

# The Bandera PROPHEET

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Today in Texas History

By Bandera Spirits of Texas  
The Bandera Prophet

On this day in 1867, Joseph Barr Kiddoo was replaced as superintendent of the Freedmen's Bureau in Texas.

Kiddoo, born in Pennsylvania in 1840, was appointed superintendent in 1866, following distinguished military service during the Civil War.

During his tenure, he was sympathetic to both planters and blacks.

Kiddoo imposed heavy fines on whites caught enticing freedmen away from employers with whom they were under contract, limited bureau interference in the civil courts, and instituted free education for blacks in Galveston and Houston.

Under Kiddoo's program, perhaps 10,000 blacks learned to read and write. Although Texas planters recognized that Kiddoo was changing the social structure of the state by his reforms, many appreciated his attempts to help planters and freedmen work together. Eventually, however, because he thought the laws reduced blacks to a condition of involuntary servitude, he suspended some sections of the state's black codes, whereupon Gen. Charles Griffin relieved Kiddoo as superintendent; the excuse was that an old wound received during the war prevented him from fulfilling his duties.

Kiddoo retired from the army in 1870 and died in 1880.