



Smithsonian
*National Museum of African American
History and Culture*

Records of the Assistant Commissioner for
the State of Louisiana, Bureau of Refugees,
Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, 1865–1869

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Collection Overview

Repository:	National Museum of African American History and Culture
Title:	Records of the Assistant Commissioner for the State of Louisiana, Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, 1865–1869
Identifier:	NMAAHC.FB.M1027
Date:	1865–1869
Extent:	36 Reels
Language:	English
Summary:	The collection is comprised of digital surrogates previously available on the 36 rolls of microfilm described in the NARA publication M1027. These digital surrogates reproduced the records of the Assistant Commissioner for the State of Louisiana, Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, 1865–69. The records consist of 43 bound volumes and 10.8 meters of unbound documents. The bound volumes include letters and endorsements sent, orders and circulars issued and received, registers of letters received, and other records. The unbound documents consist primarily of letters and reports sent and received.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Acquired from FamilySearch International in 2015.

Related Materials

See also [Freedmen's Bureau Digital Collection](#)

Preferred Citation

Courtesy of the U. S. National Archives and Records Administration, FamilySearch International, and the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture.

Restrictions

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Historical Note

[The following is reproduced from the original NARA descriptive pamphlet for M1027.]

HISTORY AND ORGANIZATION

The Freedmen's Bureau, as the Bureau was commonly known, was established in the War Department by an act of March 3, 1865 (13 Stat. 507), and extended twice by acts of July 16, 1866 (14 Stat. 173), and July 6, 1868 (15 Stat. 83). Maj. Gen. Oliver Otis Howard, appointed Commissioner by the President in May 1865, served in that position until June 30, 1872, when activities of the Bureau were terminated in accordance with an act of June 10, 1872 (17 Stat. 366). Although the Bureau was a part of the War Department, its work was primarily social and economic in nature. Bureau officials cooperated with benevolent societies in issuing supplies to the destitute and in maintaining freedmen's schools; supervised labor contracts between black employees and white employers; helped black soldiers and sailors collect bounty claims, pensions, and backpay; and attended to the disposition of confiscated or abandoned lands and property.

The act of March 3, 1865, also authorized the appointment of assistant commissioners to aid the Commissioner in supervising the work of the Bureau in the States. In Louisiana, operations began in June 1865 when Assistant Commissioner Thomas W. Conway established his headquarters in New Orleans. The names and terms of the other Assistant Commissioners or Acting Assistant Commissioners in Louisiana are as follows: Gen. James S. Fullerton, October 4 – 18, 1865; Gen. Absalom Baird, October 19, 1865–September 7, 1866; Gen. Philip H. Sheridan, October 5–November 27, 1866; Gen. Joseph A. Mower, November 28, 1866–December 4, 1867; Lt. Col. William H. Wood, December 5, 1867–January 2, 1868; Gen. R. C. Buchanan, January 3–August 24, 1868; and Gen. Edward Hatch, August 25, 1868–January 1, 1869. In accordance with an act of July 25, 1868 (15 Stat. 193), Bureau operations within the States were terminated on January 1, 1869, except for educational functions and the collection of claims.

The organization of the Bureau's staff in Louisiana was similar to that of the Bureau's headquarters in Washington, D. C. The Assistant Commissioner's staff consisted at various times of a Superintendent of Education, an Assistant Adjutant General, an Acting Assistant Adjutant General, an Inspector General, an Assistant Inspector General, a Surgeon-in-Chief, a Provost Marshal General of Freedmen, and a Chief Quartermaster. Subordinate to these officers were the subassistant commissioners who commanded the subdistricts. Under supervision of the subassistant commissioners were civilian and military superintendents, assistant subassistant commissioners, and agents.

Originally, Louisiana was divided, for administrative purposes, into several districts with an agent or superintendent in charge of each. On April 19, 1867, the State was reorganized into seven subdistricts with a subassistant commissioner in charge of each. Subdistrict headquarters were established at Baton Rouge, Franklin, Monroe, Natchitoches, New Orleans, Shreveport, and Vidalia.

The correspondence received and sent by the Office of the Assistant Commissioner is generally addressed to or signed by the Assistant Commissioner, Assistant Adjutant General, or the Acting Assistant Adjutant General. Occasionally, the Inspector General, the Assistant Inspector General, or the Superintendent of Education signed outgoing correspondence. The major correspondents in the series were General Howard; staff officers, subassistant commissioners, and other subordinate officers of the Bureau in Louisiana; Army officers attached to military commands in Louisiana and neighboring States; Louisiana political officials; white citizens and freedmen in Louisiana; and officials of the Bureau in other States.

The volumes reproduced in this microfilm publication were arbitrarily assigned numbers by the Adjutant General's Office (AGO) of the War Department after the records came into its custody. In the table of contents, the AGO numbers are shown in parentheses to aid in identifying the volumes because these

numbers appear on the spines of the volumes. The volume numbers without parentheses were assigned by the National Archives and Records Service (NARS) staff. Numbered blank pages have not been filmed.

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

American South
Freedmen's Bureau
Reconstruction, U.S. history, 1865-1877
Slaves -- Emancipation

Container Listing

Series 1: Letters and Telegrams Sent

The five volumes of fair copies of letters, telegrams, and circular letters sent, June 5, 1865–April 30, 1869, are arranged chronologically. Fair copies are handwritten duplicates of the originals. The entries in each volume are numbered in chronological order within each year beginning January 1, 1866, except that the 1867 sequence of numbers begins on January 18. Frequently, fractions are in the left margin of the pages. The numerator is the volume page number on which the preceding communication to the same correspondent was copied; the denominator is the page number on which the subsequent communication to the same correspondent was copied.

Each volume of letters sent has a name index. Volume 1 has an index bound in the front of the volume; Volumes 2 – 5 have separate index books. The entries in the indexes are arranged alphabetically by initial letter of surname of individual and thereunder correspondents are listed on even-numbered pages and persons mentioned in the correspondence are listed on odd-numbered pages except in Volume 1 where correspondents are listed on the odd-numbered pages and persons mentioned in the correspondence are listed on the even-numbered pages. In the indexes, figures that follow names refer to page numbers on which correspondence concerning that person can be found. Each index book is filmed immediately preceding the volume to which it pertains.

1.1: Volume 1 (15), June–Nov. 1865

1.1.1: Name Index to Volume 1 (15)

[Image\(s\)](#)

1.1.2: Volume 1 (15)

[Image\(s\)](#)

1.2: Volume 2 (17), Dec. 1865–Apr. 1867

1.2.1: Name Index to Volume 2 (17)

[Image\(s\)](#)

1.2.2: Volume 2 (17)

[Image\(s\)](#)

1.3: Volume 3 (18), Apr.–Dec. 1867

1.3.1: Name Index to Volume 3 (18)

[Image\(s\)](#)

1.3.2: Volume 3 (18)

[Image\(s\)](#)

1.4: Volume 4 (19), Nov. 1867–July 1868

1.4.1: Name Index to Volume 4 (19)

[Image\(s\)](#)

1.4.2: Volume 4 (19)

[Image\(s\)](#)

1.5: Volume 5 (20), July 1868–Apr. 1869

1.5.1: Name Index to Volume 5 (20)

[Image\(s\)](#)

1.5.2: Volume 5 (20)

[Image\(s\)](#)

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Series 2: Endorsements Sent

Endorsements sent are a characteristic of 19th-century recordkeeping practices. A reply to an incoming letter was frequently written on the letter itself or on a specially prepared wrapper. The reply (known as an endorsement) was then copied into an endorsement book, and the endorsed letter was returned to the sender or forwarded to another office. Endorsement books usually contain a summary of the incoming letter and sometimes the text of previous endorsements that were written on the letter.

Among the records of the Assistant Commissioner are five volumes of endorsements sent, July 12, 1865–April 30, 1869. Both volumes and entries in each volume are arranged chronologically. Many entries contain cross-references to related entries in the registers of letters received. These cross-references consist of the letters "LR" (letters received) followed by the number of a letter; "LR" usually appears in the margin of endorsement book pages to the left of the pertinent entry. The left margins also include numbers written as fractions. The numerator is the page number in the same volume on which the preceding endorsement to the same addressee appears; the denominator is the page number of the subsequent endorsement.

Each endorsement book has a name index that is arranged alphabetically by initial letter of surname of correspondent. The index for Volume 3, which was prepared by the NARS staff, is arranged alphabetically by entire name of correspondent. Each index is filmed immediately preceding the volume to which it pertains.

2.1: Volume 1 (22), July–Sept. 1865

2.1.1: Name Index to Volume 1 (22)

[Image\(s\)](#)

2.1.2: Volume 1 (22)

[Image\(s\)](#)

2.2: Volumes 2 (23) and 3 (24), Oct. 1865–Dec. 1867

2.2.1: Name Index to Volumes 2 (23) and 3 (24)

[Image\(s\)](#)

2.2.2: Volume 2 (23), Oct. 1865–June 1867

[Image\(s\)](#)

2.2.3: Volume 3 (24), July–Dec. 1867

[Image\(s\)](#)

2.3: Volume 4 (25), Jan.–Apr. 1868

2.3.1: Name Index to Volume 4 (25)

[Image\(s\)](#)

2.3.2: Volume 4 (25)

[Image\(s\)](#)

2.4: Volume 5 (26), Apr.–1868-Apr. 1869

2.4.1: Name Index to Volume 5 (26)

[Image\(s\)](#)

2.4.2: Volume 5 (26)

[Image\(s\)](#)

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Series 3: Registers of Letters and Telegrams Received

Registers of letters and telegrams received are also typical of 19th-century recordkeeping practices. In addition to a summary of the contents of an incoming letter, the registers usually include such identifying information as the name and sometimes the office of the writer, the date of receipt, the date of the communication, the place from which it was written, and the entry number assigned to it.

The eight volumes of registers of letters and telegrams received, July 1, 1865–May 10, 1869, are arranged by time period. Entries in each volume are arranged by initial letter of surname of correspondent or office and thereunder by the number assigned on the date of receipt. Correspondence from General Howard is usually listed under "R," for Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, Bureau of; correspondence from the Superintendent of Education is listed under "E," for Education, Superintendent of. In some volumes, all telegrams are entered under "T" regardless of the correspondent's name.

Many entries in the registers are annotated with cross-references to endorsement books by using the notation "EB" (endorsement book) followed by a number. The number refers to the page in the endorsement book whose dates encompass the date of the registered letter. If "EB" is followed by a fraction instead of a whole number, the numerator refers to the volume number of an endorsement book and the denominator refers to the page number. A cross-reference consisting of an alphabet letter followed by a number refers to another entry in the same register of letters received.

Originally, complete name indexes existed only for Volumes 4 – 7. Indexes for Volumes 1 – 3 list the names of persons mentioned in the correspondence but not the names of the correspondents. The NARS staff finished the indexing of Volumes 1 – 3 by compiling name indexes to correspondents, then prepared a name index to Volume 8. Indexes for Volumes 1 – 3 and 8 are arranged alphabetically. Indexes for Volumes 4 – 7 are arranged alphabetically by the initial letter of surname or place name. The NARS prepared indexes to names of correspondents for Volumes 1 – 3 are filmed before the other indexes for those volumes. Each index is filmed immediately before the register to which it refers.

Because the number of pages allotted to each alphabetical division in the volumes sometimes proved insufficient, it became necessary to continue the entries elsewhere in the volumes. The NARS staff has filmed the registers in correct order; therefore, some of the pages as they appear in this publication are not in the original numerical sequence.

A number of documents entered in the registers are no longer among the files of registered letters and telegrams received. Often, communications were either forwarded to Bureau headquarters, referred to staff or other subordinate officers, or returned with endorsements to the sender. The NARS staff has annotated the registers with a single asterisk to show which letters are still on file among the registered letters and telegrams received. Entries marked with a double asterisk are located in other series reproduced in this microfilm publication.

3.1: Volume 1 (1), July–Dec. 1865

3.1.1: Name Index (1) to Volume 1 (1)

[Image\(s\)](#)

3.1.2: Volume 1 (1)

[Image\(s\)](#)

3.2: Volume 2 (2), Jan.–Oct. 1866

3.2.1: Name Index (3) to Volume 2 (2)

[Image\(s\)](#)

3.2.2: Volume 2 (2)

[Image\(s\)](#)

3.3: Volume 3 (4), Oct. 1866–Feb. 1867

3.3.1: Name Index (5) to Volume 3 (4)

[Image\(s\)](#)

3.3.2: Volume 3 (4)

[Image\(s\)](#)

3.4: Volume 4 (6), Jan.–Nov. 1867

3.4.1: Name Index (7) to Volume 4 (6)

[Image\(s\)](#)

3.4.2: Volume 4 (6)

[Image\(s\)](#)

3.5: Volume 5 (8), Oct. 1867–Feb. 1868

3.5.1: Name Index (9) to Volume 5 (8)

[Image\(s\)](#)

3.5.2: Volume 5 (8)

[Image\(s\)](#)

3.6: Volume 6 (10), Jan.–Sept. 1868

3.6.1: Name Index (11) to Volume 6 (10)

[Image\(s\)](#)

3.6.2: Volume 6 (10)

[Image\(s\)](#)

3.7: Volumes 7 (12) and 8 (14), June 1868–May 1869

3.7.1: Name Index (13) to Volumes 7 (12) and 8 (14)

[Image\(s\)](#)

3.7.2: Volume 7 (12), June 1868–Jan. 1869

[Image\(s\)](#)

3.7.3: Volume 8 (14), Jan.–May 1869

[Image\(s\)](#)

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Series 4: Registered Letters and Telegrams Received

Letters and telegrams received by the Assistant Commissioner are in three unbound series: registered letters and telegrams received, unregistered letters received, and unregistered telegrams received.

The registered letters and telegrams received, July 1, 1865–December 20, 1868, are arranged in accordance to their entry in the register. Only a few letters or telegrams exist for 1866. The file citation on each item of correspondence includes an entry number from the register; initials designating the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, Louisiana (Bu R Fr A L–La); and the year. Some file citations show only the register entry number. Enclosures to letters frequently were not marked with a file citation, and many letters contain additional file citations from previous offices of receipt.

4.1: Entered in Register 1

4.1.1: A – B, 1865

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

4.1.2: C – F, 1865

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

4.1.3: G – K, 1865

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

4.1.4: L – Mc, 1865

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

4.1.5: M – R, 1865

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

4.1.6: R – S, 1865

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

4.1.7: T – Z, 1865

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

4.2: Entered in Registers 2 – 5

4.2.1: Y – Z, 1866

[Image\(s\)](#)

4.2.2: A – D, 1867

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

4.2.3: E – G, 1867

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

4.2.4: H, 1867

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

4.2.5: I – L, 1867

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

4.2.6: M – P, 1867

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

4.2.7: R, 1867

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

4.2.8: S – T, 1867

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

4.2.9: U – Y, 1867

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

4.3: Entered in Registers 5 – 7

4.3.1: A – L, 1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

4.3.2: M – V, 1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

4.3.3: W, 1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

4.4: Unregistered Letters Received, May 1865–Feb. 1869

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

The small number of unregistered letters received, May 8, 1865–February 25, 1869, are arranged chronologically and include letters from agents concerning freedmen's complaints, requests from agents

for more clothing and rations to distribute to the freedmen, and letters transmitting reports. NARA staff has prepared a name index to the unregistered letters, which is filmed before the series.

4.5: Unregistered Telegrams Received, May–Dec. 1865, Jan 1867–Dec. 1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

The unregistered telegrams received, May 23–December 27, 1865, and January 2, 1867–December 10, 1868, are arranged by year and thereunder alphabetically by surname of correspondent. The subjects of the telegrams are similar to those in the registered series. NARA staff has prepared a name index to the telegrams, which is filmed before the series.

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Series 5: Issuances

Records of the Assistant Commissioner also include a volume of orders, circulars, and other directives issued and received; a small number of unbound orders and circulars issued and received; and a volume of fair copies of orders and circulars issued.

General orders, circulars, and circular letters (called issuances) were often used interchangeably to convey information to staff and subordinate officers. These issuances relate to matters of general interest, including the implementation of Bureau policies throughout Louisiana, duties of subordinate personnel, administrative procedures, acts of the Congress, and issuances from Bureau headquarters in Washington. Special orders, normally used to communicate information of less general interest, include such specific items as duty assignments of individual field officers, appointments of various boards of investigation, and the restoration of abandoned lands and property to former owners. Although the Assistant Commissioner used the term "Order" to refer to the type of issuance usually known as a general order, in these introductory remarks the term "General Order" is used to distinguish it from a special order, and the plural, "Orders," is used only to describe a combination of both special and general orders.

The Assistant Commissioner directed issuances primarily to his staff and field officers. Issuances received by the Assistant Commissioner's office came primarily from the Washington headquarters, the AGO, the Superintendent of Education for Louisiana, and various military commands.

5.1: Volume of Orders, Circulars, and Other Directives Issued and Received

The volume of orders, circulars, and other directives issued and received, May 19, 1865–August 28, 1868, is arranged generally chronologically. Except for circular letters, each type of issuance is numbered within each year. In addition to issuances, there are also a small number of copies of congressional acts, speeches given by Bureau officials, lists of instructions from the Assistant Commissioner's Office, and a copy of the constitution of the Howard Fraternal Union. Most of the issuances consist of printed or handwritten copies pasted into the volume, except for a few fair copies at the beginning. Issuances in this volume that are duplicated in the volume of orders and circulars issued have not been filmed.

5.1.1: Volume (27), May 1865–Aug. 1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

5.2: Unbound Orders and Circulars Issued and Received, Mar. 1865–Dec. 1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

The small number of unbound issuances, March 11, 1865–December 7, 1868, consists of directives sent and received by the Assistant Commissioner, including general and special orders, circulars, and circular letters. Most of the series consists of special orders and circulars received. Issuances sent precede issuances received; both are arranged chronologically. Except for circular letters, each type of issuance is numbered within each year. Issuances in this file that are duplicated in the volume of orders and circulars issued have not been filmed.

5.3: Volume of Fair Copies of Orders and Circulars Issued

The volume of fair copies of orders and circulars issued, October 1, 1867–April 28, 1869, is arranged chronologically. Each type of issuance, except circular letters, is numbered within each year. In the left margin of each page (beside each issuance) is a list of names of individuals addressed or mentioned in the issuance. A name index, compiled from the names in the margins, is arranged alphabetically by initial letter of surname and filmed before the volume. The number after each name refers to the page number of an issuance concerning that person. Listed under the letter "C" in the index are the dates of circulars and circular letters. The same information also is listed under the letter "O" for orders.

5.3.1: Volume (28), Oct. 1867–Apr. 1869

[Image\(s\)](#)

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Series 6: Reports of Operations and Conditions in Louisiana

Reports of operations and conditions in Louisiana consist of annual narrative reports of operations and conditions, monthly narrative reports of operations and conditions, a register of reports received from subordinate officers, and narrative trimonthly reports of operations from subordinate officers.

6.1: Annual Narrative Reports of Operations and Conditions, Oct. 1866–Oct. 1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

The Assistant Commissioner retained copies of certain periodic reports he sent to General Howard in Washington. The copies consisted of annual narrative reports of operations and conditions, October 1866–October 1868. Similar in format, content, and chronological arrangement, both reports summarize activities for the time periods they cover, mention problems, and give the Assistant Commissioner's opinions concerning relationships between freedmen and the white populace and between freedmen and the State courts. Also included are crop reports, summaries of any activities of military units enforcing Bureau policies, descriptions of the political climate and activities in the State, statistical data concerning Bureau operations, a statement of the Bureau's organization in the State at both headquarters and subdistrict levels, lists of Bureau officials at headquarters, and lists of subassistant commissioners and agents. Each report is usually arranged by staff office but sometimes is further divided by subdistrict or parish (county).

6.2: Monthly Narrative Reports of Operations and Conditions, June 6, 1867–Nov. 30, 1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

The Assistant Commissioner retained copies of certain periodic reports he sent to General Howard in Washington. The copies consisted of monthly narrative reports of operations and conditions, June 6, 1867–November 30, 1868. Similar in format, content, and chronological arrangement, both reports summarize activities for the time periods they cover, mention problems, and give the Assistant Commissioner's opinions concerning relationships between freedmen and the white populace and between freedmen and the State courts. Also included are crop reports, summaries of any activities of military units enforcing Bureau policies, descriptions of the political climate and activities in the State, statistical data concerning Bureau operations, a statement of the Bureau's organization in the State at both headquarters and subdistrict levels, lists of Bureau officials at headquarters, and lists of subassistant commissioners and agents. Each report is usually arranged by staff office but sometimes is further divided by subdistrict or parish (county).

6.3: Register of Reports Received From Subordinate Officers

In addition to the retained copies of narrative reports, the records of the Assistant Commissioner's Office include an unbound series of general operations reports received from field officers in Louisiana and a register of the reports. The register of reports received from subordinate officers, December 1867–December 1868, is arranged by month, thereunder by subdistrict, and thereunder by name of reporting agent. Included in each entry is the type of report, date the report was due, date received, and sometimes other information concerning the status of the agent and the report. The register was used primarily to record the receipt of trimonthly reports of general operations, but entries also are included for reports of indigents and lists of agents' accounts.

6.3.1: Volume (36), Dec. 1867–Dec. 1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

6.4: Narrative Trimonthly Reports of Operations From Subordinate Officers, Feb. 1866– Dec. 1867

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

The narrative trimonthly reports of operations, submitted by subordinate officers on February 20, March 31, April 30, and August 31, 1866, and between January 10 and December 23, 1867, are arranged chronologically by date of letter of transmittal. Trimonthly reports were due on the 10th, 20th, and 30th of each month, not once every 3 months as the term implies. Received from agents in each of the subdistricts, these reports contain information similar to that found in the Assistant Commissioner's monthly reports. Generally, the reports give a broad picture of all activities of a subdistrict headquarters, although some reports contain detailed information on specific cases. A few reports consist merely of lists of contracts approved or cases handled by the reporting agent.

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Series 7: Reports Relating to the Condition of Freedmen and Refugees

Among the Assistant Commissioner's records are two series of inspection reports concerning the condition of freedmen on plantations within the State, and one series of reports of indigent refugees and freedmen.

7.1: Assistant Inspector General's Consolidated Reports on Conditions of Freedmen on the Plantations, (bulk Jan.–Aug. 1866, May–Nov. 1868)

[Image\(s\)](#)

The Assistant Inspector General's consolidated reports on conditions of freedmen on the plantations, January-August 1866 and May–November 1868, are addressed to the Assistant Commissioner. Arranged chronologically, the reports are in tabular form and include for each plantation the name of the parish or subdistrict; agent's name; number of freedmen (divided by sex) on each plantation; skills, condition, and age of freedmen; number of schools and children attending; number of acres under cultivation; and types of crops. Occasionally included in the reports are totals of figures concerning freedmen for all plantations in the parish or subdistrict.

7.2: Inspection Reports of Plantations From Subordinate Officers

Inspection reports of plantations from subordinate officers, January 31, 1866–December 31, 1868, are similar to those of the Assistant Inspector General and probably provided the basis for them. The series includes consolidated reports, covering several months or a year, and monthly reports. Monthly reports precede consolidated reports; both are arranged chronologically. Most of the information in the reports is statistical, although there are also some narrative reports and a few statistical reports with attached narrative pages. There are no reports for February and March 1868. This is the only series containing a substantial number of records for 1866.

7.2.1: Inspection Reports of Plantations From Subordinate Officers, Jan.–May 1866

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

7.2.2: Inspection Reports of Plantations From Subordinate Officers, June 1866–July 1867

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

7.2.3: Inspection Reports of Plantations From Subordinate Officers, Aug. 1867–Apr. 1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

7.2.4: Inspection Reports of Plantations From Subordinate Officers, May–Dec. 1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

7.3: Reports of Indigent Refugees and Freedmen From Subordinate Officers

The reports of indigent refugees and freedmen from subordinate officers, January 31, 1867–November 30, 1868, are arranged generally chronologically. Although primarily monthly reports, there are a few weekly reports and some consolidated reports covering longer periods. Each entry gives indigent's name, age, and sex; name of former owner (for freedmen); name of the civil official ("Police Juror") who considered the case; case registration date; and date and summary of the civil official's decision. Frequently, the reports include the subordinate officer's comments on a particular case or on the situation of indigents in general; some list the probable cause of destitution. There are often separate reports for destitute freedmen and whites. Generally, the term "Indigent Refugee" refers only to whites.

7.3.1: Reports of Indigent Refugees and Freedmen From Subordinate Officers, Jan. 1867–Mar. 1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

7.3.2: Reports of Indigent Refugees and Freedmen From Subordinate Officers, Apr.–Nov. 1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

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Series 8: Records Relating to Confiscated and Abandoned Lands

Six series of records relating to confiscated and abandoned lands are reproduced in this series: three sets of monthly reports of confiscated and abandoned lands prepared by the Assistant Commissioner, his staff officers, and Bureau agents in the field; a register of applications of freedmen for land; registers of applications of former owners for restoration of their property; and the Assistant Commissioner's monthly reports of property returned to owners.

The first three sub-series are closely related monthly reports of confiscated and abandoned lands: (1) retained copies of the Assistant Commissioner's reports, August 13–December 31, 1865, and January 31, 1867–December 31, 1868; (2) reports received from subordinate staff officers, September–November 1865 and January 1867–February 1868; and (3) reports received from Bureau agents, September–December 1865 and July 31, 1868. The first and third sub-series are arranged chronologically; the second sub-series is arranged by staff department and thereunder chronologically. The retained copies in the first sub-series are based on information contained in the last two. A typical entry in any of the three sub-series reveals the name of the former owner; locates the property; reflects the increase or decrease of property size since the last report; states the reasons why the property was designated as abandoned or confiscated; and provides a description of the property, including the acreage or size, type of crops and acreage under cultivation (for rural property), or the number and type of buildings.

8.1: Retained Copies of the Assistant Commissioner's Reports, Aug.–Dec. 1865, Jan. 1867–Dec. 1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

8.2: Reports Received From Subordinate Staff Officers, Sept.–Nov. 1865, Jan. 1867–Feb. 1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

8.3: Reports Received From Bureau Agents, Sept.–Dec. 1865 and July 1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

8.4: Register of Applications of Freedmen for Land

The register of freedmen's applications for land, September 1–November 24, 1865, is arranged numerically by date of receipt of application. Each entry includes the register number; name of applicant; agents' and partners' names, if any; date of application; number of members and sex and age of each member in applicant's family; number and location of acres applied for; applicant's resources for working a farm; and remarks. Some entries note the date on which a freedman received property.

8.4.1: Volume (77), Sept.–Nov. 1865

[Image\(s\)](#)

8.5: Registers of Applications of Former Owners for Restoration of Their Property

There are two volumes of registers of applications of former owners for restoration of their property. Volume 1, July 20 – 27, 1865, is arranged chronologically by date of the first application filed. Each entry includes the name of applicant, a description of the property, a list of the types of supporting documents (petitions, loyalty oaths, and amnesty papers) filed, and a notation of what action was taken by the Bureau. Volume 2, October 31, 1865–April 19, 1866, is arranged by assigned number. Each entry includes the name of applicant and remarks about the disposition of his application and the date and action taken by the Bureau. A name index, which is arranged alphabetically by initial letter of applicant's surname, is bound in the front of Volume 2. The number after each name in the index refers to the applicant's assigned number in the register.

8.5.1: Volume 1 (75), July 1865

[Image\(s\)](#)

8.5.2: Volume 2 (76), Oct. 1865–Apr. 1866

[Image\(s\)](#)

8.6: Assistant Commissioner's Monthly Reports of Property Returned to Owners, Oct. 1865–Dec. 1867

[Image\(s\)](#)

The Assistant Commissioner's monthly reports of property returned to owners, October 1865–December 1867, are arranged chronologically. Each entry in these retained copies of tabular reports sent to General Howard include the name of the owner; a description of the property; the estimated value of the property; an administrative designation of the property as confiscated, as abandoned, or as enemy property; the number of the special order that restored the property; the date of the restoration; and other remarks. The series contains one undated report signed by General Fullerton, which probably was compiled in September or October 1865.

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Series 9: Records Relating to Murders and Outrages

The records of the Assistant Commissioner include one bound volume and one unbound series of records relating to murders, outrages, and other criminal offenses. Although the term "Outrage" meant any criminal offense, it usually referred to violent crimes by or against freedmen.

9.1: Register of Murders and Outrages

The bound volume, a register of murders and outrages, May 10–December 20, 1868, is arranged by month, thereunder by parish, and thereunder chronologically. Each entry includes the date the incident was reported; names of parish, agent making the report, victim(s), and suspect(s); a brief description of the crime; and other information. In the left margins of the pages are cross-references to related records in other series, especially in registered letters received.

9.1.1: Volume (30), May–Dec. 1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

9.2: Miscellaneous Reports and Lists Relating to Murders and Outrages, Mar. 1867–Nov. 1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

The unbound series, comprised of miscellaneous reports and lists relating to murders and outrages, March 1867–November 1868, was received from subordinate and field officers and is arranged by type of record and thereunder chronologically. For each incident, the reports include the date; names of parish, victim(s), and suspect(s); and a description of the offense and action taken by civil authorities. Included are a few retained copies of the Assistant Commissioner's reports of murders and outrages. The lists provide consolidated information on all incidents reported for a particular time period.

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Series 10: Personnel Records

Eight series of records relating to personnel of the Freedmen's Bureau in Louisiana are reproduced in this publication: rosters of officers and civilians on duty in the staff offices of the State; a register of officers, agents, and clerks; reports of civilians employed by various staff officers and subassistant commissioners; monthly reports of persons and articles hired; monthly reports of changes in personnel; list of agents dismissed, relieved, or transferred; accounts with subordinate officers; and receipt rolls of hired men in the Office of the Assistant Commissioner.

10.1: Rosters of Officers and Civilians on Duty in the Staff Offices in Louisiana, (bulk Aug.–Dec. 1865; Jan.–Sept. 1867; Jan., Aug. and Dec. 1868)

[Image\(s\)](#)

Rosters (monthly tabular reports) of officers and civilians on duty in Bureau staff offices in Louisiana, August–December 1865, January–September 1867, and January, August, and December 1868, are arranged chronologically. The rosters include the name, rank, and duties (or occupation) of the employee; duty station; salary; service dates; name of employer; former command (for military personnel); date of assignment order; and remarks. The names in each report are arranged by staff department; some also are divided into sections for military and civilian personnel.

10.2: Register of Officers, Agents, and Clerks

The register of officers, agents, and clerks, 1867–68, is arranged alphabetically by initial letter of surname of individual and thereunder by position (officer, agent, or clerk). Each entry includes the name of employee, subdistrict or parish, and appointing and recommending officers; date and cause of discharge (if any); and other remarks. There are only a few entries for 1865–66.

10.2.1: Volume (29), 1867–68

[Image\(s\)](#)

10.3: Reports of Civilians Employed by Various Staff Officers and Subassistant Commissioners, Sept. 1865–Mar. 1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

Arranged by office and thereunder chronologically are reports of civilians employed by the Superintendent of Education, September–December 1865 and March 1867; the Medical Department, September 30, 1867–March 12, 1868; the Provost Marshal General of Freedmen, October 31, 1865; the Plantation Department, October 31, 1865; and various subassistant commissioners, September–November 1865 and September 23–October 14, 1867. The records consist primarily of tabular reports that include rosters, reports of officers and civilians on duty, and reports of changes. Typical information provided for each employee includes his name and location, job description, salary, dates of service, and other identifying information.

10.4: Monthly Reports of Persons and Articles Hired

The monthly reports of persons and articles hired, October–December 1865, November–December 1866, and January 1867–December 1868, are arranged chronologically by month. Although the series includes retained copies of the Assistant Commissioner's reports, most of the records consist of reports received from the offices of the Chief Quartermaster, the Superintendent of Education, and the Surgeon-in-Chief. The reports were prepared on tabular forms, with each entry giving the name of the person or type of article hired, occupation of a person or use of an article, number of days a person was employed or an article was rented, rate of compensation, and the amount of compensation due. Included are a few consolidated reports covering periods of more than 1 month.

10.4.1: Monthly Reports of Persons and Articles Hired, (bulk Oct.–Dec. 1865, Nov.–Dec. 1866, and Jan.–Apr. 1867)

[Image\(s\)](#)

10.4.2: Monthly Reports of Persons and Articles Hired, May–Dec. 1867

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

10.4.3: Monthly Reports of Persons and Articles Hired, Jan.–Dec. 1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

10.5: Monthly Reports of Changes in Personnel, (bulk Aug.–Dec. 1865, Jan. 1867–Dec. 1868)

[Image\(s\)](#)

The series of monthly reports of changes in personnel, August–December 1865, and January 1867–December 1868, is arranged chronologically. Entries are arranged by type of personnel action taken (assignment, relief, or change of duty station) and include name, rank, occupation, dates of service, and other information.

10.6: List of Agents Dismissed, Relieved, or Transferred

Volume (31) contains a 1–page list of 10 names of agents dismissed, relieved, or transferred during the period October 17–November 10, 1868. Arranged chronologically by date of order, each entry also includes duties, station, and order number for each personnel action.

10.6.1: Volume (31), Oct.–Nov. 1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

10.7: Accounts With Subordinate Officers

The volume of accounts with subordinate officers, June 1, 1866–May 11, 1867, is arranged by duty station and thereunder by name of agent. Each entry lists the name of an agent, reason for the monetary transaction, and amount. Only a few transactions are recorded in each entry. A table of contents in the front of the volume lists the names of the agents, duty stations, and page numbers of pertinent entries.

10.7.1: Volume (37), June 1866–May 1867

[Image\(s\)](#)

10.8: Receipt Rolls of Hired Men in the Office of the Assistant Commissioner, (bulk Oct.–Nov. 1865, Mar. 1866, and Feb.–Apr. 1867)

[Image\(s\)](#)

Receipt rolls of hired men in the Office of the Assistant Commissioner, October–November 1865, March 1866, and February–April 1867, were received by the Assistant Commissioner primarily from the offices of the Chief Quartermaster and the Superintendent of Education, although reports from other staff departments and from parishes are included. Arranged in chronological order, the rolls contain

such information as the name and occupation of employee, date paid, period of service, rate of pay, deductions, amount received, and the employee's signature verifying that he received the stated amount.

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Series 11: Miscellaneous Records

Filmed at the end of this publication are a small number of miscellaneous reports, lists, estimates, schedules, and other records, arranged chronologically. The reports concern such matters as the activities of the "Collector of the Tax for Colored Schools," the investigation of Bureau Agent Hannon on charges of embezzlement, reactions to an 1865 speech General Howard delivered to the freedmen in New Orleans, and an Assistant Commissioner's biennial report of civilian employees, dated 1867. Other records include a list of robberies committed in connection with a riot in St. Bernard Parish, October 25, 1868; a list of property in New Orleans transferred to the Bureau by the Treasury Department in 1865; estimates of needed rations and funds submitted by subordinate officers; a schedule of property exempt from tax in New Orleans; and various vouchers and receipts.

11.1: Miscellaneous Records, 1865–69

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

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