The Freedmen’s Bureau Project

WHAT WAS THE FREEDMEN’S BUREAU?
Formed by an act of Congress at the end of the Civil War in 1865, the Freedmen’s Bureau provided support for newly freed African Americans. With all of this support came the first reliable records for these new U.S. citizens.

THE BUREAU WAS CREATED TO:
- Operate refugee camps
- Open schools
- Manage hospitals
- Ration food and clothing
- Provide legal representation
- Assist with labor contracts
- Manage abandoned or confiscated land

4,000,000
African Americans were freed at the end of the Civil War in 1865.
This represented about 10% OF THE POPULATION of the United States at the time.

State Field Offices
Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland/Delaware, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and the District of Columbia.

Records we will soon be able to search:
- Military Pensions
- Marriage
- Property Claims
- Registers and Censuses
- Hospital Records
- Trial Summaries
- Labor Contracts
- School Rolls

“WITHIN THE RECORDS OF THE BUREAU ARE THE NAMES OF THAT FIRST GENERATION OF AFRICAN AMERICANS TO EXPERIENCE FREEDOM.” —Ken Nelson, AG®, Civil War Era Record Specialist for FamilySearch

Freedmen’s Bureau Records Time Line
1,400 Linear Feet
of handwritten records
1,882 Rolls
of microfilm
1.5 Million Images
of scanned microfilm online
Approximately 4 Million
searchable records
1872
2007
2015
by 2016

11 Years
Time it took to index the first 10% of the records
1 Year
Goal to index the remaining 90% with your help

Help reclaim the African American family
Join with thousands across the country to make these records freely available to all. Become a volunteer indexer at DiscoverFreedmen.org.

©2015 by Intellectual Reserve, Inc. All rights reserved. A service provided by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. P500104024