To the Rt. Hon.ble Sr. William Berkeley Knt. Governr. & Capt. Genll. of Virg.a
& with the Hon.ble Councill of State.

The petition of Phillip Cowtn a Negro, In all humility) Sheweth;
That yo. pet.r being a servt. to Mr. Anye Beazlye latt of Fumb.y — County
widdow dec.d the said Mrs. Beazlye made her last will & testament in writing
under her hand & seale, bearing datt the 9th. day of April Anno Dom. 1664. and
amongst other things, did order, will, & appoint, that yo. pet.r by the then name
of Negro Boy phillip, should serve her Cousin Mr. Humphrey Stafford, the terme of
Eight yeares then next ensueing, and then should enioy his freedome, & be paid
three barrells of Corne & a suit of Clothes, As by the said will apparell, Doune
after the making of which will, the said Mrs. Beazlye dyed, this life, and yo.
pet.r did continue & abide with the said Mr. Stafford (with whome he was ord.d
by the said will to live) some yeares, and then the said Mr Stafford sold the
remainder of yo. pet.rs time, to one Mr. Charles Lucas, with whome yo. pet.r also
continued, doeing true & faithfull service, but the said Mr. Lucas cutting yo.
pet.rs service longer then of right it was due, did not att the expiration of the
said Eight yeares, discharge yo. pet.r from his service, but compelled him to serve
three yeares longer then the time sett by the said Mrs. Beazlye will, and then
not being willing yo. pet.r should enioy his freedome, did contrary to all honesty
& good conscience, with threats & a high hand, in the time of yo. pet.rs service
with him, and by his confederacy with some wrong, compell yo. pet.r to sett his
hand to a writeing, which the said Mr. Lucas now saith, is an Indenture for
twenty yeares, and forced yo. pet.r to acknowledge the same in the County
Court of Warwick.

Now for that may itt please yo. Hon.r yo. pet.r was att the time of the
making the said sort writeing, in the service of the said Mr. Lucas and
never discharged from the same, the said Mr. Lucas alwaies vniustly pleading
that yo. pet.r was to serve him three yeares longer, by an order of Court, wch.
is vntrue, which protestes of the said Mr. Lucas will appeare to yo. Hon.r by
testimony of wrong of good creditt.

Yo. Pet.r therefore most humbly prayeth yo. Hon.r to order that the said
Writeing sett forth from him be made void, and that the said Mr Lucas
make him Satisfaction for the said three yeares service above his time
and pay him Corne & Clothes with rest of suite.

And yo. pet.r (as in duty bound) shall ever
pray &c.

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37 [16 JUNE 1675]