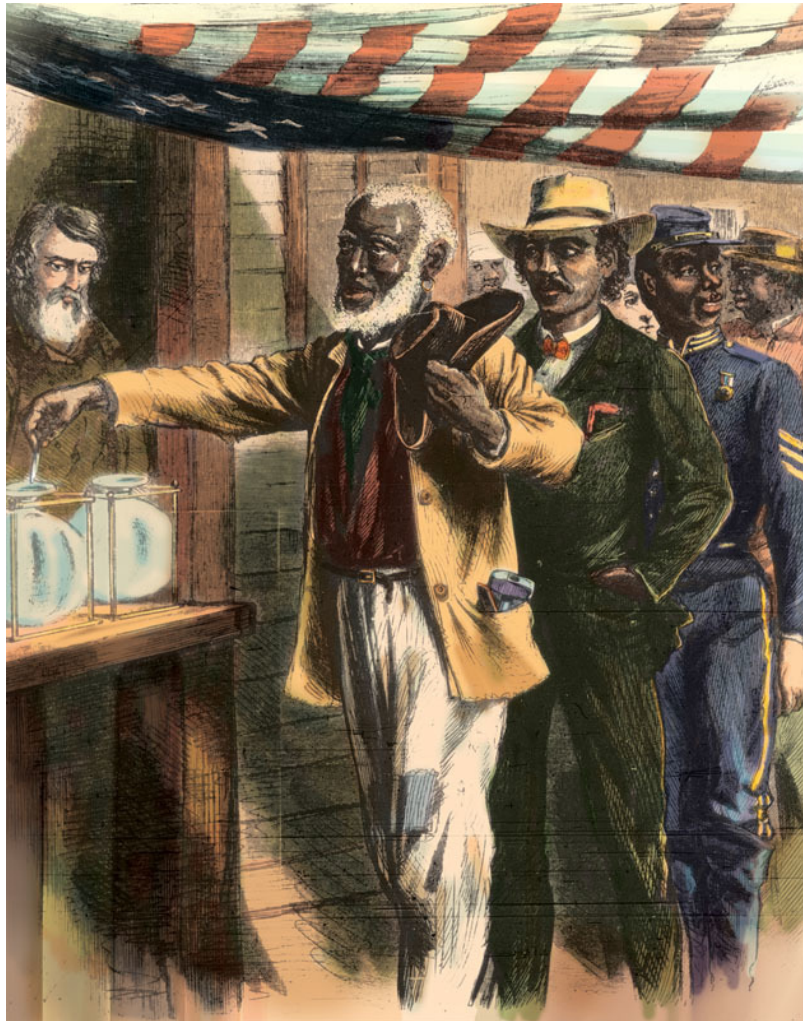


Lesson 23:

The Reconstruction Era

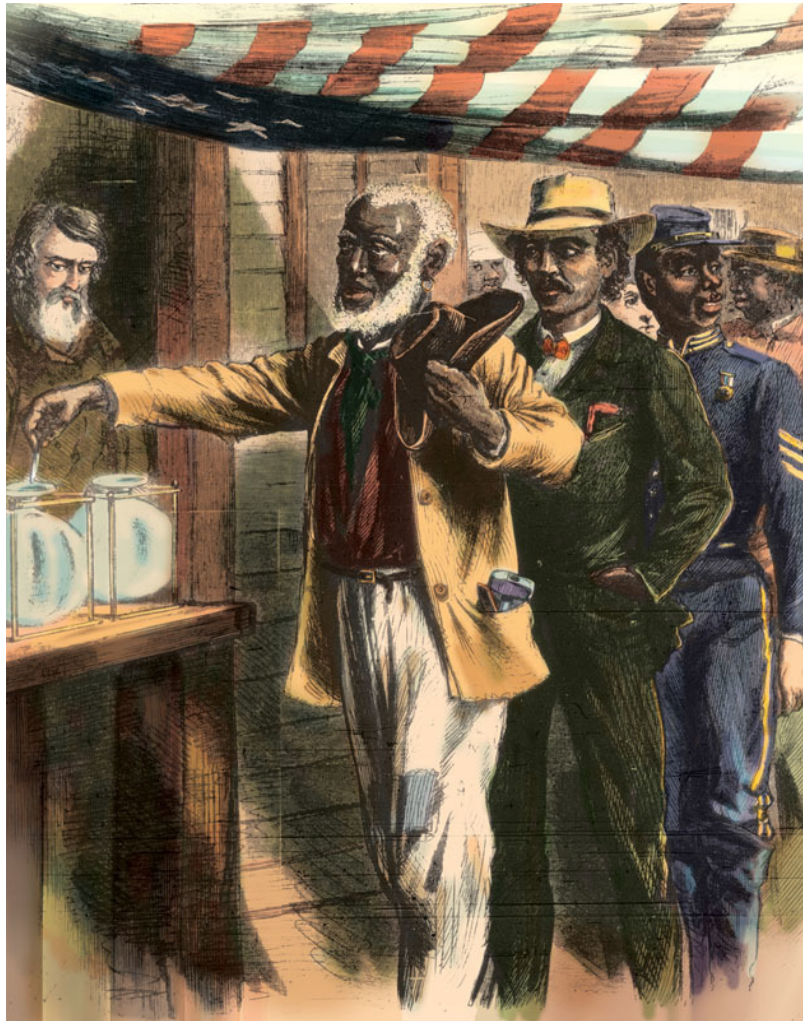
To what extent did Reconstruction bring African Americans closer to full citizenship?

Lesson 23: Section 3 – Southern Reconstruction



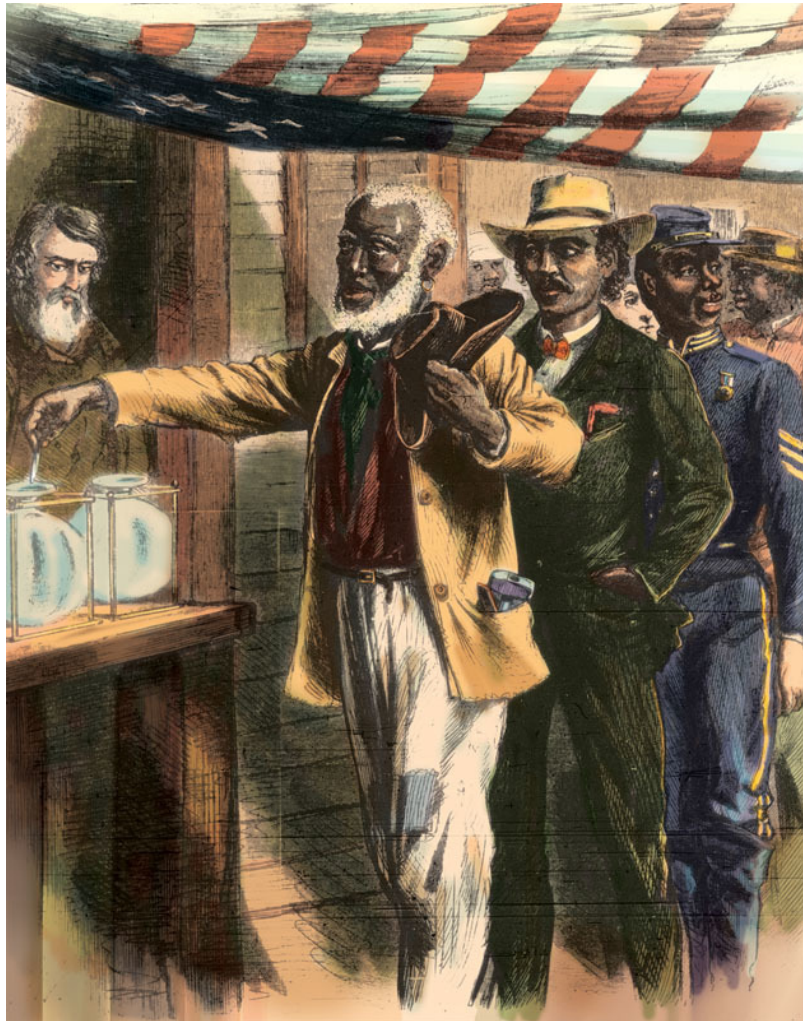
- Because Congress had banned former Confederates from voting, the right to vote in the South was limited to three groups:
 - Freedmen
 - White Southerners who had opposed the war
 - Northerners who had moved south after the war.

Lesson 23: Section 3 – Southern Reconstruction



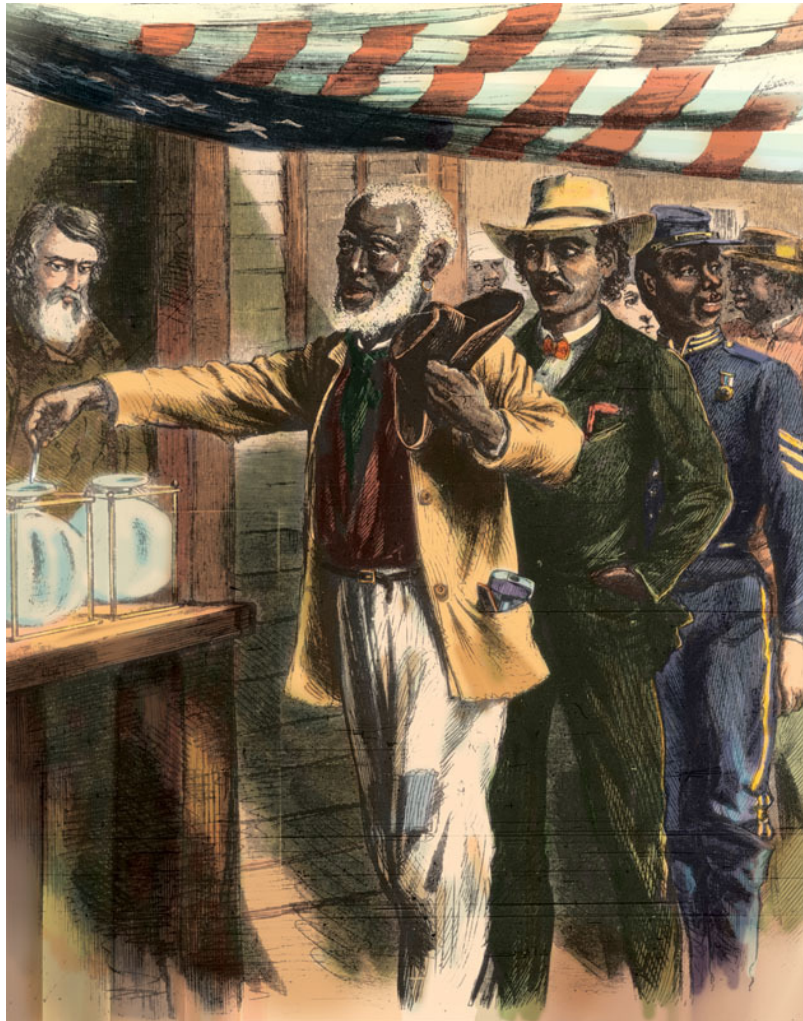
- African Americans made up the South's largest group of new voters.
- Most black voters joined the Republican Party—the party of Lincoln and emancipation.

Lesson 23: Section 3 – Southern Reconstruction



- White Southerners who had not supported secession were the next largest group. Many were poor farmers who had never voted before.
- In their eyes, the Democratic Party was the party of wealthy planters and secession, so poor farmers also supported the Republican Party.

Lesson 23: Section 3 – Southern Reconstruction



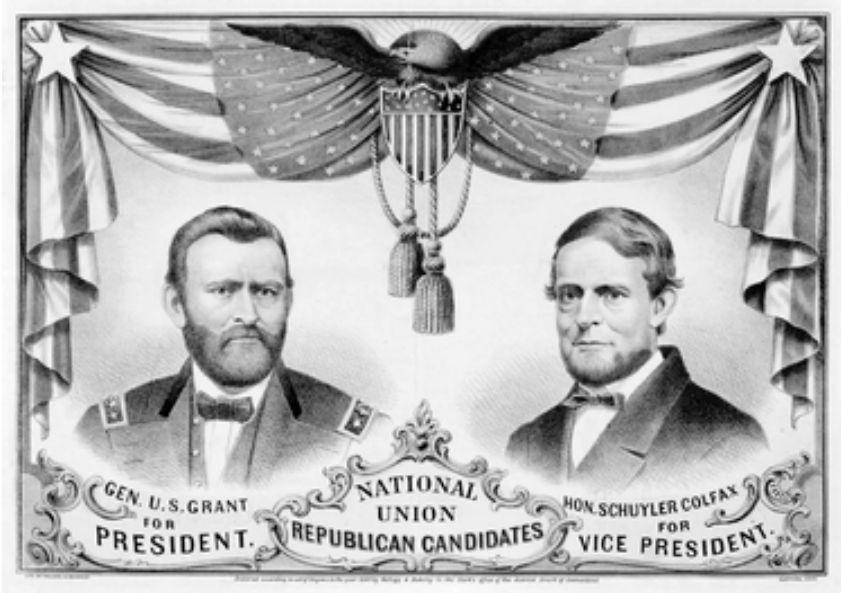
- The last group of new voters were Northerners who had moved south after the war.
- Southerners called these newcomers “carpetbaggers” after a type of handbag used by many travelers.
- They saw carpetbaggers as fortune hunters who had come south to “fatten” themselves on Southerners' misfortunes.

Lesson 23: Section 3 – The Election of 1868



- New voters in the South cast their first ballots in the 1868 presidential election.
- The Republican candidate was Ulysses S. Grant, a former Union general who supported Reconstruction and promised to protect the rights of African Americans in the South.
- His Democratic opponent, Horatio Seymour, promised to end Reconstruction and return the South to its traditional leaders—white Democrats. Seymour won a majority of white votes.

Lesson 23: Section 3 – The Election of 1868



- Grant, however, was elected with the help of half a million black votes.
- The election's lesson to Republicans was that if they wanted to keep control of the White House and Congress, they needed the support of African American voters.

Lesson 23: Section 3 – The Fifteenth Amendment



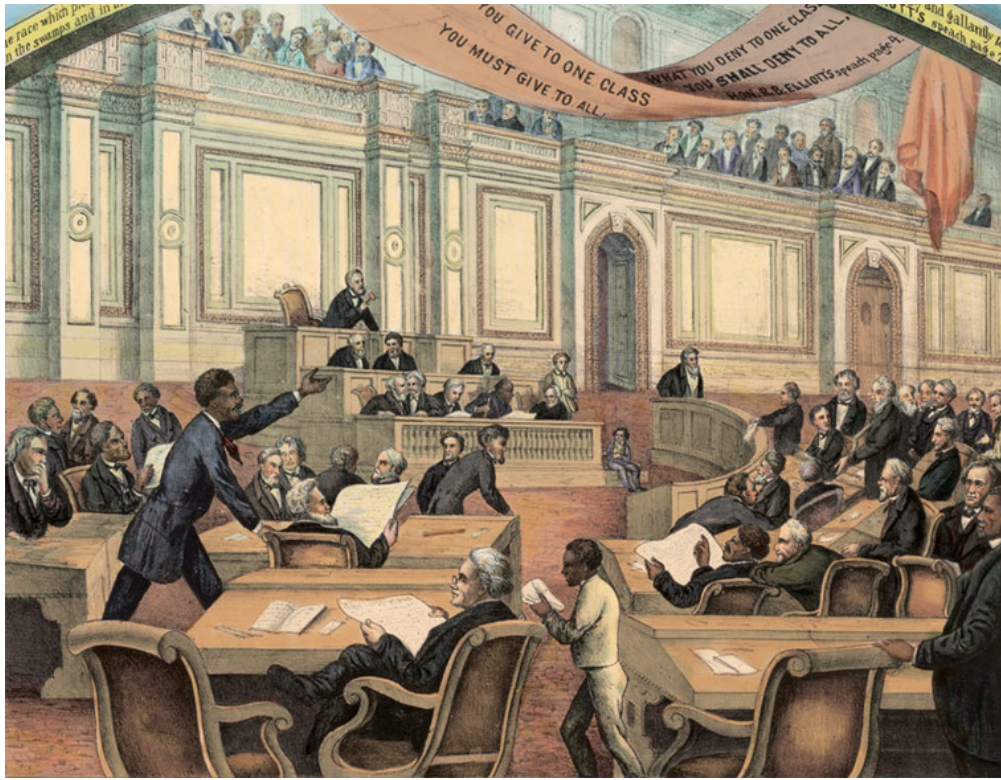
- In 1869, at President Grant's urging, Congress passed the Fifteenth Amendment, which said that a citizen's right to vote “shall not be denied . . . on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.”
- It guaranteed every male citizen the right to vote, regardless of race.

Lesson 23: Section 3 – New State Governments



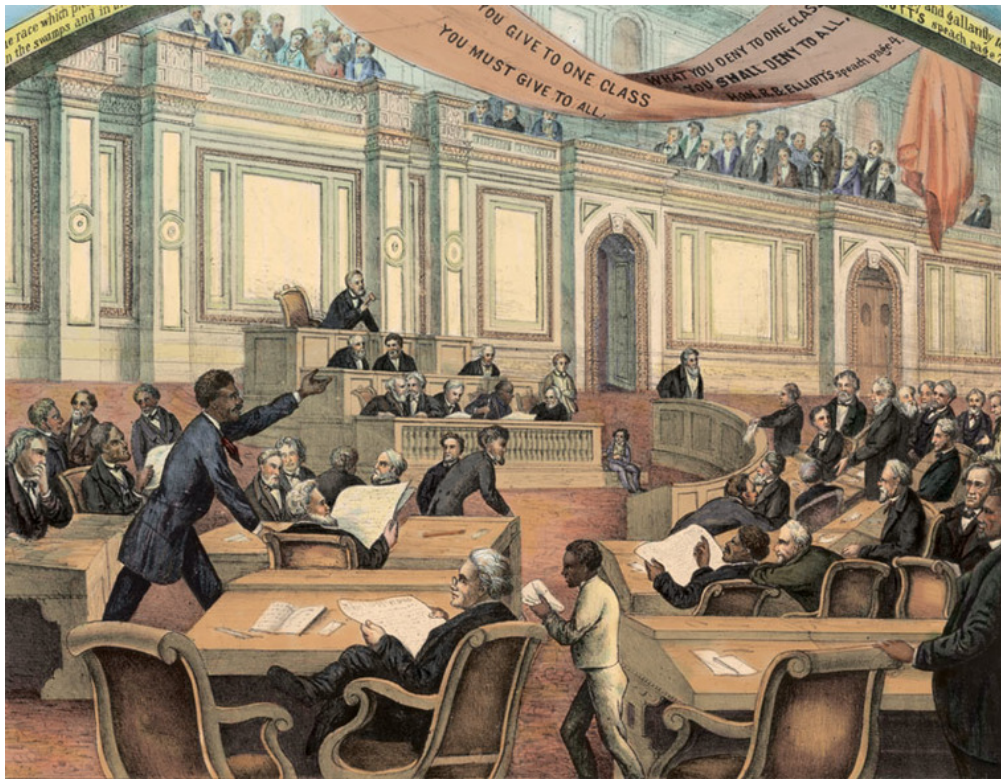
- Elections were then held to fill state offices. To the dismay of Southern Democrats, a majority of those elected were Republicans, and about a fifth were African Americans.
- The South's new state governments quickly ratified the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments. By 1870, every Southern state had finished this final step of Reconstruction and rejoined the Union.

Lesson 23: Section 3 – New State Governments



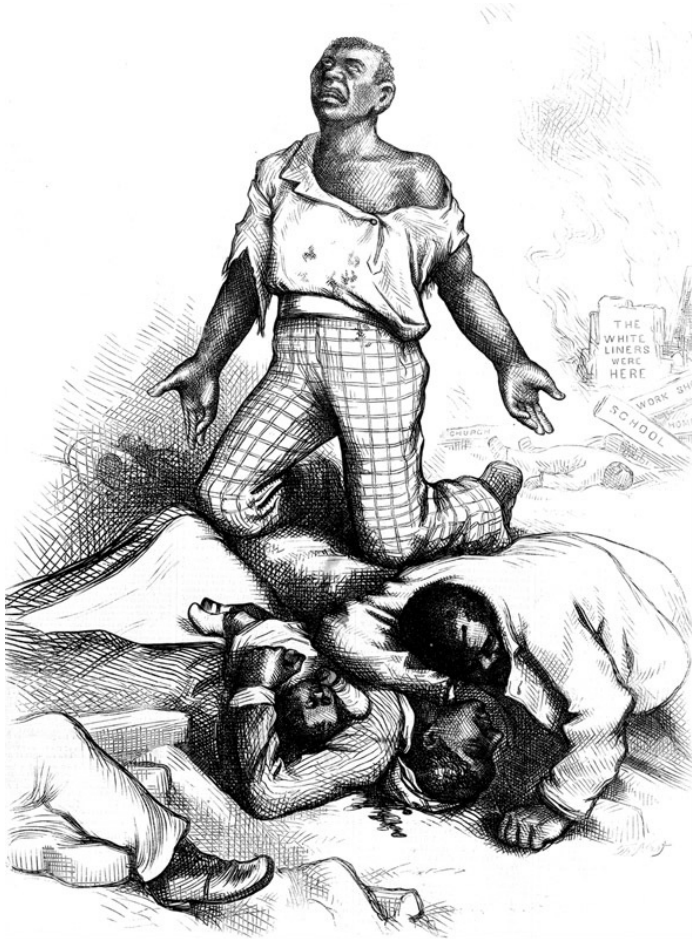
- Next, Southern governments turned to the task of rebuilding. In addition to constructing new schools and hospitals, work was also begun on damaged roads, bridges, and railroads.
- To pay for these projects, state legislatures raised taxes, which caused taxes in the South to increase by up to 400 percent between 1860 and 1870.

Lesson 23: Section 3 – African Americans in Office



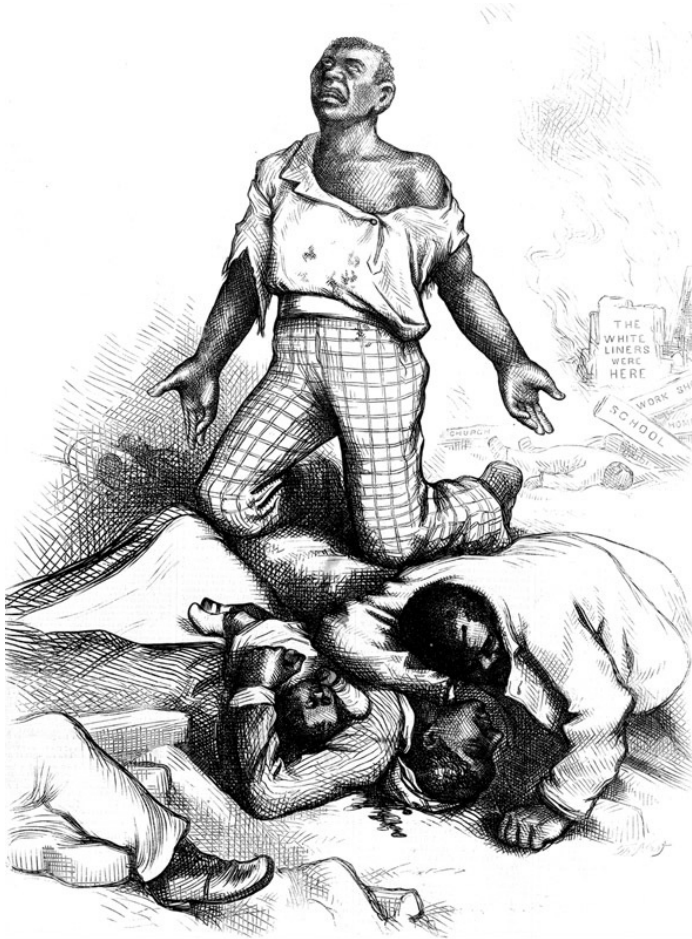
- About a fifth of the South's new officeholders were African Americans.
- Twenty-two African Americans represented their states in Congress—20 in the House and two in the Senate.

Lesson 23: Section 4 – The End of Reconstruction



- Most whites in the South bitterly resented the Southern Reconstruction governments. They hated the fact that these governments had been “forced” on them by Yankees.
- Many taxpayers also blamed their soaring tax bills on corruption—the misuse of public office for personal gain—by the South's new leaders.

Lesson 23: Section 4 – Violence Against African Americans



- At first, Democrats tried to win black voters away from the Republican Party.
- When that tactic failed, they attempted to use legal means to keep blacks from voting or from taking office.
- When legal methods failed, whites turned to violence.

Lesson 23: Section 4 – Violence Against African Americans



- Throughout the South, whites formed secret societies—the most infamous being the Ku Klux Klan—to drive African Americans out of political life.
- Dressed in long, hooded robes and armed with guns and swords, Klansmen did their work at night.
- They started by threatening black voters and officeholders, and African Americans who did not heed their threats were beaten, tarred and feathered, and even murdered.

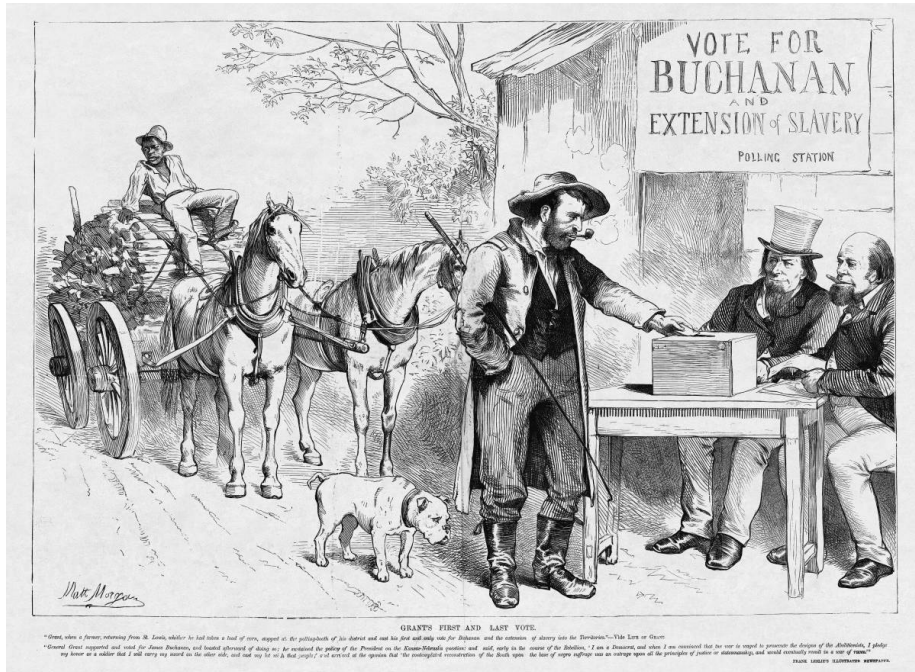
Lesson 23: Section 4 – The Enforcement Acts



- In 1870 and 1871, Congress passed three laws to combat violence against African Americans.
- Known as the Enforcement Acts, these laws made it illegal to prevent another person from voting by bribery, force, or scare tactics.
- Those who were brought to trial, however, were seldom convicted because few witnesses and jurors wanted to risk the Klan's revenge by speaking out against one of its members.

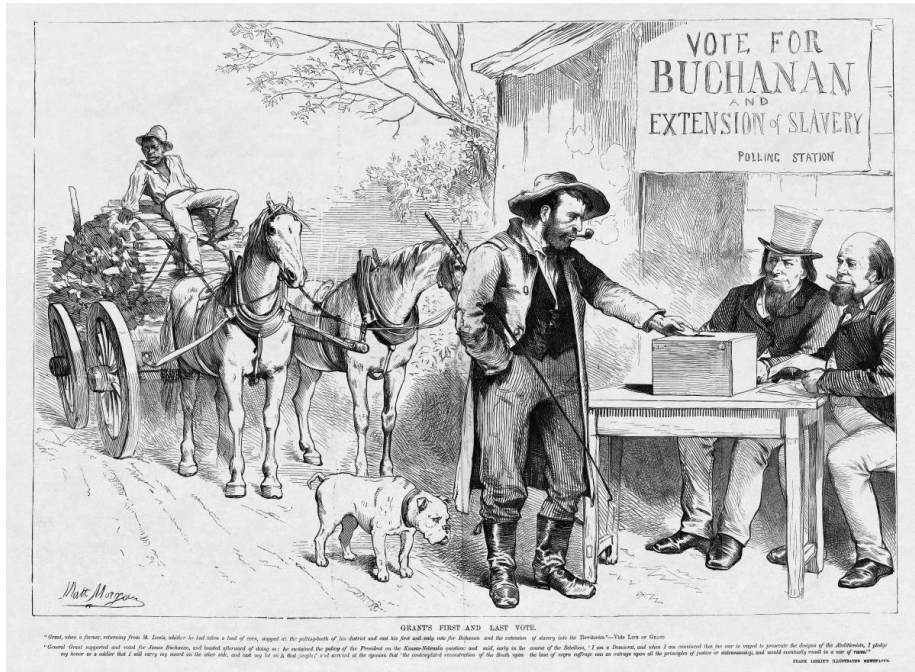
Lesson 23: Section 4 – The Amnesty Act of 1872

- By this time, most Northerners were losing interest in Reconstruction and the plight of the freedmen. It was time, many people said, to “let the South alone.”
- One indication of this changing attitude was the passage of the Amnesty Act of 1872. Amnesty means forgiveness for past offenses. The Amnesty Act allowed most former Confederates to vote once again.

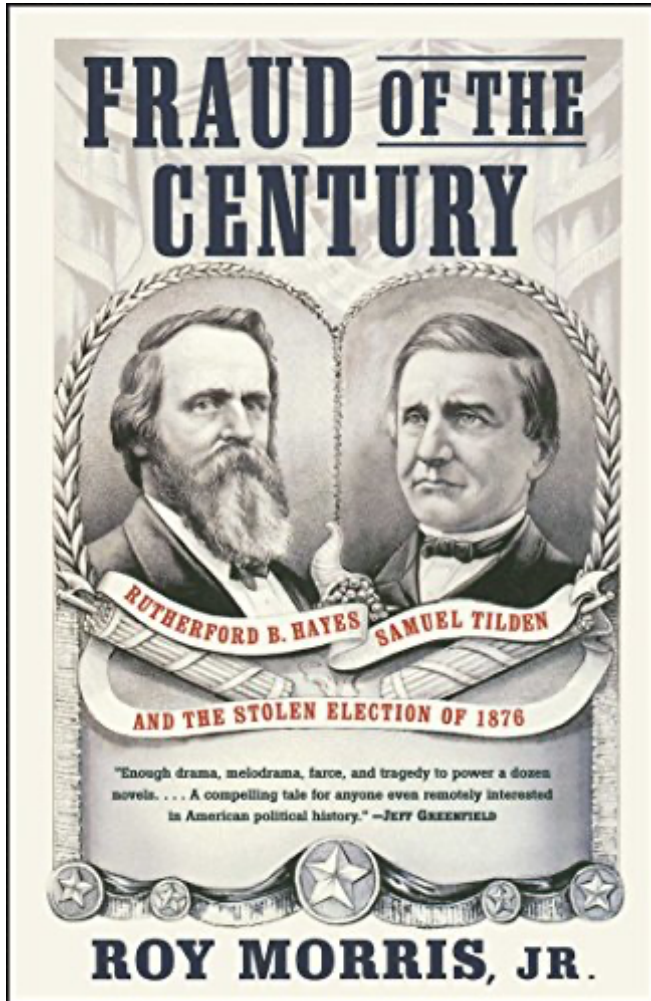


Lesson 23: Section 4 – The Amnesty Act of 1872

- The effects of the Amnesty Act were seen almost immediately, and by 1876, Democrats had regained control of all but three states in the South. Republicans clung to power in South Carolina, Louisiana, and Florida, but only with the help of federal troops.

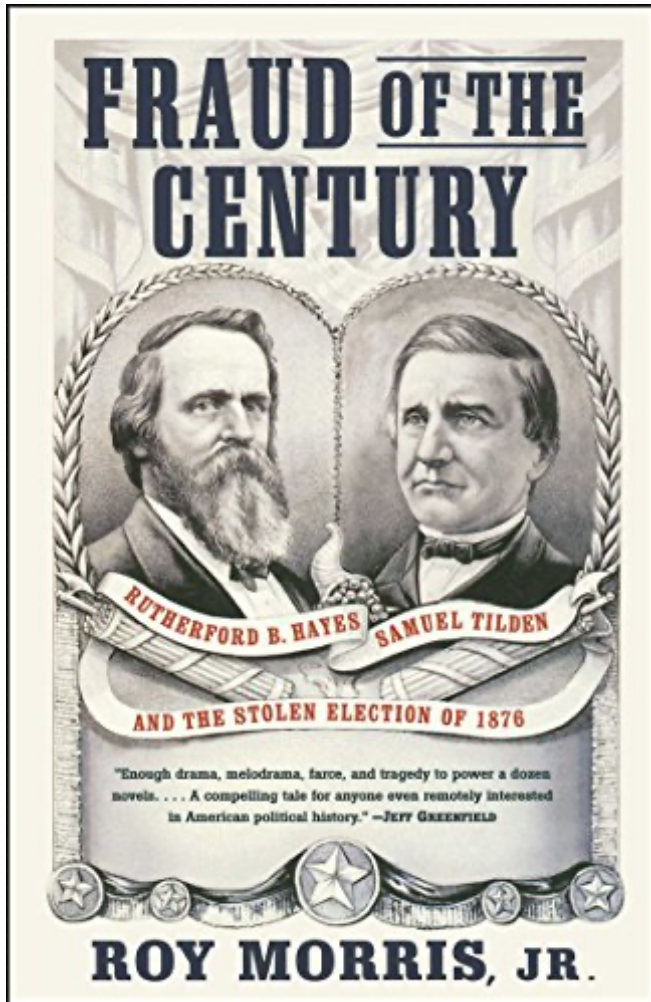


Lesson 23: Section 4 – The Disputed Election of 1876



- In 1876, Americans went to the polls to choose a new president.
 - The Democrats nominated New York governor Samuel J. Tilden as their candidate
 - Rutherford B. Hayes was the Republican nominee.
- When the votes were counted, Tilden won a majority of popular votes and 184 electoral votes, just one short of the 185 needed for election.
- Hayes received 165 electoral votes.
- Twenty electoral votes from four states were in dispute.

Lesson 23: Section 4 – The Disputed Election of 1876



- Congress, which was controlled by Republicans, appointed a commission to decide which candidate should get the disputed electoral votes.
- The commission awarded all 20 to Hayes, giving him exactly the 185 electoral votes he needed to win.
- The Democrats threatened to block the commission's decision.

Lesson 23: Section 4 – The Compromise of 1877

- The Democrats accepted the electoral commission's decision, allowing Hayes to become president.
- In return, Hayes agreed to withdraw the remaining federal troops still occupying Southern states.



Lesson 23: Section 4 – The Compromise of 1877

- Once President Hayes withdrew all remaining federal troops from the South in 1877, Reconstruction was officially over.
- After that, Democrats quickly took control of the last Southern states.

