121

[CB-April 16, 1868]

Washington D.C.
April 1868.

General;

I have taken the liberty of thus addressing you by letter — not knowing but that I might be trespassing upon your time by calling upon you, and feeling that perhaps I could say in better and clearer language, on paper, than verbally, what I wish you to know.

To be brief, and to the point, I will say, that I entered the service of my country in July 1862, and served until June 1865, when I was discharged.

I then entered the General Service of the War Dept. My time in that service expires the first of June of this year, and as the force there is being reduced I do not calculate to remain longer as my services will not be needed.

I have an aged Father and Mother in Maine, mainly dependent upon my exertions for support, and my anxiety is mostly for them, otherwise I would not fear being out of employment.

I have therefore made bold to confide to you these facts, and to ask of you, as a friend to those who are so situated, that you will if in your power, and if you think me worthy, secure for me, by that time (June) some position that will enable me to provide for the comfort of Parents — or at least aid me in procuring such position.

I care not what, or where the post is (tho' under the present difficulties of the Church, I had rather remain) providing I can by it obtain some compensation.

I would have given more for a Church enterprise had it not been for the above circumstances, and

shall do more when I am so situated that I can —

I have no doubt your influence would go far to secure me a position if you had not, yourself, such to give,

I would like to have an interview with you at any time if it would be convenient for you —

Please to consider this private as I feel a little delicate on such a matter —

Hoping I have not committed a trespass in writing thus to you,

I remain General
Very Respectfully
Your Obedt Servant
E. J. Brookings.

Genl O. O. Howard.
Comr. Bureau F, R, & Ld & Lands —
Washington D.C.

B. 9. O.O.H. Vol. 1. 1868

Washington D.C.
April 1868

Brookings E. J.

States that he served in the Army from 1862 till 1865 when he was discharged, and then entered the General Service of the War Dept; from which he will be discharged on the 1st of June.

He has aged parent in Maine, dependent on him for support, hence he would like to have the Commissioner secure him a position by June.

Can not procuredos

130

Newport, Ky.

April 16th. 1868.

My Dear General.

Enclosed herewith I send my resignation of my commissions in the Army. My Battery has been ordered to Cook's Inlet, Alaska. and I have forwarded Surgeon's Certificates to the effect that I have such strong constitutional tendencies to "Pulmonary tuberculosis" that I could not live long in that climate. If the Authorities insist upon my going I desire this, as a last resort, handed to the Adt. Genl. for the action of the President.

I was to have been Superintendent of our Sabbath School, had I remained here, and I have an excellent letter signed by Bishops Clark & Kingsley & others of the M. E. Church - to our friends on the Pacific Coast. My Christian experience has been happy since I saw you and I feel that I have grown in Grace abundantly. Mrs Thompson has also been spiritually blessed and our Married life has been wonderfully happy since we both espoused the Cause of the Lord. We are hoping some day to see you & Mrs Howard to thank you for your kind favors to us. All join in love to you all.

Yours very truly

James Thompson

Maj Gen. Howard, U.S.A.

F. 5. C. O. H. Feb 1 1868

Thompson James
Capt 2d Art, Brt Maj U.S.A.

States that his Battery has been ordered to Cook's Inlet, Alaska; that he has a lung disease which would not permit him to live in that climate (surgeon's certificate to which has been forwarded to the authorities). If the authorities still insist upon his going, he encloses herewith, as a last resort, his resignation.

Speaks also of the religious experience of himself and wife. etc, etc.

131

Newport, Ky.
April 16th 1868.

To/
His Excellency, Andrew Johnson.
President of the United States -

Sir.

I have the honor to tender the resignation of my commission of Bt. Major in the United States Army, and also that of Captain in the Second Regiment of Artillery, U. S. Army - to take effect Sep. 30. 1868, and for the reason that my health does not admit of my serving with my Regiment -

Very respectfully, Sir,
Your obedt. Servant.
James Thompson.
Capt. 2d Artly. & Bt. Maj. U.S.A.

Thro/
Hd. Qrs of the U. S. Army -
Washington
D.C.

Henrietta N.Y. 132
Apr. 16. 1868.

Maj. Gen. O. O. Howard
Dear Sir:

The "Carte de visite" was duly rec'd for which you will accept many thanks — I should be glad to have your autograph on a sheet of note paper.

Respy &c.

W. N. Phillips.

P. 4. C. [illegible]

[illegible]

April 16th 1868

Phillips M. D.

Mentions receipt of "Carte de Visite", and requests the Commissioner's autograph on a sheet of note paper

133

Headquarters, Bureau R., F. and A. L.,
STATE OF TEXAS.

Galveston, Texas, Apl 16th, 1867.

186[8]

Dear General:

I owe you an apology perhaps for presuming to write you so long a personal letter. If you read it you will see my motive. I trust you will not find it a great bore and promise you I will (I ~~for~~ hope) never inflict another such a one upon you, at least for similar reasons = Please read it.

Yours Truly
Wm H Sinclair

Personal.

134

Austin Texas
April 16th 1868

General Howard,
Dear Sir.

General Reynolds gave me your letter of the 26th ult. referring to myself and Brotherinlaw, and so far as I am concerned I have answered it - I hope to your satisfaction, though had I not desired to immediately refute the charges and suspicions thrown upon me I could have furnished you many letters as strong as that of Gov. Pease. I trust however the statements of the Gov. will be received with credence and have as much influence upon your mind as the statements that have been made against me by others whose enmity I have incurred by my official action as Inspector of this Bureau.

If you knew the character of the men who have assailed me and also the character of the men who are my friends in this State - I mean the union men - you would not for a moment suspect that I

[illegible]

am guilty of the charges alleged against me. I know that you have enemies among the union men of the Country - some of them and among them the bitterest are in this State but this does not prove that you are unfriendly to the work in which you are engaged any more than the assertions of these same men or others does that I am not.
I know that the charges brought against me are from two sources. The motives that actuated their authors are not as pure and disinterested as I fear you have been led to believe. In the performance of my duties as Inspector I have been compelled to report adversely in the case of many agents - some I have suspended immediately on the authority delegated to me by Genls. Griffin and Reynolds - others have been discharged immediately on the receipt of my report.
In these things I have only done what I considered my duty to secure to the freedpeople honest, upright and sober agents and preserve the reputation of the Bureau as much as possible from the many malignant calumnies that ~~all~~ are at all times and with or without foundation heaped upon it.
All of my reports are on file in the

[illegible]

Office of the A.A.A. Genl. – both special and general. I have often wished that copies of them might be forwarded to you but I believe they have not. Of course this is no fault of mine. I wish for your own satisfaction and for mine that you would direct that copies of them be forwarded to you for examination in order that you may learn whether I am unfriendly to the freedpeople and the reconstruction act of Congress or not and also learn that the position I have occupied has been no sinecure.

General you have but a faint idea of the condition of affairs in this State – I do not mean you alone and individually but refer to all at Washington – Inspectors sent here from there go back after visiting Galveston and Houston – Steedman and Fullerton only visited one point besides these and only came to make a case against the Bureau. General Ketchum I believe only visited Galveston he having to

hastin away on account of yellow fever which broke out about the time of his arrival - I was at the time on an Inspecting tour in northern Texas and did not see him. I learn now by one of my friends that Harris has got you to order Genl. Sewell here - So Harris wrote him. I have received a telegram from him (Genl. Sewell) to meet him at Houston but cannot go as our a.a.a.genl. is away as witness on Court martial and I am compelled to remain here to discharge his duties. I hope and presume he will come here - Should he not his investigation of any charges against me must necessarily be partial for he will have for his witnesses men whom I have before referred to and I shall have no opportunity for defense.

I do not write this letter to you from any fear I have of a discharge or dismissal for even were the result of the whole matter to be that I should feel no disgrace thence from when sustained by

so true a man and Soldier as General Reynolds and endorsed by so honest and pure a man – both politically and morally – as His Excellency Gov. Pease who has known me during my whole career as an Officer of the Bureau in this State and to whose letter forwarded in my report of yesterday I proudly refer to refute charges brought against me by a traducer of virtuous women – E. M. Harris – and by the editor of the Galveston republican – R. K. Smith – whom I know to be a drunkard and believe to be a demagogue and political trickster.

I do not write this letter to forestall any action on your part = I have only one motive. You did me the honor to refer to me in your letter as "an old friend" (although by some mistake or wrong impression you got me down as a clerk) and my only motive is to set myself right, or try to rather, with you personally and thereby retain the friendship and kindly feeling of one whom I always have been proud to consider as <u>my friend</u>. For this reason and

no other have I written — My report to General Reynolds is my defense so far as I know or can anticipate the charges.
I hope General S. will come and make his investigation complete and searching — I court it for I am willing to be judged by acts.
Of the allegation contained in the editorial that Genl. Griffin intended to relieve me I cannot speak as I otherwise would for he is dead. I have this to say — that for my work in northern Texas last summer I received his commendation —
Unfortunately for me Genls. Griffin and Kiddoo quarreled — I was a friend to Kiddoo as he had been to me and I offended him — Genl. Kiddoo had only one fault — You know what that was as well as I and so does he see his error now — but as I said I offended him and of course offended Griffin —
Plumly and Kiddoo quarreled — I took the side of Kiddoo — Plumly had the ear of Griffin and I believe worked against me —
I thought Whitlock incompetent as School

Superintendent – a drag and clog upon our Freedman schools in Texas – and I labored with General Kiddoo in an open and manly way for his removal but he too soon obtained the ear of Griffin and of course retaliated. I thought the order appointing Ruttkay & Co sole agents for the freedpeople wrong and opposed it – I did all I could to get it revoked – other men too whom I believed to be not honest in their protestations either politically or morally attached themselves to General Griffin for selfish purposes and pecuniary aggrandizement – among these men were Isaac Moses Hausacker, Smith, – one of their speculations I was invited to join provided I would consent to conditions which I considered dishonest and dishonorable. I declined and in the discharge of what I considered my duty as a staff officer of General ~~Kiddoo~~ Griffin reported the facts to him – I must add however that I do not think my motives or action in the matter were appreciated – In fact I believe the course I took worked me a positive injury temporarily and perhaps permanently for the whole ring are down upon me and for no other reason than

that I refused to join them – openly exposed their rascally schemes – tried to defeat them and rejoiced at their failure.
Under these circumstances you can readily see that I might have enemies among the loyal men of the state or some of them and not be working in the direction you have been led to believe.
But these things are all past – General Reynolds is a soldier – he is honest and conscientious and as you say in your letter to him of the 26th. ult – he will "do everything possible to give vigor and efficiency to the work of the Freedmans Bureau while it shall last in Texas." So will I.
One word in regard to my Brother-in-law Mr. Bartholomew the Chief Clerk in the office of the A.A.G. Genl. The reasons why any charges should be made against him I am at a loss to comprehend unless it is the fact that he is my brother-in-law and was a friend and defender of the teachers whom Harris traduced and wrote him that for his treatment of them he should hold him personally responsible when he met him.
Mr. B. entered the office something over a year ago as subordinate clerk – Gradually he has worked himself up to be Chief Clerk having been appointed as such by Genl Kirkman

He is and always has been a republican and is most emphatically a friend to the freedpeople and reconstruction. He is strictly temperate - I never knew him to touch a single drop of anything intoxicating in my life. How he could be considered as chargable with the offenses alleged against me I am at a loss to comprehend unless it be for the reason I have given =

Yours General
Your Obt Servant

Wm H. Sinclair

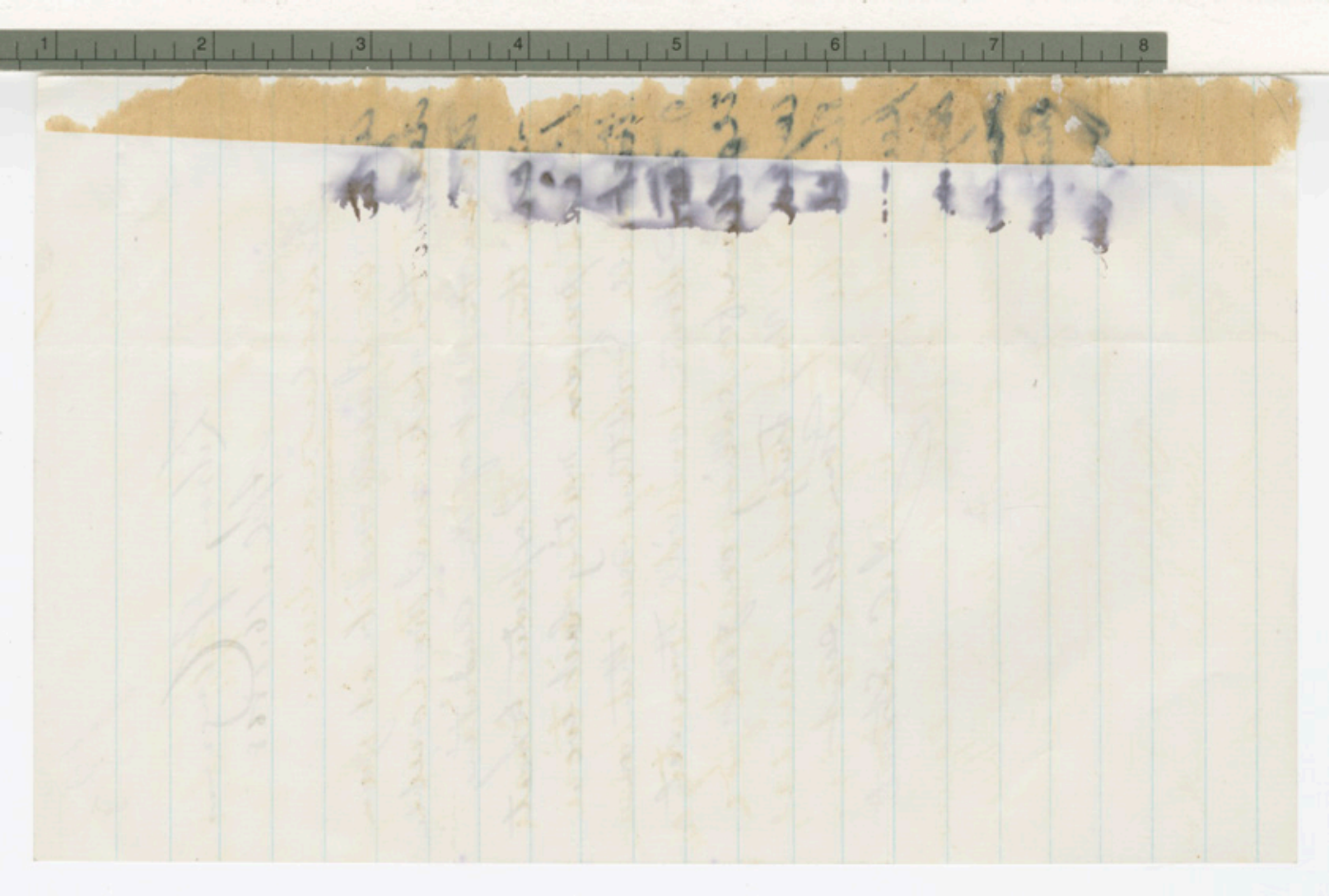
135

Library of Congress
Apl. 16. 1868

General

I shall not be at your Office this week as I was unable to see the rest of the Auditing Committee whom I expected to meet at the prayer meeting last eve. I shall doubtless see them on the Sabbath and will then set the time for calling on you.

Very truly
Your obt. servt
J. C. Strout



136

WAR DEPARTMENT,

Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands.

Washington City, 4/16 1868.

Memorandum.

After conference it is understood between the Commissioner & the junior secretary of the American Missionary Association that an unexpended balance of two hundred & seventy one dollars appropriated for repairs at Topeka, Kansas, shall be transferred to & expended for repairs at ~~Topeka~~ Mobile, Ala., an equivalent amount having been otherwise provided for Topeka by individual contributions.

O. O. Howard
Maj. Gen. Comd'g &c.

A. R. Shipherd

Personal

138

Bureau R. F. & A. L.
Nashville Tenn
April 16th 1868

Dear General:

On the 14th inst Mr A. G. Dean, late Disbursing officer, came to me under the impression that I had discovered other frauds committed by him (a fact stated by him during the interview) and made the confession that he had defrauded the government of nearly $400.00 and described the mode in which it was done. I requested him to make his confession in writing and required him to refund the money before leaving Nashville. The inclosed letter is his confession, and the draft covers the amount of his frauds therein confessed. I have no desire to have his conduct publicly exposed, and would recommend that it should not be done, for the sake of his family in Illinois and with the hope that he will reform and repent. But I am under no obligation of secrecy. He was induced by Rev D. Burt and Dr Goodbrick to make false statements against me; but I can and do forgive him - though none of his confessions were made till after his exposure, or the belief

that he was detected. There are just four persons (absent from Nashville) that should see Mr Dean's letter, viz: Yourself, Gen E. Whittlesey, Genl H. D. Scovel and especially Brt Lieut Col Beaman, and I desire that they be allowed to see it. I have receipted to Mr Dean for the money. Of course the idea I once entertained of giving him employment as clerk is abandoned.

Very truly yours
W. P. Martin
Brevet Genl
Brt Lieut Colonel

Ser. 6. Vol. 1. 1868.

Nashville Tenn

April 16th 1868

Carlin W. P.
Bvt. Maj Genl
Asst Commr.

Encloses a letter of Mr A. L. Dean, late Disbursing Officer, confessing frauds upon the Government for nearly $4000 $\frac{00}{100}$; also his draft for the money. He does not wish to expose Mr Dean, but he desires that Gen Whittlesey, Gen Duvall and Col Beaman see Mr Deans letters. etc etc,

Money to credit etc

140

Washington Ap 16. 68

My Genl O. O. Howard
Dt Bu.

I rec'd your business note on Friday, & your second one on Saturday & thank you.
Before receiving either, I mentioned to them on that I had not heard from you. From that I presume, the report must out.

Very truly
Your
C. B. Boynton

(Private)

Russellville Kentucky
April 16th 1868

Gen. O. O. Howard Comr &c.

Sir:

I feel certain that you will pardon this informal way of addressing you, when the contents of this letter has become known to you.

By act of Congress, a soldier who had sold his claim for Bounty, could never obtain it, neither the buyer. This was to protect the soldier against sharpers. But what protection is this, when just as soon as the claim is allowed, the sharper is informed of the fact, and-without the possibility of loss- buys up the claim at 50 per cent, and at once doubles his money. I had supposed, that the draft for the money, must be signed by the soldier, personally. Claims are being purchased every day here for one half their value. This would be a very disreputable business in any case; when the soldier is a colored man, ignorant, and innocent; it becomes villainous; to use a mild term. I have cautioned every colored soldier I have met, against these vampyres; and have effectually stopped the thing here. Nearly every colored soldier here was in my Regiment; and my advice is heeded. The man who buys these claims here, is at present a high

civil U.S. officer; and was a high military one. He has said that he obtained information when a claim was allowed, from persons connected with the Bureau. This seems wrong. I have been on duty here as Bureau Agent for some time. I may be troubling you needlessly, - perhaps intrusively; But my intentions are good. I wish to have you - in whose virtue, all who know you have perfect trust - know these things; and to forward such a paper, through the ordinary channel, would defeat the very object intended. I would not cast a single doubt, upon the integrity of a single officer in this State. Such is not the object of this letter; and should it be referred to any of them, it might injure me in their estimation. I have by private letter, notified Bvt. Brig Gen. S. Burbank Asst. Comr. of the existing facts.

I send a list of Soldiers, who have bounty claims. Should it seem proper to you, I desire to know whether any of them have been paid. I have reason to think some of them have been, and that the money is in danger of being obtained, by these sharpers; for little equivalent.

If required I can give part of my information; but it was given me confidentially by a reliable gentleman.

I am Sir Very Respectfully M. E. Billings

B.13.00 K. Vol. 1. 1868.

R

April 16th 1868

Billings M. E.

Agent, Bureau R. F. & A. L.

States that a high civil U.S. officer in that vicinity buys up the claims of colored soldiers for 50ct on the dollar thus defrauding them of half their money — a thing which is of every day occurance. These parties learn from the Bureau, when the claims are about to be paid.

He has notified Gen Burbank of these facts.

Sends a list of persons who have claims, desires to know whether they have been paid. Some of the men believe their claims have been paid etc, etc

Dalloch.