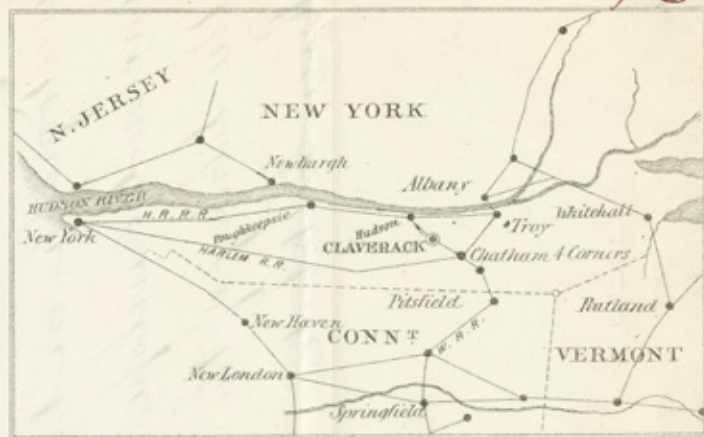




HUDSON RIVER INSTITUTE

REV. ALONZO FLACK A. M. PRINCIPAL.

CLAVELACK, COLUMBIA COUNTY,



New York, June 13th 1864

Maj. Gen. O. O. Howard
Sir

We are trying to get a collection of Autographs for our library. You would confer a great honor by sending yours in the enclosed Envelope

Yours respectfully
S. F. Irish Librarian
per J. A. Mark Sec.

Massachusetts
Col. Gen.
Sir
June 15th 1867

Went J. C.

Requests Gen. Stowards
autograph in the
enclosed envelope for
the library of the Western
River Institute.

JUN
19
1867

147

Greensboro N.C. June 15th 1867.

General.

Notwithstanding the fact that my letter to Assist Commissioner was presented to Major Bohlius, in charge of the Bureau at this post, he did not in accordance with his express promise call upon me to accompany him on his visit to the country. I have therefore spent two days inspecting the condition of freedmen in this town and its vicinity - visiting their School, Settlements &c

In order to better ascertain their condition and wants, at a late hour even

Today I called for a meeting of the colored people to be held in the evening at their large School building, one mile from this town. At 9 o'clock nearly two hundred Freedmen had assembled and the meeting was conducted with interest until 12 - The colored men organizing themselves. After singing and prayer the usual concomitants of Freedmen's meetings, I listened to the statements of their representative men, and then addressed the meeting myself, explaining the Bureau organization, its objects, purposes - and answering their various questions. In such intercourse with

with the Freedmen here I have gained certain facts and opinions which appear to me to touch the very heart of the question, their present and future condition in the South. These, however, may not be novel to the Bureau.

Very little abandoned land is now held in this State by the Government for the benefit of the Freedmen. In consequence, the only means of these people for support or the accumulation of property is their wages. The price of labor in North Carolina, and as far as I can ascertain throughout the South, hardly suffices the Freedmen for the former and does not allow them even to hope

for the latter. Alas! the highest sum
paid the laborer here is Six Dollars
- \$6 - per month - a sum not sufficient
to supply him with the necessities of
life. Two hundred colored men in this
vicinity have contracted for ^{the purchase of} small
houses. Only Twenty out of this number
have been able to pay any considerable
~~sum~~ part of the amounts for which
they have contracted, and with present
wages and prospects they do not seem
to be able to do better for the future.
The freedmen understand thoroughly
this condition of things, and are
oppressed by it. They would become

utterly discouraged were it not
that their hopeful spirit under any
circumstances leads them to expect
possible or impossible relief.

In this vicinity, where the colored
people are to an extraordinary degree
ambitious and intelligent, they hold
frequent meetings and discuss fully
their condition. They conceive, and
rightly I think, that this condition
of ~~poverty~~ extreme poverty must
remain the same for a long time
in the future unless they can pro-
cur land. But with wages scarcely
at living rates it is impossible

to save money. And this is not
the worst aspect of the question. Even
could the Freedmen save money from
mere wages they ^{could} ~~cannot~~ profitably
buy lands. I speak from a very
general statement of ^{the} facts. The land-
holders of North Carolina will sell
land to the negro only at ~~rather~~
prices and on conditions that will
ruin him. The figures are variously
stated, but the general truth appears
that for land appraised at from
\$2 to \$10 per acre, the Freedman
is demanded from \$20 to \$50
per acre. They themselves ^{- the white landholders} do not

conceal their intention, but openly
express it. These gentry who for
two centuries have been masters of
the soil of the South are determined
that, having been foiled in the purpose
of keeping the black man a slave
he shall now be a serf. Buying
his own food and clothing, working
at the lowest possible rates which
can support ^{his} life or procure his labor,
it is asserted by many that the
freedman can be made more profitable
to the landed interests than the slave.
These things are told by the freedmen
themselves. They feel and understand

the burden of the whole (infernal) system which endeavors to crush them. What is the relief? They themselves give a solution of the question.

It is the same, General, which you have practically and successfully given the same question in the District of Columbia. The acres of North Carolina are lying fallow or waste by thousands. Let them ^{say the Freedmen} be purchased by the Government by associations or by individuals and be held for sale to ^{at} ~~the colored~~ ^{men} on such terms as will allow ^{us} ~~him~~ to buy and live. The Freed-

9

men ask, and need no more.
 Those then a year ago they ~~ask~~ abandoned
 the expectation of confiscation,
 and ^{of} support by the Government. They
 now ask only, the opportunity to
 support themselves - land upon which
 to base their labor. These men are
 accustomed to work. Two years of
 practical freedom has given them
 confidence in their own ability to
 succeed - almost against the organ-
 ized tyranny which now surrounds
 them. Lands can be purchased
 here and elsewhere for \$2 \$4 - \$5
 - \$6, an acre. Scores of colored

men, practical and industrious,
assume me that within a period less
than eight years they could under
favorable contracts pay for com-
fortable farms and homes, price
double the original purchase. In
~~such~~ ^{this} light such a scheme appears
not less one of profitable business
speculation than of humanity.
Nothing could so speedily tend toward
a practical solution of the future
condition of the Freedmen in the South.
Reconstruction will certainly not
be carried on so swiftly by
bayonets and Conventions. These

although necessary and unnatural
aid which seek to protect a class
of people who only need the most
humble opportunity to protect them-
selves. To my own mind this scheme
as a general policy to be extended
throughout the whole South appears
prejudicial with the hope of the same
success it which it has obtained in
the District of Columbia. Considered
with ^{the expense of} laws enacted to protect, ~~him~~
and officers appointed to execute,
any plan which can secure the black
man practical or business independ-
ence in the South is incomparably

cheaper. So long as he is not thus
independent he will be oppressed and
outside of protection. Give but
this initiatory chance and no man
in the world by ambition by industry
by enthusiasm and capacity is so
capable as the African of self eleva-
tion. Here in the heart of the South
emerging from bondage and a con-
dition of ignorance scarcely above
that of barbarism, struggling a-
gainst the oppression of a hostile race,
the black man, in after two years
of freedom exhibits such capacities
for enlightened citizenship as would

be amazing at the end of a half
 a century. The fathers ^{with} which these poor
 freedmen speak of their past wrongs
 and future of their hopes for ^{the} future
 is tender and touching almost
 to sublimity. There is something
 so earnest so honest and so true
 in the negro's character that the future
 citizen ship ^{of this country} will boast nothing nobler.
 When the barbaric chivalry of five
 centuries ago dies out of the South
 it will be replaced by the narrow
 chivalry of modern times in this
 same negro character.

The freedmen

of this part of North Carolina
are earnestly discussing the ques-
tion, how they shall be able to
obtain land and better their condition.
Their representative men here ^{desire} ~~desire~~
me to report to you their con-
dition and necessities. They would
before this have corresponded with
you themselves, had they found
any efficient means of commu-
cation through the Bureau office
of this place. But so unworthy
and inefficient have been the
Bureau officers of this District
— including eight counties — and so

much the interests of the freedmen
have been ignored that they profess their
belief that the Government and the
North had forgotten them. They
have therefore hailed my coming
among them almost with enthu-
siasm as I have endeavored
to give them renewed assurance
of your friendly interest. Major
Bolenius now succeeds him
Mr. Dillworth the former nega-
tive agent, and through him this
assurance can doubtless be made
good. The other assistants of the
District are relieved today.

Before closing this letter, which I fear is too much prolonged, I am bound to report another matter of vital importance to the interests of the freedmen here.

It appears that the Bureau no longer makes their contracts for labor and wages. In consequence, the greater number are working either without contracts or ~~such~~ with such as have been formed by their employers to throw advantage in their own favor.

The complaint is universal among the colored laborers that

They are discharged at the whim
 or convenience of the employers: that
 they are refused their wages: that
 the Bureau influence no longer se-
 cures them as formerly: that although
 they are allowed to testify in the
 courts and to sit upon juries, and
 although justice might not be re-
 fused them on trial, the cost of
 finding lawyers generally over-
 balances their small but just
 claims. In such a state of things
 they cannot attempt to secure them-
 selves for past services, - and so
~~never~~ ~~are~~ engage with new employ-

ers at the same risk of similar
injustice. I do not know that this
statement of the case has been
before presented to the Bureau.
Injustice is done not because
the civil courts will refuse jus-
tice but because the Freedmen
cannot pay for justice. This
evil is a radical one ~~here~~
and as it seems universal
here, I have no doubt of its prev-
alence elsewhere. I feel that it is
my duty to present it as forcibly
as possible to for the consideration
of the Bureau.

Generally the relationship between
the whites and Blacks in this portion
of the State is ~~friendly~~ peaceable -
that is, there is are but few cases
of violent outrage from either side.
The ~~freemen~~ Freedmen submit to many
evils which they cannot remedy.
The fault lies in the system and
not in the acts with which they
are treated. Everywhere they are
allowed the perfect liberty of
schools, assemblies, free speech
and everything that pertains to the
outward form of freedom.
Disloyal sentiment is abundant

here, doubtless, but it is not de-
monstration. A loyal man is not
inconvenienced by the presence
of it as in Richmond, He is treated
civilly and with respect. The
garrison here under Major Woot
is orderly and keeps order. The
citizens do not appear badly disposed
~~to see~~ toward it. Some of civil
cases are brought daily to the
officers for consideration. The
ignorance of these people is immense.
The more I study the and
see the South the more I am
amazed that such stupidity

21

and ignorant inefficiency as
exists in it should have even
contemplated the overthrow of the
Government, in the hands of the North.
Judge Kelley's Speech here a month
ago, ~~is~~ has had a most wholesome
effect among all classes, and is
still the subject of much comment.

The Freedmen's School near here
at Waverlyville, under the auspices
of a Seneca Society, is in a most
flourishing condition, having upon
its rolls nearly two hundred scholars.
It is the pride of the Freedmen

Illustrating to them so clearly, as
it does, their capacities for improve-
ment, from the infants just from
The cradle to the grayhaired men
and women these people of the
villages are learning to read and
write. I found it so visiting the
tenements one by one. Much of
this enthusiasm is due to the charac-
ter of these heroic women here
from the North - the Teachers of
the School - Misses Beaumont, Deane
and Swinburne.

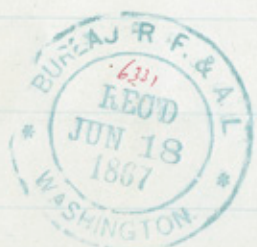
Tonight I shall call another
meeting of the Freedmen.

Trusting that this report has not
been distressingly long. I am,
General, very respectfully
Yours obt. servt.
Wm. J. Armstrong.

Genl. S. O. Howard.
Washington D.C.

Brief
don't enter

E.R.



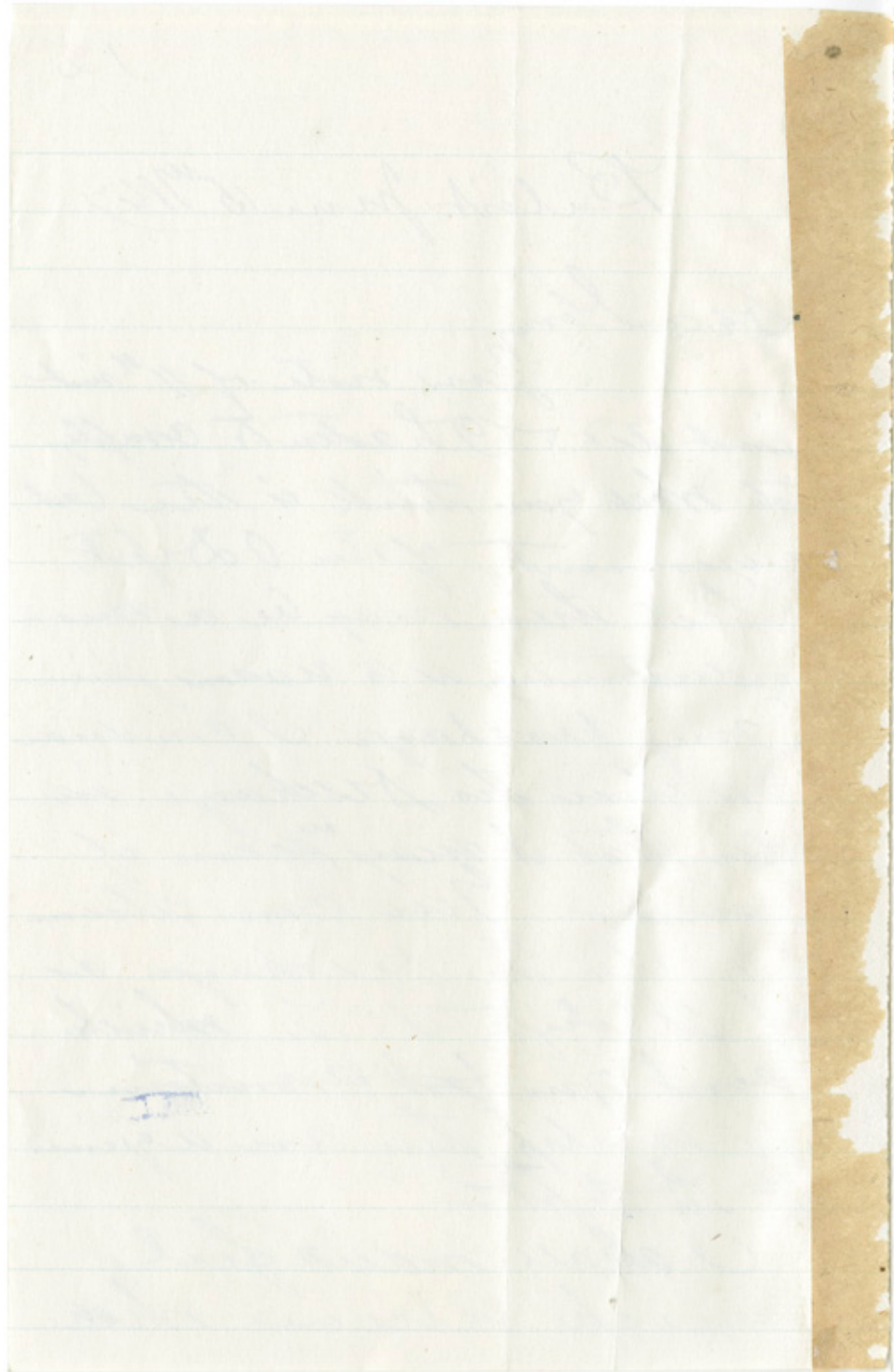
Beloit June 15th 1867

Dear General

Your note of 11th inst
is just recd & I hasten to comply
with what you think is the last
requirement of the O Dept.

Lest there may be a mis-
understanding, as to reasons given
for my discharge, I conclude
to enclose the discharge in
order that it may ^{be} seen if
desired - You can return
it & also the discharge as
of 28th Sept 1867, which
I sent you last summer
app unless they are agreed
at the Dept -

I shall indeed feel
much relieved when



This matter is closed up.
I just forgot to return
for I owe the 100\$ & any
other sum you need for
your trouble &c -

It is most 4 years
since the money
became due - And is the
only sum for services that
I have had any difficulty
in getting - For the past 8 months
I have felt the need of
the money very much.

Mr Woodman & our two
little boys are quite well -

Hope you & family are well.

Yours Affectionately
J. Woodman
Geo. O. Howard

Beloit
June 15th 1864

Woodman E. M.

Acknowledges ^{recd} Gen.

Howards note, of 11th inst.
States that he concludes
to enclose his discharge
in order that it may
be run if desired, and
asks to have it returned
together with the
discharge as Colonel
28th Inf. N. V. which he
sent some time ago.
He also encloses other
papers

✓

See index 1864

JUN

20

1864

Phelps, Dodge & Co.
Nos. 19 & 21 Cliff St.

146

New York 15 June 1867

146

Gen O. O. Howard
Washington
My dear Sir

In response
to your of the 14th I
hand you check for
the 500⁰⁰ & 200⁰⁰ sub-
by Mr. D. G. Bennett
to your Genl. Church
which please acknowledge
in two separate recpts.

Respectfully
I remain Truly Yours
W. E. Dodge

My dear Mr. [illegible]
[illegible] [illegible]

My dear Mr. [illegible]
[illegible]

My dear Mr. [illegible]
[illegible]

My dear Mr. [illegible]
[illegible]

My dear Mr. [illegible]
[illegible]

My dear Mr. [illegible]
[illegible]

My dear Mr. [illegible]
[illegible]

My dear Mr. [illegible]
[illegible]

My dear Mr. [illegible]
[illegible]

My dear Mr. [illegible]
[illegible]

My dear Mr. [illegible]
[illegible]

My dear Mr. [illegible]
[illegible]

My dear Mr. [illegible]
[illegible]

Columbus Ohio, June 16th 1867

Maj. Genl. O. O. Howard

My dear General

Your kind favor

of the 11th is at hand, for which please accept
my thanks. Fully appreciating the kindness
in the way of your serving me as I
know you would like to do, I am (allow
me to say) no longer a believer in social,
political, or military impossibilities -

That the quotas of Maine and Ohio are now
more than full, shows conclusively that
the quota lines were not very rigidly drawn,
and, like the omnibuses, although overcrowded,
will with sufficient pressure always hold
one more -

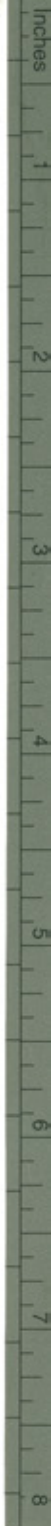
Mr. Stanton promised me an
appointment in the Army. Delaying it for
a short time hoping to give me something
better than a 2^d Lieutenant

11

Philadelphia, Dec. 10, 1841

My dear friend

I have just received your letter of the 11th inst. and am glad to hear from you. I am well and hope these few lines will find you the same. I have not much news to write at present, but I thought I would write a few lines to let you know how I am getting on. I am still in the same place, and am doing as well as can be expected. I have not much time to write at present, but I thought I would write a few lines to let you know how I am getting on. I am still in the same place, and am doing as well as can be expected. I have not much time to write at present, but I thought I would write a few lines to let you know how I am getting on. I am still in the same place, and am doing as well as can be expected.



19

His reputation at home here in Ohio
is, that while he seldom makes promises,
once made, always kept to the letter -
I have made all my arrangements
accordingly. I am waiting confidently
expecting my commission -

If you will see him in person and
remind him of the fact, you will
place me under renewed obligation,
and make doubly sure my appointments.
I am General

With great respect.

Your friend

R. E. Whitman

Late Col 30th Maine Regt

Columbus Ohio

June 25th 1867

Mr. L. D. Stearns
late 26, 30th Maine Regt

Respects from Mr. Stearns
to call on the boys of War
and reward of two farms
with regard to expiring
term of Stearns in the
Regular Army.

RECEIVED

JUN
1867