



1851 Petition to Allow Abner Hunt Francis to Stay in Oregon

Transcript

To the Honorable Members of the Council and House of Representatives of the Territory of Oregon:

We the undersigned citizens of the Territory of Oregon in view of an existing law passed by your honorable body in September 1849 prohibiting Negroes and Mulattoes from settling in the territory, beg leave to call your attention to the severity of this law and the injustice often resulting from the enforcement of it.

There are frequently coming into this territory a class of men whom this law will apply. They have proved themselves to be moral, industrious and civil.

Having no knowledge of this law some of them have spent their all by purchasing property or entering into business to gain an honest living. We see the injustice done to them by unworthy and designing men lodging complaints against them under this law and they thus ordered at great sacrifice to leave the territory.

We humbly ask your Honorable Body to repeal or so modify this law that all classes of honest and industrious men may have an equal chance.

We would also represent to your Honorable Body that the reasons which dictated the passage of this law, namely the dangers arising from a colored population instilling hostility into the minds of the Indians, has ceased.

We petitioners further ask your Honorable Body that a special act may be passed at the earliest period possible permitting O.B. A.H. Francis, citizen from the state of New York located in business in Portland to remain.

They having for no crime but a malicious intent on the part of another been arraigned before Judge Pratt on the 11th of September past and proved to be of that class of men who came under this act, were ordered to leave within four months which time will soon expire.

All of which your humble body will please grant to your humble petitioners.

End of Transcript

First page of petition next page:

To the Honourable Members of the Council and House
of Representatives of the Territory of Oregon.

We the undersigned citizens of the Territory of Oregon.
In view of an existing law passed by your Honourable
Body in September 1849 prohibiting Negroes or Mulattoes
from settling in the Territory, beg leave to call your att-
-ention to the severity of this law, and the injustice of the
resulting from the enforcement of it. There are frequently
coming into the Territory a class of men to whom this law will
apply. They have proved themselves to be honest, industrious
and Civil. Having no knowledge of this law, some of them
have spent their all by purchasing property, or entering
into business to gain an honest living. We see & feel the in-
-justice done them by more unworthy, and designing men
lodging complaint against them under this law, and
they thus ordered at great sacrifice to leave the Territory.
We humbly ask your Honourable Body, to repeal or so
modify this law that all classes of honest and industrious
men may have an equal chance. We would also represent
to your Honourable Body that the reason which dictated the
passage of this law, namely, the dangers arising from a colored
population instilling hostility into the minds of the Indians,
has ceased. We petitioners further ask your Honourable
Body that a special act may be passed at the earliest period
possible permitting D. B. & H. Francis Citizens from the
State of New York, located in business in Portland, to remain.
They having for no crime, (but a malicious intent on the part
of another) been arraigned before Judge Pratt on the 11th
of September past & proved to be of that class of men who come
under this act, were ordered to leave within four months,
which time will soon expire. All of which your Hon-
-ourable Body will please grant to your humble
petitioners.

Franklin Tilford

C. M. Knight

W. P. Davis

Lewis Day

J. J. Hargis

John H. Couch

E. C. Rogers

James B. Stephens

Samuel W. Bell

L. C. Bunker

Chas. Fish

W. H. Martin

H. C. Norton

John Hanlow

Thomas J. Dryer

J. Coffin

Thos. Carter

Robert Thompson

N. Coe

J. M. Smith

J. S. Kimerson

W. L. Higgins

C. B. Brown