

To The Honorable Legislature of
The Territory of Wisconsin

The Petition of Benjamin Safford,

of
the Town of Port Washington, in the
County of Washington and Territory
of Wisconsin aforesaid, humbly and
respectfully, unto your Honorable body
Sheweth,

That about fourteen years since
he was united in marriage, to Ann,
who is now his wife - that he was
married to her in the State of New York.
That he has since said marriage, had
by his said wife four children, that
two of said children are now living
that they are both boys; - that the oldest
is in his fourteenth year, and the young-
est is in his seventh year of age. That
your Petitioner and the said Ann, his
wife have both been residents of the said
Territory of Wisconsin for the last two
years. And over

That your petitioner owns and is in possession
of, of his ^{own} right forty acres of land, situated
about one mile from the Village of Port
Washington, in the Town of Port Washington
aforesaid, with about ~~eight~~ eight acres of
clearing and two small structures there-
on, commonly called "Shanties" - That the
whole value of said premises is about
three hundred dollars - and that he
has no other property.

That the said Ann, wife of your Petitioner as aforesaid, owns in her own right, and has a deed therefor, in trust for her own use benefit and behoof, of Lot Number 37
in Block Number 37 in
said Village of Port Washington. That the
value of said Lot is about one hundred
dollars.

That she also owns in her own right as
aforesaid Eighty acres of Land on Section
Number Seven, Township Number Eleven
North, of Range Number Twenty Two
East, and is situated about three miles
from the Village of Port Washington a-
foresaid. That said Eighty acres of land
has no improvements thereon, but that the
same is good Land, and that it is
now worth at least three hundred
dollars, and your Petitioner Verily believes
it to be worth four hundred dollars.

That the two children ~~both~~ are ready and
willing to live with your Petitioner, and that
the oldest has for the last Eight months lived
exclusively with him, that the youngest has
lived with him, a part of the time during
said Eight months, and a part of the time
with the said Ann, as he pleased.

That your Petitioner is willing that said Child-
ren shall live with whom they choose, either
him your Petitioner, or the said Ann, and
that he will support them.

And Your Petitioner further says, That the
said Ann, is unwilling that he should take
possession of the property which she owns as
aforesaid, or any part thereof, and is unwilling

to apply any part thereof or the proceeds thereof to the support of herself, or the said Children, or your Petitioner.

And your Petitioner further saith, That he is unable to live with the said Ann Safford, or dwell in the same house with her, That he has not lived with her as his wife for the last ³ or 4 months. That he has been reduced to the necessity of leaving the house he had built for his family, to her sole occupancy, and build a small abode for himself. That they two, your Petitioner and the said Ann have lived in separate houses since the month of November last. That notwithstanding this he has constantly provided for her all the comforts of life that a man in his circumstances could be expected to provide. That she has wanted nothing necessary, to his knowledge or belief. And your Petitioner further says that notwithstanding these unpleasant circumstances, he would have been content so to live and provide for the said Ann in a separate house, and enjoy none of the consolations which he had hoped to find in the bosom of a family, and never trouble the Community with the scandal of a disagreement between man and wife, and never ask ~~the~~ your Honorable Body to ~~consider~~ ^{consider} the consideration of this Petition. But this your Petitioner has not been permitted to do, as will hereinafter appear.

And your Petitioner further says, That the said Ann, wife of your Petitioner as aforesaid, is a woman of the most virulent and un governable passion, and temper. That she is often

in the utmost madness of rage, without
any apparent and sufficient ^{cause} and without
any provocation - That when in this condition
of mind she is perfectly reckless as to what she
does to your Petitioner - That she is a woman
of remarkable physical power, stronger in
muscle than most men - That she has often
assaulted, and beaten, - wounded, and seized
your petitioner, and that he has worn the
marks caused by her naked hands, for days,
That she has frequently ^{and lately} threatened to kill your
Petitioner, and destroy his property, to de-
molish the house wherein he lives, and tear
it down over his head. - And he fears that
she will put her threats in execution -

And your petitioner further says That she
has made these threats, and done these in-
juries to him in the house in which he lives.
That she had left her own house, ~~with~~ ^{with} ~~carriage~~
provided for her as hereinbefore set forth, and
came to his with no apparent purpose but
to do him these injuries. - That he has, when
she has been coming to his abode, upon sight
of her so coming left, to escape from any
personal injury that she may have intended.

And your Petitioner, in proof of the un-
kindness, and evil disposition of the said
Woman, as well as of the acts hereinbefore set
forth, as having been committed by her, would
refer your Honorable body to a copy of the
Proceedings before Benjamin F. Sledge Esqr
a Justice of the Peace in and for the said
Town of Port Washington, to obtain sureties of
the said Woman to keep the Peace towards your
petitioner, - ^{unto annexed and appended Schedule} And that the said Proceedings were

dismissed, and the said Ann released from arrest, upon the promise of her, that she would do nothing to prevent the granting by the Legislature of Wisconsin Territory, a divorce between your Petitioner and her the said Ann Safford.

And your Petitioner further says That he has faithfully tried many years to live in peace and harmony with the said Ann as his wife, That he has always so far as he could, provided sufficient for her and his family - That they, your Petitioner and the said Ann now live separate and apart from each other and have for the last few months - That there is no prospect of their ever becoming reconciled so as to live with each other again.

And your Petitioner does most humbly and earnestly pray your Honorable Body to tenderly consider the premises; To grant a divorce of the Marriage Contract between your Petitioner and the said Ann Safford, To give to her, in the law granting such Divorce, absolute control over all her property aforesaid as if she had never been married, and to prohibit her from any right of dower in the said real estate of your Petitioner.

And your Petitioner as in duty bound will ever Pray for Benjamin Safford
July 29th 1848

Wisconsin Territory

Washington County, Benjamin Safford being by me duly sworn says he has heard read the foregoing petition and that the same is true. July 29th 1848

G. W. Foster
Justice of the Peace