run by military commanders until the states meet the federal requirements for forming new governments. Johnson tries to veto the plan but fails, and also Congress passes the Tenure of Office Act, which limits the president

from dismissing government officials who have been approved by Congress, and makes sure Johnson does not override the Republicans' Reconstruction efforts. Congress also passed the Command of the Military Act, which required Johnson to issue all military orders through the General of the Army instead of dealing directly with military governors in the South. In May, the Klu Klux Klan, a white terrorist group, formed a year earlier, was discovered and was run by a Confederate general, Nathan Bedford. In the fall, the former states of the Confederacy held constitutional conventions and nearly 1.5 million voters registered and seven hundred thousand were African American.

In February of 1868, President Johnson dismisses Secretary of War Edwin Stanton, and then Congress impeaches Johnson for violating the Tenure of Office Act and other reasons. In May, Johnson was acquitted and escaped being removed from office by one vote. In June, 7 states, Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, North Carolina, and South Carolina are readmitted to the Union under the Reconstruction plan developed by the Republicans in Congress. In August, US Representative Thaddeus Stevens, who was a strong advocate for black equality, dies and thus spreads concern for African American civil rights. Then in November, Ulysses S. Grant was elected president with a big help by African Americans. In early 1869, newly formed Reconstruction governments are established. Then in March of 1870, the 15th Amendment is passed, which bars state governments from denying or abridging voting rights “ on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.” Then in May, in response to the widespread violence that had terrorized Southern blacks, Congress passes the first of three Enforcement

Acts, which designed to protect the civil and political rights of African Americans. In early 1871, Congress declares that the Indian nations are no longer sovereign, an act that will lead to the gradual relocation of all Native Americans onto reservations. In April, the second and third Enforcement Acts was issued, called the Klu Klux Klan Act, which gave the President the right to use federal forces to enforce the law. In November of 1872, Grant gets reelected President. In September of 1873, a powerful banker, Jay Cooke, was bankrupted and causes a panic in the country and more than a million people lose their jobs, thousands of businesses close, and agricultural prices and land values fall, and also Republicans lose interest in pressing Reconstruction on white South. In November of 1874, the Democrats capture control of the House.

In March of 1875, Congress passes the Civil Rights Act, which is meant to reinforce the government's commitment to protecting black rights, and key provisions of the act will be found unconstitutional in the Slaughterhouse Cases, which will come before the Supreme Court in the 1880s. In December, President Grant's private secretary, Orville E. Babcock, gets charged with participating in fraud involving tax revenues, and this was known as the Whiskey Ring corruption scandal. In November of 1876, the results of the presidential election in which Republican Rutherford B. Hayes narrowly beats Democrat Samuel J. Tilden are disputed. Four months later, in a compromise that will allow the Redemption movement to overthrow the southern Reconstruction governments, then Democrats agree to accept Hayes's election if the government will leave the South to manage its own affairs. In April of 1877, federal troops are withdrawn from the state capitols of South

Carolina and Louisiana, allowing white supremacists known as “ Redeemers” to take control of these states’ governments and soon the Redemption movement will have overthrown all of the Reconstruction governments. The Compromise of 1877 would end Reconstruction and President Hayes withdrew all troops in the South and returns their control.

Reconstruction proved to be a huge part of the Civil War and the way it effected the development of the United States. The way its policies effected how the South would be controlled, how it helped freed slaves and kept it that way, and how it effected the economy. It was America’s first experiment of democracy for men. Reconstruction brought government battles, riots, war, and just a big drama of events that are written in the history books. When Reconstruction ended it started a new chapter for America and left behind great moments in United States history.