

To the General Assembly of the Delaware State
The Petition & Address of Warner Mifflin

Respectfully represents That considering you delegated with the Powers of Legislation, & consequently as guardians of the well-being of the People of this State, I therefore believe your Actions will in a greater or less degree procure the favour or displeasure of him, who rules in and over the Kingdoms of Men.

Therefore its of great concernment to you & each Individual in the whole community, to weigh well your Conduct - and feeling myself Interested ^{with you} ~~for and~~ you, am therefore impressed with a concern to call your attention to a subject, which I do most assuredly believe at this time, requires your serious consideration and interference: And that is in regard to the present situation of the black People, many of whom (I have good reason to believe) are at this time, notwithstanding the Laws of the State, and contrary to every feeling of humanity, in this inclement season now in Irons; & that too, for no crime what ever, but for fear they might fly from the Monster who had purchased them, to carry to the Carolinas or Georgia - When we reflect that the Almighty is denominated a God of Justice (an Attribute which must be ascribed to by us all) under this consideration, doth not our reason evince to us, that we must expect to feel the effects of his Displeasure, unless there is a more earnest concern for Reformation in this business,

It doth appear to me, as if Divine indignation was upon the eve of being poured down upon the Tyrannical over fellowmen; Consider the present deplorable state.

of the Island of Hispaniola, reflect upon the situation of our fellow Citizens on the frontiers - And while tranquility is lengthened out to us, let us endeavour to conduct so, as to have just ground to hope the continuance thereof; for my own part I cannot but acknowledge, it may be consistent with justice in both the afore mentioned cases, that in measure at least it may be permitted, that what has been meted to others is turned back.

"shall a trumpet be blown in the City, and the People not be afraid shall there be evil in a City and the Lord hath not done it" Amos 3: 6 considering the ap^d instances (alluded to) to be at least permitted by the Lord, it behoves us wisely to put in Practice the following intimation viz. "A prudent man foreseeth the evil & hideth himself, but the simple pass on and are punished" Pro. 22: 3, "This I most firmly believe will be the case with this Land except there is amendment. Remember my Countrymen what times we have so recently passed, let us also remember the favour we now enjoy, And I intreat, let us feel for our fellow-men the Africans and for their situation, and consider the glaring inconsistency there is in America comparing her conduct with her past declarations, I am indeed both sorry and ashamed for my Country."

Suffer me to Query, whether it is not at this time and Day a reproach? is it not a shame? is it not a sin? ought it not to be beneath the Dignity of Americans, after the Declarations which have been made, to suffer, much less to join in the buying & selling indiscriminately by our fellow men; Iron them as the vilest criminals, send them from every connexion that is near and dear to men, and transport them where they are used in a manner shocking to every feeling of Humanity, and this is

yet done in the Delaware State I believe is very evident,

I trust there is not a man in your body, so lost to the feelings of sensibility, even for those poor devoted victims, but will admit that such doings are inconsistent with a humane Government; and with the spirit & temper of Christianity; where is there any conduct of the Uncultivated savages which, considering our profession of Christianity, may be compared to this. I believe I may say, from a sense of divine impression; That I believe ~~that~~ the Lord Almighty is about to take hold on Vengeance by the right arm of his Omnipotent Power against this Infernal ^{there will manifest to America yet} Superstition, and that he can rule the Nations ^{as} with a rod of Iron; And that he ruleth in the Kingdoms of men and giveth them to whomsoever he will" wherefore, at the present time, may the Council of Daniel to the great King Nebuchadnezzar be attended to Viz "Break off thy sins by righteousness, and thy Iniquities by shewing Mercy to the poor, if it may be a lengthning of thy tranquility."

Let me crave your particular attention to ^{the} subject, to devise some more effectual means to prevent the salutary Laws already made, from being trampled upon and evaded, as they most notoriously are in some parts of the State. whereby not only Slaves have been sold and carry'd off, but divers instances of such as were free Born, and others entitled to their Liberty by Law, have been thus carry'd away; likewise some slaves stole from their Master, and taken away, as I have been informed by good Authority I believe

And as there are of your body, who are sufficiently acquainted with those facts I have no doubt. Therefore hope you will with me, see the Necessity for something further being done

and that such restrictions should be laid, or the present mode of granting permits altered so, that it may be out of the power of persons who may in a pet make such application to obtain them so easy; for I have heard some feeling men in the Commission of the Peace say, they have been much slighted when they have been applied to by their Neighbours in this way - Also that such unlawfull transportation or attempt shall free the individuals on whom such attempt was made -

And I would suggest to you the propriety of your Addressing the Legislature of Maryland, to put a stop to Vessels from their Ports, taking people of this description without proper Certificates, for whilst their ports are open, it gives opportunity of evading the force of our Humane Laws. And we are so near Neighbours that their National crimes may in some sort be considered ours with this difference in the subsequent consequences, that they may be our sorrow, but not our sin. And I would also request on behalf of this much injured and Oppressed people your serious consideration of the propriety, (may not I say the Necessity) of your recommending to the convention the inserting a clause in the constitution, declaring that no ^{more} slaves shall be born in this state, such a recommendation from you, will no doubt have considerable influence with that body, without some such clause, it is my judgment, that the Constitution will be disgraced as long as it remains, without this, it will be repugnant to the pretended spirit of the Revolution, to say Nothing about Christianity, And will manifest that men do not deserve Liberty themselves who are determined to do all in their Power to prevent others from

enjoying that gift of God Liberty: My mind is filled
with gratitude to the great giver, when I reflect upon the ex-
tensive degree in which I enjoy this Blessing, I am even free
from the Antichristian Claims of men assuming the Character
of Ministers of the Gospel of Christ, who clearly evince that
their God is Gold and gain Silver, that can exercise such a
power when put into their hands of Lording ^{over} ~~above~~ the
conferences of their fellowmen, and spoiling their goods,
who will not put into their bellies, and there are such
men I am ^{to have it} sorry, to say it in America yet, who desire this
power so much, that they cannot conceal it; But I believe
the day of Vengeance is at hand also on this Oppression, that
the craft of this set of men is seen, and that this kind of
Babylonish Merchandise will not have legal sanction in
Christianity.

I believe and trust, you will hear me with Patience,
when you consider, that I am equally interested with
you in the welfare of our Country, my all being in it,
and likely to remain to the latest generations, so that me
and mine are like to be participators with you and yours
in the good or bad fare thereof. And it is known, that
I have formerly had a large Interest in those people,
and my Conduct for many years relative to them, suf-
ficiently evidences, that I can have no pecuniary prospects
in this Movement, I therefore trust that my Application
will have weight with you, and my cravings for you are,
that wisdom may govern your deliberations on this and all
other occasions for the good of the State. I remain your
friend and fellow Citizen
18 day of June 1791

Warner Mifflin

*The Petition &
Address of
Warner Misslin*

*Mr Collins
Mr W Cannon
Mr Draper*

1792

(dated Jan 18, 1791)