J. F. H. Clarborne Letter.

New Orleans, Feb. 1, 1867.

Dear Sir:

The Homestead Law was unquestionably intended to enable the poor todsecure an interest in the jail. As amended it was intended to give a preference up to the first f Jan. first, last, to Union soldiers, refugees and freedmen. This preferemce was defeated and avoided by thefailure on the part of the Register in Mississippi and Louisiana to have their funds in readiness in time—by their failure to give out notice to the class in question of the privilege they were entitled to—and by insisting that the application and the affidavit must be made before the Register or before the clerk. Both of which, in many cases (as I have shown in my later letter to you) is impracticable. It is not the poor and loyal, not the destitute and untaught freedmen who are now reaping, under this ruling the benefits of this beneficent Act, but the well-to-do- and those that were lately in the rebellion. By the enclosed letter you will notice that the construction is even more stringent in Luisiana than in Massachusetts. There they never require the poor refugee to appear before a clerk, who only two years ago forced him to fly to avoid conscription and who in revenge now seizes his cattle and set fire to his dwelling. But nowthey require applicants to come in person to this city, at a cost of from $20 to $50 —which ruling will exclude 2/3 of the class for whom the law was especiallyddesigned. I know the interest you must feel in this matter I know too, that you cannot give to it your personal attention, but I addressyou with the hope that you will bring the subject to the notice of friends in Congress. The law should especially designate the United States Court, where there is one as the proper person to take

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the proof or such instructions might be given by the court of the general land office.

With great respect, your friend,

Clarborne.

My address for the present is,

c-o Logan, Sonat & Clarborne

24 Union St.,

New Orleans.

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