

Deposition and Testimony Regarding Cesar and Lowis

In 1787 the Peters family petitioned the Connecticut General Assembly for their freedom. State law required that the town selectmen "enquire into the Age, Abilities, Circumstances and Character of such Servant or Slave." These depositions attest to the high regard the townspeople of Hebron held for Cesar and his family.

All documents on this page are courtesy of the Hebron Historical Society, Hebron, CT.

Deposition of Elijah Graves

Hebron, CT January 5, 1789

Hebron December 26th 1788
The Deposition of Elijah Graves of Lawfull age is as follows
who says he has lived more than fifteen years a near Neighbor
to Cesar & Lowi his wife. During which Time he has often
thought few if any of the common Vice of Mankind, but that
they have ever Maintained an honest and Sober Character,
also been Diligent and Laborious in their Calling and a Degree
of Fidelity much beyond what is common for People of their
Colour — Just at the eve of the American War the Res
Surrendered who then Considered Cesar's Soil as his Property
Left them and the rest of his Estate and Took Refuge among

Deposition of Joseph Case

Hebron, CT January 5, 1789

18017
The Deposition of Joseph Case of Lawfull age is as follows
that Cesar came into this Neighbourhood when about 8 or 9 years
of age and I have lived by him and known him well for
Nearly years and do fully join in Testimony with the
foregoing Deposition as Touching his Morals and every other
Circumstance therein contained, and Especially that of the party
being taken by Man arms with Clubs & Sticks and thrown into
a Wagon. (being an eye witness to the whole Transaction)
it exhibits such a Scene of Cruelty as was unparalleled to any
thing I had ever seen and Furthermore Testify that the night
of Mr. Peters was then Present, and one of them viz the young
Man held a Drawn Sword in his hand, and by his

Deposition of Patience Graves

Hebron, CT January 5, 1789

The Deposition of Patience Graves of Lawfull age is as follows
that she was Present at the Time that Cesar & his family
was taken by them to County of W. that Nathaniel Mansfield
then Present had held a Drawn Sword in his hand and as I
attempted to go into the House from where the Negroes was
taken he shook the sword over my head and charged me
with great anger in his countenance not to go in upon
any Person
Patience Graves
Sollard County of Hebron January 5th 1789
then Personally appeared Patience Graves the Subject of the fore
going Deposition and Made solemn oath to the Truth of the same
before me
Benjamin Buell Justice Peace

Testimony of David Sutton
Hebron, CT January 5, 1789

The Testimony of David Sutton of Lawfull Age is as follows
I have been well acquainted with Caesar a Negro, and
his Family; Servants to the Rev. Samuel Peters late
of Hebron, now of Great Britain, said Negroes Servants
Their Master faithfully & was treated by him tenderly
During the Time that they liv'd together; after S. Peters
left Hebron which was in Sept. 1774, Caesar liv'd in his
House, & conducted his Business with Prudence, untill
Peters Lands were taken & Leased out by the State of
Connecticut, at which Time S. Caesar & his Family were
turn'd off and supported themselves comfortably for
about five or six Years, without any Assistance from
his Master, or his Estate, except the Privilege of Fire
D. Sutton

Testimony of Silvester Gilbert
Hebron, CT January 5, 1789

The Testimony of Silvester Gilbert of Lawfull Age
as follows; that some time since Mr. Peters Negroes
sold to Paris I saw a letter from S. Peters & address'd to Sir
Fingham in which he directed Fingham to tell
to let his former Negroes remain where they were
according to the best of my remembrance not to
them and further saith not Silvester Gilbert
Dolland County of Hebron January 5. 1789
then personally appeared Silvester Gilbert the sub-
to the said Special Disposition and made solemn oath to the
of the said Peter in the County of Bull Justice peace