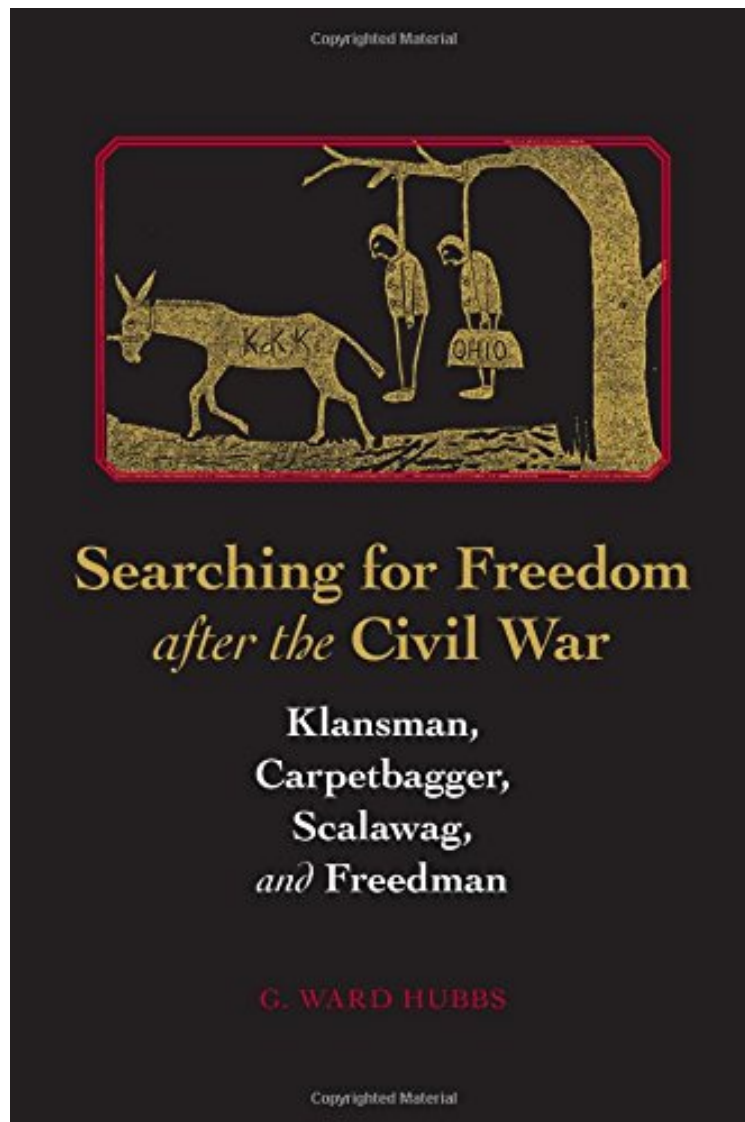


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Searching for Freedom after the Civil War: Klansman, Carpetbagger, Scalawag, and Freedman

G. Ward Hubbs

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G. Ward Hubbs : Searching for Freedom after the Civil War: Klansman, Carpetbagger, Scalawag, and Freedman before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Searching for Freedom after the Civil War: Klansman, Carpetbagger, Scalawag, and Freedman:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Excellent and Highly Readable By Elizabeth Ann Brown I know

almost nothing about reconstruction, and found this book very interesting. The approach, to tell the stories of people who had different points of view, made the topic interesting and easy to understand, and it has stayed with me in a way that common textbook approaches might not. I bought the book as one of the characters, Noah Bartlett Cloud, is a very distant ancestor of mine, and I was interested in learning about him, but the book offered much more. Highly readable! 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. A Remarkable Book By Jim This is a remarkable book. It isn't particularly short, but I read it in two extended sittings. Dr. Hubbs' approach may be unorthodox, but it certainly creates a very readable book that will fascinate historians, scholars, serious students of 19th century American History, and the general reading public. Dr. Hubbs artfully weaves together the stories of four men symbolized (or implied) by the crude political cartoon published in a Tuscaloosa newspaper in 1868. In doing so he takes events in a small, devastated town and creates a microcosm view of Reconstruction. The author is a thorough and meticulous researcher. Some of his information is from newly discovered primary sources. As a result his book is filled with information that will startle most readers. For example the murderous Klan leader, the antagonistic Ryland Randolph, was not the stereotypical backwoods fundamentalist. He was a well-educated atheist, newspaper editor, and international traveler. The stories of the three protagonists are equally revelatory. Searching for Freedom after the Civil War is an excellent introduction to post-war history and should become required reading for college courses dealing with the Reconstruction Era. Hopefully subsequent editions will include paperback and eBook versions.

Winner of the Gulf South Historical Association's Michael Thomas Book Award. In *Searching for Freedom after the Civil War: Klansman, Carpetbagger, Scalawag, and Freedman*, G. Ward Hubbs uses a stark and iconic political cartoon to illuminate postwar conflicts over the meaning of freedom in the American South. The cartoon first appeared in the *Tuskaloosa Independent Monitor*, published by local Ku Klux Klan boss Ryland Randolph, as a swaggering threat aimed at three individuals. Hanged from an oak branch clutching a carpetbag marked "OHIO" is the Reverend Arad S. Lakin, the Northern-born incoming president of the University of Alabama. Swinging from another noose is Dr. Noah B. Cloud—agricultural reformer, superintendent of education, and deemed by Randolph a "scalawag" for joining Alabama's reformed state government. The accompanying caption, penned in purple prose, similarly threatens Shandy Jones, a politically active local man of color. Using a dynamic and unprecedented approach that interprets the same events through four points of view, Hubbs artfully unpacks numerous layers of meaning behind this brutal two-dimensional image. The four men associated with the cartoon—Randolph, Lakin, Cloud, and Jones—were archetypes of those who were seeking to rebuild a South shattered by war. Hubbs explores these broad archetypes but also delves deeply into the four men's life stories, writings, speeches, and decisions in order to recreate each one's complex worldview and quest to live freely. Their lives, but especially their four very different understandings of freedom, help to explain many of the conflicts of the 1860s. The result is an intellectual tour de force. General readers of this highly accessible volume will discover fascinating new insights about life during and after America's greatest crisis, as will scholars of the Civil War, Reconstruction, and southern history.

"Hubbs's volume is informative. The preface, introduction, and four chapters illustrate many issues related to Alabama's first Reconstruction. The epilogue makes it plain that some issues, most notably race and ethnicity, spanned the state's Second Reconstruction (the modern civil rights movement) and continue to divide its citizenry during Third Reconstruction. Put another way, certain people in Alabama are still searching for freedom 150 years after the Civil War. Whether they will find it remains the state's greatest challenge." —*The Journal of Southern History* "Hubbs deftly demonstrates that a crude woodcut image from a nearly forgotten local newspaper can lead us, if we will examine it closely, toward a fuller understanding of individuals, their antecedents, and their interconnected times during this fascinating and pivotal era in American history." —Paul M. Pruitt Jr., author of *Taming Alabama: Lawyers and Reformers, 1804–1929*