

Treatment to Those Loyal

Primary Source

Transcription, Dr. and Mrs. Henry Drinker collection of miscellaneous family papers, Samuel Rowland Fisher's Memoir

From the beginning of the 3rd mo. 1779,

I was informed daily by my acquaintance, of a letter of mine to my Brother (Jabez) at New York being on the hands of Thomas McKean called Chief Justice and Jonathan Sergeant called State's Attorney being also delivered to Joseph Reed and his associates call the Council of the State of Pennsylvania. Also the contents of it [the letter] were causally told by somebody who had with seen or been informed of its many acquaintances seemed very uneasy on account thereof [sic] and I was often told that I should be taken up, but at least 3 weeks elapsed before it was put into execution. On the 30th of the month as soon as I returned from the York meeting at Market St. I was informed that my Brother Thomas has received some hurt and whilst I was gone to see him [sic] James Claypoole called at my fathers for me, and being told of my absence went away.

My Brother told me, he with John James who were appointed by the southern district monthly meeting for that purpose had been to exist. Mattack's son of Timothy on account of his having taken aims under some of the present usurpers against the King and Government, that they had conversed also with the son who treated them cruelly and was going away, when Timothy came and after acquiring their beliefs and being told it [he] gave them some little very abusive language and immediately taking up a Hickory walking stick way-lay at them in the passage gave them many hard blows over the head and shoulders following them some distance in the street until he had broken his stick. At my [?] home I was told James Claypool had called for me, and soon after eating my dinner, he came again about 20th pm [8 pm] and informed me he had a warrant from Thomas McKean to take me before him. Which he producing was as fellows [sic] [.]

... My Brother Minus walked with me to the house of Thomas McKean who not being at home he [his brother] told me I might go home and mentioned his intention of calling in the morning. ... Samuel Smith and my Brother Minus accompanied me to the house of Mr. McKean in Gates Street above Arch Street where after his informing [me] of the cause of my being sent for touching a Letter which had in his hand. I informed him I had never written any letter which I was ashamed to acknowledge, nor had ever employed any intelligence to the British Army, neither mention in any similar affairs in any shape.

That I was principled against any such thing in my own mind as to the same purports [sic]. After which he taking out the Letter, asked me if it was my writing. To which I replied I did not choose to answer. Upon which he said I should put him to the necessity if sending for witnesses to prove the hand writing and immediately demanded my Brother Minus to give evidence thereof [sic], but he refused to comply. McKean threatened to commit him to jail for the refusal and had wrote a few times of his admittance [to jail], where he abated from the anger in which he appeared to desisted from writing saying he would first try to get proof without my father and Brothers, but in case of decency he should call upon them, tho [sic] my Brother said such a manner of procedure was not legal. After which he said he would summon some persons to prove the hand writing. ... [Hours later] ...

We found James Claypoole and four persons summoned there to prove the hand writing. [?] Andrew [?], Paul Cox, Nathaniel Domnell, and Sampson Lery, and McKean informed me he had also summoned Timothy Mattack and my Brother Thomas. Timothy sent word in writing which he read to me, that he was engaged so that he could not attend and my Brother Thomas was unwell from the wounds given him by Timothy and had not been out since. Upon this he was preparing to administer the oath to the persons he had summoned, where I asked him if I might read the Letter, which he refused or if I might hear it read which he also refused. I asked how then I was to know whether it was mine or not and assuring him that I would answer obediently either negatively or affirmatively. Upon he rose off his chair and said to McKean I would have you observe you are not bound to answers, neither do I ask you to answer. Putting the letter into my hand which

After I had read I returned to him and told him it was mine or my writing and that the reason of my [me] not choosing to answer in the morning was not my own sentiments but the advice of some of my friends, that I had never written my Letter I was ashamed to acknowledge and desired he would read the whole of it to the Company [sic], which he accordingly did [sic] [.]. He said the whole [?] of my Letter carried as [all] of disaffection [sic] and clearly showed that I held myself a British subject, particularly maneuvering that part touching the Congress Bills; the words Province [sic] and lower countries be at a time when independence of the States was so firmly settled be acceded to by one of the greatest powers in the world I gave him an account [of the letter] of my continuous refuses [sic] of the Bills issued for carrying on this war and the sufferings of my Father, Brother, and Self for the same which he said he never heard of.

Which sewed as strange to me [sic], as he was one of the committee who advertised my Brother and self for our refusal of the Congress Bills. I also gave him an account of our conscientious nonconformity to the times. Which also he said he knew nothing of. ... [He]... relocated my name being among those that were sent to Virginia [jail]. I asked for a copy of my Letter but was refused. He demanded my giving Bail or entering into recognizance for my appearance at the next city court to be called to be held the 21st the next month. Upon which I informed him I had objections in mind. Which I could not get over [sic] because I was finally persuaded I hast [sic] done nothing worthy of any punishment.

He used many Law cases in several Books as a paper called an Act against conveying Intelligence to the enemies of the United States and of this State.