



EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION

Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, ending slavery in states in rebellion against the Union. The Proclamation didn't end slavery in states that stayed in the Union. But it did allow Black men to join the Union Army and Navy. Almost 200,000 joined by the end of the war.

Image of Abraham Lincoln with flags, an eagle, the figures of Justice and Liberty, and the text of the Emancipation Proclamation. (LOC/The Strobridge Lith. Co., 1888)

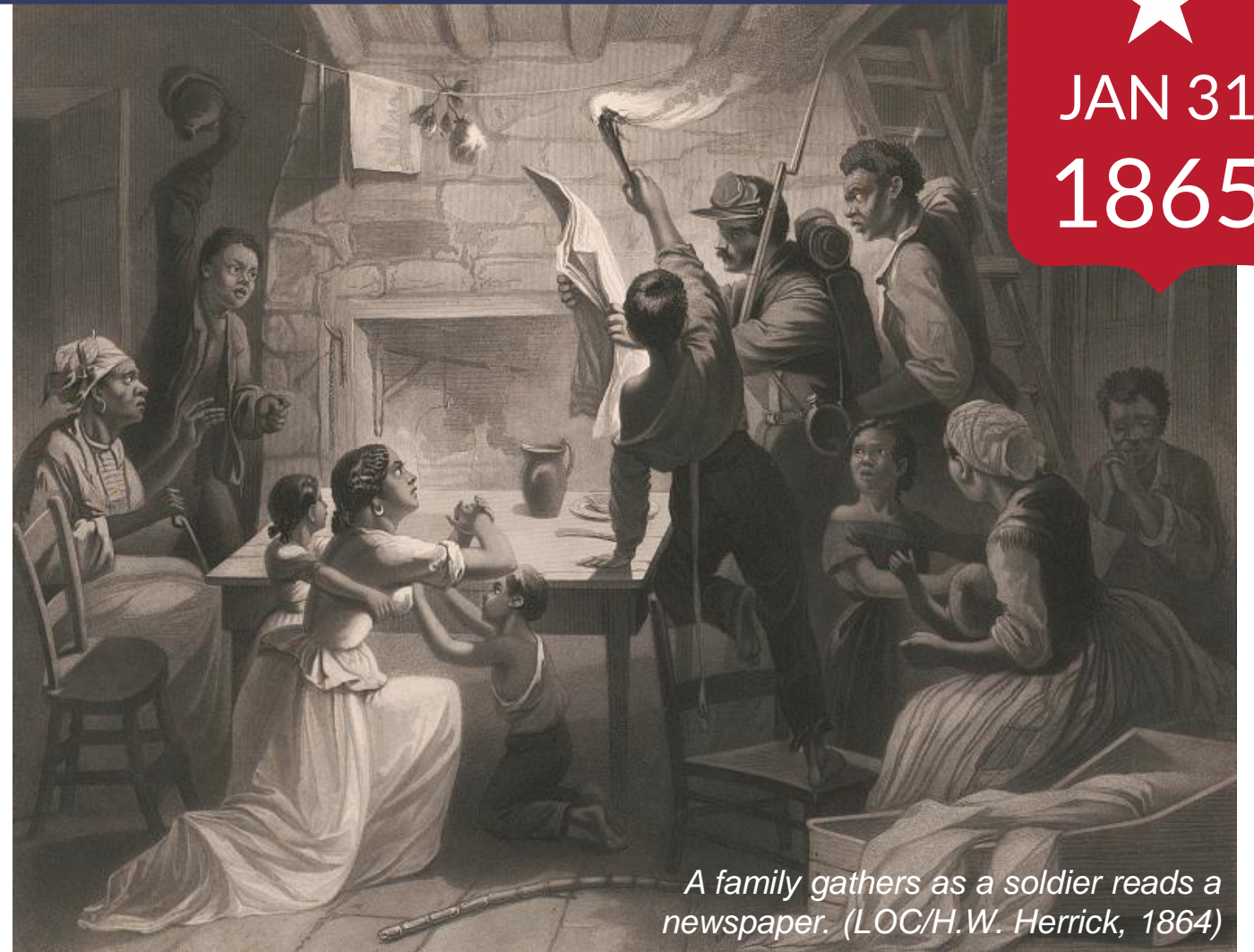




13th AMENDMENT PASSED

Congress voted to accept the 13th Amendment to the Constitution, officially ending slavery in all U.S. states and

territories. It was ratified by the states on December 6, 1865. Congress also gained the power to enforce the amendment through legislation.



A family gathers as a soldier reads a newspaper. (LOC/H.W. Herrick, 1864)

JAN 31
1865





FREEDMEN'S BUREAU CREATED

Originally organized under the direction of the Army, the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned

Lands helped 4 million enslaved people transition to lives of freedom as it provided food, housing, schools, legal assistance, and medical aid. The Bureau also helped poor Southern whites. However, the Bureau became caught in political battles and disagreements that decreased its effectiveness.



Drawn in 1868, a man representing the Freedman's Bureau stands between armed groups of Euro-Americans and Afro-Americans. (LOC/A.R. Waud)

MAR 3
1865





LINCOLN'S SECOND INAUGURATION

Abraham Lincoln won re-election in November 1864 and his second inauguration was held in March 1865. After four years of fighting, the Civil War was drawing to a close and Union victory seemed guaranteed. While many expected a day of celebration, Lincoln's speech about "charity for all" was short and somber.

Crowd at Lincoln's second inauguration, which was held on a rainy day at the U.S. Capitol grounds. The crowd included African American troops who marched in the inaugural parade. (LOC, 1865)





SURRENDER AT APPOMATTOX

With the surrender of Confederate General Robert E. Lee to Union General Ulysses S. Grant near the village of Appomattox Court House in Virginia, the Civil War officially ended. The South had been defeated, slavery had been outlawed, and people began to grapple with life after the war.



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APR 9
1865

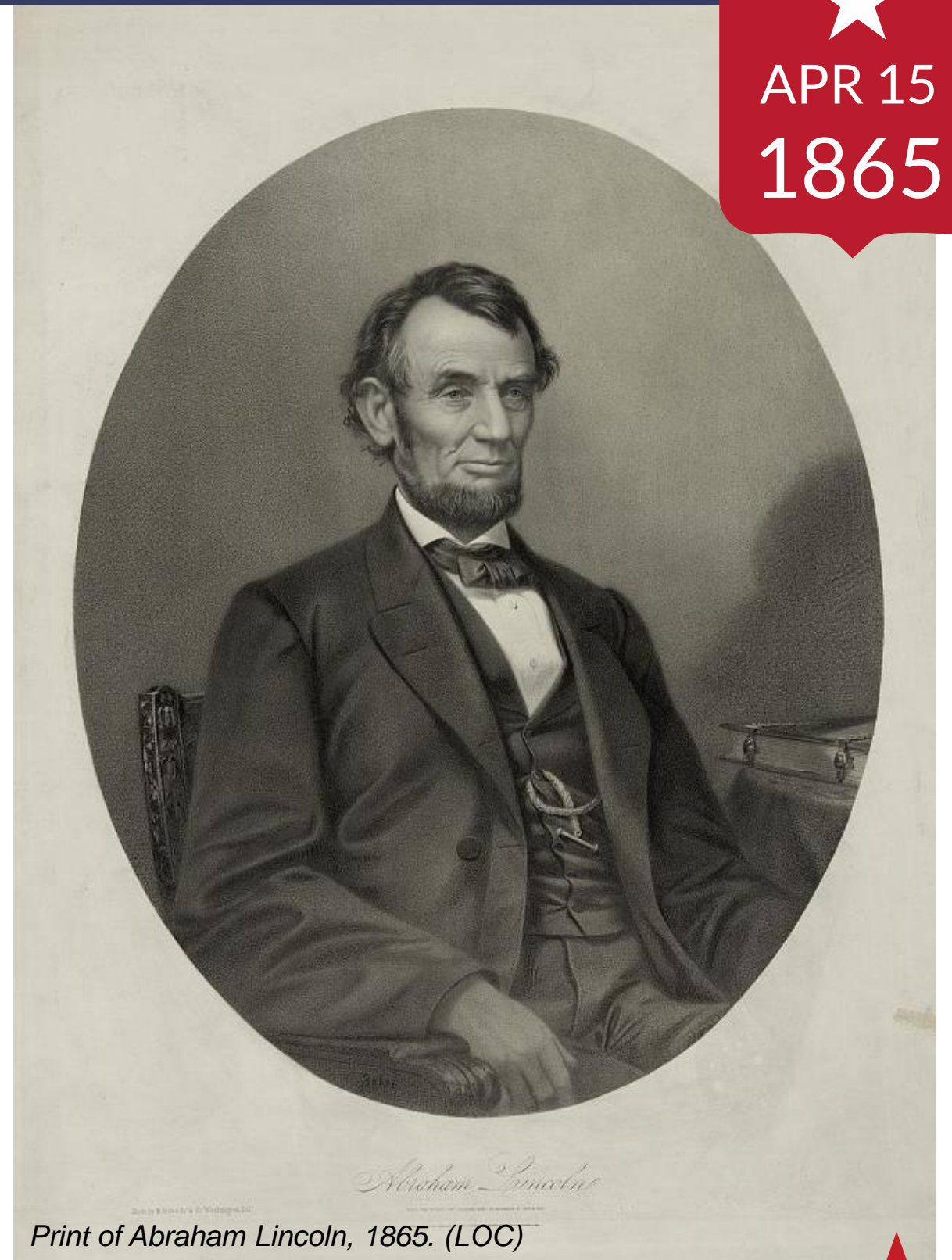
*Painting of Lee's surrender to Grant at Appomattox Court House.
(Public Domain/Thomas Nast, 1895)*





LINCOLN ASSASSINATED

President Lincoln was shot while attending a play at Ford's Theater in Washington, D.C. Within 12 hours, he died and Vice President Andrew Johnson became president.



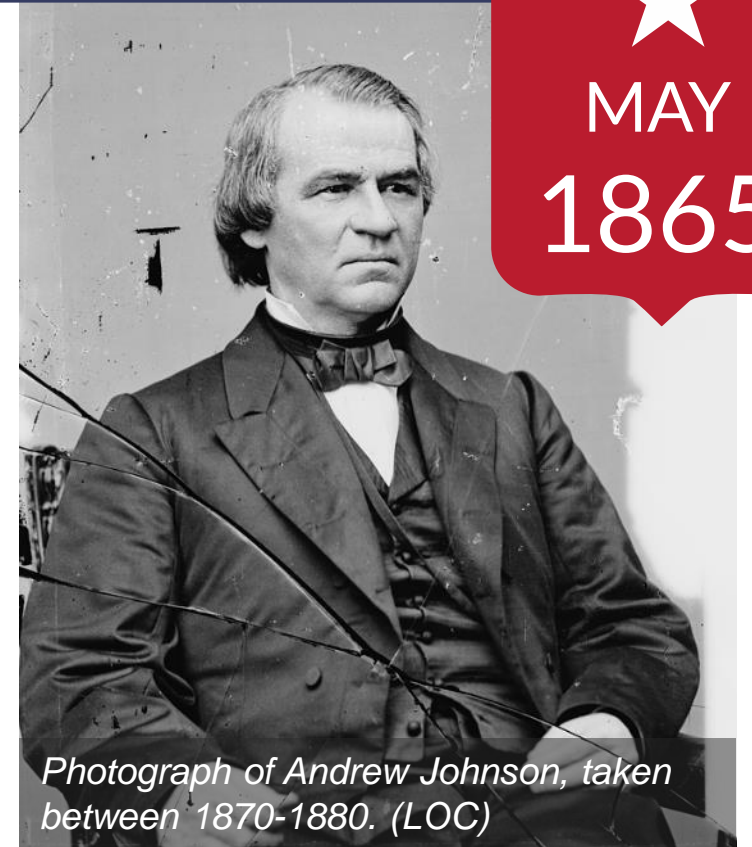
Print of Abraham Lincoln, 1865. (LOC)





JOHNSON'S RECONSTRUCTION

With Congress in recess, President Andrew Johnson set Reconstruction terms for the South. He appointed new Southern governors and outlined terms for readmitting Confederate states to the Union. This set up a showdown with Congress, who believed that they should control readmittance. By the fall, he had pardoned all but 1,500 Confederates. By December, former-Confederate military leaders were in Washington D.C. to serve as members of Congress. However, Congress refused to seat them.



Photograph of Andrew Johnson, taken between 1870-1880. (LOC)

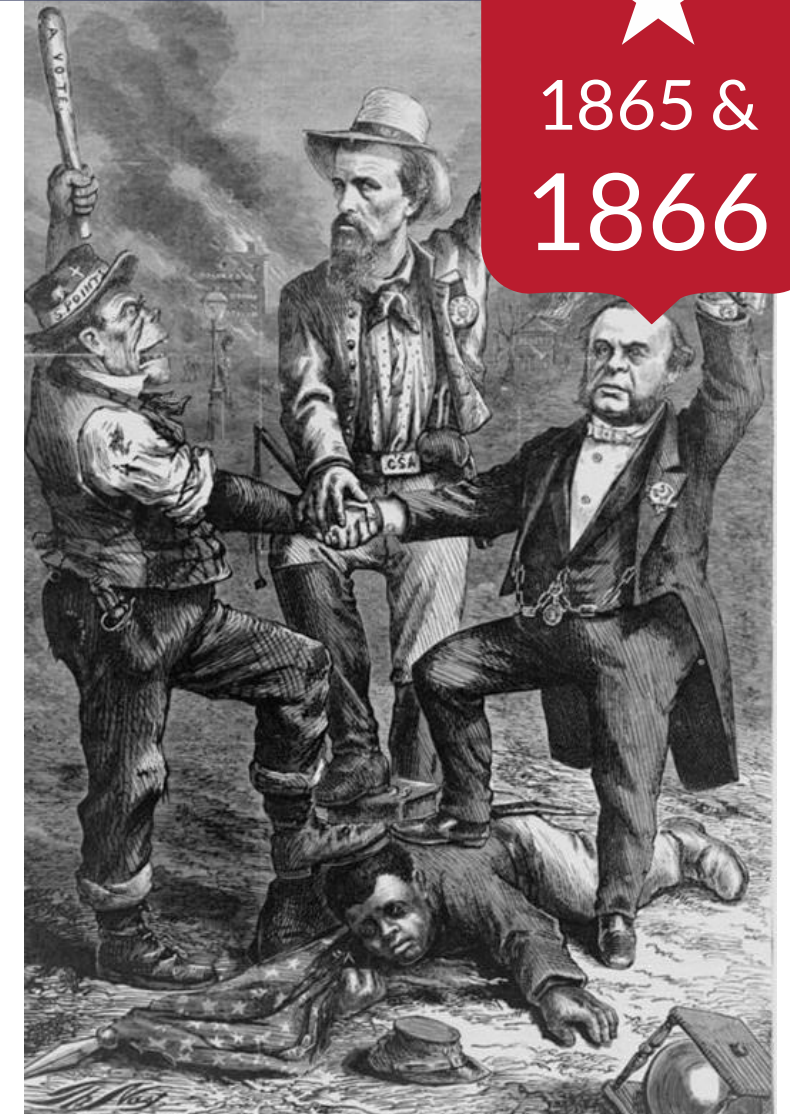
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MAY
1865





BLACK CODES

Southern states passed laws to restrict the freedoms of Black Americans. These laws specifically targeted African Americans and were viewed as “slavery by another name.” Some laws required African Americans to sign yearly labor contracts. Refusing to sign a labor contract or breaking the contract were punishable by arrest, confiscation of wages, and forced labor. Other laws restricted occupations, property ownership, gun ownership, and wages.



★
1865 &
1866

Political cartoon depicting violence toward African Americans by different white groups. (LOC/Thomas Nast, 1868)





CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1866

Congress passed the Civil Rights Act earlier in 1866, but President Johnson had vetoed it. On April 9, Congress overrode Johnson's veto by passing it with a two-thirds majority in both houses. The Act granted citizenship to "all persons born in the United States," and outlined some of those rights.



U.S. Capitol, ca. 1920-1950. (LOC/Theodor Hrydczak)





FREEDMEN'S BUREAU BILL PASSED

In response to Southern Black Codes, Congress passed the Freedmen's Bureau Bill. The original bill limited the operation

of the Bureau to one year after the war. This legislation extended the Bureau's existence and expanded its reach to northern states as well. Congress overrode President Johnson's veto on July 16.



Rations are issued to the old and sick at a Freedmen's Bureau. (LOC/James E. Taylor, 1866)

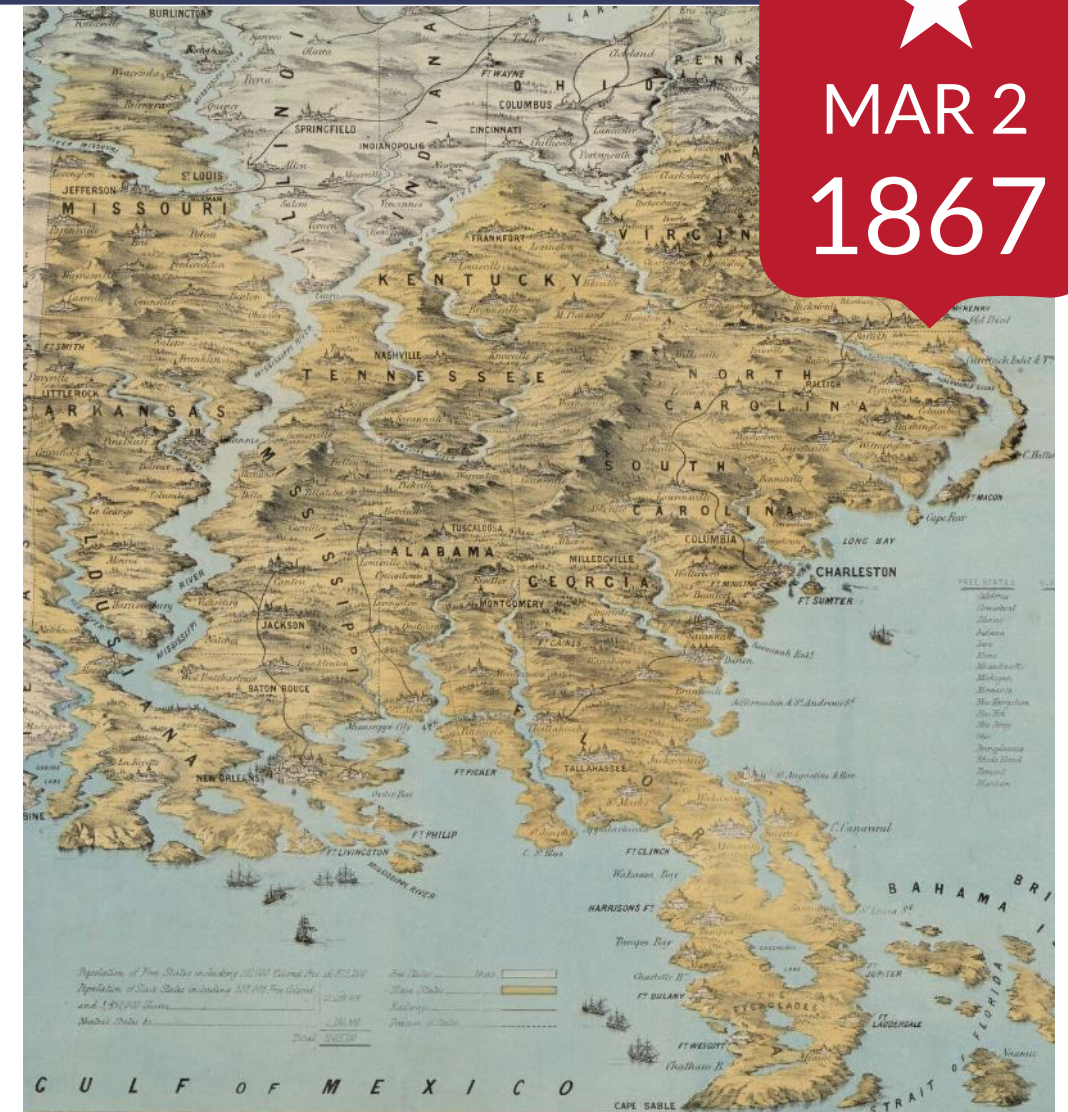
JULY 16
1866





RECONSTRUCTION BILLS PASSED

The Reconstruction Acts created requirements for readmitting Confederate states. Five military districts were created to handle interim government tasks. Before readmittance, states had to write new constitutions (which had to be approved by Congress) and ratify the 13th and 14th Amendments. Congress overrode Johnson's veto on March 2.



Map of the United States, showing the important geographic features of the Southern states. (LOC/Read & Co., 1861)





VIOLENCE AND INTIMIDATION INCREASED

As African Americans exercised citizenship

rights, violence against them increased. White vigilante groups used violence and the threat of violence to intimidate both African Americans and white Republicans. Black schools and churches became targets. People were terrorized for voting, running for office, or serving on juries. Examples included 38 deaths in the 1866 New Orleans Massacre and the 1873 murder of over 100 African Americans in Colfax, Louisiana after a disputed election.



In this cartoon, President Johnson was depicted as a king and blamed for the 1866 race riot in New Orleans, LA. (LOC/Thomas Nast, 1867)





JOHNSON IMPEACHED

After three years of disagreement, vetoes, and overrides, Congress impeached Johnson. He was the first president to be impeached, but was one vote short of being removed from office. Johnson was

not nominated for president again, and Ulysses S. Grant was elected on November 3.

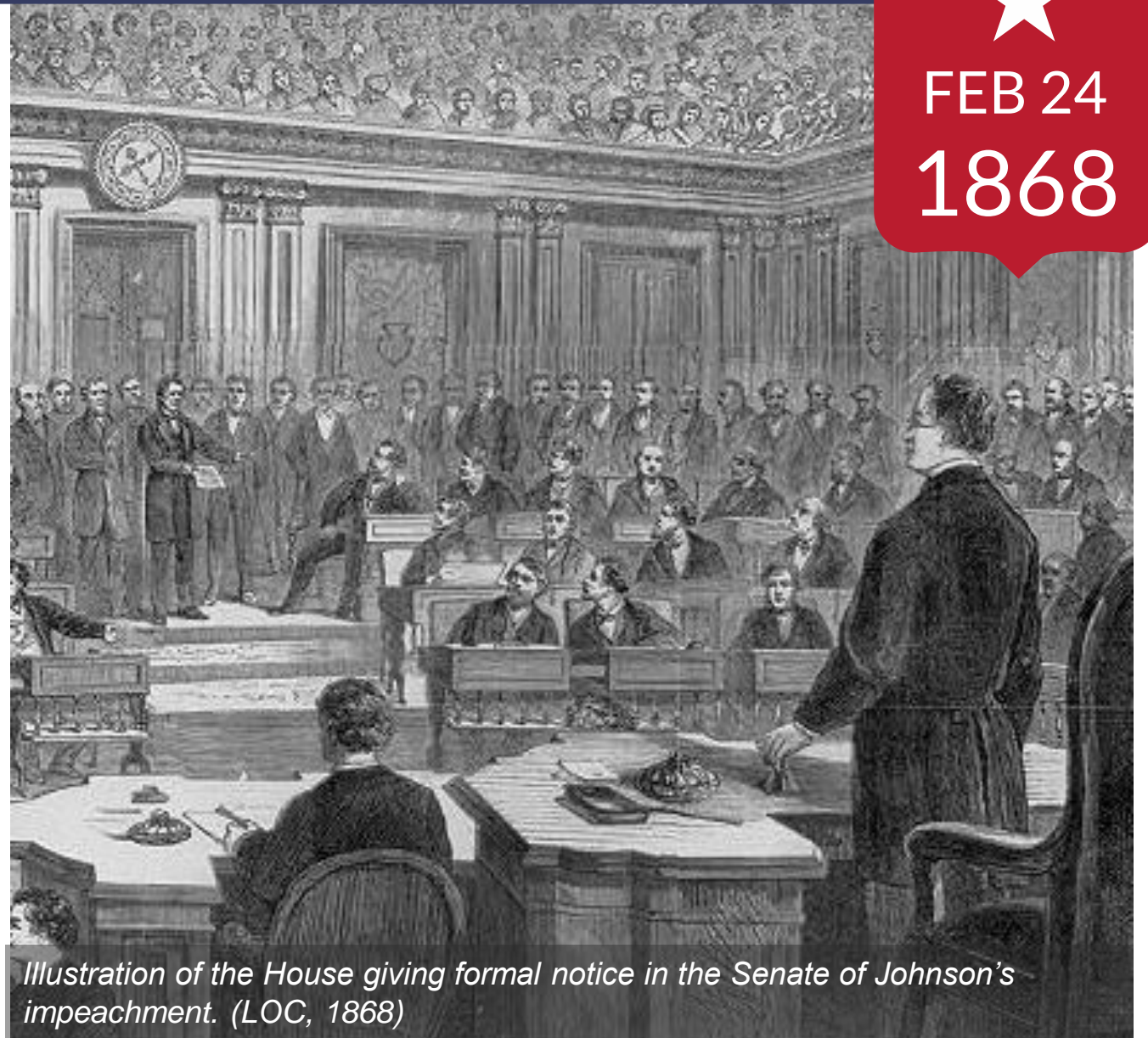


Illustration of the House giving formal notice in the Senate of Johnson's impeachment. (LOC, 1868)



FEB 24
1868





RATIFICATION OF 14th AMENDMENT

With the passage of the 14th Amendment, birthright citizenship and male citizen voting rights were enshrined in the constitution. Citizens of every race were promised “equal protection under the laws.” Former Confederate states were required to ratify the amendment before being re-admitted.



African Americans of different ages and backgrounds wait in line to vote for the first time. (LOC/Alfred R. Waud, 1867)

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JULY 9
1868





FREEDMEN'S BUREAU LIMITED

Congress passed legislation to continue the Freedmen's Bureau but cut its funding and limited its functions to processing claims of civil rights violations and supporting education.



Howard University, founded in 1867 by Congress primarily to educate free Black people. (LOC/Carol M. Highsmith, 2010)





RATIFICATION OF 15th AMENDMENT

The last Reconstruction amendment passed, the 15th Amendment extended voting rights for male African

Americans to all parts of the country. States weren't allowed to disenfranchise voters based on race. The 14th and 15th Amendments formed the legal basis for decades of activism for racial equality.



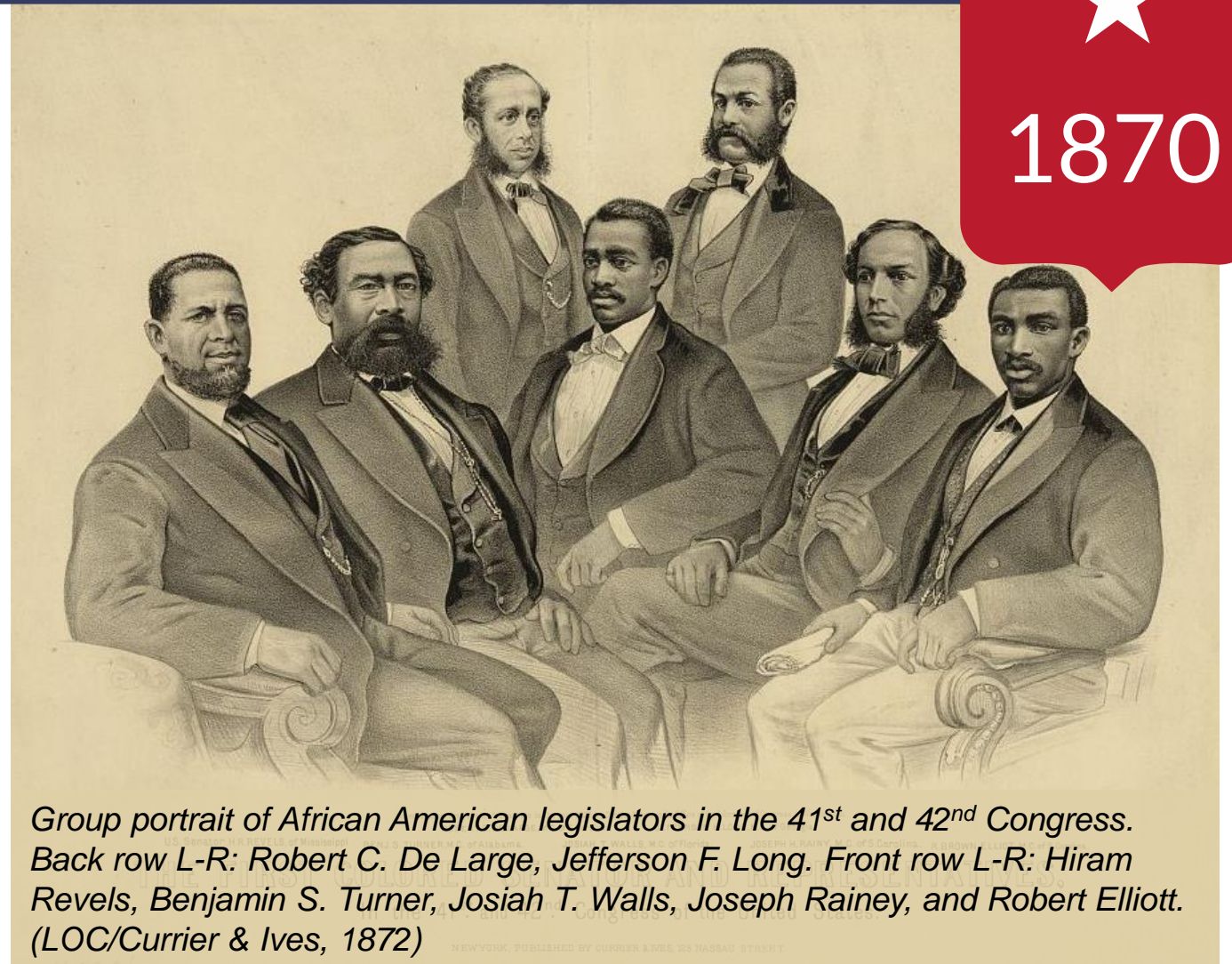
Center image shows a parade, while the surrounding images illustrate life events and rights granted by the 15th amendment. (LOC/ Thomas Kelly, ca. 1870)





FIRST BLACK AMERICANS ELECTED

Able to participate in democracy—at least legally — Black Americans were elected to local, state, and federal offices for the first time.



Hiram Revels of Mississippi, was the first African American senator. Joseph Rainey, of South Carolina, was the first African American representative.





ENFORCEMENT ACTS (KKK ACTS)

The acts were a federal response to southern states refusal to protect the rights of Black citizens. Congress aimed the legislation at white supremacist groups. President Grant sent troops to the South. Ku Klux Klan members were put on trial. The acts decreased Klan terrorism and provided some legal protections for African Americans.



Photograph of President Ulysses S. Grant taken ca. 1870-1880. (LOC)





FREEDMEN'S BUREAU SHUT DOWN

Americans' attention had shifted from the war and the plight of free Blacks. In an economic downturn and with more Confederate states



This image shows the Office of the Freedmen's Bureau in Memphis, Tennessee and was published in Harper's Weekly on June 2, 1866. (New York Public Library)

readmitted to the Union, the balance of power in Congress shifted and pressure from white Southerners led to the Bureau closure.





BRUCE ELECTED

Blanche K. Bruce, of Mississippi, became the first African American elected to a full Senate term. He was also the first (and only) Senator who was born into slavery. He would be the last African American senator until 1967.

Photo of Blanche K. Bruce taken between 1865 and 1880. (LOC)





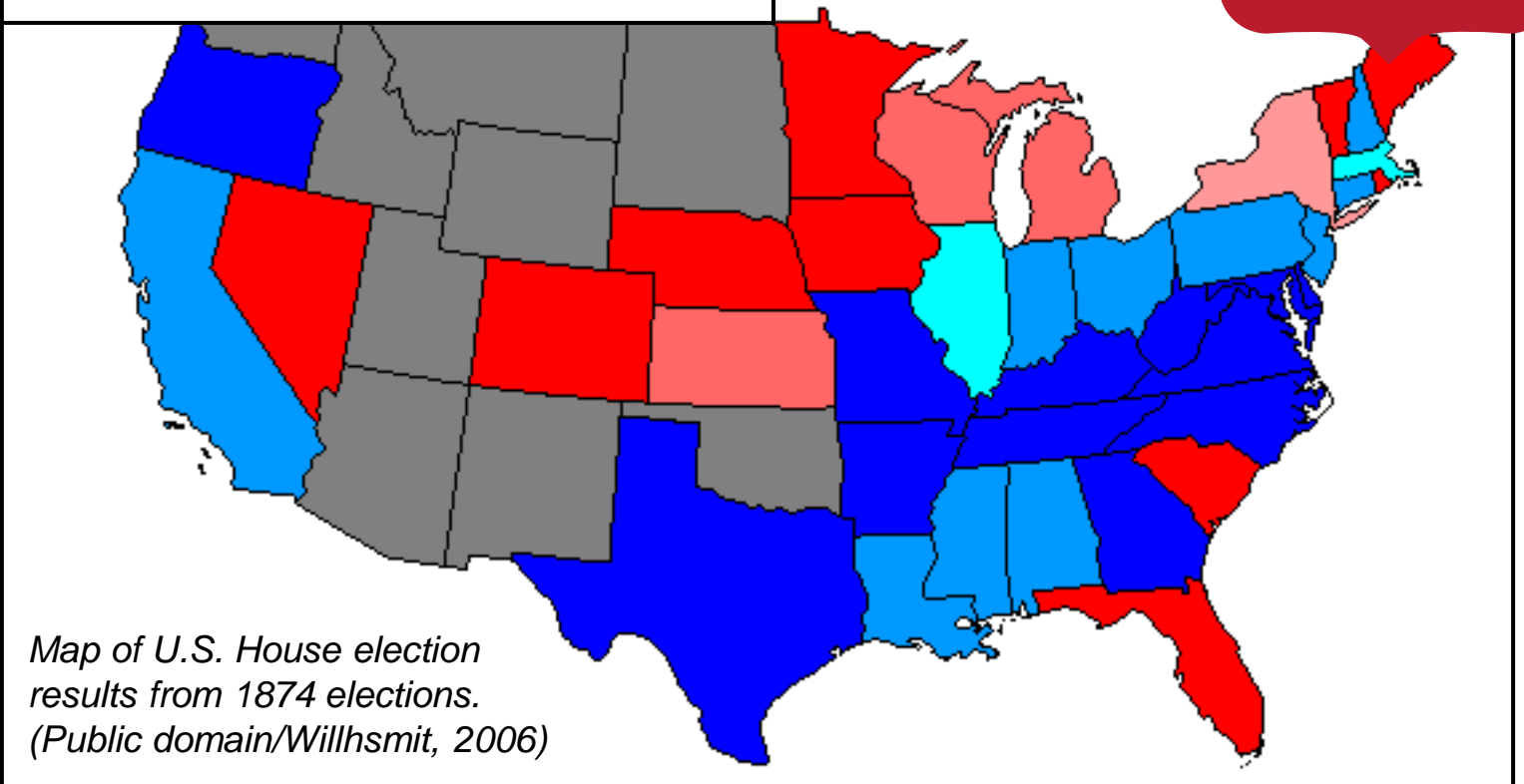
DEMOCRATS WIN THE HOUSE

For the first time since the Civil War began, Democrats controlled the House of Representatives. Radical

Republicans were committed to protecting the rights of Black citizens. With Democrats now in charge of the legislative agenda, Congress focused on other issues and Reconstruction era protections were no longer enforced.

House seats by party holding plurality in state

80%+ Democratic	80%+ Republican
60+ to 80% Democratic	60+ to 80% Republican
Up to 60% Democratic	Up to 60% Republican





CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1875

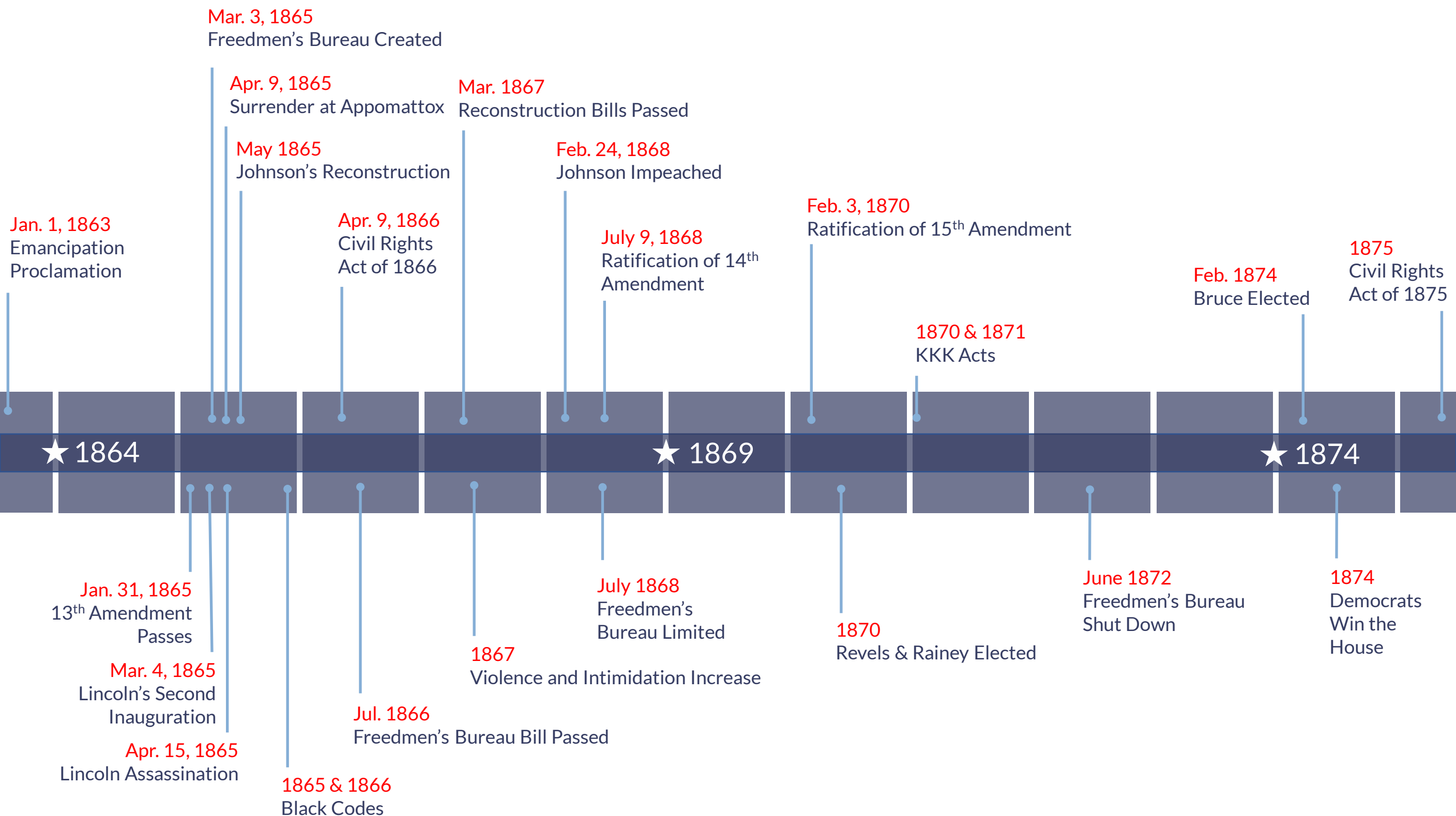
The Civil Rights Act of 1875 became the last major piece of Reconstruction civil rights legislation. It guaranteed equal access to public inns and transportation. In 1883, however, the Supreme Court declared the law unconstitutional.



U.S. Capitol, ca. 1920-1950. (LOC/Theodor Hrydczak)



RECONSTRUCTION: A TIMELINE



1863



1864



1865



1866



1867



1868



1869



1870



1871



1872



1873



1874



1875

