Washington Dec 21st 1843

My Dear Sir

I am very much obliged to you for the information in your favor of yesterday. Bacon's attack upon Roberts is copied into several papers, & his writings & lectures in New York have greatly disturbed some of our friends & may have among those who do not know him, or the history of his connexion with the Society, an injurious influence.

Strange to say, I cannot find the documents, I desired in regard to the McGuire affair, & indeed, if I am not mistaken, it occurred during Mechlin's absence in the United States, although I recollect his authority was plead in its justification. My recollections of the accounts we received of it, at the time, and what I have been told of it, by colonists, coincide with yours. Pray obtain and read Bacon's numbers. There are three out, & I think you will find the

The squadron first proceeded to Rockbokah, where the Natives were ready to receive the four hundred strong, on landing, the boats (some of them) were swamped, and the arms and ammunition injured, the formidable appearance of the natives and their disarmed of any conquest with the Berbey people, induced the Commodore to leave them undisturbed. Samuel of Rockbokah, who induced to bear them company to Bassa where King George joined them, and the squadron proceeded to Little Berbey, the scene of the Fakwelle tragedy. A Kroman was sent on shore, to state to them the intention of the Commodore to talk palaver, encouraged by the presence of the Rockbokah, and Bassa Kings this was acceded to, and the next day appointed for the meeting. At the time appointed a large force was landed, a tent pitched on the beach, and a message sent to Graco 2d. We came in company with several head men and a young brother as an interpreter. the natives in the mean time were drawn up in battle array, near the edge of the wood.

The palaver commenced, the murder of Fawell, & crew and the destruction of his vessel was acknowledged, the interpreter inadvertently ~~acknowledged~~ stating that he had been the principle actor in the seizure of the vessel, whilst talking the natives opened a fire from the bush, attempts were made to seize the natives who were in the palaver, this failing, they were soon driven, then the affray commenced, which terminated with the destruction of a village Native Town and the death of seven Natives — On the part of the Americans only three men wounded. Robert was in the midst and says that there was more confusion in the ranks of the Americans, than he had ever witnessed in any of our Colonial engagements. An irregular fire was kept up by the natives for five or six hours. It is unnecessary for me to go further into particulars.

Mch 11th Dec.

The news spread like wildfire along the Coast, our Natives heard that the Commodore intended on his return to drive them from C. Palmas, which of course was false, as soon as the squadron hove in sight on their return, the Natives began to send off their women, children and effects until not a woman was to be seen in our vicinity. We could only look on calmly, ready to take advantage of any sudden act of impudence on their part, giving them at the same time the fullest assurances the we would deal honestly with them; but it was of no use they would not return until the squadron left their departure to the windward, leward & elsewhere.

December 31st. Our present position is this — We have the Barribee people (the same who murdered Parker & family some year ago, and who have since had no intercourse with the Colony) swearing vengeance against us for killing two of their men at Mount Tubman. We have the treachery of the C. Palmas Natives to guard against, and who are secretly stimulating the Barribees with whom they are letter to step vengeance on us. they offer to us measures for settling our difficulties whilst in reality they have every obstacle in the way, they are in league with the Grebo Tribe, who are also believed ready to pounce on us from all quarters. The Sauriko tribe have been at war for four years with Banika, We have as a matter of prudence made them our allies much to the dissatisfaction of C. Palmas people. the Sauriko trade directly with us, and we have let our people know that the slightest interference of theirs will produce war, which in defence of our allies we could not prevent. We have enough Rice for six months and continue to receive supplies of this article — The Colonist dare not go to any distance from the Colony, except in force, as the Barribee people are constantly in the bush.

Our determination is that in the event the Barribees attack us to beat them off as best we can, if the slightest move is discovered on the part of our doubtful C. Palmas friends (who swear they will aid us) to disperse them as quick as possible, or if they give us no cause to act thus, to await the arrival of a man of war, requesting the Commander to remain here for a week, whilst we go to Barribee (about fifteen miles distant) and break them up root and branch. This we can accomplish I think with fifty men, the power of the Man O war giving no security at home. We discuss on the course by which we can extricate ourselves from the unpleasant position in which we are placed.

Maryland Historical Society

The Maryland State Colonization Society Papers

II. Correspondence Received
A. Letter Books

8. 1843—1844

1843