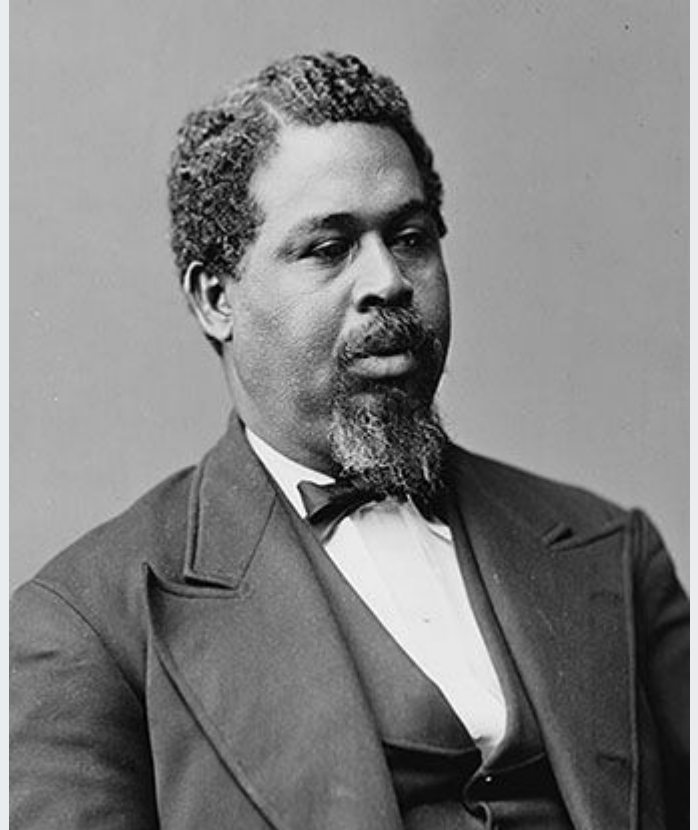

Robert Smalls

1839–1915



Biography

- Robert Smalls grew up and was enslaved by a local planter in Beaufort, SC
- He later won freedom for himself and his family
- Overall, his story shows the transformative potential of the Reconstruction period in the southern United States





Electing Black Americans to Congress

- After the end of the Civil War, Smalls opened up a store for Freedmen
- He later advocated for public education, including for his own education
- Elected to State Senate in 1872
- Later served five terms in House of Representatives from 1875 to 1887



Quick Write

- Based on the above information about Robert Smalls, what can you say about Black representation in the US congress during the Reconstruction Era? What were the most prominent effects of Smalls' tenure in the US congress?