

[Abraham Lincoln Papers at the Library of Congress](#)

Abraham Lincoln to Mary Mann, Tuesday, April 05, 1864 (Petition urging Lincoln to free slave children)

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From Abraham Lincoln to Mary Mann [Draft]¹, April 5, 1864

Executive Mansion,

Washington, April 5, 1864.

Madam.

The petition of persons under eighteen, praying that I would free all slave children, and the heading of which petition it appears you wrote, was handed me a few days since by Senator Sumner. Please tell these little people I am very glad their young hearts are so full of just and generous sympathy, and that, while I have not the power to grant all they ask, I trust they will remember that God has, and that, as it seems, He wills to do it.

Yours truly

A. Lincoln

[Note 1 For the petition in question, see Concord, Massachusetts Children to Abraham Lincoln [April, 1864], and for Mrs. Mann's reply to Lincoln, see Mary Mann to Lincoln, April 20, 1864. Mary Mann was the widow of Horace Mann, one of the country's leading advocates of education reform in the 19th Century.]