

October 31, 1865

Rev. W. G. Hawkins.

*Dear Sir:*—I was very much surprised when I opened my school, October 16th, to find so few familiar faces. At least one-half of my old scholars have gone to their old homes. I was sorry to miss their welcome and feel that I should give them no more instruction; but I know it is much better for them to go where they can find work. Their places are filled by others as bright and as anxious to learn. Again I have to commence with the A B and C, but this rather pleases me, for I have the pleasure of knowing that I have taught them all they know, and also of watching the progress they make. My school-room is very nice now; Mr. Pond has had writing desks made, and several new windows. A blackboard is being made for me, and I shall then have nothing to wish for. The scholars are equally pleased with the improvements. They are very obedient, and the hours we spend together seem too short. Mr. Birdsall, the Superintendent of Freedmen, has done everything for our comfort, and both he and Mr. Pond are the right men in the right place—untiring in their efforts for the improvement of the freedmen.

[E. P. Bennett]

["Roanoke Island," *The National Freedman* 1 (15 November 1865): 319-20.]