

GRANDFATHER CLAUSE. Although most framers of the laws and constitutional amendments that restricted suffrage (DISFRANCHISEMENT) in the South in the period from 1880 to 1912 favored excising lower-class whites as well as blacks from the electorate, the disfranchisers realized the difficulty of getting such measures passed in legislatures and referenda without apparent loopholes for whites. They therefore invented the "grandfather clause," adopted in Louisiana, North Carolina, and Oklahoma, which temporarily exempted from literacy or property requirements all men who could vote before 1867 (before Negroes were allowed to vote in the South) and all descendants of such voters; and the "fighting grandfather clause," adopted in Alabama and Georgia, which similarly exempted veterans and descendants of veterans of any American war (including former Confederates). As intended, the escape clauses, which also included the UNDERSTANDING CLAUSE, did not enable many otherwise unqualified whites to register, either because registrars exercised their wide administrative discretion or because illiterate, propertyless men were too ashamed to advertise their ignorance and poverty. The Oklahoma grandfather clause was declared unconstitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court in *Guinn and Beal v. U.S.* (238 U.S. 347 [1915]).

See J. M. Kousser, *Shaping of Southern Politics* (1974); W. A. Mabry, "Disfranchisement of Negro" (Ph.D. disser-

tation, Duke, 1933); E. McCrady, Jr., *Registration of Electors* (1880); *Alabama Constitutional Convention Proceedings* (1901), III; J. H. Stone, *Journal of Southern History* (May, 1972); J. L. W. Woodville, *Political Science Quarterly* (June, 1906); and W. B. Hixson, Jr., *Journal of American History* (Dec., 1968).

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