

Mayor's office, Philad. April 20. 1827.

Sir,

Although I have not the honour of a personal acquaintance, the character of Colonel Hickey is known to me as one of the highly respectable planters of Louisiana. - I therefore under all sense of official obligation, and without further apology thus speak by address you in relation to a matter that has deeply excited my feelings. - I have good reason for believing that you have been grossly imposed upon by an imposter and notorious fraud - well known to the police under the different names of Patrick Pickett, - Patrick Pickett, - P. Pickett, P. Pichard, - believed to be a tailor by trade. I have now before me a number of depositions, and copies of four Indentures of Apprenticeship, - three of them legally executed by the Managers of our Arms-House, and one of them by Alderman Badger of this City, proving that on the 18th August 1823, John Williams, a black boy, aged 7 years, 10 mos, 24 days, was bound to Patrick Pickett, Tailor to serve 13 years, 1 mo, 6 days, (living 55 Popsyunk road. That on the 14th July 1822 Benjamin Gray, a black boy, - 15 yrs 0 mos, 8 days old was bound to Patrick Pickett, for 5 years 11 mos, 22 days. - That on the 26th day of April 1824, - James Dailey, a black boy, aged 14 years, 7 mos, 4 18 days was bound to P. Pichard, W. 118 Bawren St for 6 years, 4 mos, 12 days. - That on the 15th day of August 1823, John Deembar, a black boy, or very dark mulatto (now about 15 or 16 years old) was bound to serve P. Pickett, 9 years from the 9th day of June 1823, - That some time in the summer of 1823, a mulatto girl that stutered or stammered, was hired and lived with the said

said Pickett, at No. 55 Pappynk road between Plum
and German streets. (She must now be 18 or 19 years of
age, named Jane Victoire, or Victory.) Picket left this
place September 1823, for a farm which he said he owned
in the interior of Pennsylvania, and the above described chil-
dren have not been seen since by their friends or relatives.

The description of Pickett, is, that he was a civil, sociable,
man, light complexion, sandy or light hair, little or no colour
in his face, - 35 to 40 years old, - about 5 feet 9 or 10 inches high,
(his wife was a spare tall woman older than Pickett) thin,
sociable talking man, - a little round shouldered. - From the
above data, it would seem that he must have returned to
this City, after his first departure in 1823, - and again left us
having James Dailley, and probably other children in his
possession. My information is, that Col. Hickey, Comdr
below Baton Rouge, has James Dailley and another boy
now in his possession, whom he purchased as a slave of the
same said powdered Pickett, and that several other kid-
napped children from the same source have been purcha-
sed by some of the neighboring Planters, - that the girl Jane,
Jane Victoir is now at the plantation of Mr. Penson, three
miles above the red Church, on the Mississippi, on the right
hand side, (but whether ascending or descending I know not.)

I have thus, Sir, without reserve stated the substance of my
information, and am perfectly assured that this infamous and
evil act of kidnapping will produce the same feelings of
indignation with you, that it has excited here. - There is
not a shadow of doubt that the coloured children whose
names

names I have enumerated, and several others whose names
are unknown to me at present, have been stolen away
from this city, and neighborhood, by Picket, they being
free born, and have been sold as slaves on the Mississip-
pi, below Natchez, by him. I have therefore most respect-
fully to request of you, that if he is within the juris-
diction of your State, that you will cause him to be ar-
rested as a fugitive from the justice of ~~the~~ State, and I
will take measures to have him brought here for trial.
Or, if you hear of his being within the State of Mississip-
pi to inform Duncan S. Walker, Esq. of Natchez, and
he will take measures to procure his arrest there. — I
will speedily forward to you a copy of the evidence in
my possession in relation to these persons. — I am aware
that it is not strictly legal in its character, but it is in-
tended to be addressed to the equitable and humane feel-
ings of the holders of these unfortunate persons, and is that
kind of proof which has heretofore operated a discharge
from servitude in similar cases. While I greatly regret
that Col. Hickey, or other Gentlemen should be losers by
the nefarious frauds practised upon them, I feel it
however my duty on the part of these injured children, and
their afflicted parents and relatives, after proofs shall be laid
before them, to press upon the gentleman, who may inno-
cently have them in possession, the propriety of permitting
them to return speedily to their friends and home in this City.
I solicit of Col. Hickey a speedy answer to this com-
munication

communication, with an expression of his views, wishes and intentions, together with any information he may have acquired touching this matter, - particularly as to the residence of any of the children sold by Pickett.

With great respect, I am Sir,
Your Obedt Servt

(Signed) Joseph Watson,
Mayor.

To Colonel Hickey,
Baton Rouge.

Philip Wickley 1827.
East Baton Rouge Louisiana.

Rec^d Aug^t - 6th "
~~Rec^d Sept 1st - 1827~~ "
Rec^d copy Oct 27th "



~~Philip Wickley Esq~~
~~To~~ ~~Philip Wickley Esq~~
~~without delay~~
~~Rec^d~~

7/21/27
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Joseph Watson Esq
Mayor of Philadelphia
Pennsylvania

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