

## Text from the Petition of 1779 at the Portsmouth African Burying Ground Memorial

In 1779, twenty natives of African living in Portsmouth petitioned the New Hampshire legislature for their freedom. Excerpts from that Petition have been engraved in the granite “petition line” that connects the entry piece sculpture at the Memorial to the burial vault lid and the glass-tiled mosaic of the Sankofa.

Below is the text of the phrases that can be found at the Petition line today. The symbol separating each phrase at the site is the Nsoromma, a West African Adinkra symbol meaning “child of the heavens” – a symbol of guardianship.

Natives of Africa, now forcibly detained in Slavery in said State most humbly Sheweth, That the God of Nature gave them Life, and Freedom, upon the Terms of the most perfect Equality with other men

**NSOROMMA**

we fondly Hope that the Eye of Pitty and the Heart of Justice and Humanity may commiserate our Situation and put us upon the Equality of Freemen and give us an Opportunity of evincing to the World our Love of Freedom, by exerting ourselves in her Cause, in opposing the Efforts of Tyranny and Oppression over the Country in which we ourselves have been so long injuriously enslaved **NSOROMMA**

private or publick Tyranny, and Slavery, are alike detestable to Minds, conscious of the equal Dignity of human Nature **NSOROMMA**

that the Name of Slave may not more be heard in a Land gloriously contending for the Sweets of Freedom.