

rity omitted or refused to execute the Trust committed to them it ought to be made known to their constituents that the power might be placed in more safe Hands. That the exertions of the Letter Writer had already produced in part of the Council of Virginia distrust and suspicion of you: That we had the most convincing proofs upon all occasions of your integrity, Vigilance and Activity in the common cause: And therefore esteemed it our duty to insist that justice might be done, to your injured characters. It was argued against the motion that the letter was confidential, that it had raised no suspicions in the congress of your zeal or integrity, because they had reposed the highest confidence in you, immediately afterwards by the recommendation sent by the return of the express. And that the mischief which would be produced by communicating the letters would be greater than any benefit which could be expected from it And that the President was not obliged to produce the letter for the Congress to take order thereon, Altho it had been read in the House Upon the question whether the President should be requested to lay the letter before congress five colonies voted in the neg^e three in the affirm^a and one divided. We conceived this treatment to you & our province to be cruel and ungerous to the last degree, the obligation to secrecy expired yesterday and we immediately determined to give you such a state of this Transaction as our memories supply us with; and M^r Johnson committed to writing what passed on the first day. We this morning waited on M^r Hancock to demand the letter, but he refused to see us, Thus the affair rests at present, & as we cannot delay communicating it to you longer, We have ordered an express immediately to set out for Annapolis and have not the least doubt but you will take the proper steps to vindicate your Honour against the foul Calumny of M^r Purviance who has dared to detract from your Patriotism & spirit. We are determined at all hazards to support you, and tho very sorry for the occasion hope you have complied with the recommendation of Congress, by securing M^r Eden and his papers. If he has conducted himself fairly an Examination will do him credit if otherwise we ought to know it and guard against his unfriendly endeavours. We shall write you by the Post and are Gen^t

Y^r most ob^t Ser^{ts} Th. Johnson Jun^r
 Phil^a T. Stone. R. Alexander.

Thursday 18 April 1776.

Original.

[Smallwood to Council.]

April 18th 1776.

Gentlemen. Captain Adams, yesterday Morning took