

# *Letter from Thomas Jefferson (as Secretary of State) to Eli Whitney, Jr.*

regarding his patent application for the cotton gin, 16 November 1793

Germantown

Nov. 16, 1793

Sir

Your favor of October 15, inclosing a drawing of your cotton gin, was received on the 6th inst. The only requisite of the law now uncomplied with is the forwarding a model which being received your patent may be made out I delivered to your order immediately.

As to the State of Virginia, of which I am, carries on household manufactures of cotton to a great extent, as I also do myself, and one of our great embarrassments is the cleaning the cotton of the seed. I feel considerable interest in the success of your invention for family use. Permit me therefore to ask information from you on these points, has the machine been thoroughly tried to the ginning of cotton, or is it as yet but a machine of theory? What quantity of cotton has it cleaned on an average of several days & worked by hand & by how many hands? What will be the cost of one of them made to be worked by hand? Favorable answers to these questions would induce me to engage one of them to be forwarded to Richmond for me. Wishing to hear from you on the subject, I am Sir

P.S. is this the machine advertised the last year by Pearce

at the Patterson Manufactory?

You most obedt servt

Thomas Jefferson

Mr. Eli Whitney.

Connecticut. New Haven.