



Smithsonian
*National Museum of African American
History and Culture*

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

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Collection Overview

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| Repository: | National Museum of African American History and Culture |
| Title: | Records of the Assistant Commissioner for the State of Mississippi, Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, 1865–1869 |
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| Date: | 1865–1869 |
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| Language: | English |
| Summary: | The collection is comprised of digital surrogates previously available on the 50 rolls of microfilm described in the NARA publication M826. These digital surrogates reproduced the Records of the Superintendent of Assistant Commissioner for the State of Mississippi, Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, 1865–1869. They consist of 41 volumes and approximately 30 feet of unbound records. The volume include letters and endorsements sent; registers of letters received; orders issued and received; registers of indentures and marriages; a register of reports, vouchers, and requisitions received; and index books. The unbound records consist mainly of letters received, orders, reports, freedmen's labor contracts, and a few miscellaneous papers. |
| Digital Content: | Image(s): M826-Representative-Image |

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Acquired from FamilySearch International in 2015.

Related Materials

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

Preferred Citation

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Historical Note

[The following is reproduced from the original NARA descriptive pamphlet for M826.]

The Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, often referred to as the Freedmen's Bureau, was established in the War Department by an act of March 3, 1865 (13 Stat. 507). Congress assigned to the Bureau responsibilities that previously had been shared by the military commanders and by the agents of the Treasury Department. The duties included supervision of matters concerning refugees, freedmen, and abandoned property. Under the provisions of the initial legislation, the Bureau was to have been terminated 1 year after the close of the Civil War. It was twice extended by laws of July 16, 1866 (14 Stat. 173), and July 6, 1868 (15 Stat. 83). Its functions were limited by an act of July 25, 1868 (15 Stat. 193), effective January 1869, to education and assistance in the collection of claims. Remaining Bureau functions were terminated following the discontinuance of the Bureau in 1872, in accordance with a law of June 10 of that year (17 Stat. 366).

In May 1865, the President appointed Maj. Gen. Oliver Otis Howard Commissioner of the Bureau. Howard, who served until the Bureau was discontinued, maintained his headquarters at Washington, D. C. Assistant Commissioners supervised the work of the Bureau in the States.

The first Assistant Commissioner of Mississippi was Col. Samuel Thomas, who established his headquarters at Vicksburg in June 1865.¹ Although the size and organization of the office varied from time to time, the Assistant Commissioner's staff usually included an Acting Adjutant General, an Assistant Inspector General, a Surgeon in Chief, a Superintendent of Education, a Disbursing Officer, and a Chief Commissary of Subsistence.

At first, the officers subordinate to the Assistant Commissioner were organized in a hierarchical manner. The State of Mississippi and the parishes of Madison, Carroll, Concordia, and Tensas in northeastern Louisiana were divided into the Western, Southern, and Northern Districts, with an Acting Assistant Commissioner in charge of each district. Subassistant commissioners in charge of subdistricts, which usually encompassed several counties, reported to the Assistant Commissioners, who, in turn, reported to the Assistant Commissioner. In January 1866, the Louisiana parishes were placed within the jurisdiction of the Assistant Commissioner for Louisiana. In March 1866, the three districts were discontinued; thereafter, the subassistant commissioners of the civilian agents in charge of subdistricts reported directly to the Assistant Commissioner.

The policies and programs of the Freedmen's Bureau in Mississippi were established by the Assistant Commissioner and administered primarily through subordinate officers. Bureau officials, in cooperation with benevolent societies, established school for freedmen and issued food, clothing, and medical supplies to refugees and freedmen. They approved or disapproved freedmen's labor contracts and indentures, investigated freedmen's complaints, kept registers of the marriages of freedmen, and helped black soldiers and sailors to file and collect claims for bounties, pensions and pay arrearages. In addition, the Assistant Commissioner maintained several freedmen's hospitals and colonies for destitute freedmen, and provided transportation to return refugees to their homes or to convey freedmen to distant jobs.

In 1865 and 1866, much of the work of the Assistant Commissioner concerned the custody of abandoned property of former supporters of the Confederacy. Officers of the Bureau leased much of the abandoned property and used the proceeds to finance Bureau activities. The Assistant Commissioner maintained colonies for destitute freedmen on several of the abandoned plantations and sometimes utilized abandoned buildings as Bureau offices. The Assistant Commissioner, however, with the approval of the

Commissioner of the Bureau, restored most of the property to former owners who signed loyalty oaths or received Presidential pardons.

Colonel Thomas was succeeded by three other officers who acted as both assistant commissioners and military commanders in Mississippi. In April 1866, Gen. Thomas J. Wood was appointed Assistant Commissioner for Mississippi, he was succeeded in January 1867 by Gen. Alvan C. Gillem. Appointed Assistant Commissioner in March 1869, Gen. Adelbert Ames established his headquarters at Jackson and supervised the closing of the office of the Assistant Commissioner. The appointment of General Ames was revoked April 30, 1869.

When the Freedmen's Bureau was abolished, its records were sent to the Office of the Adjutant General. Clerks in the Adjutant General's Office numbered the volumes or book records and prepared "indexes" or lists of these books, in this microfilm publication the number assigned to the volume by the clerks in the Adjutant General's Office appears in parenthesis. This number is useful only as a more precise method of identifying the volume.

ENDNOTES

1 Before his appointment to the Freedmen's Bureau, Colonel Thomas served in Mississippi within Chaplain John Eaton's "Freedmen's Department" of the Department of the Tennessee. During the Civil War, several commanders of military departments delegated the superintendence of freedmen's affairs in occupied areas to special organizations, often referred to as "Freedmen's Department." The functions and activities of the Freedmen's Department in Mississippi were similar to those of the later Freedmen's Bureau.

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 Sent

The seven letter books, June 1865–May 1869, consist of press copies of letters, telegrams, and reports sent by the Assistant Commissioner and the Acting Assistant Adjutant General. The communications in the letter books are generally arranged in chronological order. There are name indexes in each of the first six volumes, and there are also subject index books for the first three volumes. Filmed before the seventh letter book is a name index prepared by the National Archives.

Frequently noted in the first three volumes are the entry numbers of letters received relating to the communications in the letter books. Sometimes citations of special orders or endorsements relating to the letters are also given.

1.1: Volume 1

1.1.1: Subject Index (15) to Volume 1

[Image\(s\)](#)

1.1.2: Volume 1 (14), June 22–Nov. 4, 1865

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

1.2: Volume 2

1.2.1: Subject Index to Volume 2

[Image\(s\)](#)

1.2.2: Volume 2 (16), Nov. 4, 1865–May 29, 1866

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

1.3: Volume 3

1.3.1: Subject Index to Volume 3

[Image\(s\)](#)

1.3.2: Volume 3 (17), May 29–Oct. 31, 1866

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

1.4: Volume 4 (18), Nov. 1, 1866–June 13, 1867

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

1.5: Volume 5 (19), June 14–Oct. 17, 1867

[Image\(s\)](#)

1.6: Volume 6 (20), Oct. 19, 1867–Sept. 28, 1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

1.7: Volume 7 (21), Sept. 26, 1868–May 1, 1869

[Image\(s\)](#)

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Series 2: Endorsements Sent

According to the recordkeeping practices of the day, the Assistant Commissioner kept a series of records known as endorsements sent or endorsement 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 communication to the sender or forwarded it to another officer. These replies or statements were copied into endorsement books with a summary of the contents of the incoming communication and also the previous endorsements that had been written on the communication.

The three volumes of endorsements sent, June 1865–May 1869, are generally arranged chronologically. In the left margin of the pages in the endorsement books are the names of the persons or titles of the officers to whom the endorsements were sent. There are frequently references in the style of a fraction in the left margin also. The numerator is the number of the page in the same volume on which a preceding endorsement to the same addressee appears, and the denominator is the number of the page on which there is a subsequent endorsement. Usually noted is the entry number of the incoming letter in the register of letters received or the page number of a previous endorsement written by the office of the Assistant Commissioner on the communication. There are name index books for each of the endorsement books and also a subject index book for the first volume. Since the name index books for the first and third endorsement books are incomplete, the National Archives has prepared additions to both indexes.

2.1: Volume 1

2.1.1: Name Index (24) to Volume 1

[Image\(s\)](#)

2.1.2: Subject Index (25) to Volume 1

[Image\(s\)](#)

2.1.3: Volume 1 (23), June 26, 1865–Aug. 15, 1867

[Image\(s\)](#)

2.2: Volume 2

2.2.1: Name Index (28) to Volume 2

[Image\(s\)](#)

2.2.2: Volume 2 (26), Aug. 15, 1867–Dec. 31, 1867

[Image\(s\)](#)

2.3: Volume 3

2.3.1: Name Index (30) to Volume 3

[Image\(s\)](#)

2.3.2: Volume 3 (29), Jan. 1, 1868–May 3, 1869

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

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Series 3: Registers of Letters Received

Another recordkeeping practice of the day was the entering of incoming communications into registers of letters received. The registers include such information as the name or office of the correspondent, the date of the letter, the place from which it was written, an abstract of its contents, the date of receipt of the letter, and the entry number assigned to it. Often there are notations in the left margin of the page in the register indicating action taken regarding the communication, such as the page number of an endorsement or a letter subsequently written in response to the letter received.

The entries in the five volumes of registers of letters received, June 1865–May 1869, are arranged alphabetically by initial letter of the surname or office of the sender and thereunder by date of receipt of the communication. Each entry was assigned a number, with a separate numerical sequence for each alphabetical division in the first four registers. The fifth register has a numerical sequence for each year within each alphabetical division.

Communications from staff officers, written at the direction of their commanding officers, are usually entered in the name of the superior officer. Letters from the executive departments of the U. S. Government are entered under the first letter of the department's or bureau's title: "W" for War Department, "P" for the President of the United States, and "R" for the headquarters of the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands. Communications from the Assistant Commissioner's staff or subordinate officers in Mississippi are usually entered in the name of the sender.

There are name and subject indexes in the first register, and name and subject index books for the second register. The remaining registers have name index books.

Because the number of pages allotted to each alphabetical division in the registers often proved insufficient, it was necessary to continue the entries elsewhere in the volume. The National Archives has filmed the registers in corrected order so that the pages are no longer necessarily in numerical sequence. Blank pages have not been filmed.

The dates given for each register refer to the dates that the first and the last letters entered in that register were received in the office of the Assistant Commissioner. Although the inclusive dates received of the first three registers overlap, the first register contains only those letters written in 1865; the second register, those letters written in 1866; and the third register, those letters written in 1867.

Not all of the letters entered in the registers are still among the records of the Assistant Commissioner. Some letters were forwarded to the Bureau headquarters at Washington; others were referred to staff officers or sent to officers subordinate to the Assistant Commissioner. The National Archives has placed an asterisk in the registers near the entry numbers of the letters that are in the series of registered letters received. Often, related letters were filed together in the series of registered letters received. Notations in the registers, beneath the entry numbers of related letters filed together, indicate the location of the collective file in the series.

3.1: Volume 1 (1), June 1865–Feb. 1866

[Image\(s\)](#)

3.2: Volume 2

3.2.1: Name Index (5) to Volume 2

[Image\(s\)](#)

3.2.2: Subject Index (6) to Volume 2

[Image\(s\)](#)

3.2.3: Volume 2 (4), Jan. 1866–Feb. 1867

[Image\(s\)](#)

3.3: Volume 3

3.3.1: Name Index (8) to Volume 3

[Image\(s\)](#)

3.3.2: Volume 3 (7), Jan. 1867–Aug. 1867

[Image\(s\)](#)

3.4: Volume 4

3.4.1: Name Index (10) to Volume 4

[Image\(s\)](#)

3.4.2: Volume 4 (9), Aug.–Dec. 1867

[Image\(s\)](#)

3.5: Volume 5

3.5.1: Name Index (12) to Volume 5

[Image\(s\)](#)

3.5.2: Volume 5 (11), Jan. 1868–May 1869

[Image\(s\)](#)

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Series 4: Letters Received

The letters and telegrams received by the Assistant Commissioner and the Acting Assistant Adjutant General are in two unbound series, registered letters and unregistered letters.

The letters and telegrams entered in the registers of letters received, June 1865–May 1869, are arranged in the order in which they are entered in the registers. The series also includes those reports received by the Assistant Commissioner that were entered in the registers of letters received. The reports are primarily monthly narrative reports from subassistant commissioners and civilian agents, and most are dated 1865 and 1866. The file citation includes the entry number of the letter, telegram, or report, and the year.

4.1: Entered in Volume 1

4.1.1: A – C, June 1865–Feb. 1866

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

4.1.2: D – F, June 1865–Feb. 1866

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

4.1.3: G – L, June 1865–Feb. 1866

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

4.1.4: M – R, June 1865–Feb. 1866

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

4.1.5: S – Z, June 1865–Feb. 1866

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

4.2: Entered in Volume 2

4.2.1: A – F, Jan. 1866–Feb. 1867

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

4.2.2: G – L, Jan. 1866–Feb. 1867

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

4.2.3: M – Q, Jan. 1866–Feb. 1867

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

4.2.4: R, Jan. 1866–Feb. 1867

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

4.2.5: S – Y, Jan. 1866–Feb. 1867

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

4.3: Entered in Volume 3

4.3.1: A – G, Jan.–Aug. 1867

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

4.3.2: H – P, Jan.–Aug. 1867

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

4.3.3: R – W, Jan.–Aug. 1867

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

4.4: Entered in Volume 4

4.4.1: A – N, Aug.–Dec. 1867

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

4.4.2: O – Y, Aug.–Dec. 1867

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

4.5: Entered in Volume 5

4.5.1: A – G, Jan. 1868–May 1869

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

4.5.2: H – O, Jan. 1868–May 1869

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

4.5.3: P – R, Jan. 1868–May 1869

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

4.5.4: S – W, Jan. 1868–May 1869

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

4.6: Unregistered

The unregistered letters and telegrams, August 1865–April 1869, are arranged by year and thereunder alphabetically by initial letter of the surname of the correspondent. Some of the letters have file citations, but none of the citations are from the registers of the Assistant Commissioner for Mississippi. A name index prepared by the National Archives is filmed before the unregistered letters.

4.6.1: Unregistered, Aug. 1865–Apr. 1869

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

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Series 5: Orders and Circulars

Among the records of the Assistant Commissioner are three volumes of issuances, a register of orders received, a printed manual for Bureau officials in Mississippi, and a register of property restored. There is also an unbound series of orders and circulars received.

5.1: General Orders and Circulars Issued

The volume of general orders and circulars issued by the Assistant Commissioner, June 1865–December 1868, is arranged by type of issuance, thereunder by year, and thereunder numerically. The general orders consist primarily of issuances outlining the general policies of the Bureau. Several of the general orders are reprints of letters of instructions from the Commissioner of the Bureau, the Secretary of War, and the President of the United States. The circulars are mostly policy directives published for the general information and guidance of the Bureau officials in Mississippi. There is a name index book for the general orders.

5.1.1: Name Index (32) General Orders

[Image\(s\)](#)

5.1.2: General Orders and Circulars Issued (31), June 1865–Dec. 1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

5.2: Special Orders and Property Orders Issued

The volume of special orders issued by the Assistant Commissioner, 1865–1868, is arranged by type of issuance, thereunder by year, and thereunder numerically. The special orders, June 1865–December 1868, consist of issuances concerning specific individuals on matters such as transportation, appointments, special assignments, and purchases. Name index book for the special orders have been filmed before the issuances to which they refer.

The volume of property orders issued by the Assistant Commissioner, 1865–1868, is arranged by type of issuance, thereunder by year, and thereunder numerically. The property orders, August 1865–August 1866, consist of directives restoring abandoned lands and buildings to their former owners. Name index book for the property orders have been filmed before the issuances to which they refer.

5.2.1: Name Index (34) to Special Orders

[Image\(s\)](#)

5.2.2: Name Index (35) to Property Orders

[Image\(s\): Name Index \(35\) to Special Orders](#)

5.2.3: Special Orders and Property Orders Issued (33), 1865–1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

5.3: Scrapbook of Orders and Circulars (37), 1867–1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

The "scrapbook" of orders and circulars issued and received, 1867–1868, consists of printed orders and circulars that have been pasted in the volume. The "scrapbook" includes the following: orders issued by Gen. Edward Otho Cresap Ord, Commander of the 4th Military District; general orders and circulars issued by Assistant Commissioner Gillem; and general orders and a circular issued by Gillem in his

capacity as Military Commander of the Subdistrict of Mississippi. The volume is arranged by origin of order, thereunder by type of order, and thereunder chronologically.

5.4: Register of Orders and Circulars Received (36), 1866

[Image\(s\)](#)

The register of orders and circulars received by the Assistant Commissioner, 1866, provides such information as the origin of the issuance, the date and number of the issuance, and an abstract of its contents. Most of the orders are from Bureau headquarters at Washington, military commanders, or subordinate officials of the Bureau in Mississippi. The entries in the register are arranged and numbered chronologically.

5.5: Digest of Orders and Instructions to Subassistant Commissioners, 1866

[Image\(s\)](#)

The digest of orders and instructions to subassistant commissioners was compiled in the office of the Assistant Commissioner and printed in 1866. The manual includes copies of several orders and circulars and summaries of instructions on bookkeeping methods and on such subjects relating to freedmen as contracts, the administration of justice, orphans, vagrancy, and marriage.

5.6: Register of Property Restored (39), July–Oct. 1865

[Image\(s\)](#)

The entries in the register of property restored by the Assistant Commissioner, July–October 1865 usually provide such information as the date of the application for the restoration of property, the name of the applicant, a description of the property, and the date and number of the order that returned the property. The register is generally arranged chronologically according to the date the property was restored. There is a name index in the volume.

5.7: Orders and Circulars Issued and Received, 1865–1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

The unbound series of orders and circulars received by the Assistant Commissioner, 1865–1868, is arranged by type of order, and thereunder chronologically. The series includes general orders, special orders, and circulars.

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Series 6: Reports

Among the records of the Assistant Commissioner are six unbound series of reports and one volume of reports, vouchers, and requisitions received. None of the reports in the series of unbound or bound reports were entered in the registers of letters received.

6.1: Narrative Reports From Subordinate Officers

The narrative reports received by the Assistant Commissioner, 1865–1868, consist of monthly reports from subassistant commissioners and civilian agents, and concern destitution, complaints of freedmen, freedmen's labor contracts and marital problems, administration of State laws, and general operations of the subdistricts. The reports are generally arranged chronologically, and most of them are dated 1867 and 1868.

6.1.1: Narrative Reports From Subordinate Officers, Aug. 1865–Oct. 1867

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

6.1.2: Narrative Reports From Subordinate Officers, Nov.–Dec. 1867

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

6.1.3: Narrative Reports From Subordinate Officers, Jan.–June 1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

6.1.4: Narrative Reports From Subordinate Officers, July–Dec. 1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

6.2: Land Reports

The series of land reports, 1865–1866, consists of monthly tabular reports compiled by special agents of the Treasury Department, acting assistant commissioners, and subassistant commissioners. Arranged chronologically, the reports describe abandoned property and its use by the Bureau. Also included is a list compiled in the office of the Assistant Commissioner of property transferred to the Assistant Commissioner for Louisiana in January 1866.

6.2.1: Land Reports, 1865–1866

[Image\(s\)](#)

6.3: Ration Reports

The series of ration reports, August 1865–March 1869, consists of monthly tabular reports received from subassistant commissioners, hospitals, and orphanages. Arranged chronologically, the reports list the numbers of refugees and freedmen issued rations, clothing, or medical supplies.

6.3.1: Ration Reports, Aug. 1865–Dec. 1866

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

6.3.2: Ration Reports, Jan. 1867–Mar. 1869

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

6.4: Miscellaneous Reports

The series of miscellaneous reports from subordinate officers, 1865–1867, includes tabular reports from subassistant commissioners, hospitals, and orphanages. The series includes statistical reports on the rations, contracts, indentures, and marriages of freedmen, and also reports on persons and articles hired. The series is arranged by type of report and thereunder chronologically.

6.4.1: Miscellaneous Reports from Subordinate Officers, 1865–1867

[Image\(s\)](#)

6.4.2: Miscellaneous Reports from Staff Officers, July 1865–Oct. 1867

[Image\(s\)](#)

6.5: Tabular Reports of the Assistant Commissioner, 1865–1869

[Image\(s\)](#)

The series of unbound reports includes a short series of tabular reports compiled by the Assistant Commissioner, 1865–1869. The series consists of monthly reports of Assistant Commissioners Thomas and Gillem concerning rations, transportation, and rents. The reports are arranged chronologically.

6.6: Register of Reports, Vouchers, and Requisitions Received (13), Jan. 1866–Aug. 1867

[Image\(s\)](#)

The entries in the register of reports, vouchers, and requisitions received by the Assistant Commissioner, January 1866–August 1867, are generally arranged and numbered chronologically. Most of the reports, vouchers, and requisitions registered are from Bureau officials in Mississippi, and concern financial matters that were subsequently referred to the Receiving and Disbursing Officer. There is a name index in the register. Also contained within the volume is a register of letters received by the Freedmen's Department, January–March 1865.

6.7: Miscellaneous Records, 1865–1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

A small series of miscellaneous records, 1865–1868, is filmed immediately after the reports. The series includes several letters and affidavits relating to the transportation of freedmen, receipts, indentures, and a deed to school property. The records are arranged in chronological order.

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Series 7: Station Book, Oaths, and Rosters

7.1: Station Book

The station book, 1865–1866, lists the name of an officer or civilian on duty in the Bureau, his station, the positions held, the date and order assigning him to duty, and the date and order relieving him from duty. The volume is arranged alphabetically by initial letter of the surname of the officer or civilian. The number of pages allotted to each alphabetical division in the station book sometimes proved insufficient, and the entries for a particular alphabetical division were continued elsewhere in the volume. The National Archives has filmed the station book in corrected order so that the pages are no longer necessarily in numerical sequence.

7.1.1: Station Book (38), 1865–1866

[Image\(s\)](#)

7.2: Oaths of Office

A small series of oaths of office, 1865–1868, contains oaths signed by employees of the Bureau in Mississippi. According to an act of July 2, 1862 (12 Stat. 502), every person elected or appointed to any office of honor or profit under the Government of the United States was required to take an oath of loyalty to the United States. The oaths are arranged alphabetically by initial letter of the surname of the signee.

7.2.1: Oaths of Office, 1865–1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

7.3: Rosters

The unbound rosters of officers and civilians on duty in the Freedmen's Bureau in Mississippi, March 1865–April 1869, are primarily monthly reports on printed forms compiled by the Assistant Commissioner, staff officers, and subassistant commissioners. Arranged in chronological order, the rosters list officers on duty, citizen employees, enlisted men on duty, and changes in commissioned officers. Some of the rosters are entered in the registers of letters received by the Assistant Commissioner.

7.3.1: Rosters, Mar. 1865–May 1866

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

7.3.2: Rosters, June 1866–June 1867

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

7.3.3: Rosters, July–Dec. 1867

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

7.3.4: Rosters, Jan. 1868–Apr. 1869

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

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Series 8: Indentures, Marriages, and Labor Contracts

8.1: Register of Indentures of Colored Orphans (42), Aug. 1865–May 1866

[Image\(s\)](#)

The Register of Indentures of Colored Orphans, August 1865–May 1866, includes such information as the date of the indenture, name and age of the orphan, term of the agreement, and the name and residence of the employer. There are only four pages in the register, in addition to two pages of duplicate indentures pasted in the volume. The entries in the register are arranged chronologically.

8.2: Register of Marriages of Freedmen

There are four registers of the marriages of freedmen, 1863–1866. Each entry provides such information as the name, residence, and age of the couple married; date of their marriage; their color and the color of their parents; and the names of the minister and witnesses to the ceremony. The second register contains a list of ministers in Mississippi accredited by the War Department to conduct marriage services. The entries within the first, second, and fourth registers are generally arranged alphabetically by initial letter of the surname of the husband, and thereunder chronologically. The third register is arranged chronologically. The entries dated before July 1865 in the registers were compiled by the Freedmen's Department.

8.2.1: Volume 1 (43), 1863–1865

[Image\(s\)](#)

8.2.2: Volume 2 (44), 1864–1865

[Image\(s\)](#)

8.2.3: Volume 3 (45), 1865

[Image\(s\)](#)

8.2.4: Volume 4 (46), 1864–1866

[Image\(s\)](#)

8.3: Labor Contracts of Freedmen

The unbound freedmen's labor contracts, January 1865–November 1868, consist of agreements between planters and freedmen that were approved or disapproved by Bureau officials. In return for the labor of the freedmen, planters usually promised to pay them a specified wage in addition to providing them with food, clothing, living quarters, and medical attention. The contracts are arranged chronologically by the month approved or disapproved by the Bureau. Contracts dated before July 1865 were approved by the Provost Marshal of Freedmen.

8.3.1: Labor Contracts of Freedmen, Jan.–June 1865

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

8.3.2: Labor Contracts of Freedmen, July 1865

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

8.3.3: Labor Contracts of Freedmen, July–Aug. 1865

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

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[Image\(s\)](#)

8.3.4: Labor Contracts of Freedmen, Aug. 1865

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

8.3.5: Labor Contracts of Freedmen, Aug.–Sept. 1865

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

8.3.6: Labor Contracts of Freedmen, Oct. 1865–Dec. 1865

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

8.3.7: Labor Contracts of Freedmen, Jan. 1866

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

8.3.8: Labor Contracts of Freedmen, Feb. 1866–Nov. 1868

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Image\(s\)](#)

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