

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives
of the Commonwealth of Mafsachusetts in General
Court afsembled.

The Petition of Gideon Hawley, mifsionary, &c in
behalf of the Indian, &c proprietors of the plantation called
Marshpee in the County of Barnstable
Humbly sheweth,

X That your petitioner, sensible of the imbecility of the
former act for regulating said Indians and their interest
did in the month of May ^{or April} last did inclose to some of his ac-
quaintance in Boston a Petition, to be by them presented
to the General Court for a new Act, for the purpose of supply-
ing the defects of the old one, having in view the laying a foun-
dation for the future support of the Gospel among them; as
he supposed from the large tract of unimproved lands owned
by them, and other resources a fund might be raised for that
purpose without the least injury to the Indians as to their
subsistence - that petition he imagined would have ^{been} com-
mitted and himself called upon to have communicat-
ed his ideas on the subject to the Committee - but unhap-
pily Mr. John Percival, who hath several times ^{appeared} to be a
candidate for an Overseer ^{among the Indians} while they were indulged
with the choice, (although never chosen) by some means
found in whose hands the said petition was lodged &
without [overwritten: *his*] my desire, and even contrary to [overwritten: *his*] my wish,
as [overwritten: *he hath*] I have been informed, applied to the gentlemen
for the same in the name of your petitioner-
that is pretending to do it by my desire and ob-
tained it - and then pretended with the help of
said petition to act as if employed by me in pre-
fering the same whereby he procured the act
which pafsed 13th June last - relative to said
Marshpee and his own appointment to be one of the Guardi-
ans to carry the same into execution. Which act your Petiti-
oner conceives will not altogether supply the defects of the
old one nor does it make any provisions for the beforemen-
tioned purpose.

[verso:

Your Honours Petitioner therefore, at last fit-
ting of the General Court, preferred a petition in
his own name inclosing another from his Indians
praying for a revision of said act, &c. which petition was
committed to a Committee of both Houses of which the
Hon. Cotton Tufts, Esq; is Chairman, expecting to be heard
before the said Committee on the subject and that they
would report at this Sefsion. After which a remonstrance

said to be signed by the most stable of said proprietors on the 31st day of October AD 1788 in the presence of the Honorable Daniel Davis, Esq; was by said Percival together with a letter from him praying that the petitions aforesaid may be rejected preferred to your Honours; which letter and remonstrance seem intended to defeat the salutary purposes designed by said petition, and contains several groundless insinuations, particularly its being signed "by the most stable Indians and proprietors" three of whom had signed the petition they now remonstrate against, which is no great evidence of their stability. "Their being induced to sign the petition aforesaid by false stories of their enemies who made them drunk and have detained their property, &c." There could be no occasion for such a measure, if it can be supposed your petitioner would so far deviate from the duties of his character and sacred office, as they were very solicitous to sign without persuasion it being of a most serious and interesting nature and was done in public meeting upon mature deliberation. If any strong drink was used among them it must have been out of doors and introduced by those who wished to bring an odium upon the meeting & its conductors - some such your petitioner is sensible were lurking about there - The suggestion that "none signed a petition in their own names but were only knowing to a petition being sent, is also false, as it can be abundantly proved not only by the Certificate of the Hon. Thomas Smith, Esq; on said petition but by other witnesses.

That the remonstrance against said petition "was signed in presence of the Honorable Judge Davis" is likewise a deception attempted upon the Honorable Court as may be seen by the Judges certificate to the contrary. several of the remonstrating signers are minors, others are negro trespassers and not proprietors - and two of them

[folio 2:

them viz: Job Tobey and Isaac Wickam were gone to sea on a foreign voyage several weeks before it is said to be signed - Much pains your petitioner is sensible hath been taken in going and sending round among them in a private manner to obtain signers, and after all not more than eight of ten proprietors were obtained, and they by the remonstrance confess they are not to be trusted to their own choices and doings.

Your petitioner has now come a journey at great expence to be heard before the said Committee on the subject of his petition and is waiting for that purpose, but he is informed that another petition was on Saturday

last preferred to your honours respecting the matter,
which he hath not seen although he hath heard of great

and in taking exparte depositions to support it.

pains taken since the last Sefision to procure it, - this
he doubts not to find signed likewise principally by
non proprietors as the two black fellows who came to
prefer it are not proprietors. The variety of petitions on
this subject committed to different committees seem to per-
plex and embarrass the businefs. Your petitioner there
fore humbly prays that the said remonstrance may
not be suffered to operate to the disadvantage of his poor
people who are easily led astray by crafty and designing
men who lie in wait to deceive; but that the said re-
monstrance with the other petitions together with this
may be committed to the beforementioned Committee
of both Houses that they may have the whole in
one view and that he may be heard before them
thereupon, and that no exparte depofitions may be admitted

Your petitioner prays that he may not be
under the disagreeable necessity of being interrupted
in the exercise of his duty by one who acts in the
office of guardian to his indians and who by speak-
ing lightly of the sacred scriptures, denying their
authenticity and ridiculing the Christian religi-
on its officers and profefsors impedes his labours,
as was unhappily the case a few days since in
your petitioners presence and before his poor in-
dians, by the said Percival.

And for this and many other reasons your pe-
titioner thinks it his duty further to acquaint
your honours that he hath not nor can he ever act
with reputation & safety to himself or advantage to the

[verso:

indians in company with said Percival - And that
in cafe the said Percival should be continued he
must be excused from acting with him; nor will
it be of any advantage for him to preach the Gofpel
to them. Your Petitioner therefore earnestly
prays the attention of the Honourable Court
to these matters. And as in duty bound shall
pray.

Boston Jan.y 1789

Gideon Hawley.

Petition of
Gid.ⁿ Hawley

Mashpey
Papers

Rev.^d Gideon Hawleys
Petition Jan^y 1789-

All contents copyright © 2017 The Yale Indian Papers Project. All rights reserved.

Transcribed by the Yale Indian Papers Project.

Note: These transcriptions are solely for educational or scholarly purposes. Under no circumstances are they to be republished, in part or in whole, without express permission. Copyright on all editorial transcriptions, introductions, textual and explanatory notes, identifications of people, places, events and dates found herein is held by the Yale Indian Papers Project, Yale University.

If you have inquiries regarding copyright, please e-mail indianpapersproject@yale.edu