

There is also another question upon which I would like your views, viz: As a man free born but a portion of whose time is sold by judicial sale for crime, a slave within the provisions of the Act applicable to colored troops?

I am Sir,

Most Resp^y Your obtt. servt.
S. M. Bowman

Col. 84th Penna. Vols.

Chf. Mustg. & Recg. Offr. for U.S. & in Md.

State of Maryland

Executive Department

Annapolis June 14th 1864

Col. S. M. Bowman

Chf. Mustg. & Recg. Offr. for U.S. & V.

Sir:

I have received yours of 13th Inst. adverting to the fact that mistakes are being discovered in the County Rolls of Colored Troops in several of the Counties in misrepresenting the condition of such troops in regard to the freedom or slavery, stating that you feel at some loss how to treat such cases and requesting my views on the subject — The question of the true status of such recruits is, as you justly remark, one that especially concerns the State, and that consideration for reasons stated in a former communication to you, has caused me to suggest to the Commissioners, as I have hitherto explained to you, the necessity of a proper caution in ascertaining as nearly as they can the true condition of such recruits before paying their bounty.

From information I am constantly receiving I am inclined to fear that these mistakes are more numerous than you suppose, and that many such exist which have not yet been brought to your knowledge — I should be very glad to be able to assist you in preventing them or correcting them when brought to light.

As to what necessity there may be for new Rolls returned to the different departments by you according to your suggestion, I am not prepared to say — that would be scarcely necessary, and hardly of itself sufficient in all cases so far as payment of bounty is concerned — Here let me remind you that the free colored volunteer and the slave recruit receive their bounties through different channels — the former from the County Commissioners and the latter from the State Treasury directly — and according to the rule which I have advised them to adopt whenever there is reason to doubt that the names borne on such rolls are the names of free men as there represented the County Commissioners and the Comptroller as the case may be, withhold the payment of the bounty until the doubt is removed — When therefore mistakes