Head Quarters U.S. Forces
Gallatin Town Jan 5th 1845

Mr. W. Abston.

Sirs,

The General Command directs that you furnish all of your negroes to remain at home, that they clothe and feed them, and they in return will work for and obey you in all rightful orders.

It has been reported to him that you have abused one of the negro women recently. Such treatment of negroes will not be allowed in this military district. All those who continue it will be punished for it. By order of Brig. Gen. A. S. Rice.

A. M. Trigg
Second and A. C. O.
State of Tennessee,
COMPTROLLER'S OFFICE,

Nashville, Jan. 13th, 1864

Maj. Gen. J. H. Rousseau
Commanding Dist. Nashville,

General,

The bearer Mr.

Charles Abston is a citizen of Sumner County. He has been uniformly a devoted friend of the Union. He has been forced from his home to seek safety from rebels. He was the only Union man of his whole family connection which is a very large one. I have also known him as a kind and agreeable gentleman of strict integrity. I hope that you will do all you can for him.

Yours truly,

Jos. S. Fowler
Counsel.
Nashville, Jan 20th, 1864.

To Maj. Gen. Rousebaw, Commanding the Department of Nashville.

Your petitioner, Charles C. Abston, would state that he lives within seven miles of the town of Gallatin, in Sumner County, Tennessee, and is the owner of a farm which he has hitherto cultivated with slave labor. His slaves have become so insubordinate that it is impossible to manage them, unless the policy being now enforced by Brig. Gen. Paine, is modified or changed. Your petitioner has on the place thirty-seven negro-women & children, and but one man to assist him in feeding, clothing, and taking care of this large family. Thirteen negro-men have left, since the battle of Fort Donelson, and gone within the lines of the Federal Army, - three of them having left within the last ten days. Your petitioner went to see Gen. Paine, and after informing him that all his men had left, except one, he proposed to bring in and deliver to him (Gen. Paine) the women and children, for the reason that your petitioner could not clothe and feed them without the labor of the men. Gen. Paine refused to receive them, saying that your petitioner should keep and support them by his own labor. He further stated that there should be no labor in his department without compensation; that the pur-
ishment of slaves, for disobedience or any other
offences, must be done under his supervision,
and furnished your petitioners with a printed copy
of an agreement which he stated that the former
owner or hirer of the slaves had to sign on get-
ting back, or hiring a slave. The printed copy
of the agreement is herewith filed. Your petitioner
could not get his men back, nor would Gen. Paine
agree to receive the women and children. Most of
the able-bodied negro-men in Sumner County,
and great numbers from adjoining counties, have
reported themselves to Gen. Paine under the belief
that Gen. Paine had issued an order requiring
them to do so; and the slaves, on returning home,
were furnished with passes by which they were
required to report again within a given number
of days, at which time they are to be hired out
under the supervision of Gen. Paine.—Gen. Paine
denies issuing any such order, but on the slaves
reporting to him, he assumes the right to hire
them out, or control them in such manner as
he thinks proper.

Your petitioner has been a loyal citizen
of the United States during the whole time of
the existing struggle, and he prays for such
order, or orders, as will restore to him his rights
of property, and protect him in the enjoyment
thereof.

Charles C. Absalom
James D. White states he lives in Wilson County, Tennessee, that some time about the last of December an impression obtained generally among the slaves in his county that they were required by an order of Gen. Paine to report to him at Gallatin, and under this belief great numbers of them had gone to Gallatin, since the first day of this year. All the men, belonging to your petitioner, and at home the first of the year, have been to Gallatin, and have returned home with passes requiring them to go back to Gallatin in a few days; and on one of the passes an indorsement was made requiring your petitioner to see that the slaves returned to Gallatin by the day fixed in the face of it. The passes purport to be given by order of Gen. Paine. The further states that the slaves in his county have become insubordinate and worthless, mainly in consequence of Gen. Paine’s assuming to control and determine the relations between them and their former owners.

Nashville, Jan. 20th, 1864.

J. L. D. White