

# THE FREEDMEN'S BUREAU

## Reconstructing the American South after the Civil War

by Paul A. Cimbala

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The Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, better known as the Freedmen's Bureau, was established in the spring of 1865 to help white and black Southerners make the transition from slavery to freedom, while securing the basic civil rights of the ex-slaves. It failed to accomplish what its creators had hoped, but its history tells us much about why Northerners and Southerners, whites and blacks, approached Reconstruction in the way that they did and why that failure occurred. *The Freedmen's Bureau: Reconstructing the American South after the Civil War* is a succinct summary of the agency's history accompanied by key documents that illustrate Northern ideology, black expectations, and white Southern resistance. Topics of the day, including labor, education, violence, politics, and justice place the federal agency within the larger context of post-Civil War history.

### About the Author

**Paul A. Cimbala** is a professor of history at Fordham University in the Bronx, New York, where he teaches Civil War Era, Southern and African American history. He received his Ph.D. from Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia. Prior to accepting a position at Fordham, he was an assistant editor with The Black Abolitionist Papers Project at Florida State University and an assistant professor of history at the University of South Carolina at Aiken. He is the author of *Under the Guardianship of the Nation: The Freedmen's Bureau and the Reconstruction of Georgia, 1865-1867*, and has edited numerous essay collections including (with Randall M. Miller) *The Freedmen's Bureau and Reconstruction: Reconsiderations*. He is presently completing a study of slave musicians titled *Jester, Trickster, Priest: Black Musicians from Slavery to Freedom in the Rural American South* and has begun research on a history of the Union Army's Veteran Reserve Corps.

### Contents

#### Preface

#### Part I—The Freedmen's Bureau and Reconstruction

1. Establishing the Freedmen's Bureau
2. Organizing the Bureau
3. Bureau Men Face Reconstruction
4. The Limits of Philanthropy
5. The Bureau and the Freedpeople's Desire for Land
6. Nurturing Free Labor
7. Facilitating Education
8. Defining and Protecting the Rights of Freed Slaves

#### Part II—Documents

1. Senator Charles Sumner's Speech in Defense of Establishing a Freedmen's Bureau, June 13, 1864
2. Congress Establishes the Freedmen's Bureau, March 3, 1865
3. A Meeting of Planters Held in Savannah, Georgia, June 6, 1865
4. O.O. Howard's Rules and Regulations for Assistant Commissioners, May 30, 1865
5. Eliphalet Whittlesey Assumes Command of the North Carolina Bureau, July 1, 1865
6. Freedpeople of York County, Virginia, Petition for a Black Representative on a Freedmen's Bureau Tribunal, July 14, 1866
7. A Bureau Superintendent Reports on the Organization of the Agency in North Carolina, August 7, 1865
8. A Bureau Agent's Experiences in Carnesville, Georgia, August 29, 1868
9. A Petition for Assistance from North Carolina Freedpeople and a Bureau Officer's Response, July 10, 1867
10. The Bureau Acts as a Public Health Agency in Helena, Arkansas, May 11, 1867
11. The Restoration of the Sherman Reservation Lands on the Georgia Coast, February 14, 1866
12. The Restoration of Property in the Sherman Reservation on the South Carolina Coast, May 30, 1866
13. Assistant Commissioner Edgar M. Gregory Lectures White Texans on Free Labor, January 20, 1866
14. John Emory Bryant's Labor Regulations, June 12, 1865
15. Northern Reaction to Bureau Labor Guidelines, July 1, 1865
16. A Bureau Officer Enforces a Contract on Freedpeople in Louisiana, April 20, 1867
17. A Bureau Labor Contract Form from Muscogee County, Georgia, February 24, 1866
18. A Lowndes County Mississippi Labor Contract Approved by the Bureau, February 26, 1866
19. Collecting the Freedpeople's Pay in Southwest Georgia, March 21–June 18, 1868
20. Instructions from the Assistant Commissioner of Louisiana to His Agents, December 9, 1867
21. A Report on Education in North Carolina and a Radical Suggestion for Funding Freedmen's Schools, October 31, 1866
22. William J. White Organizes Schools in Georgia, March 29, 1867–June 4, 1867
23. The Bureau's Continued Educational Endeavors in Kentucky, July 17, 1868
24. An Officer Stands Up for the Freedpeople's Civil Rights in Tyler, Texas, June 8, 1868
25. Bureau Intervention in an Illegal Apprenticeship in Kentucky, March 9-13, 1867
26. Reporting Outrages in Texas, March 22, 1867
27. Assistant Commissioner Nelson A. Miles Urges the Freedpeople's Participation in the Freedmen's Savings Bank, May 18, 1868
28. Report of the South Carolina Bureau's Inspector in the Agency's Last Active Months, October 17, 1868
29. The Freedpeople of Fort Bend County, Texas, Petition to Keep the Bureau, October 1868

#### Conclusion

#### Select Bibliography

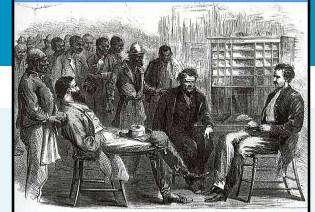
#### Index

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