Copy 52941-8

My Dear Lord,

I gladly embraced this Opportunity to inform you, that We have had three French Men of War here, & no sooner did they arrive (Which was on the 31st. of Janry last) but my Brother who has been at France, instantly went on Board them (Which was nigh 2 o'Clock in the Afternoon) & gladly received them, & welcomed them here; the French Commodore inquired of him concerning me, & whether I was here or Still in England; my Brother informed him I was here; accordingly he desired his compliments both to my Father & me, hoping my Father would let one of his Gentlemen come a Shore, to procure him a Sea-Stock, & that he had a Messenger on Board from the King of France, Who had Business of great Importance to inform my Father of, Provided he would grant him admittance to acquaint him of the Same: at 7 o'Clock in the Evening my Brother came a Shore, and acquainted my Father of the Same; Who readily Answered he Should be very glad to receive him & accordingly the Next morning Sent a Canoe, to inform the French

Commodore

Commodore of the Same, Who Sent two Lieutenants and the French Messenger ashore in their Barge; and When they saw my Father, they informed him, they Came from the French King, Who returned him thanks for all his favours done him, & for taking Care of their Merchant Ships, but particularly the Care taken of the French Gentleman, Who was here in the War, & not delivering him into the hands of the English; And at the Same time, they acquainted my Father that they had considerable Presents for him from the French King, Who desired to know, Whether the whole Coast, & Kingdom of the Phantees, Was the Property of the English, for that the English acquainted them, it Was, & that they had bought it, & them, With all the Cattle &c. thereon, for Which reason they said, the English Would not let them trade here; at the Same time they desired, my Father would inform them, to the Truth thereof. Who answered, that they Were not Slaves to the English, but that his fore-Fathers, & his present Generation were English, and my Father Likewise informed them, that the English do, & always have paid him annually, for the Rent of the Land, besides Sending him other Considerable Presents, So that the English Live by us, & We by them.

The before mentioned Gentlemen, by my Father's order, Were entertained by my Brother, in

in my Apartment (he having no place capable for their reception) for three Days, at the Expiration of which, the two Lieutenants Went on Board, With no other Answer from my Father than the above; but the Messenger Stayed under pretence of buying a Sea Stock: the 5th day he desired my Father would Send for all the Chief Capashires in the Kingdom, for that he had Something to relate, & likewise Something to present them, from the King of France: accordingly my Father Assembled them together & the French Messenger, Devided among them 60 Hanchors of Brandy, Each containing 14 Gallons, at the Same time acquainting them, that he had Something considerable to present them With, besides the Brandy; at which the Capashires told him before my Father, that they would meet on the morrow & hear concerning What he had farther to Say from the King of France, & So the Assembly broke up; and at 9 o'Clock the Same Evening the above Messenger presented my Father, With 4 Very rich Pieces of Brocade (Viz^t) one Red, & two Green, Trimmed With Gold, & the other a pink Colour, trimmed With Silver Lace, Each containing about 18 Yards in Length & 3/4 in Breadth; & Likewise with a brace of Pistols richly mounted With Gold & Silver; two rich Gold-laced Hats With a fine Feather in Each, & two rich Searlet Cloakes Embroidered With Gold; For all Which my Father thanked him;

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not Suspecting in the least (at that time) any of their Designs, in Endeavouring to Settle a Trade & Build a Fort here, but that the Presents were Sent him, in Gratuity, for taking Care of their Merchant Ships &c as mentioned before: But to his Great Surprise, the Next day, When the Capashires and other Chiefs of the Kingdom were Assembled together, the Messenger presented them With 40 Hanchors of Brandy, containing as before, & having got the Principal Capashires down in a piece of Paper (Which I presume he brought with him from France) to about the Number of 40 or 50, he Called them up in his Room (my Father being present) and presented Each, With a Laced Hat & a Feather (Some Lace being gold & some silver) & With a piece of Rich Brocade (Some of a Red & Some of a green & others of a Pinch Colour) Each Embroidered either With Silver or Gold; (tho' not so Rich as those presented to my Father) & Lastly presented them Each, With a Cane mounted With gold; & Still continues to give trifling presents, to them, & the People, every day, Such as Brandy & Cloth; So that he may excite the Phantees in his favour, acquainting them at the Same time, that he brought it from the King of France, Who he said, desired to know of them, Whether they Loved the French, as well, as the English, &

that

that, if they did, he would acquaint the King of France; Who would build a Fort, and trade with them; to which they replied; that they Liked the French very well & if they would give them, Five Thousand Bendees (Each being Sixteen Shillings Sterling) for ground-Rent, they would let them build a Fort & Trade With them; & assist them, as much as possible; (but they are afterwards to pay annually a Sum as yet undetermined). My Father Surprised at this, asked the French Messenger, Why he had deceived him so far & not told to him, his intention before; he answered, that as it Was Matter of importance, he thought it proper, to make it known at once, before the Whole Country; My Father replied (angerly) to him, Why had not you brought a Pole-Ax, & cut of my head, Sooner than Served me So.

The Next Day they Assembled together again, (by my Father's Leave) as the Frenchman Said, he had Something more to relate to them: at Which time, the above Messenger presented them With Brandy as before, desiring to know a further Answer from them, that he might acquaint the French Commodore; The Phantees told him, they would Show him, the place, they intended to give them, & accordingly they did, (Which is

between

between Annamaboe & Agga) & the French Man said, he hoped, they would let him have a large Spot of ground, which might serve them to build a Castle, & for other uses; accordingly the Capashires, with a great Number of People went, & shewed the French Man, the Place, intended for him, at which the Messenger was well pleased, it being very convenient, & situated between two Hills, so that they might build a Fort in the Valley (which is of itself a rising ground) & one on each Hill, as the French Man proposed to them, at viewing the same: about 200 Yards from this Place, is a narrow Lake, which comes down 2 Miles or more, from the Country, (but the Water thereof is not good, by reason the Salt Water in rough Weather, beats into it) & the Phantees told him, as they were ingenious People, they might enlarge it to a River, or Creek, by joining it to the Sea; which would be convenient for them, in Landing their goods in the Country, & for other uses; which the French Man approved of, & was well pleased at; and asked the Phantees, whether he might not Pitch his Flag there, and immediately begin building; The Phantees replied; We will first consult John Currantee, accordingly they came home, & informed my Father, of all their Proceedings, & asked him, whether the French might pitch

their

their Flag & begin building; My Father replied: No, Why are you for giving up the Place, for Which the English pay Ground-Rent; The Phantees replied; they were ready to give it up, for that the English sends a Flag every Year, to hoist on the ruined Forts of Annamaboe, Agga & Innecient (Which accordingly they hoist) but have not allowed them, for these Seven Years past, the Presents & other Privileges, they formerly enjoyed; and that according to Custom, Several Capashiers went up to Cape-Coast Last Christmass, & as usual presented the Governor, With Sheep & other Trifles; at the Same time enquiring of him, why he would not allow them, the Rights, which their Fore-Fathers, & present Generation have enjoyed, and that they hoist an English Flag at Annamaboe, because they are English, in order for English Merchant Ships to come and deal with them (they respecting us the Same, as When we had a Fort), but Contrary to Custom, they Stop them at Cape-Coast, & not admit them, to come to Annamaboe, to trade as Usual, Which (they told him) is the Support of our Kingdom, & by Which we Ship off, our Gold, Elephants Teeth & poor People's Wool, Yams, Corn &c^a which was the only Support & Maintenance of Us; & they demanded of the Governor, that Since he had deprived them of it,

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he would let them know the Reason: The Governor Answered them; are not you ashamed to come with your complaints about this. for I must trade as well as you with them; and that if they would come to him, about building a Fort, he would give them an Answer; The Phantees replied; you know we trade with you, to load your Company's Ship's & Sell you Slaves for that Purpose, and after we have laden them, you Stop every Merchant Ship, & trade with them likewise (not Suffering them to come to Annamaboe) by which you ruin us: for our poor People, cannot Sell off their Wool, Yarns &c. on that account, & for them, to travel with such a heavy Burthen, by Land, every day to cape Coast, to trade (being nine Miles or more) they could not; & to hire a Canoe, to come by Water they could not afford it: The Governor replied, that he must trade as well as them, & dismissed them, with only 4 Gallons of Brandy, & ever after, would not look at them, nor make them the Presents, the Capashires always use to have; telling them to go home, & plant Cotton-Trees, and When they bore, to bring it to him, & he would send it over to England and order it, to be made up, convenient for them, as they Should direct; and Likewise told them, that every one would then know the

Bounds

Bounds of their own Land; the Phantees replied; We never yet planted Cotton, but have always had Cloth, & all other necessaries by our trading With them, in Slaves, Gold, Elephant's Teeth &c. and Likewise told the Governor, that from hence forward, they would never come to Cape Coast more, nor accept of any favours from them, whilst they Lived, for that they were considerable Men, and had Money & Slaves to trade with other Nations, Which would maintain them.

After the Phantees had made this Speech (Which is all too true) they told my Father, that, that was the Reason of their giving the French Liberty to Build and trade with them, & that otherwise they must Starve, and that the English had used them ill from age to age past; Which (they said) they patiently bore with, as owning themselves English, & did assist them, not suffering any other Nation, to use them ill on this Coast; & (they said) after all, we are even now willing for the English to trade with us, & build a Fort, and that the French should likewise do the Same. All the Capaishiers & the Majority of Common-People in the Kingdom, do Unanimously (at present) approve of them, more than of the English.

My

My Father answered them, that he had been used very well by the English, in Educating me (his Son) in England, & by shewing me great respect, and told the Capashires punctually; that he would not let the French hoist a Flag, or lay any Foundation for building a Fort here, till such time as I had wrote to England, to you, of all that had passed, who I don't doubt will acquaint His Royal Majesty of the Same; that the French might be timely defeated, in their Attempt of building a Fort, by sending a Fleet of His Majesty's Ships to prevent their Designs, they having promised to come again in 16 Months time, or less, With proper Store Ships & Ships of War, to defend them in building their intended Castle; & they have now carried with them over to France, 6 or 7 of the Chief Capashire's Sons (the Capashires having Consented) in order to Educate them, & at their coming here again, are to bring them back, promising at the Same time, to bring great Presents for the Whole Country, besides the forementioned Money, to pay for the Ground Rent.

My Noble Lord, the French Messenger (before mentioned) Who was here so long & brought With him, all necessaries for Staying here till the Ships return from France, Was defeated in that design of his; my Father having

having by my persuasion, sent him on Board, just as they were ready to Sail; at the Same time, promising me, that the French Should never Settle here, or go to build a Fort, provided there were English Ships out, to keep them off by sea, which if there is not (the Phantees Country having very Considerable Capatheires) they may let them Settle here, & my Father in vain Strive to resist them.

My Dear Lord, When I first understood, the Designs of the French, I made it my utmost Endeavour, to defeat the Same, & wrote to the Governor of Cape Coast, to send me Some Liquor, to gain the Affections of the Phantees Stronger to the English, & Likewise for Powder (that after having won the Phantees affections) to hinder the French from coming ashore, by firing on Them, having 8 Pieces of Cañon here, which my Father made use of last Year, and drived the French Off, but my Request was to little Purpole, for they only sent me a Bottle of Brandy, Containing about three gallons, which was too Little, to gain the affections of the People at this time, and at which my Father & Self were Surprised at, and he ordered it, to be sent back again (With about a quarter of a Barrel of Powder, they

Likewise

Likewise sent, and which was not enough to Load all the Guns) to Cape Coast, & to tell the Governor, that it was a Shame to use the English Nation so, Especially at this time, When the French Were Over-powering the Phantees With Brandy, & other Presents, in order to alienate their Affections from them: But My Lord, I thought it not Convenient, to Send it back again to Cape-Cast, Leatt the Phantees Should see the Same, & So cast their Reproachfull Jokes on the English, but I dismissed the Messenger, with a Letter to the Governor, that it was a Shame, & too Little, to Send; And My Lord, to gain the People's Affections, I instantly Sold two Slaves (Which were given me among other Presents at my Arrival on this Coast of Africa) to Capn. Studd of the Angola, from Newfoundland, for two Pipes of Rum, one containing 115. & the other 113. Gallons, Which I took Care, to Distribute among the Phantees, daily, in order to quell as much as possible their tumultuous Riot. Being grieved to think, the English Should be like to Lose their Right; the fatigue I took & being troubled Much to See, the People's Affections drawing to the French, threw me for five Days into a violent Fever, in Which time, my good Friend Mr. Roberts, came to See me, and Stayd two Days, administring Consolation to me, & my Father often sent

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to me, & desired I would comfort myself, for that he would act the Part of a true Englishman; & as soon as the Phantees were a little appeased, would endeavour to send the French Ships away, which was a great consolation to me, in my sickness; & I bless god, am now perfectly recovered: In my illness the French Commodore sent often to know how I did, & when I was a little recovered, desired my Company on Board, I acquainted the Governor at Cape Coast of the Same, who advised me by no means to go on board, neither would my conscience let me, however, he sent ashore two rich Coats, Gold Laced, & a Hat & Feather, which the French Messenger presented to me, but I told him, I did not want to buy it, having already sent to England for Clothes, & other necessaries for my use; to which he replied; he did not want to sell it to me, but desired I would accept of it, as a Present from the King of France; I replied (only by seeing them) they were too big for me; to which he said, he would send on board for a Taylor, & have them altered; I thanked him (but refused them) telling him, I Expected some from England that would fit me, & that I had sufficient, to last me till they came: But my Brother accepted of them

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a Scarlet coat, trimmed with gold, and a brown Silk Coat & Waistcoat, trimmed with Silver, a gold Laced Hat & Feather, with a Sword Silver mounted, & gold Belt, & likewise Several Shirts, handkerchiefs & Pairs of Shoes, all very rich, and he promised to bring him more at his coming again, & Said I would See, What a Present the King would Send me next year, tho' I did not like the French, Some of their Lieutenants Said the Same to me, who have been ashore here; But their Bribes Shall never blind me, tho' all the Phantees call me a great Fool, for not accepting the Presents, & Said I never Should get So rich ones, by the English.

I was greatly overjoyed, to See three English Men of War come here, Which I hope will be the means of defeating their Attempts.

I have been very well entertained on Board Capt.n Buckle of the Assistance two or three Times (by Which Ship this present Writing will be conveyed) who Saluted me with Guns at my return; Likewise I have been honoured with his (and the other two English Captains) company ashore, and drank his Majesty's Health in Palm Wine, out of a Silver Cup, (Which my Father had presented him from His Majesty by Capt.n Buckle) according to my Fathers desire, in the mean Time firing our Cannon.

My

My Father gives His Duty to His Royal Majetty, and desires he would send with all possible Dispatch, Ships with proper officers, to build a Fort here; by which means the French King's Scheme will be frustrated, & my Father will use his utmost Endeavours, and assist in building the said Work, & will likewise give orders, for getting Shells ready to burn for Lime, by the time the English Ships can arrive on the Coast, as Likewise Stone, and every thing that is necessary for the building of the Fort, Which I hope His Majetty will consider of; and send Ships, or otherwise we cannot prevent the French King's Design, as he will, and has in a great measure gained the Affections of the Phantees by bribing them.

Thus My Lord, I have done my Duty to you, and have given all the Intelligence I possibly could, concerning the French, and always shall be proud, to serve His Royal Majetty, as a Loyal Subject, and do Wish it had been in my Power, to Avert the First Design of the French, in coming here; and hindered them, even from a Possibility of attempting to build a Fort, Which do assure Your Lordship, Would give me the Greatest Pleasure.

My Lord

My Lord, Please to send by the First Opportunity, two Suits of Clothes (Each Coat having a Shoulder-knot, which is my present Ware) One Gold, & the other Silver Lace, and agreable for this Country; the Colour of which shall leave to your own Taste; and likewise a few Shirts, Stockings, Shoes, & Table Linen, and a Gold laced Hat. Direct them to me here, or Mr. Mellwin present Governor of Cape Coast, Whom I shall pay for the Same.

My Father gives his Compliments to You, and assures You, he will still be True to the English, hoping not to be made ashamed thereof; Please My Lord to give my Compliments to Your Worthy Lady, and the Young Ladies, & likewise to the Black Lady, to Doctor Kedan, & Doctor Creaton, and all my good Friends, and Believe me to be, what I Subscribe Myself

My Dr. Lord.

His Majestty's Dutifull & Loyal Subject, & your Lordship's Very Humble Servant

William Ansah Sessaracoa.

Anamaboe
Febry 20th 1762.

P. S. My Compliments to Mr. James to whom I am indebted for my Writing, Who I hope You will be mindfull of.

a Copy of a Letter
from William
Ansah Sessaracoa
at Anamaboe,
to the E. of Halifax
Dated Febry 20th 1752.