Constitution of the State of South Carolina 1868.
This is to certify that this Constitution was adopted by a majority of votes by the Constitutional Convention of the State of South Carolina, assembled under the Reconstruction Acts of Congress, and which was held at Charleston beginning on the fourteenth day of January, and ending on the seventeenth day of March, in the year of our Lord, one thousand eight hundred and sixty-eight, and in the ninety-second year of the Sovereignty and Independence of the United States of America, and was ratified by the votes of a majority of the qualified electors of the State, at an election which was held on the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth days of April in the same year.
Constitution.

We, the People of the State of South Carolina, in Convention assembled, grateful to Almighty God for this opportunity deliberately and peaceably of entering into an explicit and solemn compact with each other, and forming a new Constitution of civil Government for themselves and posterity, recognizing the necessity of the protection of the people in all that pertains to their freedom, safety and tranquility, and employing the direction of the Great Depository of the Universe, do agree upon, ordain and establish the following Declaration of Rights and Form of Government as the Constitution of the Commonwealth of South Carolina.

Article 1.

Declaration of Rights.

Section 1. All men are born free and equal, endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, among which are the right of enjoying and defending their lives and liberties, of acquiring, possessing and protecting property, and of seeking and obtaining their safety and happiness.

Section 2. Slavery shall never exist in this State, neither shall involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime, whereof the party shall have been duly convicted.

Section 3. All political power is vested in and derived from the people only; therefore they have the right, at all times, to modify their form of government in such manner as they may deem expedient, when the justice of good demands.

Section 4. Every citizen of this State owes paramount allegiance to the Constitution.