Petition of the Inhabitants of Orange County to William Tryon

To His Excellency William Tryon Esquire Captain General & Governor in Chief in and over His Majesty's Province of North Carolina.

To the Honourable Members of His Majesty's Council, To the Speaker and Gentlemen of the House of Assembly of the Province of North Carolina, the Petition of the Inhabitants of the County of Orange humbly sheweth,

That whereas by reason of the Great Distance we your petitioners live from any Publick Inspections, whereinto we may carry Tobacco or Hemp, and other Commodities, that we your Petitioners are Greatly Discouraged from attempting the making Tobacco & the Cultivation of Hemp, Two of the most valuable as we apprehend profitable Branches (the Quality of the soil of this Country being Particularly suited to those articles) of Husbandry from Consideration after a long & laborious process of preparing them for sale, that the Possessor is obliged to be at the further Trouble, Labour and Expense, of Transporting those Weighty and Bulky Articles at least one hundred miles by Land, before he can be Certain that his Commodity will pass an Inspection, or that he shall receive any satisfaction or Recompence, for the Fruits of his Long Industry. For Remedy whereof we your Petitioners most humbly pray, that for the Mutual Benefit of the Trader, & the Industrious Laborer & Planter that a Publick Inspection may be established at the Town of Hillsborough, in the County aforesaid Under such Rules & Regulations & Restrictions as to you in your Great Wisdom and Goodness may seem meet, and your Petitioners as in Duty bound shall ever pray &c.

F Nash
Henry Pattillo
Wi Johnston
James Monroe
Jn C Cooke
F Richard
J Thackston
Ralph McNair

Ja M Carroll
John Patterson
John King
Jacob Allen
John Hart
Will Reed
Rob Clayton

James Ray
James McCauley
Sackfield Brewer
Wi Ansby
John Riely
Zachariah Downs
Thomas Robeson

Of these petitioners, several have been previously identified. No identification was possible for Jacob Allen, William Ansby, James M. Carroll, Robert Clayton, Zachariah Downs, Thomas McCaffrey, or John Riely.

William Johnston aligned himself against the Regulators and was among the anti-Regulator group soon named the "Loyal Regulators' Association" whose viewpoint was expressed in a document dated December, 1770. In July, 1772, Johnston wrote a letter of introduction to Richard Bennehan on behalf of John Frohock. Johnston represented Hillsborough in the provincial congress at Halifax, April, 1776. He declined to serve as treasurer of the Hillsborough District but was a vestryman for the Parish of St. John in Granville when it was created in 1758. Clark, State Records, XIV, 208, XXI, 194-596 passim; Saunders, Colonial Records, VIII, 273-275, IX, 311, X, 501-943 passim.

James M. (Monroe), a Hillsborough merchant, was one of those who aligned themselves against the Regulators, and in 1776 Governor Martin ordered for Monroe and Michael Holt to raise the king's standard in Hillsborough. Monroe refused to swear allegiance to the state and left Hillsborough in August, 1777, but he later returned to Orange County and resumed his residency there. Ruth Blackwelder, The Age of Orange (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1961), 56; Saunders, Colonial Records, VIII, 273-274, 246-247.

In 1735/36 John Cooke (Cook) petitioned for a grant of land in Bladen County. He also petitioned a few months later for land in New Hanover. In 1749 he petitioned for additional land in New Hanover. Cooke was appointed to be advocate for a special court of admiralty to try officers aboard a captured sloop in 1776, and a John Cook was clerk of the court for the District of New Bern in 1778. The name John Cook appears on the petition for pardon of John Fruit in 1771, and a John Cook served in the Continental Line during the American Revolution. It cannot be ascertained that these references to the same man. Clark, State Records, XIII, 383-384, XVI, 1025, 1030, 1033; Saunders, Colonial Records, IV, 218, 277, 960, 1037.

This could be the Francis Thomas Richards who in January, 1771, was summoned as a witness against Robinson York, an alleged counterfeiter. Saunders, Colonial Records, VIII, 399.

John Patterson was listed as a juror for the Hillsborough District Court of September, 1769. He was treasurer of the town in 1754 and in 1779 was nominated by the Senate for the position of treasurer of the district. Clark, State Records, XIII, 967; Saunders, Colonial Records, XIV, 710, 764, 767.

The John King, signer of this document, was probably the man who served as a juror in the Hillsborough District Court in September, 1768, when several of the Regulators were brought to trial. A John King was appointed captain of a company formed by revolutionary forces in April, 1776; and "Doctor King" was a.traitor for Franklin Academy when it was founded in 1786. Clark, State Records, XXIV, 876; Saunders, Colonial Records, VII, 853, X, 546.

John Hart's name is on a list of jurors for Bertie and Edgecombe counties as early as 1739. In 1741 he petitioned for land in Craven County. Since he signed Regulators' Advertisement 9 and the petition to pardon John Fruit he obviously took some part in the Regulator movement. However, his name also appears on a November 26, 1782, list of officers held as prisoners of war by the British, so presumably he was a patriot during the Regulator movement. The fact that he was listed as belonging to the South Carolina line is somewhat strange. Clark, State Records, XVI, 673; Saunders, Colonial Records, II, 440, IV, 602, VII, 734, 736, IX, 93-94.

This Thomas Robeson probably was not the prominent Col. Thomas Robeson of Bladen County.

In 1757 William Reed, innkeeper, was made a justice of the peace for Orange County. In 1759, he and in 1759 he was made a Hillsborough town commissioner. By December, 1763, he had and in 1759 he was made a Hillsborough town commissioner. By December, 1763, he had and in 1759 he was made a Hillsborough town commissioner. By December, 1763, he had and in 1759 he was made a Hillsborough town commissioner. By December, 1763, he had and in 1759 he was made a Hillsborough town commissioner. By December, 1763, he had and in 1759 he was made a Hillsborough town commissioner. By December, 1763, he had and in 1759 he was made a Hillsborough town commissioner. By December, 1763, he had and in 1759 he was made a Hillsborough town commissioner. By December, 1763, he had and in 1759 he was made a Hillsborough town commissioner. By December, 1763, he had and in 1759 he was made a Hillsborough town commissioner. By December, 1763, he had and in 1759 he was made a Hillsborough town commissioner. By December, 1763, he had and in 1759 he was made a Hillsborough town commissioner. By December, 1763, he had and in 1759 he was made a Hillsborough town commissioner. By December, 1763, he had and in 1759 he was made a Hillsborough town commissioner. By December, 1763, he had and in 1759 he was made a Hillsborough town commissioner. By December, 1763, he had and in 1759 he was made a Hillsborough town commissioner. By December, 1763, he had and in 1759 he was made a Hillsborough town commissioner. By December, 1763, he had and in 1759 he was made a Hillsborough town commissioner. By December, 1763, he had and in 1759 he was made a Hillsborough town commissioner. By December, 1763, he had and in 1759 he was made a Hillsborough town commissioner. By December, 1763, he had and in 1759 he was made a Hillsborough town commissioner. By December, 1763, he had and in 1759 he was made a Hillsborough town commissioner. By December, 1763, he had and in 1759 he was made a Hillsborough town commissioner. By December, 1763, he had and in 1759 he was made a Hillsborough town commissioner. By December, 1763, he had and in 1759 he was made a Hillsborough town commissioner. By December, 1763, he had and in 1759 he was made a Hillsborough town commissioner. By December, 1763, he had and in 1759 he was made a Hillsborough town commissioner. By December, 1763, he had and in 1759 he was made a Hillsborough town commissioner. By December, 1763, he had and in 1759 he was made a Hillsborough town commissioner. By December, 1763, he had 896.
Petition of the Inhabitants of Orange and Rowan Counties to William Tryon

Petition of the Inhabitants of Orange and Rowan Counties to William Tryon

To his Excellency William Tryon Esq. Cap. Gen. Gov't and Commander in chief in and over the Province of N9 Carolina

To the Hon. the Members of his Majestys Council, Mr Speaker and Gentlemen of the House of Assembly,

The humble Petition of us Inhabitants of Orange and Rowan Counties, true and faithful subjects of his Majesty King George the Third

Sheweth,

That we your poor Petitioners, now do and long have laboured under many and heavy Exactions, Oppressions and Enormity, committed on us by Court Officers, in every Station: the Source of which our said Calamity; we impute to the Countenance and Protection they receive from such of our Lawyers and Clerks, as have obtained seats in the House of Representatives, and who intent on making their own fortune, are blind to, and solely regardless of their Country's Interest: are ever planning such schemes, or projecting such Laws as may best Effect their wicked purposes—witness the Summons and petition Act, calculated purely to enrich themselves, and Creatures, at the expense of the poor Industrious peasant, besides a certain Air of Confidence, a being a Part of the Legislature gives these Gentlemen, to the perpetration of every kind of Enormity within reach of their respective offices; and seeing Numbers either from Interested views, for the sake of Treats, or from other sordid Motive, are still so infatuated, and will be, as to vote for these Gentlemen, whereby to advance them to that important Trust: tho' themselves and famlys sink as a consequence, and seeing these inconsiderate Wretches, involve your poor petitioners, together with Thousands of other honest industrious families, in the Common Destruction. We therefore humbly implore your Excellency, your honours, and your Worthys in the most suplicate manner, to consider of, and pass an Act to prevent and effectually restrain every Lawyer and Clerk whatsoever, from offering themselves as Candidates, at any future Election of Delegates, within this Province; and in case any such should be chose, that choice shall be utterly void, in the same manner as the Law now allows in case of Sheriffs being Elected.

And may it please you to consider of, and pass an act, hereby to allow Clerks of Courts, Crowns &c., certain yearly stated salaries, instead of perquisites; making it highly penal for any Clerk to demand, or even to receive, directly or indirectly, any fee, gift, or reward, under Colour of
his Office, any other than his certain stated Salary; and in order to rate the said salaries, may it please you, to lay a certain fine of so much in the pound, on every Action brought to Tryal; with half so much on such as are compromised before Issue Joined, as to you in your great wisdom, shall seem meet: which said fines shall be collected at the same Time and in the same manner with all other Taxes. And may it please you to consider of, and pass an Act, effectually to restrain Lawyers from demanding or even receiving, any other, or greater fee or reward, than is now established by the Laws of this province, with only half so much for such Actions as shall be compromised before Tryal. And as we humbly conceive, the fees now allowed by Law are highly sufficient; and that any other or greater fee, were Oppression and cruelty, and can serve no other purpose, than to enrich one part of his Majestys Subjects, and beggar the other: We therefore beseech you to make such severe act, in order to restrain such open Violation of the Laws, as to you in your great Wisdom shall seem meet. And seeing the now Acting Clerks, have, notwithstanding their many Egregious, so fortified themselves against all the Laws now in force as to render themselves invulnerable to prosecutions, partly from their own superior Cunning, and partly from our invincible Ignorance We humbly beseech you, to take the same under your serious Consideration, and for our Relief, to pass an Act to call in all the now acting Clerks, and to fill their places with Gentlemen of probity and Integrity, and may it please you to insert some clause in said Act, prohibiting Judges, Lawyers, or Sheriffs, from fingering any of their fees, directly or indirectly, until the Cause, suit or Action, on the which the said fee is due, be brought to a final Determination; and that all Obligations for more than the Legal fee, to be void in Law; this Measure will we hope, effectually prevent those Odious delays in Justice, so Destructive, yet fatally common among us.

And may it please you to grant us a Repeal of the Act, prohibiting Dissenting Ministers from marrying according to the Decretals, Rites and Ceremonys, of their Respective Churches: a privilege they were debarred of in no other part of his Majesty’s Dominions; and as we humbly conceive, a privilege they stand entitled to, by the Act of Toleration, and in fine, a privilege granted even to the very Catholics in Ireland, and the Protestants in France. And may it please you to consider of and pass an Act to divide the several Counties within this Province, into proper Districts, appointing a Collector in each, to raise and collect the several Taxes, laid or to be laid, by Law, who shall be accountable, and make all Returns to a County ________ to be nominated ________ with the Assembly. This method will (we humbly conceive) effectually prevent the Sheriffs from robbing and plundering the County spending their ill got gains in Riot, purchasing Estates, or bearing off the same into other provinces, as they frequently do, to our unspeakable prejudice, who are obliged to make good the Deficiencies, And may it please you to consider of and pass an Act, to Tax every one in proportion to his Estates; however equitable the Law as it now stands, may appear to the Inhabitants of the Maritime parts of the province, where estates consist chiefly in Slaves; yet to us in the frontier, where very few are possessed of slaves, tho’ their Estates are in proportion (in many instances) as of one Thousand to one, for all to pay equal, is with Submission, very grievous and oppressive. We Beseech you to consider of a repeal, of the Summons and petition Act: an Act replete with Misery and ruin to the lowest Class of people throughout the province and may it please you, to pass in lieu thereof an Act to empower a single Magistrate, to try and determine as high as five or six pounds; without appeal: Assisted by a jury of six men, if Demanded by either of the Contending parties. We further humbly beseech you to consider of, and pass an Act, to make Inspection Notes on imperishable Commodities, of the produce of this province, lawful Tender, at stated prices, in all payments thro’out the province; as such Tenders we humbly conceive, will not in any shape, interfere with his Majesty’s Instructions, or with an Act of Parliament, prohibiting any further Impressions of paper Currency; in any of his Majesty’s Colonies or Plantations in America.

And may it please you to grant us a Division of the County: Great Inconveniences, as well as expense, attend our Distance from Courts of Justice: And as we humbly conceive such Division, cannot be prejudicial to any number of persons whatsoever, and if obtained thro’ your Candor would confer the highest Benefit on your poor petitioners. We Beseech you to consider of some proper Staple or Staples of the Manufactures, or Produce of the Country to answer foreign Demands, would not (with Submission) put America be a fine Article, to answer the British Markets; and in a Country abounding in wood, the very Ashes now thrown away, might with encouragement (if manufactured) be a saving, or rather gain, of some Thousands per annum to the province, and render Voyages to Riga, Narva, and Danzig, from Great Britain, for that useful commodity needless.

And seeing the State of the Sinking fund, is a Mystery that exercises the ablest Heads among us, and according to the best Calculations thereto made, twenty seven Thousand pounds (besides what is now afloat) was collected from the Province, at the payment of the Tax for the year 1767, more than has ever been emitted: and as we humbly conceive the said sums, are now in the hands of the Treasurers, Sheriffs, and other Officers; to the great prejudice of the Country, of whom from these sums are redeemed. We therefore humbly implore you, to make diligent Inquisition into their several Departments and inform yourselves justly of the sums raised, by whom, and to what uses applied: As also enquire strictly, into the sums remitted from England, the Quantity, and Disbursements of the same; in like manner to inform
yourselves how Starkeys Notes have been disposed of, and whether the province has been charged therewith in common with other Emissions, which we should not, as his Majesty never assented to the Act for striking said Notes. Lastly we humbly implore you to have your Yees and Nays, inserted in the Journals of your House, and Copies of such Journals, transmitted along with the Copies of the Acts to every Justice that by this means we may have an opportunity to Distinguish our friends from our foes among you, and to Act accordingly at any future choice. And by granting us these just, and wholesome and necessary Laws, you will heal the bleeding Wounds of the Province, will conciliate the Minds of your poor petitioners, to every just measure of Government, will make the Laws what our Constitution ever designed they should be, our protection, and not our Bane, and will cause Joy, Gladness, Glee, and prosperity, diffusely to spread themselves thro every Quarter of this extensive province, from Virginia to the South, and from the Western Hills, to the great Atlantic Ocean. And your petitioners as in Duty bound shall every Pray.

Petition of the Inhabitants of Anson County to the Assembly

CR-VII. 75-80

[Anson County]
[October 9, 1769]

Mr Speaker and Gent of the Assembly.
The Petition of the Inhabitants of Anson County, being part of the Remonstrance of the Province of North Carolina,

Humbly Sheweth

That the Province in general labour under general grievances, and the Western part thereof under particular ones; which we not only see, but very sensibly feel, being crouched beneath our sufferings; and notwithstanding our sacred privileges, have long yielded ourselves slaves to remorseless oppression.—Permit us to conceive it to be our inviolable right to make known our grievances, and to petition for redress; as appears in the Bill of Rights pass’d in the reign of King Charles the first, as well as the act of Settlement of the Crown of the Revolution. We therefore beg leave to lay before you a specimen thereof that your compassionate endeavours may tend to the relief of your injured Constituents, whose distressed condition calls aloud for aid. If the alarming cries of the oppressed possibly may reach your Ears; but without your zeal how shall they ascend the throne—how relentless is the breed without sympathy, the heart that cannot bleed on a View of our calamity; to see tenderness removed, cruelty stepping in; and all our liberties and privileges invaded and abridged (by as it were) domesticks: who are conscious of their guilt and void of remorse.—O how daring! how relentless! whilst impending Judgments loudly threaten and gaze upon them with every emblem of merited destruction.

A few of the many grievances are as follows (Viz!)
1. That the poor Inhabitants in general are much oppress’d by reason of disproportionate Taxes, and those of the western Counties in particular; as they are generally in mean circumstances.
2. That no method is prescribed by Law for the payment of the Taxes of the Western Counties in produce (in lieu of a Currency) as is in other Counties within this Province; to the Peoples great oppression.
3. That Lawyers, Clerks, and other petitioners; in place of being obsequious Servants for the Country’s use, are become a nuisance, as the business of the people is often transacted without the least degree of fairness, the intention of the law evaded, exorbitant fees exacted, and the sufferers left to mourn under their oppressions.
4. That an Attorney should have it in his power, either for the sake of ease or interest, or to gratify their malevolence and spite, to commence suits to what Courts he pleases, however inconvenient it may be to the Defendant: is a very great oppression.
5. That all unlawful fees taken on Indictment, where the Defendant is acquitted by his Country (however customary it may be) is an oppression.
6. That Lawyers, Clerks, and others, extorting more fees than is intended by law; is also an oppression.
7. That the violation of the King’s Instructions to his delegates, their artfulness in concealing the same from him; and the great Injury the People thereby sustains: is a manifest oppression.

And for remedy whereof, we take the freedom to recommend the following mode of redress, not doubting audience and acceptance; which will not only tend to our relief, but command prayers as a duty from your humble Petitioners.

1. That at all elections each suffrage be given by Ticket & Ballot.
2. That the mode of Taxation be altered, and each person to pay in proportion to the profits arising from his Estate.
3. That no future tax be laid in Money, until a currency is made.
4. That there may be established a Western as well as a Northern and Southern District, and a Treasurer for the same.
5. That when a currency is made it may be let out by a Loan office (on Land security) and not to be call’d in by a Tax.
6. That all debts above 40s. and under £10 be tried and determined without Lawyers, by a jury of six freeholders, impaneled by a Justice, and that their verdict be enter’d by the said Justice, and be a final judgment.
7. That the Chief Justice have no perquisites, but a Sallary only.
8. That Clerks be restricted in respect to fees, costs, and other things within the course of their office.
9. That Lawyers be effectually Barr'd from exacting and extorting fees.
10. That all doubts may be removed in respect to the payment of fees and costs on Indictments where the Defendant is not found guilty by the jury, and therefore acquitted.
11. That the Assembly make known by Remonstrance to the King, the conduct of the cruel and oppressive Receiver of the Quit Rents, for omitting the customary ease and effectual method of collecting by distress, and pursuing the expensive mode of commencing suits in the most distant Courts.
12. That the Assembly in like manner make known that the governor and Council do frequently grant Lands to as many as they think proper without regard to Head Rights, notwithstanding the contrariety of His Majesties Instructions; by which means immense sums has been collected, and numerous Patents granted, for much of the most fertile lands in this Province, that is yet uninhabited and uncultivated, environed by great numbers of poor people who are necessitated to till in the cultivation of bad Lands whereon they hardly can subsist, who are thereby deprived of His Majesties liberality and Bounty: nor is there the least regard paid to the cultivation clause in said Patent mentioned, as many of the said Council, as well as their friends and favorites enjoy large Quantities of Lands under the above-mentioned circumstances.
13. That the Assembly communicates in like manner the Violation of His Majesties Instructions respecting the Land Office by the Governor and Council, and of their own rules, customs and orders, if it be sufficiently proved, that after they had granted Warrants for many Tracts of Land, and that the same was in due time survey'd and return'd, and the Patent fees timely paid into the said office; and that if a private Council was called on purpose to avoid spectators, and peremptory orders made that Patents should not be granted; and Warrants by their orders arbitrarily to have Issued in the names of other Persons for the same Lands, and if, when intreated by a solicitor they refuse'd to render so much as a reason for their so doing, or to refund any part of the money by them extorted.
14. That some method may be pointed out that every improvement on Lands in any of the Proprietors part be proved when begun, by whom, and every sale made, that the eldest may have the preference of at least 300 Acres
15. That all Taxes in the following Counties be paid as in other Counties in the Province (1-e) in the produce of the Country and that ware Houses be erected as follows (Viz.):

In Anson County at Islom Haley's Ferry Landing on PeDee River, Rowan and Orange at Cambleton in Cumberland County, Mecklenburg at _______ on the Catawba River, and in Tryon County at _______ on ______.
16. That every denomination of People may marry according to their respective Mode Ceremony and custom after due publication or Licence.
17. That Doct Benj. Franklin or some other known patriot be appointed Agent, to represent the unhappily state of this Province to his Majesty, and to solicit the several Boards in England:

Dated October ye gth 1769

John Snor
Isaac Armstrong
Wm. Thomson
Antho: Hutchins
Seamor Almond
Isaac Falconberry
Francis Smith
John Ryle
John Culpepper
John Jones Sr
Wm. Griffin Hogom
Richard Manser
John Watts
John Davis
Saml. Gaylord
Richard Sands
Jason Irol Hsinbrnu
Thom: Preslar
Thompson Culpepper
Daniel Culpepper
John Snider
Jno: Jeffery
Neal French
Jero Miller
Tirey Robinson
Gabril Daviss
Aquilla Jones
Thomas Tallant
James Denison
Wm. Raiford
John I. Merree
Geo Wilson
Robert Webb
Thomas Taylor
David Smith
James Barker
John Mims
John Brooks jun.
Wm. C. B. Bond
John Bond
Moses M. Tallant
Benj. Dumas
Joseph White
Wm. Sidden
Silvaunus Waker
John Smith Sondhill
David Dumas
Benjamin Smith
William Benton
Wm:: Coleman
Alex: McPherson
E: Pickett
Thomas Gowens
Jonathan Gowens
Stokey Yeamanos
Tho: Harper
John Johnson
James Upton
Jacob Watson
Isaac Belvis
Owen Slaughter
Richd: Leak
Charles Hines
John M:vlvally
Van Swearingen
William Hore
Joseph Martin
Thomas Nelson
William Burns
John Leveritt
Tho:lsis Williams
Wm:: Levertt
Jno: Williams
John Coleman
Meeager Edwards
Antho: Mathis
Fagan Gring
Samll Ratcliff
John Long
Charles Smith

James Bond
Abraham Pelyou
Jason Meadow Jr
Jason Meadow
Robert Broadway
Saml. Tonebergh
Samuel Flake
Tho: Baice
John Preslie
John Cartright
Tho: Lacy
John Jackson
Joseph French
William Newberry
Lennard Web
Julius Holley
John James Jun
John James Senf
Jimney James
Jonathan Helm
Tilmon Helm
Wm. Mins
Robert Smith
Zechariah Smith
John Smith
John Thomas
Wm: Burt
Edw: Smith
Elja Clark
John Clark
James Adams
Tho: Mason Jun
John Bennett
Jonathan Turner
Barnabee Skipper
George Skipper
John Jenkins
David Phelps
John McNish
John Cockerham
Proclamation of the Governor

North Carolina ss
By His Excellency William Tryon Esqr.

A Proclamation

Whereas a Sufficient Number of Members of the General Assembly of this Province have not appeared to Constitute a House, I do therefore issue this my Proclamation, hereby Proroguing the said Assembly until Saturday the 21st. of this Inst. October, then to meet at New Bern for the dispatch of Public business.

Given under my hand & the Great Seal &c at New Bern 19 Oct. 1769

Wm Tryon

Proclamation of the Governor

North Carolina ss
By His Excellency, William Tryon Esqr.

A Proclamation

Whereas the General Assembly Stands prorogued to this day I do therefore issue this my Proclamation hereby Proroguing the said Assembly until the 23d. of this Inst. October, then to meet at New Bern for the dispatch of Publick business

Given under my hand & the Great Seal &c. at New Bern 21 Oct. 1769.

Wm Tryon

By Command
John London D. Sec'y.