



Smithsonian

*National Museum of African American History and Culture*

Records of the Assistant Commissioner for  
the District of Columbia, Bureau of Refugees,  
Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, 1865-1869

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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	National Museum of African American History and Culture
<b>Title:</b>	Records of the Assistant Commissioner for the District of Columbia, Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, 1865–1869
<b>Date:</b>	1865–1869
<b>Identifier:</b>	NMAAHC.FB.M1055
<b>Extent:</b>	23,105 Digital files
<b>Language:</b>	English .
<b>Summary:</b>	The collection is comprised of digital surrogates previously available on the 21 rolls of microfilm described in the NARA publication M1055. These digital surrogates reproduced the records of the Assistant Commissioner for the District of Columbia, Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, 1865–69. The records consist of 42 bound volumes and 18 feet of unbound documents. The bound volumes include letters and endorsements sent, registers of letters received, and special orders issued. The unbound letters consist primarily of letters and reports received.
<b>Digital Content:</b>	<a href="#">Image(s): M1055-Representative-Image</a>

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## Administrative Information

### Acquisition Note

Acquired from FamilySearch International in 2015.

### Related Archival Materials

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

### Citation Note

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

### Access Note

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## Historical Note

[The following is reproduced from the original NARA descriptive pamphlet for M1055.]

## 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 throughout the life of the Bureau. In January 1869, in accordance with an act of July 25, 1868 (15 Stat. 193), Bureau operations in the States were terminated except for educational functions and the collection of claims. Remaining activities were terminated June 30, 1872, as required by an act of June 10, 1872 (17 Stat. 366).

Although the Bureau was part of the War Department, its work was primarily social and economic in nature. The Bureau cooperated with benevolent societies in issuing supplies to destitute persons 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 other property. Much of the Bureau's time and effort in the District of Columbia were consumed in procuring transportation for freedmen who wished to travel north to seek employment and in supervising freedmen's farms in Maryland and Virginia.

The act of March 3, 1865, authorized the appointment of assistant commissioners to aid the Commissioner in supervising the work of the Bureau. In the District, operations began in June 1865, when Col. John Eaton was appointed Assistant Commissioner with headquarters in the city of Washington. Brig. Gen. J. C. Fullerton succeeded Eaton in December 1865 and served until February 1866. Brig. Gen. C. H. Howard, the brother of Commissioner O. O. Howard, then served as the Assistant Commissioner until the position was discontinued in December 1868. Bvt. Maj. David G. Swaim, as aide-de-camp, then supervised operations until October 1869, when virtually all Bureau functions, except education, were terminated.

The Assistant Commissioner for the District of Columbia was responsible for Bureau activities not only within the District but also in certain counties in Virginia and all or parts of Delaware, Maryland, and West Virginia during certain periods of time. In September 1865, the Assistant Commissioner was made responsible for implementing Bureau policies in Anne Arundel, Calvert, Charles, Montgomery, Prince Georges, and St. Mary's Counties in Maryland; also in Alexandria [then a county], Fairfax, and Loudoun Counties in Virginia. In August 1866, Loudoun County was transferred to the jurisdiction of the Assistant Commissioner of Virginia, as were Alexandria and Fairfax Counties in March 1867. In March 1867, West Virginia was placed under the control of the Assistant Commissioner for the District of Columbia. In January 1868, this official also assumed jurisdiction over Allegany and Washington Counties, MD., and in August 1868, over the remaining counties of Maryland and the entire State of Delaware.

The staff of the Assistant Commissioner's Office for the District of Columbia, like those in the various States, included at one time or another such officials as the Superintendent of Education, Assistant Inspector General, Assistant Quartermaster and Disbursing Officer, and Surgeon in Chief or Chief Medical Officer. Subordinate to the Assistant Commissioner's staff were the local superintendents and county agents. For administrative purposes, agents were assigned to the various counties of Maryland, Virginia, and West Virginia. Within the District, a Subassistant Commissioner was appointed to supervise Bureau activities for the cities of Georgetown and Washington. In 1868, Montgomery and Prince Georges Counties were added to his jurisdiction. A Subassistant Commissioner was also assigned to Alexandria County in January 1866 and reported to the Assistant Commissioner until responsibility for the supervision of the county was transferred to Virginia authorities. In addition to county agents and subassistant commissioners, local superintendents were appointed to supervise such Government projects as Barry Farm, located south of the Anacostia River, and the Sothron Farm in St. Mary's County, MD. These farms were purchased with Bureau funds to aid freedmen in buying farmland. Other local superintendents were assigned to administer Freedmen's Village and schools and hospitals. Freedmen's Village, organized on the site of Gen. Robert E. Lee's Arlington estate, was used primarily as a center for old, infirm, and destitute freedmen. Here, small plots of land were rented to freedmen to enable them to provide food for themselves.

The volumes reproduced in this microfilm publication were arranged originally by type of record and thereunder by volume number. Originally no numbers were assigned to series consisting of single volumes; later, all volumes were arbitrarily assigned numbers by the Adjutant General's Office (AGO) of the War

Department after the records passed into its custody. In the table of contents, which follows these inductor remarks, and on the title pages and target sheets filmed with the records, the AGO numbers are shown in parentheses as an aid in identifying the volumes. Numbered blank pages have not been filmed.

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## 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

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## Container Listing

### Series 1: Letters Sent

**Scope and Contents:** The letters sent by the Assistant Commissioner's Office include five volumes of fair copies and one volume of press copies. The fair copies of letters sent, June 16, 1865–December 31, 1868, are generally arranged and numbered in chronological order; however, the letters copied into Volume 1, and to some extent Volume 2, are in rough chronological order. There is a name index to each volume of fair copies, except Volume 5. The National Archives and Records Service (NARS) staff prepared a name index to Volume 5; it is filmed immediately before the volume. A subject index to Volume 4 is included with the name index.

In addition to outgoing letters, these volumes contain copies of telegrams and reports sent and circular letters issued by the Assistant Commissioner, the Acting Adjutant General, and the Assistant Inspector General. The letters, reports, and telegrams include instructions from the Assistant Commissioner to subordinate staff members concerning the status and condition of freedmen and reports to various northern benevolent societies about conditions in the District. Other correspondence relates to personal appointments, decisions involving orphan children, and arrangements for transporting freedmen to the North. Some letters and reports include statistical data on rations and subsistence stores requested, received, and issued; on rents paid; and on the freedmen population in the District and surrounding areas.

More specifically, the volumes contain several lengthy reports written by Capt. S. N. Clark, Acting Adjutant General, concerning the status of freedmen in St. Mary's and Calvert Counties, MD., and District annual reports, October 22, 1866, October 10, 1867, and October 10, 1868. The annual reports contain information about freedmen's marriages, apprenticeships, and legal liabilities and about Bureau-run or supposed relief establishments, tenements, farms, schools, and employment offices; they also contain statistical data on Bureau receipts and expenditures and congressional appropriations.

The volumes of letters sent contain many cross-references to related entries in this and other series of records of the Assistant Commissioner's Office that are reproduced in this microfilm publication. For example, "LS" and "LB" refer to the volumes of letters sent. "LR" to the registers of letters received, and "EB" to the endorsements sent or to endorsement and memorandum books. Numbers following the letter symbols refer either to the page or entry number of the related item. Citations to Volume G refer to a press copy book that has not been reproduced in this microfilm publication because the letters copied into that volume are duplicated among the fair copies.

Press copies were made by moistening a piece of thin paper and pressing it against the original letter through the use of a press copying machine that transferred some of the ink to the moistened paper. Some copies made by this process are difficult to read; others are virtually illegible. The one volume of press copies of letters sent by Bvt. Maj. David G. Swaim, January 7–October 9, 1869, is arranged chronologically and has a name index. Six other volumes of press copies, including Volume G, are also among the records of the Assistant Commissioner's Office, but they have not been included in this microfilm publication because their contents are duplicated in the five volumes of fair copies.

1.1: Name Index (6 ½) to Volume 1, June 16, 1865–Nov. 26, 1866

[Image\(s\)](#)

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1.2: Volume 1 (6), June 16, 1865–Nov. 26, 1866

[Image\(s\)](#)

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1.3: Name Index (7 ½) to Volume 2, Mar. 14, 1866–Mar. 11, 1867

[Image\(s\)](#)

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1.4: Volume 2 (7), Mar. 14, 1866–Mar. 11, 1867

[Image\(s\)](#)

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1.5: Name Index (8 ½) to Volume 3, Mar. 12–Nov. 20, 1867

[Image\(s\)](#)

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1.6: Volume 3 (8), Mar. 12–Nov. 20, 1867

[Image\(s\)](#)

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1.7: Name and Subject Index (9 ½) to Volume 4, Nov. 18, 1867–Nov. 4, 1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

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1.8: Volume 4 (9), Nov. 18, 1867–Nov. 4, 1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

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1.9: NARS Name Index to Volume 5, Nov. 4–Dec. 31, 1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

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1.10: Volume 5 (10), Nov. 4–Dec. 31, 1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

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1.11: Press Copies of Letters Sent by Bvt. Maj. David G. Swaim (54), Jan. 7–Oct. 9, 1869

[Image\(s\)](#)

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## Series 2: Endorsements Sent and Received

**Scope and Contents:** According to recordkeeping practices of the day, the Assistant Commissioner kept a series of records known as endorsements sent or endorsement and memorandum books. Frequently, instead of writing a letter, the Assistant Commissioner or the Acting Assistant Adjutant General wrote the reply or forwarding statement on the incoming letter and either returned the letter to the sender or forwarded it to another office. These replies or statements were copied into the endorsement books along with summaries of the contents of the communications and frequently, any previous endorsements.

The contents of the five volumes of endorsements sent and received, June 15, 1865–August 26, 1869, are arranged and numbered in chronological order. There are name indexes to Volume 4 and 5. In the left margin of the pages in the endorsement book is the date of receipt of the incoming letter or endorsement, the name of the person or title of the officer to whom the endorsement was sent, the name of the person who wrote the endorsement, and the number assigned at the time of receipt. Some endorsements are continued on subsequent pages. For example, endorsement 655 in the first volume of the series contains the notation "To E. B. Volume 1, No. 735," which indicates that subsequent endorsements to the same correspondence in the same volume are Numbered 735. The endorsement book contain the same cross-reference symbols to related records as those used in the volumes of letters sent.

### 2.1: Volume 1 (21), June 15, 1865–May 22, 1866

[Image\(s\)](#)

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### 2.2: Volume 2 (22), Apr. 23, 1866–Jan. 4, 1867

[Image\(s\)](#)

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### 2.3: Volume 3 (23), Jan. 5–Sept. 3, 1867

[Image\(s\)](#)

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### 2.4: Name Index (24 ½) to Volume 4, Sept. 3, 1867–Apr. 28, 1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

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### 2.5: Volume 4 (24), Sept. 3, 1867–Apr. 28, 1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

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### 2.6: Name Index (25 ½) to Volume 5, Apr. 28, 1868–Aug. 26, 1869

[Image\(s\)](#)

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### 2.7: Volume 5, Apr. 28, 1868–Aug. 26, 1869

[Image\(s\)](#)

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## Series 3: Registers of Letter Received

**Scope and Contents:** Another 19th-century recordkeeping practice was the entering of incoming communications into registers of letters received. The entries in the registers include such information as the name of office of the correspondent, the date of the letters, the place of origin, the date of receipt, an abstract of the contents, and the entry number assigned at time of receipt.

The five volumes of registers of letters received, September 1865–August 1869, are arranged chronologically. The entries in registers 1 – 3, September 1865–January 1868, are arranged and numbered in chronological order by date of receipt, with a separate numerical sequence for each volume. The entries in Registers 4 and 5, January 1868–August 1869, are arranged alphabetically by initial letter of surname or office of correspondent and thereunder numbered in chronological order by date of receipt, with a separate numerical sequence for each alphabetical division. Often proved insufficient, it became necessary to continue the entries in the other parts of the volume. The NARS staff filmed the registers in correct entry order; as a result, some of the pages are not in the original numbered sequence.

The registers contain many cross-references, mostly to related entries in this or in other series of records of the Assistant Commissioner's Office. The symbol "LR" refers to the series of registers of letters received and "EB" to the endorsement books. In each case, the number following the symbol refers to the page number in the register of letters received or in the endorsement book where a related entry is found. The notation "Folio CPB" (or "CP") followed by an alphabetical designation, such as "D," refers to the series of copy press books of letters sent, Volume 4. The symbol "DB" refers to a disbursement book among the records of the Assistant Quartermaster and Disbursing Officer for the District. The disbursement book has not been reproduced in this microfilm publication.

A number of documents entered in the registers are no longer among the registered letters received, because communications often were forwarded to Bureau headquarters, referred to staff or subordinate officers, or returned to the sender with endorsements. The NARS staff placed an asterisk near the writer's name in the registers to indicate that the corresponding letter is still among the registered letters received. Two asterisks beside an entry indicate that the document is in one of several series of unbound reports reproduced in this publication. Some entries are marked "File With" or "Filed As," indicating that such letters are no longer filed under their original designation. Many of these letters, however, have not been placed with the related correspondence as indicated in the register. Letters received by endorsement were not entered in the registered of letters received as routine incoming communications. These letters are filed among the unregistered letters received.

3.1: Name Index (1 ½) to Volume 1, Sept. 1865–Oct. 1866

[Image\(s\)](#)

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3.2: Volume 1, Sept. 1865–Oct. 1866

[Image\(s\)](#)

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3.3: Name Index (2 ½) to Volume 2, Oct. 1866–Aug. 1867

[Image\(s\)](#)

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3.4: Volume 2 (2), Oct. 1866–Aug. 1867

[Image\(s\)](#)

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3.5: Name Index (3 ½) to Volume 3, Aug. 1867–Jan. 1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

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3.6: Volume 3 (3), Aug. 1867–Jan. 1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

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3.7: Name Index (4 ½) to Volume 4, Jan.–Sept. 1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

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3.8: Subject Index, (4 ¾) to Volume 4, Jan.–Sept. 1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

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3.9: Volume 4 (4), Jan.–Sept. 1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

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3.10: Name Index (5 ½) to Volume 5, Sept. 1868–Aug. 1869

[Image\(s\)](#)

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3.11: Volume 5 (5), Sept. 1868–Aug. 1869

[Image\(s\)](#)

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## Series 4: Letters Received

Scope and Contents: The letters received by the Assistant Commissioner are in two series: registered letters received, September 1865–August 1869, are arranged and numbered in the order in which they were entered in the registers. The file citation on each letter indicates the number of the volume in which the letter was registered, the page on which it was entered, and the entry number assigned at the time of receipt. The unregistered letters received, May 1865–March 1869, are arranged chronologically. The NARS staff prepared a name index to these letters, and it is filmed immediately before the letters. A number of the unregistered letters contain file citations, most of which were assigned by previous offices of receipt. A few appear to have been assigned by the Assistant Commissioner's Office, but the corresponding entries have not been located in the register of letters received.

Most of the items in both the registered and unregistered series of letters received were sent by local superintendents and agents and concern the restitution of property confiscated from local inhabitants, rental of buildings for Bureau activities, assaults and outrages upon freedmen, and procurement of homes and employment of freedmen in the North. The registered series also includes reports received from staff and field officers, mostly special reports on specific incidents.

### 4.1: Entered in Register 1

4.1.1: 10 – 299, Sept.–Nov. 1865

4.1.2: 300 – 1399, Nov. 1865–May 1866

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

4.1.3: 1400 – 2419, May–Oct. 1866

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

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### 4.2: Entered in Register 2

4.2.1: 5 – 1098, Oct. 1866–Mar. 1867

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

4.2.2: 1100 – 2596, Mar.–July 1867

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

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#### 4.3: Entered in Register 3

4.3.1: 3 – 1094, Aug.–Dec. 1867

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

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#### 4.4: Entered in Register 4

4.4.1: A – Y, Jan.–Sept. 1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

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#### 4.5: Entered in Register 5

4.5.1: A – W, Sept. 1868–Aug. 1869

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

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#### 4.6: NARS Name Index, May 1865–Mar. 1869

[Image\(s\)](#)

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#### 4.7: Unregistered Letters Received, May 1865–Mar. 1869

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

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## Series 5: Issuances

**Scope and Contents:** The records of the Assistant Commissioner include a volume of special orders issued and some unbound special orders and circular letters received and issued. The special orders issued, June 22, 1865–December 31, 1868, are arranged by year and thereunder numerically. They deal primarily with instructions to Bureau personnel, duty assignments, leave grants, restoration of confiscated property, and appointments of employment agents. Accompanying the volume is a separate name index.

The unbound special orders and circular letters received and issued, June 23, 1865–December 11, 1868, are arranged by type of issuance and thereunder chronologically. The special orders consist of either printed or manuscript copies of extracts of special orders of Bureau headquarters, the AGO, and the Assistant Commissioner's Office relating to the assignment and transfer of Bureau officers. The circular letters issued by the Office of the Assistant Commissioner clarify or describe in more detail Bureau policies and procedures.

### 5.1: Name Index (27 ½) to Special Orders, June 22, 1865–Dec. 31, 1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

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### 5.2: Special Orders Issued (26), June 22, 1865–Dec. 31, 1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

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### 5.3: Unbound Special Orders and Circular Letters Received and Issued, June 23, 1865–Dec. 11, 1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

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## Series 6: Reports of Operations

**Scope and Contents:** The Assistant Commissioner, in order to determine the current status of freedmen and general conditions within his jurisdiction, required the regular submission of various types of reports by subassistant commissioners, local superintendents, and employment agents. As a result, he received five kinds of narrative reports: annual, quarterly, and monthly reports from staff and subordinate officers; monthly reports from visiting agents; and monthly reports of operations from industrial schools. In addition, he received trimonthly and monthly statistical reports from employment offices.

The annual, quarterly, and monthly reports from staff and subordinate officers, August 1865–December 1868, are interfiled as one series and arranged chronologically. Most of the reports, submitted by subassistant commissioners and local superintendents, treat a wide variety of subjects, including the status of freedmen's housing, hospitals, and schools; employment and contracts with employers; farming operations; and claims against the Government. The narrative reports frequently contain statistical data on the freed population in various areas and the number of freedmen furnished employment, transportation, and rations. Some reports contain information concerning the general attitudes of blacks and whites and relations between the two races.

Most monthly reports from visiting agents in the District, August 1865–February 1866, which are arranged chronologically, were written by agents of benevolent societies authorized by the Assistant Commissioner to determine the number of destitute freedmen and to recommend the issuance of rations to needy families. Monthly reports on operations of industrial schools sponsored by the Bureau, December 1865–January 1868, are also arranged chronologically. These schools, organized under Bureau auspices to employ indigent freedmen in making clothing and household items for sale, submitted reports that frequently included the number of freedmen in attendance, the amount of materials needed and manufactured, and the expenses of operating the schools. Most of the reports are for schools outside the District, including Freedmen's Village in Virginia, the Home for Freed Children in Brooklyn, N. Y., and the Howard Industrial School in Cambridge, Mass. The last two schools were established under an agreement with benevolent societies whereby the Bureau would pay for transporting freedmen to those schools to eliminate overcrowding in the District.

The trimonthly and monthly reports from employment offices are in two series. One series, entered in the registers of letters received by the Assistant Commissioner's Office, is arranged chronologically, August 1865–November 1867, and consists of reports from officials in Alexandria and Washington and from northern employment offices. These reports generally indicate the number of freedmen that applied for jobs, the number that were actually employed, and the number of applications that were received for positions as servants. The other series is unregistered and also is arranged chronologically, December 1866–September 1868. It is similar in context except that it indicates the number of freedmen transported at Government expense and the States to which they were sent.

### 6.1: Annual, Quarterly, and Monthly Reports from Staff and Subordinate Officers, Aug 1865–Dec. 1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

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6.2: Monthly Reports from Visiting Agents, Aug. 1865–Feb. 1866

[Image\(s\)](#)

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6.3: Monthly Reports on Operations of Industrial Schools, Dec. 1865–Jan. 1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

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6.4: Trimonthly and Monthly Reports from Employment Offices, Aug. 1865–Nov. 1867  
and Dec. 1866–Sept. 1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

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## Series 7: Records Relating to the Issuing of Rations to Freedmen

Scope and Contents: Among the records relating to the distribution of rations to freedmen is a volume of monthly reports of rations, clothing, and medicine issued, July 1865–December 1868. The volume is arranged chronologically, and each report gives the number of men, women, and children receiving rations; the number of births or deaths among recipients; the number and cost of rations issued; and the cost of clothing issued. This volume appears to have been prepared from information contained in the unbound consolidated monthly reports of rations, clothing, and medicine issued, compiled by the Assistant Commissioner's Office, August 1865–February 1868. The consolidated reports, which also are arranged chronologically, were, in turn, based on information found in the monthly reports of rations, clothing, and medicine issued, submitted by local superintendents, July 1865–October 1868. The superintendents' reports are arranged by name of State or office and thereunder chronologically. The forms used in preparing the monthly reports in the three series are identical. Other series of records relating to the issuance of rations include a register of ration requests, March 1866–August 1869, arranged chronologically, with each entry giving the name of the officer requesting the rations, the total cash value of the rations, the reason for the request, and the date the request was approved by the Assistant Commissioner; a list of teachers given certificates for the purchase of fuel and rations, June 1865–October 1866, showing the name of the teacher and the date and type of certificate; and trimonthly reports of rations issued at the Soup House on New Jersey Avenue, Washington, D. C., September–December 1865, arranged chronologically, giving the number of men, women, and children issued soup rations on a day-by-day basis.



7.1: Monthly Reports of Rations, Clothing, and Medicine Issued (29), July 1865–Dec.  
1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

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7.2: Unbound Consolidated Monthly Reports of Rations, Clothing, and Medicine Issued,  
Aug. 1865–Feb. 1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

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7.3: Local Superintendents' Monthly Reports of Rations, Clothing, and Medicine Issued,  
July 1865–Oct. 1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

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7.4: Register of Ration Requests (34), Mar. 1866–Aug. 1869

[Image\(s\)](#)

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7.5: List of Teachers Given Certificates for Purchase of Fuel and Rations, June 1865–  
Oct. 1866

[Image\(s\)](#)

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7.6: Trimonthly Reports of Rations Issued at the Soup House, Sept.–Dec. 1865

[Image\(s\)](#)

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## Series 8: Records Relating to the Relief of Destitute Freedmen

**Scope and Contents:** Records relating to relief activities include those of the Special Relief Commission, which was established by the Bureau, headed by Surgeon in Chief Robert Reyburn, and funded by a special congressional appropriation for destitute people in the District. A register of destitute persons recommended for relief to be paid for out of the congressional appropriation, May 1866–January 1868, is arranged chronologically. It includes the name, race, and residence of the destitute person, the number of persons in his or her family, the name of the agent, cause of destitution, type and cost of aid required, and the date it was acted upon. This volume apparently was compiled in part from weekly reports of operations of the Special Relief Commission, May 1866–October 1868, which also are arranged chronologically and contain similar information.

Other records relating to the relief of destitute freedmen include agents' reports of investigations, May–August 1868. The printed forms on which the reports were prepared are arranged chronologically and give such information about the freedmen as length of residency in the District, food and supplies needed, and willingness to Freedmen's Village. Trimonthly returns from employees and dependents at Freedmen's Hospital, February–May 1868, which are arranged chronologically, show the number of destitute freedmen employed at the hospital.

### 8.1: Register of Destitute Persons Recommended for Relief (35), May 1866–Jan. 1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

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### 8.2: Weekly Reports of Operations of the Special Relief Commission, May 1866–Oct. 1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

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### 8.3: Agents' Reports of Investigations of Destitute Freedmen, May–Aug. 1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

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### 8.4: Trimonthly Returns from Employees and Dependents at Freedmen's Hospital, Feb.–May 1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

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## Series 9: Records Relating to Abandoned or Confiscated Lands

Scope and Contents: There are one bound volume and two unbound series of records relating to abandoned lands. A volume of summaries of monthly reports received of abandoned or confiscated lands, August 1865–March 1867, is arranged chronologically and includes a general description of the land, the former owner's name, the county or political jurisdiction in which it was obtained, and its total acreage. This volume appears to have been compiled largely from similar information found in the unbound monthly reports of abandoned or confiscated lands, April 1865–March 1867. The unbound reports, also arranged chronologically, were compiled in the Assistant Commissioner's Office from the monthly reports of abandoned or confiscated lands, August 1865–February 1867, which are submitted by local superintendents. The local superintendents' reports are arranged by name of State and thereunder chronologically.

### 9.1: Summary of Monthly Reports Received of Abandoned or Confiscated Lands (28), Aug. 1865–Mar. 1867

[Image\(s\)](#)

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### 9.2: Monthly Reports of Abandoned or Confiscated Lands, Apr. 1865–Mar. 1867

[Image\(s\)](#)

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### 9.3: Local Superintendents' Monthly Reports of Abandoned or Confiscated Lands, Aug. 1865–Feb. 1867

[Image\(s\)](#)

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## Series 10: Records Relating to Transportation of Freedmen and Bureau Personnel

**Scope and Contents:** Two bound volumes and four unbound series, each volume and series arranged chronologically, comprise the records relating to the transportation of freedmen and Bureau personnel. Two volumes of freedmen's transportation applications, July 1865–January 1866 and April 1866–November 1868, list the names of males and the number of females who applied for transportation, their destinations, the names of the officials who recommended the applications, and the dates that the applications were submitted and approved. The volumes use the same cross-reference symbols described in other records of the Assistant Commissioner's Office. Unbound records consisting of descriptive lists of freedmen for whom agents requested transportation, April 1867–July 1868, give the name of the freedmen who desired transportation and his age, height, physical description, former owner, former and present residences, and destination. Agents' receipts for transportation authorized by the local superintendents in the District, March–June 1867, are acknowledgments of permission granted to transport freedmen and include the agent's name, number of freedmen, partial lists of freedmen's names, and destinations. Agents' monthly reports of transportation furnished to freedmen, April–July 1867, show the number of freedmen who were transported at Bureau expense. Information also includes the agent's name, the age and sex of freedmen transported, and the number who refused transportation. Finally, the records include monthly reports concerning transportation furnished to Bureau officers for official travel, January 1867–December 1868; these reports list the date and number of the transportation order, the name of the person to whom the order was issued, and destination, and whether the person was a civilian or in the military service.

### 10.1: Freedmen's Applications for Transportation

10.1.1: [Volume 1 \(27\), July 1865–Jan. 1866](#)

10.1.2: [Volume 2 \(31\), Apr. 1866–Nov. 1868](#)

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### 10.2: Descriptive Lists of Freedmen for Whom Agents Requested Transportation, Apr.–July 1867

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

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### 10.3: Descriptive Lists of Freedmen for Whom Agents Requested Transportation, Aug. 1867–July 1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

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10.4: Agents' Receipts for Transportation Authorized by Local Superintendents, Mar.–  
June 1867

[Image\(s\)](#)

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10.5: Agents' Monthly Reports of Transportation Furnished to Freedmen, Apr.–July 1867

[Image\(s\)](#)

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10.6: Monthly Reports of Transportation Furnished Bureau Officers for Official Travel,  
Jan. 1867–Dec. 1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

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## Series 11: Personnel Records

**Scope and Contents:** There are four bound volumes and four unbound series of records relating to military and civilian personnel employed by the Bureau. A station book listing officers who were employed by the Bureau, 1865–68, is arranged chronologically by date of appointment and thereunder by name of officer. For each officer assigned to the Bureau, the entry gives his name, duty, rank, regiment, date of assignment, and title. Two station books listing civilians who were employed by the Bureau, 1865–68, are arranged chronologically by date of appointment and thereunder by name of appointee. Each entry includes the civilian's name, station, date of contract, and pay. The military and civilian station books contain name indexes. The monthly rosters of officers and civilians, July 1865–August 1869, are lists of commissioned officers and civilian assistants employed by the Bureau in the District. Arranged chronologically, they include the name, rank or title, regiment, and nature of duty of each officer or civilian assistant. These reports were compiled largely from monthly rosters of officers and civilians, August 1865–October 1868, received from local superintendents and staff officers. The August 1865–October 1868 rosters are arranged by name of State and thereunder in chronological order. A register of laborers, March–May 1868, arranged numerically, indicates the residence of each laborer, the number of persons in his family, the dates of employment, rate of pay per day, amount received per pay period, and the name of the official who recommended the laborer for employment. The monthly reports of persons and articles hired, submitted by local superintendents, July 1866–December 1867, are arranged chronologically. The reports include the names of persons hired, their job assignments, dates of service, rates of pay, and dates of contracts. Letters of appointment and revocation received from Bureau headquarters, March 1867–December 1868, are form letters, arranged chronologically, appointing and discharging Bureau employees. In addition to these records, there is a series of oaths of office, 1866–68, arranged alphabetically by initial letter of surname of individual. Such oaths were required by an act of July 2, 1862 (12 Stat. 502), for all officeholders, whether elected or appointed.

### 11.1: Station Book of Officers Employed by the Bureau (101), 1865–68

[Image\(s\)](#)

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### 11.2: Station Books of Civilians Employed by Bureau

11.2.1: [Volume 1 \(102\), 1865–66](#)

11.2.2: [Volume 2 \(103\), 1867–68](#)

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11.3: Monthly Roster of Officers and Civilians, July 1865–Aug. 1869

[Image\(s\)](#)

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11.4: Monthly Rosters of Officers and Civilians from Local Superintendents and Staff  
Officers, Aug. 1865–Oct. 1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

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11.5: Register of Laborers (89), Mar.–May 1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

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11.6: Monthly Reports of Persons and Articles Hired (72), July 1866–Dec. 1867

[Image\(s\)](#)

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11.7: Letters of Appointment and Revocation, Mar. 1867–Dec. 1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

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11.8: Oath of Office, 1866–1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

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## Series 12: Other Records

**Scope and Contents:** Monthly reports of tenants who occupied tenements under the charge of the Bureau, July 1866–November 1868, were submitted by the superintendent of each barracks and are arranged chronologically. They include the name and occupation of the head of the family, number of persons in the family, number of rooms occupied, monthly rent, and amount of rent in arrears. A volume of proceeding of a board of officers that fixed rental rates on Bureau–leased grounds, June–July 1867, also includes copies of letters and endorsements sent by the board and abstracts of letters received. The board was primarily concerned with the amount of rent that was to be paid on grounds where Wisewell Barracks and Campbell Hospital were situated. Miscellaneous reports and lists, 1865–68, relate to properties that were rented or owned by the Bureau; Bureau–administered projects at Freedmen's Village, Mason's Island, and other farms in Maryland and Virginia; civil and criminal cases and discriminatory legislation that involved blacks; censuses of blacks in the District and Virginia; and other subjects.

### 12.1: Monthly Reports of Bureau Tenants

12.1.1: Monthly Reports of Bureau Tenants, July 1866–June 1867

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

12.1.2: Monthly Reports of Bureau Tenants, July 1867–Nov. 1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

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### 12.2: Proceedings of Officers' Board Fixing Rental Rates on Bureau–Leased Grounds (36), June–July 1867

[Image\(s\)](#)

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### 12.3: Miscellaneous Reports and Lists, 1865–1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

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