

To his Excellency Francis Bernard Esq^r Governour
& Captain General in Chief in and over his Maj.^{es}
Province of the Mafsachusetts Bay in New England and
to the Honourable his Maj.^{es} Councill and the hon.^{ble} House
of Representatives in Gen.^l Court Afsembled

The Answer of the Indians of Chappaquiddick in
the County of Dukes County to the Petition of John Norton
of Edgartown in the County afores.^d as Agent to the
Proprietors of s.^d Chappaquiddick humbly Sheweth
That Some Years Since Your Respondents Petitioned your
Excellency and Honnours for Relief as we Groaned under
Certain Opprefions from the ~~H~~ English Inhabitants of
Edgartown and More Especially from Some persons
that had built houses and Enclosed land on s.^d Island
upon which a Committee of the Gen.^l Court was sent
to Examine into the Premifes who after a very Diligent
Search and Thorough Examination into that affair
Reported that the purchases on s.^d Island was Illegal
~~prays~~ notwithstanding which it Seems that no Relief is
yet granted unto Your Respondents and we have Labourd
Ever Since under the Same Grievances as we did before
our Petitioning or Rather have those Greivences Encreas^d
as the little finger of the present Occupiers of that
Island ~~is~~ ^{is} seems thicker than their Fathers Loyns. but as if Nothing
would Satisfie the Inhabitants of Edgartown Short of our
entire & Speedy Extirpation they have now by their ~~G~~ Agent
petitioned to have those Illegal purchases Confirmed ~~upon~~ ^{unto} them
knowing that if this be Done we cannot Subsist [~~crossout~~] unlesf
we can live without food as the purchaser we Suppose Include
almost all the Tillage land worth planting but if there be
any left we cannot fence the same for our wood is taken
up almost by the purchasers morver if the above ^{mentioned} purchases
be confirmed we know not why the English Proprietors and
Inhabitants may not come to a Division and Enclose Separatly
wheras we not having wherwithall to fence can keep no
creatures in the Summer Morver the Beaches being purch
ased [~~crossout~~] Already we can keep no Creatures in the winter
Season for the Salt Medows being heretofore Ceeded to the
English by the Gen.^l Court (which the Proprietors have
Strictly adher.^d to So far as Any thing was Granted to them
but not Regarding the Same any further) and we Not having
Medows and Obliged to Improve the Beaches in the winter which
if Enclosed Separatly Our horses mush Perish. for these reasons
and Many others we [~~crossout~~] pray that Y.^r Excellency and Hon.^{rs} would
not Grant the Prayer of the Petitioner as it must prove the
Ruin of the poor Indians in a very Short time. Your Respondents

[verso:

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Observe that the Petitioner takes notice of an Extraordinary prohibition upon them from purchasing of those Lands which they had a liberty of purchasing before, notwithstanding an Act of the Province confirming to the Inhabitants of Marthas vineyard Such priviledges this however it may be complained of by Others it Seems cannot be complained of by the Petitioner as the English and Indians at that time it Seems gave all up to be Settled upon them in Such A Manner as the Gen.^{ll} Court should think fit who accordingly Settled it upon the best Evidence then to be had undoubtedly for ^{^it} cannot be supposed that so wise a body of men as constituted that Court would have So ordered that affair as they did were it not left to them. Your Respondents beg leave further to Observe upon the Petition that the Pet.^r Suggest to Your Excellency and Hon.^{rs} that from the fewness of the Indian Inhabitants the Lands are Grawn over ^{^with} [~~crossout~~] wild Grafs we are not Able to see to what purpose this was Sugested unless it be to Shew that it would be no great Matter to take an Estate from a family that are so Small that they cannot Improve the Same to the best Advantage and give the Same to those who should have Courage Enough to ask for it we humbly conceive that what Lands the proprietors of Edgartown and others have purchased Since the Award Confirmed by the Gen.^{ll} Court long Since and which ~~confirmation~~ ^{^award} must be be Supposed to be awarding to what was then left to them to Determine are Illegal and we are Certain that ~~the pre~~ if the present Petition be Granted and the purchasers Confirm^d we Shall be Slaves to the s.^d Proprietors or must leave our Lands those few parcels yet unpurchased as we cannot Improve the Same and flee to Some other parts where we may live in peace and free from vexatious Law Sutes which we have been so mutch worried with of Late years from the † English Settlers of Chappaquiddick

As to the Other parts of the present Petition as they Do not Relate to us we think we have nothing to Do to answer them it will not matter us (if we are to be Ruin.^d) whether our Destroyers ~~who~~ be Just or Unjust with Each other in Shuring their booty or not upon the whole we pray that the Ancient Award Relative ~~thi~~ to this Island may be strictly adher.^d to that Some relief May be Granted to Y^r Respondn^{ts} agreeable to our former Petition and Y^r Respondents us in Duty bound Shall ever pray
Chappaquidick Nob 16th 1767

[folio 2:

marks

Joel x Joel mark
x beniamin naytake
Beniamin x naytake Juner
John x Joel
Benikiah x Joel
James x Roppen
George x Johnson
mark x kottoode
mark x kottoode
John x Joel Juner
Ebenezer x kottoode
Belick x Simons
Job x wannai
Samuel Peters
georg Johnson juner
Zechariah howwoswe
Beniah x mosses

marks

gerushea x koudeye
Sarah x Jethro
patience x dach
Bethiah x dach
patience x [*erasure*: Egel] Ekae
Ruth x wannoi

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and we Received your Letter in ^{the} Nob^r 10th Day 1767

[verso:

Chappaquidic Indians
Answer to M.^r Nortons
Petition ~

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