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 Majes' 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.

A copy.

William Tryon

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

PRO CO 5/311, ff. 129-129b
CR-VII, 799-800

Hillsborough

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

Address to William Tryon from the Inhabitants of Anson County

[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 this Opportunity to inform you the Cause and Manner of it, in which we

2Saunders omitted the first two paragraphs.

3See Hillsborough to Tryon, April 16, 1768.
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 disgraceable 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 oppress 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 Honours 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 Expense, 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 Expense when it is notoriously known it is a Province Expense, 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 known to Mr Spencer when he laid Medlock's Claim before the Assembly. In the next place where the Justices are in Possession of Public Fines they establish them free at Times pretending for the 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 Consent of themselves or their Delegates. But here the Magistrates and his Associates have made a constant practice to exact 2/8 for their 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 Expense 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 Obdience, and ready to discharge according to their Abilities every Expense necessary for the Support of Government, and We as Petitioners3 in Duty bound shall every pray—

Selonell Crofts
Thos Usery
Jno Skinner4
And: Fortinberry
Lewis Low
Joseph Howel5
Jason Meadow
James Allmond
Job Gileadon
James Lowry
Jas MacMeot
Daniel Short6
James Colton
Chas Walkinford
James Round
Thos Masen
Wm Betten
Wm Rogers
Thomas Mims
Chas Henson
Malachi Watts
Charles Booth
Abraham Buskin
Nathl Wood7
Mark Rushen
Wm Hickman8
John Batte9
John Hornback10
Wm Bosil
Harklis Conkwrite
Wm Fielding
Patt Boggen11
Thom Fanning
John Jenkins12
Thomas Fanning junr
Patrick Saunders
Jno Caterham
James Short13
Wm Short14
John Henson
Robert Thorn
Robert Ashley15
Thomas Free
Jonath Helms
Wm Tours
Jno Fretinberry
Delany Herring
Jno Touchberry
Jacob Collins16
Joshua Collins
Thos Swearinger17
Isaac Armstrong
Jno Swor Ser
Jno Swor Junr
Saml Swearinger18
Reuben Woodard
Van Swearinger
Luke Robinson19
Ralph Mason20
Jrn Mason21
Thos Mason22
Jno Bennet
Thos Harper
Saml Harper
Jno Adams
Amos Pilgrim
Wm Adams
Thos Adams
Joth Baridine
Wm Baridine Sr
Wm Baridine Jr
Saml Bruton
Saml Williams23
So Williams24
Benj Barrit
Wm. Burns26  
Jr. Poston27  
Henry Fostinberry  
Wm. Rogers27  
George Marchbanks  
Wm. Buizen  
Anth'ly Matthews  
Peter Brisley (Bailey?)

Samps Thomas  
James Higgins  
Wm. Higgins  
Frank Jordan  
Jno. Higgins  
Tho. Jordan28  
Jno. Carpenter  
Sam Touchberry  

John Webb29  
Tho. Mims  
Abra'h Harper  
Joseph Burbum  
John Brus  
Joseph English  
Dennis Nolsen Senior

1Charles Medlock.  
2Samuel Spencer.  
3Editorial 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.  
4While 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 Jos Skinner, Anson County Regulator.  
5It is unlikely that there is any connection between Joseph Howel, Regulator, and Joseph Howell, the assemblyman from Edgecombe County.  
6Daniel Short received a land grant in Anson County in 1749. Saunders, Colonial Records, IV, 961.  
7A Nathaniel Wood was listed as a servent in the North Carolina Continental Line, but it cannot be ascertained that it was the same person as the petitioner.  
8William Hickman (Hickmon) was listed as a juror in Granville County who took the foot, regimen of Colonel Richard Henderson. Clark, State Records, XXII, 163, 172.  
9John 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, 1062.  
11Capt. Patrick Boggin was later an important figure in Anson County and an active Revolutionary War soldier. This document contains one of the earliest references to him. L. Medley, History of Anson County, North Carolina, 1750-1976 (Wadesboro: Anson County Historical Society, 1976), 64-65 and passim.  
12Undoubtedly there were several men of the time by the name of John Jenkins. It is impossible to determine just which one this was.  
13James Short was paid in 1776 for participation in the "Indian Expedition as a Light of November inclusive." The company was under the command of Capt. William  
14A 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) promotion to major. In 1749 he was named to be a commissioner for a new town Northampton. It cannot be affirmed that the William Short, Regulator, was the William  

15Ashley 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.  
16A 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.  
17Thomas Swearengam (Swearengin?) was one of the Anson County men named as leaders in the Regulator movement.  
18The Anson County Inferior Court of January, 1773, recommended that Samuel Swearengam be exempt from paying public taxes or performing public duties. Saunders, Colonial Records, IX, 462.  
19As indicated in the document following this one, Tryon's answer to the Regulators, it was Luke Robinson who delivered the petition to the governor.  
20Whether 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.  
21John Mason was a name borne by more than one man, so positive identification is impossible.  
22A Thomas Mason owned land in Edgecombe County in 1744, but he may have been unrelated to the Regulator by that name.  
23One 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.  
24One 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.  
25A 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.  
26The 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.  
27The 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.  
28This is hardly the Thomas Jordan who was sheriff of Hyde County; no other Thomas Jordan can be definitely identified.  
29Although 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 Mr. 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 Breech 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. 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 Consquences 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.