

Ripped from Newspaper Headlines in 1818 ~ 1819 of the

# Missouri Gazette

Dueling Letters to the Editor  
about Missouri Statehood

Sunday, November 14, 2021

2 to 4 pm at

The Barn and Loft Gift Shop  
at Historic Sappington House  
1015 S. Sappington Road 63126

Half-hour Living History Play Developed  
by Anne Williams

Paired with Christmas Shopping of  
Made-in-Missouri Gifts



Light Refreshments  
No Admission Charge



2:15 pm Entertaining and  
Informative Skit

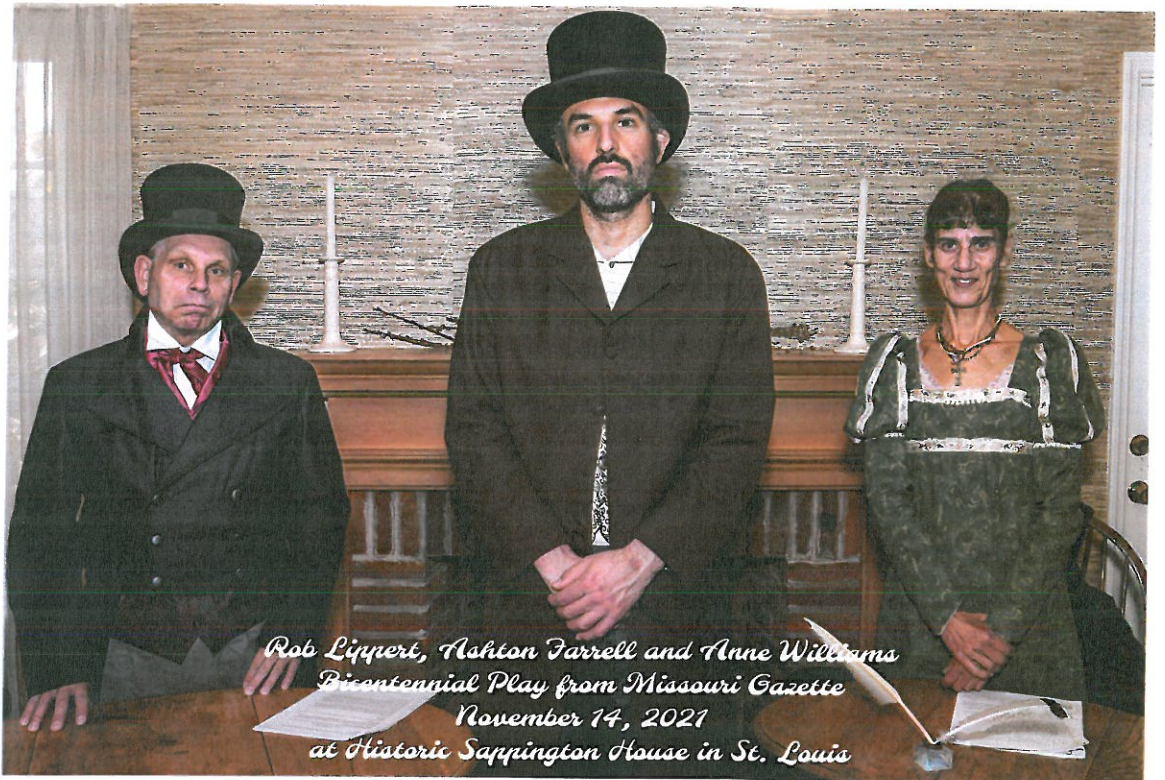
3:45 pm Dedication of  
Engraved Brick Garden  
Pathways

Displaying Missouri  
Bicentennial State  
Park Quilt

Readings of Children's  
Book, The Cow Cocoon

For more information, call 314-822-8171 or check [historicsappingtonhouse.org](http://historicsappingtonhouse.org)



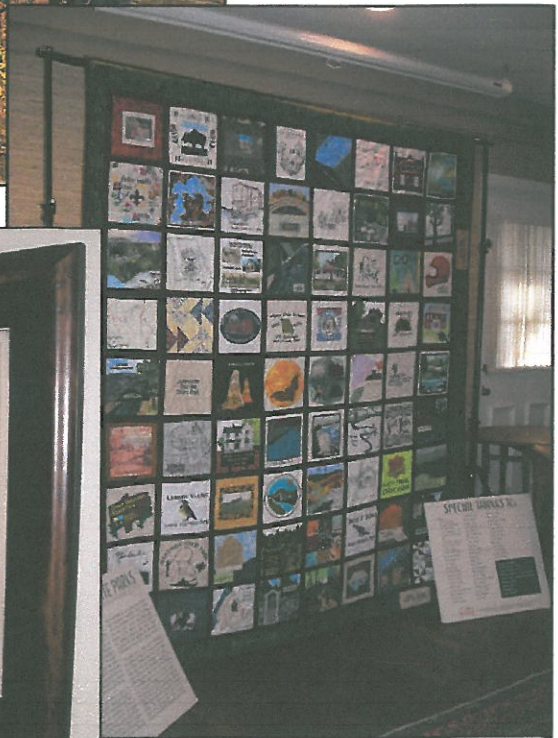


*Rob Lippert, Ashton Farrell and Anne Williams  
Bicentennial Play from Missouri Gazette  
November 14, 2021  
at Historic Sappington House in St. Louis*





Missouri Bicentennial  
 Living History and  
 Shop Missouri-made  
 November 14, 2021  
 One-act play by Anne  
 Williams taken from the  
 Missouri Gazette  
 ~ Engraved Brick Dedication  
 ~ Missouri State Park Quilt





**Missouri Bicentennial play based on letters to the editor published in the *Missouri Gazette* in 1819, compiled by Anne Williams and performed on August 10, 2021 at U.S. Grant National Historic Site and on November 14, 2021 at Historic Sappington House, both in St. Louis.**

**NARRATOR – Ashton Farrell, actor**

MEMORIAL – 1817  
Of the citizens of Missouri Territory

TO THE HONOURABLE THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, IN CONGRESS ASSEMBLED

That your petitioners live within that part of the Territory of Missouri which lies between the latitudes 36 degrees 30 minutes [?] 40 degrees North, and between the Mississippi river to the East and the Osage boundary line to the West. They pray that they may be admitted into the Union of the states within the limits.

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**FARMER – Anne Williams, actor**

May 19, 1819

Mr. Printer,

How did you get hold of that letter from the Virginia member of Congress? It is a precious document. I suppose it must have been dropped in the street by some "emissary" of the Virginia slave-dealers. Surely they will soon learn to employ more careful agents. The cat is completely out of the bag. This Virginia Congressman writes to his understrapper in St. Louis, that we must oppose Congress, and that Congress "must yield in the end". He says we must "refuse to become a state". ...

But though some parts of the letter are obscure, yet its general drift is plain enough. If we "refuse to become a state", and thus keep a market open west of the Mississippi, where he can dispose of his worthless slaves, he does not care a cent how long we remain a territory. What makes this Virginian so anxious that Missouri should become a slave state, or no state at all? Is it because slavery is a blessing? Do they want to get rid of their blessing? Is there not something suspicious in that? The real fact, Mr. Printer, is this: -- Virginia and Kentucky will grow an abundance of negroes. These must be sold or emancipated: for it would not do to let them remain in those states: therefore they want a market for them in Missouri. They know that slavery is a curse, and they want us to have a share of their curse, and to pay them well for it besides.

A Farmer of St. Charles County

**NARRATOR**

Tallmadge Amendment (February 13, 1819)

And provided, that the further introduction of slavery or involuntary servitude be prohibited, except for the punishment of crimes, whereof the party shall have been fully convicted; and that all children born within the said State, after the admission thereof into the Union, shall be free at the age of twenty-five years.

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**LAWYERS – Rob Lippert, actor for both Hampden and Sydney parts**

May 5, 1819

It was desirable that this [statehood] should be done at the least possible expense of regulation, because it was known that the government could not, consistently with its principles, be invested with power sufficient to bind the states together against their will. The subject [of slavery] was therefore left to the several state governments exclusively, and measures were taken so to balance the power of these two portions of the union, that neither should exercise the overwhelming influence over the other. On this point the constitution was expressly declared to be the result of a compromise, which neither party had a right to disturb, and the balance was so ascertained as that neither should have power to disturb it.

Now what becomes of the care exercised by the framers of the constitution for this purpose, if the present pretension of the House of Representatives be admitted? The whole of the territory west of the Mississippi is to be cut up into states from which domestic slavery is to be excluded. These must be peopled entirely from the north, for southern emigrants could not afford to emancipate their slaves, and for the most part are too humane to sell them.

HAMPDEN

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**FARMER**

May 19, 1819

But the most heartrending thing of all is that, this extensive region should never resound with the sound of the slave-drivers' scourge – that the shrieks of the abused and oppressed African, should never be heard here, to gratify the ears and sooth the desponding spirits of the high-feeling enemies of usurpation, and proud defenders of the rights of man. If anything can be more dreadful than this, it is the thought that the inhabitants of this extensive region grow rapidly in wealth and power without keeping among them a domestic enemy, ready to cut their throats, at the first favorable moment.

Yours to serve,  
A Farmer of St. Charles County

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## **LAWYERS**

May 5, 1819

But the effect upon the Senate would not be all. The additions therefore to the House would soon be altogether in the northern interest, and it would not be long before their aggressions on their southern neighbors would be carried through that house. In such an event, and after the evidences we have lately seen of their grasping spirit, we might expect to see a constitutional majority of states prepared to annihilate the Slave-Representation of the southern states, to emancipate the slaves themselves. Can you believe that their love of the union will make them acquiesce in the destruction of all that government is intended to protect? They will scatter the constitution before the wind, and take up arms.

HAMPDEN

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## **FARMER**

May 19, 1819

The bugbear of the dismemberment of the Union, which Hampden has conjured up, has always been the hobby of every faction, setting up pretensions, unsupported by reason, justice or common sense. But believe me, Mr. Printer, it is all nonsense. The honest and enlightened yeomanry, the farmers, who form the real strength of the country, will never countenance such a thing. They know the advantages of union, and the folly of disunion, too well, to be led into an insurrection, by the idle rant of lawyers and demagogues.

A Farmer in St. Charles County

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## **LAWYERS**

May 5, 1819

If the prevailing party in Congress have high aristocratic notions, they may secure the same character to the new state by confining the right of suffrage to the holders of large estates. If they are possessed by the demon of frantic democracy, they may extend it to every vagrant rabble that straggles through the country; after emancipating our slaves they may bring them to the hustings, and into the legislature, and into the judgement seat. If a neighboring state be much in the interest of the dominant faction of the day, they may make a week's residence a sufficient qualification to vote, and send over a gang of neighbors to decide every election.

HAMPDEN



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**FARMER**

Mr. Printer.

Occupied on my little farm, which I cultivate with my own hands, I have not had the liesure of late to go about among my neighbors to learn what's going on in the busy world; but last Sunday, after meeting was over, I commenced reading some of the publications of Mr. Hampden, and one Sydney, and then I read the publications of a Farmer of St. Charles County, ... and then I got hold of another long piece of Mr. Hampden's, but as I fell asleep, before I got half way through it, and have not since had time to finish it, I cannot at present say much about the sentiments of these gentlemen.

The other day, when I had been pretty hard at work in my field, replanting my corn and cursing the infernal crows, I set myself down in the shade to rest awhile, and began to think about the hard work and the trouble we farmers have to get along in the world. Then I began to wish I had a half dozen little negroes to scare the crows from my corn. This brought slavery into my mind, and some how or other, I began to reflect on what I had read in the papers, about Congress, and Mr. Hampden, and about what that lawyer said ... the man what makes speeches to the people of St. Louis, and then publishes them for the edification of us farmers. Well, I began to argue with myself and ask questions until my brain became as much fatigued as my body, I determined that I would someday go to St. Louis and ask a lawyer; but then thinks I, dang it, ... who knows but I may stumble on squire Sydney or squire Hampden, who are lawyers they say.

So I resolved to write to you, Mr. Printer, and request you ... to get some honest disinterested lawyer (without fee mind) to satisfy my doubts. ... Had Congress instead of wishing to keep the slaves from amongst us, passed our state bill, conditioned that in framing our constitution, the principles of slavery shall be recognized and admitted; that is, the people of Missouri shall never make any laws prohibiting or resricting slavery; would such an act on the part of Congress have been a violation of the constitution, or the treaty of cession, or the rights and interests of the people of Missouri?

A Farmer in St. Louis County

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**NARRATOR**

At a meeting of a number of the citizens of the town and county of St. Louis, at the courthouse, on Saturday the 15<sup>th</sup> in pursuant to the recommendation of the grand jury of the superior court, for the purpose of expressing their opinion of the powers of the Congress of the United States, to impose conditions on the admission of this territory into the union of the states, at which Colonel Alexander McNair was chosen President, and David Barton, Secretary. The following resolutions were adopted.

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### **LAWYERS (reading newspaper)**

Resolved: That the Congress of United States has no right to control the provisions of a state constitution, except to preserve its republican character.

Resolved: That the attempt by the majority in the House of Representatives in the last Congress, to prevent the further introduction and continuance of slavery in the future state of Missouri was equally contrary to the rights of the state and to the welfare of the slaves themselves.

Resolved: That the right of the Missouri Territory to be admitted into the Union of the States depends not upon the will of Congress but upon the Treaty of Cession and the principles of the federal constitution.

Resolved: That a constitution so formed cannot be disapproved by Congress for any other cause than for anti-republican feature and if disapproved upon any other pretext, it will be equivalent to an attempt to exclude the territory of Missouri from the federation of states.

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### **FARMER**

June 30, 1819

The Intelligencer says "we confess that, we citizens of the territory, consulting its future happiness & safety, its internal strength and political weight in the confederacy, we should be opposed to the toleration of slavery within it, any longer than is necessary to the gradual abolition of that which already exists."

Well, then, what have they been making all this fuss about? Surely it is not necessary to introduce any more slavery in an effort to get rid of what we now have. The restriction which passed the House of Representatives ought, therefore, to have received your support. Say nothing about constitutional objections; for if Congress had a right to require the people of Louisiana to establish trial by jury, and to keep their records, &c. in the English language, they certainly have as good a right to require the people of Missouri to prohibit the importation of slaves.

A Farmer of St. Charles County

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### **NARRATOR**

At a meeting of the Citizens of Montgomery County, in the territory of Missouri, held at the house of John Tice on the 28<sup>th</sup> day of April, 1819. After considerable discussion with the following declarations and resolutions were unanimously agreed to.

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**LAWYERS (reading newspaper)**

Resolved: That we are constitutionally entitled to admission in the union of the states a free, sovereign, and independent member thereof, (without any other restriction or condition than that our constitution shall be truly and entirely republican) equally with any other territory which has been admitted.

Resolved: That the restriction attempted to be imposed upon the people of this territory as a condition of their admission into the federal union, is a daring stretch of power, an usurpation of our most sacred rights, unprecedented, unconstitutionally, and in open violation of the 3<sup>rd</sup> article of the treaty of cession entered into with France.

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**FARMER**

April 21, 1819

The editorial of that paper says, "If the effect of this restriction would be to diminish the number of slaves in the United States or to improve their condition, we should have sincerely rejoiced in it, but its only effect will be to concentrate that population within a narrower space."

I do not know, Mr. Printer, that we are under any obligation to convert this territory in a Botany Bay for the reception of such slaves as the people of slave states wish to part with. If they have more slaves than they dare to keep, it is their concern, not ours. They can at any time emancipate them, and send them back to Africa. The Colonization Society will pay the expense of transportation; and perhaps they will also pay the master something towards the value of his slaves. Mr. Speaker Clay holds a high office in that Society; and I have strong hopes that his patriotic feelings will induce him to use his powerful influence, and a part of his immense fortune in promoting its benevolent objects.

A Farmer of St. Charles County

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**NARRATOR**

In pursuance of a request, contained in the eighth resolution of a meeting, held in the town of St. Louis, on the 15<sup>th</sup> day of May, 1819, recommending public meetings, the following resolutions were read and unanimously agreed to at St. Ferdinand Township this 5<sup>th</sup> day of June 1819.

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**FARMER (reading newspaper)**

Resolved: That the amendment to the Missouri state bill in the House of Representatives of the Congress of the United States, meets our full approbation, as being more conducive to the present happiness, and future prosperity of this fair and growing country.

Resolved: That slavery contrary to the term freedom, and it is also contrary to the laws of nature, that one nation, or one individual should be compelled to serve another unjustly.

Resolved: That it is one of the greatest evils we have to regret at this present day in the United States, and if not protested against it this growing country, it will eventually end in an entailed hereditary misery on our future posterity, and bring upon us their just censure, as well as the judgement of a just, but angry God.

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**LAWYER**

May 5, 1819

I proceed to show that Congress have not the right to dictate to us on any subject, because it is forbidden by the constitution of the United States.

The tenth article of the amendments to the constitution, declares that "The powers not delegated to the United States by the constitution or prohibited by it to the states, are reserved for the states respectively, or to the people." This provision renders it necessary for those who advocate the pretensions of the House of Representatives, to look for their warrant in the constitution. Mr. Taylor pretends that he has found it in Article 4 Section 3, Clause 2, which declares that "The Congress shall have the power to dispose of, and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States."

Can it be pretended that the United States have any farther property in our slaves, than they have in the slaves of any of the states, or further property in our lands patented by them, or fully granted by the Spanish government, than in any other land in the union, to which the owner holds a complete title?

SYDNEY

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**FARMER**

May 19, 1819

The Missourian intimates that Congress might attain their objective sooner, by "suppressing not only the Richmond Enquirer, but all other newspapers possessing sufficient independence to inquire into, and expose their iniquitous proceedings."

I take the liberty to inform Mr. Missourian, that the friends of freedom never attack the liberty of the press, either by mobs or other means. The traffickers in human flesh have the exclusive honor of such transactions. You might sooner arrest the current of the Mississippi with a mound of sand, than you can stop the progress of the cause of liberty, in a country where the press is free. A Farmer of St. Charles County



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**LAWYERS**

May 12, 1819

As to the facts:

The writer is not a St. Charles farmer. There is no such Farmer here as he is. No man who with the same opportunities of information understands and values his rights so little.

There is no such neighborhood in St. Charles, as that described. There is no such man in the territory who can say with truth, that his neighbors would be willing to submit to this claim of Congress, even if they knew it to be usurpation.

These falsehoods are of no consequence among ourselves, they are known to be false, but they are a part of a system of usurpation. A faction in Congress wishes to rob us of our land and negroes. They employ traitors among ourselves, or spies among themselves, to assume false characters, that may assist the deception.

For the information of people at a distance, I state that between the date of that piece, and the time it came to the printer's hands, the state of the weather, the roads and waters, cut off all communication between St. Louis and St. Charles. That the most acute observation has been incapable of discovering in St. Louis, any St. Charles man who could or would have written it.

SYDNEY

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**FARMER**

May 5, 1819

Sydney seems to think that if he can make out that my piece was not written by a St. Charles farmer, all the arguments contained in it will fall to the ground of course. He therefore proves, by his own positive testimony, that I am not a St. Charles farmer.

Methinks I can see the acute and learned Sydney traversing the streets and alleys of St Louis, entering all the houses and accosting every man he meets with, "Are you the vile traitor who dared to write the piece *A Farmer of St. Charles County?*" But perhaps he did not put the question to any but the well-dressed, and such as appeared to be lawyers; for if I am not mistaken, Sydney is one of those who think that talents are always accompanied by a fine coat. If he had seen me dressed in my leather hunting shirt, linsey pantaloons, coarse shoes, and old hat, I do not think that he would have suspected that I was the man who "would or could have written" *A Farmer of St. Charles County*.

Well, after having trudged all over St. Louis in search of me, without being able to find me, it was very natural that lawyer Sydney should be in a dreadful passion; and while in this passion it was natural for him to say that Congress wished to rob him of his lands and negroes, and that I was a spy or a traitor in their employ.

A Farmer of St. Charles County

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## **LAWYERS**

May 5, 1819

Sir- Your correspondent, who subscribes himself a Farmer of St. Charles County, seems to take honor to himself, for the attention which his essays have excited. He is much flattered at being taken to be something different from what he professes to be, and does not wonder that those who should see him in his hunting shirt and with his rifle in his hand should think him incapable of writing so well. I am not at all desirous of disturbing his self-complacency, and as I am never disposed to swear or insult, or to evade the point of an argument by calling my adversary a fool, I freely declare that I think his piece well written. I know many farmers who could write as least as well. But it is easy for a man to glance his eye over the country, and select from among individuals capable of writing as well as he does, those from whom such sentiments as he avows can be expected to proceed. Such men are generally not obscure, and the mind easily turns to them. In the county of St. Charles I have sought in vain.

The farmer, it seems, takes me for a lawyer. I sincerely wish that I could bestow on this great legal question, talents worthy of a member of that profession. If the farmer has discovered and traces of such talent it is more than I can do. But I anticipate his only answer, (as I do not mean to reply to him) which will be something about quibbling, and merely ask the courteous reader to look back, and see if he can find a quibble in anything that I have written.

But he must excuse for not believing that such intelligence as he clearly possesses, associated with the daily use of the hunting shirt and rifle, would have ever given birth to sentiments so servile as he avows. If any man in the country entertains them, I frankly declare I have not heard him.

SYDNEY

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## **FARMER**

May 19, 1819

I had not room in my last letter to notice all the fine things the Missourian has said about me in the Enquirer. He says my sentiments are "base, spiritless, abject, contemptible, and servile", and insinuates



that I cannot bear the “smell of gunpowder”. I understand well what he would be at, but he will be disappointed. Neither the Missourian nor the Enquirer-man, shall ever catch me on the sandbar.

A Farmer of St. Charles County

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**FARMER**

August 5, 1819

I am a little surprised, Mr. Printer, at the difference of opinion between lawyer Sydney and lawyer Hampden. Sydney says my pieces are “well written;” while Hampden declares that I have descended to a “style of sneering and vulgar ribaldry, which no man will use who can use a better.” For my own part, I think that Sydney is the better judge of the two. The lawyers have made dreadful complaints that the publication of my pieces would *ruin* them. My object was, to prevent them from humbugging and deluding the people into a Hartford Convention, or a whiskey insurrection.

I perceive that the Enquirer-man is still racking his brain to find out the author of the “vile pieces” signed “A farmer of St. Charles County!” But if the cause of slavery is so just, so pure, and so righteous, as the Enquirer-man pretends, why does he not refute my arguments, and prove to the world that the Congress of 1776 were mistaken when they said that *liberty* was the *inalienable* right of all men; and demonstrate that one class of men have an *inalienable right* to hold another class of men in perpetual slavery? Why does he spend his time in trying to make people believe that my pieces were written by this man or that man, when, if my argument were wrong, he could refute them in half the time?

A Farmer of St. Charles County

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**NARRATOR (read factually, unemotionally)**

Missouri Compromise – March 2, 1820

Section 8. And be it further enacted. That in all that territory ceded by France to the United States, under the name of Louisiana, which lies north of thirty-six degrees and thirty minutes north latitude, not included within the limits of the state, contemplated by this act, slavery and involuntary servitude, otherwise than in the punishment of crimes, whereof the parties shall have been duly convicted, shall be, and is hereby, forever prohibited: Provided always, That any person escaping into the same, from whom labour or service is lawfully claimed, in any state or territory of the United States, such fugitive may be lawfully reclaimed and conveyed to the person claiming his or her labour or service as aforesaid.

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## **FARMER**

Letter from Thomas Jefferson to Representative John Holmes of Massachusetts regarding the Missouri Compromise – April 22, 1820

But this momentous question, like a firebell in the night, awakened and filled me with terror. I considered it at once as the knell of the Union. It is hushed indeed at the moment, but this is a reprieve only, not a final sentence. A geographical line, coinciding with a marked principle, moral and political, once conceived and held up to the angry passions of men, will never be obliterated; and every new irritation will mark it deeper and deeper.