

July

Boston Robert Taylor

To

the Right Honble

Senators

1777

To the Right Honourable Lord North first
Lord commissioner of the Treasury

The petition of Robert Douglas late Clerk
of the Customs in Dumfries
Humbly sheweth

That your Lordships petitioner during the
course of eight years that he was clerk of the Customs
at D^{um} did every thing in his power to promote the Interest of
the Revenue, and in the year 1775 prosecuted some
Irregularities in the trade at that port, which not
only increased the Revenue but put the trade in general
upon a more respectable footing. — That in July last
year your Lordships petitioner was deprived of his office by
the Collector, as far as your Lordships petitioner can
understand with a view to act the same in the
Lancashire, upon which your Lordships petitioner
applied to the Commissioners of the Customs in Scotland
and represented, with his former complaints against the
officer that the conduct of the collector was in many
respects contrary to the Interest of the Revenue, as well
as the Conduct of the other officers; and that in
general it had been customary to land goods without
payment of duty, at sometime letting forth some of the
most glaring of these frauds, which were as follows
Eight Tons of Iron landed and no duty paid by which
Government lost £19. 0. Sterling; The Collector for
embezzling a Sugar and abstracting there from
Tea to the amount of £30. — and at selling of said
Sugar deducting from the officers share to the amount
of £16. 0 for fees; and charging for the report of a
small quantity of Wine from Guernsey £6. 6. and
not enquiring into a parcel of french Wines

landed without payment of duty whereby the Revenue
lost £111.9.4. Exactingly extravagant fees for Corn &
Deliveries and ~~other~~ reports of receipts Inwards. And
not giving that encouragement to officers for making
Seizures of prohibited goods by appropiating them
with high fees, to himself, and a backwardness
in the payment of the respective shares of
such Seizures due to the different Seizure makers;

Your Lordships petitioner begs leave to
Instance the above as a Specimen of the general
frauds committed at Dumfries, which through
your Lordships ~~mean~~ petitioner were brought
to light and clearly proven before David
Reid Esq Inspector General of the Customs
in Scotland; - Your Lordships petitioner

hopes that for ^{these} essential discoveries made in
the department of the Revenue, that your
Lordship will be pleased to grant your
~~petitioner~~ petitioner One of the places vacant
at Dumfries either that of Collector Surveyor

or ^(a) ~~Reading~~ ^{Reading} officer, for the faithful execution
of which your Lordships petitioner ~~shall~~ ^{will}
give the most undoubted security. your
Lordships petitioner begs also to set forth
that for some time past he has been most
barbarously oppressed and persecuted by
the officers complained of, ^{and abused by} and that he has
by them been prevented from being assisted
in his applications to your Lordship
Labouring under all these disadvantages

as or at any
other part of
the custom of
West of Scotland
when ~~completing~~
is carried on

your Lordships petitioners has presumed to
represent his situation in this manner, . . . Hoping
your Lordships that from the knowledge your
Lordships petitioner has of the Customs that
many Amendments may be made to the
Interest of the Revenue which your
Lordships petitioner can clearly make
appear

May it please your Lordship
to consider the foregoing
petition and grant your
Lordships petitioner such
relief as to your Lordship
may seem fit, and your
petitioner shall ever pray

Robert Douglas