

Charles County J^r. 25. April 1770. The above and within Deposition was taken before me the Subscri-
ber One of his Lordships Justices for the County afo^r. before John Winter.

Benjamin Branson aged forty two years or thereabouts being sworn on the Holy Evangel of
Almighty God Deposeth that he hath lived several years near Sq^r Lees and frequently went to his
House as a Neighbour and for the Year past lived within three hundred Yards of his Jail and
this Deponent further saith that some short time after the Prisoners were removed from M^rs
Smiths Jail to Squire Lees that John Doncastle told this Deponent that he was very much pleased
with his Change from Smiths Jail to Squire Lees for he had come from Hell to Heaven and
blesed his God that he had once more got among Christians - Sometimes after this Deponent called
at Squire Lees and Squire Lee according to Custom asked me if I would drink a Dram or some
Cyder, I in a merry Humour used freedom enough to say I had not eat my Breakfast, M^r Lee
laughed and said I must wait till it was drefft - the Squire asked me if a cut of Bread and
Cheese would not do? I answered very well, which was ordered to be brought and M^r Lee at the
same time went out and presently returned with a Plate of Fresh Beef hashed as good as ever
I saw - M^r Lee told me with a Smile that she had done for me what she had never done for her-
self for she had stole that Breakfast for me out of the Prisoners Provision upon this I told M^rs
Lee that was the way she fed her Prisoners I had almost got my own Consent to be a priso-
ner too - and Squire Lee made Answer they should never live worse if they behaved them-
selves well - frequently after that when I was at Squire Lees I have seen exceeding good Din-
ners carried into the Jail such as good fat Beef and Pork both Roast and Boiled and Saw-
Sallads Clean Table Lining Plates Knives and Forks and Cyder with their Dinner - I never
heard any Complaint till after there was an attempt to break the Jail when Doncastle
Wright and some others used to Lavish at the Family and would send very abusive Messages
into the House and used Squire Lees Housekeeper in a very blackguard manner whenever
she went to carry them Victuals or any thing else - This Deponent further saith he was at
Squire Lees last Fall and Joseph Harrisons Wife was there and M^r Harrison was saying
she wanted to go into the Jail to her Husband Squire Lee declined granting her Permission
and gave for Reason that it was late in the Night and by such indulgencies the Prisoners
had endeavoured to ruin the Sheriff by breaking the Jail with some Tools that were given
in by some of the Mens Wives In the mean time M^r Wrights Wife came in and asked me for
a Nights Quarters with that the Women went away and in a short time after I took my leave
of Squire Lee, as I went by the Jail Doncastle asked me if I had any Meat and Bread in
my Pocket for they were Starving alive, when I came home I was mentioning to M^r Harrison
and M^r Wright what Doncastle said and they both said they were very sure there was no Starv-
ing there for they saw a great Quantity of Meat and Bread carried to the Jail that evening, the
Prisoners Wives and Wrights Mother often lodged at my House and they all said there was after-
wards great plenty of Goods Provisions And this Deponent further saith that Wrights Mother
was often complaining of her Sons undutifull Behaviour to her, and said her Son wanted her
to make over her Land to him which was the only Support she had but she said she would
be very cautious of doing that and further said with Tears in her eyes if she did he would
use her with no better Treatment than he formerly did for he had often times taken her
by the Throat and choaked her till she fell down and then he would call her a Damned
Bitch and say that if she was not his Mother how he would use her, I have heard his
Mothers Neighbours say she was a very honest worthy Woman, and especially M^r Brooke says
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