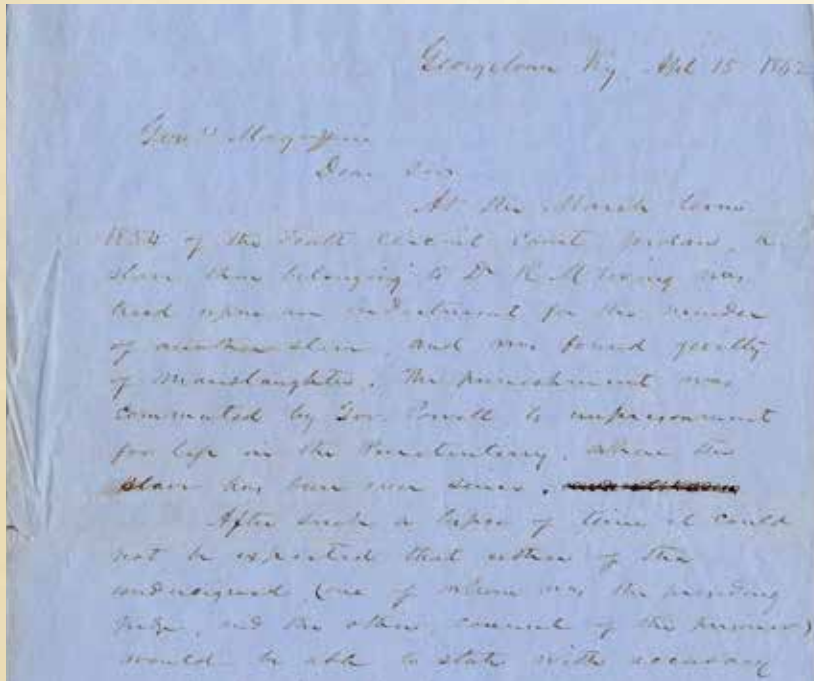


PRESENTED BY

## KentuckyHistoricalSociety

### CIVIL WAR TO CIVIL RIGHTS:

### ALVIN DUVALL & JAMES F. ROBINSON TO BERIAH MAGOFFIN



Kentucky Historical Society collections

SCOTT COUNTY — State senator and future Kentucky governor James F. Robinson teamed up with Alvin Duvall, the second chief justice of the Kentucky Court of Appeals, to plead for clemency on behalf of a slave convicted in Scott County of murdering a fellow enslaved man.

They petitioned Gov. Beriah Magoffin in April 1862 to grant a full pardon to the slave, a man named Jordan.

Robinson had defended Jordan in the original 1854 case and Duvall was the presiding

judge. The two wrote:

"We do remember, however, the leading features of the case, and can now state, that although according to strict law, the proof was perhaps sufficient to make out a case of manslaughter, yet, if the prisoner had been a free white citizen of respectable standing, it would have been a fair case for acquittal. ...In view of the nature of the case, of the long confinement of Jordan, and of the character he has sustained both before and since his convictions, we do not hesitate to request that your Excellency would exercise in his favor the power of pardon as now provided by law."

Kentucky's race relations were complicated and uneven. However, this pardon request highlights the benevolence of some white citizens and the changing nature of law, social relations and racial attitudes in Kentucky during 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. 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).

KentuckyHistoricalSociety

100 W. Broadway | Frankfort, KY 40601  
502-564-1792 | [www.history.ky.gov](http://www.history.ky.gov)



The Kentucky Historical Society is an agency of the  
Tourism, Arts and Heritage Cabinet.