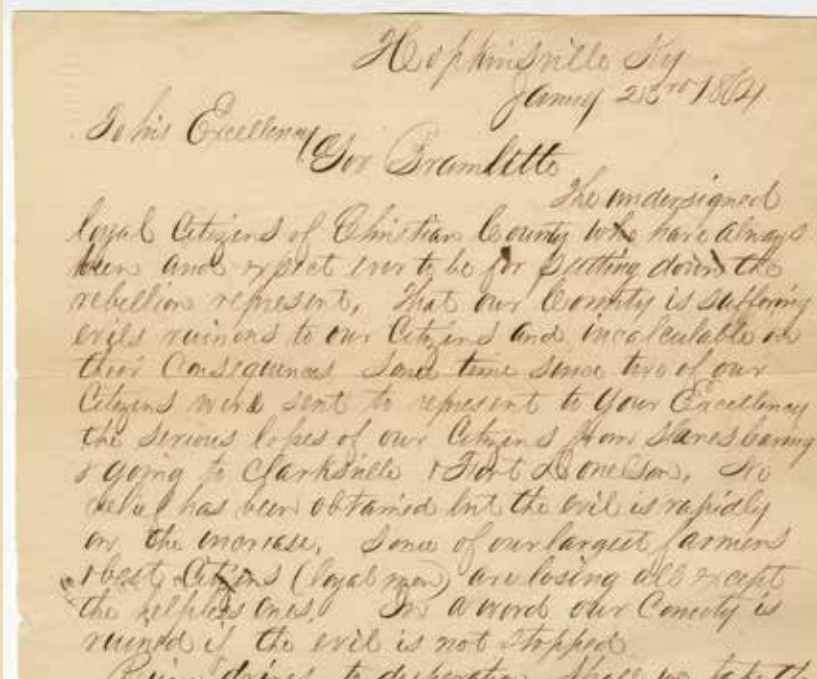


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CIVIL WAR TO CIVIL RIGHTS:

JAMES F. BUCKNER, ET. AL TO GOV. THOMAS E. BRAMLETTE



Kentucky Historical Society collections

HOPKINSVILLE — Angered slave owners in Hopkinsville petitioned the governor in January 1864, asking for something to be done about their slaves escaping and enlisting in the United States Colored Troops units in Clarksville and Ft. Donelson, Tenn.

Because Kentucky did not secede from the Union, the Emancipation Proclamation did not apply to Kentucky slaves, who remained in bondage. Even pro-Union Kentucky slave owners were not prepared for and did not support their slaves

fighting in USCT units. Buckner wrote to the governor, "Ruin drives to desperation, Shall we take the law in our hands? or can the Executive of our state do any thing to arrest the evil? We feel that loyalty & protection should be inseperable & hope his authority will be used for our relief."

Bramlette was unable to help the Hopkinsville slave owners. The inability of the state government or individual owners to maintain the pre-war power relations highlighted the increase of African Americans exercising their rights as the war continued. African American men and their families escaped to USCT camps throughout the North and served the Union honorably throughout the remainder of the war.

The Kentucky Historical Society (KHS) links Kentuckians with their past via archival collections that document people from every walk of life, reaching back to 1509. The "Civil War Governors of Kentucky" (CWG-K) is a multi-year documentary-editing project dedicated to publishing documents associated with all five of the state's Civil War governors: the three Union governors, Beriah Magoffin (1859 – 1862), James F. Robinson (1862 – 1863), and Thomas E. Bramlette (1863 – 1867); and the two provisional Confederate governors, George W. Johnson (1861 – 1862) and Richard Hawes (1862 – 1865).

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