

State of Missouri }  
County of Saint Louis } Be it Remembered that heretofore to wit on the twenty  
sixth day of May in the Year of Our Lord One thousand Eight Hundred  
and thirty - Ralph a man of Color by his attorney filed in the Office of  
the Clerk of the Circuit Court for the county of Saint Louis - his Petition to  
to the Judge of the third Judicial Circuit of the State of Missouri - praying  
to be permitted to sue James Duncan and Coleman Duncan as a poor person  
to establish his right to freedom which said petition was verified by affidavit  
and accompanied by an affidavit stating the apprehensions of the said petitioner  
that the said James and Coleman Duncan would remove him out of the  
Jurisdiction of the said court unless restrained from so doing - also by an order  
of the said Judge permitting the said petitioner to sue as aforesaid - and by an  
order of said Judge requiring the said James and Coleman Duncan to enter  
into Recognizance for the purposes in said order mentioned which said Petition  
affidavits and orders are in the words and figures following to wit; -

To the Honorable William C Carr Judge of the Circuit Court for the third  
Judicial Circuit of the State of Missouri - The Petition of Ralph a man  
of colours Represents that he is Justly entitled to his freedom but that  
he is held in Slavery now in St Louis in said Circuit by James Duncan  
& Coleman Duncan. your petitioner further says that he has resided  
in the State of Illinois & the Territory of Michigan for between two &  
three years last past where he was taken by James Duncan & where  
he has labored for him at his request & with the full knowledge &  
Consent of said Coleman. Your petitioner says that he sued James  
Duncan in the State of Illinois for his freedom that said James went into  
Court where your petitioner had sued for his freedom & represented that  
your petitioner belonged to Coleman Duncan whereupon said suit was  
dismissed & before your petitioner could sue said Coleman for his free-  
dom & serve process upon him said Coleman had escaped or concealed  
himself so that process could not be served upon him & in the mean time  
said James Duncan Kidnapped your petitioner & brought him to St Louis  
Your petitioner further says that he believes it is the intention of said  
James & Coleman to take your petitioner to some place where the fact  
of his freedom is unknown & sell him for a Slave. Your petitioner prays  
that he may be permitted to sue as a poor person to establish his freedom  
that Counsel may be assigned to him & that such order may be made  
& such process issued in his behalf as his personal safety requires & the  
law will warrant - Ralph by G. A. Bird - his agent & atty -

Gustavus A Bird states on oath that he believes the facts stated in the  
above petition are substantially true - G. A. Bird - Sworn to before me this  
26. May 1830 - Will. C Carr. -

State of Missouri, St. Louis County ss - It is hereby ordered that Ralph  
the above named Petitioner be permitted to sue as a poor person to  
establish his freedom & Gustavus A Bird is assigned as his counsel  
to commence & prosecute his Suit for freedom. it is moreover ordered

Petition 3

order of Judge  
permitting suit  
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