

Name:

Date:

Class/Period:

Reconstruction: The Challenges of Reunification Primary Source Extension Lesson
Letter from Samuel Q. Richardson to Governor Throckmorton, 1867

Instructions: With a partner, examine the primary source excerpts below and answer the questions that follow.

Read the letter from Mr. Samuel Q. Richardson, County Judge of Van Zandt County, to Governor Hamilton in 1865.

Sept. '65

To his Excellency AJ Hamilton
Provisional Gov of the State of Texas

Sir,

I would respectfully represent to Your Excellency that an agent for the Freedman's Bureau in our Vanzandt County is absolutely necessary for the following reasons to wit.

Within the last two weeks several negroes have been taken from their place of business (making salt oat furnaces and cutting timber in the woods and shamefully abused and mistreated as follows to wit. One Hill running a furnace claimed by Geo Washington came to a furnace run by P Moore and drove part of the Negroes off and slaked several down and in one particular case gave one five hundred lashes. He was accompanied (his own admission) by a Mr. Brown running a furnace claimed by Rogers and Fulds.

Also, by a Mr. Porter running a furnace, claimed by Pearce and Dixon. The only reason gave by the parties is that the Negroes have left their former masters the said negroes are in danger of their life if they do not either work with the parties for nothing. The principal parties are Anderson Carlock Porter and Montgomery. The particulars will be given you by Mr. Moore two of said Negroes are still prostrated by injuries received.

Also that in order to enforce law for the protection of the Negroes and assisting said agent it will be necessary there should be a suitable body of troops in said county for the said reasons the principal parties say that they set the Federal laws at defiance and no one shall live if they

interfere between them and their negroes also that there is a secret organization to assist the said parties and to compel said negroes and all others to go back to their masters.

I would also state there is an extensive organization in this part [of] the state to prevent any parties, except the former owners, from employing Negroes. []

Timely action by your Excellency in sending troops in the county will sustain order and prevent the Negroes from being trampled upon or an altercation with said parties and those who have been hiring said Negroes. Notices have already been stuck up forewarning persons from hiring Negroes or they will be prosecuted by the parties.

In reviewing the above the substance is that the negroes are maltreated and in the threats and menaces put forward by certain parties I think that any civilian would run a serious risk either in protecting the negroe or upholding the law therefore I would respectfully ask that a squad of soldiers be immediately sent to the county.

I will not enumerate the recent murders of Negroes Several I have been told have been murdered within the last few days and more will be murdered if not be protected also the civilians will I believe from threats be assassinated if they try to protect them.

Mr. Moore will give you the details the above is respectfully submitted to your Excellency's consideration. S Q Richardson

I recommend Mr Moore as agent for Freedmans Bureau for Vanzandt Co.

Samuel Q. Richardson to Hamilton, September 1865, Records of Andrew Jackson Hamilton, Texas Office of the Governor, Archives and Information Services Division, Texas State Library and Archives Commission.

Analysis Questions

1. What was the subject of Mr. Richardson's letter to Governor Hamilton?

2. How would you describe the tone of the letter?

3. List some of the conditions that the newly freed people are facing according to Mr. Richardson.

4. What can you infer about about the role of the Freedmen's Bureau based on letter?