

Cases Adjudicated by the Freedmen's Bureau Superintendent at Gordonsville, Virginia August 16–September 13, 1865¹

Docket

Edmund Taylor & Anderson Strauder Colored vs Mr Jas. Newman Aug. 16th 1865. Two boys state that they have been whipped without just cause—that Mr Newman refuses to allow them to remain on his place unless they will agree to remain permanently with him and allow him to whip them when he thinks proper; refuses to recognize the authority of the Bureau, approves of the boys having been whipped.

Action— Mr Newman summoned to answer the complaint—required to appear to-day.

Decision— The evidence adduced shows these boys to have been lazy & insolent— They were instructed that such practices were not to be continued—admonished to work earnestly & be respectful. Mr Newman was instructed that the practice of whipping was to be entirely discontinued & that the people on his plantation were to have their freedom acknowledged in every respect; these boys especially to be kindly treated & provided for. The boys returned to Mr Newman's plantation.

Fannie Fortune—Colored. vs. Thos. Newman August 16th 1865 Complains that on Saturday, Aug. 12th 1865, she was struck both by Mr Newman & his wife, without any provocation—that since that time till to-day she has not been allowed anything to eat; that Mr Newman requires her to leave his place without making any provision for her.

Action.— Mr Thos. Newman summoned to answer the Complaint

Decision.— Girl required to return to her home; the evidence indicating impertinence on her part; she is cautioned against such conduct. Her employer required to abstain from all punishment, to furnish proper food and quarters, and to retain her on the plantation. Both parties dissatisfied with the result.

W^m Taylor vs Mr John Cowherd Aug 18

States that he was told to leave the farm of Mr. John Cowherd on the 16th inst—Mr Cowherd saying he had no further use for him. also that he has worked on Mr Cowherd's farm since the last of May—

Has rec^d no Compensation. is without family— Wants to Know if he is not Entitled to Compensation

Action. Letter written to Mr Cowherd asking Explanation

¹ Source: <http://www.freedmen.umd.edu/Gordonsville%20reg.htm>

Alonzo Walker & Ja^s Butler Taylor versus Gratton Ehrhart Aug 18 1865

State that they have been abused. being whipped threatened & driven away from home. State that their master refuses to recognize any authority of the officers of the Bureau. & claims the right to whip beat & annoy the colored people on his plantation as formerly

Action. Mr Ehrhart Summoned to answer the Complaint–

Newton Baylor vs Robt. Williams Aug 19–

States that he has been Employed by Mr Williams for 3 months& 6 days. That Mr Williams refuses to pay him any wages– Has rec^d nothing

Action Mr Williams summoned to answer the complaint

Result. Took Mr Williams note for \$12⁰⁰ payable in 60 days

Julia Bates (Cold) versus. W. Campbell Aug 19

Reports that she was this morning driven from her home by her former master. that no provision is made for her. and that she has no home to go to–

Action Mr Campbell summoned to appear on Monday afternoon Aug. 21. to answer the complaint

Decision Complaint Dismissed. No cause for it Existing

Winston versus Joseph Ham Aug 20th

Reports that he is badly treated, being threatened with being killed. has rec^d no wages– Was struck by a stone thrown by his Employer. Shows swelling on his head. & side of his face in proof– Is Ordered off the place &c&c

Action. Mr Ham Summoned to appear and answer to the complaint, tomorrow afternoon

Sealy Banks vs Mrs Estes Aug 20

Reports that she is working for Mrs Estes– That Mrs Estes refuses to allow her any payment, save victuals & clothes, and is not certain about giving her the clothing– Has worked for Mrs Estes all her life– Has had no clothing for 3 years except one cotton dress. one yarn Dress, Shoes & stockings Is clothed & in a great measure supported by her Husband, Peyton Banks–

Action. Mrs Estes Summoned to appear and answer the Complaint

Decision. Mrs Estes to pay Sealy Banks for one month's work \$4.00–also to give her. her summer clothing– The Evidence shows that only during one month was the girl entitled to wages

Ben Davis. [. . .] Farm of David [T]ayman

Has a wife & 5 children on the Farm of Mr Davis, Lives on the farm of Mr [T]ayman & works for him: Mr [T]ayman agrees to have him bring his family to the farm– Mr Davis wants him to do so He, Ben, desires to do so himself– But the woman does not wish to go–

Decision that the wife of Ben must go with him to the farm where he is living

Alfred Goffney Col^d versus Widow Strange Aug 27 1865

States that he was Employed by Mrs Strange at \$5.⁰⁰ per month– That he is now ordered away without any pay being given him– That Mrs Strange this morning threatened to shoot him if he did not leave and got a pistol and pointing it at him ordered him to leave at once or she would blow his brains out

Adjustment– Mrs Strange paid the wages Earned \$5²⁰

Edmund Newman versus Dr Geo. Newman. Aug 28 1865

States that he has been at work for Dr Newman since the fall of Richmond. that he has not been paid anything for his labor– That Mr Newman refuses to hire him & pay him more than His board–

Will allow him to remain if he will work for his board– Will not give him any pay for what he has done–

Action Mr Newman required to answer the complaint–

Sept 4th 1865 Decision– As Dr Newman agrees to give Edmund by the close of this year, \$15.⁰⁰ and allow him to gather & retain his own private crop. the case is adjusted on these terms–

Daniel Baker Frank Johnson Lewis Wright Timothy Terryl vs Miss Mary Cowherd Aug 28 1865

State that they have worked for Miss Cowherd all the year– Have not rec^d any pay– Miss Cowherd says that she is not able to pay them, That they must stay and work for their board & clothing: if they will not accept these terms they must leave the plantation & never return– She will not pay them for the work they have done–

Action– Miss Cowherd required to settle with the men or explain

Lucy Ann Johnson & Patsy Gordon versus Widow Ham Aug 29 1865

Complain that they are badly treated being whipped and otherwise abused Also have been required to leave home

Action, Letter written to Mrs Ham directing her to correct her Conduct

Charles. (Col^d) versus B. Brockman

States that Mr Brockman refuses to allow him any pay for past services, or to hire him for time to come.

Action. Letter of advice written to Mr Brockman–

Cornelia Whitley versus Allen Dickerson Sept 2^d 1865

States that she is supporting herself for 3 months That this morning she was ordered to leave the premises or she would be whipped away– That she has been sewing, knitting & picking cotton &

peeling fruit for her Employer. has rec^d no pay, nor clothing for herself for two years— That Mr Allen Dickerson says that black people are not free That in consequence of attending to her sick child she was late at her churning this morning and was abused for the same

Action Mr Dickerson summoned to answer the complaint

John Scott Versus Robert Collins Sept 4th 1865

States that he has worked with others for Robert Collins before and since the fall of Richmond Collins says they are not free Says he will not give them any thing

Action Robert Collins Summoned to answer complaint

Decision Sept 5th 1865 Received notes from Robert Collins for John Scott and [Blank space in the manuscript.] Quauls in settlement for work from Apr 1st 1865 to Sept 1st 1865

Mary Winkey Versus Davis Twiman Sept 4th 1865

States that Davis Twiman beat her and threatened to whip her next morning until she was cold

Action Davis Twiman summoned to answer the complaint

Albert Jackson & Thos Thorton versus Fayett Goodwin Sept 9th 1865

State that Fayette Gooden drove them off beat them. shot at them said that they would let the government authorities know that they ruled on their plantation

Action F. Goodwin summoned to answer the complaint

Decision Received from Mr Goodwin twelve dollars to each of the boys in full for services from the 1st of April 1865 to 1st of August 1865

[Orn]sted Brown versus Robt Williams Sept 9th 1865

States that last newyears day he sold Robert Williams one hog for which he was to recieve one barrel of flour befor and one barrel after harvest He has not been able to get his pay

Action Sent order for payment

Betsy Robison versus Benj Walker Sept 9th 1865

Complains that herself and husband worked for Benj Walker until last sunday when her husband died. they never received any compensation for their labor That now Mr Walker refuses to let her have her pig, claiming it for her husbands Doctor bill &c

Action Gave an order for the pig

Rosa Cooper versus Chas Payne Sept 10 1865

States that she has been driven from home & not allowed to bring away even her clothing That Mr Payne told her that if she did not leave he would whip her. If she returned after leaving in obedience to this order she was threatened with shooting

Action Letter written to Mr Payne requiring him to let this woman remain at her home until he should shew cause for his requiring her to leave

George Gilmore versus Wm Scott Sept 13th 1865

Complains that having received a letter from Capt Crandon to Wm Scott he went to his house & told him he had a letter from the Capt. Mr Scott cocked a pistol and put it to his breast and dared him to take the letter out of his pocket. He took out the letter He struck him a number of times, and holding his pistol cocked to his breast made him put the letter in his pocket, saying that he would let Capt Crandon see that he would not take any of his letters, or from any other Yankee

Action Sent Mr Scott a summons to report to answer complaints