

Abraham Lincoln papers

From William P. Wood to Abraham Lincoln [With Endorsement by Lincoln]¹, February 16, 1865

¹ Pardon Worsley, referred to in what follows, was a captured blockade runner who cooperated with federal officials and testified before military commissions at Baltimore and Washington. Worsley's testimony resulted in the conviction of several merchants who were fined and given prison sentences for trading with the enemy. Lincoln later pardoned most of the merchants who had been convicted as a result of Worsley's testimony. See *Collected Works*, VIII, 303.

Washington Feb 16th 1865

Sir

At the solicitation of some of the friends of the parties convicted by evidence or information of Pardon Worsly, I respectfully unite with them in their appeal to you for executive clemency in behalf of Worsly's victims. Worsly from general character is a low and contemptable villian, the parties who have suffered from his evidence were nearly all known to me personally as law-abiding and worthy citizens; since the Rebellion a few of them have not been up to the highest standards of Loyalty to the government, but I do not beleive on of them would commit (wilfully) any act detrimental thereto — the anxiety of their friends, — the sufferings of their families, already endured, are points calculated to excite our sympathy and pity— The tottering hopelessness of the enemies of our Government is so apparent that our chief magistrate can afford to be magnanimous — your natural humanity as husband & father gives us hope for executive clemency in these cases. In conclusion of this brief appeal excuse the liberty & style I have taken in thus addressing you, but I desire the friends and kindred of these unfortunate people to bless you; and myself to thank you for another kindness at your hands, ever desiring to remain your friend and obt sevt

William P. Wood

Supt of Capl Prison

[Endorsed by Lincoln:]

Pardon Worseley—