

FREEDMEN'S BUREAU PROJECT FACTS

DiscoverFreedmen.org

FREEDMEN'S BUREAU RECORDS FAST FACTS:

- The Freedmen's Bureau was organized near the end of the American Civil War to assist newly freed slaves in 15 states and the District of Columbia.
- From 1865 to 1872, the bureau opened schools to educate the illiterate, managed hospitals, rationed food and clothing for the destitute, and even solemnized marriages. In the process it gathered priceless handwritten, personal information on potentially 4 million African Americans.
- In 2001, FamilySearch indexed the Freedman's Bank records, comprising more than 460,000 historical records, which became one of the largest collections of searchable Civil War-era African American records.
- In 2009, FamilySearch volunteers continued these efforts by indexing over 800,000 Freedmen's Bureau records from Virginia.
- Today, FamilySearch is launching a call to action to index the names of freedmen and refugees from approximately 1.5 million more documents in the bureau collection.
- Using an online indexing tool, volunteers will mine each record for data, which will then be compiled into an online searchable database.
- Nationwide volunteer indexing efforts are expected to take one year to complete.
- Once the records are indexed and searchable online, many African Americans will be able to discover their Civil War-era families for the first time.
- Records, histories and stories will be available on discoverfreedmen.org.
- Additionally, the records will be showcased in the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture, which is currently under construction on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., and expected to open in late 2016.

ABOUT FAMILYSEARCH: FamilySearch is the largest genealogy organization in the world. Millions of people use FamilySearch records, resources and services each year to learn more about their family history through more than 4 billion free online records and nearly 5,000 family history centers worldwide. FamilySearch is a nonprofit family history organization dedicated to connecting families across generations.

The Freedmen's Bureau Project

LEAD US INTO THE LIGHT

