
3578 5/24/1866 *From:* Thomas W. Conway *To:* Major Gen. O.O. Howard

OOH-3527

Harlem N.Y.

Source: Bowdoin

[70, 71]

Harlem N.Y.

May 24th 1866

Major Gen. O.O. Howard,
Commissioner &c.
Genl,

It pains me to listen (as I do fifty times each day) to the assaults of bad men upon you and upon the work which you have in hand. And not only are you now set upon (especially by all the readers of the Copperhead Press and by those of Conservative republican papers like the "Times", but every officer serving under you, as if you and they had suddenly become guilty of swindling both the Government, and the Freedmen all over the south; and guilty not only of swindling, but of persecution of the blacks in the service of your own aims and desires for gain.

It is part of my daily pleasure to shield you from these assaults. Your failure to do just what I would like, has nothing whatever to do with my appreciation of your character as a faithful Christian, an ardent patriot, and a true friend of the oppressed black man.

It appears to me that the President, in sending Steedman and Fullerton south, with a corps of reporters favorable to his policy, has gained an advantage with men, though not by righteousness. He may accomplish his wicked purpose of rendering the Bureau so obnoxious in the eyes of many as to feel justified in strangling it entirely. He probably will do so, except you and your friends, and the friends of justice all over the land, and especially in Congress, will be equally bold for the right.

Can you not have the congressional Committee on Freedmen so thoroughly informed on all the important facts as to save the day? It appears to me that this is possible, though you are the best judge.

I have already called the attention of Congress to the instructions given by the President to Genl Fullerton when he sent him to New Orleans – the "private instructions of the President" as the General styled them. These were enough to bring condemnation not only upon Gen. Fullerton but upon the President, and you may have been deceived as to those instructions, as I believe you were. But you may rest assured that the Government (Congress) is not, nor will the people long be. Let things of this sort be made known through the investigations of this Committee, and you will be strengthened by the exposure. The President's cloven foot is already manifest and men need not be in ignorance of it.

I am well aware that you have suffered most in consequence of the Presidents course in regard to the bureau. I know that you have been hampered and tied by him, and you have never been without my prayers and sympathies.

Will it do any good to publish a vindication of the Bureau by the "Radical Commissioners" who have been relieved from duty in it – say Saxton, Gregory, Thomas and myself?

With much regard and sympathy

I am very truly yours

Thomas W. Conway [Former Asst. Commissioner, State of Louisiana, Freedmen's Bureau]
Harlem N.Y.

[Summary written on the last page, in a different hand.]

Harlem, May 24 1866

Conway Thos W.

Friendly (?) letter

Recd May 25th 1866

3579 5/24/1866

From: H.E. Simmons

To: Maj Genl. O.O. Howard

OOH-3528

No 715 Tremont St.
Boston Mass

Com'r Bureau Refugees
Freedmen &c
Washington D.C.

Source: Bowdoin

[72]

No 715 Tremont St.
Boston Mass May 24th 1866

Maj Genl. O.O. Howard
Com'r Bureau Refugees Freedmen &c
Washington D.C.
Sir

The following from the "New York Tribune" report of speeches made at the meeting in N.Y. of the "American Tract Society of Boston", and copied into a good many of the papers here, is causing considerable enquiry. Will you inform me if the statements in the extract are true.

"Among the freedmen the Society had 90,000 pupils in their organized school, of which there were 700. They had 1,300 teachers, and he believed that from their labors great good must result."

I am General
Your most Obt Servt
H.E. Simmons

[Handwritten in pencil below the above letter on the first page in a different hand.]

Must be some mistake – not from my speech – means the whole number of organ schools under the different soc.

3580 5/25/1866 *From:* A.O. Morgan

To: Gen. O.O. Howard

OOH-3529

Lewiston Me

Washington

Source: Bowdoin

[51]

[Letterhead]

The American Telegraph Co.

Dated: Lewiston Me May 25 1866

Received at: Washn May 25

To: Gen. O.O. Howard

Our city tenders you an invitation to deliver an oration 4th of July. Will you Accept?

A.O. Morgan

Ans. By telgh

[Summary written on the reverse side, in a different hand.]

Lewiston, Maine

May 25 1866

Morgan A.O.

Desires Gen O.O. Howard to deliver 4th of July oration

Recd May 25, 1866

3581 5/25/1866 *From:* A. Baird

To: Maj Genl O.O. Howard

OOH-3530

New Orleans La

Source: Bowdoin

[73, 74, 75, 76]

New Orleans La
May 25 1866

Maj Genl O.O. Howard
My dear General

I have rec'd your letter in relation to brevets and other matters. I was anxious to have been in Washington before the end of the session of Congress to look out for my Army interests. You know that as Major in the Inspect Genl's Dept there is no promotion for me, & I wished this fixed but my friend Blaine from your Stte has been most kindly attentive to this matter and assures me that he will do every thing in his power to have me made a Lieut Col, as Asst. Inspector and to have promotion go on in the Corps. I do not wish to quit the staff but I want a grade of promotion in it. If you have an opportunity ot give me a lift in this will be obliged.

As to the brevet I have certainly been unfortunate. Sherman, Thomas, & Meade each looked out for his own men – and I fell between Thomas and Sherman. I know that Thomas rated me higher than several of his officers who are put a month ahead of me in the list. He told me that he would have given me the 14th Corps in preference to Davis if he could and yet Davis who has ne er behaved well in a single fight gets five brevets to make him a Maj Genl – and I only three whereas in the battles wehre we commanded divisions together I was always recommended for promotion and he was not.

The subject of brevets is a sore one just now and if I can not get the brevet of Maj Genl, I want my others dated at proper times.

I wrote Blaine quite fully about this the other day and explained how I wanted it done. I want to get the President to, without its going through the War Dept., to send in my name again to the senate for Lt. Col. to date from Williamsburg May 5th 1862 – for Colonel to date from Chicamauga Sept 1863 – and for Brig Genl to date from Mission Ridge Nov. 1863. This will leave the Atlanta Campaign open and if I do not get the fourth brevet now I may hereafter it all events I will have my proper grade among the brigadiers. Blaine has a little synopses of my services and I told him I thought Rousseau would ask the President to do this for me. If you can please give me a lift.

I enclose you a copy of an order from Sherridan putting me in command of the Dept. and I will relieve Canby on Monday next. I will keep the Offices entirely separate and spend a part of the day on each - Genl Gregg watching over the Bureau when I am at the other place. It will give me some considerable advantage to have the command of troops when we want them for the purposes of the Bureau. This additional duty will preclude the possibility of my going north as I expect to have done or at least hoped.

I presume now that I must remain until I am mustered out of the volunteer service. Until that time therefore you need give yourself no concern about finding a successor for me.

I shall be glad to see Steadman and Fullerton for my acts are open at all times to scrutiny and I know that I have done the best according to my judgement that the circumstances would permit. I have at times found our Agents doing wrong but the evils have been promptly correct as soon as discovered. I know of but one officer who was interested in a plantation and I relieved him and sent him to his regiment. Col Reno has discovered that one or two in collecting the tax under my predecessor have been guilty of fraud, but one of them had gone to the north before we made the discovery and escaped us. The other is also out of the Bureau, but I at once asked the Dept. commander to have him arrested and tried.

I think our skirts are quite clean. And the only persons who complain of us are the N.Y. Tribune people who are angry that I will not let the bureau become involved by mixing it up in those political manoeuvres. They are really not pleased to have an honest man in my place. They complain frequently that freedmen are wronged and that we will not do them justice but in nearly every instance the case has been fully examined and

dismissed either for want of evidence or because the offenders could not be reached, or that the whole matter is frivolous. This party then goes to the Tribune and they are glad to take his one sided statement on which by inuendo to attack the Bureau. Of course our machine is weak in many particulars, but if Steadman can find anything wrong I shall be glad to see him. I presume he will be here within a month and I will keep you informed as to the course which he will take.

This reminds me that I sent you some time ago a long report of my first quarter's administration. Please have your Adjutant acknowledge its receipt.

Most Truly Yours &c

A. Baird [Absalom Baird, USMA Class of 1849]

[Summary written sideways on the last page, in a different hand.]

New Orleans, <[CHECK ORIGINAL –underneath tape]

May 25, 1866

Baird, A

Bvt. Maj. Genl.

Asst. Comr.

Friendly letter

[STAMP] BUREAU R.F.&A.L. REC'D MAY 31 1866

3582 5/26/1866 *From:* A. Hyde

To: Gen [OO] Howard

OOH-3531

Wash'n

Source: Bowdoin

[77]

Wash'n 26 May '66

Dear Sir

I feel that an explanation is due to you, as well as for my own credit, in view of the remarks yesterday, that I had dismissed my carriage, and yet had it there at the close of the exercises.

Mrs Hyde's sister, formerly the Principal of the Female Grammar School, returned in it without my knowledge, and I found it there after you had left.

Your presence with us, on friday next, will be very gratifying, and we trust you will not fail to come.

I had not the pleasure of meeting your brother, on my recent visit to his Sab. School, but would glad to see him also.

Very respectfully yours
A. Hyde

Gen Howard

3583 5/26/1866 *From:* O.O. Howard

To: Dear Brother Morris

OOH-3532

Washington

Source: Bowdoin

[5]

[Washington May 26, 1866]

Dear Brother Morris;

The christian spirit and zeal with which you have entered upon your labors have been highly gratifying to the Committee. They have cherished the hope that your further proceedings would have been equally satisfactory. It is only after much hesitation, and with sincere regret, that they find themselves compelled to withhold their approbation from some part of them.

You mention in one of your letters that you had spread our wants at the close of a lecture upon Lincoln, before a congregation assembled to hear it. Had we known that you contemplated such a measure we should have deprecated it earnestly. We do not question the merits of the lecture in the slightest degree. But the inevitable effect of making it precede the presentation of our claim is to preoccupy the minds of the hearer, and, enlist their feelings in an entirely different subject, so that they are not in a fit frame to give our case a favorable consideration. And, if the lecture runs beyond the usual length, most of them will become weary and averse to listening to a new topic. They will be prejudiced, in fact, against what they have been compelled to hear contrary to their expectations. We are assured from more than one source that such has been the result in this instance, and that our prospects have been seriously injured in consequence. We must request therefore that you make the presentation of our wants your sole mission where ever you present it at all, without connecting it with any such exercises.

We are compelled, also, to express our regret at the publication of the circular prepared by you. You cannot be ignorant that we refused to print the one prepared here on account of its length, deeming it injudicious to <issue [CHECK ORIGINAL - tape> one of more than two pages at the extreme. It seems to us indiscreet, moreover, to put in press the paragraphs which imply a reflection upon the churches in this city. They cannot but give unnecessary umbrage. You may perceive this from the strictures contained in the Presbyterian of last week upon General Howard's address before the Congregational Union in Brooklyn. The promulgation of your circular at this juncture is the more unfortunate, especially as you have appended General Howard's name to it. It may not be best to withdraw the paper, though that step has been urged upon us, and is under consideration. But we are decidedly of opinion that not another copy should be sent out for the present.

We are sorry we cannot concur in your hopes of success in your mission. Your report awakens great misgivings on that point. The promises and assurances which afford you so much encouragement are what some of us are familiar with, and, according to our experience, forbade anything but an abundant <kerorst [CHECK ORIGINAL]>. In the usual course you would have been gathering the cream of the collections. You have not realized the expenses, although much of what you have collected we were sure of before you went. We have been waiting for your second report. Should it shew us better results, the continuance of the agency must become a serious question for consideration. There would be reason to fear that the favor manifested for us in the west is in danger of being irretrievably diminished.

Be assured that it gives us the deepest pain to be compelled to hold this language. But unless our affairs are managed differently, we apprehend the most disastrous affect upon the enterprise we all cherish.

Wishing you many blessings, and praying that you may be greatly prospered in your good work, we are with sincere esteem,

Your fellow servants in the Lord
The Business Committee of the First
Cong'l Society of Washington, by

[Summary written sideways at the bottom of the last page, in a different hand.]
Washington

May 26 1866
O.O. Howard
Maj Gen.
Concerning the Cong. Church
Retained Copy

3584 5/26/1866

From: Jhs. Dickinson

To: Maj. Genl. O.O. Howard

OOH-3533

Aetna Life Insurance
Co.

Comm'r &c, Washington, D.C.

Source: Bowdoin

Philadelphia Branch
400 Chestnut St.

[78]

[Letterhead]

Aetna Life Insurance Co.
Philadelphia Branch
400 Chestnut St.
General Agent, Joseph Dickinson
May 26th 1866

Maj. Genl. O.O. Howard
Comm'r &c, Washington, D.C.
Dear General

Generals Hooker & Meade have forward to Washington (last week) recommendations for Brevets for my services during the war. As these compliments will be esteemed by my family as some slight acknowledgement of the part I took in the late rebellion, and as you were cognizant of some of my actions I would esteem it a favor if you could forward the reccommendations to consumation.

My only reasons for desiring these Brevets are that so many officers who were my juniors in the Army have received such promotions that my friends think I could not have deserved, if not receiving any.

With respect I remain, in hast
Your Obt. Servant
Jhs. Dickinson
late Lt. Col. & A.A. Genl. A. of P.

[Summary written on the back page, in a different hand.]

Philadelphia
May 26, 1866
Dickenson, Jos.
Late A.A.G.
Desires recommendations for brevet.
Recd May 29th 1866

3556 5/16/1866

From: William J. R. Taylor

To: Major General O.O.
Howard

OOH-3534

American Bible Society
Bible House, Astor
Place
New York

Washington D.C.

Source: Bowdoin

[79, 80]

[Letterhead]

American Bible Society
Bible House, Astor Place
New York

Executive Officers James Lenox, President
Joseph Holdich, D.D., Cor. Sec.
Wm. J.R. Taylor, D.D., Cor. Sec.
William Whitlock, Jr., Treas.
Henry Fisher, Asst. Treas.
Caleb T. Rowe, General Ag't

May 16 1866

Major General O.O. Howard
Washington D.C.
My dear Sir

We send you to day by mail the manuscript of your address delivered at our Jubilee. Be pleased to accept our thanks for your kindness in presenting the claims of the Freedmen to the audience on that memorable occasion. The noble building in which we met is in ashes but the spirit and power of that meeting will live for many a year to bless our country and the world. Our limited space and the specific object of the Institution oblige us to abridge some of the longer addresses in our publication of them. We have therefore selected from your address those portions which relate most intimately to our immediate work, especially the important statements respecting Education.

We trust that this will be agreeable to yourself and will send you copies when issued, which will be within a week or ten days.

With sincere respect, I remain, General, in Christian bonds

Yours very truly
William J. R. Taylor
Cor. Sec.

[Summary written on the last page in a different hand.]

New York City
May 26th, 1866
Taylor, W.J.R.
Cor Secy, A.M.S.
Sends manuscript of Generals address.
Recd May 29th 1866

3585 5/26/1866 *From:* Hammie Bittinger

To: Gen. O.O. Howard

OOH-3535

Shadeland, Virginia

Source: Bowdoin

[81, 82]

Shadeland, Virginia
May 26th 1866

Gen. O.O. Howard
Dear Sir,

In my rural home I have often read of your deeds of benevolence and Christian zeal, and I wondered if a letter would not meet your kind consideration.

I am begging to-day, not for myself but for Christ, and knowing the link that bings you to Him, I imagined I should not plead in vain.

A little band of Presbyterians at Falls Church Virginia are very desirous to build a small but plain house of worship, and as most of our pleasant things were laid waste by war we find it necessary to go abroad for assistance. This church is connected with the Presbytery of Potomac (O.S.) and Northern Assembly & is under the charge of Rev. Howard P. Decherl –a member of the Presbytery of New York.

To build we require \$2000, thus far another lady member and myself have collected \$500, Gens. Grant & Carrington being among our contributors.

Will you not aid this struggling people? Any contribution you may feel disposed to make, sent to me or Rev. Dr. Gurley, Pastor of the New York Avenue church Washington D.C. Will be most thankfully received and I hope profitably invested.

Yours respectfully
Hammie Bittinger
P.O. Address Falls Church, Fairfax Co, Virginia

[Summary written on the back page, in a different hand.]

Shadeland Va.

May 26, 1866

Bittinger, Hammie

Desires aid for building a church

[STAMP] BUREAU R.F.&A.L. WASHINGTON REC'D MAY 30 1866

3586 5/28/1866 *From:* JG Blaine

To: Maj. Gen. O.O. Howard

OOH-3536

Washington

Source: Bowdoin

[85]

Washington, May 28 1866

Dear General,

I enclose a letter which seems to me to deserve attention and a reply. I have advised the writer that I have referred the letter to you. What can be done to arrest the systematic robbery of the colored people under the force of law should be done. But this you understand & feel as much as any one.

Do you go to Albany to the Young Men's Christian Convention? If so on what Day? I think of going & should like to have the pleasure of your company.

Sincerely yours
<JG Blaine>

Maj. Gen. O.O. Howard

3587 5/28/1866 *From:* J.W. Alvord

To: Maj Genl O.O. Howard

OOH-3537

Source: Bowdoin

Headquarters
Department of North
Carolina
Raleigh, N.C.

[83, 84]

[Letterhead]

Headquarters Department of North Carolina
Raleigh, N.C.
28th May 1866
Monday morning

Dear Genl.

Your telegram of Friday was rec'd same night, and the instructions therein contained immediately obeyed. All officers and agents of the Bureau in this state, <accused>, and named in my order have been relieved from duty and others assigned to take their places. Genl. Ruger seems well pleased with his new position and is taking hold of freedmen's affairs with great earnestness and vigor. He proposes making a few changes in the manner of conducting affairs in the state, all of which changes will, in my judgment, be improvements. He intends to cause a rigid and thorough inspection to be made each month of every officer and agent in the state and a searching and sweeping examination will be made as to official conduct of subordinate officer and all who are worthless and inefficient will be dispensed of and replaced by others. The Genl. will consolidate some of the subdistricts and desires me to say that he will not need any more officers at present.

I like the way Genl. Ruger takes hold, and I am well convinced you will be well satisfied with his administration. He will see justice done. The freedmen in every instance if it lies in his power.

Genl. R- speaks in the highest terms of Genl Whittlesey and says his honesty and integrity is beyond reproach.

How matters stand now with regard to Genl. W. and others? And is it the intention to prefer charges against them? And will it be necessary for me to remain here for some time yet? Genl. Whittlesey feels a little uneasy and would like to know what is to be done with him and if there is no objection to him knowing please inform me.

Genl. W is very well and in good spirits and wishes to be remembered to you and yours. I am stopping with him. I presume you have recd ere this the Genls report. I wish you would cause the entire report to be published. I think it clears him completely from all the accusations, dont you?

I am well, regards to all

Your Respectfully

<J.W. Alvord <?> [CHECK ORIGINAL -tape page 4]>

Maj Genl O.O. Howard
Comr Bureau