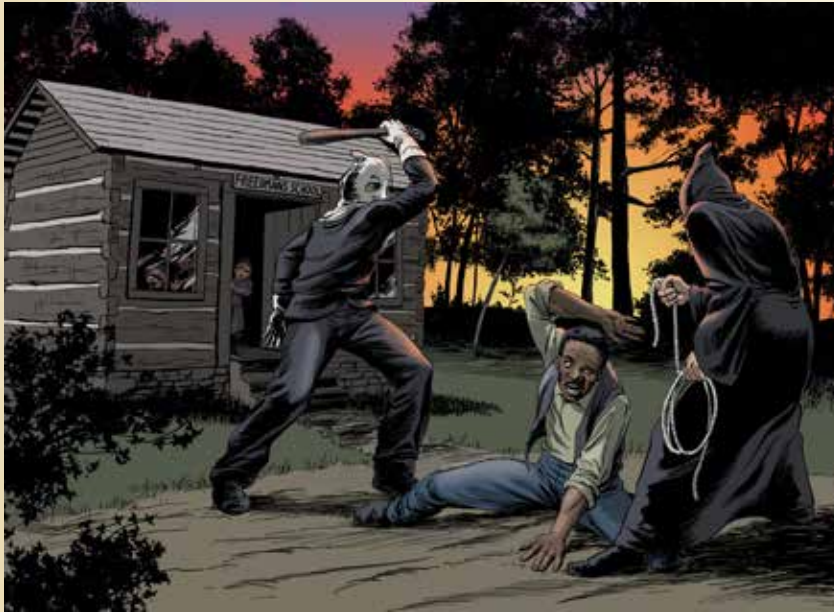


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CIVIL WAR TO CIVIL RIGHTS: FREEDMAN'S BUREAU SCHOOLS



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STATEWIDE — The federal Freedman's Bureau established schools for African American children and adults to learn skills and better assimilate into the new racially integrated culture. Many whites in communities throughout the Commonwealth did not support the bureau's efforts. They attacked schools and Freedman's Bureau workers met with violence when they attempted to organize the newly freed population.

The shared racism of Unionists and Confederates alike led many white Kentuckians to fear former slaves becoming their political and social equals. As Reconstruction unfolded, the guerrilla violence escalated. Freed people were beaten, murdered and threatened to curtail their claims to justice and equality.

The Ku Klux Klan and other similar groups were as strong in Kentucky as anywhere in the former Confederacy and, in fact, had a significant advantage over vigilante groups in other states. Because Kentucky had not seceded from the Union, its Democratic state government remained in power. The General Assembly refused to pass laws providing for the political, legal and educational benefit of African Americans, resisted and undermined the efforts of the federal Freedmen's Bureau and reenfranchised former Confederate soldiers to ensure electoral majorities for the Democratic Party.

KHS's HistoryMobile is a traveling history lab developed for school-aged children. This full-sized tractor/trailer houses an interactive exhibition, "Torn Within and Threatened Without: Kentuckians in the Civil War Era," which uses personal recollections, primary sources, authentic artifacts and touch-screen activities to teach students critical-thinking skills. The HistoryMobile travels to all of Kentucky's 120 counties to teach students that the future is not inevitable, but is shaped by their choices.

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100 W. Broadway | Frankfort, KY 40601
502-564-1792 | www.history.ky.gov



The Kentucky Historical Society is an agency of the
Tourism, Arts and Heritage Cabinet.