

Circumstance of real Affliction to Me, when I consider you as Acting upon Principles no less Void of Faith and honor than inconsistent with every Moral and Religious Duty. You have given Occasion to every Man of Property and Probity, by the open & unreserved Menaces You have thrown out against the Lives and Properties of many of the Inhabitants of this County to look on Your Designs as bent rather upon destroying the Peace of this Government, and the Security of its Inhabitants, than a wish, or Intention to wait for any Legal Process against those you imagine have abused their Publick Trust.

Upon these alarming Prospects I esteem it my Duty to provide for the Safety of the Government & to take Care that the Public receives no Damage.

To prevent therefore as much as possible the heavy Expence that must accrue to the Province by providing against the insults that are intended to be offered to His Majesty's Superior Court of Justice, I am peremptory to require on your part, that at least Twelve of your Principals and those of the first Property, wait upon me at Salisbury on Thursday the 25th of this Month, and there Execute in my Presence a Bond in the sum of One Thousand Pounds as a Security that no Rescue shall be made of William Butler and Harmon Husbands at the Superior Court at Hillsborough, They being under Recognizances there to appear and take their Tryals.

William Tryon

A copy.

¹The copy of this letter in CO 5/312 indicates that it was drafted by the council rather than by Tryon. The copy in the Governors' Office Papers, however, bears Tryon's signature.

The Earl of Hillsborough
to William Tryon

N^o 17

Governor of North Carolina

Sir,

My last letter to you N^o 16, was dated the 12th of July, and on the 25th I received your Letters to me numbered from 1 to 6, all which, with their Inclosures, have been laid before the King.

I shall be very happy if, in obeying my Royal Master's Commands in the Department entrusted to me, I shall be able to justify the favorable Sentiments which, you say, the Gentlemen of America have entertained of the Utility of it, & shall be most sincerely glad of every Opportunity of testifying the Respect I have for you, whose conduct has been so very meritorious.

Whitehall 13th August 1768

PRO CO 5/311, ff. 129-129b
CR-VII, 799-800¹

The Disturbances in the Counties of Orange and Anson appear, from the Circumstances related in your Letter, to have been of a very dangerous Nature, and as the King gives full Credit to your Spirit and Activity in the Suppression of them so His Majesty has an entire Confidence in your Prudence that every necessary precaution will be taken to prevent the like riotous Proceedings for the future.

At the same time it will be very satisfactory to His Majesty to be fully informed of the Causes of those Disturbances, to the End that, if there appears to be any real Ground of Complaint, Measures may be taken to apply the proper remedy.

I have already, in my Letter N^o 11,² been so full and explicit upon the Application made by the Council & Assembly of North Carolina for a Paper Currency, that I have nothing to add upon that Subject.

The Petition of the Members of the Council to His Majesty, praying an Allowance out of the Quit Rents in Consideration of the various Duties they are obliged to perform, has been communicated to the Board of Trade, and a favorable Report thereupon, from that Board, now lies before the Lords of the Committee of Council, but I do not expect that their Lordships will come to any Determination upon it, until they know the Sentiments of the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury.

I am

Hillsborough

¹Saunders omitted the first two paragraphs.

²See Hillsborough to Tryon, April 16, 1768.

Address to William Tryon from
the Inhabitants of Anson County

PRO CO 5/312, ff. 70-71b.
CR-VII, 806-809

[Anson County]
[August 15?, 1768]

To His Excellency Governor Tryon,
Excellent Sir,

We make no doubt but that you will soon hear the disagreeable News of the Disorders of the unfortunate County of Anson. We therefore take this Opportunity to inform you the Cause and Manner of it, in which we blame Ourselves, for not having first addressed your Excellency on the Occasion of our Complaints, who could, an[d] no doubt would have removed our Grievances and have prevented the Rumour of Faction and Disorder. But being long under the growing wait [weight] of Oppression became precipitate, and rash, and thought to change the State of the County in a different Manner to have suppressed the

Offenders, and made them wary of their Employment. For which Purpose formed Ourselves into which the opposite Party Called a Mob of about five hundred Men, resolving should no happier Event interfere to our Succour to have defended our Cause in the disagreeable Manner of a Force, and to have persisted unto Blood; We looking on it at that Time much out of our Powers to have Kindness from your Excellency as Our Leading Men were best acquainted, whose Assertions We feared would have greatest Weight with your Excellency. But whenever Considered that neither Prince nor Governor who has the Good of his People at Heart would see them oppressed to gratify the Errors and ambition of any particular Persons, who are Anthony Hutchins, Colonel Samuel Spencer, Charles Medlock and their Assistants the Justices and Sheriffs &c. Persons chiefly recommended to your Excellency by Hutchins Spencer to answer their partial Views and Purposes, under whose Influence they act the Magistrate part through Fear as fearing to Offend the Persons who Conferred the Honors on them, and part Ignorance as not knowing what to do, they being a Number of very poor Ignorant and almost Illiterate Men Under such their Inability they proceed to the Administration, of what they call public Justice which Property and Character are extremely doubtful & precarious, as Innocent Persons are Committed to Gaol by the Gaoler himself being a Magistrate and then put to considerable Expence, and then discharged without Form of Tryal to conceal their Injustice. Amongst other Things they tax the People in an unusual Manner which are as follows.

First. Persons who Commit Capital Offences are committed to the County Gaol and there retained five or six Months, a County Tax is laid to defray the Expence when it is notoriously known it is a Province Expence, But Medlock¹ the late Sheriff stop'd not there, but proceeded by Mr Spencer² the Clerk & Member for the County to have the same Claim allowed by the Assembly, and were only prevented as we are informed by its being proved to the Committee of Claims that the Prisoners had made Satisfaction themselves. These Things were not unknown to Mr Spencer when he laid Medlock's Claim before the Assembly. In the next place where the Justices are in Possession of Public Ferries they establish them free at Times pretending for the free Passage of Courtiers a Considerable Tax is laid for that Purpose. In the next place they tax considerable Sums of Money for particular Persons, who not having a Right thereto, the Magistrates after receive back part, if not all to their own use. All these Things can be made [to] appear, and we Conceive that no People have a Right to be taxed, but by the Consent of themselves or their Delegates. But here the Magistrates assume it, then the Sheriffs who receive the Tax particularly Medlock and his Associates have made a constant practice to exact 2/8 for Distress Money, when no distress is made nor necessary to be made, and also have Taxed different Sums from the People according to their

Non Acquaintance with the right Tax so that several different Sums were received from the People in the same year Surmounting the right Tax. As to the Clerk his Extortions are Burthensome to all that fall in his Power as he takes double and some times treble his due. And tho' it is true he purchased his Office from Colonel Frohock and gave to the Amount of One hundred and fifty Pounds for it yet it's unreasonable we should bear the Expence by way of Extortion. Please Sir, to enquire of Mr Edwards, touching the Connection of Hutchings Spencer & Medlock, and their unreasonable method of proceeding by means of their Influence over the Ignorant Magistrates as he has doubtless made some Observation on their Behaviour. This and much more are the Causes of the present Disturbances which we humbly pray your Excellency will please to reconcile by Discharging the most of the Magistrates from their Seats, and appointing better Men more Capable and willing to Discharge that Office, and also the Clerk if it seems right to you. Sir, if you in your Wisdom think meet so to do we beg leave as we have no Person to represent us to inform your Excellency of the magistrates which are unqualified for that Office and ought to be discharged, and also to recommend by the Voice of the County such Persons as will Judiciously discharge their several Offices & immediately upon such Alterations the Minds of the People will be at Ease, and each one to his former Obedience, and ready to discharge according to their Abilities every Expence necessary for the Support of Government, and We as Petitioners³ in Duty bound shall every pray —

Solomⁿ Crofts
Thos Ussery
Jno Skinner⁴
And: Fortinberry
Lewis Low
Joseph Howel⁵
Jason Meadow
James Allmond
Job Cilleadon
James Lowry
Jas MacMeot
Daniel Short⁶
James Colbton
Cha^s Walkinford
James Round
Tho^s Masen
W^m Betten
W^m Rogers
Thomas Mims
Cha^s Henson
Malachi Watts
Charles Booth
Abraham Buskin
Nath^l Wood⁷
Mark Rushen

W^m Hickman⁸
John Baile⁹
John Hornback¹⁰
W^m Bosil
Harklis Conkwrite
W^m Fielding
Patt: Boggen¹¹
Thom^s Fanning
John Jenkins¹²
Thomas Fanning junr
Patrick Saunders
Jⁿ^o Caterham
James Short¹³
W^m Short¹⁴
John Henson
Robert Thorn
Robert Ashley¹⁵
Thomas Free
Jonathⁿ Helms
W^m Tours
Jⁿ^o Fretinberry
Delany Herring
Jⁿ^o Touchberry
Jacob Collins¹⁶
Joshua Collins

Tho^s Swearinger¹⁷
Isaac Armstrong
Jⁿ^o Swor Senr
Jⁿ^o Swor Junr
Sam^l Swearinger¹⁸
Reuben Woodard
Van Swearinger
Luke Robinson¹⁹
Ralph Mason²⁰
Jn^o Mason²¹
Tho^s Mason²²
Jn^o Bennet
Tho^s Harper
Sam^l Harper
J^{as} Adams
Amos Pilgrim
W^m Adams
Tho^s Adams
J^{as} Barindine
W^m Barindine S^r
W^m Barindine Junior
Sam^l Bruton
Sam^l Williams²³
Solⁿ Williams²⁴
Benjⁿ Barrit

W ^m Burns ²⁵	Samps Thomas	John Web ²⁹
J ⁿ Poston ²⁶	James Higgins	Tho ^s Mims
Henry Fostinberry	W ^m Higgins	Abra ^m Harper
W ^m Rogers ²⁷	Frank Jordon	Tho ^s Harper Sn ^r
George Marchbanks	J ⁿ Higgins	Joseph Burham
W ^m Buzen	Tho ^s Jordon ²⁸	John Brus
Anth ^y Matthews	J ⁿ Carpenter	Joseph English
Peter Brisley [Bailey?]	Sam Touchberry	Dennis Nolsen Senior

¹ Charles Medlock.

² Samuel Spencer.

³ Editorial note: A diligent effort was made to identify all the petitioners on this list, but many of the names could be found nowhere else and other names were of people living in Bertie, Edgecombe, or Hyde counties and therefore could not be definitely identified as the names of Regulators on this petition.

⁴ While there are numerous references to John Skinner and Jonathan Skinner, assemblymen from Perquimans County, no reference other than the name on this petition can be found for Jno Skinner, Anson County Regulator.

⁵ It is unlikely that there is any connection between Joseph Howel, Regulator, and Joseph Howell, the assemblyman from Edgecombe County.

⁶ Daniel Short received a land grant in Anson County in 1749. Saunders, *Colonial Records*, IV, 961.

⁷ A Nathaniel Wood was listed as serving in the North Carolina Continental Line, but it cannot be ascertained that it was the same person as the petitioner.

⁸ William Hickman (Hickmon) was listed as a juror in Granville County who took the oath of allegiance on May 30, 1778. He is also listed in Col. James Yancey's company of foot, regiment of Colonel Richard Henderson. Clark, *State Records*, XXII, 163, 172.

⁹ John Baile (Bailey) is listed as an army man, but nothing else about him could be found. Clark, *State Records*, XVI, 1021, XVII, 192, 193; Saunders, *Colonial Records*, VI, 1022.

¹⁰ John Hornbeck (Hornback) in 1745/46 proved his right to land in Bladen County. In the November, 1771, term of court the Anson County Inferior Court recommended that John Hornbeck be exempt from payment of public taxes and performance of "public duties." Saunders, *Colonial Records*, IV, 800; IX, 145.

¹¹ Capt. Patrick Boggan was later an important figure in Anson County and an active Revolutionary War soldier. This document contains one of the earliest references to him. The town of Wadesboro was built on his land and his house there is well preserved. Mary L. Medley, *History of Anson County, North Carolina, 1750-1976* (Wadesboro: Anson County Historical Society, 1976), 64-65 and passim.

¹² Undoubtedly there were several men of the time by the name of John Jenkins. It is impossible to determine just which one this was.

¹³ James Short was paid in 1776 for participation in the "Indian Expedition as a Light Horse Company, for 92 days, including the Time between the 23rd of August to the 22nd of November inclusive." The company was under the command of Capt. William Sheppard. Saunders, *Colonial Records*, X, 998.

¹⁴ A land grant in Bertie County to William Short was made in 1739. He was also listed as a juryman for Bertie and Edgecombe. In a list of the Northampton Regiment (1748) William Short was listed as a captain of the Roanoke Company and recommended for promotion to major. In 1749 he was named to be a commissioner for a proposed new town to be called Hawns, which was to be laid out on Samuel Jordan's plantation in Northampton. It cannot be affirmed that the William Short, Regulator, was the William Short of Bertie County. Saunders, *Colonial Records*, IV, 348, 524; X, 273.

¹⁵ Ashley is listed on the muster roll of the regiment in Granville County under the command of Col. William Eaton, October 8, 1754. Clark, *State Records*, XXII, 373.

¹⁶ A Jacob Collins, sailor, was arrested and released in New Bern in February, 1776. No connection between Jacob Collins, Regulator, and the sailor Collins has been made.

¹⁷ Thomas Swearingham (Swearinger?) was one of the Anson County men named as leaders in the Regulator movement.

¹⁸ The Anson County Inferior Court of January, 1773, recommended that Samuel Swearinger be exempt from paying public taxes or performing public duties. Saunders, *Colonial Records*, IX, 462.

¹⁹ As indicated in the document following this one, Tryon's answer to the Regulators, it was Luke Robinson who delivered the petition to the governor.

²⁰ Whether or not Ralph Mason the Regulator was the Ralph Mason who was in Edgecombe County in 1743 cannot be ascertained. Saunders, *Colonial Records*, IV, 524, 642, 684, 711.

²¹ John Mason was a name borne by more than one man, so positive identification is impossible.

²² A Thomas Mason owned land in Edgecombe County in 1744, but he may have been unrelated to the Regulator by that name.

²³ One Samuel Williams of Anson County was charged with opposing the cause of the American revolutionists in 1775, but the charges against him were dropped. Saunders, *Colonial Records*, X, 182.

²⁴ One Solomon Williams was a building commissioner in Halifax in 1773; and a Solomon Williams was a lieutenant in Pike's Company of the Sixth Regiment in 1777. No relationship between these two references and the signer of this petition has been established.

²⁵ A William Burns, private, a member of Gregory's Company of the Tenth Regiment from May 20, 1778, until February 10, 1779, was listed as a deserter.

²⁶ The Anson County Inferior Court in January, 1773, recommended that John Poston be exempt from paying public taxes and doing public service. Saunders, *Colonial Records*, IX, 462.

²⁷ The name Wm. (William) Rogers appears twice in the petition. In 1745 and 1751 William Rogers petitioned for grants of land in Craven County. A William Rogers is listed as a private in Jones's Company of the Tenth Regiment with his death date given as 1782. The name occurs twice in the roster of Sharp's Company of the Tenth Regiment with no indication of the outcome of his service. Clark, *State Records*, XVI, 1150, 1151; Saunders, *Colonial Records*, IV, 765, 1246.

²⁸ This is hardly the Thomas Jordon who was sheriff of Hyde County; no other Thomas Jordon can be definitely identified.

²⁹ Although there was a John Webb in Halifax County who was very active during this period, no relationship between him and this petitioner can be established.

William Tryon to the
Petitioners of Anson County

PRO CO 5/312, f. 71b
CR-VII, 809-810

[Hillsborough]
[August 16, 1768]

Gentlemen,

The various Matters of Complaint in your Petition to me delivered by Mr Luke Robinson are of so extraordinary and unusual a Nature, that

they require Consultation of His Majesty's Council which are far distant from me, at present. Such part of your asserted Grievances as regard the Extortion of Public Officers will be remedied by the Parties who have been injured applying to the Attorney General who shall receive Directions from me to Prosecute those who have abused their Public Trusts—

As to the Insults you offered to the Magistrates, in the Execution of their Offices at the Inferior Court of your County, will be a Subject of Enquiry at His Majesty's Superior Court of Salisbury District—The Acknowledgment however you make of the Guilt of so rash and illegal a Proceeding will if accompanied with a future good Behaviour and a Dutiful Submission to the Laws of your County, entitle you to some Lenity from the Court as well as from Me.

The enclosed Proclamation¹ will be sufficient to Satisfy you of the just abhorrence His Majesty Entertains of the Dishonorable Practices Complained of in Public Offices.

William Tryon

Hillsborough 16th August 1768.

¹See Proclamation of the Governor, May 17, 1768, in this volume.

The Regulators to William Tryon

PRO CO 5/312, ff. 68-69
CR-VII, 810-811

Nº 19

August 19, 1768

May it Please your Excellency,

We received your letter by the hands of M^r Lee¹ at the only Time that ever our Officers showed any real Intention of informing us to what uses our Money is applied and at a Time when we had Hopes and were Persuaded Matters were likely to be settled to the Peace and Satisfaction of the Public. But finding by it that your Excellency was displeased and charges us with breach of Honor and that we have given Occasion for to be looked on as rather bent upon destroying the Peace of this Government than to wait for Justice.

At which we are truly affected, with Sorrow and Concern at the Thoughts of any Differences arising between your Excellency & Us, and that as through false Reports and Alarms the Commonalty under Oppression have been incensed and Occasion given we determine to use our utmost Endeavors to guard against such Offences for the future.

But amidst our Sorrow we are rejoiced to find your Excellency to be agreeable to Our Resolutions, to petition the Legislative Body which is generally agreed on.

As to the Demand for Security, not to rescue the prisoners, we beg that it may be Considered that the Alarms of raising Men and Indians to cut off the Inhabitants of this County as Rebels, when they know in their Hearts and Consciences they were guilty of no other Crime, but endeavoring to obtain Justice, and detect Fraudulent Practices in the Officers which has been so Common in this Province that it is mentioned in many Public Acts of Assembly made to remedy the same which constantly prove unsuccessful, and we Conceive ever will be so until the Public is encouraged to assist, and help by Complaining and producing Matters of Fact, against the Particulars.

Now these Alarms were thought by the most Considerate Men to be without Ground who Interposed, Pacified and Moderated the People, and these it is likely may be looked on as the Principals or Leading men. And these will ever use the same Care, and will no doubt be always able to Govern the Multitude by Reason & yet would be unwilling to enter into Bonds, for the noise of such a Step would be rather more likely to hinder their Influence.

Moreover there never was any Intent to rescue Prisoners but to beg and pray of the Governor to Dissolve the House of Assembly and so far as we know the Sentiments of the People in General, this one step alone, would at once stop every Mouth and every Complaint, but what would go through, and by Way of such Representatives as would then be Chosen.

As the Governor may Observe by the Detail of our Proceedings, that it was the Representatives refusing us a Conference, and threatening us for requesting one, And Frightening and deterring us from Petitioning for Redress, that first gave Occasion for Disorder; Therefore as the stopping the free Passage of this Channel for Relief, has Occasioned the Obstruction of Good Order, so the opening of which Passage, will as assuredly restore it again.

James Hunter
Thos Welborn²
Peter Julian

Signed in behalf and by Order of the Regulators.

¹John Lea.

²Thomas Welborn lived in the Sandy Creek community. In 1771 his friends appealed to Gov. Josiah Martin to pardon Welborn, who was declared to be an outlaw after the Regulator trouble. Saunders, *Colonial Records*, IX, 25, 26-27.