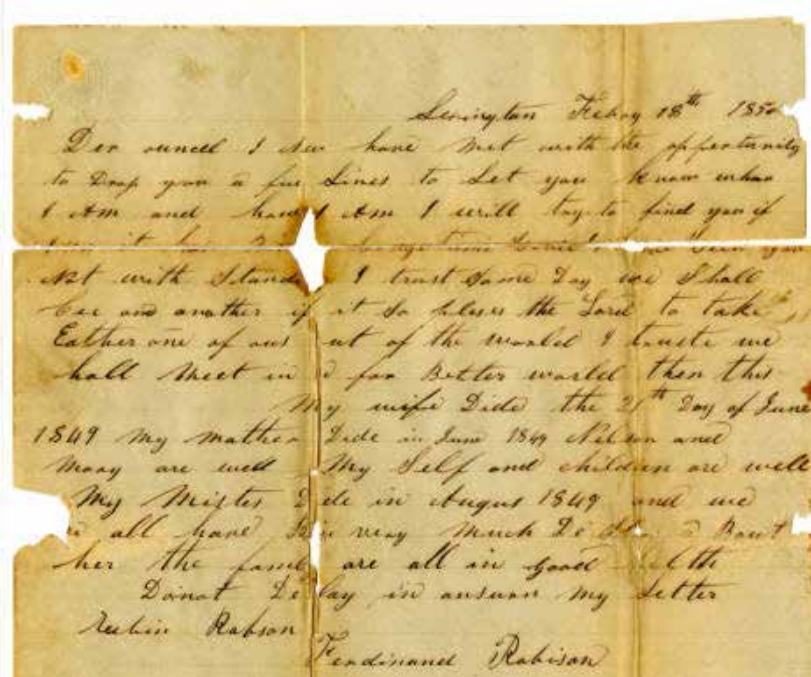


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## KentuckyHistoricalSociety

### CIVIL WAR TO CIVIL RIGHTS: FERDINAND ROBINSON (SLAVE)



Kentucky Historical Society collections

his uncle Ruben, a free man of color in Hopkinsville, updating his uncle on his and his family's status. After his first wife's death, Robinson married a free woman of color and was able to amass a small amount of money through farming. Robinson's letters illustrate the importance of family and community to slaves and free people of color who moved throughout Kentucky prior to the Civil War.

LEXINGTON — Ferdinand Robinson was a slave from Hopkinsville who taught himself to read and write after he was freed. After the death of his master, Robinson moved to Lexington because his mistress was engaged to a man from Fayette County.

Upon the death of his mistress, Robinson and his family were manumitted. The practice of manumitting slaves after the mistress died was common, especially when the master preceded the mistress in death.

Robinson wrote letters to his uncle Ruben, a free man of color in Hopkinsville, updating his uncle on his and his family's status. After his first wife's death, Robinson married a free woman of color and was able to amass a small amount of money through farming. Robinson's letters illustrate the importance of family and community to slaves and free people of color who moved throughout Kentucky prior to the Civil 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. Letters, diaries, oral histories and photographs, as well as the first and second Kentucky Constitutions, are included. Find these and other KHS collections online at [khscatalog.kyvl.org](http://khscatalog.kyvl.org)

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The Kentucky Historical Society is an agency of the  
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