Thomas Smithson for their Speaker who humbly excused himself by Reason of Sickness and other disabilities to whom his Excellency by Answer manned that tho he might take him at his Word yet having Considered that seing the House had made Choice of him to serve in that Station he would not excuse him whereupon Mr Speaker Cleared the Lobby he might at all times have freedom of Speech and Access to his Person and was w[illegible] he might expect the same always prope and Convenient

Afterwards his Excellency was pleased to express himself in the following words

Honourable Gentlemen

God Almighty having been pleased by his Majesty's inimitable Valour and Conduct to Restore an Honourable Peace to his own Kingdoms and Dominions as well as to his Confederates

I think we are in all duty bound to keep a Solemn day of thanksgiving in this his Majesty's province as we are capable Concerning which I do not in the least doubt but you Agree with me as also in signing a most dutyful and loyal Address to his most Sacred Majesty upon this Occasion and I judge this a proper time to have read to you their Excellency's the Lords Justices Proclamation for publishing the peace between his Majesty and the French King with the several Articles thereof as also the right Honourable the Lords Commissioners for Trade and foreign Plantations their letter to me Concerning the said Proclamation [which being read his Excellency further added]

Mr Speaker I here give you his Majesty's most Gracious speech to both Houses of Parliament on Friday the third of November 1697 and by the latter part of it you will find how extraordinary all of us are who have the Good Fortune of being subjects to so Great a King

Gentlemen His Majesty's Royal Commission and Instructions to me pursuant to some of them by the advice and Consent of his Majesty's honourable Council and the late House of Delegates I have already on his Majesty's behalf passed several laws and Ordinances and I hope that by the divine Assistance you will Agree to present such others as are still wanting and shall be Conformant to the Merit by which you are here met that I may pass them likewise

And when you Gentlemen of the House of Delegates are ready I shall Order to be laid before you the particulars especially concerning the Church the Indians the Militia the School about altering the Winter County Courts and a Certain method of holding Assemblies

Their lordships the Lords Justices Proclamation on for publishing the peace between his Sacred Majesty and the French King

The Articles of the peace and the right Honourable the Lords of the Council for trade and Foreign Plantations letter with their directions to his Excellency for publishing the said Peace within this his Majesty's province being read in full Assembly at the same time all the Ships in the Harbour discharged their Great Guns

His Excellency afterwards being pleased to give the whole Assembly a General Entertainment where all imaginable Joy for such happy news was expressed in drinking his Majesty's health

At a Council in a General Assembly met and held at the Port of Annapolis the 11th day of March 169⅞ In the tenth year of his Majesty's Reign &c

Present

His Excellency Francis Nicholson Esq Captain General &c

Colonel Henry Jowles — Col George Robotham

Colonel John Addison — Thomas Brooks Esq

Produced by his Excellency and read a Commission under the Broad Seal of England directed to several of his Majesty's honourable Council Impowering them to administer