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## Documents Online

**Title:** Letter from Supreme Court Justices to Robert Grier

**Date:** January 31, 1870

**Location:** I-SpahrB-undated-6

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Supreme Court Room,

Washington, January 31, 1870.

Dear Brother,

Your term of judicial service as a Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States will close today by your resignation. We cannot permit an event so interesting to pass, without expressing to you something of the feeling which it excites in us; for some of us have been long associated with you; and, though the association of others has been for briefer periods, we all honor & love you.

Almost a quarter of a century ago you brought to the labors of the Court, a mind of great original vigor; endowed with singular powers of apprehension & discrimination; enriched by profound knowledge of the law; & prepared for the new work before you by large experience in a tribunal of which you were the sole judge.

Already you possessed the esteem, the respect and the entire confidence of the bar & the suitors who frequented your Court, and of the people among whom you administered justice.

Transferred to a more conspicuous position you wore larger honors. The sentiments of the profession, and of the people of a single city & State, became the sentiments of the American bar, and

of the whole country.

We who have been nearest to you best know how valued is your title to this consideration and affection. With an almost intuitive perception of the right; with an energetic detestation of wrong; with a positive enthusiasm for justice; with a broad and comprehensive understanding of legal & equitable principles, you have ever contributed your full share to the discussion & settlement of the numerous & often perplexing questions which duty has required us to investigate and determine.

This aid we gratefully acknowledge & can never forget. Nor can we ever cease to remember the considerate magnanimity, with which you have often recalled or modified expressions of which <sup>our</sup> your reflections have disapproved as likely to wound unnecessarily the sensibilities of your brethren of the bench or the bar.

Your eminent services as a judge command our respect, and gratitude; your magnanimity & kindness as a man in our official and personal intercourse have drawn to you, irresistibly, our veneration & love.

We deeply lament that infirmities incident to advancing years constrain you to retire from the post you have so long and so honorably filled. But though you will no longer <sup>actually</sup> participate in our labors here, we trust that you will still be with us in spirit and sympathy. We shall still seek aid from your counsels; we shall still look for fratification from your society. May you live many years to give us both. May every earthly blessing cheer, and the assured hope of a blessed immortality through Christ, our

Lavioir, brighten each year with ever increasing radiance.  
With warm affection & profound respect, we remain,

Your brethren of the Bench,  
Salmon P. Chase, Chief Justice

Samuel Nelson associate  
Nathan Clifford <sup>Justice</sup> associate <sup>Justice</sup>  
A. D. Swayne <sup>Justice</sup> associate <sup>Justice</sup>  
Saml. F. Miller <sup>Justice</sup>  
David Davis <sup>Assoc. Justice</sup>  
Stephen J. Field <sup>Justice</sup>  
Associate Justice

Am. R. C. Erié  
Asso. Jus. Sup. Court U States

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Your brethren of the Bench,

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Samuel Nelson associate Justice  
Nathan Clifford, associate Jus  
Sup Court

N.H.Swayne asso Jus  
Sup Court U S.

Sam. F. Miller Asso Justice  
David Davis. Asso Justice  
Stephen J. Field Associate Justice

Hon. R.C. Grier  
Asso. Jus. Sup. Court U States