

SEDSL006
Department of Education
New Jersey State Library
Bureau of Archives and History [BAH]
Manuscript Collection, ca. 1680s – 1970s

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Petition of Negro Prime to the
"Honourable Court in Trenton."

N.D.,
[ca. 1780s]

New Jersey State Archives

6/26/2025

Petition of Negro Prime to the "Honourable Court in Trenton," N.D.

[ca. 1780s]

Dear Mother
I received your kind letter
of the 10th and was glad
to hear from you and
to hear that you were
well and happy.

Yours
affectionately
John

Dear Mother
I received your kind letter
of the 10th and was glad
to hear from you and
to hear that you were
well and happy.

I am well and hope
these few lines will find
you the same. I have
not much news to write
at present. The weather
is very warm here now
and the crops are doing
well. I have not time
to write you more fully
at present but will do so
when I have more news
to write.

James
Dutton

I am well and hope
these few lines will find
you the same. I have
not much news to write
at present. The weather
is very warm here now
and the crops are doing
well. I have not time
to write you more fully
at present but will do so
when I have more news
to write.

James

Hbcm

is the fine paid,

To The Hon.^{ble} Court In Trenton
The Humble Petition of Prime a free Negro
Gent.^l

Your Petitioner Begs Leave to Acquaint
Your Honours, that he is at this time fined £^s. for
Not going out with the Militia, when at the same
time he was not warned, nor did he hear of it, till the men
had marched, being five miles from home at a place to work
and was also lame by the stroke of a horse at that
very time, and could not have marched if he had been
warned, Your Petitioner thinks himself aggrieved, to be
thus fined for what was impossible for him to comply with,
Beside Gent.^l you must think that I have not an equal right
with white state subjects, as I cannot hold lands, serve
on juries, nor be a witness, nor sue for debt, nor do I know
of any in my circumstance that has been called on duty by the
laws of this state, I take the liberty also to acquaint you
that at the training before I did attend and was not called
to stand in the ranks, and some of the men did say they
would not do duty with me, therefore I concluded I should
not be called upon any more, from what has been said your
Honours may see that I am fined wrongfully, and hope you will take
it in consideration and redress my grievance and Y^r. Petitioner
as in duty bound will Pray

Prime