



Smithsonian Institution

Freedmen's Bureau

Registers and Letters Received by the Commissioner, Letters Received, Entered in Register 2, M, Oct. 1865–Feb. 1866. Part 1

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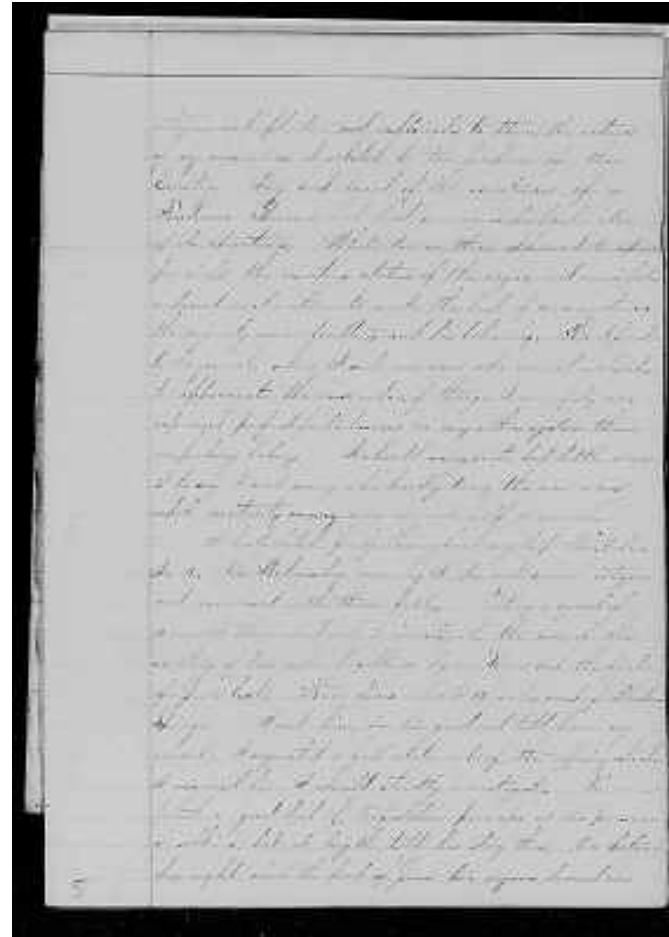
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citizens and planters and explained to them the nature of my mission as it related to the freedmen of the Country. They had heard of the existence of a Freedmens Bureau but had a very imperfect idea of its operations. While two or three appeared to appreciate the existing status of the negro, and manifest a decent inclination to make the best of circumstances, the majority were doubting and disbelieving. This I found to be general, where I met one man who seemed inclined to appreciate the new order of things I met fifty who expressed perfect faithlessness in any other system than compulsory labor. I should exaggerate but little were I to say I met many who hardly knew the war was ended, certainly many who are not half [?].

I distributed freely throughout my trip Gen. Orders. No. 12. On Wednesday morning I also met several citizens and conversed with them fully. Taking a squad of 10 men I then went out to investigate the case of the shooting of two colored soldiers by one Ware on the first of June last. Ware lives about 12 miles west of Bladen Springs. I met him in his yard and told him my errand. I requested a full statement of the affair which I assured him I should strictly investigate. He manifested a good deal of trepidation perhaps at the presence of soldiers, but at length told his story thus: On Saturday night about the first of June two negroes dressed in



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