makes wise Men mad; they went to the Prison, opened the Door, took out Baldwin, and returned peaceably. ordering the Breach made to be well mended: which was done accordingly. Note, The Ground of the above Supposition (besides what has been offered) was this; a certain Gentleman of the adverse Party, discoursing concerning a certain bill to be exhibited in Chancery, relating to their Affairs with Elizabeth Town; declared, if they could once make their Matters bear, to bring in said Bill: it would put a Stop to Elizabeth Town's Proceeding, by Reason the Expence would be so great, they could never take it out, &c. Thus you have a brief Hint of the Grounds or Causes why People have been so exasperated: We will only add in a word what some of us has met with, set forth as a Reason for their sending home, viz. That the Invasion of our just Rights, Properties and Possessions, in and by the Oppressions and Frauds of the Proprietors, so called, is the only Spring of our Motion in the Matter of Complaint offered; it being notoriously known, how they impose upon, or rather deceive and beguile innocent, weak and ignorant Men, many and diverse Ways; and that when or after they, or some of them, have sold Lands to Persons under Colour of Right, &c. others under the like Pretence of Proprietie, have again, or afterwards, sold the same lands; whereby the Purchasers are not only frauded, but even the whole Country is in Confusion.

— Document No. 5 —

NATHANIEL BACON'S VERSION OF HIS REBELLION*

The account by Mrs. Bacon (née Mary Horsmanden) comes first, though dated a few days later than that of her husband. The form of abbreviation then in use is sometimes confusing until one gets acquainted with it, especially as the letter v substitutes for th-the, that, and them appearing as ye, yt, and ym, but being pronounced as though fully spelled out. The meanings of other abbreviations are rather obvious.

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A copy of Mrs. Bacon's letter . . . in Virginia, June ve 29th, 76, sent to her sister, & received the 26th of September, 1676. . . .

DEAR SISTER.

I pray God keep the worst Enemy I have from ever being in such a sad condition as I have been in since my former to the: occasioned by ve troublesome Indians, who have killed one of our Overseers at an outward plantation which wee had, and we have lost a great stock of cattle, which wee had upon it, and a good crop that wee should have made there, such plantation Nobody durst come nigh, which is a very great losse to us.

If you had been here, it would have grieved your heart to hear the pitiful complaints of the people, the Indians killing the people daily the Govern: not taking any notice of it for to hinder them, but let them daily doe all the mischief they can: I am sure if the Indians were not cowards, they might have destroied all the upper plantations, and killed all the people upon them; the Governour so much their friend, that hee would not suffer any body to hurt one of the Indians; and the poor people came to your brother to desire him to help against the Indians, and hee being so much concerned for the losse of his Overseer, and for the losse of so many men and women and children's lives every day, hee was willing to doe them all the good hee could; so hee begged the Governour for a commission in severall letters to him, that hee might goe out against them, but hee would not grant one, so daily more mischief done by them, so your brother not able to endure any longer, he went out without a commission. The Govern being very angry with him put out high things against him, and told mee that he would most certainly hang him as soon as hee returned, weh hee would certainly have done; but what for fear of

^{*} From "Bacon's Rebellion: Eggleston MSS," William and Mary College Quarterly Historical Magazine, Vol. IX (July, 1900), pp. 4-10.

the Governour's hanging him, and what for fear of the Indians killing him brought mee to this sad condicion, but blessed be God hee came in very well, with the losse of a very few men; never was known such a fight in Virginia with so few men's losse. The fight did continue nigh a night and a day without any intermission. They did destroy a great many of the Indians, thanks bee to God. and might have killed a great many more, but the Governt were so much the Indians' friend and our enemy, that hee sent the Indians word that Mr. Bacon was out against them, that they might save themselves. After Mr. Bacon was come in hee was forced to keep a guard of soldiers about his house, for the Govern would certainly have had his life taken away privately, if hee would have had opportunity; but the country does so really love him. that they would not leave him alone any where; there was not any body against him but the Govern and a few of his great men, which have gott their Estates by the Govern'; surely if your brother's crime had been so great, all the country would not have been for him, you never knew any better beloved than hee is. I doe verily believe that rather than hee should come to any hurt by the Governour or any body else they would most of them willingly loose their lives. The Govern has sent his Lady into England with great complaints to the King agt Mr. Bacon, but when Mr. Bacon's and all the people's complaints be also heard, I hope it may be very well. Since your brother came in hee hath sought to the Govern for commission, but none would be granted him, so that ye Indians have had a very good time, to doe more mischief. They have murdered and destroied a great many whole families since, and the men resolving not to goe under any but yor brother, most of the country did rise in Armes, and went down to the Govern, and would not stirr till hee had given a commission to yor brother weh hee has now done. He is made Generall of the Virginia Warr, and now I live in great fear, that hee should loose his life amongst them. They are come verry nigh our Plantation where wee live.

Mr. Bacon's acct of their troubles in Virginia by ye Indians, June ye 18th, 1676.

By an Act of State it was pvided for ye better security

of the country, That no Trade should be held with ye Indians, notwth standing weh our present Govern monopolized a trade wth ye Indians & granted licences to others to trade wth ym for weh hee had every 3rd skinne, which trading wth ye Indians has proved soe fatall to these pts of ye world, yt I feare wee shall bee all lost for this commerce having acquainted ye Indians or neighbours, but most inveterate Enemy wth our manner of living and disipline of warr; has also brought them generally to ye use of or Fire Arms wth such dexterity, yt orselves often hire ym to kill Deare; & they have allmost lost ye use of their bowes and arrows, & every body through connivance have for lucre sake supplied ym wth ammunition (though a prohibited commodity) yt they have been in a condition to punish us.

Things standing in this posture, they have entered into generall bloody warr wth all these pts of ye world, ye murders and depradations they have committed here are horrible and continuall, laying a great part of ye country desolate, and forcing the inhabitants to fly from theire dwellings to their ruine; ye Govern' (who from ye Neighbor Indians receives this Tribute & benefitt by ye trade) still ptecting ym for these many years agt ye people, & tho. ye complaints of their murdrs have been continuall yett hee hath connived at ye great men's furnishing ym with ammunition (weh by ye Law is death), and ye sad effects thereof. Now ye Govern having placed mee here in a place of trust, I thought it my duty to discharge my conscience in it, by introducing a looking after ye wellfare of the people here, they being poor, few and in scattered habitations on ye Frontiers & remote pt of ye country, nigh these Indians, who falling upon us (as well as other pts) & killing amongst ye rest, my Overseer and laying desolate a plantation of mine to my great lose of cattle & all my crop: I sent to ye Govern for a commission to fall upon ym, but being from time to time denied, and finding yt ye country was basely for a small and sordid gain betraied, & ye lives and fortunes of ye poor inhabitants wretchedly sacrificed, resolved to stand up in this ruinous gap; & rathr expose my life and fortune to all hazards, than basely desert my post, & by soe bad an example make desolate a whole country, in weh no one dared to stirr agt ye common Enemy, but came flying from ye Enemy and crowded together like sheep, leaving their plantations and stock a prey to ye Enemy.

Upon this I resolved to march out upon the Enemy wth wt volunteers I could yn gett, but by soe doing found yt I not onely lost ye Governour's favour, but exposed my verry life and fortune at home as well as abroad; for yt hee thou by mee and others often humbly requested, would by no means consent to my going out, being most unwilling yt point should bee handled, weh had been so long concealed; but considering ye necessity, I still pceeded, & returned wth a greater victory from sharper conflict than ever yett has been known in these pts of the world; for yt wth about 70 men onely wth engaged and stood by me (ye service being too hott for ye rest) we fell upon a town of ye Indians, consisting of 3 forts strongly mann'd, beginning our fight after midnight close at their port holes, & maintained it so all ye remainder of ye night, & in yt time burnt their king's forts, & all theirin. The fight continued till ye next day about 3 or 4 in ye afternoon wthout ceasing, in weh time their king making a sally was killed wth most of his men, soe yt wee reckned, wee destroyed about 100 men and 2 of their kings, besides women & children. This victory being ye greatest & agt 2 of their most valiant nations gave great satisfaction to ye people, but so enraged ye Govern vt I came home with greater danger yn I went out, for being putt out of ye Councell, I was chosen by ye country a Burgesse, but going down in my sloop was seized on, & my fellow Burgesse putt in irons: but immediately all ye country was in armes for my relief, such an appearance as has not been known in Virginia, threatening ye ruine of all if any thing were done to my prejudice, who had so freely stood up in their defence, upon weh by ye importunity of my cousin, & to shew my cleanesse from any ill intencons as also to reconcile ye people and the Govern, who found my party too universall, & himself left wth none but his Councell, ye people generally disaffecting his peeedings, hee resolved imediately for England; unlesse I to salve his hon would submitt, & doe soe generous an Act (as my cozen formed it) as to acknowledge yt my actions were unjust & unwarrantable, to beat up drums wthout ye Govern's leave, weh if I should doe, all should be well; whereupon I followed his advice not suspecting ye pfidious hatred of ye

Govern^r, who yett restored mee upon this to ye Councell, granted mee his pardon as fully as any ever was granted, and by one of the Burgesses proclaimed mee Generall to satisfy and disperse ye people, who were so satisfied herewth yt they all retired peaceably, but hee brok his word, & refused to signe my comission, weh ye people highly resented, expecting ye pformance of his word, & univrsally resolving to goe undr no other man; & thereupon all ye country immediately up in arms & their heat increasing by ye repetition of ye sad and bloody murthers just at or doors for wee are surrounded wth nations of Indians on all sides, except ye seaboard side of Virgina, so many yt none can guess at their number, who are now if not all a vast numbr of them confederated, & have for some time been in open wars wth us: ye stage and seat of ye war being now, & has for some time, nigh my doors, for you know Sr I have formerly intimated my vicinity to them, & yt as others did so I also had a mind to look into ye gainfulnesse of trading wth them. Till I saw into ye fatall consequences thereof to ye country, weh made mee become ye Indians' Enemy, who have only use ye trade to furnish themselves wth instrumts to destroy vs; you would wonder to see ve sad condition wee are in: ye Indians being every where seen, ye houses & plantacons Deserted, and all left a prey to ye Enemy, till wthin 3 miles of my dwelling, yet no man dared to stir or endeavor to destroy ye Indians because some of ym whom ye Govern and those licensed by him trade wth, are under his ptection, thou we find ym all alike, neither can we distinguish this fatall undistinguishable distinction of ve Governe, who only for ye gain sake has bridled all people, yt no man dare to destroy ye Indians, even in ye psuit of murder untill I adventured to cutt ye knott, weh made ye people in generall look upon mee as ve countries friend; for vt no man could pceive in my manner, Estate, or manner of living, how any indirect end, as levelling or rebellion, could make me desirous to exchange my fortune for worse; altho by the Govern' & some other of his creatures, such terms were putt upon mee, and ye Govern' being much incenced, and jealous of ye people's inclinations to mee, resolved after ye people were quietly dismissed, not only to deny my comission, but to take mee: and for the former, upon my servts report yt he saw an Indian in ye way, ye Govern caused

him to bee imprison'd & endeavoured to psuade ye house yt this report was only a plott to amuse ye people, & tho ye house gave little credence to ye Govern's story, yet he took occasion from hence, not to signe my commission, upon weh I desired his permission to goe home, & took a civill leave, but hee taking ye advantage of my late departure, caused mee to be besett both by water, and land, wth a designe to murder mee, weh a friend of mine acquainted mee wth. I took ye next horse, and went away alone. I was noe sooner gone but psued and searched for. They feeling the very beds for mee, seized on my Servants in Town, imprisoned them, but finding yt I was gone they were dismissed. Vpon my return home without a comission, this strange disappointment of ye people, putt all in armes again, in weh posture they went down to Town to expect ye pformance of ye Governrs promise, who then confirmed to ye people their desire, and has sent to England to acquaint his Maty of ye reasons and grounds of our distraccons & of his being now satisfied of my intentions, as you will further understand by his letter directed to his Maty from ye Governour and grand assembly. How long this fair weather will last I cannot tell, but doe earnestly desire wee may have so fair a representation in England, as ve countries complaints may be audited, either by agents from hence to England or there by commrs from thence: & his Maty & ye world will quickly pceive how ye case stands between the Governour, and the country.

Sr I am at present engaged in providing for safety of ye country, in all pts, having ye care of ye warre upon my hands; therefore I hope you will please to pardon my manner of Writing &ca.