

REBELLION, RECONSTRUCTION, AND REDEMPTION, 1861–1893

The History of Beaufort County, South Carolina, Volume 2

Stephen R. Wise and Lawrence S. Rowland

With Gerhard Spieler

Foreword by Alexander Moore

In *Rebellion, Reconstruction, and Redemption, 1861–1893*, the second of three volumes on the history of Beaufort County, Stephen R. Wise and Lawrence S. Rowland offer details about the district from 1861 to 1893, also incorporating the development of South Carolina and the nation. During a span of thirty years, the region was transformed by the crucible of war from a wealthy, slave-based white oligarchy to a county where former slaves dominated a new, radically democratic political economy.

This volume begins where volume 1 concludes, the November 1861 Union capture and occupation of the Sea Islands clustered around Port Royal Sound and the Confederate retreat and reentrenchment on Beaufort District's mainland, where they fended off federal attacks for three and a half years and vainly attempted to maintain their prewar life. In addition to chronicling military actions that revolutionized warfare, Wise and Rowland offer an original, sophisticated study of the famous Port Royal Experiment in which United States military officers, government officials, civilian Northerners, African American soldiers, and liberated slaves transformed the Union-occupied corner of the Palmetto State into a laboratory for liberty and a working model of the post-Civil War New South.

The revolution wrought by Union victory and the Reconstruction of South Carolina was followed by a counterrevolution called Redemption, the organized campaign of Southern whites, defeated in the war, to regain hegemony over African Americans. While former slave-owning, antiblack "Redeemers" took control of mainland Beaufort County, they were thwarted on the Sea Islands, where African Americans retained power and kept reaction at bay.

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Gerhard Spieler (1920–2012) was a historian who wrote extensively about Beaufort County for the *Beaufort Gazette*

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