

United States Post Office,

Durham,

Durham County,

State of

N.C.

May 14th

1896.

Hon. Thos J. Jarvis,

Greenville - N.C.

My Dear Friend,

I write you to ask you to help me to get to
✕ an insident man out of the penitentiary
whom I have been steadily trying to do for ~~four~~
long years & have failed. I will give you the
exact case & the name of the party & how come
him in the penitentiary &c. - It Jno W. Williams
sent from Durham County in March 1890. for
stealing ten dollars from Jno Thord, one of my
employees at that time, you recalled (Thord) & he
was sent on very flimsy circumstantial ev-
idence, which turned out to be utterly untrue.
That he never stold the money. but that another
party stold the money & left about the time of

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the trial & after Williams had been tried & sent to the penitentiary it was found out by Word that the other party got the money & that Williams was innocent. Word then came to me & advised ^{with me} how to go about getting Williams out & I advised how to do it. Has to get a letter from the judge & relesator & the jurors. & regular papers from the clerk of the court & then for him to write a letter stating the facts as he knew them & get up a petition signed by the citizens of the town or a few of them & I thought he would have no difficulty in getting him pardoned - & in a few weeks Mr Word got killed in a rail road accident before he made the effort. So then knowing the facts & knowing both Word & Williams both well as they had worked for me several years. I set about trying to get him pardoned & got up all the above named facts & also the facts that the evidence was not true & ~~that~~ it was flimsy & circumstantial also & the facts from the lawyers who were in court at the time of the trial. This is what they & Manning. Gus & John Graham & in fact all the bar here Boone & Brian & very well & have said the evidence was even insufficient to make a true bill before the grand jury & would not have been found but for Williams having been sent to the penitentiary once before. since the war when the laws was not carried out one in a loose way.

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and after I got all this evidence + all these things up + at great trouble the Governor says he has made it a rule not to pardon any one who has been in the penitentiary before - and right here I think he is wrong + makes a great mistake. As in the first instance Williams served out his first sentence + that might have been wrong + that it now is sure this time he is innocent + ought not to be in there now is more the reason why he should be pardoned - and besides a man ought not to serve a sentence for a crime he did not commit - I have great feeling for this man + I think it a perfect outrage for him to stay in any longer + he was sent to the penitentiary for a longer time any way if he was guilty than he ought to have been for the offence - I waked up away in the night between one + two o'clock + got

to studying over the case & it popped into mind that you
could help me in getting this poor innocent man out
as you know I am stating the facts as they are & you
know the Governor & have great influence with him
& you would have done a great & humane act if you
could get him pardoned & I want him pardoned now while
Mr Carr is Governor & it will save me a great deal
of trouble to get these papers up again to go before the
next Governor. & too the man has been in the penitentiary
five years for nothing & that is a mighty long time or
part of a mans life at his age - Now Governor I beg of
you to please help me to get this man out & I believe
you can. it so struck me last night & I got up this
morning & commenced on the effort to see if there was
anything in the thought. I am worked up in this case so that
I cant stop it. Humanity compells me to keep trying & not
stop. you can see why I make this request of you - I dont
know when or where to stop if I know I am right - you know
that is my nature & too to be on the small & needy side -

Very Truly Yours -

W. Blackwell -