

Materials concerning two persons from Maryland. 1830.

PAS Papers Box 4A Manumissions Actions involving illegal enslavement of free blacks, 1787-1830

Two Persons from Maryland ↑attended by Counsel C.P. Holerman↓ applied to the Rcd^r of the City of Philade^a to hear the case of an alleged slave ↑a ?? woman↓ whom the younger of the two had arrested with much brutality under by a warrant granted under Oath and had illegally committed to Prison The Recorder immediately had the alleged slave bro^t before him at and proceeded to hear the case without without any counsel being present on behalf of the prisoner The claimant then produced his brother E T Massey who swore that the prisoner was the slave of his brother the claimant to whom he had sold her that he had purchased her at the sheriff's sale of his Father's effects who had become insolvent that her mother had been the Slave of his Grandfather from who his father received her by inheritance & in whose possession she died a Slave Fortunately for the Prisoner a Coloured Man of respectable appearance was present and testified the prisoners mother had been manumitted before his birth by the grandfather of the claimant The Massey's being known to the recorder as respectable man he gave no credence to the story of the manumission of the mother which the claimant his brother pronounced to be false ↑the testimony of E Massey was taken in writing & he suffered to go home↓ A postponement was granted the Penns^a Soci^y was applied to who procured able counsel ↑for the woman↓ wh^h at the next hearing there being no witness on the part of the claimant the Counsel D P Brown¹ G Griscom Cha^s Gilpin endeavoured to set aside the evidence of E T Massey on the ground of at interest having been the Seller and of course bound to make her title good the objectⁿ was overuled by Recorder J M^cIlraine² who the a manumⁿ of the Mother ↑& several other Slaves↓ was then produced on which was indorsed a certificate of of the witness himself E T Massey after perusing it the Rcd^r handed it to the claimant enquiring whether [it] was genuine he hesitated said he had never [text covered over] of it he was then enquired of whether that was not her brother's Certificate on the back he said he could not tell he had an uncle of the same name

¹ David Paul Brown was a prominent attorney in Philadelphia and resided at Washington Square. *Desilver's Philadelphia Directory and Stranger's Guide, 1830*, 22. Brown throughout the 1820s and '30s was associated with the Pennsylvania Abolition Society as their "energetic and distinguished consellor." Edward Needles, *An Historical Memoir of the Pennsylvania Society, for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery* (1848; Arno Press reprint, New York, 1969), 93.

² Joseph M^cIlvaine was an attorney in Philadelphia as well as the Recorder of the City of Philadelphia in 1830. He lived at 1 South Ninth Street. *Desilver's Philadelphia Directory and Stranger's Guide, 1830*, 122.

The plaintiffs counsel then contended that the Girl was born since the date of the manumissⁿ and was not 22 years old. The Col^d man was again brought forward who stated positively that she was not__but the Recorder willing to shew the Slave holder a favor granted time to procure further evidence which he ↑alleged he↓ could procure by half the county he lived in. the friends of the Girl entered security for her appearance and a few days afterward an offer was made to sell her which was indignantly rejected at the app^d time. No claimant appeared but the Recorder as if infatuated declared had he came he would have delivered the woman to him as a Slave. a Certificate was since produced from the County office by which it appeared Massey the Grandfather left no slave & on examination it was found that the Sheriffs sold no Slave of B Massey the father. Comment is unnecessary

^a/c of Slave Case