

Reconstruction Document Set

Doc. A: Freedmen's Bureau Act, March, 1865

Be it enacted by...Congress assembled, That there is hereby established in the War Department...a bureau of refugees, freedmen, and abandoned lands, to which shall be committed, as hereinafter provided, the supervision and management of all abandoned lands, and the control of all subjects relating to refugees and freedmen from rebel states, or from any district of country within the territory embraced in the operations of the army, under such rules and regulations as may be prescribed by the head of the bureau and approved by the President...

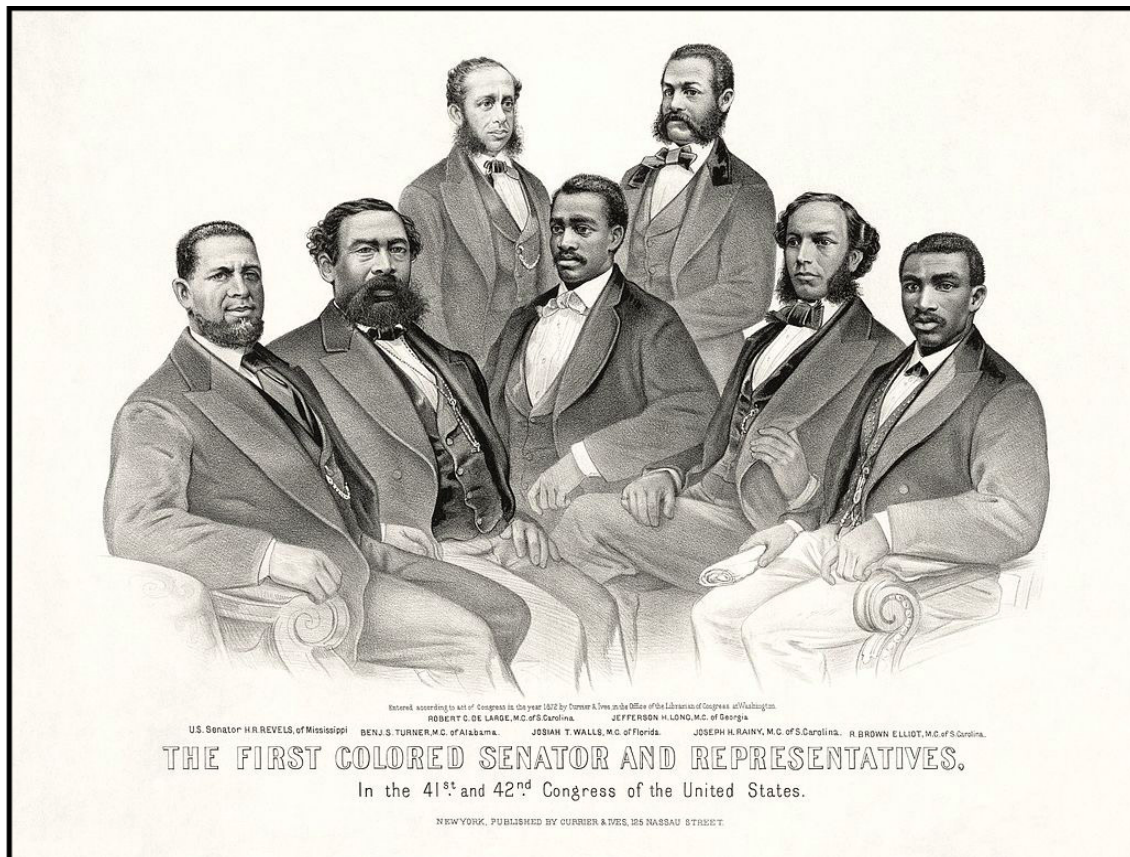
SEC. 2. And be it further enacted, That the Secretary of War may direct such issues of provisions, clothing, and fuel, as he may deem needful for the immediate and temporary shelter and supply of destitute and suffering refugees and freedmen and their wives and children, under such rules and regulations as he may direct...

SEC. 4. And be it further enacted, That the commissioner, under the direction of the President, shall have authority to set apart, for the use of loyal refugees and freedmen, such tracts of land within the insurrectionary states as shall have been abandoned, or to which the United States shall have acquired title by confiscation or sale, or otherwise, and...the person to whom it was so assigned shall be protected in the use and enjoyment of the land for the term of three years... At the end of said term, or at any time during said term, the occupants of any parcels so assigned may purchase the land and receive such title thereto...

Doc. B: Freedom's Lawmakers: A Directory of Black Officeholders during Reconstruction, 1996

	# of Officeholders	Slave	Free	Both	Unknown
Alabama	173	42	9	8	114
Arkansas	46	12	5	3	26
D.C.	1	0	6	2	3
Florida	58	15	8	2	32
Georgia	135	20	15	5	95
Louisiana	210	33	81	2	93
Mississippi	226	59	28	6	131
Missouri	1	0	0	1	0
North Carolina	187	22	34	3	126
South Carolina	316	131	88	5	91
Tennessee	20	4	7	2	7
Texas	49	28	6	4	11
Virginia	85	21	40	12	12
Total	1517	387	327	55	741

Doc. C: Currier & Ives, *The First Colored Senator and Representatives*, 1872



Doc. D: Sharecropping Contract, 1879

Agreement between Landlord and Sharecropper: This agreement, made and entered into this 18th day of January, 1879, between Solid South, of the first part, and John Dawson, of the second part.

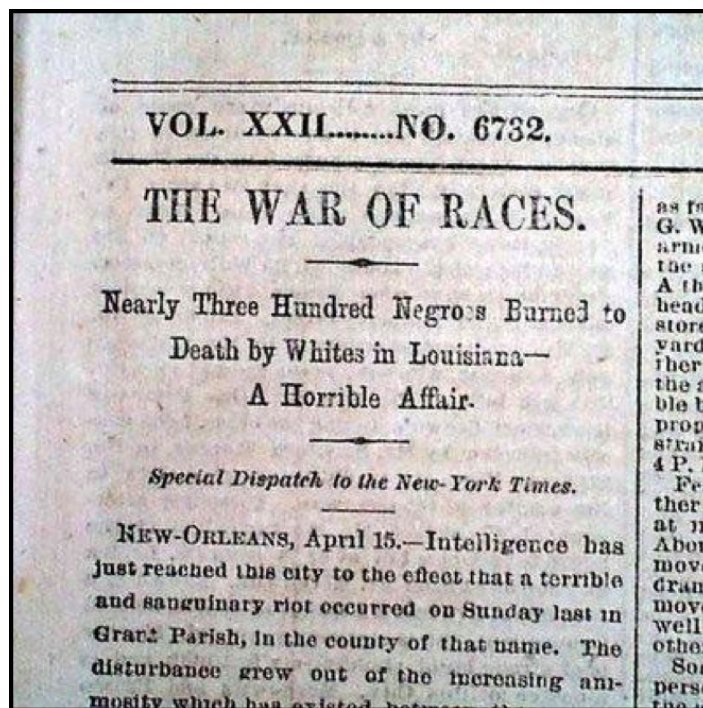
Witnesseth: that said party of the first part for and in consideration of eighty-eight pounds of lint cotton to be paid to the said Solid South, as hereinafter expressed, hereby leases to said Dawson, for the year A. D. 1879, a certain tract of land, the boundaries of which are well understood by the parties hereto, and the area of which the said parties hereby agree to be fifteen acres...

The said Dawson is to cultivate said land in a proper manner, under the general superintendence of the said Solid South...All ditches, turn-rows, bridges, fences, etc. on said land shall be kept in proper condition by said Dawson, or at his expense. All cotton-seed raised on said land shall be held for the exclusive use of said plantation, and no goods of any kind shall be kept for sale on any said land unless by consent of said lessor.

If said Solid South shall furnish to said lessee money or necessary supplies, or stock, or material, or either or all of them during this lease, to enable him to make a crop, the amount of said advances, not to exceed \$475 (of which \$315 has been furnished in two mules, plows, etc.), the said Dawson agrees to pay for the supplies and advances so furnished, out of the first cotton picked and saved on said land from the crop of said year...which is to be fully paid on or before the 1st day of January, 1880...All cotton raised on said land is to be ginned on the gin of said lessor, on said plantation, and said lessee is to pay \$4 per bale for ginning same.

To secure payment of said rent and supply bill, the said Dawson grants unto said Solid South a special privilege and right of pledge on all the products raised on said land, and on all his stock, farming implements, and personal property...and agrees that all his property shall be seized and sold to pay said rent and supply bill in default of payment thereof as herein agreed. Any violation of this contract shall render the lease void.

Doc. E: Map of Congressional Reconstruction, 1865-1877

Doc. F: New York Times, *Report on the New Orleans Massacre*, April, 1865

Doc. G: Mississippi Black Codes, 1865

Sec.1. Be it enacted...That the provisions of this section shall not be so construed as to allow any freedman, free negro, or mulatto to rent or lease any lands or tenements except in incorporated cities or towns, in which places the corporate authorities shall control the same....

Sec. 3...It shall not be lawful for any freedman, free negro, or mulatto to intermarry with any white person; nor for any white person to intermarry with any freedman, free negro, or mulatto; and any person who shall so intermarry, shall be deemed guilty of felony, and on conviction thereof shall be confined in the State penitentiary for life...

MISSISSIPPI VAGRANT LAW

Sec. 2....All freedmen, free negroes and mulattoes in this State, over the age of eighteen years, found on the second Monday in January, 1866, or thereafter, with no lawful employment or business, or found unlawfully assembling themselves together, either in the day or night time, and all white persons so assembling themselves with freedmen, free negroes or mulattoes, or usually associating with freedmen, free negroes or mulattoes, on terms of equality...shall be deemed vagrants, and on conviction thereof shall be fined in a sum...in the case of a freedman, free negro or mulatto, fifty dollars, and a white man two hundred dollars, and imprisoned at the discretion of the court....

PENAL LAWS OF MISSISSIPPI

Sec. 1. Be it enacted,...That no freedman, free negro or mulatto, not in the military service of the United States government...shall keep or carry fire-arms of any kind, or any ammunition...and on conviction thereof in the county court shall be punished by fine...

Doc. H: Abram Colby, *Testimony to the Joint Select Committee to Inquire into the Condition of Affairs in the Late Insurrectionary States*, 1872

Colby: On the 29th of October 1869, [the Klansmen] broke my door open, took me out of bed, took me to the woods and whipped me three hours or more and left me for dead. They said to me, "Do you think you will ever vote another damned Radical ticket?" I said, "If there was an election tomorrow, I would vote the Radical ticket." They set in and whipped me a thousand licks more, with sticks and straps that had buckles...

Question: What is the character of those men who were engaged in whipping you?

Colby: Some are first-class men in our town. One is a lawyer, one a doctor, and some are farmers. They had their pistols and they took me in my night-clothes and carried me from home. They hit me five thousand blows. I told President Grant the same that I tell you now. They told me to take off my shirt. I said, "I never do that for any man." My drawers fell down about my feet and they took hold of them and tripped me up. Then they pulled my shirt up over my head. They said I had voted for Grant and had carried the Negroes against them. About two days before they whipped me they offered me \$5,000 to go with them and said they would pay me \$2,500 in cash if I would let another man go to the legislature in my place. I told them that I would not do it if they would give me all the county was worth.

Question: You spoke about being elected to the next legislature?

Colby: Yes, sir, but they run me off during the election. They swore they would kill me if I stayed. The Saturday night before the election I went to church. When I got home they just peppered the house with shot and bullets.

Question: Did you make a general canvas there last fall?

Colby: No, sir. I was not allowed to. No man can make a free speech in my county. I do not believe it can be done anywhere in Georgia.

Question: You say no man can do it?

Colby: I mean no Republican, either white or colored.

Doc. I: Reconstruction Amendments

AMENDMENT XIII

Section 1. 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.

Section 2. Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

AMENDMENT XIV

Section 1. All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the state wherein they reside. No state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any state deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.

AMENDMENT XV

Section 1. The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.

Section 2. The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

Doc. J: S.J. Lee, Final Report to the South Carolina House of Representatives, 1874

Permit me, now to refer to our increased educational advantages. It is very pleasing, gentlemen, to witness how rapidly the schools are springing up in every portion of our State, and how the number of competent, well trained teachers are increasing...Our State University has been renovated and made progressive. New Professors, men of unquestionable ability and erudition, now fill the chairs once filled by men who were too aristocratic to instruct colored youths. A system of scholarships has been established that will, as soon as it is practically in operation, bring into the University a very large number of students...The State Normal School is also situated here, and will have a fair attendance of scholars. We have, also, Claflin University, at Orangeburg, which is well attended, and progressing very favorably; and in the different cities and large towns of the State, school houses have been built, and the school master can be found there busily instructing the young...The effects of education can also be perceived; the people are becoming daily more enlightened; their minds are expanding, and they have awakened, in a great degree, from the mental darkness that hitherto surrounded them...

Doc. K: Thomas Nast, *The Veto*, *Harper's Weekly Magazine*, April 1866

