

ABSTRACT

THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION AND THE BAPTIST AND PRESBYTERIAN CLERGY OF VIRGINIA: A STUDY OF DISSENTER OPINION AND ACTION

By

William Jennings Terman, Jr.

With extant records limited, it is a difficult task to ascertain truth in relationship to any historical event. Furthermore, when the subject is in the realm of religion, the immeasurability of what little evidence is available in terms of concrete findings increases staggeringly. Despite these twin hindrances, this work was undertaken to determine, if possible, the extent of involvement by Virginia Baptist and Presbyterian clergymen in the American Revolution. Since historically ministers have been men of considerable influence, the discovery of what their position and participation were and why they reacted as they did could lead to significant conclusions. The fact that the clergymen studied were evangelical dissenters from the Church of England, Virginia's established church, was vital in the determination of two things: (1) How did the differences with and the harassment by the Establishment eventually lead the two denominations to seek redress via an anti-British policy? (2) How influential was their dogma in the decisions that were made by

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these dissenters regarding the securing of civil and religious liberty in the conflicts with the state church and the mother country? Baptists and Presbyterians in Virginia were acknowledged Patriots in the Revolutionary War, and the question that sheltered the entire study as queries turned into conclusions was why?

Research included the perusal of the available printed sermons and other ministerial writings of the revolutionary generation. Nineteenth-century interpretations were examined as well for the purpose of discovering uniformity of opinion or indications of change. Journals and personal letters were helpful, while Baptist and Presbyterian petitions to the Virginia Legislature supplied both the rationale for dissenter action and the appeals for guaranteed rights, which the two ecclesiastical bodies sought. War records, minutes of church meetings, and histories of counties and congregations often revealed clergy opinion and activity. For the first time, public service records in the Virginia State Library were used to ascertain those supplies and services that dissenter clergy contributed to the Old Dominion's war effort. The findings were arranged in a series of tables for easy reference and also provided valuable additions to the narrative of the work.

The evidence revealed that without question Virginia dissenters gave themselves to the American cause sincerely

William Jennings Terman, Jr.

and vigorously. They considered the position of Great Britain and the Established church untenable vis-à-vis the colonies. If religious freedom could not come, short of war and independence, then they would have an end to toleration's limitations by joining the struggle for America's civil rights. Their doctrines approved the decision, for it was the Creator who had designed and ordained the rights for which they were striving. The American cause was His cause, and He would give them the victory. Their right to resist had God's blessing and their inferior moral conduct was the only hindrance to God's fulfillment of His will. Nineteenth-century Calvinistic literature traced these views back to Reformation thought, if not further.

Scotch-Irish Presbyterians came into western Virginia in droves as the revolutionary spirit developed. Baptists, evolving worship practices that conformed to the needs of backcountry people, multiplied unbelievably. The Great Awakening stirred these dissenters to a fresh appreciation of a fundamentalist belief-system and a simple expression of evangelical Christianity. As harassments increased and the awareness of inequities became keener, the dissenter clergy became active in the resistance movement. They became propagandists, members of Committees of Correspondence and Safety, chaplains, recruiters, soldiers, and officers. They held

William Jennings Terman, Jr.

political office, they supplied food and other commodities, and they even participated in collecting the same. They were staunch Patriots, playing a supportive rather than an initiative role. And in the end, they realized their sought-after freedoms.

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OF DISSENTER OPINION AND ACTION

By

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William Jennings Terman, Jr.

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William J. Terman, Jr.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| CHAPTER | Page |
|--|------|
| LIST OF TABLES | viii |
| INTRODUCTION | 1 |
| <hr style="width: 20%; margin: 10px auto;"/> | |
| I. THE BACKGROUND: SEEDBED OF BAPTIST AND PRESBYTERIAN REACTION | 7 |
| The Baptists. | 7 |
| The Presbyterians | 24 |
| II. FACTORS WHICH INFLUENCED THE DISSENTER POSITION. | 38 |
| The Scotch-Irish Migration. | 38 |
| The Great Awakening's Effect. | 50 |
| Difficulties with the Virginia Establish- ment | 55 |
| III. CALVINISTIC OPINION: THE REVOLUTIONARY GENERATION. | 66 |
| Samuel Davies | 71 |
| John Witherspoon. | 82 |
| A Miscellany of Revolutionary Spokesmen . . | 97 |
| IV. BAPTISTS AND PRESBYTERIANS: THEIR REVOLU- TIONARY ROLES EVALUATED | 122 |
| V. BAPTIST REVOLUTIONARY ACTIVITY | 153 |
| VI. PRESBYTERIAN REVOLUTIONARY ACTIVITY. | 207 |
| VII. AT WAR'S END | 292 |
| VIII. CONCLUSION | 314 |

TABLE OF CONTENTS--Continued

Page

APPENDICES

| | |
|---|-----|
| A. THE IMPRISONMENT OF VIRGINIA BAPTIST CLERGY. . . | 322 |
| B. TABLES | 330 |
| C. CALVINISTIC OPINION IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY. | 368 |
| BIBLIOGRAPHY. | 383 |

LIST OF TABLES

| TABLE | Page |
|--|------|
| 1. Baptist Clergy Ministering in the Virginia Area during the Revolutionary Period | 331 |
| 2. Public Service Claims of Virginia Baptist Clergy. | 343 |
| 3. Presbyterian Clergy Ministering in the Virginia Area during the Revolutionary Period. | 352 |
| 4. Public Service Claims of Virginia Presbyterian Clergy. | 364 |

INTRODUCTION

Standard history books contain little or nothing of the documentary material which would relate religion to the factors contributing to the American Revolution. References to social, political, and economic causations abound, but only occasional statements concerning the influence of religion are found, and among these the role of the Anglicans is usually emphasized. Roman Catholics, Lutherans, Quakers, and even New England Calvinists receive some attention,¹ yet the involvement of the southern Calvinistic churches was significant enough to merit separate, intensive study. It was the object of this investigation to consider the involvement of the leaders of these churches, the Presbyterian and Baptist clergy, in the American Revolution as it took place in Virginia.

Since the Reformation, Protestant clergymen have had the advantage of occupying a position from which they have been able to exert persuasive powers over their parishioners.

¹Most often these sectarian bodies are mentioned if their dogmas were caught up in the volatile issues of the day. The best known of these were the possible selection of an American Anglican bishop, religious liberty for dissenters from the established church, and the separation of church and state.

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Traditionally, they have been looked upon as "called out ones" who enjoyed special gifts and favors bestowed upon them by God. Their educational and travel experiences have usually elevated them to a level of respect shared by few in the surrounding community. Preaching, teaching, writing, and counseling have been most typically used by the clergy to encourage superior moral performance. The desired action was to coincide with the fundamental belief-system proposed by the Christian sect that was represented by the clergyman. The minister could purpose to influence his flock in ways that may or may not have overt religious implications. These could range from the correction of social ills or the support of a particular political view to the condemnation, ostracism, and even punishment of those who had broken with established society. In its extremity, such involvement could likewise endanger the minister's property and/or person. Active participation by the clergyman in these tangent causes could be consequences of his own vital concern, but they were also meant to be levers of influence. His parishioners were to recognize him as an example of the highest calling and the finest demands that the Christian faith could propose to its adherents. This display was more than a matter of privilege; it was an obligation on the part of the minister to proclaim by word and deed the full implications of what was considered the gospel message. To do

less was frequently judged to be a denial of the full import of the calling, a compromise with evil, and an injury to the cause of Christ.

The Calvinistic ministers of Virginia took seriously the responsibilities that accrued to them by virtue of the impact their "call" had made upon them. Despite the level of educational achievement which each attained and the societal milieu from which each had come, the evidence points to a broad and fairly uniform acceptance of the incumbencies of the Christian ministry as they understood them. Their burdens were heavy and increased in scope as many preaching points were established and the duties of their office were assumed. Since they received their commissions from God, many reasoned that licensing by the civil government was not only unnecessary but an affront to the God whom they had obeyed. Resistance to the laws of the state and failure to cooperate with the state-supported church resulted in harassment, persecution, and imprisonment for these dissenting preachers.

By the 1770s, the Virginia Calvinists were actively working within the law to promote reforms while many of them continued to ignore those laws they believed to be unjust and even illegal. A barrage of carefully-worded petitions coupled with dissenter support for sympathetic politicians kept the issues of religious liberty and separation of church and state before the Virginia government.

At last, when the Virginia dissenting clergy had become convinced that religious liberty would not be forthcoming until civil liberty had been won, they threw their support to the growing secular resistance movement and then to the forces for independence from the mother country. For the most part, their judgment proved correct. Religious freedom came in 1786, followed by other less drastic religious reforms.

The goal of this study was to ascertain the extent and types of support given the revolutionary movement by the Presbyterian and Baptist clergymen. The problem was divided into two aspects for each sect. The first part was to discover the dissenter position regarding the nature of the contest with Great Britain. This was accomplished by an examination of the printed sermons and other ministerial writings that are extant. Unfortunately, those written before or during the Revolutionary War are few:² the inclusion of

²Many dissenter materials were never printed for various reasons. Living or itinerating in the Virginia backcountry was not conducive to the preservation or propagation of these writings. Preaching a gospel of salvation from the penalties of sin was the most important conviction which the dissenters held. Funds for publications were in short supply, and consequently, the time and money that were available were used for their primary task. See Philip Davidson, Propaganda and the American Revolution, 1763-1783 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1941), p. 207.

At least one Presbyterian minister, James Waddell, shortly before his death, ordered all his manuscript sermons to be burned. See James W. Alexander, "The Rev. Jas. Waddell,

post-Revolutionary War views was germane because, in most cases, they came from men who were eye-witnesses of the conflict and its effect upon dissenter Christians. Some later opinions were included to either reinforce a given interpretation or to show how an aura of mythology had begun to emanate from the literature (see Appendix C).

The second part of the problem was to discern how actively engaged were the dissenter clergymen in bellicose activity. The ten categories of patriot service, which apparently included all forms of activity, were petitioners, propagandists, members of Committees of Correspondence and Safety, recruiters, chaplains, officers, enlisted soldiers, suppliers of provisions, and elected political officials. Lists of clergymen were compiled from a variety of sources, primary and secondary, and any evidence of active involvement was recorded. Again, the scarcity of records complicated matters. However, it must be remembered that a lack of recorded evidence did not necessarily mean there was limited or even no participation. In this case, the nature of the

D.D., " Watchman of the South, VII (March 28, 1844), 126, 134, 138.

Many source materials were destroyed by fire. Examples of these tragedies are the destruction of the eighteenth century Hanover County records in Richmond in 1865. The gap in primary works covering early Virginia Baptist history can be explained by a fire which accidentally destroyed them while they were in a Richmond bank vault awaiting preparation for publication. Personal interview with Woodford B. Hackley, Secretary, Virginia Baptist Historical Society, June 12, 1972.

dissenter theology juxtaposed against the dissenter plight forces the conclusion that there was considerable and intense involvement. Without question, what evidence is available supports that hypothesis. In addition, then, it is safe to assume, on the basis of the argument from silence, that Presbyterian and Baptist clergymen had a prominent role in the internecine but necessary conflict.

One cannot understand the Revolutionary period in Virginia without taking into account the religious factor. The Virginia of the period was cognizant of the fact that controversy existed over the interpretation of public and private religious matters. The entanglement of religious problems with the longed-for political and economic freedoms came about as a consequence of the accelerating revolutionary activity. The Virginia Calvinists willingly gave themselves to the Patriot cause, at least partly because they possessed a fundamental faith which molded their conception of human worth, freedom, and justice. It also contributed a perseverance in the face of overwhelming odds, which would assist them when dark days appeared to prophesy defeat. In the vanguard of the contest were the Calvinistic clergy of Virginia who preached, wrote, counseled, and fought for what they believed to be a cause ordained by the God they served.

CHAPTER I

THE BACKGROUND: SEEDBED OF BAPTIST AND PRESBYTERIAN REVOLUTIONARY REACTION

The Baptists

The Baptists first came to Virginia rather inauspiciously about 1714. Migrating from England, they unobtrusively settled in the southeastern part of the colony. There they carried on their religious practices without molestation until the middle of the eighteenth century. A second group from Maryland settled in Frederick County in 1743. These Baptists, like those before them, were Arminian in doctrinal persuasion and had little influence on the Baptists who followed them.¹ These made up what came to be called Regular or General Baptists and affiliated with the Philadelphia Baptist Association. In 1766 they formed the Kettoctin Association,²

¹Mercer O. Clark, "Baptist History in Virginia Before the Revolution" (unpublished term paper for Union Theological Seminary in Virginia, 1933), p. 5; William Henry Foote, Sketches of Virginia: Historical and Biographical, 1st series (1850, rpt. Richmond: John Knox Press, 1966), p. 314; William W. Sweet, Religion on the American Frontier: The Baptists (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1931), p. 7; B. F. Riley, A History of of the Baptists in the Southern States East of the Mississippi (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1898), p. 19.

²Robert A. Baker, A Baptist Source Book, with Particular Reference to Southern Baptists (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1966), p. 16.

the first Baptist Association in Virginia. These were respected churchmen with trained clergy and orderly services.

New England was the source of the third migration. In 1754 a few Separate Baptists with a Congregational background moved to what is now Berkeley County, West Virginia. Being Calvinistic in doctrine and inspired by the Great Awakening, they naturally clashed with the Arminian Baptists and as a result moved to North Carolina. In 1760 they formed the Sandy Creek Association and sent itinerant ministers into Virginia in the area called Pittsylvania. Their evangelistic labors took them into Spotsylvania about 1767, and thereafter their growth was rapid between the Blue Ridge Mountains and the Bay Shore.³

In the meantime, the Regular Baptists had spread slowly into the northern neck of Virginia by 1770. Despite the ostracism which both groups suffered, Regular and Separate Baptists did not unite until 1785, but they did so under the banner of Calvinism.⁴ By 1770 Separate Baptists in the

³Foote, Sketches of Virginia, I, 314.

⁴William Fristoe, the Regular Baptist historian, confessed that his movement was "jealous of the separate Baptists, because, as yet, they never formed nor adopted any system of doctrine, or made any confession of their faith, more than verbally." This could not be understood by the Regulars. Fristoe added, "On the other hand, the separate Baptists supposed the adopting a confession of faith would only shackle them; that it would lead to formality and deadness, and divert them from the Bible." Christian charity won the day, however, when "upon close conversation and

Old Dominion were concerned about their troubled surroundings and desired a closer cooperation among themselves. The product of their efforts was the General Association of Virginia, organized in the late spring of 1771. In 1773 this association divided to form the Northern and Southern Districts, with the James River becoming the line of division.⁵

Baptist evangelistic efforts were responsible for a rapid growth in churches and members in the decade preceding the Revolutionary War. Extant records allow for confusion; even the material compiled by Morgan Edwards--"the earliest source-book for Virginia Baptist history, straight from the Baptist fathers themselves"--contains errors.⁶ Estimates of

frequently hearing each other preach, it was found that they agreed in sentiment, held forth the same important doctrines, and administered the gospel ordinances in the same manner, and of course children of the same family, . . ." They wished then for union. A Concise History of the Ketoclin Baptist Association (Staunton, Va.: Wm. G. Lyford, 1808), pp. 21-22.

⁵General histories of the Virginia Baptist movement which provide many of the details that have had to be omitted in this brief summary are: David Benedict, A General History of the Baptist Denomination in America and Other Parts of the World (New York: Lewis Colby and Co., 1848); R. B. Riley, History; Garnett Ryland, The Baptists of Virginia, 1699-1926 (Richmond: Virginia Board of Missions and Education, 1955); Robert B. Semple, A History of the Rise and Progress of the Baptists in Virginia (Richmond: John Lynch, 1810); Sweet, Religion on the American Frontier: The Baptists (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1931).

⁶Morgan Edwards, "Materials Toward a History, of the Baptists in the Province of Virginia" (3 vols.; 1772), cited

numbers of Baptist churches in Virginia in 1776 run from seventy-four to ninety-three.⁷ Membership statistics are also sketchy, with 1776 figures showing from five to ten thousand members.⁸

As a result of their exposure to the Great Awakening in New England, these Separatists were known for their fervor and even fanatical standards, which caused them to consider the Established Church as unenlightened concerning the mainsprings of Christianity. Adaptation to wilderness conditions was accomplished readily by these simple people with their loosely-organized church government and their

in "Baptist Preachers in Virginia in 1772," Virginia Baptist Register, No. 6 (1967), p. 284. Here it is pointed out that Edwards mentioned thirty-two ordained Baptist preachers in Virginia at the time. But in Appendix IV of his work, he forgot to follow his own rules in listing the preachers--which was to write the names of those ordained in 'Roman' and those not ordained in italics...."

⁷Benedict numbered seventy-four churches, p. 651, and Harry P. Kerr counted ninety-three, "The Character of Political Sermons Preached at the Time of the American Revolution" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Cornell University, 1962), p. 202. Helen Hill, in George Mason: Constitutionalist (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1938), p. 44, declared that there were ninety Baptist churches in Virginia in 1776. Benedict showed the dramatic growth in the numbers of Baptist churches from ten in 1768 to 210 in 1790, p. 641.

⁸Wesley M. Gewehr estimated about five thousand Separate Baptists, The Great Awakening in Virginia, 1740-1790 (Durham, N. C.: Duke University Press, 1930), p. 117; Helen Hill believed there were more than five thousand, George Mason, p. 44; while Riley felt the number was closer to ten thousand, History of the Baptists, p. 110; and Mercer Clark set the figure at ten thousand, "Baptist History in Virginia," p. 11.

fierce individualism. Spiritual matters were private and deeply personal even as their surroundings were. What relationship was there between the state and a man's religious life? Just as the state was far removed from their living conditions, so it was remote from their religious experiences and worship practices.

Much of the venom poured out upon the Virginia Baptists came from their refusal to demand a high level of training and literacy on the part of their ministers. Baptist William Fristoe was not highly educated but expressed his opinion that a lack of education could be a serious liability. On the other hand, he declared that great learning was not an essential element in the preparation of the clergy. A man "with strong intellect, capable of taking in high and sublime ideas, and prying into mysterious and intricate subjects, and given him to know his dear Son, whom to know is life eternal"--that man may enter the ministry without learning. Fristoe explained, "For a person of this description forever to remain in silence, merely for the want of education, would be like a beautiful flower blooming in a desert, unnoticed by few, and enjoyed by none."⁹ A mid-nineteenth-century apologist for the Baptists explained the lack of academic regimen:

⁹Quoted in James B. Taylor, Virginia Baptist Ministers, 1st series (New York: Sheldon and Co., 1860), p. 74.

Profound knowledge of the word of God may exist associated with very limited attainments in human learning. Not a few men thus characterized, are much more useful as ministers, than are many of the classically trained. Learning of itself cannot make a minister of even a truly Christian man. He must have the native mind and powers--what the fathers so aptly called "the gifts"--essential to success.

It is true, the commentator continued, that where these gifts were absent, "fervent zeal" could not become an adequate substitute. Some men were ordained "who were, indeed, excellent, earnest, devoted, self-sacrificing Christians, but wholly unqualified to perform the high duties assigned them." Consequently, multitudes "were scandalized and repelled" and "the cause of Christ among them suffered serious and lasting injury."¹⁰

One Virginian who was repelled by the evangelical Baptists and Presbyterians was Charles Lee, the arrogant and eccentric major-general in Washington's army. Without candor, he expressed his feelings on the disposal of his body upon his death:

I desire most earnestly that I may not be buried in any church or churchyard, or within a mile of any Presbyterian or any Baptist Meetinghouse. For since I have resided in this country I have kept so much

¹⁰ Robert Boyle C. Howell, The Early Baptists of Virginia (Philadelphia: The Bible and Publication Society, 1857), pp. 135-36. This volume was written by the pastor of the Second Baptist Church of Richmond as a defense for the role of the Baptists vis-à-vis that of the Presbyterians in the Revolutionary War and the founding of the State of Virginia.

bad company when living that I do not choose to continue it when dead.¹¹

That Lee should react so unfavorably to his evangelical neighbors in Berkeley County is not surprising in the light of his relationships with others--his superiors and inferiors--in military service.

Another unfavorable appraisal of Separate Baptist "goings-on" was penned in a Revolutionary War diary. They were described by Robert Honeyman as growing rapidly in the Commonwealth and "extremely zealous in making proselites [sic]." He continued:

They draw in numbers of the lower sort and of the negroes. Their preachers are generally mean, illiterate Enthusiasts, and their meetings which are often much crowded are terrible scenes of screaming, lamentation, convulsions and all the marks of the wildest enthusiasm; they generally preach in the woods, by the side of rivers; though the regular sort have meeting houses.¹²

In short, the Separate Baptist manner of religious expression was revolting to those whose practice of Christianity was more formal and whose understanding of commitment to the demands of the faith was more nominal.

But were the Baptists that reprehensible? Were they a menace to an orderly community? Did their worship, although responsive to the call of God rather than the control of the

¹¹Charles Lee, Memoirs . . . to Which are Added His Political and Military Essays (New York: T. Allen, 1793).

¹²Robert Honeyman, "Diary, 1776-1782," microfilm in Colonial Williamsburg, entry for Oct. 27, 1776, p. 79.

state, offer a threat to the English Establishment? David Thomas, Virginia Baptist preacher and author, answered these questions in a treatise published in 1774.¹³ He explained that Baptist meetings were held as often as they were needed during the week for spiritual growth and for the expedition of congregational business. Members were expected to attend; absenteeism was thought to lead to apostasy. Thomas declared that at Baptist meetings there was no meddling with state affairs.

We concern not ourselves with the government of the Colony . . . unless it be to pray for both the temporal and eternal welfare of all the inhabitants. We form no intrigues. We lay no schemes to advance ourselves, nor make any attempt to alter the constitution of the kingdom to which as men we belong.

They were loyal to King George III, he said, and heartily paid him all due homage.

We also esteem ourselves in duty bound to give all becoming deference to the legislature of this colony; and to respect, regard, and obey all in lawful authority. And as standing evidence hereof, we freely pay all taxes, levies, etc. We muster, clear roads, etc. as well as others. And in one word, we comply with all the laws of our country without exception. Nor do we desire any further liberty, than peaceably to enjoy the fruit of our own industry; and to worship God in that manner which we verily believe is most acceptable in his sight, without molestation.¹⁴

¹³David Thomas, The Virginian Baptist: Or a View and Defence of the Christian Religion, as It is Professed by the Baptists of Virginia (Baltimore: Enoch Story, 1774). The original is incomplete and is in the possession of Johns Hopkins University. The Virginia Baptist Historical Society has a photostatic copy.

¹⁴Ibid., pp. 32-33.

The catch in the toleration of these evangelicals was exactly at that point--the thing which made them dissenters was their unacceptable manner of worship and their unorthodox polity. They were nonconformists and courted molestation by living under an umbrella of suspicion. They were agitators in their resistance to the inequities of the Establishment and their criticism of conditions within the Anglican Church and controls imposed upon themselves. Their preachers--ordained or not--preached whenever and wherever opportunities were found, and their witness was always aimed at the salvation of the "lost," which included the clergy and laity of the Church of England.¹⁵

Perhaps because of this, no other Virginia denomination suffered the abuse which became the lot of the Baptists. They were regarded as lawbreakers worthy of punishment because they ignored the worship services of the Anglican Church. They were accused of being a dangerous influence, and their preachers were often labeled false prophets. Charges of promoting laziness were also leveled against them as a result of their frequent meetings, which took people

¹⁵A convert who felt the call to preach could not participate in constituting a church, for that required ordination. He could preach and often did so for years, but ordination was requisite before a preacher could be installed as a pastor. Interview with Woodford B. Hackley.

from their work.¹⁶ They were feared because the success of their movement might mean the destruction of the Establishment.¹⁷

The most serious threat to the Baptists, however, came from the law-enforcement officials and others who supported the state church. In the eight years before the Revolution, approximately thirty-five Baptist ministers were imprisoned in Virginia jails, some more than once.¹⁸ Despite the ugly

¹⁶M. O. Clark, "Baptist History in Virginia," pp. 17-18.

¹⁷William Fristoe discussed the basis for the fear which Establishment supporters expressed toward the Separates: "They were charged with design--the vain supposition was that if the baptists could succeed, and have a large increase of converts to their party--when once they supposed themselves sufficiently strong, that they would fall on their fellow subjects, massacre the inhabitants and take possession of the country. Groundless and stupid as this conjecture was, it was spoken of from one to the other, until many of the old bigots would feel their tempers inflamed, and their blood run quick in their veins, and declare they would take up arms and destroy the new lights." Ketocin Baptist Association, pp. 65-66.

¹⁸The following is a list of jails and the preachers who were incarcerated in them during that period: Accomack--Elijah Baker; Alexandria--Jeremiah Moore; Caroline--John Burrus, Lewis Craig, Bartholomew Chewning, James Goodrich, Edward Herndon, Nathaniel Holloway, John Waller, James Ware, John Young; Chesterfield--Joseph Anthony, Augustine Eastin, John Tanner, David Tinsley, Jeremiah Walker, John Weatherford, William Webber; Culpeper--Thomas Ammon, Adam Banks, John Corbley, Elijah Craig, John Dulaney, James Ireland, William McClanahan, Thomas Maxfield, Anthony Moffett, John Picket, Nathaniel Saunders; Essex--Iverson Lewis, John Shackelford, John Waller, Robert Ware; Fauquier--John Picket; King and Queen--James Greenwood, Iverson Lewis, William Lovall (Loocall?), John Shackelford, John Waller, Robert Ware; Middlesex--James Greenwood, John Waller, Robert Ware, William

nature of this harassment, John Leland, Virginia Baptist clergyman, recalled in 1789 that there was little bloodshed.

The Dragon roared with hedious [sic] peals, but was not red--the beast appeared formidable, but was not scarlet colored. Virginia's soil has never been stained with vital blood for conscience sake. Heaven has restrained the wrath of man, and brought aspicious [sic] days at last. We now sit under our vines and fig-trees, and there is none to make us afraid.¹⁹

Nevertheless, those years of persecution make a bitter chapter in the history of American human relations as religious convictions became a pivot around which animosity ebbed and flowed. Physical abuse was suffered by John Waller, David Thomas, John Picket, Lewis Lunsford, Jeremiah Moore, David Barrow, John Corbley, and James Ireland.²⁰

Webber; Orange--John Corbley, Elijah Craig; Spotsylvania--James Childs, Lewis Craig, John Waller. Banks, Chewning, Childs, Dulaney, Eastin, Goodrich, Herndon, Lovall, McClanahan, Moffett, and Tanner were probably lay preachers or exhorters and not ordained. McClanahan was ordained following the war.

This list was obtained from the following accounts: Charles F. James, Documentary History of the Struggle for Religious Liberty in Virginia (Lynchburg, Va.: J. P. Bell Co., 1900), pp. 29-30, 210-15; Garnett Ryland, "James Ireland, May 20, 1931, Berryville, Clarke County, Virginia (Richmond: Virginia Baptist Historical Society, 1931), pp. 11-12; Samuel Kercheval, A History of the Valley of Virginia (4th ed.; Strasburg, Va.: Shenandoah, 1925), pp. 65-66. See Appendix A for a brief discussion of these imprisonments.

¹⁹ John Leland, The Virginia Chronicle: with Judicious and Critical Remarks Under XXIV Heads (Norfolk, Va., 1790), p. 23. The reference to vines and fig trees is a biblical picture of peace found in Micah 4:4.

²⁰ Waller: Thomas E. Campbell, Colonial Caroline: A History of Caroline County, Virginia (Richmond: Dietz

Many of those imprisoned and abused were well-known and influential. Thus public sympathy for them was aroused in some areas. Others felt the wrath of the mob as the baser elements gathered to break up Baptist services just for the sport of it. No religious interest served as a motive for their harassment, for the mob was little concerned with the issue of religious freedom.

Virginia Baptists were the victims of much verbal abuse as well. Samuel Harriss was preaching when an antagonist stopped him briefly with the derisive accusation: "You have sucked much eloquence today from the rum cask; please give us a little, that we may declaim as well when our turn comes."²¹ Two ruffians stood drinking from a bottle when Robert Ware was exhorting in Middlesex. Intoxicated, the men cursed the preacher and offered him the bottle. They then sat on the edge of the platform and played cards while they attempted to get his reproof, hoping to have an excuse to beat him.²²

Press, 1954), pp. 224-25; Edwards, "Baptists in . . . Virginia," III, 21, 121. Thomas: C. F. James, Struggle for Religious Liberty, p. 211; Prince William: The Story of Its People and Its Places (Bethlehem Good Housekeeping Club, 1941), p. 39. Picket: C. F. James, Struggle for Religious Liberty, p. 212. Lunsford: ibid. Moore: ibid. Barrow: ibid. Corbley: J. B. Taylor, Virginia Baptist Ministers, I, 108. Ireland: C. F. James, Struggle for Religious Liberty, p. 214.

²¹Quoted in C. F. James, Struggle for Religious Liberty, p. 211.

²²Ibid.

Some verbal attacks were more sophisticated and made use of the printed page to carry charges to a broad reading public. A particularly harsh and satirical censure was published in the Virginia Gazette by an anonymous writer, who apparently was John Randolph, Jr., the Attorney-General of Virginia.²³ He justified the incarcerations and prosecutions of Baptists, for they had "exchanged orderly, pure, and rational Worship, for Noise and Confusion." He challenged them to show proofs of their divine mission but stated they could not. They were the authors of confusion, he said, for their so-called new message has proven to be the preaching of "that Saviour" and the explanation of "those Scriptures with which the World have been acquainted for upwards of seventeen hundred years."²⁴

Despite the persecution, and with courage and purpose, these clergymen continued their evangelistic efforts and actually saw an increase in converts, as indicated by the statistics available which cover the years prior to the Revolutionary War. Some of the converts actually came from

²³David J. Mays, Edmund Pendleton, 1721-1803, A Biography (2 vols.; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1952), I, 264-65.

²⁴"An Address to the Anabaptists imprisoned in Caroline County, Aug. 8, 1771," Virginia Gazette (Purdie and Dixon), February 20, 1772.

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the ranks of the persecutors.²⁵

Harassment also triggered Baptist migration to areas where there was broader toleration of dissidents. North Carolina was one such area, and many Baptists moved there and flourished in the years that followed.²⁶

But the persecuted evangelicals of Virginia were not without friends in the higher echelons of society and government. John Blair, Virginia's Deputy-Governor, wrote the king's attorney in Spotsylvania with regard to charges of disturbing the peace leveled against John Waller and Lewis Craig. Dated July 16, 1768, the letter described the two men as being willing to apply for licenses and to take the oaths. He pointed out that "their petition was a matter of right, and you ought not to molest these conscientious people, so long as they behave themselves in a manner becoming pious Christians, and in obedience to the laws" until the court convenes. He described their use of the sacraments as being similar to the Church of England, except

²⁵Gewehr's figures showed 1,335 Separate Baptists in Virginia in 1771, compared to 4,004 in 1774. Churches increased during the same period from fourteen to thirty, Great Awakening, p. 117. One commentator emphasized that "counties where the Baptists suffered the worst persecution became strongholds of their faith." Robert D. Meade, Patrick Henry, Patriot in the Making (Philadelphia: J. P. Lippincott, 1957), p. 250.

²⁶W. E. MacClenny, "A History of Western Branch Baptist Church, Nansemond County, Virginia, 1779-1938" (manuscript in the files of the Virginia Baptist Historical Society, Richmond), p. 9.

for the mode of baptism and the application of traditional disciplines. He continued:

They have reformed some sinners, and brought them to be truly penitent; nay, if a man of theirs is idle, and neglects to labor, and provide for his family as he ought, he incurs their censures, which have had good effects. If this be their behavior, it were to be wished we had some of it among us.²⁷

Another sympathizer was James Madison who wrote to William Bradford in Pennsylvania, January 24, 1774, about the sufferings of the Baptists: "That diabolical, hell-conceived principle of persecution rages among some, and to their eternal infamy be it said the clergy can furnish their quota of imps for such purposes." He mentioned the imprisonment of several "well-meaning" ministers and commended their "very orthodox" religious sentiments.²⁸

Still another advocate of religious liberty who vocally supported the Baptists in their struggles was Patrick Henry. One early Baptist historian wrote of his regard for Henry's efforts on behalf of the beleaguered dissenters:

Patrick Henry: being always a friend of liberty,

. . . only needed to be informed of their oppression; without hesitation he stepped forward to their relief. From that time, until the day of their complete

²⁷Copies of this letter may be found in Edwards, "Baptists in . . . Virginia," III, 24-26; J. B. Taylor, Virginia Baptist Ministers, I, 87-88; and Foote, Sketches of Virginia, I, 316-17.

²⁸Cited in William T. Hutchison and William M. E. Rachal (eds.), The Papers of James Madison (3 vols.; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962), I, 106-107.

emancipation from the shackles of tyranny, the Baptist found in Patrick Henry an unwavering friend.²⁹

The fame of Henry as an untiring worker in the endeavor for religious liberty has been widespread. His biographer, Robert Meade, described how Henry paid jail fees which had accumulated over five months of incarceration to allow Baptist John Weatherford to be released from Chesterfield jail.³⁰ Meade continued: Henry defended several Baptist ministers in Caroline County court where Edmund Pendleton, antagonist of the dissenters, was the presiding justice.³¹ Furthermore, Baptists imprisoned in Spotsylvania County were defended by the Virginia orator.³² Another writer may have confused the

²⁹ Semple, Rise . . . of the Baptists, p. 24.

³⁰ Meade, Patrick Henry, p. 247.

³¹ Ibid., p. 248.

³² Ibid. Meade insisted, however, that "the eloquent speech attributed to Henry" in that court "is based on doubtful traditions," pp. 248-49. However, Foote, Sketches of Virginia, I, 317-18, provided an emotional narrative of the courtroom scene, including the electrifying lines by Henry, "If I am not deceived, according to the contents of the paper [the indictment] I now hold in my hand, these men are accused of preaching the gospel of the Son of God!--Great God! . . . What laws have they violated?" Foote added the order given by the presiding magistrate, "Sheriff, discharge those men." Henry's great-grandson, Edward Fontaine, mentioned the incident without quoting from the speech Henry allegedly made. Fontaine concluded, "[Henry] did not approve [the Baptists'] doctrines; but he broke their chains. He believed that the consciences, the tongues, the souls, and bodies of all mankind ought to be free." Fontaine, "Patrick Henry: Corrections of Biographical Mistakes and Popular Errors in Regard to His Character, Anecdotes and New Facts Illustrating His Religious and Political Opinions; and the Style and power of His Eloquence" (1872), photostatic copy in the Virginia State Library, Richmond, p. 15.

Spotsylvania incident with a trial he recounted that took place in Alexandria and involved Jeremiah Moore. Henry on that occasion was supposed to have snapped, "Great God gentlemen, a man in prison for preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ!" Colonel Broadwater, the Justice of the Peace, who was trying Moore, quickly responded by releasing the accused.³³

Henry's warm feelings for the plight of dissenters made a definite impression upon the Virginia politician and historian, Edmund Randolph. In his History of Virginia, Randolph related that Henry was partial toward the dissenters, extending a sympathetic ear to them in their struggle with the state church. With candor Randolph observed, "If [Henry] was not a constant hearer and admirer of that stupendous master of the human passions George Whitefield, he was a follower a devotee of some of his most powerful disciples at least."³⁴ Probably Randolph's appraisal of Henry's relationship with the dissenters was too strong, but much can be said about the genuine concern of the man for

³³Eugene B. Jackson, "A Romantic Chapter of the Final Stages in the Baptist Contention for Religious Liberty" (typescript in the Virginia Baptist Historical Society, Richmond), p. 6.

³⁴Edmund Randolph, History of Virginia, ed. Arthur H. Shaffer (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia), 1970), pp. 179-80.

the oppressed--not because he was necessarily a convert to their religious creed--but because his convictions regarding basic human freedoms would not permit him to remain silent.³⁵

The attempt to suppress the Baptist mode of worship and Baptist ideas of personal rights continued until war appeared imminent. Then, with the energies of the people directed toward resisting the British, persecution ceased, and Baptists were encouraged to join the fray. As one Baptist put it, "Soon the hitherto dominant party were glad to have the aid of dissenters in their struggle for liberty, civil and religious."³⁶

The Presbyterians

Although Presbyterians were in eastern Virginia at the beginning of the eighteenth century, their numbers were small, and they were unorganized. A few families with Presbyterian leanings were living in the counties of Rappahannock and York at that time, and one small congregation was located at Elizabeth River.³⁷ Migrations of these

³⁵And yet Henry's blindness regarding freedom for the slave points up an incongruity not unique to himself in eighteenth-century America.

³⁶Benedict, General History, p. 655.

³⁷Records of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America (Philadelphia: The Presbyterian Board of Education, 1841), p. 18.

dissenters increased in the 1730s as groups of Scotch-Irish and Scots joined the German Lutherans, the German Reformed, and the Quakers in moving into the region between the Alleghenies and the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia. The migratory process took large numbers of these people as far south as western South Carolina. In Virginia, Governor Gooch approved the building of Presbyterian log meeting-houses and promised not to interfere with their worship practices so long as they obeyed the laws and lived peaceably.³⁸ Of course, the effect of Gooch's leniency was to draw more settlers to this haven.

The lack of government interference encouraged the various sects to follow the dictates of their consciences and to develop societies with characteristics not found east of the mountains.³⁹ How significant the governor's decision

³⁸T. K. Cartmell, Shenandoah Valley Pioneers and Their Descendants: A History of Frederick County, Virginia (Berryville, Va.: Chesapeake Book Co., 1963), pp. 166-67; Richard L. Morton, Colonial Virginia (2 vols.; Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1960), II, 584.

³⁹Katharine L. Brown expressed the opinion that the growing multi-denominationalism in an area where considerable freedom was permitted made possible the creation of strong "self-conscious religious groups." The "interplay of these challenging new forces and the institutions they were challenging"--the established church and the government's controls on religion--"led to the development of ideas with a decidedly revolutionary flavor. . . ." "The Role of Presbyterian Dissent in Colonial and Revolutionary Virginia, 1740-1785" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Johns Hopkins University, 1969), pp. 86-87.

was will be seen when the commination of the Establishment would pose the greatest issue the Valley population had yet encountered.

In 1743 William Robinson, an exponent of the Great Awakening, went to Hanover, and New Light Presbyterianism began there.⁴⁰ The New Lights were products of the Great Awakening who rebelled against the practice of religion and the preaching of the day. They were dogmatic in their demands that each Christian must possess a personal religious experience and that each must have the "inner light" as an essential ingredient for Christian living. As they saw it, how could the Christian know the will of God and sense His guidance in a pragmatic way unless the "light" of

⁴⁰ Ernest T. Thompson, Presbyterians in the South: 1607-1861 (2 vols.; Richmond: John Knox Press, 1963), I, 53. Other volumes containing histories of Virginia Presbyterianism which trace the movement of the denomination through the period covered by this study are: W. P. Breed, Presbyterians and the Revolution (Philadelphia: The Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1876); Charles A. Briggs, American Presbyterianism: Its Origin and Early History (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1885); Katharine Brown, "Presbyterian Dissent"; E. H. Gillete, History of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America (rev. ed.; Philadelphia: The Presbyterian Board of Publications, 1873); Robert E. Thompson, The American Church History Series, Vol. VI: A History of the Presbyterian Churches in the United States (New York: The Christian Literature Co., 1895). Probably the foremost study of Presbyterianism in early America is Leonard J. Trinterud, The Forming of an American Tradition: A Re-Examination of Colonial Presbyterianism (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1949).

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the Holy Spirit's presence was within the possession of each believer? And of course, no minister should occupy a pulpit unless he had received this light.⁴¹

New Light contention that the state church was unconverted and in opposition to the work of God brought down upon them the wrath of the Establishment. They were charged with inciting treason and disturbing the peace. It is true that their enthusiasm did cause them to divide congregations and bring confusion to many--even within their own denomination.⁴² Governor Gooch complained to the Synod of Philadelphia in 1745 for the New Light "railing against our religious establishment," but the situation did not improve.⁴³ As a result, in April 1747 Gooch and his Council issued a

⁴¹See Alice M. Baldwin, The New England Clergy and the American Revolution (Durham, N. C.: Duke University Press, 1928), pp. 52-54.

⁴²George W. Pilcher gave this evaluation of the New Light tactics: they "had no desire to disrupt or harm the church to which they had devoted their lives, but their unwillingness to confine their activities to their own pulpits could not help but cause trouble. Their readiness to preach wherever they felt a need for their message could only agitate and embitter their opponents. . . . The revivalist would preach his message, demanding a personal religious experience with complete disregard for the lingering ill feelings of the resident minister, who was often accused of the most damning sin--religious formalism." Samuel Davies: Apostle of Dissent in Colonial Virginia (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1971), p. 24.

⁴³Records of the Presbyterian Church, p. 180.

Figure 1. The 1000 most abundant genes in the *Salmonella* genome. The genes are arranged in descending order of abundance. The x-axis represents the number of genes, and the y-axis represents the number of genes per 1000. The data is presented as a bar chart with error bars.

proclamation prohibiting the preaching of New Light doctrine within the colony. Calling their doctrines "shocking," they ordered that all "Itinerant Preachers whether New Light men Morravians or Methodists" should be prohibited from "teaching Preaching or holding any meeting and assisting to that Purpose."⁴⁴ In 1750 the governor gave evidence that the problem must have continued when he ordered a statement placed in the Virginia Gazette to the effect that no minister should preach in the colony until he had been qualified to do so according to the law.⁴⁵ Actually, this was a relaxation of Gooch's previous order for even New Lights would now be able to preach if they obtained a state permit.

The growth of the valley settlements was rapid during these years, and the thrifty Scotch-Irish took advantage of the area's productivity. As more of them came into Virginia, usually by way of Pennsylvania, they brought their church with them. The Church of England could not cope with the expansion and thus failed to provide the various services of the church.

New Light doctrines continued to spread. John Blair⁴⁶

⁴⁴Executive Journals of the Council of Colonial Virginia (6 vols.; Richmond, 1925-1966), V, 227-28.

⁴⁵Ibid.

⁴⁶Blair's later years were given to the College of New Jersey where he served as professor of theology and vice president. See Archibald Alexander, Biographical Sketches of the Founder, and Principal Alumni of the Log College (Princeton: J. T. Robinson, 1845), p. 198.

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and John Roan, unlicensed Presbyterian preachers, came into the area to minister for a time. While in the Valley, Roan was indicted by the government for inveighing against the clergy of the Establishment, but the charges were dropped after Roan left Virginia.⁴⁷ Samuel Davies arrived in 1747, obtained a license to preach, and became pastor of the Hanover Presbyterians. By 1755 the Hanover Presbytery was organized to care for the burgeoning population.⁴⁸ Davies' flock was more than one man could shepherd, yet he put himself to the task. Preparing a letter to the Bishop of London, he sent it to friends in England for them to relay to the bishop if they believed it to be wise. The epistle described the conditions of the dissenters whom he served as pastor. He wrote:

⁴⁷ See Foote, Sketches of Virginia, I, 133-40; Pilcher, Samuel Davies, pp. 30-32.

⁴⁸ The New Lights, or New Side Presbyterians, formed the Synod of New York in 1745, composed of three Presbyteries--the New York, the New Brunswick, and the New Castle Presbyteries. Twenty-two ministers belonged to the new synod. The more conservative and traditional segment, the Old Side Presbyterians, with twenty-four clergy, made up the Synod of Philadelphia. In 1755 the New York Synod organized the Hanover Presbytery in Virginia. The gulf between the two synods was spanned in 1758 when they merged into the Synod of New York and Philadelphia. Then in 1789 the General Assembly was formed. See Records of the Presbyterian Church. Henry A. White's concise summary is found on p. 37 of his work, Southern Presbyterian Leaders (New York: Neale Publishing Co., 1911).

There are seven meeting-houses licensed in five different counties, . . . But the extremes of my congregation be eighty or ninety miles apart; and the dissenters under my care are scattered through six or seven different counties. . . . The counties here are large, generally forty or fifty miles in length, and about twenty or thirty miles in breadth; so that though they lived in one county, it might be impossible for them all to convene at one place; and much more when they are dispersed through so many.⁴⁹

Davies' need was at last met with the licensing and installation of John Todd as his ministerial assistant in 1752.

The ministry of Samuel Davies was a calming influence on the troubled waters of Virginia Presbyterianism. While being a sincere evangelical, he was not fanatical in his expression of his faith. He believed in order and was an example of disciplined zeal. He desired each preacher to avoid being a "fiery, superficial" pulpit orator; instead he wished for "a popular preacher, of ready utterance, good delivery, solid judgment, free from enthusiastic freaks, and of ardent zeal."⁵⁰ He was that kind of preacher, and the crowds loved it. Even large numbers of Anglicans sought his sermons rather than the unenthusiastic and dead performances of their own clergy.

While Edmund Randolph would have no association with dissenters, he was tolerant enough to express his admiration

⁴⁹Cited in Foote, Sketches of Virginia, I, 183-84.

⁵⁰Quoted in Pilcher, Samuel Davies, p. 54.

for the labors of their clergy. The Presbyterian ministers, he said, were "indefatigable." They did not depend upon, "the dead letter of written sermons" and "they understood the mechanism of haranguing." Their talents "had often been whetted in disputes on religious liberty so nearly allied to civil."⁵¹

Virginia Presbyterianism was building on a foundation of dignity and integrity thanks to the leadership of Samuel Davies, when in 1759, he left the colony to take up the presidency of the College of New Jersey. The decline which followed Davies' removal was probably due to the lack of strong leadership among the Presbyterians of eastern Virginia more than any other factor. John Todd, as Davies' successor in Hanover, had his hands full and did well, for his congregation remained strong for over a score more years.⁵² Still Todd was no Davies, and with migrations to the fertile west increasing, Presbyterianism declined. The Separate Baptists were experiencing a great awakening in the 1760s, and some Presbyterians joined their movement. It appears that others found their way into the Anglican Church, but certainly the number was not large.⁵³ The picture was brighter in other

⁵¹Edmund Randolph, History of Virginia, p. 194.

⁵²Katharine Brown, "Presbyterian Dissent," p. 187.

⁵³Ibid.; Gewehr, Great Awakening, pp. 101-102.

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parts of the colony; growth continued in the Great Valley and there was a heavy influx of converts in the Northern Neck.⁵⁴ The primary need by 1770 was a host of ordained clergymen to serve congregations who continually requested supply pastors. The Hanover Presbytery tried to alleviate the growing restlessness by stepped up efforts to establish schools for the training of ministers and by assignments of most clergy to annual preaching tours.⁵⁵ No adequate solution was forthcoming, for the vacancies continued throughout the Revolutionary War. If anything, conditions worsened, due to the disruptive nature of a lengthy period of military action.

Despite the more moderate nature of Presbyterianism in the years following the Davies' leadership, there were Virginians who did not like the sect and said so. Presbyterians were dissenters and thus threatened the order which conformity to the Establishment brought to Virginia. Presbyterians and Baptists were frequently confused with each other in the minds of the ill-informed, and so misunderstandings were rife when they were discussed. Most dissenters were thought to be excessively emotional and capable of seditious intrigues; naturally, contact with them was to be avoided. Charles Lee's contempt for religion in general,

⁵⁴Katharine Brown, "Presbyterian Dissent," p. 188.

⁵⁵Ibid., p. 231.

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but Presbyterianism in particular, was evidently open for all to behold. His sick mind near the end of his life forced him to believe that the masses of people saw conditions as he did. He confidently remarked, "I verily believe there is scarcely any one person, if they had the honesty to confess it, man, woman, or child, who would not rather suffer considerable inconvenience than go either to a church, or a presbyterian meeting-house."⁵⁶ One wonders if the fact that Presbyterian churches were plainer than the Anglican churches and usually built in rural areas caused him to specifically designate the Presbyterians as he did. Of course, it could have been the doctrines they preached or the dissenter label which they bore.

Landon Carter's intolerance for dissenters allowed him to blame them for difficulties he was having with his slaves. One particular slave kept disobeying Carter to the point where Carter observed, "I think my man Tony is determined to struggle whether he shall not do as he pleases." One day, after Tony had again disobeyed, Carter struck him lightly on the left shoulder. Carter's account continued:

He went to breakfast afterwards and no complaint. This evening I walked there and then he pretended he could not drive a nail, his arm was so sore. I made Nassau strip his Cloaths off and examined the whole arm. Not the least swelling upon it and every now and then he would tremble. . . . At last, looking full upon him, I discovered the gentlemen compleatly

⁵⁶Lee, Memoirs, p. 52.

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drunk. This I have suspected a great while. I then locked him up for Monday morning's Chastisement for I cannot bear such a rascal. I thought this a truly religious fellow but have had occasion to think otherwise and that he is a hypocrite of the vilest kind. His first religion that broke out upon him was new light and I believe it is from some inculcated doctrine of those rascals that the slaves in this Colony are grown so much worse. It behoves every man therefore to take care of his own. At least I am determined to do what I can. Mine shall be brought to their [p]iety though with as little severity as [possible].⁵⁷

The incident reveals that Carter must have had respect for those who sincerely lived their faith and disdain for those who practiced hypocrisy. This reaction is normal, but it was another matter to Carter when his slaves began to show signs of having been exposed to too much of the evangelical Presbyterian or Baptist preaching. When slaves resisted captivity as men who were the children of God--when slaves manifested their worth as people for whom Christ died by a subtle implementation of a variety of resistance tactics--it was at that point that those who preached to them and even worshiped with them got the blame. The New Light "rascals" were responsible for slave insolence. Their doctrines were insidious for they destroyed the acquiescence which was characteristic of the ideal slave. Carter could not afford to permit the contacts with New Lights to continue. There were other ways to achieve a piety which did

⁵⁷Landon Carter, Diary, 1752-1778, ed. Jack P. Greene (2 vols.; Charlottesville, Va.: University Press of Virginia, 1965), I, 378.

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not devastate the slaves' submissiveness.

It is misleading not to note that in the fifteen years leading to the Revolutionary War, the Presbyterians were becoming more and more acceptable as contributing members of Virginia society. Most of them prospered materially, and many were occupying offices of trust in the colony. There were Presbyterian sheriffs, deputy sheriffs, justices of the peace, and constables. Most often office-holding by these evangelicals was enjoyed in the West, but even eastern Virginia had its share of elected or appointed officials.⁵⁸

As the Revolutionary War began, Presbyterian strength in the South was not as great proportionately as it was in the North. There were sixty-six congregations in Virginia,⁵⁹ with twenty-three in the valley portions of Augusta and Rockbridge Counties by 1778, where Scotch-Irish lived in

⁵⁸Katharine Brown, "Presbyterian Dissent," pp. 239-48. Brown added several factors which she believed accounted for the increasing acceptance and strength of the Presbyterians: (1) their proportionately large numbers in the West made them a buffer protecting the colony from Indian depredations; (2) they were respecting the laws concerning church and state; (3) their organizational structure provided a means of disciplining clergy and laymen; (4) the "voluntaristic" nature of the church allowed for a certain amount of selectivity in the making of church members. Membership was not extended to or assumed by all citizens. It required a positive act to join the Presbyterians, pp. 338-31.

⁵⁹Kerr, "Character of . . . Sermons," p. 202. Kerr also counted 117 Anglican, 93 Baptist, and 26 miscellaneous congregations in the new state.



such large numbers.⁶⁰ Despite its size, the denomination made significant contributions to the life of Virginia in the social and political spheres, as well as in the religious.⁶¹

The Virginia Baptist acceptance of a participatory role in the American Revolution should come as no surprise. The harsh environment surrounding the practice of their faith conditioned them for an active involvement in a war which, if won, would secure for them the liberty they sought. The Presbyterians of Virginia, on the other hand, did not receive the austere treatment which had followed the Baptists from county to county. They were fewer in numbers and churches, were more moderate in their dissension, and were more acceptable members of Virginia society. But Presbyterians, too, suffered from discrimination. They grated their teeth at the politically-imposed toleration; they wrestled with the religious limitations that were their lot. They were ripe for the picking by the spirit of revolution which swept through the colonies in the decade preceding

⁶⁰James G. Leyburn, The Scotch-Irish: A Social History (Chapel Hill, N. C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1962), p. 208.

⁶¹See Ernest T. Thompson, "The Synod and Moral Issues," Yesterday and Tomorrow in the Synod of Virginia, eds. Henry M. Brimm and William M. E. Rachal (Richmond: Synod of Virginia, Presbyterian Church in the U. S., 1962), p. 41.

independence. Together the two denominations had historic differences with the existing regime which would test their allegiance to it. Their combined thousands in Virginia could be fairly potent if the issues were ever joined. Other developments would sharpen the differences, increase the tensions, and make a more definite dissenter commitment to warfare possible. The following chapter will describe those influences.

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CHAPTER II

FACTORS WHICH INFLUENCED THE DISSENTER POSITION

Three important developments were factors that worked together to embroil Virginia Baptists and Presbyterians in the Revolutionary War. Their combined effect was the elevation of religion to an eminence from which the two denominations, led by their clergy, surveyed the difficulties with the mother country and deliberately pursued the road to independence. The developments were the growth of the Scotch-Irish population, the new vitality contributed by the Great Awakening, and the sharpening of differences with the Established Church. The discussion of each will comprise this chapter.

The Scotch-Irish Migration

The coming of the Scotch-Irish to the Valley of Virginia is a story often told and thus briefly repeated here as one of the props on the stage from which the drama of this study



will be presented.¹ To begin, it must be understood that the Scotch-Irish and the Scots were separate ethnic groups by the eighteenth century. The Scotch-Irish immigration to America came from Ulster or Northern Ireland. Philadelphia was the port of entry for most of them in the generation preceding the Revolution.² From there many of the immigrants "moved inland and then turned to the south, moving parallel to the Blue Ridge mountains along valleys such as the Shenandoah, into Virginia and the Carolinas."³ They became the largest single ethnic group in the Valley of Virginia⁴ and were Presbyterian in religious experience and

¹The first important analytical studies of the Scotch-Irish in America appeared soon after the turn of this century. They were Charles A. Hanna, The Scotch-Irish, or The Scot in No. Britain, No. Ireland, and No. America (2 vols.; New York, 1902) and Henry J. Ford, The Scotch-Irish in America (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1915). Both have been reprinted. Hanna's work reappeared in 1968, published by the Genealogical Publishing Company of Baltimore. Archon Books, of Hamden, Conn., published Ford's monograph in 1966.

A recent work which relies heavily on secondary accounts is Leyburn, The Scotch-Irish: A Social History. Another recent helpful account is R. J. Dickson, Ulster Emigration to Colonial America, 1718-1775 (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966).

²Dickson, Ulster Emigration, pp. 222-27.

³Ibid., p. 226. See also H. A. White, Presbyterian Leaders, pp. 29-30.

⁴See Freeman H. Hart, The Valley of Virginia in the American Revolution, 1763-1789 (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1942), chap. 1, and Katharine Brown, "Presbyterian Dissent," p. 229.



practice. With tidewater Virginians moving into the area looking for new lands, Anglicans and dissenters became mixed, but the Anglicans were definitely in the minority.⁵

Just how large a proportion of the Virginia population was dissenter at the time of the Revolution has long been a controversial matter. The best known and most often discussed of the estimates has been Thomas Jefferson's in his Notes on the State of Virginia. He wrote:

Other opinions began to creep in, and the great care of the government to support their own Church, having begotten an equal degree of indolence in its clergy, two-thirds of the people had become dissenters at the commencement of the present revolution. The laws indeed were still oppressive on them, but the spirit of the one party had subsided into moderation, and of the other had risen to a degree of determination which commanded respect.⁶

George M. Brydon, the historiographer for the Episcopal Diocese of Virginia, called Jefferson's statement "absurd" on the basis that, of the estimated 500,000 people living in Virginia at the start of the war, "the great majority" of them lived east of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Grouping together all Baptists, Presbyterians, and Methodists in Virginia for which statistics were available, and then adding "as large an estimate as one will" of the dissenters in

⁵Katharine Brown, "Presbyterian Dissent," p. 50.

⁶Thomas Jefferson, Notes on the State of Virginia, ed. William Peden (Chapel Hill, N. C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1955), p. 158.

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the Valley and the Southwest would still leave the number far short of the two-thirds of which Jefferson spoke.⁷

An early history of Virginia, written by Jefferson's contemporary, John Burk, and continued by others after Burk's death, agreed with the Jefferson estimate but failed to explain the factors that forced that conclusion.⁸ By the middle of the nineteenth century, William H. Foote, another student of Virginia history, attempted an analysis of the Jefferson fraction: "In the class of dissenters he probably ranked Presbyterians, Baptists, Germans, Quakers, and those by education favourable to the Episcopal church, but, disinclined to the Establishment on account of the proceedings of the clergy."⁹ Foote wisely cautioned the skeptics, "Should his estimate be thought to be extravagant it will yet be conceded by all, that, the number opposed to the Church of England, as established in America, was very large."¹⁰

⁷George MacLaren Brydon, The Established Church in Virginia and the Revolution (Richmond: The Virginia Diocesan Library, 1930), p. 10. In eastern Virginia, Hanover County was a Scotch-Irish Presbyterian and Baptist stronghold. See Gewehr, Great Awakening, pp. 99-101; Hubertis M. Cummings, Scots Breed and Susquehanna (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1964), p. 283; Leyburn, Scotch-Irish, p. 200.

⁸John Burk, The History of Virginia, Vol. IV continued by Skelton Jones and Louis Hue Girardin (4 vols.; Petersburg, Va.: M. W. Dunnavant, 1804-1816).

⁹Foote, Sketches of Virginia, I, 319.

¹⁰Ibid.

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Recently Katharine L. Brown completed a study of Presbyterian dissent in eighteenth-century Virginia. Her conclusions led her to disagree with Jefferson as Brydon had done. However, she observed that "Jefferson may have been correct if he meant that two-thirds of the population had become disenchanted with the established church, for that venerable institution suffered from several weaknesses."¹¹ She insisted, on the other hand, that the Methodists--there may have been 3,500 in Virginia at the time--should not be listed as separate from the Anglican Church since they considered themselves to be affiliated with the Establishment. This factor would have reduced the numbers of dissenters even more.

Before attempting a brief additional analysis of Jefferson's view, at least two other estimates contemporaneous with the Revolution should be acknowledged. The Virginia Gazette published a question in the autumn of 1776, with regard to freedom of conscience, which contained an appraisal of dissenter strength in the Valley of Virginia: "Is there not something peculiarly oppressive and dishonorable in obliging the inhabitants on the western side of the Blue Ridge to contribute indiscriminately to the support of a

¹¹Katharine Brown, "Presbyterian Dissent," p. 333.

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worship which not more than one of twenty approve or attend?"¹² The query probably came from a dissenter who was expressing his sympathy for a region heavily populated with those who were unfavorable toward the Establishment. The figure of 95% refers to the western portion of Virginia only and should not be compared with the Jefferson estimate which covered the entire state. It is alleged that James Madison held a view which was much less than that of Jefferson's. The comment attributed to Madison was that "the proportion of dissenters in Virginia, at the breaking out of the Revolution, was considerably less than one half of those who professed themselves members of any church."¹³ This may be closer to the truth in light of extant records and the knowledge that as war with Great Britain approached there was an easing of the controls which had been the policy of the government toward the non-Anglicans.

Any interpretation of Jefferson's estimate must rely on the context for the vital information which clarifies that

¹²Virginia Gazette (Purdie), Nov. 8, 1776, p. 1. Katharine Brown estimated that "most of 100,000 frontier settlers were dissenters," "Presbyterian Dissent," p. 333. Freeman Hart calculated that slightly more than 51% of the 1776 Valley population of 53,000 was Scots or Scotch-Irish, while 33% was German. Valley of Virginia, pp. 6-8. This would make the number of dissenters in excess of 75%, not including a small percentage of Scotsmen and Scotch-Irish who might have joined the Established Church. See Katharine Brown, p. 241.

¹³Gaillard Hunt (ed.), The Writings of James Madison (9 vols.; New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1900), Vol. I, 23.

issue considerably. He indicated that the Establishment was protected by the government with "great care" and that the clergy of that church had become indolent to the same degree, i.e., great, here meaning either "in large numbers" or "a high occurrence rate bred by the demeanor of the church." These conditions had driven two-thirds of the people into a dissenter relationship in his opinion. Since in the closing sentence of the quotation he emphasized that existing politico-ecclesiastical laws remained oppressive toward those who fell into the dissenter category, it appears that he saw their relationship to the Established Church as being in a state of rupture. However, the needs of the war were forcing the Anglican Church into a posture of moderation, which had the impact of increasing the determination of the dissenters to gain full religious liberty. Jefferson said he respected them for this. Apparently it was Jefferson's belief that the disillusioned dissenters indeed did number two-thirds of the population. Even though the estimate was excessive to many who would read Notes on Virginia, the important thing to remember is that in this situation he was not speaking as a historian or a scholar but as a citizen-reporter. He was writing informally about Virginia's social and natural history from information he had collected over the years. Thus he gave opinions which he held without the probability of thorough research. The essay was written in response to the request of Charles Thomson, Secretary of

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Congress, who had been asked by M. Marbois, Secretary of the French Legation in America, to collect information about the several states for his government.¹⁴ The estimate was not meant to be used as evidence by future scholars; it was meant to be read in the light of the entire work--in the light of its being one of many Jefferson opinions. It was that and nothing more.

Wherever they settled in America and regardless of their numbers, the Scotch-Irish had sufficient cause to be concerned about any threat to their liberty. In Ulster, before their emigration to America, they resisted British economic and political policies that threatened to dispossess them of their lands and to deny them constitutionally-guaranteed rights.¹⁵ How deeply they resented the

¹⁴Coolie Verner, "The Maps and Plates Appearing with the Several Editions of Mr. Jefferson's 'Notes on the State of Virginia'," Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, LIX (1951), 21. Verner continued, "Many of [Jefferson's] friends wished copies of these Notes and while in Paris in 1784 he had Ph.D. Pierres print 200 copies which he distributed to them. These were never intended by their author for general distribution. . . ."

¹⁵Ford, Scotch-Irish in America, chap. 18; Dickson, Ulster Emigration, chap. 1; James F. Hurley and Julia G. Eagan, The Prophet of Zion-Parnassus: Samuel Eusebius McCorkle (Richmond: Presbyterian Committee of Publication, 1934), pp. 71-72; see Leonard J. Kramer, "The Political Ethics of the American Presbyterian Clergy in the Eighteenth Century," (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1942), who concluded: "In Ulster, . . . , the Presbyterians were at a middle-point of tension economically, politically, and ecclesiastically. Because they were farmers and traders, tenants and not landholders, their political importance was in no proportion to their numbers," p. 3.

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injustices imposed upon them at that time was revealed by their general attitude toward Great Britain when their new homeland gave birth to similar issues involving the mother country. Most Scotch-Irishmen favored the American position,¹⁶ and as colonial reaction gradually increased, Scotch-Irish feelings kept pace.¹⁷ David Ramsey, that intrepid South Carolina physician, historian, and defender of the American cause during the Revolutionary conflict, appraised the Scotch-Irish convictions clearly:

They had fled from oppression in their native country, and could not brook the idea that it should follow

¹⁶J. G. Craighead, Scotch and Irish Seeds in American Soil: The Early History of the Scotch and Irish Churches, and Their Relations to the Presbyterian Church of America (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1878), p. 315; John A. George, "Virginia Loyalists, 1775-1783," Richmond College Historical Papers, I (1916), 207-208; Ford, Scotch-Irish in America, p. 465; Hurley and Eagan, Samuel E. McCorkle, pp. 71-72.

¹⁷The rhetoric employed by some writers of the history of this period is expressive of this emotional tie and also may be an indication of their own emotional involvement. Examples are: ". . . this smouldering flame was eventually fanned into a burning fire of enthusiasm for colonial political independence" (Hurley and Eagan, Samuel E. McCorkle, p. 72); the Scotch-Irish "had a passionate love of liberty" (John W. Dinsmore, The Scotch-Irish in America [Chicago: The Winona Publishing Co., 1906], p. 17); the Scotch-Irish "soon detested that idea which prevailed in the English government, in accordance with which individuals pretended to be their natural rulers and superiors" (Lewis P. Summers, History of Southwest Virginia, 1746-1786, Washington County, 1777-1870 [1870; rpt. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1966], p. 162); the Scotch-Irish "formed a strong English-hating element in their new homes" (Winston S. Churchill, The Age of Revolution, Vol. III of A History of the English-Speaking Peoples [New York: Bantam Books, 1957], p. 121).

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them. Their national prepossessions in favour of liberty, were strengthened by their religious opinions. They were Presbyterians, and people of that denomination, . . . , were mostly Whigs.¹⁸

That the Scotch-Irish supported the American position was widely believed. Joseph Galloway, the Pennsylvania author of the stillborn plan of conciliation which bore his name, had fled to England and willingly appeared before a committee of the House of Commons investigating the American situation. He was examined in March 1779 by Lord George Germaine, who asked him at one point about the composition of the American army: ". . . were they chiefly composed of natives of America, or were the greatest part of them English, Scotch, and Irish?" Galloway replied, "There were scarcely one-fourth natives of America;--about one-half Irish [Scotch-Irish],--the other fourth were English and Scotch." He attempted to document his statistics by adding, "The names and places of their nativity being taken down, I can answer the question with precision."¹⁹ Since it is doubtful that Galloway, a Loyalist from the war's beginning, would have had access to military records, it is almost

¹⁸David Ramsey, The History of the American Revolution (2 vols.; Philadelphia: R. Aitken and Son, 1789), II, 311-312. See Leyburn, Scotch-Irish, pp. 304-307.

¹⁹Parliamentary Examination of Joseph Galloway, March, 1779, Hanna, The Scot . . . in North America, Appendix E, p. 156.

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certain that this was an educated guess. He did testify that while he was with the British army in Philadelphia from December 1776 to June 1778 he was responsible for the interrogation of American deserters. He recalled that there were "upwards of 2300" whose names and places of birth had been kept, but he quickly raised the total to three thousand to include those from whom information had not been received.²⁰ Apparently he based his estimates on the national origins listed for the deserters. If so, this most certainly was a misuse of evidence, for he attempted to judge the makeup of the American forces on the basis of a sample only--and that sample was comprised of deserters. Despite this weakness, the testimony of Galloway is valuable for he did disclose data on desertion and he did provide information on the composition of the military--at least that part that fled to the enemy.

Ashbel Green, the aged Presbyterian divine from Pennsylvania, looked back to his youth during the Revolutionary War and recalled that British and American Tories "justly attributed" the Declaration of Independence and the war "to the leaders of the Yankees in New England, and to those of the Scotch and Irish inhabitants of the middle and southern provinces." The Tories were wrong, he said, in believing that the Patriot leaders were desirous of

²⁰ Ibid.

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independence from the start. Most wished for reconciliation, and many continued to desire it even after Lexington and Bunker Hill. "On the whole," he emphasized, "I think it unquestionable, that the spirit which produced the American Revolution had its origin and its fostering principally among those who were denominated dissenters. . . ."21

Wherever the Scotch-Irish settled, they quickly adopted the New World as a homeland. Historians would be remiss if they did not recognize the valor with which they defended their new country and the honor which they brought to themselves and their revolutionary comrades. Whatever debt America owes them "would not have been acknowledged by the settlers themselves--their ardour in the Revolution was a thanksgiving to a land which had received them in their distress."22

²¹Ashbel Green, Life of Ashbel Green, V.D.M., Prepared for the Press at the Author's Request by Joseph H. Jones (New York: Robert Carter and Brothers, 1849), pp. 27-29. Green rationalized: "Old men, . . . , remember the occurrences of their early years, with greater accuracy than those which happen when they have reached a more, advanced age. But as I have kept a diary for the last half century, I think I am pretty well furnished with materials for my undertaking, in which I mean to take notice of the state of society at the commencement and during the progress of the American Revolution, as well as of many events that have since transpired." He also was intimate with fifteen or sixteen signers of the Declaration of Independence, p. 26.

²²Dickson, Ulster Emigration, p. 227.

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On the other hand, while the majority of the Scottish immigrants were Presbyterian as well,²³ their sympathies were usually Loyalist. Many of them were more recent arrivals from Scotland and/or enjoyed strong economic ties with the empire. Ramsey reported that the Scots, "though they had formerly sacrificed much to liberty in their own country, were generally disposed to support the claims of Great Britain. Their nation for some years past had experienced a large proportion of royal favour."²⁴ It is important to reiterate that "the universality of Presbyterian patriotism is a fallacy. . . . It is the confusion of the Scots with the Scotch-Irish that has resulted in the assumption that Presbyterian Loyalists" were nonexistent during the War for Independence.²⁵

The Great Awakening's Effect

Just before the revolutionary spirit gripped the emotions of the colonists, Virginia witnessed the religious tidal wave of the Great Awakening, which swept over the

²³Highlanders and Aberdonians in the colonial South were either Roman Catholic or Anglican. See Ian C. C. Graham, Colonists from Scotland: Emigration to North America, 1707-1783 (1956; rpt. Port Washington, N. Y.: Kennikat Press, 1972), p. 180.

²⁴Ramsey, American Revolution, p. 311. See also Craighead, Scotch and Irish Seeds, p. 315.

²⁵I. C. C. Graham, Colonists from Scotland, p. 180.



countryside with long-lasting effects. While it is not the purpose of this study to attempt a fresh interpretation of the religious revival, it must be said that the movement coincided with and strengthened the agitation for religious freedom. The revival came to the South later than it did the New England and Middle colonies, and it found religious groups there ready for its propagation. Peculiar to Virginia, above all the other American colonies, was the rapidity with which evangelical sects became established and grew. New Light Presbyterians and Separate Baptists, followed by the Methodists, were endeavoring to evangelize the area, and they possessed a uniqueness which made them logical perpetuators of the spirit of the Awakening. The rural setting, where dissenter sympathies were stronger, created an atmosphere that would look upon the revival as a divine visitation. Welcome were the message and emotionalism, the individualism and lay exhortation, the simple freshness and nonliturgical fervency!²⁶

The free spirit energized by the Awakening was tempered by the concern with regard to the ever-present Establishment with its restrictions and controls. Anglicanism was a constant menace and often showed open opposition to

²⁶See Cedric B. Cowing, The Great Awakening and the American Revolution: Colonial Thought in the 18th Century (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1971), p. 192, and Leonard Kramer, "Political Ethics," chap. 3.

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the revival.²⁷ In fact, the only Anglican clergyman in Virginia to embrace the revival was Devereaux Jarratt, who later became the good friend of Virginia Methodism.

The narrow dogmatism constantly manifested by the presence of the state-church irritated the evangelicals in another manner. The Great Awakening tended to increase the piety of the people, and pietism is of a personal and voluntary nature. It does not flourish when it is compulsory; it cannot be imposed upon a people. Religious pietism resisted controls and condemned the ties of the state to an ecclesiastical organization thought to be made up of "unredeemed, reprobate" men. Thus the environment created by the Awakening was hostile to religious controls as set up by the Establishment.²⁸

The revival intensified schisms that had rent the Baptist and Presbyterian movements. Separate Baptists were participants in the revival, while the non-evangelical Regular Baptists remained aloof from it and even scorned it.

²⁷ Gewehr, Great Awakening, pp. 187-88; Raymond W. Albright, A History of the Protestant Episcopal Church (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1964), p. 24; Charles H. Maxson, The Great Awakening in the Middle Colonies (Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1958), p. 149.

²⁸ Baldwin's studies of Revolutionary New England led her to conclude: "The Great Awakening with its confusions, political strife, and doctrinal discussions had stimulated men to new and lively thinking in religious and civil affairs. It had brought with it much intolerance, yet out of it had grown a passionate conviction in man's right to freedom of conscience and a struggle, partially successful, to obtain it," New England Clergy, p. 80.

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New Side or New Light Presbyterians in Virginia gave support to the Great Awakening through the leadership of Gilbert Tennent and Samuel Davies. Old Side Presbyterians were virtually untouched by the religious enthusiasm.²⁹ At the same time, the revival exerted a unifying influence. It gave large segments of the population common emotional and intellectual ground, as well as a consciousness of religious unity as "revival fires" spread throughout the colonies. The masses who willingly gave themselves to the Awakening experienced a self-esteem as God's children and an equality as far as spiritual matters were concerned. It was an easy next step for this equality to be found applicable in other areas, "for in the new light of the Awakening was glimpsed the possibility of a people's acting to make their united will prevail as the guarantor of the common good."³⁰

²⁹ Recently these rifts have been discussed by Cowing, Great Awakening, chap. 6, and by Pilcher, Samuel Davies, chap. 2.

³⁰ Alan Heimert and Perry Miller (eds.), The Great Awakening: Documents Illustrating the Crisis and Its Consequences (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1967), p. lxi. It was Heimert's opinion that the Great Awakening played a dramatic role in shaping a surprisingly unified and politically liberal America for that day. He observed that the revival "provided pre-Revolutionary America with a radical, even democratic, social and political ideology, and evangelical religion embodied, and inspired, a thrust toward American nationalism." Religion and the American Mind from the Great Awakening to the Revolution, p. viii. Similar views were expressed by Maxson, Great Awakening, pp. 149-50; William W. Sweet, Methodism in American History (New York: Methodist Book Concern, 1933), pp. 78-79; and H. Shelton Smith, Robert T. Handy, Lefferts A. Loetscher, American Christianity: An Historical Interpretation with Representative Documents (2 vols.; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1960), I, 314-15.

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No longer would the evangelical Virginians accept the jurisdiction of a ruling minority. They would discuss, question, and petition; they would convince their Assembly of the rightness of their cause.

The great revival contributed another invaluable service to the embryo American continentalism when it produced the first intercolonial religious leaders. Preachers of the Awakening, including George Whitefield, Jonathan Edwards, Gilbert Tennent, Samuel Blair, Samuel Davies, Samuel Finley, and Isaac Backus, were widely heard and read and left their influence on younger clergymen who would become local leaders of the American cause with the merger of religious and political dissatisfaction. Patrick Henry, James Madison, and Thomas Jefferson were Virginians acquainted with and probably influenced by the evangelical position.

One religious historian has ascribed to the revival the setting down of America's religious convictions, which balanced the political revolution and prevented it from being hurled into the anarchy and ruin which characterized the French Revolution.³¹ Undoubtly, there are scholars who would be critical of this appraisal in light of the deism and humanism which were prevalent on the colonial scene. Yet the fundamentals of the evangelicalism of the period

³¹Frank G. Beardsley, A History of American Revivals (3rd ed. rev.; New York: American Tract Society, 1912), p. 69.

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fostered a defiance of atheism and anarchy and assisted in paving the way for the experiment in republican democracy. America "cannot eradicate, if it would, the marks left upon its social memory, upon its institutions and habits, by an awakening to God that was simultaneous with its awakening to national self-consciousness."³²

Difficulties with the Virginia Establishment

On March 22, 1775, Edmund Burke arose in Parliament to speak concerning conciliation with America. His address included a segment describing the religion of the American colonists:

Religion, always a principle of energy in this new people, is in no way worn out or impaired; and their mode of professing it is also one main cause of this free spirit. The people are Protestants; and of that kind which is the most adverse to all implicit submission of mind and opinion. This is a persuasion not only favorable to liberty, but built upon it.³³

Then, addressing himself to the interests of the dissenters, he observed that their claim to natural liberty as sincere

³²H. Richard Niebuhr, The Kingdom of God in America (Chicago: Willett, Clark and Co., 1937), p. 126.

³³Edmund Burke, "Conciliation with America," The Writings and Speeches of Edmund Burke (12 vols.; Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1901), II, 122-23.

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Protestants was the foundation of their existence, that they had been dissenters from establishments in the countries from which they came, and that they had taken with them to America "a temper and character far from alien to that of the people with whom they mixed."³⁴ Burke's accuracy revealed the depth of his knowledge of the dogma adhered to by American dissenters. He knew their motivations and responses. He sympathized with them and urged British patience and caution.

A similar view of the dissenter philosophy was embraced by Alexis de Tocqueville after his eye-opening journey to America in the 1830s. He apparently found it difficult to describe New World Christianity but finally stylized it "a democratic and republican religion." He continued, "This sect contributed powerfully to the establishment of a democracy and a republic." He believed that religion and politics had been allies promoting a libertarian society "from the earliest settlement of the emigrants. . . ."³⁵ While it is probably true that all sects during the revolutionary period possessed "a religious enthusiasm for liberty,"³⁶ the

³⁴Ibid.

³⁵Alexis de Tocqueville, Democracy in America (2 vols.; New York: Shocken, 1961), I, 355.

³⁶E. F. Humphrey, Nationalism and Religion in America, 1774-1789 (Boston: Chipman Law Publishing Co., 1924), p. 20. In his History of Virginia, Edmund Randolph contributed this

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dissenters were uniquely committed to a society that guaranteed religious freedom, and they were convinced that civil liberty, once gained, would give birth to the religious temper they sought. The painful travail was accepted, even when independence from Great Britain was seen to be the only way to weaken and ultimately end the controls imposed by the state-supported religious establishment.

Typical of evangelical Protestant thinking of the period was this emotional outcry of Virginia's anonymous "Country Poet" as he wrote to the House of Delegates meeting at Williamsburg in 1776:

FREEDOM we crave with ev'ry breath;
 An equal freedom, or a death.
 The heav'nly blessing, freely give,
 Or make an act we shall not live!
 Tax all things, water, air, and light,
 If need there is; yea tax the night!
 But let our brave heroic minds
 Move freely, like celestial winds.
 Make vice and folly feel your rod,
 But leave our consciences to God.
 To mortal power she never bows,
 For Heav'n alone claims all her vows.³⁷

observation to the dissenter reputation: "Obvious as it was that the dissenters, as they were called, could be animated with a zeal inferior to that of no partisan of general liberty, it was yet impracticable for the mother country or the colony to incorporate religion into the controversy, . . ." p. 194.

³⁷Virginia Gazette, Oct. 18, 1776. J. B. Taylor credited Baptist David Thomas with the writing of this verse, adding two lines at the beginning:

"'Tis all one voice, they all agree,
 'God made us, and we must be free.'
Virginia Baptist Ministers, I, 48.

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This and similar pleas were not the result of imaginary circumstances. The Anglican Church was recognized in Virginia as the official state church to the exclusion of all other ecclesiastical organizations. Some of these, like the Presbyterians and Quakers, were permitted to establish congregations and appoint preachers upon the receipt of a license, but total religious liberty was unknown. Dissenters struggled with religious bonds that forced support of the Establishment and denied the open practice of convictions unique to themselves. Often promiscuous preaching, home-centered religious services, and the propagation, by whatever means, of the strongly evangelistic and fundamentalist interpretation of the Scriptures encountered highly volatile reactions. Warnings, interruptions of services, beatings, imprisonments, and fines were all persecutions aimed at silencing the opposition as well as achieving conformity. These harassments were unsuccessful; the clamors for recognition increased, and diversity of opinion and dogma spread rapidly by the beginning of revolutionary hostilities.³⁸

³⁸The story of the struggle for religious freedom in Virginia is not within the scope of this work. Only occasional references will be made to the issue when it is interwoven with the quest for civil liberty. Intensive studies of that period of trial include the following: Katharine Brown, "Presbyterian Dissent"; Hamilton J. Eckerd, Separation of Church and State in Virginia (Richmond, 1910); Charles F. James, Struggle for Religious Liberty; Lewis P. Little, Imprisoned Preachers and Religious Liberty in Virginia (Lynchburg, Va.: J. P. Bell Co., 1938); Henry

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In fairness to the Anglican Establishment, it must be stated that there were ways in which dissenter worship could gain recognition. Since the English Toleration Act of 1689 did not officially apply to the colonies, sects were recognized there either through direct legislation or by the British law being applied without legal sanction. Virginia used both means. In 1699 the Virginia Assembly extended the application of the act, permitting legally-recognized dissenters to attend their own places of worship. The decision was certainly liberal for that period, for it required attendance only once in two months.³⁹

This did not create immediate problems for the Virginia Establishment as there were few dissenters. These were small groups of Quakers and a few Presbyterians. However, beginning in the 1740s, dissidents rapidly migrated to Virginia's Great Valley region partially surrounding the older settlements to the east. These were chiefly Presbyterians who had obtained through the efforts of the Philadelphia

R. McIlwaine, The Struggle of Protestant Dissenters for Religious Toleration in Virginia (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1894); William J. Thom, The Struggle for Religious Freedom in Virginia: The Baptists (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1900).

³⁹William H. Seiler, "The Church of England as the Established Church in Seventeenth-Century Virginia," Journal of Southern History, XV (1949), 496-97.

Synod the promise of William Gooch, lieutenant-governor of Virginia, that their religious observances would suffer no interruptions, provided they adhered to the Act of Toleration and manifested peaceful intentions toward the government.⁴⁰

As the years went by, dissatisfaction with the old order grew, and the Establishment resisted every attempt to lessen its power. The dissenter population grew to the extent that the Anglican Church felt threatened. Whenever possible, dissenter congregations were suppressed. The dissidents, in turn, feared the specter of a state-church with expanding powers, which would eliminate all other sects and create an episcopate in the American colonies. Virginia dissenters were especially concerned over such a possibility, for Anglican strength there was greater than in any other colony.⁴¹ The issue remained viable over a long period and was marked by intense feeling.

At least two other factors on the Old Dominion religious scene were responsible for dissenter unrest. They were the

⁴⁰ Foote, Sketches of Virginia, I, 103-104.

⁴¹ In the seventeenth century, a plan for a Virginia episcopate appeared in England with the apparent approval of Charles II; see "Draft for the Creation of a Bishoprick in Virginia," Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, XXXVI (1928), pp. 45-53. For more on the issue, see Arthur L. Cross, The Anglican Episcopate and the American Colonies (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1902), p. 226; Heimert, Religion and the American Mind, chap. 7; Fred Hinkhouse,

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alleged loyalty of the Episcopal clergy to the Crown and the commonly-held opinion that those same ministers were delinquent in their duties and their morals. Accusations of Anglican disloyalty ran the gamut of suspicion all the way from their being pro-British in sympathy to the theory that they were emissaries of and in conspiracy with a foreign government.⁴² What few Loyalists there were among the

The Preliminaries of the American Revolution as Seen in the English Press, 1763-1775 (1926; rpt. New York: Octagon, 1969), chap. 6.

⁴²Maxson, Great Awakening, p. 149. The debate over the Established Church's position has been carried on for many years and occasionally has waxed warm. See E. Clowes Chorley, "The Planing of the Church in Virginia," William and Mary Quarterly, 2nd series, X (July, 1930), 211; G. MacLaren Brydon, "The Planting of the Church in Virginia," William and Mary Quarterly, 2nd series, X (October, 1930), 341. Brydon's treatise, The Established Church in Virginia and the Revolution, is a brief work written as a defense of the Established Church in response to Wesley M. Gewehr's The Great Awakening in Virginia, 1740-1790. In his volume, Gewehr made several derogatory references to the Loyalist nature of the Anglican Church and its low moral state. Brydon accused Gewehr of adopting "every prejudice or partisan statement against the Established Church made by any denominational historian, without appearing to give any weight to evidence to the contrary even in those records listed in his bibliography and presumably available to him," p. 5.

Wallace Brown, The Good Americans: The Loyalists in the American Revolution (New York: William Morrow and Co., 1969), concluded that there were fewer Anglican Loyalists in the South than in other sections of the colonies, pp. 57-58, 243-44. It does seem safe to say that a high percentage of Anglicans was active in the American cause, and that traditional charges have been exaggerated.

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Virginia Establishment may well have aggravated the situation by causing the church to be suspected and by increasing the agitation for its long-awaited destruction. Those who made much of the alleged Anglican disloyalty were the Baptists and Presbyterians whose adherents were almost unanimously pro-American.⁴³ As far as the dissenters were concerned, the Establishment "shared the popular odium which attached to anything of English origin."⁴⁴

The dissenters had looked with disdain upon certain pastimes of the Anglican community for many years. In the 1750s, Samuel Davies had preached of Episcopalian excesses to his Presbyterian followers. He condemned them for abandoning themselves to "lawless pleasures, to gaming, cock-fighting, horse-racing, and all the fashionable methods of killing-time, as the most important and serious business of life."⁴⁵ The clergy, he said, were "smooth-tongued

⁴³ Robert E. Semple, A History of the Rise and Progress of the Baptists in Virginia (Richmond: John Lynch, 1810), p. 62; Leonard J. Kramer, "Muskets in the Pulpit: 1776-1783," Journal of the Presbyterian Historical Society, XXXV (December, 1953), Part I, 230.

⁴⁴ Chorley, p. 211.

⁴⁵ Quoted in Richard L. Morton, Colonial Virginia, II, 752. See Davies, Religion and Patriotism: The Constituents of a Good Soldier, A sermon preached to Captain Overton's Independent Company of Volunteers, Raised in Hanover County, Va., Aug. 17, 1755 (Philadelphia: James Cattin, 1755), pp. 14-18.

Preachers, who would admit promiscuous Crowds into Heaven, tho' it should impeach the Veracity of the God of Truth."⁴⁶ Whether or not these pastors, charged with the spiritual care of their parishes, were guilty of such gross neglect of moral duty remains a matter of controversy. Davies was a Presbyterian whose New Light convictions led him to a more disciplined life style than that conceived by the Church of England. Anglicans were more open and flexible in their daily living, so it should not be surprising to find evidence of various questionable activities. Governor Francis Fauquier, a contemporary of Davies, was known to visit planter-friends where "dice rattled, cards appeared, and money in immense sums was lost and won."⁴⁷ If such amusements were pursued by Virginians, especially by those of the

⁴⁶ Samuel Davies, "Charity and Truth United or the Way of the Multitude Exposed, in Six Letters to the Rev. Mr. Wm. Stith, A.M., President of William and Mary College," Journal of the Presbyterian Historical Society, XIX (1941), 260. On another occasion, Davies declared: "Had the whole Counsel of God been declared, had all the Doctrines of the Gospel been solemnly and faithfully preached in the established Church; I am perswaded [sic] there would have been but few Dissenters in these Parts of Virginia; . . ." The State of Religion Among the Protestant Dissenters in Virginia (Boston: S. Kneeland, 1751), p. 6.

⁴⁷ Charles H. Ambler, Sectionalism in Virginia from 1776 to 1861 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1910), p. 17. The foibles of another Anglican clergyman, Isaac Giberne, are discussed in Robert E. and B. Katharine Brown, Virginia, 1705-1786: Democracy or Aristocracy? (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1964), pp. 248-49.

(Faint, illegible handwritten notes)

populous state church, this lament by Davies can be understood: "What crowds of such Sinners burden our Land! So many, that whoever mingles Religion with his Patriotism, cannot but tremble for his Country, especially in this critical and dangerous juncture, lest 'our Iniquities should be now full.'"⁴⁸ This same concern was reiterated in 1774 when an anonymous dissenter declared "that every person who read his Bible, and inquired into the law of the church, must become the adversary of the clergy."⁴⁹ Their fundamentalist approach to the interpretation of Scripture predetermined that the Calvinistic dissenters would believe themselves more orthodox and thus more thoroughly Christian

⁴⁸ Samuel Davies, "Charity and Truth United," p. 261.

⁴⁹ Quoted in M. O. Clark, "Baptist History in Virginia," p. 8. Brydon, in Established Church in Virginia, p. 9, again defended the Established Church by rejecting the charge that the Virginia clergy were delinquent. He accused denominational historians of bias in their appraisals of the colonial church, but the candid reader of Brydon's short essay quickly becomes aware of the author's own struggle with impartiality. Brydon's deficiency in that invaluable virtue was apparent in this rather pompous statement: "Virginia in 1776 was spiritually what the Established Church had made her. Could great leaders and her great soul have been born out of such a muck of irreligion and vice . . .?" p. 6.

H. J. Eckenrode had exonerated the ministers twenty years before Brydon when he rationalized: "If their lives were as evil as has been alleged, it is strange that presentments were not more common. Grand juries often indicted laymen fearlessly for moral offenses. Why then was a generally depraved clergy tolerated? It is possible that the parsons gained a bad reputation, partly for the very reason that such black sheep as were among them were shown up." Separation of Church and State in Virginia (Richmond, 1910), p. 35.

than their Anglican neighbors. They believed they were witnesses of moral decline, and their piety would not permit them to overlook it. Their fear of the wrath of God upon those who did not take the disciplines of the faith seriously was just one more of a series of factors in their quest for disestablishment.

Increasingly, the Anglican Church was opposed until it appeared to be losing its position of strength. The controversy grew until it occupied a prominent place in the minds of Virginia dissenters, along with the disputes over taxes and other economic and political regulations. They knew that the regulatory powers assumed by Parliament permitted a wide range of activity, including the creation of a centralized ecclesiastical bureaucracy that could prohibit all other churches. These dissenters came to cherish political independence because they felt it would result in the rejection of religious oppression.

THE
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20535

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR, FBI

SUBJECT: [Illegible]

[Illegible text follows]

CHAPTER III

CALVINISTIC OPINION: THE REVOLUTIONARY GENERATION

The decisions made by most of the Calvinists of Virginia to resist restrictive British policies, to support the use of American arms, and to uphold the proclamation of independence rested firmly upon principles molded by the religious doctrines they embraced. It was not easy for them to separate the spiritual from the physical or the eternal from the temporal. Christ was the Lord of life--all of it--and God was the God of history. Men's times were in His hands, and nothing was done without His notice. Dogma, then, dominated the lives of the people, although many of them may not have fully understood it and others may not have taken it seriously.¹

If the clergy of the two dissenting denominations became leaders of political thought and action for their lay

¹Presbyterians were not uniform in their response to dogma. Evidently they had the same problems all religious groups have in the maintenance of piety and zeal. Acquaintance with the letter of the law does not guarantee a manifestation of the spirit of it. See Leyburn, Scotch-Irish, p. 273ff.

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members, they did so reluctantly.² Their primary responsibility was to preach the spiritual aspect of the gospel, but their concept of God and His dominion led them directly to the broader application. Ascertaining God's will and doing God's work "had anthropological overtones and implications for Presbyterian [and Baptist] citizenship."³ James Smylie, a twentieth-century church historian, explained:

Incensed at what they considered to be the unjust dominion of others, Presbyterian clergy . . . often spoke in the rhetoric of sedition. While they were bellicose, they were also wary, particularly in corporate ecclesiastical statements. Afraid of anarchy, cautious about violence, they believed that the shedding of blood is only justified as an ultima ratio against tyranny. Moreover, so uncertain is revolutionary disruption that only God can determine the final outcome.

"To be sure," Smylie concluded, "they were reluctant revolutionaries."⁴

With creeds placing such heavy emphasis upon the inter-relationship of God and man and thus the religious and the political, it should not be surprising that there was logical progression in Calvinistic reasoning about the revolutionary

²Henry M. Muhlenberg, in his journal, called the Presbyterian clergy "politico-Christiani." Quoted in James H. Smylie, "Presbyterian Clergy and Problems of 'Dominion' in the Revolutionary Generation," Journal of Presbyterian History, XLVIII (1970), 161.

³Smylie, ibid., p. 162.

⁴Ibid.

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crisis. Alice Baldwin listed four basic doctrines espoused by the Presbyterians that made political entanglement inevitable:

1. Political concepts must stem from scriptural roots.
2. The people's fundamental constitution is thus based on God-given laws guaranteeing inalienable rights, which are therefore natural because they come from God.
3. Government is a binding compact made between the people and their rulers.
4. It is the right of the people to hold their rulers accountable and to defend their rights against all oppression.⁵

An analysis of Presbyterian preaching during the Revolutionary War led Leonard Kramer to conclude that sermonizing stressed the "necessity of supporting political independence by force of arms." He said that subject matter came out of their views of the two-directional nature of the involvement of God and man. Presbyterian sermon topics dealt with four foundational areas:

1. God is concerned with the crisis, for it is only natural for the Creator to be concerned about his creation.
2. As moral governor of the universe, God has sided with the Americans in their struggle to throw off the shackles of Great Britain.

⁵Baldwin, "Sowers of Sedition: The Political Theories of Some of the New Light Presbyterian Clergy of Virginia and North Carolina," William and Mary Quarterly, 3rd series, V (January, 1948), 76.

3. Although God's justice inclines Him toward America, there is much dross in American society. America suffers to eliminate the impurities of collective and individual sin, that the purest gold might be produced.
4. God would set aside the natural laws, if it became necessary, to give victory to the just.⁶

Most often, these topics were used in exhortations to militia companies and in preaching at special events, such as fast or thanksgiving days. Occasionally, they were the bases of sermons delivered in Sunday services.⁷ It appears, however, that whenever politics was the subject, the clergy delivered their sermons "as priests rather than as politicians."⁸

Dissenting ministers were careful to follow specific guidelines in presenting their thinking about the war. Harry Kerr's circumspect work with Revolutionary War sermons led him to observe that the dissenting clergy were concerned with two major questions: (1) Were the colonists justified in their resistance to England? (2) If they were, what were

⁶Kramer, "Muskets in the Pulpit," Part I, 242-43. Kramer added that an example of God's intervention, according to the Presbyterians, was the storm which permitted Washington to capture the Hessians near Trenton.

⁷Kerr's important study of the character of Revolutionary War sermons revealed that only 15% of the political sermons that are extant were preached on Sunday, "Character of . . . Sermons," p. 25.

⁸Ibid., p. 32.

the best ways to secure victory? Kerr said that as the political situation matured in the years before independence, justification of colonial actions varied from self-defense through right of resistance all the way to necessity of separation.⁹ He continued:

Laymen argued justification principally in terms of alleged violations of constitutional rights. The important thing about the ministers' handling of this topic is that they never ventured out of the religious domain. The specific question which they phrased for debate was something like this: "If our civil and religious rights are threatened, are we justified in resisting the threat?" Very little attention was paid to whether or not the colonists' rights were in fact threatened. Discussion of that matter was left to laymen because it involved chiefly secular considerations.¹⁰

The organizational style or homiletical pattern used in sermonizing was simple so that "communication would be less hampered by human failings." Dissenting ministers shunned figurative language, "unusual words, classical allusions and foreign expressions."¹¹ Usually the biblical text was used in two ways, the first explaining the propositions drawn from the passage and the second applying the propositions to the parishioners' lives.¹² Kerr emphasized:

⁹Ibid., p. 156.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 157.

¹¹Ibid., p. 141.

¹²Ibid., p. 144.

Virtually every assertion, whether it set forth a general doctrinal proposition or recommended a specific course of action, was accompanied by a statement of the minister's reasons for believing it to be true. Most of the evidence was drawn from reason, revelation, and history.¹³

In political sermons, the text often became "a springboard for comments the preacher wanted to make."¹⁴ It must be remembered, however, that the dissenting clergy--and the Anglicans, too--"refrained from examining mundane affairs too closely" and "viewed political events consistently from a religious perspective."¹⁵

Samuel Davies

No better example of this effective combination of religion and politics in the pulpit can be found than the Virginia Presbyterian, Samuel Davies. Although he predated the Revolutionary War by almost a generation, his sermons were still in use more than one hundred years after his death. Likewise, "his oratory exerted a profound influence

¹³ Ibid., pp. 139-40. Kerr used John Witherspoon's sermon, "The Dominion of Providence Over the Passions of Men," to illustrate this point. In contending that God governs the affairs of men, Witherspoon "omitted arguments from reason and ancient history, but cited, in order, passages from the Old and New Testaments and examples based on the Reformation, the defeat of the Spanish Armada, Cromwell's life, and the difficulties overcome by the first Puritan colonists."

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 148.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 144.

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on later preachers and perhaps had a significant effect on Southern secular oratory of the Revolutionary period."¹⁶ Davies' biographer, George W. Pilcher, summarized the great preacher's first political sermon, delivered on a fast day in March 1755, during the colonial wars with the French and the Indians. Entitled "God the Sovereign of All Kingdoms," the sermon stressed God's interest in His children's times of crisis and called for repentance of those sins for which they were being punished through war. Davies laid responsibility for the outcome of the conflict on the people, for God controls events "through secondary means. Those who wished to be helped must first be used."¹⁷ Davies blatantly urged his listeners to assume a bellicose attitude:

Let us use our influence to diffuse a military spirit around us. I have no scruple thus openly to declare, that such of you whose circumstances allow of it, may not only lawfully enlist and take up arms, but that your so doing is a Christian duty.¹⁸

The political sermons of Davies disclosed his personal convictions regarding religious and political principles. He believed that the iniquities of society determined the

¹⁶Pilcher, Samuel Davies, pp. 186-87. This biography is the most recent and carefully researched study of the life of Samuel Davies. See chap. IX for an excellent description of Davies' ability to blend the religious and the political.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 164.

¹⁸Cited in ibid.

Outcome of battles.¹⁹ He called for prayer, heart-searching, and Bible study to bring about reformation and the blessing of God. Davies was impatient with tyranny and believed that liberty was always the foe of arbitrary power. God chose to protect His children from such a fate through the use of arms. The martial spirit "is as necessary in its Place, for our subsistence in such a World as this, as any of the gentler Genius's among Mankind, and it is derived from the same divine Original."²⁰ As Christians, "we are obliged to defend our Country; and that is a sneaking, sordid Soul indeed that can desert it" when a crisis comes. Such defense is "a righteous cause; . . . [when] we act entirely upon the defensive, repel unjust Violence, and avenge national Injuries; we are fighting for our People, and for the Cities of our God."²¹ When he spoke of "our

¹⁹ Samuel Davies, Virginia's Danger and Remedy: Two Discourses Occasioned by the Severe Drought in Sundry Parts of the Country; and the Defeat of General Braddock (Williamsburg, Va.; Wm. Hunter, 1756), p. 25. This list of sins is from Davies' Religion and Patriotism: The Constituents of a Good Soldier, pp. 18-19; vice, drunkenness, swearing, avarice, "dishonest craft (for unlawful gain)," oppression of the poor, prodigality, luxury, vanity, mirth, sensuality, card-playing, backgammon (played more than Communion was taken), reading of plays and romances, horse-races, cock-fights, conversing over trifles, prayerlessness, ignorant and vicious children, slaves untaught in Christianity, neglect of religion, infidelity, neglect of gospel ordinances, and worship neglected.

²⁰ Davies, Religion and Patriotism, p. 8.

²¹ Ibid., pp. 10-12.

Country," he used the term in a rather mystical and even sacred manner. He explained, "Our country is a word of the highest and most endearing import: it includes our friends and relatives, our liberty, our property, our religion: in short, it includes our earthly all."²² The obligation to defend one's homeland was not in conflict with sincere Christianity; in fact, both were compatible.

But Davies went further. If the usurpation of the People's rights has occurred and resistance has been chosen as the only way to fight arbitrary power, what is the fate of that one who "refuses to obey, and consults his own Ease and Safety, more than his Duty to God and his Country"? God's wrath enters the picture, for such conduct is nothing less than a "moral Evil." "The Wretch" is exposed "to the heavy curse of God both in this and the eternal World."²³

²² Samuel Davies, "The Crisis: Or, the Uncertain Doom of Kingdoms at Particular Times. Preached at Hanover, in Virginia, October 28, 1756, Being the Day appointed by the Synod of New York, to be Observed as a General Fast, on Account of the Present War with France," in Sermons on Important Subjects (5th ed.; New York: T. Allen, 1792), III, 388.

²³ Samuel Davies, The Curse of Cowardice: A Sermon Preached to the Militia of Hanover County, Virginia, at a General Muster, May 8, 1758. With a View to Raise a Company for Captain Samuel Meredith (London: Woodbridge, 1759), p. 6. Davies accepted the theological concept of man's accountability to God for deeds done or undone in this life. Redeemed man, although constantly harassed by his evil nature, must come to grips with his lower nature and rise

On September 21, 1760, Davies addressed the Senior Class of Princeton (then the College of New Jersey), to which he had come a few months before as president. His subject was "Religion and the Public Spirit," and he described "the good, the useful, and public-spirited man," using David, the Hebrew King, as his example. He challenged those young men who were to enter upon careers of service to do as that ancient and worthy monarch had done:

Serve your generation. Live not for yourselves, but for the Publick. Be the Servants of the Church; the Servants of your Country; the servants of all. . . . Let your own Ease, your own Pleasure, your own private Interests, yield to the common Good. For this, spare no Pains; avoid no Labour; dread no Sufferings. For this do every Thing; suffer every Thing. For this, live and die. From this, let no selfish Passion mislead you; . . . ; let no Opposition deter you; no private Interest bribe you . . . Bravely live and die, serving your Generation,--your own Generation.²⁴

Not only had Davies' life been an example of that which he taught, but the students who heard him that day or on other occasions left that institution to emulate their instructor; they became a vital part of the revolutionary generation.

above it. Failure to do so encountered the wrath of God. Davies expressed this vividly:

When Mercy call'd, they would not turn;

Now Mercy frowns, and they must burn.

From "A Survey of Human Nature," Collected Poems, ed. Richard Beale Davis (Gainesville, Fla.: Scholars' Facsimiles and Reprints, 1968), p. 46.

²⁴ Samuel Davies, Religion and the Public Spirit. A Valedictory Address to the Senior Class, Delivered in Nassau-Hall, September 21, 1760, the Sunday Before Commencement (New York: Parker, 1761), p. 7.

The new regime of George III made Davies anxious about the future of the British Empire. He spoke of it being "a strange untried Period" and declared "that we can be certain of almost Nothing, but what is past." Almost as if he were a prophet, he continued:

The most promising Posture of Affairs may put on another Form; and all the Honours and Acquisitions of a well conducted and successful War, may be ingloriously lost by the Intrigues of Negotiation, and a dishonourable Peace. The best of Kings (with all due Deference to Majesty be it spoken) may have evil Counsellors: And evil Counsellors may have the most mischievous Influence, notwithstanding the Wisdom and Goodness of the Sovereign.²⁵

Nevertheless, Davies reaffirmed, the new king will have the loving support of all men of Christian spirit. He who "'fears GOD,' will not fail to 'honour the King.'"²⁶

This biblical principle of respecting the ruler was to be followed, but not blindly. Davies and the Presbyterian clergy who came after him differentiated between the authority of the king and that of the other segments of his government. They could react openly against the acts of parliament--as they did the Stamp Act--but they maintained their allegiance to the throne until the threat of autocratic tyranny became too real for them to deny. One hundred years

²⁵ Samuel Davies, A Sermon Delivered at Nassau-Hall, January 14, 1761, On the Death of His Late Majesty King George II (New York: William Bradford, 1761), p. 15.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 17. See I Peter 2:17.

after independence, Presbyterians were reading the church's version of that final break:

It was against the king that the impeachments of the Declaration were addressed, and not against the Parliament. It was the long series of acts, so impressively recited in the preamble of that great instrument as implying every attribute that can define a tyrant, which forced the long-hesitating and reluctant provincials at length to sever the last tie which bound them to the British government.

The discourse underlined the sincerity of the Presbyterian clergy's stand in continuing to pray for their sovereign. For more than a year after fighting had broken out.

They owned him as their legitimate prince, though they denied that the Parliament was their master. No doubt, also, the simple, domestic, and religious character of the king and the various stories told of his kindly frugal life had greatly endeared him to the colonists, . . . The last sound of prayer for George the Third died out of Presbyterian pulpits in the month of June, 1776. . . .²⁷

Without doubt, had Davies lived through the Revolutionary War, he would have been pleased with the conduct of most of the Presbyterian clergy in the Virginia area. His conception of responsible Christian citizenship seemed to coincide with theirs: Christian men, by virtue of their acceptance of the gospel, were warmly patriotic but also fiercely antagonistic toward tyranny, especially when that despotism

²⁷ Centennial Historical Discourses Delivered in the City of Philadelphia, June, 1876, by Appointment of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America (Philadelphia, 1876), pp. 99-100.

threatened God-given rights.²⁸ The son of Moses Hoge, a Presbyterian minister in Virginia during the war, wrote that it was his opinion that while these ministers

knew their rights and asserted them, they also knew their duties and studied to fulfill them. . . . Attempts indeed were made more than once, to represent them as seditious people, as unfriendly to their rulers and to the established order of things. But their conduct furnished a splendid and unanswerable refutation of these calumnies.²⁹

As was Davies in his spirit and conduct, so were they. They were patient and peaceful but in the Revolution "were generally prompt and zealous in maintaining the rights of their country." They "rendered not railing for railing" and "crimination did not provoke recrimination from them. We have heard nothing of either their verbal or their published controversies."³⁰

The mantle of Davies, the patriotic orator, apparently fell upon a young Virginia lawyer named Patrick Henry. In elocution and logic, Henry did emulate the Presbyterian clergyman under whose ministry he developed from a lad of

²⁸ Baldwin's impression was that Presbyterians in the south quoted Locke and other philosophers less than did the clergy of New England, relying moreso on scripture and Christian theology. The scarcity of southern political sermons made her judgment difficult, however. "Sowers of Sedition," p. 76.

²⁹ John Blair Hoge, The Life of Moses Hoge (Richmond: Union Theological Seminary in Virginia, 1964), p. 31.

³⁰ Ibid.

eleven to a young man of twenty-two or three.³¹ Henry had received much of his early classical and moral training from his Anglican clergyman uncle, after whom he was named.³²

But there were events that predetermined that the youthful Henry would encounter Presbyterian teachings. His maternal grandfather, Isaac Winston, was an acquaintance of Samuel Morris, of the "Morris Reading House" fame, broke with the Established Church, and was indicted and fined for permitting the dissenter, John Roan, to preach in his home.³³ Henry's mother, although married to a devout Anglican,

³¹George H. Bost compared the war sermons of Davies and the "Liberty or Death" speech of Henry and found interesting parallels. The likenesses included: (1) the progression of the argument from a description of conditions through the taking up of arms as the sole alternative, with the advantages to be gained by doing so; (2) the heavy usage of oratorical questions and exclamatory sentences" as a means of "emphatic address"; (3) "the piling one on another of facts or statements for their mass effect"; (4) the vividness and "personal directness" of their styles of delivery. Samuel Davies: Colonial Revivalist and Champion of Religious Toleration" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1942), pp. 236-37. See also "Revolutionary Patriots," Virginia Evangelical and Literary Magazine, I (February, 1818), 52; Foote, Sketches of Virginia, I, 305; Meade, Patrick Henry, Patriot, p. 72.

³²Edward Fontaine, "Patrick Henry: Corrections of Biographical Mistakes and Popular Errors in Regard to His Character. Anecdotes and New Facts Illustrating His Religious and Political Opinions; and the Style and Power of His Eloquence. A Brief Account of His Last Illness and Death" (1872), copy in the Virginia State Library, p. 5. Fontaine was the great-grandson of Patrick Henry. The Rev. Patrick Henry was rector of St. Paul's Parish, Hanover County.

³³Meade, Patrick Henry, Patriot, pp. 66-67, also Meade Patrick Henry, Practical Revolutionary (Philadelphia: J. P. Lippincott, 1969), p. 126.

became a dissenter and a follower of Samuel Davies, as did two of Henry's sisters. Young Patrick often drove his mother to Presbyterian services in Hanover and thus heard the preaching of the great Davies. On the way home, his mother would examine Henry on the text and content of the sermon.³⁴

Davies preached his patriotic sermons during the years when Henry was making major decisions about his life--from age nineteen through his twenty-second year³⁵--and in his later years, Henry continued to express admiration for Davies and appreciation for the influence of the Presbyterian divine upon his life. He spoke of Davies as the greatest orator he had ever heard and apparently thought of the clergyman as his example.³⁶

It should come as no surprise that Henry's Anglican Uncle was an aggressive opponent of Davies and his followers. His parish had been hit hard by the religious revival in the Old Dominion and was being devastated by Davies. He was

³⁴ Meade, Patrick Henry, Patriot, p. 71; Foote, I, 305.

³⁵ Meade, Patrick Henry, Patriot, p. 71; "The Apostle of Virginia Presbyterianism," Young Virginian, III (December, 1876), 93.

³⁶ Meade, Patrick Henry, Patriot, p. 71; Pilcher, Samuel Davies, p. 84. Pilcher pointed out that despite the similarities between the oratory of the two men, it should be remembered that "the underlying purpose of all of Davies' Oratory was to bring sinners to repentance," p. 85.

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one of several petitioners in 1751 asking the Assembly to tighten the controls of the Presbyterians,³⁷ but Davies continued in Hanover until 1759.

The Davies legacy went beyond principles of Christian Citizenship which blessed a revolutionary generation; it surpassed the impact made upon the young Anglican, Patrick Henry. Davies assisted in the training of numerous Presbyterian clergymen who served their church from Maryland to North Carolina.³⁸ At the College of New Jersey, he established the tradition of monthly orations by students, which were delivered before large audiences after they were critically read by President Davies. Alice Baldwin alleged that "this may have been the origin of the students' political speeches which attained such importance under the next two presidents."³⁹ Furthermore, Davies' oldest son William became a colonel in the Revolutionary War and afterwards served the American government in the adjustment of the financial accounts of the states.⁴⁰ It is impossible to

³⁷ Bost, "Samuel Davies," p. 69.

³⁸ Ibid., p. 125.

³⁹ Baldwin, "Sowers of Sedition," p. 61.

⁴⁰ Richard Webster, A History of the Presbyterian Church in America, from Its Origin until the Year 1760, with Biographical Sketches of Its Early Ministers (Philadelphia: Joseph M. Wilson, 1857), p. 562.

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ascertain what influence the elder Davies had on his son, since the father died when the boy was only twelve. William did not embrace his father's religious tenets⁴¹--still memories of the preacher's stand on patriotism and citizenship must have made impressions which the younger man could not shake.

John Witherspoon

Another example of the masterful use of politics and religion as a unit to shape opinion and foster action was the ministry of John Witherspoon, president of Princeton from 1768 to 1794. His remarkable tenure was the culmination of many years of Princeton's stress on human freedom under God. This emphasis had its antecedents in the administration of Aaron Burr, known for his abhorrence of tyranny and condemnation of the persecution of dissenters.⁴² Burr was followed by Jonathan Edwards, Samuel Davies, Samuel

⁴¹Pilcher, Samuel Davies, pp. 39-42.

⁴²William B. Sprague (ed.), Annals of the American Pulpit (9 vols.; New York, 1866-1877), III, 72; Baldwin, "Sowers of Sedition," p. 59. Burr served Princeton as president from 1747 to 1757, and when he died, Governor Livingston of New Jersey said of him: "For public spirit and love of his country, who ever surpassed this reverend Patriot? . . . He had a high sense of English liberty, and detested despotic power as the bane of human happiness." Quoted in Webster, History of the Presbyterian Church, p. 451.

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Finley,⁴³ and Witherspoon. This direct descendant of John Knox⁴⁴ came to the college at a time when anti-British feeling was very evident. The Stamp Act had been repealed, but the distrust fomented by the measure continued. John DeWitt noted that the former popularity as an oratorical theme which the British Empire had enjoyed had been dissipated by 1768. Instead the two literary societies,⁴⁵ that probably began during the Davies' years, were lauding political liberty and condemning British restrictions.

Witherspoon had difficulty disciplining himself with regard to the Presbyterian conviction that, in general,

⁴³Finley was president between 1761 and 1768 and continued the emphasis on Christian libertarianism. He had preached during the French and Indian War: "Who, that desires to transmit the Blessings he has enjoyed to his Posterity, can bear to see them deprived of the greatest?--of Liberty, Property, and Religion, at once?--shall we leave our Children, Slavery for Liberty, arbitrary Government for Law and Equity, and Popery for the pure Christian Religion?--blessed be all loyal Subjects, who had rather die, than to give up their Country to ruin . . ."
the Curse of Meroz, or, the Danger of Neutrality, in the Cause of God, and our Country. A Sermon, Preached Oct. 2, 1757, in Nottingham, Pennsylvania (Philadelphia: James Chattin, 1757), pp. 27-32.

⁴⁴J. F. Dickie, John Witherspoon, Patriot, 1722-1794 (Detroit, n.d.), copy in the Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia, p. 20; Dwight R. Guthrie, John McMillan: The postle of Presbyterianism in the West, 1752-1833 (Pittsburg: University of Pittsburg Press, 1952), p. 17.

⁴⁵The Well-Meaning and the Plain-Dealing Clubs. See John DeWitt, "Princeton College Administrations in the Eighteenth Century," Presbyterian and Reformed Review, VIII (1897), 411. These societies apparently advocated independence some time before it was a popular theme. See Baldwin, "Sowers of Sedition," p. 62.

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politics should be kept out of the pulpit.⁴⁶ He developed the curriculum, introduced fresh Scottish Presbyterian ideas which had overtones of the Enlightenment, and made the college "a seminary of sedition, known as such to both rebels and loyalists."⁴⁷ The course in Moral Philosophy, which he prepared, was given to juniors and actually introduced them to political ethics.⁴⁸ Woodbridge Riley asserted that the course was the first overt ethical system offered to eighteenth-century American students by a college president.⁴⁹ In writing his lectures, Witherspoon drew from the Philosophers of the seventeenth and eighteenth-century Enlightenment as well as orthodox Christian theology. He taught his students:

⁴⁶Varnum L. Collins, President Witherspoon, A Biography (2 vols.; Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1925), I, 156.

⁴⁷Francis L. Broderick, "Pulpit, Physics and Politics," William and Mary Quarterly, 3rd series, VI (January, 1949), 59. Acts of Patriotism took place on campus from the middle 1760s on. Among these were debates on liberty, the wearing of American-manufactured cloth at commencement, the burning of Loyalist letters, the harassment of students who were sons of Loyalists, and the holding of a tea party where the commodity was publicly burned. See Thomas J. Wertenbaker, Princeton, 1746-1896 (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1946), pp. 56-57.

⁴⁸Kramer, "Political Ethics of the American Presbyterian Clergy," p. 147. Chapter V of the Kramer thesis contains an intensive summary of Witherspoon's political philosophy.

⁴⁹Quoted in ibid.

1. Human rights may be natural or acquired. Natural rights are essential to man, such as the preservation of one's life. But natural rights do not include the right to domineer, to get riches (comparatively speaking), or to hold any particular office. Acquired rights come from the fruits of industry, accident, or conquest.
2. Rights are perfect or imperfect; that is, they are perfect when in their circumstances they can be clearly ascertained, and when we may use force to obtain them if they are denied us. Self-preservation and justice are perfect rights. We may demand imperfect rights, yet we have no title to them. Those which are given us usually come from the mercy of the giver.
3. Rights are alienable and unalienable. The former we may surrender--examples are goods and lands. The latter we may not give away--these being the rights to think, to know, to judge for one's self in all matters of religion, to preserve one's self and one's property. Some agree that liberty is unalienable, and those who have given it away may lawfully resume it.⁵⁰

Witherspoon based human conduct on justice, which he defended as "giving or permitting others to enjoy whatever they have a perfect right to--and making such an use of our own rights as not to encroach upon the rights of others." Reason dictates, he said, "that there are many rights which men severally possess, which others ought not to violate." Liberty ought not to be surrendered in the social state--in fact, "the end of the union should be the protection of liberty, as far as it is a blessing." Without any doubt, it is "unlawful

⁵⁰ John Witherspoon, "Lectures on Moral Philosophy," Works (4 vols.; Philadelphia: Woodward, 1800-1802), III, 309-10.

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to make inroads upon others, unprovoked," to "take away their liberty by no better right than superior power."⁵¹

Students must have reacted visibly when Witherspoon attacked the principle of monarchy: "Everyone knows [it] is but another name for tyranny, where the arbitrary will of one capricious man disposes of the lives and properties of all ranks."⁵²

Of the right of revolution, Witherspoon declared that in every government,

there is a supreme irresistible power lodged some where, in king, senate, or people . . . How far does this authority extend? . . . If the supreme power wherever lodged, come to be exercised in a manifestly tyrannical manner, the subjects may certainly if in their power, resist and overthrow it. But this is only when it becomes manifestly more advantageous to unsettle the government altogether than to submit to tyranny. . . . It is not till a whole people rise, that resistance has any effect, and it is not easy to suppose that a whole people would rise against their governors, unless they have really received very good provocation.

History reveals that "nothing is more natural than for rulers to grasp at power, and their situation enables them to do it successfully by slow and insensible encroachments." To combat this evil, Witherspoon rejected insurrections as a technique of political reform--they were "easily raised by interested persons" and are at best "partial." Human experience supported popular rebellions: "There are many instances

⁵¹ Ibid., pp. 310, 312, 321, 322.

⁵² Ibid., p. 336.

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568

of rulers becoming tyrants, but comparatively, very few of causeless and premature rebellions."⁵³

Witherspoon's sermons and secular addresses repeated these themes time and time again.⁵⁴ Those who heard him in the halls of education, religion, or legislation were immersed in a flood of the clear, unmistakable logic of a Christian Patriot. The foundation for his opinion was the Will of a sovereign God. He declared that the greatest service--devotion "to the public good under the immediate Order of Providence"--must not be refused, if the individual has assurance that "he carries the commission of the King of Kings."⁵⁵ Deity will use the righteous man to His own Glory; He will also make "the ambitions of mistaken princes, the cunning and cruelty of oppressive and corrupt ministers, and even the inhumanity of brutal soldiers" redound to the Glory of God.⁵⁶ In the last analysis then, even the actions

⁵³Ibid., pp. 338-39.

⁵⁴See especially his following discourses: "Reflections on the Present State of Public Affairs, and on the Duty and Interest of America in this Important Crisis," Works, IV, 293-96; "Thoughts on American Liberty," Works, IV, 297-300; "Christian Magnanimity," Works, II, 599-611; "The Dominion of Providence over the Passions of Men," Works, II, 407-36; "An Address to the Natives of Scotland Residing in America," Works, II, 437-50; and "Speech in Congress on the Conference Proposed by Lord Howe," Works, IV, 317-23.

⁵⁵Witherspoon, "Christian Magnanimity," pp. 602-603.

⁵⁶Witherspoon, "The Dominion of Providence over the Passions of Men," pp. 409-10.

of George III were in accordance with God's plan for America. It was the king who actually brought on the state of war when he decided to use armed might to subdue his wayward American subjects. That act "armed more men, and inspired more deadly rage, than could have been done by laying waste a whole province with fire and sword."⁵⁷ Certainly the validity of Witherspoon's comparison can be questioned, since no colony suffered that fate. Yet the monarch's conduct in turning his back on his American subjects was the additional grievance that made their burden too heavy to bear.

Earlier in 1775, Witherspoon was assessing the effects of the Coercive Acts on America and concluded that Britain's purpose was to "force us to be absolute slaves." True to his convictions on the necessity of mass reaction to the onslaughts of tyranny, he expressed his hope for the First Continental Congress:

The great object . . . should be to unite the colonies, and make them as one body, in any measure of self-defence, to assure the people of Great Britain that we will not submit voluntarily, and convince them that it would be either impossible or unprofitable for them to compel us by open violence.

Then he listed several recommendations which he desired the congress to consider. Foremost among them were:

1. The profession of loyalty to the king and the desire to remain within the empire.

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 428.

2. The declaration that submission to the parliament was impossible because its claims were illegal and unconstitutional.
3. The statement of unity in resistance until American liberty rested on a solid base.
4. The agreement on a non-importation and non-consumption pact, to be entered into immediately.
5. The encouragement of manufacturing by bounties and other devices.
6. The recommendation that all militia units be placed on war readiness for whatever emergency might arise.
7. The drawing up of a colonial plan of union and action for the common defense.⁵⁸

Like Davies, Witherspoon was convinced that sincere religion and high moral standards affected the progress of the war. The "best friend to American liberty" was the one whose religion was "true and undefiled," who firmly suppressed "profanity and immorality of every kind." He affirmed, "Whoever is an avowed enemy to God, I scruple not to call him an enemy to his Country." But he cautioned, "I do not wish you to oppose any body's religion, but every body's wickedness." We must exert ourselves to "stem the tide of prevailing vice" and to promote the knowledge of the laws of God. This was especially essential for soldiers defending their country. "The cause is sacred, the the champions for it ought to be holy."⁵⁹

⁵⁸Witherspoon, "Thoughts on American Liberty," pp. 298-300.

⁵⁹Witherspoon, "The Dominion of Providence over the Passions of Men," pp. 431-33.

The Princeton preacher called his audience to the duty of devoted labor that the necessities of life might be supplied and the country strengthened. "Industry," he said, "is a moral duty of the greatest moment, absolutely necessary to national prosperity, and the sure way of obtaining the blessing of God." Frugality, temperance, and modesty were characteristics of the "distinguished patriot" and equipped the people for duty against the most powerful enemy.⁶⁰

Witherspoon's well-known "Address to the Natives of Scotland Residing in America" was published the latter part of July 1776. It explained his support of American independence and appealed to his fellow Scots to exert their energies on behalf of the American effort. Great Britain, he wrote, had not permitted the colonists "to enjoy [their] ancient rights," which meant that to yield to the claims of parliament would have made the colonies "no better than a parcel of tributary states, ruled by lordly tyrants." Independence was the only alternative and should gain wide approval for there was no way in which the British could "be sure of our dependence, and we, at the same time, secured in our liberties." In the end it will prove to be both honorable and profitable. It "will not only give union and force to the measures of defence while they are necessary,

⁶⁰ Ibid., pp. 434-35.

62

but lay a foundation for the birth of millions, and the future improvement of a great part of the globe." Thirdly, independence will probably be of real advantage to Great Britain, in the long run. Trade will become more and more important as the American states grow "numerous, powerful, and opulent, to a degree not easily conceived."⁶¹ Witherspoon based his faith on the nature of the American people and their new government. Confidently, he paraphrased Montesquieu's philosophical observation: "A free government overcomes every obstacle, makes a desert [sic] a fruitful field, and fills a bleak and barren country with all the conveniences of life."⁶² Scotsmen in America were warned against remaining aloof from involvement in the birth struggles of the new nation.

One who is barely neuter can scarce be forgiven; a secret plodding enemy must be considered as a traitor. Every person who continued among us after the decisive

⁶¹Witherspoon, "An Address to the Natives of Scotland Residing in America," pp. 441-47. Witherspoon's influence did much to win over numbers of Scottish immigrants. A letter from a Scotsman to the London Evening Post affirmed: "It is true that many North Britons in America did at first object to the resisting of the British government, and were particularly averse to the scheme of independence." However, thanks to Witherspoon, "they now in general espouse the American cause, and some of them promise by their zeal and abilities, to be some of the main pillars of the new government." Letter reprinted in the Virginia Gazette (Pinckney), July 3, 1779.

⁶²Witherspoon, "An Address to the Natives of Scotland Residing in America," p. 447.

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resolutions formed by all the colonies, ought to be considered as pledging his faith and honor to assist in the common cause.⁶³

Hesitation and indecision were not acceptable to this Scotsman, whose rugged spirit and questing mind were committed to a free society. He could not countenance Tories or their fellow-travelers.

Witherspoon's confidence that Providence was guiding America's destiny never diminished throughout his career as a public servant, which spanned the years 1776 to 1789. Whether it was in service to New Jersey as a legislator and delegate to its constitutional convention or in his membership to the Continental Congress, the Scotsman from Princeton always exuded a faith in the unerring purposes of God. His students were molded in this tradition, and a host of them responded to the call of public service with a decorum that was both disciplined and devoted. A few--among them James Madison and William Bradford--even remained a year after their graduations to study theology and philosophy under the direct tutelage of Witherspoon.⁶⁴ It was said of him that

⁶³ Ibid., p. 449.

⁶⁴ William J. Whitsitt, Life and Times of Judge Caleb Wallace (Louisville, Ky.: John P. Morton and Co., 1888), p. 25. John Maclean noted: There was probably no other period "in the history of the institution during which so large a proportion of the students, in after-life, rose to distinction. This may be accounted for in part by the circumstances of the country, which called forth all the energies of which these men were possessed, but still not a little may be claimed for the training which they have received under their

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he "impressed the distinctive characteristics of his own mind" upon his students in general, but upon Madison in particular.⁶⁵ Probably it was Witherspoon who persuaded Madison that in religion "mere toleration was not enough. He would settle for nothing less than an assertion of the right to full religious freedom."⁶⁶

During Witherspoon's administration, the emphasis of the college began its shift away from the preparation of clergymen to the training of lawyers--away from the church to the state. Maclean reported that from 1769 to 1794

able and patriotic teachers." History of the College of New Jersey, from Its Origin in 1746 to The Commencement of 1854 (2 vols.; J. B. Lippincott, 1877), I, 357. Wertenbaker insisted that Princeton's remarkable record during the revolutionary period could be accounted for partly by the fact "that they were picked men." Colleges--certainly Princeton--purposed to develop leaders, so cultured youths or young men with native ability were chosen. Furthermore, creativity was encouraged, especially in public speaking. Bright students were given every assistance. Princeton, 1746-1896, pp. 116-17.

⁶⁵ Howard M. Wilson, The Lexington Presbytery Heritage (Verona, Va.: McClure Press, 1971), p. 58. However, Brant insisted that Witherspoon's influence on Madison was limited by the strong traits of the student: a "too inquiring mind," "a moral determinist," and an adherence to "original views." Irving Brant, James Madison (4 vols.; Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1941-1953), I, 77. Chap. V describes Madison's stay at Princeton under Witherspoon.

⁶⁶ Keith B. Berwick, "Moderates in Crisis: The Trials of Leadership in Revolutionary Virginia" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1959), p. 77.

there were 469 graduates from the College of New Jersey. Of that number, 114 were clergymen, but seventy-five, or two-thirds of the ministers, graduated in the years before independence.⁶⁷ However, the impetus these men gave to church growth, the development of educational institutions, and civic progress cannot be fully ascertained. Maclean listed 147 graduates during the Witherspoon years--clergy and laity--who served as presidents and professors of colleges, pastors of note, members of the Continental Congress, senators, members of the House of Representatives, governors, judges of the Supreme Court, judges of the lower courts, physicians, lawyers, army officers, etc.⁶⁸

⁶⁷ Maclean, College of New Jersey, I, 357. See also Elwyn A. Smith, The Presbyterian Ministry in American Culture: A Study in Changing Concepts, 1700-1900 (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1962), pp. 93-94; Virginia Religious Magazine (Sept.-Nov., 1805), pp. 257-58.

⁶⁸ Maclean, College of New Jersey, I, 357-62. See also L. H. Butterfield, John Witherspoon Comes to America: A Documentary Account Based Largely on New Materials (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1953), p. 82. Kramer numbered "eleven captains, six majors, four colonels, and ten lieutenant-colonels" among Witherspoon's graduates. "Political Ethics of the American Presbyterian Clergy," p. 165. Presbyterian clergy who were Witherspoon's graduates and served their church in Virginia in some way during the war were: (Class in parentheses)

| | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Smith, Samuel Stanhope (1769) | McConnel, James (1773) |
| Wallace, Caleb (1770) | McKnight, John (1773) |
| Fithian, Philip Vickers (1772) | Smith, John Blair (1773) |
| Hunter, Andrew (1772) | Waugh, Samuel (1773) |
| Keith, Robert (1772) | Craighead, Thomas B. (1775) |
| McCorkle, Samuel Eusebius (1772) | Crawford, Edward (1775) |
| McMillan, John (1772) | Doak, Samuel (1775) |
| Bard, David (1773) | Scott, Archibald (1775) |
| Dodd, Thaddeus (1773) | Erwin, Benjamin (1776) |
| Graham, William (1773) | Crawford, James (1777) |

The great educator's sense of personal pride in seeing his graduates succeed was evidenced in a remark he made to a friend after returning from the Presbyterian General Assembly, meeting in Philadelphia: "I cannot, my dear sir, express the satisfaction I feel, when I observe that a majority of our General Assembly were once my own pupils."⁶⁹

Witherspoon and his college became the targets of the weapons of the Loyalist satirists, as did any man or institution that became prominent in the Patriot cause. Odell's "The American Times" contains a lengthy diatribe about the Princeton president which is a scathing bit of vitriol:

Ye priests of Baal, from hot Tactarean stoves,
Approach with all the prophets of the groves;
Mess-mates of Jezebel's luxurious mess,
Come in the splendor of pontific dress;
Haste to attend your chief in solemn state,
Haste to attend on Witherspoon the great.

.....
Princeton receiv'd him bright amidst his flaws,
And saw him labour in the good old cause;
Saw him promote the meritorious work,
The hate of Kings, and glory of the Kirk.

.....
Mean while unhappy Jersey mourns her thrall,
Ordain'd by vilest of the vile to fall;
To fall by Witherspoon--O name, the curse
Of sound religion, and disgrace of verse.

One of Witherspoon's students, Samuel Stanhope Smith, became his mentor's son-in-law.

⁶⁹Virginia Religious Magazine. p. 258.

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Jonathan Boucher, in his Reminiscences, directed a slur at the colleges in Princeton and Philadelphia, which he called

the chief nurseries of all that frivolous and mischievous kind of knowledge which passed for learning in America. . . . They pretended to teach everything, without being really competent to the teaching of anything as it ought to have been taught: but their chief and peculiar merit was thought to be in Rhetoric and the belles lettres, . . . Hence in no country⁷⁰ were there so many orators, or so many smatterers.

Despite attacks such as these made by Loyalists, Witherspoon's legacy remained intact. John Rodgers' eulogy upon Witherspoon's death summarized the feelings of his generation. He commended him for advising youth in the most agreeable way, so "that they could neither be inattentive to it, nor was it possible to forget it." Witherspoon knew how to govern and to excite "the emulation of young gentlemen under his care. . . ." Clergy and laity alike had benefited from his instructions; to him "America owes many of her most distinguished patriots and legislators."⁷¹ The passage of time has not altered this portrait of a public-spirited, Christian Patriot.

⁷⁰Jonathan Boucher, Reminiscences of an American Loyalist, 1738-1789 (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1925), p. 101.

⁷¹John Rodgers, "The Faithful Servant Rewarded: A Sermon, Delivered at Princeton, May 6, 1795, Occasioned by the Death of the Rev. Dr. John Witherspoon" in Witherspoon, Works, I, 30-32.

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A Miscellany of Revolutionary Spokesmen

The works of Davies and Witherspoon are the best and almost only source materials available contemporaneous with the evolution of the revolutionary spirit in Virginia. They indicate what the Virginia dissenter clergymen might have believed and preached as fellow laborers in the Lord's vineyard. Some manuscript sermons and treatises from the immediate postwar period are extant, and there are numerous nineteenth-century volumes that attempt an interpretation of Revolutionary Presbyterian and Baptist opinion. For the most part, the views of the postwar ministers were compatible with those of Davies and Witherspoon, as were analyses by the later writers. This section will examine the writings of the former group only, leaving the nineteenth-century works for brief coverage in Appendix C.

The question of how Americans could have triumphed over the most potent naval power on earth was answered in a postulation by Moses Hoge, a Revolutionary Virginia clergyman and later president of Hampden-Sydney College. Not chance nor fate, not American wisdom nor heroics were responsible--rather it was "the Providence of God our Maker," who interposed Himself into our affairs to prepare us for His eternal purposes. Our deliverance from "a state of miserable thralldom" to Great Britain was divinely designed to make us "appreciate more highly our deliverance from the thralldom of

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sin revealed to us in the gospel of Christ." But the Presbyterian preacher continued: Has this appreciation been in evidence? The retort speaks for itself: "Far from it."⁷² The new dimension added to the former proposition that God's will was being worked out in the American victory, was the declaration that the Heavenly Father was creating for Americans the chance to become "a peculiar people zealous of good works."⁷³ As Hoge interpreted it, the tragedy for America was that it had not taken advantage of the opportunity God's intervention had provided to bring that realization to pass. The day of reckoning appeared to be coming.

Dark and lowering are the clouds, which have been for some time collecting over our heads. . . . Already has the spirit of discord, and its never failing concomitant, defamation, made some inroads among our citizens--already have the usual sources of our wealth been greatly diminished.⁷⁴

Of course, Hoge feared the probability of war with the possibility that America's guilt could result in God's subjection of the new nation to a bloody chastisement.

His study of Christianity had convinced Hoge that "wherever Christianity prevails"--America was the ideal place

⁷²Moses Hoge, "The Day of Adversity," Sermons Selected from the Manuscripts (Richmond: N. Pollard, 1821), pp. 402-403.

⁷³Titus 2:14.

⁷⁴Moses Hoge, "Salutary Chastisement: A Sermon Preached on the Occasion of the Burning of the Richmond Theatre in 1812." Sermons, pp. 360-61.

for this to happen--slavery had diminished, equality between the sexes had increased, marriage relationships had improved, and the ferocity of war had been abolished. He continued: "It has mitigated the rigour of despotism, mitigated the cruelty of punishments; in a word, has reduced mankind from their ancient barbarity into a more humane and gentle state."⁷⁵ How disappointed Hoge must have been to be forced to conclude that Americans were not paragons of Christian morality.

Another Presbyterian whose views coincided with Hoge's was Daniel McCalla, who itinerated in Virginia in the troubled months following the Tea Act and later pastored there. He believed that Providence was responsible for American independence in the first place but that Americans had failed to maintain that spirit of reliance upon God coupled with a tenacity to defend freedom. Continued difficulties with Europe, and Great Britain in particular, had been the logical results. God was endeavoring to teach us that we ought to cultivate "a firm and manly spirit, capable of the severest self-denial, for the common good" and that we were obligated to soberly commit our faith to the care

⁷⁵Moses Hoge, "The Sophist Unmasked; in a Series of Letters, Addressed to Thomas Paine, Author of a Book, entitled The Age of Reason," in R. Watson, Christian Panoply; Containing an Apology for the Bible (1797), p. 331.

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and wisdom of God.⁷⁶

The concept that America's initial and subsequent success as a free nation depended upon its comprehension and performance of God's will and His ethical requirements was generally espoused by the Virginia dissenting clergy.

David Rice, a veteran Presbyterian pastor, informed his son after the war that the Patriot heroes

taught us that liberty, a free government, and happiness under it could never become permanent without virtue and religion; that liberty did not consist in licentiousness, or a freedom from law; but in equal rights and wholesome laws of our own making, faithfully and strictly executed.

His great concern was that Americans were not following the Patriots' example.⁷⁷ Rice believed that the success of the founders of America rested upon basic principles and actions which they accepted confidently, knowing that their political salvation came from no other source. Their circumstances made them "wise and faithful." With the end of hostilities, Americans "began to jar and clash; one adopted one system and another another; and the Americans did not appear to be wiser than other people."⁷⁸ The anticipated solution,

⁷⁶ Daniel McCalla, "An Address to the Public, on Public Amusements, March 21, 1794," Works (2 vols.; Charleston, S. C.: John Hoff, 1810), II, 101-102.

⁷⁷ David Rice, "Original Letters of Rev. David Rice to his Son," Presbyterian Herald, XX (Oct. 24, 1850), 3.

⁷⁸ David Rice, A Sermon on the Present Revival of Religion, etc. in this Country; Preached at the Opening of the Kentucky Synod (Lexington, Ky.: Joseph Charless, 1803), Works (Shane Collection, n.d.), p. 48.

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according to the minister, was the religious revival then sweeping through segments of America's churches. Samuel Stanhope Smith was also aware of the foibles of the American people, for he observed that the "caprices of liberty itself, . . . are so often ruinous to its own interests."⁷⁹

That God's sovereignty must be recognized as the source of the American victory was proclaimed by John McKnight, whose name was well-known among Virginia Presbyterians. God was the Author of all the blessings America had enjoyed and all that were yet to come. All the factors in the success of American arms had been used as "instruments in his hand for the accomplishment of his purpose." He alone "gave us Victory, Independence, Liberty, and Peace." America's obligation was to put its trust in Him, "from whom promotion cometh: who putteth down one, and setteth up another."⁸⁰ At the war's beginning, this reliance upon the all-encompassing dominion of God was voiced in a prayer uttered by

⁷⁹ Samuel Stanhope Smith, An Oration upon the Death of General George Washington, Delivered at the State-House at Trenton, on the 14th of January, 1800 (Trenton, N.J.: G. Graft, 1800), p. 12. Smith had been president of Hampden-Sydney College and held the same office at Princeton at the time.

⁸⁰ John McKnight, God the Author of Promotion: A Sermon Preached in the New Presbyterian Church, New-York, on the 4th of July, 1794, at the Request of the Democratic Society and the Military Officers (New York: Durell, 1794), pp. 5, 10-12. The same emphasis is found in his The Divine Goodness to the United States of America, Particularly in the Course of the Last Year: A Thanksgiving Sermon, Preached in New York, Feb. 19, 1795 (New York: Greenleaf, 1795).

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John Brown, a clergyman who was active in the educational programs of Virginia Presbyterianism during the war. He prayed that God "who can bring order out of confusion" should "order all things for his own Glory, and protect his Church and people in America from all ill designing men."⁸¹ The course of events throughout the war apparently proved that God had done just that.

The obligatory nature of America's indebtedness to God was a thread running through most Presbyterian writings regarding the war, and the nature of Baptist doctrine and activity was ample evidence that they would have agreed. One example of Virginia Baptist feeling can be studied; John Leland pastored in the Old Dominion throughout the war, finally moving to Massachusetts in 1791. He wrote with a fervency born and bred in the evangelical faith:

I may be enthusiastical; but I feel a strong persuasion, that America's God presided, and seemed to be addressing Americans thus: "My children, when Britain sought to crush you, and treat you as the task-masters of Egypt treated the seed of Jacob, I espoused your cause. . . . Thus you became a people to dwell alone and not be numbered among the nations. Your nobles have been of yourselves and your governors have proceeded from the midst of you."⁸²

⁸¹Letter written by John Brown to William Preston, May 5, 1775, MS. in Draper Collection, Wisconsin State Historical Society, IV. Preston was one of the leading political and military figures along the Virginia frontier and a Presbyterian.

⁸²John Leland, A Stroke at the Branch, containing Remarks on Times and Things (Hartford, Conn.: Elisha Babcock, 1801), pp. 12-13.

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The unique role that God had assigned America was contingent upon her citizens conducting themselves in the fear of God. The nation's success would spring from her basic goodness, for which she was accountable to God. Leland put it, "My age authorises me to say, that the leading doctrine of the American revolution has been, 'that responsibility was the best expedient to keep men honest.'"⁸³

The subject of God-given natural or human rights was also discussed by the Presbyterian and Baptist clergy--in fact, this topic was almost as popular as that of God's intervention in the revolutionary proceedings. Samuel Stanhope Smith's lectures on philosophy at Princeton revealed the indelible imprint of the Witherspoon influence; especially was this true of Smith's understanding of the rights of man.

⁸³John Leland, "An Elective Judiciary, with other Things: A Speech at Cheshire, July 4, 1805," The Writings of the Late Elder John Leland, including Some Events in His Life, written by Himself ed. L. F. Green (New York, 1845), p. 291. Leland wrote elsewhere: "If people had virtue enough, there would be no need of any government. Government becomes necessary on account of the vices of men. Can a royal monarch, or a splendid junto of nobles, make the people happy without virtue? The great empires of the earth have crumbled into atoms for the want of virtue, as well as the flourishing republics." "Republicanism, the Best Government; But not without Its Evils, Writings, p. 419. See also his "An Oration, Delivered at Cheshire, July 5, 1802, on the Celebration of Independence: Containing Seventeen Sketches, and Seventeen Wishes," Writings, 260-261.

A right may be defined to be the just claim which any person possesses to the free use, and full enjoyment of a thing, which no other person can justly use, possess, or change without his consent; and which may be maintained, or defended by force, or by any other means which may be, at once, necessary and effectual for the purpose.⁸⁴

Smith stressed that there were perfect rights--such as the right to life, personal safety, and property--which may be obtained or defended by force, if judicial redress were not available, or by the legal framework that society had substituted for force.⁸⁵ Culpable was the man who bartered his liberty for any purpose or who did not "strenuously" defend it when it was attacked.⁸⁶

Leland, too, defined human rights, using language reminiscent of the Declaration of Independence. He emphasized that men had the right to govern themselves, were born equal, and may form a government based on a compact by mutual agreement for the general good. All men, "ripe in years," had the right to voice their choices for representatives and were themselves eligible for office.⁸⁷ He agreed with fellow

⁸⁴ S. S. Smith, The Lectures Corrected and Improved Which have been Delivered for a Series of Years, in the College of New-Jersey; on the Subjects of Moral and Political Philosophy (2 vols.; Trenton, N. J.: Daniel Fenton, 1812), II, 182-84.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 114.

⁸⁷ John Leland, "The Government of Christ a Christocracy," Writings, pp. 273-74.

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evangelical and other Enlightenment thinkers that men possessed natural rights--"life, liberty and property"--but he arrived at this conclusion via a theological route. Since guilt followed the overt acts of men and all men must give an account to God for what was done in life, it was "conclusive that each has a measure of original right, of which he cannot justly be deprived."⁸⁸ Within that "measure" of natural right resided life, liberty, and property, and men were accountable for their stewardship in those areas. To guarantee the perpetuation of these original rights, the people formed themselves into a body politic bound by a mutually-acceptable compact. The government that was formed by this action was charged with the protection of the acknowledged rights.⁸⁹ Leland accepted the utilitarian ideal of "the greatest good of the greatest number" as the legitimate object of government⁹⁰ but placed the responsibility for its success upon the ethical performance of individuals within the system.

⁸⁸ John Leland, "Free Thoughts on War," Writings, pp. 464-65.

⁸⁹ John Leland, "The Yankee Spy," Writings, p. 215. See also his "A Blow at the Root: Being a Fashionable Fast-Day Sermon, Delivered at Chesire, April 9, 1801," Writings, p. 238; "The Government of Christ a Christocracy," p. 277; "On Sabbatical Laws," Writings, p. 441; "The Rights of Conscience," Writings, p. 180.

⁹⁰ L. F. Green, "Further Sketches of the Life of John Leland," in Leland, Writings, p. 51.

Remember that the genuine meaning of republicanism is self-government; if you would, then, be true disciples in your profession, govern yourselves. The man who has no rule over his unruly passion, is no republican. He who will swear profanely, drink to excess, cheat his neighbor, speak falsely and scandalize his fellow creatures, is no republican, let his profession be what it will. . . . If you are republicans, indeed, you seek the public good.⁹¹

For Leland, original rights were fragile in that they had to be carefully guarded and preserved. Especially did he caution against infringements on the right to worship freely:

Be always jealous of your liberty, your rights. Nip the first bud of intrusion on your constitution. Be not devoted to men; let measures be your object, and estimate men according to the measures they pursue. Never promote men who seek after a state-established religion; it is spiritual tyranny--the worst of despotism. It is turnpiking the way to heaven by human law, in order to establish ministerial gates to collect toll. It converts religion into a principle of state policy, and the gospel into merchandise. Heaven forbids the ban[d]s of marriage between church and state; their embrace, therefore, must be unlawful.⁹²

The principle of the people's sovereignty was a law of divine origin and must be held in reverence by all governments.

Let [the people's] earnings be secured to them by law, deducting therefrom what is necessary for the protection of the rest--let their alienable rights be defended by government, and their inalienable rights be sacred as the holy ark--too awful for government to meddle with.

⁹¹ John Leland, "Oration, . . . , on the Celebration of Independence," Writings, p. 267.

⁹² Ibid.

Leland confessed that throughout much of his ministry the rights of man--civil and religious--had been his theme, second only to "the salvation of the soul." His preachments had come from the center of his being.⁹³

The Presbyterian McCalla was guided by the same convictions which had been the focus of the Baptist Leland's career. Believing that the good of the nation rested in the hands of the people collectively, McCalla warned that they could keep or give up those rights that promoted national happiness--"liberty, the common supports of life, and everything that can render life desirable."⁹⁴ As long as the people maintained them, they would be safe.

But should they languish into supineness and indifference, all the fruits of our boasted independence will be blighted forever, and instead of liberty, we shall leave to posterity the inheritance of chains and all the miseries of oppression.⁹⁵

The loss of the rights that were innately man's would mean "that man has lost the most genuine characteristics of his original dignity, as formed in the image of God."⁹⁶ Only an

⁹³Leland, "An Elective Judiciary," p. 297.

⁹⁴Daniel McCalla, "The Sovereignty of the People," Works, II, 189.

⁹⁵Daniel McCalla, "Federal Sedition and Anti-Democracy," Works, II, 397. The author signed this essay: "A Republican of '76."

⁹⁶McCalla, "The Sovereignty of the People," p. 189.

enlightened and alert populace could preserve the identity which God had intended for man.

An identical interpretation of human rights was espoused by William Graham, a Presbyterian revolutionary activist and president of Liberty Hall Academy (later Washington and Lee University). He championed a representative government that would secure "liberty and property to all men, with the free exercise of religion, according to the dictates of conscience," and declared, "The simple voice of nature and of reason will say this is right."⁹⁷ The technique that he supported in the realization of such a system was a government based upon a compact of the people and maintained by the people's representatives. Liberty could best be guaranteed in this manner, for this was governance "by my own will, . . . by my own choice." Continuing, he explained: "When I am subjected to the will of another, or restrained by the will of another, I am not free.--If I am at his pleasure in part, I am so far a slave. If I am wholly at his will, I am a complete slave." The lesson was the same when applied to government. "If [a man] has a vote in choosing all the officials of government, as far as the state of things will admit, he is a free man; otherwise, he is not."⁹⁸ The way Graham had seen the American Revolution,

⁹⁷William Graham, An Essay on Government (Philadelphia: Francis Bailey, 1786), pp. 4-6.

⁹⁸Ibid., p. 7.

the greatest contention had developed to a point of impasse over American representation in the British Parliament.

It was considered "impossible to have an equal representation there, and so no security for either liberty or property."⁹⁹ As did others of his peers, he named virtue and knowledge as the most important factors in opposition to civil and religious tyranny. Summoning his readers to the consideration of his judgment, he underlined why a cognizance of this was so essential:

No people ever, to this day, lost their liberty, until they lost the knowledge of their rights, and were debauched in their morals. . . . Let us therefore, my good countrymen, examine the ground upon which we stand. Let us try to know our rights and assert our privileges, Let us remember that we are acting for ages; and let us endeavor to secure the applause of posterity, by securing to them a precious birthright of perfect freedom and political equality.¹⁰⁰

Such action, he reiterated, was in the best interests of any people who opposed tyranny.

A Virginia Baptist who penned his conception of human rights in the form of a circular letter was David Barrow.

⁹⁹ Ibid., p. 9. Graham questioned whether possession of property determined the quality of patriotism: "Being born and educated in a country; having father and mother, brother and sisters, wife and children, are much stronger, than any other. These form a real interest, by deeply engaging the strongest affections of the human heart, which will move a man most readily to hazard all, both property and life, for their security." Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., p. 37.

After summarizing his religious creed and his reasons for a contemplated removal to Kentucky, Barrow succinctly stated his political views. The rights of men included "acquiring and possessing property, with the enjoyment of life and members, and the means of defending them." This was the "unalienable privilege of all complexions, shapes, and sizes of men, who have not forfeited those blessings by their own personal misdemeanors." Government, he said, was a civil compact and subject to the control and alteration, when thought proper, by a majority of the people. Men were bound by laws which they enacted or which were decreed by representatives whom the people had "fairly chosen." All representatives of the people were "constantly accountable to them." No religious tests and ecclesiastical establishments were to be countenanced. He asserted that

civil rulers have nothing more to do with religion, in their public capacities, than private men; save only, that they should protect its possessors in the uninterrupted enjoyment of it, with life, property, and character, in common with other good citizens.¹⁰¹

Men possessed the right to express their grievances without restraint but could make their greatest contribution to the perpetuation of tranquility in the community via a "strict

¹⁰¹ David Barrow, "Circular Letter from Southampton County, Virginia, February 14, 1798." Copy in the Virginia Baptist Historical Society, Richmond, pp. 7-8.

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adherence to virtue" and a "frequent recourse to fundamental principles." Liberty was related to good character and could not survive without it.¹⁰²

Still another popular topic discussed by these eye-witnesses of the Revolutionary War was the right of revolution or just causes for war. This subject was usually hinged to the themes of man's fundamental rights and God's purposes for America. In fact, the three were practically inseparable as the Baptists and Presbyterians stated the logic by which they supported the War from Independence.

McCalla's reasoning convinced him that the excessive use of taxation powers made mandatory some counteraction on behalf of freedom. He declared, "Taxation has been the most successful engine ever employed by tyrants, to keep the great mass of mankind in a state of subjugation which precluded all hopes of a just and rational liberty." The result of such an intrusion has been the increase of luxury and excess that government has enjoyed at the expense of the people, many of whom lacked the necessities for adequate living.¹⁰³ The people's hope had been the American

¹⁰² Ibid., pp. 8-10.

¹⁰³ McCalla, "The Sovereignty of the People," p. 256. See McCalla, "The Servility of Prejudice, Displayed," Works, II, pp. 357-59. Of the threat which taxation offered, Fristoe maintained, "The amount of taxation . . . might have been borne, but it was the assumption of power claimed by them to tax us in all cases whatever" that was evidence of

Revolution--however terrible it had been to humanity. It

excited all our energy; and the prospect of acquiring the advantages of independence, rendered us superior to the dangers and difficulties which so great and dignified an object presented. We then sufficiently united to hazard our fortunes and our lives to gain the right of governing ourselves, according to our own sentiments and principles.¹⁰⁴

McCalla did not question the propriety of resorting to war to gain what he believed to be just results. Apparently he knew of no other recourse open to oppressed Americans who had every right to defend their principles from the tyrant's threat.

Presbyterian Caleb Wallace was of the same conviction. In 1777 he wrote a friend with the army in New York, "I still persevere in the sentiment that an American ought to seek an emancipation from the British King, Ministry, and Parliament, at the risk of all his earthly possessions of whatever name."¹⁰⁵ He based his decision on political

tyranny. None could say where that power would end; it might mean taxes on home manufactures as well as on imports. Americans might have to serve as a large part of the British army in distant parts of the world, and they might have to build and equip much of the British shipping. Ketocin Baptist Association, p. 155.

¹⁰⁴McCalla, "Federal Sedition and Anti-Democracy," p. 394.

¹⁰⁵Letter written by Caleb Wallace, April 8, 1777, cited in Whitsitt, Judge Caleb Wallace, p. 40. Fristoe's conclusion regarding the necessity of American independence was based on sound libertarian reasoning: "Monarchical usurpation cannot be glutted, it never cloy; the desire of pomp and enlargement of empire has never met with an entire gratification." Ketocin Baptist Association, pp. 155-57, 161.

reasons without specifying what they were.

McKnight was more explicit; he cited Britain's jealousy of the American "populousness," wealth, and growing prosperity. He mentioned the Stamp Act, "duties laid upon tea," and the shocking treatment given American memorials by the British. "Our humble petitions were either refused a reading or disregarded." As the controversy became more serious, "the parties flew to arms. . . . We put our trust in God."

He . . . distracted the councils of our enemies. He gave wisdom to our counsellors. He raised up commanders for us. He united and inspired our people. He provided a sufficiency of arms and military stores. He taught our hands to war, and our fingers to fight.¹⁰⁶

The war was of God.

Earlier, in May of 1775, John Brown had written his thoughts on existing conditions after he had heard of the military action around Boston and the seizure of the magazine at Williamsburg. His comments were undoubtedly treasonous despite his careful selection of words:

I think it is time for the Continent to do something for the defence [sic] of Life and Liberty. I am no polotition [sic] yet I can see that we are in no posture of defence, were we independent of England and laws military, and civil, money struck to support an army, it wou'd not (I am apprehensive) be easy to subdue us or make us slaves as is intended. As far as I am acquainted I find the spirit of resentment increased among the people. . . .¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁶ McKnight, "God the Author . . . ," pp. 9-12.

¹⁰⁷ Letter written by John Brown to William Preston, May 5, 1775, Draper Collection.

McCalla, like Brown, respected Great Britain's role as the parent country, short of tyranny, yet so Americanized had he and the others become that their ardor could be cooled quite rapidly if conditions worsened. McCalla admitted that his "great dislike" for the British government did not prohibit his "commending any thing that is praise-worthy in it." Yet he felt no "filial veneration: for the mother country--" "I have long since outgrown such baby affection; and think, and speak, of this dear mother, as though I stood in no tenderer relation to her, than to any other mother country in the world."¹⁰⁸ Patriotic sentiment remained viable but it was redirected toward the new homeland and would support the cause existent there.

David Rice vividly depicted the appalling conditions surrounding any despotic political system in order to show the effect upon the Christian Patriot. However, he spoke more particularly of the sufferings of Americans in the Revolutionary War and the strong feelings of Patriotism which rightly welled up in the face of his country's plight.

The pious patriot must feel the greatest anxiety. . . .
He loves his country and considers his own interest
as inseparably connected with that of the public.
When his country is thus distressed, his heart is
deeply wounded, and nearly overwhelmed with sorrow.

He would then turn to God, knowing that "in the final issue every thing will terminate exactly right." The Christian

¹⁰⁸McCalla, "The Servility of Prejudice, Displayed,"
p. 364.

Patriot became involved for there was no other choice. His lot was cast in his country's cause, and the plans of men would "certainly answer the holy and gracious purposes originally intended" by Almighty God.¹⁰⁹

A justifiable cause of war, according to the teaching of Samuel Stanhope Smith, was "the violation of any of the perfect rights of nations." Any act of aggression which has not been properly redressed or any "threatening posture" of military action which has continued without "amicable explanation" have been held to be just factors in the decision for war.¹¹⁰ Smith, too, accused Britain of looking at her colonies through eyes jaundiced by "avarice and ambition." To her, they were "instruments of commerce" and Americans were her "tenants and labourers." But the exploitation and the oppression came to an inglorious end for Great Britain:

America will forever record that happy day in which her victorious chief saw Britain laying her last standards at his feet. . . . How delicious! How sublime was the moment! Britain was humbled--America was delivered and avenged.¹¹¹

Smith eulogized the name of Washington for bringing peace to

¹⁰⁹David Rice, A Lecture of the Divine Decrees, to Which is Annexed a Few Observations on a Piece Lately Printed in Lexington, entitled "The Principles of the Methodists, or the Scripture Doctrine of Predestination, Election and Reprobation (Lexington, Ky.: John Bradford, 1791), Works, pp. 51-52.

¹¹⁰S. S. Smith, The Lectures, II, 370-71.

¹¹¹S. S. Smith, Oration upon the Death of . . . George Washington, pp. 10-11, 19-20.

America through the use of weapons of war. No American village, field, or stream existed "which he has not stained with the blood of our enemies, or where he has not inscribed on the earth with his sword the characters of American liberty."¹¹²

Should the force of arms be used? Should a country go to war? Smith directed his answer to the American people:

If you would preserve yourselves from insult and aggression, present such a front on the land, and on the ocean, where you equally live, as will compel the most contemptuous and unjust of your enemies to respect you. Surrounded with your fortresses, both fixed and floating, you should resemble your own eagle, who, securely building his nest in the summit of his rocks, relies on his courage to defend his habitation and his offspring.¹¹³

Smith was emphatic in declaring that a republic, in fulfilling its role of protector of the public interests and preserver of the people's liberties, must be "prepared to defend with ardour, and at every hazard, the existence, the rights, and the true glory of the republic."¹¹⁴ Such action would be the exception rather than the rule, Smith stated. When great crises work directly on the interests "of the great body of the people, and call for their united exertions,"

¹¹²Ibid., pp. 44-45.

¹¹³S. S. Smith, "Patriotism," Sermons (2 vols.; Philadelphia: S. Potter and Co., 1821), II, 33.

¹¹⁴Ibid., p. 26.

the patriotic principle comes to the fore and defends the republican system.¹¹⁵

John Leland's writings stressed the unavoidable duty of individuals and nations to defend natural rights from despotic aggressors. When attacked by such an enemy, who is "in quest of life, liberty or property, the injured individual has a just right to use his weapon to defend himself." Leland's uniqueness here lay in two aspects of such a contest that were not emphasized by his contemporaries:

- (1) in the case of injury or death, the guilt fell upon the assailants; the defenders were justified in their actions;
- (2) that innocent nation, which did not contend for its own right, contended for the wrong of the encroaching nation.

But, the clergyman asserted, military force should not be used promiscuously. It "should never be called forth, but to repel invasions, suppress insurrections, and enforce the laws."¹¹⁶

"The thirst for liberty," as Leland expressed it, had carried the Americans through everything in the Revolutionary

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 24. Smith defined patriotism as "a complicated and powerful affection, which attaches us to the region in which we have received our birth, to the people with whom we have become assimilated by common ideas, common manners, and common interest, and to that form of government and system of laws which preside over our union, safety, and happiness; and serve to connect us in one great political body." *Ibid.*, p. 22.

¹¹⁶ Leland, "Free Thoughts on War," pp. 464-67

War.¹¹⁷ In the postwar period of readjustment and as the nation progressed, the same thirst had been in evidence. When the people's rights were threatened, they rose up in strength. But their weapons were different. "Arming themselves with little bits of paper, they discomfitted their adversaries and saved themselves."¹¹⁸ In the same vein, Leland expressed his belief that "whenever government is found inadequate to preserve the liberty and property of the people, they have an indubitable right to alter it so as to answer those purposes."¹¹⁹

This minister of the gospel of peace, as so many of his ministerial brethren, looked upon warfare as the course to be taken only as a last resort. For them the ballot box was a more typical weapon, and if men's thirsts for liberty were never quenched, the use of the paper weapon would usually suffice. In the American Revolution, harsher measures were called for. People voted for liberty with the loss of property, limb, or life. Presbyterians and Baptists merged their grievances with those of other Americans; the

¹¹⁷Leland, "A Stroke at the Branch," p. 4.

¹¹⁸John Leland, "Address at South Adams, July 4, 1832," Writings, p. 621.

¹¹⁹Leland, "The Rights of Conscience," p. 180. The same writer described the effective American citizen: "The costume of every American, should be a continental coat--a state jacket--a cap of liberty on his head--a sword of justice at his side--an independent mind for a shield, and the good of his country at heart." "Address at South Adams," p. 618.

sword was taken up, and the battle was joined.

From Davies to the last Calvinistic eye-witness of the Revolutionary War, the major themes of their spoken and written works were similar. These can be summarized as follows:

1. God looks favorably upon the American defense of her right to be a free people in the face of the tyranny of the enemy and does not hesitate to intervene on America's behalf.
2. Public-spirited Americans will serve their country's cause by rejection of low moral standards and acceptance of the demands of sincere religion.
3. Men possess the God-given, inalienable rights to life, civil and religious liberty, and property, and by their own free choice, may covenant together to form a government. That government is restricted in power to the protection and perpetuation of the stated rights.
4. When tyranny becomes an obvious threat to the rights of the people, and they have no other recourse, they may legitimately choose warfare as the means to protect their God-ordained liberties.

It is evident from the available sources that the ideas propounded by these clergymen came from Christian theology and political philosophy. Rather than being in juxtaposition to each other, the two disciplines came together to make contributions to a code that became for the dissenters their American creed. Partly from their training, partly from their continuous exposure to scripture and scholarship, and partly from their secular experiences, Presbyterians and Baptists accepted a body of truth, which determined their fairly uniform stand in an atmosphere of restriction and

harassment. Of course, they were affected by the economic and social pressures of the period, but the homogeneity that was revealed by Baptist and Presbyterian reactions to revolutionary events underscored deeper motivations that must have sprung from their theological and philosophical convictions. Calvinism and the Enlightenment came together; they were wed to each other--at least in those tenets that were not antithetical. And out of the union between the two, a formula was born that would direct the energies of at least two denominations through a war for independence and the making of a new nation.

At the same time, the two sects were establishing a reputation for embracing a well-formed libertarian position and for being committed to the attainment of specific goals. Thanks to the theological and philosophical emphases of their clergy--trained and untrained--there were numerous dissenters in the colonies who would challenge the might of Great Britain and her institutions. Many of them served other motives as well, joining with their fellow Americans for political, social, and economic changes that the end of British rule would bring about. But for many of the dissenters' contemporaries, the doctrinal framework of these more zealous Protestants made the difference between the typical anti-British reaction and the dissenter response. That eighteenth-century evaluation then is an important

phase of this study. How were the dissenters viewed by those who knew them in the revolutionary period?

CHAPTER IV

BAPTISTS AND PRESBYTERIANS: THEIR REVOLUTIONARY ROLES EVALUATED

The tensions which engulfed the colonies after the passage of the Tea Act in 1773 caught up the dissenters as well. As citizens, the intensity of their understanding and interest varied from person to person, as has been the case in any prewar period in history. Reports of a more restrictive British policy, coupled with news of events happening sometimes far away, evoked responses commensurate with the comprehension and participation levels of each individual. Generally, however, the Calvinistic dissenters of Virginia were uniform in their reaction to political developments. Like their counterparts in the remaining colonies, their feelings were apparently based on motives both religious and civil, and they moved guardedly but steadily from pleas for reform within the British Empire to deeds aiming at independence from the empire.

The dissenters built a reputation for loyalty to what they believed to be their rights under the Act of Toleration enacted by Parliament in 1689. In their fundamentalist fashion, they persisted in their adherence to scriptural

truth and their resistance to establishment control. No wonder they were suspected of harboring anti-British sympathies and of giving early support to the cause of independence. As we have already seen, volatile language was employed to describe the alleged activities of dissenter ministers arrested during the period of Baptist persecution. It is difficult to take lightly the use of such expressions as "raising sedition,"¹ "stirring up strife,"² and "raising factions."³ The fear of societal divisions, with the attendant threat to conformity--especially when it involved a religious establishment--was genuine, even though it was an appendage of sixteenth-century thought and practice. Dissension from the dogma and polity of the royal church was heretical and consequently could be termed treasonous, for it was a direct menace to the unanimity which was mandatory for the security of the recently unified nation-states. Monarchs with shaky crowns could not afford factions exerting themselves in opposition to the royal position.

¹From the original warrant bond and order of the Court of Culpeper County, Va., for William McClanahan and Nathaniel Saunders, Aug. 21, 1773, in the Virginia Baptist Historical Society, Richmond.

²Ibid.

³Quoted in "Baptists in Middlesex, 1771," William and Mary Quarterly, 2nd series, V (July, 1925), 209.

In the eighteenth century, representatives of monarchical institutions served their masters from the same premise. Although time had brought about a liberalization of policy, the letter of the law--even moderated as it was by the Toleration Act--had to be enforced. The dissenters' convictions brought down upon them the suspicion of disloyalty to the Crown as well as an overt desire for independence. In both areas they were innocent, until they became convinced that only through independence from the mother country could they have their spiritual liberty recognized. The government they and their compatriots would build would guarantee to them what they had already found through faith and practice: congregations thoroughly reformed, composed of regenerated individuals, and guided by scriptures made alive through the dynamic presence of the Holy Spirit.⁴

The difficulty of establishing which of the two dissenting denominations was the more ardently Patriot is complicated by at least three factors. First and most important regarding Virginia is the scarcity of extant

⁴B. F. Riley observed that the struggles for civil and religious liberty were interrelated: "It would seem that the one was productive of the other, if indeed it was not the same struggle which came naturally to involve the question of civil freedom in common with that of religious emancipation in the outworking of the principle of liberty in America." History of the Baptists, p. 80.

records.⁵ Those records which are available point to two fairly obvious conclusions that form the other factors. The Baptists were prone to ignore compliance with laws controlling the licensing of clergy and congregations and the taking of oaths. To cooperate with the law would have been inconsistent with their views pertaining to the articles of the Church of England and would have been an affront to their belief that their authority to preach the gospel in all the world came from God alone.⁶ Furthermore, their attitudes and activities were more open, and they were more generally known for antagonism toward British church policy. As the revolutionary mood progressed, the historic Baptist position vis-à-vis the Establishment blended in with the secular ingredients to produce their participation in the war and independence.⁷ Of course, the Baptists were known for their Patriotism as a logical consequence of these conditions.

The Presbyterians, on the other hand, had tended to abide by the laws for licensing and oath-taking. The terms of their agreement with Governor Gooch had stood long after his administration had ended, and as the Revolutionary War

⁵ Supra, p. 4.

⁶ See Gewehr, Great Awakening, pp. 126-27; B. F. Riley, History of the Baptists, p. 86.

⁷ Riley maintained, however, that the Baptists "considered religious freedom as a greater freedom than the principle of political freedom which was necessary." Ibid., p. 80.

approached, their demands for change were made from within the legal framework. They asked for recognition of rights, as they interpreted them, under the Act of Toleration.

The extent of Presbyterian Patriotism was determined by the denial of the rights of religious freedom, the fear of even tighter controls, and the national origins of Virginia Presbyterians. Like the Baptists, when religious and civil liberties became a common and singular goal, the Presbyterians accepted war and independence as a means to the desired end. They would not surrender a way of life which had evolved over many years and which appeared menaced by empire institutions. Thus most Virginia Presbyterians joined their denominational brothers from the other colonies in hailing the Revolution.

The portrayal thus far delineates a Baptist denomination less subtle and cautious in their response to church-state conditions than were the Presbyterians. Yet those who wrote their appraisals of the religious nature of the conflict mentioned the impact made by Presbyterianism, while they almost totally disregarded the Baptists. Thomas Gage, commander of the British forces in America, classified the Presbyterians as capable of rebellion as early as 1766. The issue was the Stamp Act, and the Presbyterians were resisting the new internal tax. Gage chided them for being "as ripe for outrage as can be," while he contrasted them

with the Quakers, who "complain of hardship" but "have been complying with the law."⁸ After the skirmishes at Lexington and Concord and the battle of Bunker Hill, Sir Horace Walpole commented on the Presbyterian nature of the Revolution with the now familiar, "Cousin America has run off with a Presbyterian parson, and that was the end of it." He had already observed, "There was no good in crying about the matter."⁹ Unfortunately, others were not as ready to accept the changes taking place in America as he seemed to be.

At about the same time, a Boston Loyalist was writing his aunt in Middlesex about the American invasion of Canada. He accused certain merchants at Quebec and Montreal of providing the invaders with intelligence information. He continued, "These merchants are the greater part Scotchmen, some Americans, and some Irish Dissenters; these are all staunch Presbyterians, fast foes to kingly gov't, and traitors by principle."¹⁰ This Bostonian was not alone in

⁸Letter written by General Thomas Gage from New York, Jan. 16, 1766, cited in Kramer, "Political Ethics of the American Presbyterian Clergy," p. 274.

⁹Letter written by Sir Horace Walpole to the Countess of Ossory, Aug. 3, 1775, cited in A. T. McGill, S. M. Hopkins, and S. J. Wilson, A Short History of American Presbyterianism (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication and Sabbath-School Work, 1903), p. 105.

¹⁰Letter written by R. Hope from Boston to a Mrs. Rogers in Middlesex, July 12, 1775, MS. in Public Record Office, London.

considering Presbyterians anti-monarchical and thus treasonous; apparently feeling was widespread that dissenter theology ultimately led one to a break with Great Britain, at least in principle. A nagging tyranny was potent enough, many believed, to thrust genuine Presbyterians into an orbit of rebellion.

Concern over Presbyterian disloyalty became coupled with the fear that the same sect would dominate the government if the Americans succeeded in separating from the empire. Just before the Declaration of Independence was drawn up, an article in the Pennsylvania Evening Post scored the Loyalists for such statements. The anonymous writer declared that these same Loyalists had been heard to remark that if an American government were structured, they would prefer a Quaker or Episcopalian leadership to a Presbyterian one.¹¹ Both Quakers and Episcopalians had had establishments where the political "style" of each was well-known in the middle and southern colonies. Far to the north was the Congregational establishment, the closest official church to Presbyterianism, and memories were still fresh regarding the tyrannical excesses of that state-church. The same dread of Presbyterian power was expressed by Benjamin Rush in his categorization of Loyalists, drawn up in 1777 and republished

¹¹Pennsylvania Evening Post, June 1, 1776, cited in Frank Moore, The Diary of the American Revolution, 1775-1781 [1860; rpt. John A. Scott (ed.); New York: Washington Square Press, 1967], p. 116.

Figure 1. The effect of the concentration of the *Agrobacterium* strain on the transformation efficiency of *Agrobacterium* strain 101. The *Agrobacterium* strain 101 was grown in YEA medium at 28°C for 24 h. The cell suspension was adjusted to a concentration of 1×10^8 cells/ml. The cell suspension was then diluted to various concentrations (10%, 20%, 30%, 40%, 50%, 60%, 70%, 80%, 90%, and 100%) and used for transformation. The transformation efficiency was determined by the number of transformants per 10^8 cells. The results are shown in Table 1.

in his later autobiographical writings. There were Tories, he said, whose stance was determined by

a dread of the power of the country being transferred into the hands of the Presbyterians. This motive acted upon many of the Quakers in Pennsylvania and New Jersey, and upon the Episcopalians in several of those states where they had been in possession of power, or of a religious establishment.¹²

Shortly after the start of the Revolutionary War, Ambrose Serle, a British official in America, was put in charge of the release of military reports and accompanied the British army for about two years. An entry in his journal, dated October 25, 1776, contains an intriguing comparison of Presbyterians and Anglicans and an observation that a strong secular power might be needed to keep both in line. He wrote:

One thing is very observable in the Clergy of this Country; both those of the Establishment and of the Presbyterian Interest, who take the Lead, are Firebrands to a man, and can speak with no sort of Patience of each other. These have fomented half the present Divisions [existent in the country against various decisions of the Congress], nor is it likely that they will be quiet in future, but under a Power that may controul them both.¹³

¹²Quoted in Morton and Penn Borden (eds.), The American Tory (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, 1972), p. 67.

¹³The American Journal of Ambrose Serle, Secretary to Lord Howe, 1776-1778, ed. Edward H. Tatum, Jr. (San Marino, Cal.: Huntington Library, 1940), p. 131. Serle believed the Establishment needed strengthening and, in his journal, proposed reforms which would be implemented when the war was over: [Inglis] agreed to my Idea (which I had adopted so long since as 1769 or 1770 in a Paper written upon the Subject) of setting out a Glebe for the Church of the several

But Serle had already formed a strong dislike for Presbyterians through his association with the well-known New York Loyalist, Charles Inglis, rector of Trinity Church. A month before the October entry, Serle documented the Inglis influence on his own judgment of the dissenting sect. He reported that Inglis was "of opinion, that much of this Controversy has been fomented by Presbyterian Preachers, with a View to the Extirpation of the Church of England from the Colonies." His almost total lack of understanding regarding dissenter logic was revealed as he penned his own reaction to the Inglis view:

Strange, that men, who enjoy full Liberty for the Profession of their own Principles, should have so little Decency, or even Xtianity [sic], as to be intolerant to the Religion established by that Governmt, which has expressly provided a Toleration for their own! However, this is an argument for the full establishment of the Church in the final Settlement of Affairs.¹⁴

By November, Serle had become persuaded that the War for Independence was "very much a religious War" and listed John Witherspoon among clergy he believed to be fiercely

Provinces, wch would neither cost the Crown or People a Farthing, and of establishing an Episcopate upon a proper Foundation. The more Wealth and Influence the Church and Bishop could have, the more Power wd. result to the Crown. . . . The whole must be planned and executed with Judgmt. . . ." April 10, 1777, pp. 209-10.

¹⁴Ibid., Sept. 27, 1776, p. 115.

anti-British.¹⁵ Five months later, on April 25, 1777, he wrote the Earl of Dartmouth of his conviction that "Presbyterianism is really at the Bottom of this whole Conspiracy, has supplied it with Vigor, and will never rest, till something is decided upon it."¹⁶ Undoubtedly, Serle's friendship with Inglis, as well as Joseph Galloway, had much to do with his conclusions regarding the war, for in this same letter, he remarked that his views and Galloway's "upon American Affairs nearly coincide together."¹⁷

The finest explanation of why Inglis had such a strong dislike for the Presbyterians was a succinct statement in his "State of the Anglo-American Church in 1776." The Anglican clergyman, whose name could well be a byword for eighteenth-century Loyalist thought in the middle states, spoke of the devious nature of the dissenter conduct:

It is now past all doubt that an abolition of the Church of England was one of the principal springs of the dissenting leaders' conduct; and hence the

¹⁵Letter to the Earl of Dartmouth, Nov. 8, 1776, quoted in Kramer, "Political Ethics of the American Presbyterian Clergy," p. 283. Witherspoon had great influence on Virginia Presbyterianism as the aggressive president of the College of New Jersey, where many Virginia Presbyterians were educated.

¹⁶Quoted in ibid. See also Thomas C. Pears, Jr., "Presbyterians and American Freedom," Journal of the Presbyterian Historical Society, XXIX (June, 1951), 80.

¹⁷Kramer, "Political Ethics of the American Presbyterian Clergy," p. 283.

unanimity of dissenters in this business. Their universal defection from government, emancipating themselves from the jurisdiction of Great Britain, and becoming independent, was a necessary step towards this grand object.

Inglis said that the Presbyterian ministers, while at a synodical meeting,¹⁸ were rumored to have "passed a resolve to support the continental congress in all their measures." He believed the only satisfactory explanation for the uniform conduct of the Presbyterians was their goal of the destruction of the Anglican Church. He continued:

I do not know one of them, nor have I been able, after strict inquiry, to hear of any, who did not, by preaching and every effort in their power, promote all the measures of the congress, however extravagant.¹⁹

Inglis, of course, was accurate in his interpretation of Presbyterian motives. The denomination had been intent upon getting recognition of their rights under existing law. But now, with independence and nationhood so new, the demands would be for a religious freedom which would match civil liberty. Disestablishment would mean the destruction of the state-church, even though the institution that remained was a comparatively large and viable denomination. It would

¹⁸The Synod of New York and Philadelphia had given its support to the Continental Congress in 1775 and 1776. See Records of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America.

¹⁹Charles Inglis, "State of the Anglo-American Church in 1776," The Documentary History of the State of New York (Albany, 1850), III, 1050-1051.

have to stand upon its feet, set its house in order, and painfully adjust to new challenges facing it in the same world with which the other sectarian bodies had to cope.

Serle recalled a conversation he had had with Inglis where the Anglican clergyman had described the Presbyterian intrusions into Anglican country with a veiled admiration.

He told me, that the Presbyterians were indefatigable in extending their Influence and Sect; that no sooner were ten or twelve Houses built in the interior Country, than they sent one of their young men to be their Preacher; that the members of the Church of England among them, having no where else to go, went to the meeting, and generally became Presbyterians themselves, and certainly their Children; that they increased their synodical Influence (wch by the Bye shd. be stopped). . . .

The Presbyterian tactics had worked great hardship on the Church of England ministers who were too few for the existent need--their ordination must take place in England--and who had to cope with "popular Prejudices." But the primary factor behind the Presbyterian success had been the political nature of the American colonies, i.e., "most of the Colonies were founded in Republicanism, and the Principles of Republicanism had kept Pace with their Increase."²⁰ In other words, according to Inglis, American republicanism favored Presbyterian polity more than Anglican episcopacy. Likewise, the Presbyterians were adapting their ecclesiastical style and their evangelistic outreach to the peculiar

²⁰Serle, American Journal, April 10, 1777, p. 209.

conditions of the American frontier. They were meeting the challenge of New World life and Americanization--something the Church of England had in large measure failed to do as yet.

Captain Johann Heinrichs of the Hessian Jager Corps, a unit in the employ of the British military forces, wrote in his letter-book for January 18, 1778, an observation that could be directed to a large segment of the Virginia population. His experiences in the war had convinced him of the unusual nature of the conflict: "Call this was . . . by whatever name you may, only call it not an American Rebellion, it is nothing more or less than an Irish-Scotch Presbyterian Rebellion."²¹

By 1779, one of the foremost Loyalist satirists of the period was lampooning the American cause and the Patriot leaders in his "The American Times." Jonathan Odell was convinced that American arms could never triumph over the British, and throughout the work he reiterated the absurdity of thinking otherwise. Of all the American religious sects he could have mentioned, he chose only one at which to hurl his arrows of derision--the Presbyterians.

Impossible the scheme could e'er succeed;
Why lift the spear against a brittle reed?

But arm they would, ridiculously brave;
Good laughter spare me, I would fain be grave;

²¹Kramer, "Political Ethics of the American Presbyterian Clergy," p. 284. See also Kramer's "Muskets in the Pulpit," Part I, 229-30.

So arm they did--the knave led on the fool;
 Good anger spare me, I would fain be cool:
 Mixtures were seen amazing in their kind,
 Extravagance with cruelty was join'd;
 The presbyterian with the convict march'd,
 The meeting-house was thinn'd, the gaol was search'd;
 Servants were seiz'd, apprentices enroll'd;
 Youth guarded not the boy, nor age the old;
 Tag, rag, and bobtail issued on the foe,
 Marshal'd by generals—²²

Still another well-known, but reluctant, Loyalist, Joseph Galloway, wrote his version of the coming of the war from the safety of Great Britain in 1780. Among his introductory statements was the comment that at that time the war was being supported by only two groups, "The congregation-alists of New England, and the Presbyterians in all the other Colonies." He then assiduously reviewed the manner in which the Presbyterians structured their ecclesiastical organization in the early 1760s around the annual synodical meetings in Philadelphia.

Here all the Presbyterian congregations in the Colonies are represented by their respective ministers and elders. In this Synod all their general affairs, political as well as religious, are debated and decided. From hence their orders and decrees are issued throughout America; and to them as ready and implicit obedience is paid as is due to the authority of any sovereign power whatever.

²²Jonathan Odell, "The American Times," A Satire in Three Parts (London: W. Richardson, 1780). Odell's pseudonym for this work was "Camillo Querno, poet-laureat to the Congress." It should be noted that in Evans Bibliography, Jonathan Boucher was listed as the author of the satire, but Odell's authorship was supported by Moses Coit Tyler, in The Literary History of the American Revolution, 1763-1783 (2 vols.; 1879; rpt. New York: Frederick Ungar, 1957), II, 107, 118, and by Richard B. Davis, in his American Literature Through Bryant, 1585-1830 (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1969), p. 81.

Galloway asserted that the "union of the congregational and Presbyterian interest throughout the colonies" was brought about by the formation of committees of correspondence "with powers to communicate and consult."

Thus the Presbyterians of the Southern Colonies who while connected in their several congregations, were of little significance, were raised into weight and consequence, and a dangerous combination of men, whose principles of religion and polity were equally averse to those of the established Church and Government was formed.

The effect of the organization of these Congregational and Presbyterian republicans was to subvert the Stamp Act to the point of ineffectiveness.

It was these men who excited the mobs, and led them to destroy the stamped paper; who compelled the collectors of the duties to resign their offices, and to pledge their faith that they would not execute them; and it was these men who . . . by their personal applications and petitions, led the Assemblies to deny the authority of Parliament to tax the Colonies, in their several remonstrances.²³

Galloway's years as a Philadelphia lawyer had been marked by enmity between himself and the Presbyterians,²⁴ but knowledge of this fact does not suffice in the attempt to understand the great emphasis he put upon Presbyterian

²³Joseph Galloway, Historical and Political Reflections on the Rise and Progress of the American Rebellion (London, 1780), cited in Ford, Scotch-Irish in America, Appendix E, pp. 583-87.

²⁴See Kramer, "Political Ethics of the American Presbyterian Clergy," pp. 282-83; Howard M. Wilson, "The Story of Synod Presbyterians," Brimm and Rachal (eds.), Yesterday and Tomorrow, pp. 16-17.

disloyalty to British institutions. His was one more voice declaring that dissenters of Calvinistic theology took an active part in the revolutionary struggle.

In 1781, Matthew Robinson, a Newport, Rhode Island, merchant and Loyalist, was arrested on a warrant charging him with drinking the king's health, damning the Congress, and calling them "damn'd Rebels and Presbyterians." Evidently the Rhode Island authorities considered this a grievous offense for they imprisoned him without examination in direct violation of the state's Bill of Rights--at least that was Robinson's report.²⁵

Robert Honeyman's diary reveals his personal analysis of Virginia Presbyterian attitudes toward the revolutionary encounter. In 1777, he noted that the state's governor, Patrick Henry, had abolished his scheme of raising volunteer companies, believing it to be "a hindrance to the recruiting men for the regular regiments." In the same entry, Honeyman reported that the governor had urged

the clergy of all denominations to stir up the People, and incite them to enter into the service, which they generally comply with most heartily, especially those formerly called dissenters, and

²⁵Cited in "Transcript of the Manuscript Books and Papers of the Commission of Enquiry into the Losses and Services of the American Loyalists, 1783-1790" (London, Public Record Office), V, 409-13.

most of all the Presbyterians, who have always been serious in the cause."²⁶

"A Presbyterian loyalist was a thing unheard of," testified William B. Reed, a postwar Episcopalian and member of the Philadelphia Historical Society. While it has already been established that there were Loyalist Scottish Presbyterians, few if any of them were in the area known to Reed. His contacts would have been with Scotch-Irishmen for the most part. He continued, "The debt of gratitude which independent America owes to the dissenting clergy and laity, never can be paid."²⁷

Records are lacking which would provide similar statements of Baptist responsibility for the revolutionary fervor and action, yet it is common knowledge that the sect was a major accomplice of the party of rebellion in those areas where the Baptists were. It is possible, but not probable, that for some there was confusion as to the diverse characteristics of the two denominations. Both may have been known by the common expression "dissenters" or even "presbyterians" by those of the Anglican population who would have

²⁶Honeyman, March 4, 1777, pp. 115-16. Honeyman was a medical doctor and wrote in a diary format a history of the war. His coverage of the Virginia campaign and the surrender at Yorktown was in greater detail than the rest of the history.

²⁷Quoted in "Presbyterians of the Revolution," Watchman of the South, III (Feb. 20, 1840), 104.

referred to the nonconformists with derisive language. It seems more probable, however, that the clue lies in the migratory and evangelistic patterns of the Baptists. Their population was numerous in New England and certain parts of the south, but by the remainder of the American citizenry, they were little known. Since Baptists were the victims of discrimination, they tended to live in enclaves, and it was from those centers of strength that the Baptist ardor for freedom made its impact upon the surrounding society. Consequently, we learn more about Baptists and the War for Independence from their own writers, however prejudiced, than we do from spokesmen representing secular society or even the Establishment. The problem still shadows the historian, however, for Baptists in the period of revolution in Virginia were not known for their fecundity in literary accomplishment, and what literature was bequeathed by them was reduced even more by conditions mentioned earlier.²⁸

With the taking up of arms by both the British and the Americans, Baptists would no longer accept the limits implied by toleration.²⁹ Semple explained:

This was a very favourable season for the Baptists. Having been much ground under the British laws, or

²⁸Supra, p. 4.

²⁹Ryland, Baptists of Virginia, p. 95.

Figure 1: A schematic diagram of a 1D lattice chain. It shows a horizontal line with several dots representing lattice sites. The sites are connected by horizontal lines, indicating nearest-neighbor interactions. The diagram is labeled 'Figure 1' and includes a caption below it.

[Illegible handwritten text]

at least by the interpretation of them in Virginia; they were to a man, favourable to any revolution, by which they could obtain freedom of religion. They had known from experience, that mere toleration was not a sufficient check, having been imprisoned at a time, when that law was considered by many as being in force.³⁰

The Baptists were willing to sacrifice their love for the mother country in order to rid themselves of the controls imposed upon them by men whom they considered as vicious as ravening beasts. As Hawks, the Episcopal historian, recounted:

[The Baptists] resolved on their course: . . . the war which they waged against the church, was a war of extermination . . . and now commenced the assault, for, inspired by the ardours of patriotism which accorded with their interests . . . [they] informed that body [the Establishment] that their religious tenets presented no obstacle to their taking up arms and fighting for the Country; and they tendered the services of their pastors in promoting the enlistment of the youth of their religious persuasion.³¹

³⁰ Semple, Rise . . . of the Baptists, p. 62. See also J. L. M. Curry, Struggles and Triumphs of Virginia Baptists: A Memorial Discourse (Philadelphia: Bible and Publication Society, 1873), p. 64.

³¹ Francis L. Hawks, Contributions to the Ecclesiastical History of the United States of America, Vol. I: A Narrative of Events Connected with the Rise and Progress of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Virginia (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1836), pp. 137-38. In Howell's polemic work, The Early Baptists of Virginia, the author assured that "not a Baptist could be found in Virginia, minister or layman, who did not espouse, and at every sacrifice and to the last extremity defend, the cause of liberty," p. 78. But Howell was so overtly defensive of the Baptist record that the temptation is to look elsewhere for historical fact. Robert Baker's Baptist Source Book ameliorated the issue by stressing that "practically all" Baptists were patriots, p. 31. See also William Cathcart, The Baptists and the American Revolution (Philadelphia: S. A. George and Co., 1876), p. 42.

And William Fristoe, the Baptist eye-witness of revolutionary events, added that the Virginia Assembly, composed chiefly of Episcopalians, was not favorable to disestablishment in 1776 despite independence. Anxiety was a factor in their actions. They reasoned, he said, that if there were no repeal of those heinous laws which guaranteed an establishment,

and the nation to which we belonged succeeded in supporting their independence, and our government settled down with these old prejudices in the hearts of those in power, . . . , and religious tyranny raise its banner in our infant country, it would leave us to the sore reflection: what have we been struggling for?

Fristoe reminded his readers of wealth invested, hardships faced, wounds suffered, and losses experienced by all who engaged in the cause. After all this, he continued, must we "be exposed to religious oppression and the deprivation of the rights of conscience in the discharge of the duties of religion, in which we are accountable to God alone, and not to man?"³²

Human nature, under such circumstances, might have dictated what would seem to be a normal emotional response to the conditions confronting the Baptists. Hatred would not have been beyond them theologically if they equated the Establishment's doctrinal and political stance with the principle of evil, and, of course, they did. Also, they could justify their detestation on the grounds that God's

³²Fristoe, Ketoctin Baptist Association, pp. 88-89.

wrath was reserved for those with whom He was displeased. One church historian did assert that the Separate Baptists "were distinguished for a bitter hatred of the established church."³³ But the overwhelming evidence points to the conclusions proposed by a nineteenth-century Baptist author, J. D. McGill, who affirmed that his denomination "had become familiar with principles which lead to 'perfect liberty of opinion and of conscience.'" Since these principles were foundational for Baptists, they desired "the institutions of Virginia" to be based upon these precepts. Baptists, he said, were "actuated by these considerations, rather than hatred to the Episcopal Church."³⁴ Semple clarified the Baptist position further: with republican principles gaining ground and rapidly advancing to superiority, the Established Church, with its appendages, was looked upon as being inseparable from the monarchy which supported it.

The dissenters, at least the Baptists, were republicans from interest, as well as principle; The crisis was such, that nothing less than a total overthrow of all ecclesiastical distinctions, would satisfy. . . . Having started the decaying edifice,

³³Chorley, "Planting of the Church," p. 211.

³⁴J. D. McGill, Sketches of Baptist Churches within the Limits of the Rappahannock Association in Virginia (Richmond, 1850), p. 15. See Isaac Backus, A History of New England: with Particular Reference to the Denomination of Christians called Baptists (2nd ed.; Newton, Mass.: Backus Historical Society, 1871), I, 197-98.

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every dissenter put to his shoulder, to push it into irretrievable ruin--The revolutionary party found that the sacrifice must be made, and they made it.³⁵

Again the emphasis was on motivations that were beyond simple hatred, although an occasional anathema must have issued from the mouths of those Baptists--and Presbyterians, too--who knew little of the philosophical arguments and possessed little of the patience required to live during those hectic times.

Howell, the nineteenth-century Baptist apologist, did not accept all the publicity which the Presbyterians had gotten regarding their role in the American Revolution. He wished to make it clear that the Presbyterian Church and ministry practiced prudence and caution in carefully maintaining "only such grounds as would afford them an opportunity of easy retreat" to their original rapprochement with the Establishment if the revolution failed. But, he wrote, the position they held would also allow them "to join in their triumphs," should the colonies succeed.³⁶ Dogmatically, he asserted that the Baptists committed themselves to revolution early, urging independence before many of the recognized colonial leaders did. They urged a vote for

³⁵ Semple, Rise . . . of the Baptists, pp. 26-27.

³⁶ Howell, Early Baptists, pp. 77-78.

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independence upon the Continental Congress "as a duty which it owed, not to Virginia only, but to the whole nation."³⁷ Undoubtedly, Howell was slighting the Presbyterian contribution in his effort to balance the scales of history. The Presbyterian record is replete with commitment rather than compromise and purpose rather than prudence. Had Howell been more modest in his assertions, endeavoring to maintain a scholarly demeanor as he exposed the Baptist record, and had he refrained from attacking the Presbyterians in the manner he did, his work possibly would have made a more significant contribution to Baptist church history.

Despite the restrictions imposed and implied by the licensing of Presbyterian ministers in Virginia, it is incorrect to assume that they reduced the Presbyterians to a more passive role than the Baptists in the Revolutionary War. By 1775, the Presbyterian movement in Virginia possessed characteristics which determined their predilection for the options chosen by their comrades vis-à-vis the British policies. They were as follows:

1. The synod was the most powerful intercolonial organization in the colonies.³⁸ It has even been acclaimed the "prototype of so many American

³⁷ Ibid., p. 144.

³⁸ Thomas C. Pears, Jr., "Presbyterians and American Freedom," Journal of the Presbyterian Historical Society, XXIX (June, 1951), 84. Robert F. Scott, "Colonial Presbyterianism in the Valley of Virginia: 1726-1775," Journal of the Presbyterian Historical Society, XXXV (Sept., 1957),

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republican national federal assemblies"³⁹ and earned the Presbyterians the reputation of having "a natural and strong affinity" for republican forms of government.⁴⁰

2. The natural animosity for Great Britain felt by the Scotch-Irish Presbyterians made them staunch friends of independent action⁴¹ and early exponents of civil and religious liberty.⁴² They harbored fears that the Establishment might take firmer control of the colony,

177. Kramer emphasized the service the synodical arrangement performed in being "an instrument of political propaganda" in his "Political Ethics of the American Presbyterian Clergy," p. 281. The Loyalist, Samuel Seabury, was convinced that "the uniting of all the Jarring Interests of the Independents and Presbyterians from Massachusetts [sic] Bay to Georgia under Grand Committees and Synods" was proof "that some mischevious [sic] Scheme was meditated against the Church of England and the British Government in America." Quoted in Wallace Brown, The Kings Friends: The Composition and Motives of the American Loyalist Claimants (Providence, R. I.: Brown University Press, 1965), p. 101.

³⁹Humphrey, Nationalism and Religion, pp. 66-67.

⁴⁰Breed, Presbyterians and . . . Revolution, pp. 25-27.

⁴¹Delamo L. Beard, "Origin and Early History of Presbyterianism in Virginia" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Edinburgh, 1932), p. 477.

⁴²Emmett W. McCorkle, "The Scotch-Irish of Virginia: An Address Delivered at Louisville before the Virginia Society of Kentucky, on Washington's Birthday, 1908," MS in Richmond: Union Theological Seminary in Virginia, p. 9. Katharine Brown's analysis is worthy of insertion here. She wrote that the large numbers of Scotch-Irish Presbyterians brought new forces to Virginia, which "led to the development of ideas with a decidedly revolutionary flavor such as the broader participation of the people in their own institutional affairs, the institution in this case, being the church. The experience of choosing one's form of worship and theological tenets has long been associated with the desire to participate more fully in the direction of the political institutions which control one's civil affairs." That "option and participation" had not formerly been available in the colony of Virginia, "Presbyterian Dissent," pp. 86-87.

which would mean that bishops would appear as agents of the British government. The memories of affairs in Ireland constantly freshened their American Patriotism.⁴³

3. There was an increasing consciousness of an American identity⁴⁴ which had been affirmed by contacts with British forces in the French and Indian War and reaffirmed by the conflicts with the mother country in the postwar period. America had become their haven, and their hopes for the future were centered in the New World.
4. The influence of John Witherspoon, through the education of young colonial leaders--many in the Old Dominion--and his leadership of the group which became the independence party, had a definite effect upon the Patriotism of the Virginia Presbyterians.⁴⁵

Joseph Reed, Washington's adjutant general and a Pennsylvania Presbyterian, praised his denomination for its support of the war effort:

I shall not blush at a connection with a people who, in this great controversy, are not second to any in vigorous exertions and generous contributions, and to whom we are so eminently indebted for deliverance from the thralldom of Great Britain.⁴⁶

It is true that the decisions of the Synod of New York and Philadelphia had broad effect upon its presbyteries and

⁴³Thomas C. Hall, The Religious Background of American Culture (New York: Frederick Ungar, 1959), p. 169.

⁴⁴Scott, "Colonial Presbyterianism," p. 177.

⁴⁵Ibid.

⁴⁶Quoted in Samuel D. Alexander, Princeton College during the Eighteenth Century (New York: Anson D. F. Randolph Co., 1872), p. xi.

the local congregations. Of course, the reverse effect was felt, too, as delegates from the constituent areas convened for synodical sessions bearing petitions and memorials on diverse subjects that were important locally. The strong possibility exists that colonial Presbyterians did not desire their clergy to introduce politics into religion on a regular basis. However, as the controversy with the Establishment evolved into a conflict with Great Britain as well, they entered the political arena with increasing numbers of appeals and resolutions, as did the Baptists. A study of the synod's records before independence came to the colonies reveals this evolution of political involvement:

1766 Approval was given an address directed to George III
 "on the joyful occasion of the repeal of the Stamp
 Act, and thereby a confirmation of our liberties.
 . . . "47

Here was an evaluation of parliamentary action which must have galled the British.

1769 A fast day was appointed to counter "the prevalence of irreligion and immorality, the lamentable decay and vital piety, and the threatening aspect of our public affairs."48

This relationship of morality, piety, and the state of public affairs is reminiscent of the Puritan Jeremiads.

⁴⁷Records of the Presbyterian Church, p. 360. The synod's sessions were held annually in May.

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 398.

Of course, colonial reaction to the Townshend Acts had led to deprivation which must have had an effect upon colonial morale.

1771 A general fast was requested "in all our bounds in consideration of the aspect which matters, both civil and religious bear. The overture was cheerfully accepted, and the Synod earnestly recommend it. . . ."49

The cheerful acceptance probably indicated that a heavy majority favored the motion with its mixed purpose.

1772 The synod did not mention civil matters during the session. Instead they called for a day of fasting and prayer in consideration of "the low state of vital and practical religion, the great prevalence of vice and infidelity in this land in general, and the manifold dispensations of Divine Providence which appear at this time."50

During the years 1770 and 1771, including the first few months of 1772, the British government did little to increase the animosity of the colonists toward itself, so that some historians have called this a period of quiet. The Boston Massacre had occurred on March 5, 1770, and the Gaspée incident took place June 9, 1772, a few days after the closing of the synod's session for that year. The Presbyterians set aside a day of thanksgiving for the more tranquil times which they enjoyed as one more evidence of God's grace

⁴⁹Ibid., p. 420.

⁵⁰Ibid., p. 426.



being poured out upon them. Their responsibility, in return, was to go to their knees in intercessory prayer for an awakening of vital religion that would bring faith and cleansing to their land.

1774 With great gravity, the synod, "taking into their serious consideration the dark and threatening aspect of our public affairs, both civil and religious, as loudly calling for deep humiliation before God, and earnest application to the Throne of Grace," did agree to observe a day of fasting and prayer, "to implore the Divine compassion, that it may please God in his great mercy to avert those calamities which, on account of our manifold provocations, we have great reason to fear."⁵¹

Events had been happening at an accelerated pace. The Tea Act, numerous tea parties, the Boston Port Bill, and the call for a continental congress spoke of action and rapid reaction. The Presbyterians, meeting in synod, were not aloof from public affairs. They feared for the worst, whatever that might be.

1775 More fasting and praying--with "humiliation"--was ordered, because of the "present alarming state of public affairs." But they agreed that since the First Continental Congress was sitting at that time, they would observe the fast day appointed by "that august body and for the greater harmony with all other denominations, and for the greater public order." However, if the Congress should set a day for prayer after the last Thursday in June, then Presbyterians would observe an earlier occasion set by the synod as well. The times were so critical the congregations were urged "to spend the afternoon of the last Thursday in every month in public solemn prayer to God, during the continuance of our present troubles."⁵²

⁵¹Ibid., p. 460.

⁵²Ibid., p. 465.

By the spring of 1776, the Continental Congress had set a day for general fasting which was in conflict with the May meeting of the synod. Members of various presbyteries requested that the moderator postpone the session to permit the clergy to keep the fast with their congregations. The moderator's compliance forced an unusual ruling by the synod when it at last convened. The record reads:

The Synod judge and hereby declare, that the Synodical Moderator has not authority, either with or without the concurrence of particular members, to alter the time of meeting to which the Synod stands adjourned, yet in the present extraordinary case they approve of what the Moderator has done.⁵³

Only an event as epochal as a revolution and a Patriotism as fervent as theirs would induce them to reprove their moderator for illegal and unilateral action yet give him their blessing for the decision he made--and both statements were part of the same sentence.

It was William Marshall, a minister of the Associate Presbytery centered mostly in Pennsylvania, who aptly observed, "In this time of general confusion, religious distinctions were, in a great measure, lost in the political union of all classes of Presbyterians, in the common defence of liberty and independence."⁵⁴ But it would have been

⁵³Ibid., p. 472.

⁵⁴William Marshall, A Vindication of the Associate Presbytery (Philadelphia, 1791), p. 9. The Associates differed from other Presbyterians mostly in the interpretation

equally accurate to declare that distinctions which had been impediments to cooperation among all dissenters became less important in the face of the common threat. Differences were never fully laid aside, but the non-Episcopal clergy and their congregations entered the fray as American Patriots. They knew this was a common cause, and according to an early nineteenth-century view, it would be "more easy to prove that they did too much, than that they did too little."⁵⁵

It is impossible to conclude this chapter with a decision that one dissenter sect did more to bring about independence than another or to list accolades earned by a single denomination for supporting the war to its successful conclusion. All dissenters had grievances, and the bulk of the clergy and the laity of each church gave themselves to the cause in some way. The War for Independence was created by many diverse factors, not the least of which were those that touched the soul of the dissenter churches. They were sincere in their involvement--they knew what they wanted,

of scriptural passages that dealt with the rights and powers of civil magistrates and the ecclesiastical controls imposed upon church members in the area of morals. Marshall's volume is a valuable aid in making the Associate distinctives stand out.

⁵⁵ Charles Hodge, The Constitutional History of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America (Philadelphia: William S. Martien, 1839), p. 482.

for many of them believed that their survival depended upon the outcome. So, in large measure, this terse appraisal of the conflict must be accepted as accurate: "The War of the American Revolution has been termed a church war, or, in other words, a war carried on by the church party."⁵⁶ For the dissenters at least, the end of British rule offered the prospect of religious freedom. That goal, among others, justified the hazards encountered along the way.

Since Baptist and Presbyterian attitudes toward the British position were fairly well-known at the time and some saw the outcome of the religious issues as vital as any of the others, it is not unsafe to state that more credence must be placed in religion as a factor in the American Revolution. The record of Baptist and Presbyterian activity in support of the American sword speaks for the statement. Whatever the economic and political motivations of the dissenters were and however much they fought to protect their homes and lands, their actions also stemmed from religion. And because of the importance they placed upon their faith--as much as the other motivations--both dissenter groups in Virginia gave yeoman service to their country's cause. The account of that performance in the Revolution follows.

⁵⁶ Hezekiah Smith, Chaplain Smith and the Baptists; or, Life, Journals, Letters, and Addresses of the Rev. Hezekiah Smith, D. D., of Haverhill, Massachusetts, 1737-1805, ed. Reuben A. Guild (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1885), p. 161n.

CHAPTER V

BAPTIST REVOLUTIONARY ACTIVITY

As American disillusionment over relations with the mother country increased after 1773, the clergys' political role in the dissenter community became more and more significant. Kerr's important study of revolutionary clergymen revealed that they were usually "popularizers" rather than "planners" of anti-British feeling. He found that they "rarely rose above a secondary role in political affairs" and "were useful intermediaries between revolutionary leaders and the people."¹ Their role then was supportive rather than initiative, and since the majority of them were revered by their parishioners as men of God, their

¹Kerr, "Character of . . . Sermons," p. 9. J. T. Headley's observation that the British considered the clergy of being at the bottom of the Revolution was an overstatement and thus inaccurate. Chaplains and Clergy of the Revolution (New York: Charles Scribner, 1864), p. 59. Kerr pointed out: "Ministers, by and large, did not sow the seeds of rebellion. For several generations they had been helping to prepare the soil by spreading doctrines of political liberty. . . . When the seeds began to sprout, ministers sympathetic to Whig principles acted as advisors to their parishioners and supporters of the revolutionary leaders. If they 'preached up doctrines of sedition, rebellion, carnage and blood,' it was in pursuance of policies formulated by Whig politicians," pp. 32-33.

opinions carried a weight of influence shared by no other member of the community. This was especially true of the dissenter societies, which were more compact because of a commonly-shared spiritual experience and the knowledge that they were not part of the Establishment. Baptists and Presbyterians, within their own circles, were prone to share each other's distresses and delights, and the minister enjoyed the favors which accrued to him as the recognized leader of the evangelical community. In matters of religion and politics, the clergyman's powers of evaluation and persuasion elevated him to the position of princeps--literally, "first among equals."

Both Baptist and Presbyterian ministers possessed an asset which was uniquely theirs. They were emphatic in their adherence to the Reformation doctrine concerning revelation. It was sola scripture that revealed God and His will for man. From this premise, they were able to proclaim the will of God for His children in the area of politics. This kind of investiture endowed the political area with a sanctity that had its source in the domain of spiritual life. The Christian could and must search the Scriptures with the purpose of application of what he found there to every facet of life. But the clergyman who directed the search and defined the application always did so as a minister of the gospel and not as a politician. He was true to his ordination vows and to his role as a shepherd of the sheep. The resultant political

involvement of pastor and people was haloed by the admonitions of Holy Writ--an advantage for dissenting evangelicans not shared by other branches of Christendom.²

The effect of this asset was remarkable. When the dikes of patience, hope, and fear finally gave way to the tides of unrest and dissatisfaction, the dissenters were in the vanguard of resistance and liberation. Ambrose Serle's shock at dissenter reaction is evident in this journal entry:

The Dissenting Preachers of all men are the most extraordinary in their conduct. They inculcate War, Bloodshed and Massacres, as though all these were the express Injunctions of Jesus Christ; and they call for Destruction upon the loyal Subjects and Army of their rightful Sovereign, like so many Arbiters of the Vengeance of Heaven, or so many Disposers of the divine Decrees.³

Writing in Loudoun County, Virginia, Nicholas Cresswell's candid comment regarding clerical conduct was penned into his journal with a biting bitterness:

Even the parsons, some of them, have turned out as Volunteers and Pulpit Drums or Thunder, which you please to call it, summoning all to arms in this cursed babble. D-- them all.⁴

²See Kerr, "Character of . . . Sermons," pp. 34-35.

³Serle, American Journal, Sept. 3, 1776, p. 89. Serle's note had reference to his experience in Connecticut, but the observation described the attitude of the Virginia clergy as well.

⁴Nicholas Cresswell, Journal: 1774-1777 (New York: Dial Press, 1924), entry for Jan. 7, 1777, p. 180.

The support practically all the dissenter clergy gave the revolutionary effort was not overlooked by the British. They sought evangelical pastors as perpetrators of treason and desecrated or burned their churches as citadels of rebellion.⁵ The rewards of courageous Patriotism oftentimes included suffering and deprivation.

The Baptist ministers (see Appendix B, p. 330) were vigorous leaders of their congregations despite their lack of formal training. Furthermore, their strong leadership was not impeded by their nomination to clergy status by congregations who recognized the call to Christian service and ordained clerical candidates from their own ranks. God's selections were taken seriously, and the few records which exist reveal that many of these men were able and effective, proving Deity's higher wisdom.⁶ These were the clergymen who put their divine call on the line and went to prison rather than submit to the demands of an Establishment they considered of earthly origin. These were also the pastors who led their flocks in the defense of civil and religious freedom, when it appeared that harsh British restrictions would increase the threat of despotic actions in all areas of colonial society. The vitality of their resistance won them the respect of such outstanding Virginians

⁵ See Maxson, Great Awakening, p. 150.

⁶ See Kerr, "Character of . . . Sermons," pp. 11-12.

as Madison, Jefferson, and Henry.⁷

Virginia Baptists responded in a warmly Christian and patriotic manner to the fast-moving events that followed the Boston Tea Party and the Coercive Acts. On June 15, 1774, Pastor John Garrard led his Mill Creek congregation in an observance of fasting and prayer "on account of the calamity which has befallen Boston."⁸ The Virginia Assembly had requested the observance, and Mill Creek showed its solidarity with the colonial government and the beleaguered Bostonians in a manner typical of sincere Christians for generations. Several weeks later, in the early autumn of 1774, the Meherrin church ordered a similar observance.

Their minutes state:

We believed every Christian Patriot ought to show himself on the occasion [sic], seeing what a dark cloud hung over not only our heads but our rising posterity, from the violent usurpation of a corrupted Ministry. Therefore believing that God has the Hearts of Kings and Rulers in his hands and could turn them whither soever he pleased and that his Eyes were over the Ritious [sic] and his ears open to their complaints,

it was ordered that a day for fasting and prayer be set and that their minister, John Williams, prepare a sermon to be delivered on the occasion.⁹ Apparently, neither congregation

⁷ Gewehr, Great Awakening, p. 135.

⁸ "The Mill Creek Baptist Church Minute Book: 1757-1928," copy in Richmond: Virginia Baptist Historical Society, p. 34.

⁹ His text was to be I Timothy 2:1-2, with emphasis on intercession for kings and all in authority "that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty." "The Meherrin Baptist Church Minute Book: 1771-1844," copy in Richmond: Virginia Baptist Historical Society, pp. 28-29.

envisioned a break with Britain at the time of these entries. They were willing to trust God for whatever happened, and Meherrin at least would pray for order and peace that the evangelization of Virginia might continue unabated.

At the same time, David Thomas was inscribing his conviction in his brief account of Virginia Baptists and their faith. "We believe," he wrote, "that it is lawful for Christians . . . to bear arms in defence of their country, when unjustly invaded." He based his belief on Jesus' command to soldiers to do violence to no one when that action is unjustified.¹⁰ Thomas interpreted the directive as approving of violent defensive measures when there is no other recourse.

The test of the Baptist conviction was soon to come. Bunker Hill was followed by the Second Continental Congress' release of the "Declaration of Causes and Necessities of Taking Up Arms" in July 1775. On July 17, the Virginia Convention convened in Richmond and, among other decisions took actions to exempt "all clergymen and dissenting ministers" from military service.¹¹ Some dissenters welcomed the

¹⁰Luke 3:14. Virginian Baptist, p. 20.

¹¹Journal of the Convention of Delegates, 1775-1776 (Richmond, 1816), p. 36. The decision was slightly revised in December to read: ". . . no dissenting minister, who is not duly licensed by the General Court, or the society to which he belongs, shall be exempted from bearing arms." Ibid., p. 110. See also Arthur J. Alexander, "Exemption from Military Service in the Old Dominion during the War of the Revolution," Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, XLV (1945), 163-171.

exemption; one suggested that since most of the ministers of the Established Church were not really "preachers of the gospel," they should form a "regiment of black coats" or "gown men." This would free Virginia pulpits of unenlightened and unsanctified clergy and open the door to the solution of the Commonwealth's moral and domestic problems. He explained:

Let the true preachers of the gospel [the evangelical dissenters] be introduced throughout the colony, into their pulpits, . . . ; then you will soon see the colony flourish, and the gospel preached to every creature.¹²

However, Baptist support for Virginia's defense was immediate. The colonial convention, meeting in Richmond, was the recipient of a petition in August 1775, which has been called "the entering wedge to religious equality in Virginia."¹³ The petition was the production of a joint meeting of the Baptist Northern and Southern Districts, which had met at Dupuy's meetinghouse in Cumberland, now Powhatan, County. The Baptist paper, as it was presented August 16, observed that despite their religious differences, they considered themselves citizens of the colony and consequently involved in the common struggle. They expressed their alarm

¹²Letter from "A Preacher of the Gospel," Virginia Gazette (Dixon and Hunter), October 11, 1776.

¹³B. F. Riley, History of the Baptists, p. 87.

at "the shocking Oppression which in a British cloud hangs over our American Continent" and confided that they had pondered "what part might be most prudent for the Baptists to act in the present unhappy contest." They had concluded

that in some Cases it was lawful to go to War, and also for us to make a Military resistance against Great Britain, in regard to their unjust Invasion, and tyrannical Oppression of, and repeated Hostilities against America.

Baptists were permitted to determine their own obligations to enlist without censure from the church. Indeed, they wrote, some have enlisted, and many more will likely do so. As Baptist troops "will have earnest Desires for their Ministers to preach to them," the petition requested that certain Baptist clergymen, Elijah Craig, Lewis Craig, Jeremiah Walker, and John Williams, be permitted to preach to the soldiers without interference. The paper reaffirmed Baptist loyalty to American liberty and sound Christian principles. In its conclusion, it offered a prayer to God for His blessing on the government's "patriotic and laudable Resolves, for the good of Mankind and American Freedom, and for the success of our Armies in Defense of our Lives, Liberties, and Properties."¹⁴

¹⁴Journal of the Convention of Delegates, p. 16. Samuel Harris was moderator of the session, while John Waller was clerk. The petition has not survived, but complete statements can be found in C. F. James, Struggle for Religious Liberty, pp. 218-19, and Semple, Rise . . . of the Baptists, pp. 492-93. Much of the petition is recorded in Foote, Sketches of Virginia, I, 321. James maintained that

The response of the convention revealed the mood of increased toleration that was spreading over parts of Virginia. On the same day that the petition was presented, the convention adopted a resolution formed by Patrick Henry that granted the dissenting ministers permission to conduct worship services and to preach to the troops. The rationale for such a decision came out of concern "for the ease of such scrupulous consciences as may not choose to attend divine service as celebrated by the chaplain."¹⁵ This meant that the regimental chaplaincies, which had been established in 1758 at the request of George Washington, were open to ministers of all religious bodies, not just the Established Church.¹⁶

Baptist hopes of religious freedom rose, while the Church of England must have faced the prospect that its power was destined to diminish. The Establishment began an emergency program of convasses, circulated petitions, and urged action in favor of the retention of the Episcopacy as

this petition reappeared during the Convention of 1776 and was used as a lever to influence the delegates to declare the independence of Virginia. See C. F. James, Struggle for Religious Liberty, pp. 60ff.

¹⁵ Journal of the Convention of Delegates, p. 17. See also William Wirt Henry, Patrick Henry: Life, Correspondence, and Speeches (3 vols.; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1891), I, 317.

¹⁶ Anaon Phelps Stokes and Ralph H. Gabriel, Church and State in the United States (3 vols.; New York: Harper and Brothers, 1950), I, 268.

a permanent legal institution. Baptists, in the meantime, continued to give encouragement to the American defensive effort and to work for full religious recognition.

In September, another congregation made a crucial decision regarding Christians and warfare. With precision, the clerk of the Hartwood-Potomac Baptist Church recorded the simple but definitive position taken by the membership:

1. Query, Whether it is lawfull for Christians to take up Arms and go to War upon any Occasion.

Agreed that it is lawfull upon some Occasions.

2. Query, Whether it is lawfull to take up arms in the present dispute with great Briton and her Cononies.--

Agreed that it is lawfull.¹⁷

This was the conviction shared by most Virginia Baptists by the autumn of 1775.

Throughout the next year, the Virginia Convention and the General Assembly which succeeded it were greated by a host of petitions coming from every part of the Old Dominion. Many of the memorials dealt with religious liberty but usually made a common cause out of religious and civil freedom. The petition from the Baptists of Prince William County, received by the Convention on June 20, 1776, was an example of this merger of goals. They declared that since

¹⁷"The Hartwood Potomac Baptist Church Minute Book: 1775-1861," copy in Richmond: Virginia Baptist Historical Society, entry for Sept. 16, 1775.

"this colony, with the others, is contending for the civil rights of mankind, against the enslaving schemes of a powerful enemy," they were convinced that "the strictest unanimity is necessary among ourselves." To accomplish this accord, they urged the removal of "every remaining cause of division," to wit: religious privileges yet denied them. These they listed:

That they be allowed to worship God in their own way, without interruption; that they be permitted to maintain their own ministers, and none others; that they may be married, buried, and the like, without paying the clergy of other denominations; that, these things granted, they will gladly unite with their brethren, and to the utmost of their ability promote the common cause.¹⁸

Here were Baptists who were desirous of laying aside every impediment to cohesive action against the British forces, and for them and other dissenters, the most serious hindrance was the lack of guaranteed religious equality.

In response to the Anglican effort to arouse popular support for the retention of the Establishment, the Virginia Baptists launched a drive to collect signatures in behalf of their cause. Their work was successful in procuring

¹⁸Journal of the Convention of Delegates, p. 58. A copy in the Religious Petitions Folder, the Virginia Baptist Historical Society, has the names of forty-nine members of the Occagon congregation affixed to it. It is probable that "Occagon" was a corruption of "Occaquan," for the latter was the Prince William church, pastored by David Thomas, mentioned in the extant records. See also Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, XVIII (1910), 38.

approximately ten thousand names, mostly freeholders,¹⁹ including many who were not Baptists.²⁰ Known as the "Ten-thousand Name" petition, it represented dissenters in general from all over Virginia and was entered into the Journal of the House of Delegates on October 16, 1776.

The journal reads:

Being delivered from British oppression, in common with the other inhabitants of this Commonwealth, they rejoice in the prospect of having their freedom secured and maintained to them and their posterity inviolate; that their hopes have been raised and confirmed by the declaration of this House with regard to equal liberty, . . . , which, . . . , they have been deprived of , . . . ; that having long groaned under the burthen of an ecclesiastical establishment, they pray that this, as well as any other yoke, may be broken, and that the oppressed may go free.

The aftermath of such action presented the dissenters the brightest of prospects, for it conformed to their concept of a Christian society where the government's domain was limited.

The document continued:

Every religious denomination being on a level, animosities may cease, and Christian forbearance, love, and charity, practised towards each other, while the Legislature interferes only to support them in their just rights and equal privileges.²¹

¹⁹See B. F. Riley, History of the Baptists, p. 87.

²⁰C. F. James, Struggle for Religious Liberty, p. 74.

²¹Journal of the House of Delegates of Virginia, 1776 (Richmond: Samuel Shepherd, 1828), p. 15. The full text was included in George Maclaren Brydon, Virginia's Mother Church and the Political Conditions Under Which It Grew (2 vols.; Richmond & Philadelphia, 1947 & 1952), II, 566, entitled "The Baptist Petition."

In the meantime, Patrick Henry was elected governor of the newly-freed State of Virginia, and the Baptists, manifesting their profound respect for the political leader who had championed their cause, sent their congratulations in the form of an address. They commended him for his "constant attachment to the glorious cause of liberty, and the rights of conscience" and declared their confidence in his "favourable regards" which left them "nothing to request" of him.²² In Henry's reply, he called for a continuation of that unanimity of spirit and effort which had marked recent months.

My most earnest Wish is, that Christian Charity, Forbearance and Love may unite all our different Persuasions as Brethren who must perish or triumph together; and I trust that the Time is not far distant when we shall greet each other as peaceable Possessors of that just and equal System of Liberty adopted by the last Convention, and in Support of which may God crown our Arms with Success.²³

The Baptists of Virginia, then, were considered as loyal supporters of the American position by their governor. But the respect they had gained at home through a war would not deter them from the achievement of a phase of freedom that

²²"Address of the Baptist Association in Session in Louisa, August 13, 1776," Virginia Gazette (Dixon and Hunter), Aug. 24, 1776. Jeremiah Walker signed the letter as moderator and John Williams as clerk.

²³H. R. KcIlwaine (ed.), Official Letters of the Governors of the State of Virginia, Vol. I: The Letters of Patrick Henry (Richmond, 1926), 30.

would endure in times of peace. They would continue to work for full religious equality.

Dissenter endeavors on behalf of religious freedom received a boost when the Virginia Legislature appointed a committee on religion numbering seventeen and including James Madison and Thomas Jefferson. Their task was to consider "all matters and things relating to religion and religious morality."²⁴ After a severe struggle which lasted from October 11 to December 5, 1776, a significant victory was won. A bill releasing dissenters from restricted religious opinions and worship and from the support of the Established Church was presented to the Assembly, where it was voted into law.²⁵

However, this was but the beginning of the demise of the Establishment. There remained much work to be done. Independence from Great Britain had loosened the moorings of the state church, and the new legislation had come close to setting it adrift. There were still issues concerning obligatory support of the clergy, what ministers could legally officiate at marriages, and the superintending of ministerial conduct. Step by step, complete religious freedom

²⁴Thomas Jefferson, quoted in Gilbert Chinard, Thomas Jefferson: The Apostle of Americanism (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1957 paperback ed.), p. 89.

²⁵Ibid., pp. 89-90. See also B. F. Riley, History of the Baptists, p. 90.

came to Virginia by January 1786. Only the disposal of the glebe lands and the discontinuation of the use of public funds for the relief of the poor by the vestries remained as issues after that date.²⁶ For these Baptists, the humiliating harassment was at last a memory of a bygone day. A man could worship as he pleased.

The dissenters were quick to ascertain that the only guarantee of a firm religious freedom was a successful conclusion to the War for Independence. They put the same energy into the revolutionary venture that they expended in the struggle for disestablishment. Thus they chose rebellion rather than submission to British suppression. Since British toleration laws had proven inadequate to safeguard Baptist religious expression, they questioned the adequacy and ultimate purposes of British legislation in all other phases of the Anglo-American relationship.²⁷ Baptist reactions were symbolical of the defiant mood pervading the meeting-places of an American pluralistic society at the time.

The critical nature of the American military posture as the spring of 1777 approached was recognized throughout the new nation. The winter had seen Washington retreat into

²⁶ See Julian P. Boyd (ed.), The Papers of Thomas Jefferson (17 vols.; Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1950-1965), II, 546; also Chinard, Thomas Jefferson, pp. 100-105, and E. T. Thompson, Presbyterians in the South, p. 99.

²⁷ See Semple, Rise . . . of the Baptists, p. 62.

Pennsylvania, and except for mild successes at Trenton and Princeton, the atmosphere hung heavy with the depression described by Thomas Paine in his first issue of The American Crisis, published that December: "These are the times that try men's souls." Virginia Baptists turned to the only source of strength they knew; they set aside days of thanksgiving and prayer for the purpose of offering their praise to God for His preservation of America from the threat of the tyrant.²⁸ The Raccoon Swamp congregation's anxiety was the major factor in their decision that "there shall not any business, such as the temper and concerns is, to be done in our annual conference."²⁹ With the British moving ever closer, it appears probable that these Patriots knew of no more important business than that which combined prayer, penitence, and preparation for defense.

By autumn the British had occupied Philadelphia, and Virginia stepped up its efforts to get its military forces in readiness for an attack that looked more and more inevitable. The Assembly took an unprecedented step in October when it

²⁸At least one church routinely set annual observances. See "The Ketoctin Baptist Church Minute Book: 1776-1890," copy in Richmond: Virginia Baptist Historical Society, entries for June 2, 1777, 1778 (no month or day), August 27, 1779, August 5, 1780, and August 4, 1781. No further thanksgiving days were ordered until 1797.

²⁹"The Antioch (Raccoon Swamp) Baptist Church Minute Book: 1772-1837," copy in Richmond: Virginia Baptist Historical Society, entry for April 5, 1777, p. 8.

passed an "Act for Speedily Recruiting the Virginia Regiments." This act contained the provision that religious groups could form companies and regiments with their own officers and chaplains. This would permit the evangelicals to engage in their country's defense without conflicting with their convictions of separation from those of more liberal beliefs.³⁰ Religious companies were raised in Virginia, although records are incomplete with regard to the numbers of dissenters who responded and the extent of their service.³¹

The withdrawal of the British to New York in 1778 gave short respite to Virginia, for in May 1779 Norfolk, Portsmouth, and Suffolk were burned by naval forces. The Southern Campaign was underway, and once again Baptists shared the anxiety all Virginians were to experience until the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown in the autumn of 1781. The Kehukee Baptist Association, which comprised parts of North Carolina and southeastern Virginia, had planned a postponed session for May 1779. When the meeting convened, gloom was much in evidence. Joseph Biggs, the association's historian, wrote:

³⁰ See William Waller Hening (ed.), The Statutes at Large; Being a Collection of all the Laws of Virginia . . . (13 vols.; Richmond, 1809-1823), IX, 348.

³¹ The dissenter companies about which some information is available were raised by clergymen William McClanahan, a Baptist, and John Blair Smith and William Graham, Presbyterians.

On account of the present distress of our Country, but few delegates met, and but little business was done. . . . The people were fearful . . . but the Association sat, and we continued a short space of time.

That was the last session held by the Kehukee Baptists until 1782. The afflictions caused by war and the "molestation" by the enemy prevented any more meetings.³² Baptist organization and evangelization efforts in the area suffered as the result.

The Western Branch church, founded in 1779 a few miles north of the town of Suffolk, was in the area threatened by the British but evidently escaped the enemy's wrath. British troops landed in the vicinity of Norfolk, and their cavalry swept inland as far as Suffolk. Encountering little resistance, they burned the town with its shipping and military supplies. They did not venture north toward the church, but their presence in Suffolk was enough to panic nearby residents, including the Baptists.³³

Unrecorded factors, which must have included concern over the presence of the British in the South, were responsible for the June 1779 migration of a portion of the Meherin church from their homes in southcentral Virginia to the

³² Joseph Biggs, A Concise History of the Kehukee Baptist Association (1834), copy in Richmond: Virginia Baptist Historical Society, p. 53.

³³ W. E. MacClenny, "A History of Western Branch Baptist Church, Nansemond County, Virginia, 1779-1938," MS. in Richmond: Virginia Baptist Historical Society, p. 7.

Yadkin River region of western North Carolina. The congregation, led by their pastor John Williams, presided over the departure with tears of farewell and promises of prayer. The reception extended to these migrants was expected and prompted them to return to Virginia the next year. They met with "distress from the Tories and other ill disposed persons and the Brittish Army [sic],"³⁴ and the move back to Virginia was accomplished with sufficient haste to force them to live "in a scattered and dispersed circumstance" for some time. However, by 1784 they were welcomed back into the fellowship of the Meherrin Baptist Church.³⁵

It is surprising that, as the Southern Campaign intensified by late 1780, the Baptist Association of Virginia did convene at a church called Sandy Creek in Charlotte County and drew up a memorial to the House of Delegates. Dated October 16, the petition repeated the demand that "this heavenborn Freedom" should be extended to affect "every Law or Usage now existing among us, which does not accord with that Republican Spirit which breathes in our Constitution and Bill of Rights." The goal they sought was

³⁴This was probably an exaggeration since it does not appear that the British invasion force got as far as the Yadkin River. It is possible that inhabitants living near the source of that river may have experienced some harassment.

³⁵"Meherrin Minute Book," pp. 53-54, 59.

the abolition of all such legal conditions, and they argued that the times had never been more right for such sweeping action.³⁶ This was a statement of definite continued commitment by Virginia Baptists to their objective in supporting the revolution. By winning independence from Great Britain,³⁷ the Establishment would face elimination as well, since its weakened status would make it a victim of the forces working for legal recognition of full human rights. The dissenters were pushing closer to the realization of their goal.

The few records in existence give credence to the contention that the Baptist clergy gave themselves to the winning of the military victory, just as they did to the winning of religious freedom. It must be remembered, however, that the Baptist pulpit was not generally used for political purposes, even throughout the darkest periods of the war. Regular Sunday and week-day sermons were designed to convict sinners, instruct Christians, or comfort saints. Only rarely did a Baptist preacher break this routine. Richard Dozier kept a notebook in which he recorded all the sermons and exhortations, with their texts, which he heard

³⁶See C. F. James, Struggle for Religious Liberty, Appendix C, pp. 219-20, for a copy of the petition.

³⁷This petition was adopted just nine days after the battle at King's Mountain, North Carolina, which forced Cornwallis to retreat into South Carolina. In all probability, news of the victory had spread into Virginia by October 16.

from May 19, 1771, to the end of 1783.³⁸ These totaled 247, and only one was not an orthodox, textual presentation appealing for either Christian conversion, rededication, or Christian growth. An unusual entry was dated May 1, 1783:

Mr. Jones (parson) Farnham church. Ps. [Psalm] 118:24 "This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it." Many guns fired and much eating and drinking (water) This was on account of the agreeable news of peace. (1000 p[people]).³⁹

News of an imminent peace was more than the preacher could ignore. The celebration called for mild revelry and a sermon of praise for victory in war.

On the other hand, fast and thanksgiving day sermons usually called for some kind of political statement which blended into the textual exposition. Harry Kerr's definitive study of Revolutionary War sermons revealed that fast and thanksgiving discourses did more than direct attention to the Patroits' cause. Legislative proclamations were used by clergy already burdened with a multitude of duties as a vital part of their presentations. This "presented the legislatures with a splendid opportunity to influence

³⁸Richard Dozier, "Dozier's Textbook," transcribed by G. W. Beale, original in Richmond: Virginia Baptist Historical Society. Dozier's family lived in Westmoreland County, Virginia.

³⁹Ibid., p. 237 (revised pagination by Beale). Records identifying Jones and the Farnham church are incomplete.

public opinion." Kerr maintained that ministers fell back on these proclamations more readily if "special manifestations of God's providence . . . [in] recent or impending events in their parish, colony, or country" could not be found.⁴⁰ Apparently, even Baptists followed this norm, but they were careful to observe the evangelical tradition which kept the text with its gospel emphasis at the very heart of what was said.

Sermons preached to troops contained similar emphases regardless of whether the speaker was a dissenter or an Anglican. Kerr found that sermon content changed as the war progressed. At the beginning of the conflict, the emphases were twofold: (1) as Christian men, they were obliged to prepare for defensive warfare, for (2) they could be confident that God's favor was extended to the American cause.⁴¹ Success was assured on the basis that the war was in God's hands, and He was working out His purpose. Dissenters stressed the availability of God's intervention, and even Anglicans were not reticent to proclaim that the Americans could continue the conflict with God's sanction. As the war dragged on, religious motivations tended to fade in the light of new emphases. Kerr declared

⁴⁰Kerr, "Character of . . . Sermons," pp. 77-79.

⁴¹Ibid., pp. 98-103.

that physical and material well-being supplanted religion as topics for presentation. "Courage under fire" was the challenge, and there were appeals for action out of fear and even hatred for the enemy. The rationale for these entreaties focused on the "brutality and immortality of the foe."⁴² Baptist and Presbyterian emotions were moved by such preaching, as were the passions of any other Patriot American.

The permission granted the Virginia Baptists in 1775 to preach to troops of their denomination was but the beginning of a long series of decisions throughout the country affecting the ministerial function and the military. For the most part, a discussion of this subject is beyond the scope of this study. However, it should be noted that the chaplaincy went through an evolutionary process during the Revolutionary War as to its compass and authority. By the war's end, it had "attained the stature of a national institution."⁴³ Again, records remain incomplete, and some information is either without documentation or based on unreliable sources. There were clergymen who led services in military encampments without official appointment; later

⁴²Ibid., pp. 105-106.

⁴³Eugene F. Williams, "Soldiers of God: The Chaplains of the Revolutionary War," unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Texas Christian University, 1972, p. 137.

they were spoken of as chaplains.⁴⁴ These confused the records and helped make an accurate historical account impossible.

No Virginians were among the nine Baptist chaplains who apparently served in the Continental forces,⁴⁵ but the denomination took an active part in ministering to the spiritual needs of the Virginia troops. Regimental and battalion chaplains were provided for by resolutions of the Convention of Delegates in July and December 1775,⁴⁶ but the Baptist clergy were ready to serve the units even without appointment. William McClanahan was one of the first Virginia Baptist ministers to become actively involved in the Revolution in this manner. Already a preacher of note in northern Virginia,⁴⁷ McClanahan became captain of the

⁴⁴Roy J. Honeywell, Chaplains of the United States Army (Washington, D. C. Office of the Chief of Chaplains, Dept. of the Army, 1958), p. 30. The most recent study of the chaplaincy's function in the American Revolution is Williams' work.

⁴⁵Honeywell, Chaplains, p. 31. George Washington allegedly complimented the Baptist chaplains for their contribution, stating they "were among the most prominent and useful in the army." See B. F. Riley, History of the Baptists, p. 91.

⁴⁶Journal of the Convention of Delegates, pp. 29, 32.

⁴⁷See "Dozier's Textbook," pp. 1-2. As early as 1771, McClanahan was "going about through the wilderness very much in the manner of John the Baptist and preaching the Gospel of Salvation by Baptism"--thus stated the Northern Neck History Magazine, Dec. 15, 1951, p. 16. See also Ryland, Baptists of Virginia, p. 81.

Culpeper Minute Battalion soon after independence was declared.⁴⁸ How many of his men were Baptists is uncertain, but it appears likely that the majority were attached to their captain's denomination since he "ministered to their spiritual wants as their chaplain" as well.⁴⁹ This military unit went into action before the passage of the "Act for Speedily Recruiting the Virginia Regiments"⁵⁰ and may have provided the example which pointed out the feasibility of establishing companies and regiments on the basis of religion. The McClanahan company was a patriotic lot for, in the tradition of Patrick Henry's Culpeper Minutemen, they made "Liberty or Death" their motto, inscribing it on

⁴⁸ On Sept. 11, 1776, McClanahan received a £52.11.0 warrant for seventeen guns "purchased for the public . . . Culpeper Battallion." He also received £5.15.10 payment for sundries for his men. Journals of the Council of the State of Virginia, I, 127. On Sept. 30, he received £109.15.10 for payrolls, rations, and forage "to the 28th Instant" and the use of seven rifles for six months. Ibid., p. 180. See Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, VI (1898-1899), 281, for a memo concerning payment for corn and other provisions for McClanahan's unit, dated Feb. 6, 1777. The McClanahan file in the Virginia Baptist Historical Society contains a copy of Mrs. A. W. Burns, Bourbon County, Kentucky, Revolutionary Pensions, which lists the application of a Lewis Corbin as a sergeant in McClanahan's "militia" in 1780, p. 11.

⁴⁹ B. F. Riley, History of the Baptists, p. 91. In this citation, Riley stated that McClanahan's troops were "mainly from the members of Baptist Churches."

⁵⁰ An excerpt from the pension application of Samuel Burke traces the movements of McClanahan's company following its formation: ". . . entered the service of Captain William McClanahan of Culpepper Co., Va . . . marched to Williamsburg, then returned home. I volunteered to stay, so I enlisted in the company of Capt. Abraham Buford, . . . In the company of

the fronts of their green hunting shirts.⁵¹ A strong, "stout" Scotsman,⁵² McClanahan's spirit must have infused his son Thomas in addition to his minutemen, for the younger McClanahan served a three-year term as a soldier in the war.⁵³

Other Baptists responded to the crisis in a similar manner. David Barrow's zeal prompted him to encourage his followers to accept the hazards of war and to exhort his countrymen not to desist from breaking the British ties, as

McClanahan and Buford we marched from Williamsburg to the Long Bridge and fought the enemy . . . marched to Norfolk . . . marched from Norfolk to Suffolk . . . thence to Portsmouth . . . From Portsmouth to Culpepper and was discharged in 1777. . . ." See McClanahan file.

⁵¹Ibid.; also see the James Jarvis MS. microfilm in Colonial Williamsburg. Jarvis was a rabid patriot who knew veterans of the battle of Great Bridge, fought in Norfolk County in 1775. His bias reduces the value of the narrative. However, his citation of John Randolph's humorous definition of minutemen is useful: "They were raised in a minute, armed in a minute, marched in a minute, fought in a minute, and vanquished in a minute." Despite the satirical nature of the appraisal, the impact made by these "special forces" is a fact of history. Another valuable description of the Culpeper Minutemen is found in Barton H. Wise, "Memoir of General John Cropper of Accomack County, Virginia," Collections of the Virginia Historical Society, new series, XI (1892), 279-80.

⁵²Edwards, "Baptists in . . . Virginia," p. 31.

⁵³Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, XLI (1933), 355. See also the excerpt from "Land Grants to Colonial and Revolutionary Soldiers," Bk. 1, p. 130, in the McClanahan file.

the tyranny had increased. Semple wrote of him:

He set them the example. When dangers pressed, he voluntarily shouldered his musket and joined the army. His exceptionable deportment rendered him very popular with all descriptions of men.⁵⁴

His leadership was not forgotten when the conflict was over. He was offered a magistracy and served his community in that capacity for several years. He has been called "one of the most eminent, as well as one of the most useful" Baptist ministers of the period.⁵⁵ Lewis Conner's involvement in the founding of the new nation was so intense that J. B. Taylor commented: "Perhaps it may be set down as a misfortune, so far as his ministerial usefulness was concerned, that so much of his attention was given to politics."⁵⁶ Greatly admired and respected, he not only served in the militia, he declared his views regarding the political events and counseled the young as to their duties to their country. At the war's end, he gave greater attention to his preaching but continued to be conspicuous in civil affairs.

His political opinions were eagerly sought after, . . . aspirants to office in the county in which he resided never failed to feel themselves much surer of success, if they found the weight of his name and opinions in their scale.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ Semple, Rise . . . of the Baptists, p. 465.

⁵⁵ B. F. Riley, History of the Baptists, p. 92.

⁵⁶ J. B. Taylor, Virginia Baptist Ministers, I, 192.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

He even served his constituency as sheriff for a time.

From the Richmond area came John Courtney, an ardent Baptist who had been reared in the Anglican Church. Following his conversion to the Baptist movement, he began to preach to others of the merits of evangelical Christianity. Not recognized officially as a clergyman, he nevertheless preached to the soldiers both in their camps and in the field. His reputation was marked by his Patriotism, his valor, and his love for civil and religious liberty.⁵⁸

After dissenters were permitted to minister to the military, Jeremiah Walker and John Williams preached to the troops who were encamped in lower Virginia. A short time later, they ceased their efforts when the troops did not respond.⁵⁹ In January 1778, Walker was approached by Governor Patrick Henry, with the advice of the Council, to use his influence with the Baptists to increase the number of enlistments from the membership of that sect.⁶⁰ There is no record of Walker's reply, but it is known that he was a persuasive and successful preacher until about 1782 and also may have been an effective recruiter. It is unfortunate

⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 97.

⁵⁹ Semple, Rise . . . of the Baptists, p. 62.

⁶⁰ Journals of the Council of . . . Virginia, II, 74.

that Walker's moral conduct became objectionable toward the end of the war period and he was expelled from the church.⁶¹ Williams had been sheriff of Lunenburg County when he experienced Christian conversion in 1769. Immediately he began to evangelize and to plead for sincere Christianity to be the norm rather than the exception in the people's daily lives. After the Declaration of Independence, he placed emphasis on the moral obligations of his countrymen, as did so many of his colleagues. He condemned vice and luxury and called for a pattern of living that was remarkably like the Methodist life-style:

Every circumstance points out to us the importance and necessity of holy living, pious deportment, a well-educated offspring, and proper family government. . . . Of what avail will be the best laws and well-ordered civil government, the most virtuous rulers and warm pathetic addresses from the pulpit, if religious domestic government is not supported . . . ; let us bear open and practical testimony against the dissipations and extravagancies which, in their very nature, awfully threatens the interests of liberty, learning, morality, and religion.⁶²

The lethargy and decadence which greeted Williams as he and Walker attempted to proclaim Baptist doctrines to the encamped troops must have been depressing and shocking in the

⁶¹See Thomas W. Sydnor, "Historical Sketches of Tussockiah Baptist Church, Delivered the 4th Sunday in October 1877," MS. in Richmond: Virginia Baptist Historical Society, pp. 5-6; Henry Toler, "Dairy, 1782-1784" (incomplete), MS. in the William and Mary College Library, typescript in the Virginia Baptist Historical Society, pp. 1, 19.

⁶²Quoted in J. B. Taylor, Virginia Baptist Ministers, I, 136.

light of these perfectionist convictions.

At least one Baptist preacher never accepted active clergy participation in the war. John Taylor publicized his view that war was "unworthy [of] a gospel minister" whose calling directed the evangel's energies to the reconciliation of men with God through Jesus Christ.⁶³ While being a patroit, he maintained this opinion throughout the war. When opportunities beckoned him to venture on a preaching itinerary along the Virginia frontier, he went during the winter of 1775-1776, as he later recalled. His journal describes what happened:

The war was now increasing with mighty rapidity, and a number of regular troops were stationed in Tiger's Valley⁶⁴ to guard the frontiers.--Some of the poor soldiers became much affected under preaching, and were despised by their officers, declaring that my preaching had disqualified them for fighting, their fellow-soldiers also derided their tears and sorrows.⁶⁵

⁶³ Dorothy B. Thompson, "John Taylor of the Ten Churches," Register of the Kentucky Historical Society, XLVI (1948), 549, and "John Taylor as a Biographer of Pioneer Baptist Churches, Part II," Filson Club History Quarterly, XXXVII (1963), 345.

⁶⁴ Tygart's Valley was on the main branch of the Monongahela River.

⁶⁵ John Taylor, A History of Ten Baptist Churches in Which Will Be Seen Something of a Journal (Frankfort, Ky., 1823), pp. 22-23. As a preacher, Taylor was impressive because of the force of his delivery as much as the logic of his message. During Robert Carter's tenure as a Baptist, Taylor was a guest at Nomini Hall on several occasions. Carter enjoyed Taylor's company for, as the clergyman put it: "I could tell him a great deal about new countries, and the various effects I had seen among the people in the back-woods under preaching." Taylor confessed, "My preaching passed better with him than might be expected, for if

consciences and guilt-ridden minds had temporarily
 e military demeanor of these men, but for Taylor,
 what evangelizing was all about. Conviction for
 ut the first step to the regeneration of heart and
 e minister's place was to be the agent by which
 ening of the dormant spiritual life became possi-
 a messenger of the Kingdom of Heaven, his business
 military pursuits, except to proclaim the gospel to
 ing men. Taylor's Patriotism was not in question;
 matter of priorities. He was thankful for the
 ose presence made the frontiers safer,⁶⁶ but he
 join them except to minister to their souls' needs.
 aps the most bizarre preaching experience of any
 clergyman during the war was that which befell
 ker during the summer of 1778. While evangelizing
 stern Shore, he was seized as a dissenter and jailed.
 hasty and improper decision was made by the authori-
 deport the troublesome preacher, so a contract was

lse attended it, there was plenty of noise; hence
 aching one night in his hall, his old lady remarked
 re I came again she must remove her great candle
 t the sound should break it to shivers." Ibid., pp.

id., p. 23.

is almost certain that Baker fell into the hands
 sts, yet no records are available which will attest
 n assertion.

arranged with the captain of a vessel bound for Europe. Baker would work for his passage, and the captain would deposit him in one of the European countries. He was placed in the captain's care on a Saturday night and was given an assignment which kept him busy until late that evening. The next morning the minister received permission "to sing and pray" among the crew. This Sunday worship service, although simple and probably quite emotional, drew the attention of the captain, who became convinced that Baker was not a disturber of the peace nor worthy of deportation. He released his captive despite the contract. Baker's friends had obtained a stay of execution from the governor to prevent his deportation, but his release came before the legal papers could be served to those responsible for the aborted attempt.⁶⁸ Baker's sufferings were not over, however. A short time later, he was imprisoned in Accomack jail for fifty-six days for the crime of being an unlicensed preacher.⁶⁹ It is believed that Baker was the last of the Virginia evangelical dissenters to be incarcerated on that charge.

⁶⁸J. B. Taylor, Virginia Baptist Ministers, I, 113-14. See also Whitelaw, Virginia's Eastern Shore, I, 123.

⁶⁹Whitelaw, Virginia's Eastern Shore, II, 1020; J. B. Taylor, Virginia Baptist Ministers, I, 110ff. Whitelaw recorded the inscription of a memorial tablet placed at the Drummondtown Baptist Church, Accomack County, in 1926. The Accomack Baptist Association sponsored the plaque in commemoration of Baker's suffering and imprisonment and expressed their gratitude for a heritage made richer by the courage of this preacher.

Times were changing, and religious freedom was fast becoming as vital to the American experience as was political freedom.

Baptists of Virginia, while being Patriots of the first rank, were not recognized as leaders of the organized effort that characterized the months immediately before the outbreak of hostilities. A few engaged in political activity, but the examples remain sparse. It appears that only one Baptist clergyman served on a county Committee of Correspondence. Reuben Ford was selected by Goochland County in 1775.⁷⁰ John Corbley was a justice of the peace in Monongalia County and was kept busy arresting Loyalists who filtered into the area along the frontier. In 1777 sixteen of them were arrested in a group and taken by Corbley to Winchester for trial.⁷¹ Corbley was honored that same year by being elected to represent Monongalia County in the Virginia House of Delegates, but that body passed a resolution disqualifying him on the basis of a 1776 clergy disqualification clause written into the state constitution.⁷² Still another Baptist who

⁷⁰William and Mary Quarterly, 1st series, V (1897), 254.

⁷¹William R. Paukey, "The Trials and Triumphs of Western Pennsylvania Baptists, a Centennial Address Delivered before the Pittsburgh Baptist Association, June 7, 1939," type-script in Richmond: Virginia Baptist Historical Society, p. 5.

⁷²Keith B. Berwick, "Moderates in Crisis: The Trials of Leadership in Revolutionary Virginia," unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1959, p. 163; Alan K. Austin, "The Role of the Anglican Church and Its Clergy in the Political Life of Colonial Virginia," unpublished Ph.D.

played a small part in the political activity of the time was Elijah Craig, who represented his denomination's interests before the general assemblies.⁷³ Nevertheless, Baptist reticence to engage in secular activities and their preference for the preached word over the use of the pen predetermined their role as followers rather than leaders. At the same time, the tendency for them to come from the lower echelons of society dictated a constituency both unpolished and uneducated in the ways of public life. Without doubt, if records were complete, the Baptist story would not be significantly different.

Participation in military service can be claimed for several Baptist clergymen from Virginia. In addition to David Barrow and William McClanahan, William Cave, volunteer from Caroline County, gave several months of service, receiving bounty land in Kentucky for services in both the French and Indian War and the Revolution. He claimed fifty acres in 1780 and in 1785 deposited treasury warrants which gave

dissertation, University of Georgia, 1969, pp. 194-95. Austin found that the growing spirit of separation between church and state was more responsible for such action than a "fear of the political power of the clergy," p. 239. He also noted that Corbley was unacceptable despite his rejection of "a stipend or gratuity for his services," p. 195. It was this same Corbley who was implicated in the 1794 Whiskey Rebellion in western Pennsylvania and was jailed in Pittsburg. While there, he served as chaplain for the accused insurrectionists until his acquittal. See Paukey, "Western Pennsylvania Baptists," p. 5, and Wingfield, Caroline County, p. 323.

⁷³Papers of James Madison, I, 183n.

him an additional 1,700 acres of land.⁷⁴ Lewis Conner earned a reputation as a zealous soldier by serving a lengthy period in the army of General Nathanael Greene as it harassed the British in North Carolina. His discharge gave him only a brief respite from war, for he returned to the army and participated in the siege which culminated in the surrender of Cornwallis of Yorktown.⁷⁵

During the early part of the war, Ambrose Dudley was commissioned a captain in the Continental forces and became well-known as a disciplinarian.⁷⁶ While on duty in Williamsburg,⁷⁷ he became a convert to evangelical Christianity and began to preach for the Baptists. Upon being discharged from the armed forces, he continued to practice the same regimen as a clergyman that had marked his performance in war.⁷⁸ Before hostilities began, James Bell also experienced Christian conversion while serving as captain of a militia

⁷⁴Thompson, Taylor as a Biographer, p. 345. Cave's treasury warrants were numbered 309, 333, 340, 341.

⁷⁵J. B. Taylor, Virginia Baptist Ministers, I, 187.

⁷⁶Robert Davidson, Presbyterian Church . . . Kentucky, p. 87. See also Journals of the Council of the State of Virginia, II, 32; Tyler's Quarterly Historical and Genealogical Magazine, XV (1933-1934), 178; Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, V (1897-1898), 210, XLVI (1938), 341; Baptist Annual Register, II, 202.

⁷⁷J. B. Taylor, Virginia Baptist Ministers, I, 221.

⁷⁸Robert Davidson, Presbyterian Church . . . Kentucky, p. 87.

company. His accomplishments to that point had been impressive, for he had served Sussex County as a justice of the peace, a sheriff, and a burgess in the Virginia House.

J. B. Taylor described the striking change after Bell's spiritual experience:

The whole current of his desires and habits now received a new direction. He renounced his worldly honors, not because he esteemed the occupancy of honorable stations in civil life inconsistent with his relation to Christ, but because he felt it his duty to spend his days in preaching the gospel.⁷⁹

We are not informed if Bell resigned his commission as an officer or left the army for the civilian ministry. He may have used his role in the military to enhance his Christian witness; on the other hand, Taylor's appraisal seems to indicate a total rejection of his multiphased earlier life.

Robert Murrell served in the southern army for six months and frequently preached to his fellow soldiers. His ministry reached beyond his compatriots; a Baptist congregation a few miles from the encampment enjoyed his occasional visits, and his colonel often requested Murrell's leadership at prayers in the officer's tent. The daily routine kept by this minister must have been rigorous for it was said that his health was adversely affected by his military tenure for a long time after his discharge. During a skirmish along the Savannah River, the southern army was performing badly

⁷⁹J. B. Taylor, Virginia Baptist Ministers, I, 172-73. See also Biggs, Kehukee Baptist Association, pp. 49-50.

when the order was relayed: "Every man to himself." With the British closing in on them, the army fled, Murrell among them. He lost most of his clothes, plus his Bible and hymnbook. Not being a swimmer, Murrell's path of escape was blocked by a river. Just in time, Murrell came upon a friend preparing to cross the stream. An excellent swimmer, the soldier held Murrell by one hand, pulling him along as the river was crossed. Probably Murrell's life was spared by the providential encounter.⁸⁰ In later years, he retold the story, expressing deep appreciation for his deliverance.

A Baptist minister who served three years in the Continental Army was William E. Waller. Presumably he remained a private in the First Virginia Regiment, but his service was rewarded by warrants in April and June 1783 for two hundred and one hundred acres of land respectively.⁸¹

The account of John Weatherford's military service remains incomplete. It is known that he was "a soldier of the Resolution,"⁸² but there is some doubt as to whether he was a chaplain or a soldier of the line.⁸³ His obituary

⁸⁰J. B. Taylor, Virginia Baptist Ministers, ii, 76-77.

⁸¹Louis A. Burgess, Virginia Soldiers of 1776 (3 vols.; Richmond: Richmond Press, 1927), III, 1,056-57.

⁸²John Weatherford's Obituary, Religious Herald, VI (March 13, 1833).

⁸³See John S. Moore, "John Weatherford: The Man Behind the Legends," Virginia Baptist Register (1969), p. 365.

referred to him as a soldier, which seems to indicate that he was an enlistee bent on defending the right to civil and religious freedom. He was a "firm advocate" of such guarantees,⁸⁴ so it should not be difficult to accept his more bellicose role.

At least three other Baptist ministers may have served in a military capacity during the war. The pastoral work of John Burrus, John Shackleford, and John Young was performed in Caroline County at the time, but the names appear on the list of soldiers from that county as well.⁸⁵ It is not unlikely that clergy may have elected to serve short terms in the military without resigning their pastorates, or they could have taken brief leaves of absence for the purpose of defending their country.

One Virginia Baptist clergyman, Martin Kaufman, remained a conscientious objector throughout the American Revolution. He and a number of laymen had been Mennonites before their conversion to Baptist principles and had retained much of their old dogma. They were appalled at the numbers of Baptists enlisting in the armed forces and offended by the

⁸⁴Ibid.

⁸⁵John Burrus: see T. E. Campbell, Caroline County, p. 373, and Wingfield, Caroline County, pp. 226, 319; John Shackleford: see T. E. Campbell, Caroline County, p. 375, and Wingfield, Caroline County, p. 229; John Young: see Wingfield, Caroline County, pp. 230, 330.

popular demand that all Patroits should subscribe to a contentious oath of allegiance. Kaufman and his followers-- they ultimately numbered no more than sixty or seventy-- were not Loyalists. Their belief was simple; all wars were wickedness, and they could not "in good conscience" continue in fellowship with those who participated in such "unlawful practices." Reconciliation was attempted but proved impossible. They separated from the Baptists over the issue, formed their own congregations, and finally lost their identity after Kaufman's death in 1805.⁸⁶ John Koontz became the target of organized Mennonite opposition during the early part of the war. A German, Koontz had become a Baptist, and in 1776 he began pastoring the Mill Creek church where Kaufman had been before his departure from the Baptist fold. This part of Berkeley County had a numerous Mennonite population, and they became divided over Koontz's ministry. A spiritual revival accompanied the new pastor's labors, which won many of the German Mennonites to his cause. Koontz, then, was considered the chief reason for the dissention among them, so the tactic employed to eliminate the cause was a theological discussion based upon scripture. Importing a few of their clergy from Pennsylvania, they debated with Koontz privately to enlighten him regarding his

⁸⁶ See Semple, Rise . . . of the Baptists, pp. 247-48, and Cathcart, Baptists and the . . . Revolution, pp. 63-64.

errors. They rejected the possibility of Christians participating in war, holding slaves, or taking legal oaths. Koontz remonstrated that Baptists permitted each Christian man to follow the dictates of his conscience in those areas. He then quizzed them as to their knowledge of saving faith in Christ and concluded that they were "entire strangers to vital godliness." They left him, having failed in their mission, and the Baptist revival continued.⁸⁷

Patriotism combined with economic need to motivate many Baptist ministers in Virginia to fly to the aid of the military in supplying a variety of commodities for the country's use throughout the war. While it is true that certificates of declared value--at prices often grossly inflated--were given in exchange for the good, we cannot ignore the fundamental tie between spiritual and national freedom which saturated the desires and thus the motives of these evangelical dissenters. Their Patriotism, which one Baptist historian appraised as excessive,⁸⁸ was real because it was vital. Without their country's liberty, they feared they would lose their own, which was not yet perfected,

⁸⁷J. B. Taylor, Virginia Baptist Ministers, I, 100-104.

⁸⁸Cathcart observed: "If our fathers erred in the struggle of the Revolution, it was in possessing a superabundance of zeal in their country's cause," Baptists and the . . . Revolution, p. 64.

through harsher impositions by a vengeful British administration. At the same time, they could not be blamed for the wartime inflation; more often than not, provisions were in short supply, and many American Patriots were sacrificing what they needed for their families when they shared with the Continental forces. What small profits came to these people did not make up for the sacrifices thus entailed.

Contracting to provide transportation for the goods intended for the military proved to be a lucrative occupation, so often supplying provisions merged with hiring out one's person, wagon, and horses for public service work. Again, patriotism was a factor in these arrangements, but with money in short supply within their families, the more aggressive householders--Baptist or otherwise--would agree to work for the wages regardless of the dwindling value of the remuneration. Unfortunate were those Baptists who found their creedal obligations to be antithetical to their worldly interests. Sunday--the Lord's Day⁸⁹--was carefully and rigidly preserved as the day for worship, rest, and Christian fellowship. To labor for wages on that day was in

⁸⁹ Most Protestants have equated Sunday with the Sabbath. However, the Sabbath in its Hebrew inception means "the seventh day, a day of rest from labor." (See Gen. 2:2-3; Exodus 20:8-10.) Thus in our calendar, Saturday is the Sabbath; Sunday is more properly "the Lord's Day"--the day of Christ's resurrection.

violation of God's law and deserving of censure. But Baptists were not above yielding to the temptation of earthly gain, even when the day was their Sabbath. Younger Pitts, pastor of the Upper King and Queen church, was accused by his congregation of breaking the Sabbath for personal gain, and a membership meeting was called to consider the case. The church records contain a brief statement regarding that session: March 16, 1778--Pitts acknowledged his "being overtaken in the fault of Trading on the sabbath." His humble, repentant confession was rewarded with his flock's compassion: he was continued in their fellowship.⁹⁰ In a similar situation, two laymen did not fare so well. The Albemarle church records furnish this account:

Church Meeting, 1st Saturday in April, 1779, Find that Brother William Woods has Violated the moral law of God, by Witingly and willingly Entering Wagon and horses Into publick Service to work on the Sabath Day. For which Cause he is prohibited [sic] Church privaleges [sic]. Brother Russel Jones, for somthing near the same Cause Is likewise Suspended,--⁹¹

It seems likely that in those two cases, confession accompanied by sincere remorse was lacking.

Of course, most Baptists could haul supplies or sell

⁹⁰"The Upper King and Queen Baptist Church Minute Book: 1774-1815," copy in Richmond: Virginia Baptist Historical Society, n.p.

⁹¹"The Albemarle Baptist Church Minute Book: 1773-1779, 1792-1811," copy in Richmond: Virginia Baptist Historical Society, n.p.

their crops or livestock for the good of their country and their own purses without despoiling their Christian Sabbath. The records of their public service claims⁹² reveal their names, the nature of the provisions or service, the value of the same for remuneration purposes, and their county. (See Appendix B, p. 291.) The period of the Southern Campaign, 1779-1781, when the British moved north from Georgia to ultimately invade Virginia, was the time when most of the transactions were effected. Beef and wheat were the most popular commodities, with dried beef, bacon, mutton, rye, oats, and corn appearing on the lists. John Leland brought in some brandy, and at least three guns were furnished the Virginia forces. Elijah Craig received a certificate for a rifle valued at £5 in June 1776. When the fighting was over, the gun was not returned. The Orange County Court noted this fact in April 1782 and authorized a payment of £2.5.0 for the lost weapon.

With the British in North Carolina by the autumn of

⁹²Public service records have been preserved in four forms: (1) lists kept by the Commissioners of the Provision Laws showing the transactions by certificates and receipts, listed by county; (2) certificates given to the claimant for the commodity supplied with its value as determined by the commissioner, listed by county, and arranged alphabetically by the claimant's last name; (3) court books registering the claims and their approval, listed by county; (4) commissioners' records showing the court's decisions regarding the commodity's evaluation, listed by county.

1780, certificate values jumped unbelievably. Beef values remained fairly constant at two or three pence per pound, but Elijah Craig apparently received 48s. per pound for bacon in August. Ten months later, he received 9d. per pound. The most difficult transaction to believe was a certificate given Craig in October for twelve bushels of wheat at £20 per bushel. In June 1781, he received 5s. per bushel for the grain. Lewis Craig, in Spotsylvania, received £20 per bushel of wheat in October--the same as his brother--and sold his rye for £12 per bushel at the same time. William McClanahan's wheat, delivered in October, was evidently revalued by the March 1782 Culpeper court at 4s. per bushel.

The unbacked paper currency of the time had been gradually depreciating in value until 1780 when the pace increased. Prices naturally rose, and in Virginia the situation was made more difficult by the tremendous need for staple foods to feed several thousand troops moving into the state to resist the advancing British. If the crop had been smaller than usual, and if the need were great enough, prices would soar accordingly. Two factors apparently reduced prices: (1) Congress in late 1780 provided for the redemption of practically worthless paper money with new treasury notes which lowered prices for a time. (2) High prices pried loose hoarded supplies which were sold by

profit-takers. Within a short time, the need would have diminished significantly, thus forcing down the inflated prices.

Several Baptists were hired to move supplies for the armed forces and during critical periods were paid handsomely for their efforts. Ambrose Dudley, besides serving as an officer and recruiter,⁹³ hauled goods for 122 days in 1780, receiving 11s. per day by the Spotsylvania court in 1783. It is not known if his initial pay was more than that figure, but Lewis Craig, transporting supplies at the same time, received £27.15.0 per day for eleven days work--at least the lists of certificates for Spotsylvania declared this evaluation in October 1780. Information is lacking concerning whether a later revision of the rate took place that would have resulted in the approximate amount which Dudley received going to Craig. The Pittsylvania court paid Samuel Harris 10s per day for six days of wagonage in March 1782; at the same time, they approved an 11s. rate for another span of seventeen days. The court also paid him for one specific route which he had taken to deliver military supplies, that being "from Peytonsburg to Charlotte Town." One writer gave credit to Harris for keeping "two

⁹³Money was advanced to Dudley "to recruit for the State Infantry," and he satisfactorily accounted for the sum, according to the Journals of the Council of . . . Virginia, II, 32. The date of the statement was Nov. 21, 1777.

wagons running to Petersburg to bring salt to his neighbors" when it was difficult to procure it during the war.⁹⁴ Incidentally, it is probable that Harris covered the Peytonsburg-to-Charlotte Town road as a dispatch rider for the army as well.⁹⁵ Eleazer Clay was paid for "waggoning grain to fatten Beeves" and for feeding and finding pasture. John Goode may have supplied "Provisions and Waggon hire to Capt. Flemings Co. of the 7th Regt." as well as "Capt. Fauknors Co. of the 5th Regimt." Thomas Maxfield, John Picket, and Samuel Shrewsbury received payment for "diats" (diets) of forage--the first two ministers, for seven and five days respectively.

One elderly minister, too old to actively participate in the action against the British, chose instead to furnish supplies for the army. John Anderson, Sr., was seventy-six

⁹⁴Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, XXIV (1916), 187. See also Maud C. Clement, The History of Pittsylvania County, Va. (Lynchburg, Va.: J. P. Bell Co., 1929), pp. 171-73.

⁹⁵Clement, Pittsylvania County, p. 173. Harris was an able, yet humble, leader of the Virginia Baptist movement. He was described as possessing sound judgment, being a safe counselor, and having the "implicit confidence" of "the whole brotherhood" for his "sincerity and godliness." See J. L. Burrows, "Dover Association, Va., 1783-1883: Centennial Address before the Virginia Baptist Historical Society, 1883." MS. in Richmond: Virginia Baptist Historical Society, p. 7. The esteem with which Harris was regarded by Virginia Baptists resulted in his being elected their first Messenger or Apostle (Bishop) in 1776 at a time when the Baptists were flirting with an episcopal system. See Howell, Early Baptists, chap. 8, and Clement, Pittsylvania County, p. 127.

years old when the war began⁹⁶ and had been suspended from the ministry in 1774 for "unseemly Behaviour with a Woman in Maryland."⁹⁷ He combined Patroit action with "sound Repentance" and was restored "into his Place, in the Church" in 1777.⁹⁸ Shortly thereafrer he moved west of the Allegheny Mountains to the Greenbrier River country, evidently becoming the first minister to do so.⁹⁹

Some Baptist clergymen were generally known for their patriotism without having their specific exploits publicized. John Leland may not have participated actively in the Revolutionary War, but his influence was decidedly in favor of the American cause. J. B. Taylor wrote of him: "He grew up amid the stirring incidents which brought on the Revolution, and imbibed an unconquerable sentiment for hostility to civil and ecclesiastical oppression."¹⁰⁰ In 1942 the National Congress of the Sons of the American Revolution

⁹⁶Robert D. Stoner, A Seed-Bed of the Republic: A Study of the Pioneers in the Upper (Southern) Valley of Virginia (Roanoke, Va.: Roanoke Historical Society, 1962), p. 264.

⁹⁷"The Smith's Creek: 1756-1774; Lynville Creek: 1775-1777, 1787-1818; Brock's Gap: 1843-1844, Baptist Church Minute Book," copy in Richmond: Virginia Baptist Historical Society, p. 23.

⁹⁸Ibid., p. 26.

⁹⁹George Alderson, "The Aldersons in America," typescript in Richmond: Virginia Baptist Historical Society, p. 7.

¹⁰⁰J. B. Taylor, Virginia Baptist Ministers, II, 30.

placed a marker in Orange County in commemoration of Leland's staunch libertarianism. In part, the inscription characterized him as an "ardent advocate of the Principles of Democracy" and "Vindicator of Separation of Church and State."¹⁰¹ His postwar publications certainly supported such an appraisal.

Lewis Lunsford's reputation as a Patriot and as a Christian inspired a Miss Clarissa Pollard from Northumberland County to write an elegy to him upon his death. One stanza will suffice:

My pen, forbid this deep desponding sigh,
Fresh courage take, submissive be, while I
In falt'ring tone, thy feeble aid command,
To mourn the great reformer of our land,
Who, zealous for his country, and his God,
Proclaim'd the joyful news of peace abroad,
True Gospel-Peace, thro' Christ's atoning blood;
Great advocate for Zion, Lunsford stood.¹⁰²

The war came close to Lunsford's congregation in Virginia's Northern Neck as it did to many Baptist churches. In the late summer of 1780, when there was much Loyalist activity in the British-launched Southern Campaign, a disturbance between Patriots and Loyalists occurred in the vicinity of Lunsford's parish. The minister wrote to his close friend

¹⁰¹See papers in the Leland-Madison file in possession of the Virginia Baptist Historical Society.

¹⁰²Cited in Henry Toler, Funeral Sermons on the Death of Elder Lewis Lunsford, 1795, n.pub., copy in Richmond: Virginia Baptist Historical Society, pp. 69-70.

and admirer, Robert Carter, disclosing what he knew of the riot:

The particulars of the mob I cannot justly inform you but it is certain Edward Hull in behalf of the County [Country?] was killed on the place two of the mob are dangerously wounded Wm Davis a man who has a wife and family of Children in low circumstances has his thigh broke and the Dr says there is no hope (his wife is a member of our church). Hill Pitman one of the widow's sons we were talking of is wounded in his hip and back very dangerous--I have not heard of any other on Either side. . . .¹⁰³

While Lunsford approved of the purposes of the revolutionary action, it is obvious that he was saddened by the violence and the disruption of daily life with its domestic relationships. But as an evangelical pastor, he was likewise burdened with the spiritual preparedness--or lack thereof--of those whose lives had been taken from them and those whose wounds would doom them to an early death. Carter would have shared those concerns at the time.¹⁰⁴

Another Baptist clergyman who by reputation was an ardent supporter of the American Revolution was David Thomas. His close friend and associate, William Fristoe, wrote of him: "He was a great patriot, and took an active part in our

¹⁰³Letter from Lewis Lunsford to Robert Carter, Sept. 18, 1780, MS. in Richmond: Virginia Baptist Historical Society.

¹⁰⁴For a brief study of Robert Carter's religious life, see Louis Morton, Robert Carter of Nomini Hall: A Virginia Tobacco Planter of the Eighteenth Century (Williamsburg, Va.: Colonial Williamsburg, 1941), chap. 10.

national revolution."¹⁰⁵ It is disappointing indeed to search in vain for evidence that would give credence to Fristoe's observation. Sparse records force the historian to use that mysterious element on which the Baptists built their congregations: the principle of faith. In the case of Thomas, who must have been energetic on behalf of his country, we are left with the word of a Baptist historian--but a colleague of the man about whom he wrote. Thus his observation should not be ignored.

John Waller, who suffered so much at the hands of persecutors just before the war, was eulogized as a Patriot by John Leland. Waller's death prompted his friend to write a lengthy poem in memory of their years of mutual service. The following excerpt describes Waller, the dissenter Patriot:

When Independence was declar'd,
Waller was Whig--a valiant band
To blow the trump of jubilee;

The change brought freedom to his cause
And banished all religious laws,
And set the sons of Zion free.¹⁰⁶

As did his compatriots, Waller became a foe of the oppression which British civil and religious institutions had come to

¹⁰⁵Fristoe, Ketocin Baptist Association, p. 7.

¹⁰⁶John Leland, "Poetic Lines, on the Death of Rev. John Waller," Writings, p. 415. Evidently, Waller's personality had noticeable weaknesses for he was described as being "erratic, impulsive and often indiscreet." See Barrows, "Dover Association," p. 7.

represent. Independence from British control had permitted freedom to replace toleration, and Waller--one of Zion's Sons--must have reveled in the hard-fought victory.

The exuberance which James Ireland felt when he heard that documents had been signed severing the ties with the British Empire burst forth in four stanzas of Patriot verse. Independence, to Ireland, meant the attainment of civil liberty with the strong probability of the end to religious restriction following posthaste. With the theological awareness so typical of the evangelicals, Ireland accepted the concept of the revolutionary action being within the compass of God's dominion.¹⁰⁷ To have thought anything else apparently escaped his comprehension. Stanzas I and II are included here as an excellent example of this merger of causes--the mortal with the divine, i.e., America's deliverance with eternal salvation.

America! exult in God
 With joyful acclamation;
 Who has, thro' scenes of war and blood,
 Display'd to thee salvation.
 When armed hosts,
 With warlike boasts,
 Did threaten thy destruction,
 And crossed the main,
 With martial train,
 To compass thy subjection;
 Thy sole resource was God alone,
 Who hear'd thy cries before his throne,

¹⁰⁷ J. B. Taylor quoted Ireland as believing the Revolution to be an instrument of God "to burst asunder the bands of oppression," Virginia Baptist Ministers, I, 116.

Beheld with hate their schemes of blood
 Impending o'er thee like a flood,
 And made them know it was in vain
 To make thee longer drag their chain;
 That thou should be
 A nation free
 From their unjust oppression.

Hail now ye sons of liberty,
 Behold thy constitution!
 Despotism power and tyranny
 Have seen their dissolution.
 No clattering arms,
 No war's alarms,
 Nor threats of royal vengeance;
 Thy hostile foes
 Has [sic] left off those;
 Now own thy Independence.
 Replete with peace, valiant we stand,
 Freedom the basis of our land;
 Blest with the beams of gospel light,
 Our souls emerge from sable night;
 Jehovah's heralds loud proclaim
 Eternal life thro' Jesus' name,
 Points out his blood
 The way to God,
 For our complete salvation.¹⁰⁸

Ireland concluded his psalm of praise with an admonition to Americans to pursue humility rather than pride in recognition of the true source of America's strength. He prayed for an acknowledgment among his countrymen that God's perpetual care should overshadow the new nation, and he hoped for a people unique among men:

. . . teach us how,
 Our hearts to bow,
 To the Redeemer's sceptre.
 O may the silver trump of peace,
 Within our Empire never cease . . .

¹⁰⁸Cited in William McElrath (ed.), The Life of the Rev. James Ireland (Winchester, Va., 1819), pp. 222-24. A copy of the poem may also be found in J. B. Taylor, Virginia Baptist Ministers, I, 124-26.

Human nature, however, would determine that the ship, newly launched, would steer another course.

The loyalty these preachers exhibited as Patriots made them subject to the vengeance of the British soldiers. All rebel clergymen were considered dangerous to the cause of pacification, so the treatment reserved for those who were captured was especially harsh. The British hounded them from place to place and offered rewards for their capture or betrayal. Their churches were desecrated by being turned into British hospitals, warehouses, and magazines. Congregations were broken up and demoralization became a tragic result.¹⁰⁹ In Virginia most of this suffering occurred in 1780-1781 during the Southern Campaign. Consequently, the end of the war, while sweet to the American South, carried with it a devastation that affected much more than the physical resources possessed by the inhabitants. It is difficult to see how this could have been different with war all around them and their leaders in constant danger.

While the Baptists suffered along with their Virginia neighbors, for the most part they accepted their lot cognizant of the probable results that would issue from either victory or defeat. They were spurred on by their aspirations--by their relishing the fruits of success. After the war, John Leland succinctly analyzed the Baptist clergy's

¹⁰⁹ B. F. Riley, History of the Baptists, p. 97.

proclivity for a happy conclusion to the struggle:

Upon the declaration of independence, and the establishment of a republican form of government, it is not to be wondered at, that the Baptists so heartily and uniformly engaged in the cause of the country against the king. The change suited their political principles, promised religious liberty, and a freedom from ministerial tax; nor have they been disappointed in their expectations.¹¹⁰

The long war, with its demands for persistent support and personal sacrifice, had been worth the investment, for with its conclusion, the prospects for equality of opportunity and freedom of expression with all other ecclesiastical bodies were bright indeed.

¹¹⁰Leland, Virginia Chronicle, p. 30.

CHAPTER VI

PRESBYTERIAN REVOLUTIONARY ACTIVITY

Following the French and Indian War, it was apparent that a new spirit, akin to nationalism, was moving up and down the Atlantic coastal area. It was a growing cohesiveness--albeit limited in depth--which was evidenced as Americans looked to each other for the solutions to problems rather than to the mother country. Especially was this true among the Presbyterian inhabitants of Virginia. They saw themselves as an American church and conceded to no extra-American body any authority over their organization.¹ This was an early expression of the growing American identity.² It is not difficult to understand why this should have happened to the Presbyterians. Their firm stand for freedom under the leadership of their clergy (see Appendix B, p. 299) has already been mentioned, and the Scotch-Irish antipathy to British control is well-known.

¹William W. Sweet, Religion in the Development of American Culture: 1765-1840 (Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1863), p. 50.

²Robert F. Scott, "Colonial Presbyterianism in the Valley of Virginia: 1726-1775," Journal of the Presbyterian Historical Society, XXXV (Sept., 1957), Part II, 177.

As early as 1765, Virginia Presbyterians--especially those of the interior counties--had thrown their support behind Patrick Henry's actions against Great Britain. The possibility of Presbyterian assistance having sizeable influence upon the passage of his resolutions against the Stamp Act cannot be ignored.³ Joseph Galloway, who implicated Presbyterianism as a bete noire for its efforts in sustaining the rebellion, charged their doctrinal principles with direct responsibility for making their involvement a fait accompli. His brief comment was that their convictions "naturally [led] them to an admiration and love for democracy" and their members taught "the People that the path of Rebellion was the high road to temporal as well as spiritual Happiness."⁴

Beginning in May 1774, the Presbyterians used the right to petition in an attempt to secure and enlarge their religious freedom. In quantity they never equaled the Baptists; however, in quality and effect the Scotch-Irish Presbyterians could not be surpassed.⁵ On January 20, 1775, in Fincastle County, these pioneers approved the meeting of

³Samuel C. Mitchell (ed.), History of the Social Life of the South, Vol. X of The South in the Building of the Nation (12 vols.; Richmond: The Southern Historical Publication Society, 1909), 475.

⁴Cited in Pears, "Presbyterians and American Freedom," p. 81.

⁵See Hawks, Ecclesiastical History, p. 140.

the Continental Congress and appointed a committee to express themselves to that body. Their pastor Charles Cummings was the chairman. In a straight-forward manner void of the heavy language of diplomacy, they described the dangers of coming into a wilderness occupied by savages and the disillusionment of being relentlessly pursued by the government they supposedly had left behind. They denied any desire to "shake off our duty or allegiance to our lawful sovereign," glorying instead in being his loyal subjects if "the free exercise of our religion, as Protestants, and our liberties and properties, as British subjects" can be guaranteed. But, they reiterated, we

cannot think of submitting our liberty or property to the power of a venal British parliament, or to the will of a corrupt ministry. . . . If no pacifick measures shall be proposed or adopted by Great Britain, and our enemies will attempt to dragoon us out of those inestimable privileges which we are entitled to as subjects, and to reduce us to a state of slavery, we declare, that we are deliberately and resolutely determined never to surrender them to any power upon earth, but at the expense of our lives.⁶

How much of this document came from Pastor Cummings himself is not known, but most of the men who comprised this

⁶Cited in Virginia Gazette (Purdie), Feb. 10, 1775. See comments by Lyman C. Draper, King's Mountain and Its Heroes (New York: Dauber & Pine Bookshops, 1929), pp. 381-82.

convention had received their religious instruction from Cummings' pulpit Sunday after Sunday.⁷

Two months later, the freeholders of Augusta County--largely Presbyterian--sent a similar statement to the Virginia Convention meeting in Richmond. In a manner repetitious of the Fincastle paper, they rejected "acts of injustice and violence" perpetrated by "a wicked and tyrannical ministry, under the sanction of a corrupt and venial [sic] Parlaiment." The commitment of these men to any eventuality was not the result of rashness but rather an indication of conviction and courage: "Liberty is so strongly impressed upon our hearts that we cannot think of parting with it but with our lives. Our duty to God, our country, ourselves, and our posterity, all forbid it. We, therefore, stand prepared for every contingency."⁸

Perhaps the most artistic prose to appear in a Virginia political document during those critical months was found in

⁷H. A. White, Presbyterian Leaders, pp. 116-17. William C. Pendleton maintained that while tradition ascribed the Fincastle address to Cummings, the structure of it proved it was written by an educated man and its phraseology was that of a clergyman. Cummings was the only member who could fill both roles. History of Tazewell County and Southwest Virginia, 1748-1920 (Richmond, 1920), pp. 340-43.

⁸Cited in Beard, "Presbyterianism in Virginia," p. 479. The Augusta County paper was received by the Virginia Convention March 20, 1775. See also Howard McKnight Wilson, The Tinkling Spring: Headwater of Freedom (Richmond: Garrett & Massie, 1954), p. 189.

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the resolutions sent by Botetourt County to its delegates in the same Richmond convention. With the majority of them Scotch-Irish Presbyterians, the freeholders described the decisions of the "set of miscreants" the king had appointed over the empire. Their unjust, cruel, and tyrannical policies had forced Botetourt to be wary of the sovereign's ability and wisdom to rule over them. Then the rugged beauty of the wilderness became the mood of the document. The spirit of the frontier--with less rigid conventions--began to express itself:

We only say, and assert it with pride, that the subjects of Britain are one; and when the honest man of Boston who has broke no law, has his property wrested from him, the hunter of the Alleghany must take the alarm, and as a freeman of America, he will fly to his representatives, and thus instruct them: Gentlemen, my gun, my tomahawk, my life I desire you to render to the honour of my king and country; but my liberty to range these woods on the same terms my father has done, is not mine to give up; it was not purchased by me, and purchased it was; it is entailed on my son, and the tenure is sacred. Watch over it, Gentlemen, for to him it must descend inviolated, if arms can defend it; but if not, if wicked power is permitted to prevail against me, the original purchase was blood, and mine shall seal the surrender.⁹

The message was plain though couched in the expressions of the poet.

In May 1775, the action of the General Synod of the colonial Presbyterian movement, the Synod of New York and

⁹Cited in Beard, "Presbyterianism in Virginia," pp. 479-80.

Philadelphia, was mixed with resolute purpose and moderating caution. The synod's pastoral letter, written after the beginning of hostilities in New England, observed that the "whole continent, with hardly any exception, seem determined to defend their rights by force of arms" and that "a lasting and bloody contest must be expected" if the British government continues to resort to violence to enforce its claims. The Presbyterian position vis-à-vis the military action was clear, the letter continued.

It is well known to you . . . that we have not been instrumental in enflaming the minds of the people, or urging them to acts of violence and disorder;-- Perhaps no instance can be given on so interesting a subject, in which political sentiments have been so long and so fully kept from the pulpit . . . ; but things are now come to such a state, that we do not wish to conceal our opinions as men and citizens; . . . there is no soldier so undaunted as the pious man, no army so formidable as those who are superior to the fear of death. . . . Let therefore every one, who from generosity of spirit, or benevolence of heart, offers himself as a champion in his country's cause, be persuaded to reverence the name, and walk in the fear of the Prince of the kings of the earth. . . .

The synod, on the other hand, expressed its attachment to the Crown--"the present opposition to the measures of administration does not in the least arise from disaffection to the king, or a desire of separation from the parent state." While it called for union with all of the colonists in the resistance movement and the maintenance of high moral living--"universal profligacy makes a nation ripe for divine

judgments"--it cautioned that civil wars "wound more deeply than those with foreign countries." The letter closed with a truism that has been repeated many times: that "man will fight most bravely who never fights until it is necessary, and who ceases to fight as soon as the necessity is over."¹⁰

While the general rule in truth was no politics from the pulpit, there were the occasional exceptions, as we have seen. An important witness to the exceptions was Nicholas Cresswell, the Englishman who toured the southern and middle sections of America between 1774 and 1777. He visited a Presbyterian church in Alexandria in November 1774 and came away saying, "These are a set of rebellious scoundrels, nothing but political discourse instead of Religious Lectures."¹¹ In October 1776, he again wrote from Alexandria:

The Presbyterian Clergy are particularly active in supporting the measures of Congress from the Rostrum, gaining proselytes, persecuting the unbelievers, preaching up the righteousness of their cause and persuading the unthinking populace of the infallibility of success. Some of the religious rascals assert that the Lord will send his Angels to assist the injured Americans. They gain great numbers of converts and I am convinced if they establish their Independence that Presbyty will be the established religion on this continent.¹²

¹⁰Records of the Presbyterian Church, pp. 466-69. See also Witherspoon, Works, III, 599-605.

¹¹Cresswell, Journal, p. 46.

¹²Ibid., p. 165.

His last vitriol was poured out just before his departure for England in July 1777. Convinced that "the Rascally Presbyterian Clergy" were "the chief instigators and supporters of this unnatural Rebellion," he accused them of resorting to "the most inveterate malice" in equating Loyalists, atheists, and deists. He said Presbyterians in general possessed "that cursed enthusiastic, uncharitable, bloody-minded and cruel persecuting spirit" which makes them "fanatic brawlers, or rather Bellows of Sedition and Rebellion." With his verbal heel on their necks, he concluded his attack on the Presbyterian clergy, "Divine teachers, or Godly teachers, I cannot call them without a vile prostitution of that sacred function."¹³ Cresswell's error in predicting a Presbyterian nation was evidently due to an over-estimation of their numbers and strength. Their rapid growth and influence astonished him. However, it is worth noting that the religious issue was of sufficient importance to be classified by the tourist as a major factor in the Revolution.

The Synod of 1775 also communicated to the presbyteries its urgent request that funds be raised for the purpose of speeding up the evangelization of the frontier. At the same time, the Presbytery of Hanover was ordered to send its

¹³Ibid., pp. 260-61.

records to the next synodical session--it had neglected to send its books to the 1775 sitting. Hanover, however, manifesting an air of autonomy, rejected both appeals on the basis of hardship caused by the times. The presbytery's financial situation and "the important Struggle we are now engaged in with the Mother Country" meant that "little or nothing can be procured at present" via collections in the congregations. Furthermore, the many vacancies in Presbyterian churches which had to be supplied by itinerancies, "as well as the Difficulties in which we are involved in common with our Countrymen," made it impossible for any of the clergy to attend the next synod with the records.¹⁴ Already repercussions caused by the limited military action, anxiety over the immediate future, and conflicts between pro and anti-British groups were being felt by these Virginians and throughout the colonies.

Philip Vickers Fithian witnessed the evolution of the rebellion as an itinerant Presbyterian preacher on the Virginia-Pennsylvania frontier in 1775.¹⁵ His

¹⁴Minutes of the Presbytery of Hanover, II (1769-1785), 71, Nov. 9, 1775. The minutes from Aug. 1776 to June 1777 have been lost.

¹⁵Fithian's earliest revolutionary action occurred Nov. 22, 1774, at Greenwich, N. J. He and Andrew Hunter were two of about forty youths who seized a cargo of tea, which had been taken from the ship Grey Hound and stored in a basement. As did the Bostonians almost a year earlier, the young patriots disguised themselves as Indians, removed the chests, and burned them. See S. D. Alexander, Princeton College, pp. 151-52.

journal,¹⁶ written during his travels and ended by his death during his 1776 chaplaincy in the Continental Army, is replete with references to the political and social climate of the times. He was concerned about the turmoil his country was experiencing and prayed early in May that God would grant the newly-established Continental Congress counsel and blessing to meet the current exigencies.¹⁷ Within a few days, while in Martinsburg, Berkeley County (now West Virginia), he wrote that America had much to gain from independence. He envisioned the growth of grand and wealthy towns--such as Martinsburg--"if American liberty be established." But, he noted, "the Glory of America, her Wealth, & Inhabitants, & inchanting Habitations, are remote yet, & to be obtained by Time & Industry."¹⁸ Fithian's entry for June 1 was an emotional outburst triggered by the first anniversary of the British closure of the port of Boston. Describing the British as "Hell-inspired," he declared the past year to be a time of worsening conditions. "All along the Bladder has been filling with Venom--Now it is distended with Poison,--full, ready to crack, to split

¹⁶Philip Vickers Fithian, Journal: 1775-1776, written on the Virginia-Pennsylvania Frontier and in the Army around New York, ed. by Robert Greenhalgh Albion and Leonidas Dodson (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1934).

¹⁷Ibid., p. 4, May 11, 1775.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 11, May 19, 1775.

with Rage!" Then, with a passion born out of Patriotism, he addressed his beloved country:

O America! Unwieldy Mass of Earth, pleasant, & healthful, tho' various in thy Climes--Fertile of every useful Support of Life--on thy Bosom, exuberant of Nourishment, have been raised a wise & gigantic People--They are now Flourishing in Learning, & Arts, & chiefly at present, urged on by a misjudging Ministry, are preparing with a Confidence of Success, to rival the whole World in Military [sic] Honour--O America! with Reverence I look forward, & view thee in distinguished Majesty--It is not rash to assert, without the Aid of Prophecy, that thy commerce, & Wealth, & Power, are yet to rule the Globe!¹⁹

Five days later, he was in Winchester, Frederick County, and was greatly impressed with the bellicose mood of the place.

He wrote:

Mars, the great God of Battle, is now honoured in every part of this spacious Colony, but here every Presence is warlike, every Sound is martial! Drums beating, Fifes & Bag-Pipes playing, & only sonorous & heroic Tunes--Every man has a hunting-Shirt, which is the Uniform of each Company--Almost all have a cockade, & Bucks-Tale in their Hats, to represent that they are hard[y], resolute, & invincible Natives of the Woods of America--²⁰

It is clear that Fithian respected and even admired these hard-working people of the back-country. They possessed a sturdiness--a fiber--which convinced the clergyman that they were more than a match for any enemy. Many of them were Presbyterians or leaned toward Calvinistic doctrines, which Fithian believed would reinforce their determination to carry on resistance until tyranny was no more.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 20, June 1, 1775.

²⁰Ibid., p. 24, June 6, 1775.

Governor Dunmore's autumn proclamation of martial law and freedom for all slaves and indentured servants who would bear arms for the king left Virginians aghast at the prospects the decree represented. Writing in Berkeley County, Fithian had just expressed his disappointment at the lagging spirit he detected in the area. The martial air had dissipated; the militia drilled less often and was torn by factions.²¹ But what a difference a few hours could make. The shock of the Dunmore declaration with its aftermath was concisely analyzed by Fithian: "The Inhabitants of this Colony are deeply alarmed at this infernal Scheme. It seems to quicken all in Revolution to overpower him however at every Risk."²² The youthful Fithian's optimism had cause to soar again.

Continued bad news from New England stirred Fithian's Patriotism and may have prompted him to consider the chaplaincy, which he soon entered. In January 1776, he wrote: "To the last 'Half-Bitt' of our Substance; & with every precious Drop of our Blood, we are ready to help them [the Bostonians]." But as he watched the militiamen carousing and racing their horses, his chagrin and disgust were evident in this addendum:

²¹Ibid., p. 134, Nov., 1775.

²²Ibid., p. 135, Nov., 1775.

False, or at best visionary, are such Pretentions with so base a conduct--talk of supporting Freedom by meeting & practising Bacchanalian Revels.--preposterous & vain are all such Pretentions. . . . Forbid it Decency & Valour that sacred Patriotism should be so cursedly prostituted, to subserve such diabolical Purposes!²³

Fithian's reaction was less prudery and more genuine concern over how depravity of this nature might affect the American position. He and his brethren were convinced that God's chastisement awaited those whose deeds made a mockery of His moral requirements. Even God's chosen people had not been immune from such justified punishment. What if the vial of divine wrath were poured out upon America? What if the happenings around Boston were warnings to the rest of America? As a prophet interceding for his people, Fithian raised his Jeremiad to heaven:

Weeping America! As the Leaves of the Book of Fate are turning over, we find black Lines still opening to our Sight--! Every returning Packet heightens our foreboding Alarms. The Magnitude of our Calamity is yet rapidly accumulating! Righteous Heaven! We appeal to thee. Are we not an injured, oppressed People? Is our claim unjust? If it be, by some signal & visible Token make it known. We want only to be convinced we are acting unjust. And such a Conviction will lead us to Repentence.²⁴

Fithian's last references to the war before becoming a chaplain were written in February while itinerating in Augusta County. He may have labored for enlistments as

²³Ibid., p. 158, Jan. 1, 1776.

²⁴Ibid., p. 178, Feb. 1, 1776, from Augusta County.

well, for he commented, "Still beating for Recruits! Martial Sound. It is Music to my Ears." He made reference to those who "appear backward," but he hoped the people would consider the cause a just one and would give it their full support.²⁵ After Sunday services among the Elk Branch and Falling Waters congregations, he observed, "The People here appear firm in Support of the American Rights."²⁶

Fithian's entries reveal the vacillation of human nature and the strategic role of societal leaders who inform and appeal to get a desired response. The task has ever been a continuous one, for the masses of men are captured by the routine so that the maintenance of a commitment comes hard. Clergymen during the Revolutionary War, along with politicians and journalists, had to cope with this challenge; suffice it to say that the same problem existed within the dissenter camp. The doctrinal groundwork had been laid, but the promises for "the more abundant life" inherent in the dogma had to be constantly inculcated upon the evangelical believers. This repetition--this spelling out--successfully parried the emotional tides and the vacillations of most of the dissenter membership. Change, in whatever area or to whatever degree, demands a constant vigil; Virginia

²⁵Ibid., p. 180, Feb. 8, 1776.

²⁶Ibid., p. 182, Feb. 18, 1776.

dissenters in the American Revolution were not an exception to this rule.

In May 1776, when the delegates to the Virginia Convention convened in Williamsburg, they were the recipients of a memorial from Augusta County, which followed by one month the North Carolina message to the Continental Congress that independence should be strongly considered. The Augusta petition suggested that "the present unhappy situation" and "the necessity of making the confederacy of the united colonies the most perfect, independent and lasting, and of framing an equal, free and liberal government that may bear the test of future ages" made mandatory the severance of ties to the mother country.²⁷

Prince Edward County dissenters, mostly Presbyterian, sent a petition to the House of Delegates in September expressing their hearty approval of the newly-established independent government in Virginia. They hoped that "the United American States" would "long continue free and independent" and expected Virginia "to raise religious as well as civil liberty to the zenith of glory." Virginia's destiny would then be assured: "an asylum for full inquiry,

²⁷Cited in H. A. White, Presbyterian Leaders, pp. 122-23. White made much of the movement for independence having its origins among the Scotch-Irish who occupied the frontiers, especially of Virginia and North Carolina.

knowledge, and the virtuous of every denomination."²⁸ The paper was signed by one hundred sixty-two men, with clergyman Richard Sankey placing his name at the top of the list.

The Presbytery of Hanover was the first church body to recognize officially the Declaration of Independence. On October 24, 1776, it adopted a memorial to the Virginia Assembly, to the effect that those sentiments which brought about the United States of America were shared by the presbytery and that every effort would be made to guarantee the success of their common cause. They emphasized "that now when the many and grievous oppressions of our mother country have laid this continent under the necessity of casting off the yoke of tyranny, and of forming independent governments," full freedom--totally void of encumbrances--in all areas of religious and civil life was their reasonable expectation. They accused the church establishment of being "highly injurious to the temporal interests of any community:"

No one can deny that the more early settlement, and the many superior advantages of our country, would have invited multitudes of artificers, mechanics, and other useful members of society, to fix their habitation among us, who have either remained in their place of nativity, or preferred worse civil governments, and a more barren soil, where they might enjoy the rights of conscience more fully than they had a prospect of doing it, in this.

The presbytery next inserted its private judgment that the inference might be made "that Virginia might have now been

²⁸Journal of the House of Delegates of Virginia, p. 9. The journal entry date was Oct. 11, 1776.

the capital of America, and a match for the British arms, without depending on others for the necessities of war, had it not been prevented by her religious establishment."²⁹ Of course, the allegation could not have been proved, and the thousands of dissenters that had flooded the interior region of the Old Dominion might present a case for more flexible controls than we have been led to believe. However, the presbytery's purpose was persuasion--to accomplish the cheerful removal of "every species of religious" bondage, which was the companion of civil harassment. Independence had smashed one barrier to full freedom; the Virginia Assembly could demolish the rest.

Shortly before the Hanover Presbytery statement was received, the Virginia assemblymen from Augusta, Thomas Lewis and Samuel McDowell, were the recipients of a message from several companies of militiamen and the freeholders of Augusta County, the home of a host of dissenters. Their sentiments were similar to the presbytery's, and they added that the present accord within the new state depended upon the decisions made by the governing representative body.

²⁹Cited in Foote, Sketches of Virginia, I, 323-24 and Summers, Southwest Virginia, pp. 119-21. John Todd signed the document as moderator; Caleb Wallace was the clerk and probable author. See Whitsitt, Judge Caleb Wallace, pp. 42-43.

All denominations have unanimously rushed to arms, to defend the common cause. Their unanimity has made them formidable to their enemies; their unanimity will be ever preserved by giving equal liberty to them all; nor do the[y] crave this as the pittance of courtesy, but demand it as their patrimony, that cannot be withheld from them . . . , which, if practised, may shake this continent, and demolish provinces.³⁰

Their concern for the preservation of what had been begun was evident. The destruction of the prevailing cohesion within Virginia was not only unwarranted, it would be a crippling blow to that vehicle by which independence was being achieved.

Incidentally, the Augusta dissenters were the targets of a rejoinder written by an unnamed member of the Anglican Establishment and published in the Virginia Gazette. The most significant aspect of the letter regarding the dissenter hint at a deterioration of the unanimity was the interpretation by the writer that the citizens of Augusta were trying to bully the House of Delegates into a decision. To threaten is a bad cause, he penned, and continued with the following rationale:

Every reasonable person will allow, that, to deprive men of what they have always enjoyed, and been taught to regard as their right, is a much juster cause of complaint, and much more likely to produce dissatisfaction and dissensions, than the withholding from them what they never had in possession, and what the distresses of their country only could have made them expect.

³⁰Cited in Virginia Gazette (Dixon & Hunter), Oct. 18, 1776.

He argued that for the Assembly to legislate approval of dissenter desires would aggrieve "the greater and more orderly part of the state."³¹ It was only a matter of time, however, before legislation accomplished what the anonymous writer was rejecting.

Petitions kept up their steady pace throughout the fall of 1776. Coming from every part of the state, they dealt with religious liberty but contained references to the conflict with Great Britain over civil rights. A typical one was dated October 22 and came from a group of dissenters--largely Presbyterian--in the counties of Albemarle, Amherst, and Buckingham. In it they warned

that the same motive namely liberty, that exerted them to venture life and fortune in opposing the measures adopted by the king and Parliament of Great Britain will still determine them to bleed at every vain [sic] before they submit to any forms of Government that may be subversive of there [sic] Religious Privileges that are a natural Right, and that stand nearer every man of Principal than even life itself.³²

In November Augusta County reiterated its concern for internal accord in facing the common enemy, Great Britain. Their message to the delegates stressed that "there is nothing more necessary in the present struggle for the liberties of America than an union of the minds and strength

³¹Cited in ibid. (Purdie), Nov. 1, 1776. Caleb Wallace evidently published a brief reply to the Nov. 1 letter, for the reply's language is that found in the memorial from the Presbytery of Hanover, dated Oct. 24, 1776, which apparently was authored by Wallace. See ibid., Nov. 8, 1776. Whitsitt discussed the issue of documentation, pp. 42-43.

³²Journal of the House of Delegates of Virginia, pp. 27-28.

of its inhabitants." But dissenters were being aggrieved and even alienated by forced contributions to the Established Church; this must end in accordance "with Christian liberty, and those noble sentiments which should animate every virtuous American."³³ The petition did not state to what end the embitterment might lead.

The minutes of the House of Delegates for November 19, 1776, show that that body, acting as a Committee of the Whole, approved the purposes of an assortment of resolutions with regard to the whole question of the church and the state.³⁴ They decided that private religious opinion and expression ought to be permitted, that dissenter exemption from financial support of the Established Church was reasonable, and that statutes providing for clergy support ought to be repealed. On the other hand, they resolved "that publick assemblies of societies for divine worship ought to be regulated, and that proper provision should be made

³³ Ibid., pp. 64-65, Nov. 9, 1776. See also Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, XVIII (1910), 148-49. In Mays' biography of Edmund Pendleton, he mentioned that this petition quickly brought the separation of church and state to the attention of the Virginia government, for the memorial supported a rumor that had been recently heard. It was feared that the frontier folk desired independence from Virginia and that a scheme was already being implemented in Augusta to gain that end. See II, 135. The attempt to establish the State of Franklin did get the support of some dissenter leaders.

³⁴ Journal of the House of Delegates of Virginia, pp. 62-63.

for continuing the succession of the clergy, and superintending their conduct." It was clear that reform was in the air and that dissenter arguments were being given a hearing. The noteworthy triumph came in December, as we have seen.

Many other petitions from Virginia dissenters were addressed to the Virginia legislature throughout the war.³⁵ Most often their proposals were meant to continue widening the breach between church and state and to guarantee total freedom and equality among the diverse denominations of the new state. Most of them either made outright mention of the common ground upon which all Virginians had fought the war or else alluded to that fact. They constantly reminded the delegates of their own Patriotism and libertarianism with regard to human rights and attempted diligently to persuade their readers of the need for legislation to guarantee the implementation of the full purposes for which the Revolution was being fought.

Petitioning was only one form of Presbyterian participation in the events surrounding the Revolutionary War. It has been estimated that over one-third of the denomination's

³⁵ Dissenting groups from the following counties sent memorials containing their views at various times throughout the war: Amelia, Amherst, Augusta, Charlotte, Essex, Hanover, and Spotsylvania. The motivating quest was full religious freedom and the proposals with their rationale were largely repetitious of those we have already considered.

clergymen gave significant service to the American forces.³⁶ Their range of activity covered the chaplaincy, outright military action, supplying goods and services, recruiting, counseling, consoling, and feeding the propaganda mills.

The continental picture showed that Presbyterian chaplains numbered thirty-seven out of a total known chaplaincy of one hundred seventy-nine.³⁷ Several of these served in Virginia or else were from that state. The Virginia government, believing that religion, discipline, and good conduct were compatible elements in making exemplary soldiers, had enacted statutes in July 1775 "earnestly recommend[ing] to all officers and soldiers diligently to attend divine service."³⁸ Furthermore, any military personnel behaving "indecently and irreverently at any place of divine worship" were to be punished in the following manner: commissioned officers were to be "publicly and severely reprimanded" by a court martial, and other soldiers, for the first offense, were to forfeit a day's pay. Additional offenses were to result in the offender's forfeiture of pay and a one-day

³⁶See Trinterud, Forming . . . an American Tradition, p. 253.

³⁷Howard L. Applegate, "Presbyterian Chaplains Assigned to the American Army During the American Revolution," Journal of the Presbyterian Historical Society, XXXIX (March, 1961), 63. See also Kramer, "Political Ethics of the Presbyterian Clergy," pp. 318-26, and Williams, "Soldiers of God," pp. 117-18, 120, 122, 125, 128.

³⁸Journal of the Convention of Delegates, p. 39.

incarceration.³⁹ Chaplains, too, were expected to maintain high standards while in the service of their government. Virginia law permitted no absenteeism for a chaplain except for sickness or an official leave of absence, no drunkenness, nor any "scandalous or vicious behavior, derogating from the sacred character with which he is invested." Punishment could result in dismissal from duty, depending upon the nature of the case.⁴⁰ By July 1776, chaplains in the Continental forces were under similar obligations.⁴¹

Chaplains, in most cases, were men of education and respected by the military personnel they served. At least during the early part of the war, chaplains took part in the actual combat, encouraging men overcome by fear and even assuming command on occasion. They interrogated prisoners, seeking information vital to the carrying on of the war. Some led their own militia units and served as the men's chaplain at the same time.⁴² It has already been pointed out that William McClanahan served in such a dual capacity.

Chaplains--and civilian clergymen for that matter--who were the most effective in keeping morale high could not

³⁹ Ibid. Sick soldiers from the offender's regiment would be cared for with the fine monies.

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 44.

⁴¹ See John R. Sampey, "Baptist Chaplains in the Revolutionary War," Religious Herald, XCI (1918), 5; Hezekiah Smith, Chaplain Smith, pp. 190-91; and Honeywell, Chaplains, pp. 67-68.

⁴² Honeywell, Chaplains, p. 51.

expect favorable treatment if they fell into the hands of the British. Punishment was often severe⁴³ until early 1780 when both belligerents agreed that all captured chaplains from that time forward would be released immediately. This policy was in force until the war's end.⁴⁴

Presbyterian chaplains, whose ministry had encompassed the Virginia region, gave significant service to their country's cause in the Revolutionary War. Charles Cummings has been described as "a zealous Whig" who "contributed much to kindle the patriotic fire which blazed so brilliantly among the people."⁴⁵ He had been called by and received the support of the Sinking Spring and Ebbing Spring congregations, made up of Patriot frontiersmen who were involved in military action against the Indians and later the British.⁴⁶ He was the first named to the Fincastle Committee of Safety to prepare the address to the Continental Congress mentioned earlier in this chapter and was chairman of the Committee of

⁴³Headley maintained that the British "violated all the usages of war among civilized nations" in the harshness of the treatment they inflicted upon captured chaplains. Again, his claim apparently was an exaggeration. Chaplains and Clergy, see p. 58.

⁴⁴Honeywell, Chaplains, p. 51.

⁴⁵Annals of the American Pulpit, III, 287.

⁴⁶See Summers, Southwest Virginia, p. 142; H. A. White, Presbyterian Leaders, p. 100; and Foote, Sketches of Virginia, I, 114-17.

Safety for Washington County after its formation in 1777.⁴⁷ An admirer of John Locke, he frequently inserted the great philosopher's logic into his sermons and quickly gained the reputation of being "the fighting parson."⁴⁸ As a chaplain, he served the Virginia troops when they moved into Tennessee country against the Cherokee Indians in 1776. Evidently, he was the first clergyman to preach in Tennessee, and as the expedition moved through the settlements along the Holston River, he sermonized to any group that would listen.⁴⁹

Since the Indians on the frontier were allied to the British, there were frequent skirmishes that made the area

⁴⁷See Richard Barksdale Harwell (ed.), Committees of Safety of Westmoreland and Fincastle: Proceedings of the County Committees, 1774-1776 (Richmond, 1956), pp. 17-18. Annals of the American Pulpit, III, 287; Summers, Southwest Virginia, pp. 201-204. A fellow Presbyterian clergyman, John Brown, condemned Cummings' political activities in a letter he wrote to William Preston, Aug. 24, 1775. He commented, "I question Mr. Cummings right to be one of the Committee [sic] and a Gospel minister at the same time. Who made him a Ruler and a judge in civil affairs? . . . I am apprehensive if he had considered the affair as he shou'd have done, he wou'd not have undertaken it unless the love of fame that universal passion had prompt him to it." MS. in Draper Collection. See William and Mary Quarterly, 1st series, V (1897), 254.

⁴⁸See Breed, Presbyterians and . . . Revolution, pp. 55-56 and Baldwin, "Sowers of Sedition," p. 71.

⁴⁹William H. Foote, Sketches of North Carolina, Historical and Biographical (1846; rpt. Synod of North Carolina, Presbyterian Church in the United States, 1965), p. 309. Cummings was widely known as a forceful speaker, possessing a powerful voice--"he could speak to be heard by ten thousand people"--and the ability to enunciate distinctly. See Summers, Southwest Virginia, p. 717.

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a dangerous place in which to live. Cummings participated in the fighting with his neighbors, and he and his parishioners always marched armed to church. Upon arrival at the meetinghouse, Cummings would take a short walk around the area, converse briefly with men stationed at the door, and gravely walk to the pulpit. There he would deposit his rifle in a corner nearby, lay aside his shot pouch, and direct the service. He would preach two sermons, separated by a short interval, and then dismiss his congregation.⁵⁰ Usually throughout the entire service, each man in the congregation kept his rifle with him ready for any emergency.⁵¹

The importance placed upon the clergy as disseminators of the latest official decisions made by the Virginia Assembly or the Continental Congress can be seen in a letter sent to Cummings by his friend and fellow Presbyterian, Col. Arthur Campbell, an assemblyman, in June 1778. Campbell wrote:

Yesterday I returned home, the Assembly having adjourned until the first Monday in October. The acts passed and a list of their titles I here enclose, together with an address of Congress to the people of America, for you to publish agreeably to the resolve. I wish you could make it convenient to preach at the

⁵⁰ Foote, Sketches of Virginia, II, 123-24; Summers, Southwest Virginia, pp. 230-32, 605.

⁵¹ H. A. White, Presbyterian Leaders, p. 101.

lower meeting house in this county, if it was but a week day, as the contents of the address are of the most interesting nature, both as to the moral and political conduct of the good people of America.⁵²

The letter continued with a statement of thanksgiving for God's special providences in making the French treaty so beneficial to America and in discomfiting the Indians in the Greenbriar country. Clergymen such as Cummings were amazingly effective in maintaining a delicate and dangerous posture between the roles of spiritual shepherd and civil counselor.

As a chaplain, Philip Fithian performed effective service in the New York area, giving the last few weeks of his life to unselfish, Patriotic duty.⁵³ What thoughts and feelings were his regarding the conflict are revealed by his journal and his letters to his young bride. His ministry

⁵²Cited in Summers, Southwest Virginia, p. 606.

⁵³Fithian's appointment as chaplain was obtained June 20, 1776, and he was assigned to Col. Silas Newcomb's battalion in the New Jersey brigade under the command of a General Heard. See Frank D. Andrews (comp.), Philip Vickers Fithian, Chaplain in the Revolution: Letters to His Wife, 1776 (Vine-land, N. J., 1932), p. 11. An associate of Fithian's, David Bard, who itinerated in Virginia, announced his intention of becoming a chaplain in April 1778. By June he had changed his mind. He later did render public service, however, by a lengthy tenure in the Pennsylvania legislature. See Fithian, Journal: 1775-1776, p. 33; William J. Gibson, History of the Presbytery of Huntingdon (Bellefonte, Pa., 1874), pp. 229-31; S. D. Alexander, Princeton College, p. 1773.

must have been shaped by his animosity for Great Britain and his love for his country. To the time of his death from dysentery and exposure, October 8, 1776, shortly after the battle of White Plains, he expressed himself fluently regarding the war, blaming George III for the suffering that had come to America and calling upon God for His vindication of America's cause. The king "merits what the Devils suffer,"⁵⁴ he wrote, and charged that "George's Tory Fleet & Army" had come "from their Homes to rob us of our Peace & Freedom." He called upon God to fill them with confusion, concluding the entry with "Do it, good Lord. Amen. Amen."⁵⁵ Five days later, he wrote his wife of his disdain for "the Menaces of haughty George & all his Minions." He confessed he would rather be in her "peaceful, loving Arms," but that Britain's actions had forced him to "think & contrive & plan & execute, & be merry; in my needful Duty."⁵⁶ Fithian described what his responsibilities as a chaplain were:

We have public Prayers in the Church appointed for our Battalion twice every Day; in the morning at half after five--Evening at six. After Evening Prayers I visit the Sick in the Hospital; this is my Duty for the Battalion on Week Days--Besides this every Sabbath Day I preach one Sermon in the Evening at five o'clock. This is my whole Duty, it is easy, but is some Confinement. We have the

⁵⁴Fithian, Letters to His Wife, p. 27, Aug. 12, 1776.

⁵⁵Fithian, Journal: 1775-1776, p. 210, Aug. 15, 1776.

⁵⁶Fithian, Letters to His Wife, p. 30, Aug. 20, 1776.

Scotch Presbyterian Church, a large elegant Building in "Little Queen Street" near the Broadway; & within a small Distance of my Lodging.⁵⁷

He spoke well of the army's morale, despite extremely difficult circumstances: "The very flower of rising America is now in the Army, . . . , & there with spirit & Dignity perform their laborious Duty."⁵⁸ Almost prophetically, Fithian--lover and Patriot--unburdened his feelings to his wife in September:

We were as near perfect contentment in each others company as mortals can come; O, we were blest til cruel Britain compelled us to separate!--Cruel George, why, without Reason, are so many mothers robbed of their beloved Children--So many Lovers forever divided?--Why, since all must lie on thy guilty Head! But Tyranny & Ambition have no control.⁵⁹

As he penned those words, the British army was maneuvering to surround the American forces in New York City. However, Fithian revealed no dread nor fear in his epistle.

Tho' they conquer us, unto Death we will hold fast our sacred rights; . . . Sacred indeed is their memory & fair & lasting will be their fame, who fall fighting for America's Good. We can hardly find a place in Our Hearts for Sorrow that they died; we rather envy them the Dignity & Sweetness of their Repose as they lie sleeping under the Laurels that must always shade & adorn their Graves.⁶⁰

⁵⁷Ibid., p. 28, Aug. 12, 1776.

⁵⁸Ibid., p. 35, Aug. 26, 1776. See also ibid., p. 44, Sept. 9, 1776.

⁵⁹Ibid., p. 38, Sept. 1, 1776.

⁶⁰Ibid., p. 37. See also his note to his wife written on Sept. 3, ibid., p. 45.

On September 15, New York City fell to the British after the American forces had retreated to Harlem Heights.

Fithian's final reference to the war situation before his death was written that day, and it revealed the depression that nearly overwhelmed a man whose faith doggedly clung to a sovereign God who yet had the times of man in His hands.

He wrote:

New York we have lost this Day; the Enemy entered about 3 o Clock; . . . Just Heaven thy Judgments are equal--We are a sinful Nation, O Lord. But is it written in thy Book concerning us that we must always fly before our Enemies?--Must this great, & formerly happy Country, submit at Length to despotic Domination?--Must Oceans of our Blood yet stain our own Land? Must not the widowed Lovers, & the fatherless Orphans for a long Time to come cease to increase!--We pray, good Lord for thy interposing Mercy; O spare us, & spare our Land--

I pray my God I may never see another such a Sabbath--The Cries of Women, the Groans of the Wounded, the Confusion of All! Swearing most profanely in every Quarter of the Army.⁶¹

Fithian's sorrow was intense, and before it waned, he was beset by the illnesses that were infesting the camp at Mt. Washington.⁶² His death occurred before any significant change in the American war fortunes had taken place.

Another chaplain who had itinerated in Virginia was Fithian's friend and preaching colleague, Andrew Hunter.

⁶¹Fithian, Journal: 1775-1776, p. 234, Sept. 15, 1776.

⁶²Fithian described Mr. Washington: "a spacious, very high Eminence on the Banks of the North River, 9 Miles above N. York, & 3 below Kings Bridge. It commands the River, & the country for a great Distance round." Letters to His Wife, p. 43, Sept. 9, 1776.

They both served in the same militia brigade,⁶³ and Hunter was present at Fithian's death. It was Hunter who kept Fithian's wife Elizabeth informed of her husband's condition, and Hunter's journal in the library of Princeton University contains information on Fithian's last days. Hunter was a chaplain throughout the war, and there is some evidence that he was captured by the British, although little is known about his alleged captivity.⁶⁴

George Duffield had preached in Virginia as a missionary and had pastored the Tuscarora congregation in Frederick County for a short period. Four days after independence was declared, he became a chaplain in the Pennsylvania militia and even served as one of the chaplains of the Continental Congress for a time.⁶⁵ He was known as a "zealous and active patriot" and in the Revolutionary War declared

⁶³Hunter was a chaplain in Col. Van Cortland's battalion, General Heard's brigade. See Fithian, Letters to His Wife, p. 11, June 20, 1776.

⁶⁴See Fithian, Journal: 1775-1776, p. 3n; Honeywell, Chaplains, pp. 51, 58; Headley, Chaplains and Clergy, pp. 289-92. Hunter served with four different military companies throughout the period of revolution. Kramer, "Political Ethics of the American Presbyterian Clergy," p. 320.

⁶⁵"Friends of Old Pine Street, Presbyterian Patriots' Day," copy in Philadelphia: Presbyterian Historical Society, p. 3.

himself in the initial stages as a "uniform friend to his country."⁶⁶

Soon after hostilities began, the Continental Congress commissioned Daniel McCalla as chaplain to the forces ordered to Canada under the command of General William Thompson.⁶⁷ Shortly after his arrival there, he and several officers, including Thompson, were captured at Trois Rivières. After several months of confinement on board a prison ship where the diet consisted mainly of bad bread, water, and an occasional morsel of meat,⁶⁸ McCalla was paroled. He returned to the civilian ministry in Pennsylvania by the end of 1776 but was ordered arrested by the British commander in Philadelphia on the charge of having violated his parole by praying for his country's cause. Having been warned of his imminent arrest, he fled to Hanover County, Virginia, where he remained inactive as

⁶⁶ Ashbel Green, A Sermon Preached at the Funeral of the Reverend George Duffield, D.D., Late Pastor of the Third Presbyterian Congregation in the City of Philadelphia; Who Died February 2, 1790 (Philadelphia: Daniel Humphreys, 1790), pp. 15-16.

⁶⁷ It appears that McCalla was the only chaplain appointed by Congress, for thereafter chaplaincies were supplied by each regimental commanding officer. See William Hollinshead, "A Funeral Discourse Commemorative of the Rev. Daniel McCalla, D.D., Late Pastor of the Independent or Congregational Church, in the Parish of Christ's Church, (S. C.) Delivered on the 28th day of May, 1809," in McCalla, Works, I, 15n.

⁶⁸ McCalla kept the shank bone of a ham for several weeks, scraping it with his knife to get every particle of food from it. Hollinshead observed that this gave some "relish to his spoiled and worm-eaten bread." Ibid.

a clergyman until he was released from his probationary status by an exchange of prisoners. He pastored the Hanover congregation and became active in Presbyterian educational efforts until his removal to Charleston, South Carolina, in 1788.⁶⁹

John Rodgers became a chaplain soon after the war began. It is not known how long he remained in the military forces in that capacity, but evidently he assumed the pastorate of the Old Providence church, Frederick County, in 1782. When peace finally was negotiated and the army was being disbanded, Rodgers proposed that Bibles be presented to the soldiers as they reentered civilian life. Washington commended him for the suggestion and stated that the project would have gotten his support had it been proposed earlier.⁷⁰

Joseph Rhea and Amos Thompson were also part of Virginia's contribution to the chaplaincy in 1776. Both served with Cummings in the Virginia militia that fought the Cherokees that year in Tennessee. While little is known of Rhea, it is certain that the minister had been exposed to considerable classical education for in April 1777 he wrote a letter in Latin to his son John, then a soldier in

⁶⁹See also Katharine Brown, "Presbyterian Dissent," pp. 312-16.

⁷⁰See Kramer, "Political Ethics of the American Presbyterian Clergy," p. 318, and Honeywell, Chaplains, p. 61.

Washington's army.⁷¹ Thompson joined the Continental Army as a chaplain, leaving his congregation at Ketoctin and Gum Spring, Loudon County, to be supplied.⁷² He served a company of Maryland and Virginia riflemen⁷³ and was well-known to Philip Fithian. Their friendship had been established at about the same time the war was beginning, and Fithian knew him as a jovial, friendly man. He described Thompson as "a very Wag--a warm Patriot--Cheerful, & agreeable Companion."⁷⁴ Evidently their paths were not destined to cross after both assumed the obligations of the chaplaincy.

Enoch Green, Robert Keith, and Robert McMordie had itinerated in Virginia as young ministers and became chaplains in the early months of the war. Green entered the war from a pastorate in New Jersey and died November 20, 1776,

⁷¹Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, XXIII (1915), 423-24. John later became a congressman from Tennessee and was honored by having Rhea County named after him. See also H. A. White, Presbyterian Leaders, p. 102.

⁷²See Beard, "Presbyterianism in Virginia," pp. 395-96.

⁷³Kramer, "Political Ethics of the American Presbyterian Clergy," p. 325.

⁷⁴Fithian, Journal: 1775-1776, p. 5, May 12, 1775. Thompson was a powerfully-built man whose physical strength gained a reputation in the area of Virginia where he preached. Rowdies bent on interrupting dissenter services were silent in the presence of this Presbyterian preacher. See S. D. Alexander, Princeton College, pp. 68-69.

after having contracted what was called camp fever--probably dysentery--in the performance of duty.⁷⁵ Keith served throughout the war and died within a few months after the Peace of Paris was signed.⁷⁶ In 1777 McMordie became pastor of the Tinkling Spring, New Dublin, Reedy Creek, and Fourth Creek congregations in Augusta and Botetourt Counties. He must have taken a leave of absence soon after assuming these pastorates, for it appears that he accepted an appointment as chaplain that same year. Serving with distinction, he was selected as a member of the Order of the Cincinnati. Upon his discharge from the armed forces, he returned to an active full-time ministry.⁷⁷

Other Virginia Presbyterians were known to have preached to the troops and gave their assistance to the recruitment of men especially in times of emergency.⁷⁸

⁷⁵ Alfred Nevin (ed.), Encyclopedia of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America: Including the Northern and Southern Assemblies (Philadelphia, 1884), p. 276.

⁷⁶ S. D. Alexander, Princeton College, pp. 153-54; and Honeywell, Chaplains, p. 61.

⁷⁷ Webster, History of the Presbyterian Church, p. 602; Encyclopedia of the Presbyterian Church, p. 507; Honeywell, Chaplains, pp. 40-41.

⁷⁸ Apparently, this kind of recruitment was most effective in 1775 and 1776. Thereafter, its success was limited except for portions of New England and the southern frontier. When the British or their Indian allies threatened the homes of these Americans, they responded more quickly to the appeals of clergy recruiters. See Williams, "Soldiers of God," p. 106.

Samuel Doak had loved the Virginia mountains since his youth⁷⁹ and was willing to give all his energies to the region's defense. He tutored at Hampden-Sydney College, studying theology there at the same time. He was licensed to preach in 1777 and moved to the Holston River area at a time when the settlers there were in constant danger from Indian attacks. One Sunday while he was preaching, the service was interrupted by an alarm that the Indians were attacking. Doak closed his sermon, exhorted his men, offered a brief prayer, seized his rifle which he kept nearby, and led his male parishioners in pursuit of the enemy.⁸⁰ Moving to Washington County in 1779, he worked to prepare the Washington County militia for what was to be the battle of King's Mountain. On September 26, 1780, about one thousand men were assembled near Sycamore Shoals. Doak presented some brief devotional remarks, closing his exhortation with a reference to "the sword of the Lord and

⁷⁹After graduation from Princeton, he desired to live on the frontier, so loading his books on the back of a horse, he walked through Maryland and Virginia to his destination. See Summers, Southwest Virginia, p. 284.

⁸⁰Breed, Presbyterians and . . . Revolution, p. 101, and Walter B. Posey, "The Presbyterian Minister in the Early Southwest," Journal of the Presbyterian Historical Society, XXVI (1948), 216. On another occasion, his wife, with their infant in her arms, watched from her hiding place in the nearby woods as the Indians burned their home and its contents. See S. D. Alexander, Princeton College, p. 184.

of Gideon."⁸¹ Doak then prayed as the men bowed their heads, asking God to bless the expedition. The prayer summarized the dangers that threatened his parishioners from the Indians on their rear and the British on their front. He recalled many biblical promises of God's mercy and prayed for God's overshadowing of their families as well as for success for the men who were to defend homes and liberty. The scene was a moving one, and tears were seen to drop quietly from the eyes of many.⁸² Many years later, in an interview conducted by the editor of the Calvinistic Magazine, Doak reminisced that when the British forces invaded the country, "you could not find a Presbyterian preacher anywhere through all the country, but was a stanch [sic] whig."⁸³ How accurate Doak was in his appraisal is impossible to ascertain if he meant the whole of America. He was correct if he were referring to the Virginia backcountry.

William Graham was a pastor and teacher at Timber Ridge, Augusta County, Virginia. In May 1776, the Presbytery of

⁸¹Judges 7:18, 20.

⁸²Summers, Southwest Virginia, p. 310. Doak later established the first school to be erected in Tennessee and was a member of the Convention of 1784, which framed the constitution of the State of Franklin. See ibid., p. 284; Alfred J. Morrison, The College of Hampden-Sidney: Calendar of Board Minutes, 1776-1876 (Richmond: The Hermitage Press, 1912), p. 25; Lyon T. Tyler (ed.), Encyclopedia of Virginia Biography (5 vols.; New York, 1915), II, 143.

⁸³Calvinistic Magazine, III (1829), 372.

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Hanover elected Graham the rector of Liberty Hall Academy, which the presbytery established at Timber Ridge.⁸⁴ The area was a hotbed of Patriot sentiment,⁸⁵ and Graham was not the last to express his sympathies among his neighbors and colleagues.⁸⁶ His ardent support of the American position

⁸⁴Katharine Brown pointed out that the name "Liberty Hall" was chosen as a result of the spirit of the times, i.e., just before the "unanimous vote of the Virginia Convention to instruct its delegates to the Continental Congress to vote for independence." She also suggested that this name would give the new school wider appeal than if it had a regional name. "Presbyterian Dissent," p. 271. H. A. White quoted a U.S. Bureau of Education report to the effect that "Liberty Hall" was the name of the Limerick, Ireland, country home of John Brown, one of the founders of the Timber Ridge school. See Presbyterian Leaders, p. 130. Henry R. Mahler, Jr., suggested that William Graham proposed the name for the academy. "The Contribution of Liberty Hall and Washington College to Presbyterianism in Virginia, 1749-1870," unpublished Th.D. dissertation, Union Theological Seminary in Virginia, 1952, p. 74. The institution is now Washington and Lee University.

⁸⁵See Archibald Alexander, "The Rev. Wm. Graham: An Address Delivered before the Alumni Association of Washington College, Va., June 29, 1843," Watchman of the South, VII (Jan. 4, 1844), 78, and Charles E. Kemper, "The Valley of Virginia, 1765-1782," Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, XXXVIII (1930), 238-39. Kemper stressed the great service performed by the Augusta militia as well as that of Rockbridge County, which was formed out of Augusta in 1778. The Augusta militia was ordered into the field thirteen times.

⁸⁶Fithian recorded that Graham had brought him the news that Boston had been cleared of British troops, with four thousand of the enemy slain and all the rest captured. Graham's intelligence had also learned that Quebec had been taken. Fithian noted: "If this News be true it will astonish the World!" Of course, it was not true, as the young clergyman soon discovered. Journal: 1775-1776, p. 149, Dec. 23, 1775. Graham's reputation was not that of a rumor-monger; the news was so gratifying, it had to be shared. Any Patriotic soul would have been stirred by the amazing possibilities if the story were true.

came from his views of politics and religion,⁸⁷ and his reputation as "the intellectual giant of the valley"⁸⁸ simply enhanced his role as a prime mover of men in that region. His effectiveness was illustrated by his actions in the early part of the war. In 1777 Virginia was called upon to furnish volunteers for the Continental Army. In February 1778, men assembled a few miles from the academy to make up militia companies and thus meet their quota for the newly-established Rockingham County, of which they were a part. Graham addressed them on the purpose of their meeting and endeavored to arouse their Patriotism. A few stepped forward, marching before the assembled crowd, but most were reticent to respond. Graham was indignant, so stepped forward himself to join the tiny band of volunteers. The exclamation was heard, "What! Shall the minister go and we stay behind!" Quickly the quota was met and Graham was selected their captain. His company never served, however,

⁸⁷ Foote, Sketches of Virginia, I, 450; A. Alexander, "The Rev. Wm. Graham," p. 78; "Log College," MS. in Philadelphia: Presbyterian Historical Society. Sprague said of him that "the patriotic fire burned in no bosom with a warmer flame." Annals of the American Pulpit, III, 366.

⁸⁸ J. Staunton Moore (ed.), History of Henrico Parish and Old St. John's Church, Richmond, Va., 1611-1904 (Richmond, 1904), p. 158. Another source praised Graham as "the excellent and too little remembered William Graham" who taught at Liberty Hall. See Virginia Historical Register and Literary Advertiser, IV (1851), 222-23.

as countermanding orders were issued. Longer terms of service were needed, along with more careful selection of troops.⁸⁹

Both Graham and the academy encountered financial difficulties as paper money depreciated and inflation marked the period. Army service took students away from the school as well. Graham determined to turn to farming to supplement his income, and moving to a farm about six miles from the academy and near Lexington, he prepared the way for the academy's move to the same location at a later time. Meanwhile, the Timber Ridge school closed its doors in 1779 because the war had drastically reduced the number of potential students and the distance between the rector's residence and Timber Ridge made continuation too inconvenient.

Early in 1781, Augusta and Rockbridge men were part of General Greene's forces which engaged the British at Guilford Court House.⁹⁰ Some of the Virginians who held their ground throughout the entire episode were the students of Graham. In June of that year, Graham's influence was felt in a novel way. Colonel Tarleton had moved a strong

⁸⁹Virginia Evangelical and Literary Magazine, IV (1821), 256-57.

⁹⁰Foote, Sketches of North Carolina, p. 280. The men of Peaked Mountain congregation formed themselves into two companies and gave effective service during this emergency. See Kemper, "Valley of Virginia Notes," Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, XXXIII (1925), 76.

British force toward Charlottesville, almost succeeding in capturing the Virginia Assembly. All but seven escaped and reassembled at Staunton. They resumed their order of business but were hastily interrupted a second time. They were warned that Tarleton was approaching Staunton and that they should flee. On that very day, Graham was on his way to the Augusta Stone church just south of Staunton and encountered some assemblymen on the road. After he learned of Tarleton's threat to the entire area, he asked the officials if they had made any provisions to order the militia into action. He was surprised to discover they had not and proceeded to urge the men to divide into three groups for the purpose of contacting militia officers who lived along the three roads leading from Staunton to Lexington. He stressed that each militia officer must call out his unit and march immediately to Rockfish Gap. The plan was followed and by the next morning a major part of the Augusta and Rockbridge militia was moving rapidly toward the gap.

A small company of men set out from Graham's home that same morning. They found Rockfish Gap protected by scores of riflemen including many older men and youths who were ready to defend their Blue Ridge region from the enemy's threat. Aiding in the emergency were Presbyterian clergymen John Brown and Archibald Scott, who helped spread the alarm

and urged their parishioners to convene at Rockfish.⁹¹ Tarleton's advance never came; in fact, he had left Charlottesville altogether. Part of the militia--Graham among them--followed the general course that Tarleton was taking until they joined the army of the Marquis LaFayette. During this short time, Graham was faithful to his calling as a Christian minister. It was said of him that he

made it a practice to have evening prayers, in the company to which he belonged. It was observed that they were not very well attended excepting on one occasion. An alarm had been given and . . . it was believed that a battle would soon take place. On that evening, . . . the men . . . generally assembled and appeared to listen to the prayer with great attention.⁹²

Graham's military life ended with this incident. Apparently, he was not fond of the showmanship that went along with military life but had performed his duty as he believed God had called him to do. Furthermore, he feared that if America lost the war with Great Britain, the blessings of civil and religious liberty would be lost. Since he believed that his parishioners were looking to him for

⁹¹Foote, Sketches of Virginia, II, 206; E. T. Thompson, Presbyterians in the South, I, 94.

⁹²Virginia Evangelical and Literary Magazine, IV, 259-60. Rockfish Gap was considered a strategic pass through the Blue Ridge. Gov. Thomas Jefferson wrote the Marquis LaFayette on Jan. 4, 1781, informing him that he should "call on the Counties of Augusta, Amherst and Albemarle to collect a Force at Rockfish gap . . . only requiring your agents to keep exact Lists of their Certificates to be returned to the Auditors. . . ." See Official Letters of the Governors, Vol. II: The Letters of Thomas Jefferson (Richmond, 1928), 263-64, 529-30.

leadership, he denied himself his own desires and "readily entered upon any labour to which his country called him," undergoing "all privations demanded by the public good."⁹³

Archibald Scott's announced purpose in serving the people of the Blue Ridge was "to assist in laying deep the foundations of our Republic on religious truth," and by doing his duty through instruction and example, "to prepare the rising generation to enjoy and preserve constitutional liberty."⁹⁴ Scott's success in providing his congregation with an example on Christian Patriotism was seen in the numbers of his parishioners who took part in the battles

⁹³ Foote, Sketches of Virginia, I, 455. By October 1782, Liberty Hall was incorporated by the Virginia Legislature under the leadership of Graham and later received from George Washington his shares in the James River Navigation Company. See Virginia Evangelical and Literary Magazine, IV, 260; H. A. White, Presbyterian Leaders, pp. 135-39; William and Mary Quarterly, 1st series, XIII (1905), 265-66; Hening, Statutes, XI, 164-66; George Washington, Diaries, 1748-1799, ed. John C. Fitzpatrick (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1925), II, 376n; Edgar E. Hume, "The Virginia Society of the Cincinnati's Gift to Washington College," Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, XLII (1934), 103-105, 198-210, 304-16. Graham engaged in other political enterprises such as the writing of a constitution for the pseudostate of Franklin, resisting the adoption of the Federal Constitution without amendments in the area of human rights, and sympathizing with the Whiskey Rebellion on the basis of his being an anti-Federalist. See Mahler, Contribution of Liberty Hall, pp. 76-77; J. Staunton Moore, Henrico Parish, p. 158; A. Alexander, "The Rev. Wm. Graham," p. 78.

⁹⁴ Quoted in Sprague, Annals of the American Pulpit, III, 388.

of the Southern Campaign, especially Cowpens and Guilford. Later, when the alarm was given that Tarleton was approaching Staunton, Scott was teaching a catechism class at the Bethel church. Immediately he dismissed the class and rushed to assist in preparing a defense of the area. On Sunday as the militiamen gathered in the vicinity of Rockfish Gap, the Bethel congregation held no services.⁹⁵ Scott, along with John Brown and William Graham, exhorted their men to make a strong defense on the Blue Ridge and prayed with them that God would give success to the American arms.⁹⁶

Brown was a teaching colleague of Graham's at Liberty Hall and had pastored in the Augusta-Rockbridge area since 1753. In temperament he considered himself rather stoical,⁹⁷ yet an anxious John Brown, much involved with the rapidly moving events preceding the Revolution, gave bent to his feelings in a 1774 letter to his wife's grandfather, the well-known Virginia frontiersman, William Preston:

⁹⁵Defensive preparations cancelled worship services at John Brown's Providence church, William Wilson's church at Augusta, and James Waddell's at Tinkling Spring. See Foote, Sketches of Virginia, II, 206.

⁹⁶Ibid. See also Sprague, Annals of the American Pulpit, III, 388; S. D. Alexander, Princeton College, p. 190; "Sketches of Bethel Church," Young Virginian, III (March, 1876), 23.

⁹⁷Letter written from John Brown to William Preston, June 8, 1764, MS. in Draper Collection.

Do you think that God is about to punish us for our sins with temporal Judgments? the expectation of a plentiful Crop is cut off. The Indian Tribes commenc'd a War. the ministry at home intending to force Taxes upon us. I think it is time to cry: Help Lord, for Vain is the help of man without he concurs.⁹⁸

Independence and the prolongation of the war secured Brown's energies for his country's cause. His preaching assisted in raising the morale of his congregation, he preached to troops, and he furnished supplies in times of dire need. When James Blythe preached his funeral sermon, he summarized Brown's revolutionary sympathies in an accurate, if elaborate fashion:

When the American revolution commenced, he took a decided part in favor of liberty; and though he was firmly convinced, that the pulpit ought never to be prostituted to the promotion of political parties; yet upon this grand occasion, he did not think it beneath him, often, by his discourses, to animate his countrymen, to resist the claims of unlawful power.⁹⁹

⁹⁸Ibid., May 28, 1774. Brown was more the cynic than he was stoical. In 1767 he had difficulty with his Timber Ridge congregation and refused to serve them any longer as pastor. See Bayless E. Hardin, "Dr. Preston W. Brown, 1775-1826, His Family and Descendants," Filson Club History Quarterly, XIX (Jan., 1945), 4. In 1775 he chided those clergy and laymen who were moving to Kentucky, stating derisively: "What a Buzzel is this amongst People about Kentuck? to hear people speak of it one woud [sic] think it was a new found Paradise." He continued his cynical comment with the flippant observation that their migration should not be impeded--ministers "stand in need of good land as any do, for they are bad farmers." Letter to William Preston, May 5, 1775, MS. in Draper Collection.

⁹⁹James Blythe, "The Death of the Good Man Precious in the Sight of God:" A Sermon delivered at Pisgah, Occasioned by the death of the Rev. John Brown, late pastor of New Providence Congregation, Virginia (Lexington, Ky.: Joseph

An earnest preacher who vindicated the American cause as few men could was James Waddell. Beginning his ministry in Virginia's Northern Neck, he migrated to the mountainous western part of the state during the early stages of the war.¹⁰⁰ He located in Augusta County and pastored Tinkling Spring, preaching often at Staunton as well.¹⁰¹ Waddell

Charles, 1804), p. 23. Brown's eldest son John was three times United States Senator from Kentucky, and his third son James was the first Secretary of State for Kentucky, a United States Senator from Louisiana for several years, and the Minister to the Court of France. See Webster, History of the Presbyterian Church, p. 657.

¹⁰⁰Three factors probably influenced his decision to move further west. His health could not take the humidity of the tidewater area; leading members of his congregation had already migrated to take advantage of fresh, fertile farm land; British warships were a constant menace to the inhabitants along the rivers of the coastal area. See Foote, Sketches of Virginia, I, 375.

¹⁰¹The Tinkling Spring congregation were not unanimous in their acceptance of Waddell. It was said that the older members did not like him, believing him to be a poor example to the youth of the church. The specific complaint was that the clergyman loved to ride fast horses. He would "come in a lope to church, and leave in the same way, passing everybody on the way." And the fast riding was done on the Sabbath! See "Recollections of Tinkling Spring," Young Virginian, III (Oct., 1876), 77-78. Another problem for Waddell's congregation was what they believed to be a style of living that was too luxurious for the area and the times. He regularly drank coffee, which the valley people did not use as yet. Believing his imbibition to be scandalous, they strengthened their protest by accusing him of Sabbath-breaking in his having hot coffee on the Lord's Day. A committee presented their protest, to which Waddell replied, "What do you have for breakfast Sunday morning?" They responded, "Mush and milk." He then asked, "Hot or cold mush?" They answered, "Hot, of course." "Well," stated Waddell, "you have cold mush and I will have cold coffee." See Joseph A. Waddell, "Historical Anecdotes," a typescript included with "The Tinkling Spring Presbyterian Church Session Book, 1741-1793," MS. in poor condition in Richmond: Virginia State Library, p. 4.

quickly established himself as a pulpit orator and received the admiration of some of the leading citizens of the Commonwealth. Patrick Henry heard him preach on the Creation and shortly thereafter observed, "It seemeth to me, while that man was preaching, that he could have made a world."¹⁰² James Madison, along with his mother and father, heard him with great appreciation.¹⁰³ It was indeed a tragedy that Waddell ordered the destruction of all his sermon manuscripts, only a few outlines remaining.¹⁰⁴

Waddell's parishioners fought in the battle of Guilford Court House, being posted on the left opposite the enemy's advancing right. Their pastor had preached to them just

¹⁰²Quoted in Joseph A. Waddell, The Waddells, a pamphlet written in 1901 and found in Richmond: Union Theological Seminary in Virginia. Fithian mentioned Waddell in one of his journals, referring to him as an "eloquent" preacher of the gospel. Journal and Letters of Philip Vickers Fithian, 1773-1774: A Plantation Tutor of the Old Dominion, ed. Hunter Dickinson Farish (Williamsburg, Va.: Colonial Williamsburg, 1943), p. 118.

¹⁰³Foote, Sketches of Virginia, I, 384; Encyclopedia of Virginia Biography, II, 295. His son said of him, "People were willing to listen to him; they forgot for the time that they were only listeners. . . . He never declaimed from the pulpit; he talked his sermons in the purest English, with his melodious voice and no apparent gesture; every motion of his body was in accordance with his subject, and whether by the fireside or in the pulpit, his listeners felt his mellifluous strains to be resistless." Quoted in Foote, Sketches of Virginia, I, 379. See also Clarence E. N. Macartney, "James Waddell: the Blind Preacher of Virginia," Princeton Theological Review, XIX (Oct., 1921), 627. Waddell became blind from cataracts about 1787.

¹⁰⁴See James W. Alexander, "The Rev. Jas. Waddell," pp. 126, 134-38.

before their departure to join Greene's forces. The sketchy report of what he said to them included his review of the fundamental principles of Christianity, a call to defend their new country from spoilation by the enemy, and a warm farewell to those of his pastoral charge who were risking their lives.¹⁰⁵ During the battle, these Presbyterians were constantly under attack and held their ground until the order to retreat was given. Foote's apt description is a sufficient conclusion to the account: "They did not know how to retreat--they fled. In flight they lost more than in battle."¹⁰⁶

On that Sunday in June 1781 when the men of Virginia's Valley were gathering at Rockfish to resist Tarleton's reported advance, Waddell's congregation was gathering for worship at Tinkling Spring. News of the British threat came at about the same time an unknown visitor to the area was brought to the church by several men who had arrested him, supposing him to be a spy attached to Tarleton's army. Three companions of his had escaped, and he was partly attired in a British uniform. Waddell urged his men to get their weapons and hasten to Rockfish; he would follow soon. The prisoner was assigned to a young parishioner

¹⁰⁵Foote, Sketches of Virginia, I, 377; II, 205.

¹⁰⁶Foote, Sketches of Virginia, I, 377.

who, having his rifle with him, volunteered to take the suspected spy to the Staunton jail. Enroute the suspect was shot as he attempted to escape while the two were crossing a stream. Before he died, the prisoner confessed to being a British soldier and a spy for Tarleton.¹⁰⁷ In the meantime, Waddell rushed home to get his gun, much to the amazement of his young son who had not gone to church that morning. To see his father return early from church and remove his gun from its rack on Sunday was most unusual indeed.¹⁰⁸ Waddell joined his flock who took the responsibility of lining the mountain roads on the look-out for the approach of Tarleton.¹⁰⁹

Little is known of William Wilson, pastor of the Augusta Stone church, except that he was a fervent Patriot and led his congregation to Rockfish Gap to watch for Tarleton's army.¹¹⁰ Many of his men fought in those dramatic battles that ultimately sent the British toward their rendezvous with disaster at Yorktown. Certainly Wilson's

¹⁰⁷ Joseph A. Waddell, Annals of Augusta County, Virginia: From 1726 to 1871 (2nd ed.; Bridgewater, Va.: C. J. Carrier, 1902), p. 298.

¹⁰⁸ Waddell, "Historical Anecdotes," p. 5.

¹⁰⁹ Foote, Sketches of Virginia, II, 206. An intriguing account of this alarm is found in H. M. Wilson's Tinkling Spring. See especially pp. 203-205.

¹¹⁰ See ibid.

preaching and counseling must have had some effect on the Patriot spirit evidenced by his parishioners.

Another influential preacher of Patriotism was David Rice, a proficient Presbyterian leader in the Peaks of Otter region of Bedford County.¹¹¹ He had succeeded Samuel Davies at the Hanover church and had had some contention develop. After four years he had moved to the sparsely settled frontier of Bedford.¹¹² As relations with Great Britain worsened, Rice refused to remain indifferent to the growing tensions. At county meetings especially, he warned the people of the dangers posed to their civil rights. His devotional remarks at these sessions were usually prefaced with a scriptural text, which contained the basis for his statements. The following extracts are samples of typical comments Rice shared with his hearers on these occasions:

The dispute is not between us and the king, but between us and the parliament. The king has the same authority here he has in Great Britain: the Americans never denied it, they always submitted to it; . . . , and are still willing to hazard fortunes in its support. The question is this: Has the parliament of Great Britain authority to make laws to bind the Americans in all cases whatsoever? or in other words, have they a right to take our money out of our pockets without our

¹¹¹ See John Brown's letter to William Preston, May 5, 1775, MS. in Draper Collection.

¹¹² See John Opie, "The Melancholy Career of 'Father' David Rice," Journal of Presbyterian History, XLVII (Dec., 1969), 298.

consent, and apply it to what purposes they please? They assert they have; we maintain they have not.¹¹³

This assumed right of taxation is contrary to every idea of civil liberty, and to the spirit of the English constitution of government, according to which no man can be bound to any law but those of his own making; he cannot be obliged to pay any tax but by his own consent. It is a blow at the root of the English constitution, it saps the foundations of English Government.¹¹⁴

I do not, gentlemen, exhort you to rebellion: rebellion is opposition to lawful authority and our rightful sovereign. The king and not the parliament is our sovereign; the power we resist is not lawful but usurped. . . . We contend for our estates, for our liberties, for our lives, for our posterity, for the rights of our king and our country; they[,] to gratify the ambition and avarice of a few. They are destroying their country; we are endeavoring to save it from ruin.¹¹⁵

The speaker's knowledge of political philosophy was probably that of an interested layman, but combined with his knowledge of theology and the respect which his clergyman's role had earned him, his political exhortations--simple as they were--took on an aura of divine sanction.

¹¹³David Rice, An Outline of the History of the Church in the State of Kentucky, during a Period of Forty Years: Containing the Memoirs of Rev. David Rice, and Sketches of the Origin and Present State of Particular Churches, and of the Lives and Labours of a Number of Men Who Were Eminent and Useful in Their Day, arr. Robert H. Bishop (Lexington: Thomas T. Skillman, 1824), p. 93.

¹¹⁴Ibid., p. 94.

¹¹⁵Ibid., p. 95.

Rice's sermons during the period showed the same patriotic commitment. In a discourse on Job 32:10,¹¹⁶ his conclusions were much more profound:

The grounds of the Americans' struggle and the reason of our opposition to the claims of the British Parliament are very just and important. It is nothing less than a fundamental subversion of the Civil Constitution of the Colonies and the substitution of arbitrary despotic power in the room of a free government that we oppose. Were it only some small encroachments, some lesser instances of maladministration that did not affect the very being of the constitution, resistance by force of arms would not be lawful; but where the very being of the constitution is struck at, resistance is justified by the laws of God and the dictates of common sense, and is agreeable to the fundamental principles of the Civil Constitution of Great Britain.¹¹⁷

In March 1777, he proclaimed to a company of soldiers: "We should resist oppression by every means in our power to the last extremity; cheerfully undergoing the various fatigues and dangers of military life. This is wise because oppression is worse than death."¹¹⁸ Rice adhered to these political principles throughout his life, being a teacher of an example of Christian civil libertarianism.

Despite the fact that Rice never participated in the military phase of the Revolution, his activity on behalf of

¹¹⁶"Therefore I said, Hearken to me; I also will shew mine opinion."

¹¹⁷Cited in E. T. Thompson, Presbyterians in the South, pp. 93-94.

¹¹⁸Ibid., p. 94.

his country enabled his descendants to become eligible for membership in both the Daughters of the American Revolution and its counterpart, the Sons of the American Revolution.¹¹⁹ He became an elected member of the Bedford County Committee of Safety in May 1775,¹²⁰ and besides working for an equitable settlement of the political problems within the British Empire, he gave himself to the contest for religious freedom as well.¹²¹

One of the most successful recruiters in revolutionary Virginia was John Blair Smith, an instructor in, and then president of Hampden-Sydney College. In September 1777, he brought a volunteer company of students from the college to Williamsburg for six weeks of garrison duty. Smith was the captain of the unit on this occasion and again in 1778, when another volunteer company left Hampden-Sydney for similar

¹¹⁹Vernon P. Martin, "Father Rice, the Preacher Who Followed the Frontier," Filson Club History Quarterly, XXXIX (Oct., 1955), 325.

¹²⁰Virginia Gazette (Pinckney), June 8, 1775.

¹²¹See Martin, "Father Rice," p. 326; Foote, Sketches of Virginia, I, 326-27; Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, VI (1898-1899), 176. In 1792, still adhering to the principles he held during the Revolutionary War, he became a member of the convention called to form the first constitution of Kentucky. See Rice, The Church in . . . Kentucky, p. 95.

service in the Petersburg area.¹²² With the invasion by the British in 1780, the college temporarily closed its doors as students dispersed to join the militia or to assist their families in looking after their homes. Smith, an intrepid activist, raised another company of volunteers from his students and the youth of his Cumberland and Briery congregations and performed a short tour of duty against the army of Benedict Arnold.¹²³

After the battle of Cowpens, General Daniel Morgan sent out a call for volunteers, as the army of Cornwallis was in close pursuit of the American forces. Captain William Morton raised a company in Charlotte County, and when Smith heard of Morton's action, he pursued him to join his ranks. The

¹²²Charles G. Sellers, Jr., "John Blair Smith," Journal of the Presbyterian Historical Society, XXXIV (Dec., 1956), 207; Herbert C. Bradshaw, History of Prince Edward County, Va. (Richmond: Dietz Press, 1955), pp. 116-17; Foote, Sketches of Virginia, I, 400. Some confusion exists with regard to whether the Williamsburg enlistment lasted the full six weeks for the Hampden-Sydney unit or just a few days. See Bradshaw, Prince Edward County, pp. 147-48; Charles Campbell, History of the Colony and Ancient Dominion of Virginia (Philadelphia: J. P. Lippincott, 1860), p. 678; Foote, Sketches of Virginia, I, 401. Campbell added that the student militia's uniform was a purple hunting shirt.

¹²³William Hill, Autobiographical Sketches of Dr. William Hill, Together with His Account of the Revival of Religion in Prince Edward County and Biographical Sketches of the Life and Character of the Reverend Dr. Moses Hoge of Virginia (Historical Transcript No. 4; Richmond: Union Theological Seminary in Virginia, 1968), p. 105. The unit probably saw action at Guilford Court House. See J. T. McAllister, Virginia Militia in the Revolutionary War (Hot Springs, Va., 1913), p. 59.

company had gotten nearly a day's start on Smith, but he traveled as rapidly as his strength would allow and overtook the unit two days later. When Morton, a Presbyterian elder and friend of Smith, saw the exhausted clergyman with his blistered feet, he knew the new arrival would find it impossible to maintain the company's pace. With difficulty, he persuaded his friend to return home to comfort his parishioners and serve his country's cause with his Patriot speeches and sermons.¹²⁴ Foote added, "Worn out by fatigue, rather than convinced by his friend, he returned to the College."¹²⁵

Smith's military endeavors were only part of his revolutionary action, for he freely voiced his opinions on the political issues as well. He was a leader in the formulation of Presbyterian memorials to the Virginia Assembly and served the Hanover Presbytery as a spokesman in the struggle for religious liberty.¹²⁶

Samuel Stanhope Smith, the brilliant brother of John Blair Smith, left the College of New Jersey as a partisan of Witherspoon's ethical and political philosophy. In 1775 he became the first president of Hampden-Sydney College and

¹²⁴Ibid.

¹²⁵Foote, Sketches of Virginia, I, 403.

¹²⁶Ibid., pp. 430ff.

imbued the students with the same logic and spirit with which he had left Princeton. Despite the presence of members of the Church of England on the school's Board of Trustees, Smith had to weather an attack upon his newly-born institution through the vehicle of the Virginia Gazette. Using "Luther" as a pseudonym, the writer expressed his fear that dissenter doctrines would be taught to the youth of Anglican families who moved to the back country and sent their children to Hampden-Sydney. He advised

that members of the Church of England withhold contributions until the school is put under the control of the Church of England. For to suppose that a Dissenter is a proper tutor to bring up members for the Church of England, is absurd.¹²⁷

Samuel Smith responded in a manner which apparently stifled such adverse thinking. He informed Luther and his sympathizers that the school would be directed by trustees, among whom were several members of the Established Church, despite the fact that Presbyterians first conceived of the institution. Under Presbyterian guidance, he said, the plan to include Anglicans had matured. He concluded his reply:

On [Luther's] narrow principles we could form no very flattering hopes, who will not suffer a dissenter, though ever so well qualified, to have any connexion [sic] with the management of a place of education.¹²⁸

¹²⁷Virginia Gazette (Dixon & Hunter), Nov. 18, 1775.

¹²⁸Ibid., Dec. 9, 1775.

Smith and his small staff did include in their curriculum the theological doctrines and philosophical hypotheses that would ignite an active Patriotism and foment a sincere support of divinely-given human rights. These, of course, would include a man's right to maintain private religious beliefs and to express those convictions in modes of worship that were volitionally chosen. The effect upon youthful Anglicans was obvious.

On November 16, 1776, Hampden-Sydney's trustees petitioned the Virginia Legislature for official recognition and presented their reasons for launching the college at that time. Among them were the following which pertained to the conflict with Great Britain:

That in the course of human life, and during the ravages of a destructive war, it is very uncertain how many of those who now fill our civil and military departments, may survive the calamities of their country; and that it is a fact well known, and regretted in many countries, that few remain behind capable of supplying the places of those who shall be torn from the commonwealth by death or by war. That our resources for education from Britain are cut off. That the prospect of leaving an extensive republick young and unexperienced, before it hath acquired stability, to be guided by the councils and defended by the arms of unskilled and unlettered men, is too unfavorable to be indulged by any lover of his country. That it may be too late to seek a remedy for the evil at the termination of the war, an event that is uncertain, and may be remote.¹²⁹

¹²⁹ Journal of the House of Delegates, pp. 58-59. The memorial stated that over one hundred student applications has been received and the expectation was that the number would double in the next few months. The initial enrollment at the school was one hundred ten. See Katharine Brown, "Presbyterian Dissent," p. 305.

The memorial was referred to the Committee on Propositions and Grievances and began its slow course toward the culmination of legislative action, which was the granting of a charter in 1783.

It was Samuel Smith who in 1777 had encouraged his students to serve with his brother in the militia.¹³⁰ He did not participate in the military action himself but did serve with Richard Sankey, a neighboring Presbyterian clergyman and Hampden-Sydney trustee, on the Prince Edward County Committee of Safety. When the county freeholders met, November 20, 1775, they agreed, "There is no great prospect of a reconciliation shortly between Great Britain and her American colonies, from anything that has as yet transpired." They proceeded to elect twenty-one of their number who were the "most discreet, fit, and able persons" to their committee. The youthful Smith and the elderly Sankey must have been highly regarded by their fellow citizens.¹³¹

In 1779 Samuel Smith resigned the leadership of Hampden-Sydney to become Professor of Moral Philosophy at the College

¹³⁰ Foote, Sketches of Virginia, I, 401. The Board of Trustees of the college, on Dec. 11, 1777, directed that financial refunds should be given all students who "depart this life or enter the service." It should be mentioned that Hampden-Sydney had difficulty providing good food--or even food at all--during the war. Students complained about the food, as most students do even in peacetime. Morrison, Hampden-Sidney: Board Minutes, pp. 24-25.

¹³¹ Virginia Gazette (Purdie), Dec. 29, 1775. See also Bradshaw, Prince Edward County, p. 110.

of New Jersey. His brother succeeded him as president of the former school and continued to stress the principles of the American Revolution during his tenure. When Virginia presented Hampden-Sydney its charter in the spring of 1783, the revolutionary stance of the institution was preserved for all posterity. The third article stated:

And that in order to preserve, in the minds of the students, that sacred love and attachment which they should ever bear of the principles of the ever glorious Revolution, the greatest care and caution shall be used in electing such professors and masters, to the end that no person shall be so elected unless the uniform tenor of his Conduct manifest to the world his sincere affection for the liberty and independence of the United States of America.¹³²

The school, born with the new nation in the midst of struggle, was destined to survive despite the uncommon nature of its beginning. Witnesses to Samuel Smith's leadership spoke of his remarkable ability many years later, recalling "his patriotic speeches at the beginning of the Revolution, and . . . their marvellous effect upon the people."¹³³

¹³²See Foote, Sketches of Virginia, I, 404-405.

¹³³In 1818 Philip Lindsley, later president of Princeton, wrote to William B. Sprague of his visit to Hampden-Sydney in 1810. He remarked how elderly people remembered the "impassioned" oratory of young Smith, comparing him to George Whitefield, Samuel Davies, and Patrick Henry. The reference to his patriotic speeches was included in Lindsley's reminiscences. See citation in Maclean, College of New Jersey, II, 145. Smith delivered a tremendous oration at Trenton, N.J., upon the death of George Washington. Encyclopedia of the Presbyterian Church, pp. 838-39; Encyclopedia of Virginia Biography, II, 175. See also a biographical sketch in I. Woodbridge Riley, American Philosophy: The Early Schools (New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1907), pp. 497-508.

Little is known of Richard Sankey's participation in an active manner in the Revolutionary War. Beyond his membership on the Committee of Safety for Prince Edward County, the only other extant proof of his involvement is his name affixed to the Prince Edward memorial of September 1776 and various presbytery papers written in the interest of civil and religious liberty.

Samuel Houston was a theological student when in 1781 the appeal was made for volunteers to assist Nathaniel Greene against the army of Cornwallis. He left the New Providence congregation in Rockbridge County to fight at Guilford Court House and kept a short diary of his experiences surrounding the action. As the battle commenced, the order was given for the brigades "to take trees as we pleased." The men did so, "but with difficulty, many crowding to one, and some far behind others." Houston recorded that the battle lasted two hours and twenty-five minutes before the units retreated the only way they knew how: "We were obliged to run, and many were sore chased, and some cut down." The lack of military preparedness and discipline was evidenced by the large numbers who, after the battle, "proposed returning home, which was talked of in general." Many agreed and promptly left without so much as a good-bye to their officers. Houston recorded miles marched daily, kinds of food consumed, escapades of the troops, and other

happenings which revealed the difficulty of adjustment to the newness of army life.¹³⁴

Two aspects of his brief army career were not included in the journal but were discussed with his friends after the battle. Houston revealed that on the morning of the battle, he climbed into an old tree top and "committed himself to the wise and protecting providence of God." Furthermore, during the fray he had discharged his rifle fourteen times. Witnesses evidently supported the account, with the additional information that he had been the first in his line to answer the command to fire and that when he did fire he was in advance of the line.¹³⁵

That autumn Houston was received by the Hanover Presbytery as a candidate for the ministry and continued his preparation for ordination. As a minister, he became involved in the aborted attempt to establish a new state to be called Franklin. As a member of the Franklin Convention, he approached William Graham with the request that he write a constitution for the proposed state. Houston, like so many of his colleagues, accepted the concept of the Christian being a participating part of his society.

¹³⁴The journal is printed in full in Foote, Sketches of Virginia, II, 142-45.

¹³⁵Ibid., pp. 146-47. See also "Viator," "The Battle of Guilford, North Carolina," Watchman of the South, V, (July 14, 1842), 187.

Religious isolationism and asceticism were not acceptable to these evangelicals.¹³⁶

Another staunch supporter of the American Revolution was John Todd, pastor of the Providence congregation in Louisa County. Starting his ministry as Samuel Davies' assistant, Todd became one of the charter trustees of Hampden-Sydney College and a signer of petitions for civil and religious liberty.¹³⁷ In 1774 he was elected to the Committee of Safety for Louisa and, in December 1775 along with Thomas Hall, was the recipient of a rather curious statement of commendation from the committee members. The committee unanimously thanked clergymen Hall and Todd

for the unwearied application of their abilities in the service of their country, as well in checking the wild irregular sallies of those who would aim at too much, as in rousing those lethargic wretches, who would tamely submit to a deprivation of their rights and liberties, to a proper sense of their danger and duty.¹³⁸

Noncommittal, "lethargic wretches"--not necessarily Loyalist in sympathies--were the targets of certain extremists in

¹³⁶ Foote, Sketches of Virginia, II, 148.

¹³⁷ See "Data Relating to John Todd: Extracts from the New Brunswick Presbytery Minutes," typescript in Williamsburg, Va.: Colonial Williamsburg; Bost, "Samuel Davies," pp. 128-29; Encyclopedia of the Presbyterian Church, p. 944; Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, VI (1898-1899), 174; Foote, Sketches of Virginia, II, 47; Hanford A. Edson, "John Todd of Virginia and John Todd of Indiana: A Home Missionary Sketch," Presbyterian Review, VII (Jan., 1886), 15-18.

¹³⁸ Cited in the Virginia Gazette (Purdie), Dec. 29, 1775.

Louisa County. The committee, agreeing that indecision was horrendous, nevertheless strove for order and stability in their society. Evidently, Hall and Todd had rejected extra-legal means of dealing with neutrals, and the committee was expressing its thanks for their provision of leadership in what was a crucial and could have been an embarrassing circumstance. However, the committee did declare its revulsion for such indifference by its clever insertion of its own label for those who had become despicable members of society. Their sentiments toward the neutrals were the same as the extremists.

Among Todd's other Patriot activities were service as chaplain to the county militia¹³⁹ and a commission by the Virginia Council in January 1778 as the commander of the newly-authorized Louisa regiment with the rank of colonel.¹⁴⁰

From Charlotte County came Caleb Wallace, pastor of the Cub Creek and Little Falling River churches.¹⁴¹ While at the

¹³⁹ See E. T. Thompson, Presbyterians in the South, p. 94; R. S. Thomas, The Loyalty of the Clergy of the Church of England in Virginia to the Colony in 1776 and Their Conduct (Richmond: William Ellis Jones, 1907), p. 18.

¹⁴⁰ Journals of the Council of . . . Virginia, II, 89.

¹⁴¹ See Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, XIII (1905-1906), 45n. Wallace's father Samuel was an example of an agitator before his young son. He was a defendant in court cases where the charges against him included slander against county court members, absenting himself from church services, and unfair treatment of an indentured servant. The elder Wallace, regardless of his reputation, was appointed a constable in Prince Edward County. See Katharine Brown, "Presbyterian Dissent," p. 237.

College of New Jersey, he and James Madison had distinguished themselves by being two of the principal founders of the American Whig Society, a literary organization which at the time had a flair for expression Patriotic as well as pedagogic.¹⁴² Wallace's relationships from the onset of the war marked him as a Patriot. He was a charter trustee of that school of Patriots, Hampden-Sydney College, and his two marriages brought him into close contact with two leading families devoted to the American cause. His first wife Sarah was the daughter of one of August County's representatives in the Virginia Legislature during the early part of the war, Samuel McDowell. Rosanna, his second wife, was the youngest daughter of Captain Israel Christian and the sister of Colonel William Christian, husband of Patrick Henry's sister Anne. Both father and son were prominent Virginia soldiers and William served in the Continental Congress, on the Governor's Council, and in the Virginia Convention to consider the ratification of the Federal Constitution.¹⁴³

Wallace's convictions regarding the conflict with the mother country and his obligation to assist in establishing securely good government for America led him to a multiphased

¹⁴²Whitsitt, Judge Caleb Wallace, p. 18; Maclean, College of New Jersey, I, 261.

¹⁴³Whitsitt, Judge Caleb Wallace, pp. 31, 42, 59; F. B. Kegley, Kegley's Virginia Frontier (Roanoke, Va.: Southwest Virginia Historical Society, 1938), p. 518.

role during that period. He affixed his name to various memorials and letters which clearly stated his position. It is probable that he authored the document that Augusta County militiamen and freeholders sent to their representatives in the Virginia Legislature, which appeared publicly in the Virginia Gazette (Dixon & Hunter), October 18, 1776. The same may be said for the Hanover Presbytery petition of October 24, 1776.¹⁴⁴ In the late autumn of that year, Wallace served as a deputy for the Hanover Presbytery in Williamsburg to look after their interests before the Virginia Legislature. His name appeared on a Botetourt County memorial in January 1781. The subject of the petition was a slave Jack, already convicted of two robberies and an attempted procurement of rats-bane poison to use on an area army officer. He was also charged with "enlisting several negroes to raise in arms and join Lord Cornwallis, the said Jack to be their Captain." He was to be executed, but a stay of execution handed down by Governor Nelson had postponed the event. Twenty-five inhabitants of Botetourt, Wallace among them, had petitioned the legislature to order the court to proceed immediately with the carrying out of the sentence on the basis that Jack had been proven guilty, was notorious as a "dangerous and incorrigible Violator of the Laws and Peace of the Country," and should be made an

¹⁴⁴Whitsitt, Judge Caleb Wallace, pp. 41-43, 57-58.

"Example of Justice and not of Mercy."¹⁴⁵ In 1782 Wallace was appointed to the Commission for the Adjudication of Western Accounts, a position freighted with much danger for the commission was to audit the accounts for the disbursement of public monies in the western area. They evidently took on the added responsibility of settling land claims in Montgomery and Washington Counties.¹⁴⁶ In 1783 he served in the Virginia Legislature from the District of Kentucky,¹⁴⁷ and on August 14 of that year, he was made one of three judges of the first supreme court for Kentucky.¹⁴⁸

During the early part of the war, Wallace disciplined himself from devoting too much time and energy to civil

¹⁴⁵Calendar of Virginia State Papers and Other Manuscripts, 1652-1784, Preserved at the Capitol in Richmond, arr. and ed. William P. Palmer (11 vols.; Richmond, 1875-1893), I, 477-78.

¹⁴⁶Whitsitt, Judge Caleb Wallace, pp. 97-98; Calendar of Va. State Papers, III, 289. In the latter account, a sheriff and militia escort was requested for the commission. By May 1783, the papers they had accumulated were "a horse load." See Calendar of Va. State Papers, III, 436, 480, 482, 491.

¹⁴⁷Whitsitt, Judge Caleb Wallace, p. 99. Wallace's decision to remove to Kentucky was based partly on disappointment with his congregation at Roan Oak in Botetourt, a pastorate he had assumed in 1779. They had failed to supply him with an amount of grain which had been one of the conditions presented to them before he had come. He would lose, as a result, his life's earnings in one year "among an ungrateful people, and the greatest part through their default." He was not eager to continue as a clergyman in Kentucky but would do so "upon proper encouragement." See letter to Col. Fleming, Feb. 1780, cited in Kegley, Virginia Frontier, p. 397.

¹⁴⁸Calendar of Va. State Papers, III, 523; H. A. White, Presbyterian Leaders, p. 208.

affairs, giving himself instead to matters relating to the Christian ministry. In a letter, he confided, however, that he did "countenance the recruiting business" and confessed: "I sometimes have a fight with the prejudices, I would rather say the perverseness, of such as are inclining to Toryism among us. But we have reason to rejoice that we have few such cattle with us."¹⁴⁹ It was all but impossible for a Patriot clergyman to divorce himself entirely from political opinion and expression.

Other Presbyterian ministers who promoted the Christian faith in the Virginia region served their country militarily at some point during the war. Moses Hoge's education was interrupted by the conflict, so he enlisted in a volunteer corps, completing at least one term of service. Nothing is known of his exploits, however.¹⁵⁰ In 1775 and 1776, John McMillan toured the frontier area of western Pennsylvania and Augusta County, Virginia, as an itinerant preacher.¹⁵¹ His sympathies were with his countrymen throughout the war, and he was a militiaman in Captain James Scott's Company of

¹⁴⁹Letter written by Caleb Wallace, April 8, 1777, cited in Whitsitt, Judge Caleb Wallace, p. 40.

¹⁵⁰John Blair Hoge, The Life of Moses Hoge (Historical Transcript No. 2; Richmond: Union Theological Seminary in Virginia, 1964), p. 15. The author was the son of his subject.

¹⁵¹John McMillan, "Journal: Oct. 26, 1774, to His Marriage, Aug. 6, 1776," MS. in Philadelphia: Presbyterian Historical Society. See Fithian, Journal: 1775-1776, p. 138n.

the Third Battalion from Washington County, Pennsylvania, in 1782. Serving on the frontier, he was eligible for a donation of land reserved for veterans and actually did receive one hundred acres in Mercer County, Pennsylvania, which he willed to his son William.¹⁵² Robert Marshall, who after the war was renowned in Kentucky for his eloquence in the pulpit, began his military career at the age of seventeen. Fighting in at least six major engagements, he utilized his free time wisely, studying mathematics and rejecting the debauchery in which his peers were participating. He served without injury, although at the battle of Monmouth, a bullet grazed his hair. In the American retreat which followed the battle of Brandywine, he managed the narrowest of escapes.

Becoming separated from his company, he was exposed to the fire of a whole regiment of the enemy. As he ran along a high fence, on a hill side, aiming at a gap, at a little distance, through which to escape, afraid to climb the fence lest he should become too fair a mark, he heard the balls whistle, and tap upon the fence, just by his right hand, in quick succession; but escaped unhurt.¹⁵³

¹⁵²Daniel M. Bennett, Life and Work of Rev. John McMillan, D.D., Pioneer, Preacher, Educator, Patriot of Western Pennsylvania (Bridgeville, Pa., 1935), p. 264; Helen T. W. Coleman, Banners in the Wilderness: Early Years of Washington and Jefferson College (Pittsburgh, Pa.: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1956), p. 6.

¹⁵³ Foote, Sketches of Virginia, I, 544-45; Gillette, History . . . Presbyterian Church, p. 188.

James Mitchel, who began the war as a tutor at Hampden-Sydney, served two months of military duty. He found army living undesirable and avoided another enlistment. Since it was said of him that he was a man of courage, it is almost certain that he wanted no part of what was in his judgment the low moral state of army camp life. Instead, he continued his preparation for the ministry and was licensed to preach at the same session of the presbytery which received the announcement that Cornwallis had surrendered.¹⁵⁴ Another postwar Presbyterian clergyman spent a few months as a soldier in the early part of the war and rejected further service as a result of the rigors of camp life. Enlisting in the Bedford County militia at the age of seventeen, James Turner did not find general military life agreeable and left the army. However, his talents as a leader were recognized in his county, and he served several times as Bedford's representative in the Virginia Legislature. After the war, he experienced Christian conversion and prepared himself for the Presbyterian ministry, where he proved to be most effective.¹⁵⁵ Extant records

¹⁵⁴ Foote, Sketches of Virginia, II, 134-35; Alfred J. Morrison, College of Hampden-Sydney: Dictionary of Biography, 1776-1825 (Hampden-Sydney, Va., 1920), pp. 26-27.

¹⁵⁵ Foote, Sketches of Virginia, II, 191-201; Gillette, History . . . Presbyterian Church, p. 188; William Hill, Autobiographical Sketches, p. 114.

provide no information that would show these men to be other than typical American Patriots: they loved their country but for the most part disliked military service. They were not renowned as heroes but contributed what they had at hand to bring about a successful conclusion to the conflict with Britain.

Hezekiah Balch was distinguished by his being the only clergyman-member of the Mecklenburg Convention of May 20, 1775, in North Carolina. Balch's itinerant ministry had been in Virginia in part, and upon his removal to North Carolina, he had joined with a body of Presbyterians from Mecklenburg County to issue a document which has been called the first declaration of independence in North America.¹⁵⁶

Another North Carolinian who had Virginia background was Henry Patillo. He had pastored congregations in Cumberland and Amherst Counties until 1765, had removed to North Carolina, and was a member of the Provincial Congress of that colony in 1775.¹⁵⁷

Samuel Eusebius McCorkle's itinerant ministry in Virginia ended in 1776, and he assumed the pastorate of the Thyatira congregation in North Carolina in August of 1777.

¹⁵⁶ Foote, Sketches of North Carolina, pp. 204-205; A. W. Miller, Presbyterian Origin of . . . Independence, p. 99.

¹⁵⁷ See "Biographical Sketches," MS. in Philadelphia: Presbyterian Historical Society; Encyclopedia of the Presbyterian Church, p. 609; Foote, Sketches of Virginia, I, 405.

As a student at the College of New Jersey, he had apparently been involved in various patriotic escapades,¹⁵⁸ and as a clergyman in North Carolina, his Patriot fervor continued. He was an intimate friend of General William Lee Davidson, who was killed February 1, 1781, opposing Cornwallis. It was discovered that Davidson had worn the borrowed overcoat of McCorkle's on the bitterly-cold day of his death.¹⁵⁹ McCorkle's war ministry emphasized the sacredness of the American mission and the interference which human vice posed to God's working out His will.¹⁶⁰

The historical record of the life of Archibald McRoberts is one of the most unusual of revolutionary Virginia Presbyterianism. He began the war as an Anglican clergyman in Chesterfield County. While there he was chairman of the Committee of Safety. He then moved in 1777 to St. Patrick's Parish in Prince Edward County. He was reputed to be a strong evangelical, having been a close friend of Devereux Jarrett, a leading light in the Virginia Great Awakening. Furthermore, in 1776 he was made a trustee of Hampden-Sydney College.¹⁶¹ Intimately associated with Presbyterianism in

¹⁵⁸ Foote, Sketches of North Carolina, p. 354; Hurley and Eagan, Samuel E. McCorkle, pp. 66-67, 71.

¹⁵⁹ Walter L. Lingle, "Another Revolutionary Preacher," Christian Observer, CXIX (Dec. 16, 1931), 3-4.

¹⁶⁰ Encyclopedia of the Presbyterian Church, p. 487.

¹⁶¹ Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, XX (1912), 198, 432; XLI (1933), 239; Foote, Sketches of Virginia, I, 398.

Prince Edward, his increasing disillusionment with the Church of England ultimately led him to break with his church in 1779 and to unite with the Presbyterians by 1787. During the interregnum, he lost five slaves and all of his horses to Tarleton's forces as they moved through Virginia.¹⁶² Also, after the Yorktown surrender, one of his churches, French's Chapel, was chosen as a place to billet French troops. Allegedly, approximately seventy French soldiers died of smallpox during that time and were buried in the chapel's cemetery.¹⁶³ Information apparently is not available on his Patriot activities after his removal to Prince Edward, but the assumption is well taken that he was an active rather than a passive influence.

James Crawford's story is also unique and leads to some intriguing assumptions. His graduation from the College of New Jersey in the autumn of 1777 was interrupted by the close proximity of the British forces. President Witherspoon presented him with a certificate promising his degree as soon as circumstances improved. At that same time, he received a certificate of church membership with a statement attached attesting to his patriotic sentiments. The words were these: "And also, he appears well affected

¹⁶²Calendar of Va. State Papers, II, 308.

¹⁶³Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, XX (1912), 432.

to the cause of American liberty." One of the historians of Presbyterianism, Robert Davidson, observed as he related this information:

When we bear in mind the probability, from the date, that this was furnished as part of the credentials necessary for his reception by the Presbytery as a candidate, it gives us an insight into the political preferences of the Presbyterian clergy. Warm patriots themselves, it doubtless constituted a strong recommendation for a candidate to entertain similar sentiments.¹⁶⁴

If exact, the allegation contained in the historian's statement may provide a fairly solid foundation for the view that Presbyterian leaders would not countenance--indeed would reject--any Loyalist sentiments on the part of their clergy.

In Virginia the only Loyalist Presbyterian clergyman was Alexander Miller, but he had been deposed from the active ministry by 1765 on charges of misconduct. A lawsuit followed which went against Miller, and eventually he was expelled from the synod.¹⁶⁵ The Miller case, however, cannot be cited to document and thus prove the aforementioned

¹⁶⁴Robert Davidson, Presbyterian Church . . . Kentucky, pp. 79-80.

¹⁶⁵Ibid., pp. 29-30; Wayland, Virginia Valley Records, p. 303; Lyman Chalkley, Chronicles of the Scotch-Irish Settlement in Virginia, Extracted from the Original Court Records of Augusta County, 1745-1800 (3 vols.; 1912; rpt. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1965), I, 137, 139, 143, 163, 311, 346, 363, 380; Minutes of the Presbytery of Hanover, II (1769-1785), 4, Oct. 12, 1769; Records of the Presbyterian Church, pp. 394-96; Letters from John Brown to William Preston, Dec. 12, 1770, and Mar. 5, 1771, MSS. in Draper Collection. Miller had come to the New World from Ulster, Ireland, where he had been expelled from the ministry because of misconduct.

allegation because of his early deposition. Neither can proof be found in the existing church records. It would appear from those records available and from an understanding of Presbyterian doctrines that no test case ever appeared because no individual holding Loyalist views would have ever become a clergyman in that denomination. Similarly, no Loyalist, having been ordained before the Stamp Act especially, would have continued long in that fellowship. Here again a supposition may have support because history has remained silent.

Miller's difficulties increased in October 1775 when he appeared before the Augusta County Committee of Safety at Staunton to answer charges of providing opposition to the popular measures being taken to resist the tyranny of Great Britain. He was declared guilty, and his punishment was meant to humiliate him into a repentant spirit. They recommended that "the good people of this county and colony have no further dealings or intercourse with said Miller until he convinces his countrymen of having repented for his past folly."¹⁶⁶ Miller was back in custody in the

¹⁶⁶Cited in Waddell, Annals of Augusta, p. 238. Miller was known to be a man of strong opinions and extremely independent when it came to group pressure. Miller's obstinacy in siding with Great Britain did not deter his son John from becoming an officer in the Virginia militia. See Kate M. Bolls and Bennett H. Powell, Cooks Creek Presbyterians: A Heritage of Faith (Harrisonburg, Va.: Park View Press, 1965), p. 47.

summer of 1776 and was found guilty by an Augusta County Court of "aiding and giving intelligence to the enemy." He was ordered confined to his own farm and was not to "argue nor reason with any person or persons whatsoever on any political subject relating to the dispute between Britain and America" until the end of the war or until officially discharged from the sentence.¹⁶⁷

Miller refused to remain silent; by August 1777, he was charged with a most serious offense. In April he had written a letter to a newly-elected member of the Virginia Legislature, John Poage, suggesting that Poage publish the contents under the heading, "A letter to a gentleman on his being elected a Burgess." Apparently, he had written a similar letter to Colonel Abraham Smith. The Poage letter's content is staggering in the manner in which it reveals the naivete of the writer. He called for the securing of "Peace and Safety" by the rejection of the war and independence. America was "unfit to conflict with Britain" and independence was wrong for these reasons: (1) Britain was deprived of her legal property, her colonies; (2) independence is "imprudent and unprofitable" for it stops trade, increases taxes, and exposes the people to Britain's vengeance; (3) "we will be condemned for perfidy and ingratitude to our

¹⁶⁷Chalkley, Scotch-Irish Settlement, I, 506-507.

founders and protectors, and suspected by friends and enemies" in the future; and (4) divine displeasure will be ours for violating our oaths of allegiance to Great Britain. In conclusion, Miller reminded Poage:

You have now an equal right and privilege with any other member to reason and even repeal all or anything hitherto done by conventions or congresses. . . . To treat with Lord Howe for peace and safety is ye best plan you can fall upon to save ye lives and estates of your constituents.¹⁶⁸

The jury found him guilty of being "in open defiance of the Act of Gen'l Assembly of the Commonwealth of Virginia, passed the 7th day of October, 1776," and he was assessed a fine of £100 and two years imprisonment.¹⁶⁹ Evidently, Miller appealed the verdict to the General Court at Richmond but the result of the appeal is unknown as the records have been destroyed.¹⁷⁰ It is probable that the defendant remained in the Staunton jail throughout the remainder of the war despite his wife's requests for release or transfer of the prisoner to a location nearer her home.¹⁷¹

Virginia Presbyterians also provided supplies and other services to the armed forces during the war, as did the

¹⁶⁸Ibid., pp. 505-506.

¹⁶⁹Ibid., pp. 194, 507. Miller had the temerity to suggest to Poage that he accept from Miller "my thoughts on ye bill of rights and plan of government."

¹⁷⁰Wayland, Virginia Valley Records, p. 303.

¹⁷¹H. M. Wilson, Tinkling Spring, p. 202.

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Baptists. However, the public service records (see Appendix B, p. 330) do not indicate that Presbyterian clergy exchanged goods and services to the degree the Baptists did. Far fewer of the former are mentioned in the lists of comparison to the latter. Whether this fact means that the Presbyterian ministers had less to give because they gave themselves to other types of Patriot activity or did not farm to the extent the Baptists did is not clear. Certainly their Patriotism was no less than that of their Baptist brethren, and the records show extensive cooperation in goods and services by local Presbyterian congregations. H. M. Wilson's study of the Tinkling Spring church¹⁷² included a sampling of what the public service records reveal in this regard:

William Lewis supplied in the spring and summer of 1779, 1200 pounds of meal and flour. In 1780 John Campbell supplied forty-eight beeves for £18,446.17s.6d.; Thomas and Benjamin Stuart, 121 pounds of bacon for £291.4s.; William Christian, "one wagon in Service" for £9,860; Hugh McClure, thirty yards of linen for £285; John Ramsey, 406 pounds of flour for £203 and half-day "Waggonage" for £15; Zechariah Johnston, four beeves for 2100. . . .¹⁷³

Another example involved the Cook's Creek congregation:

Archibald Hopkins, for 2 bags for the use of the militia going to "Tyger Valley," April 30, 1779, 18 shillings; and for 1060 lbs. of flour, at 15s. cwt., for the use of the militia ordered on duty,

¹⁷²The Tinkling Spring: Headwater of Freedom.

¹⁷³Ibid., 202-203.

May, 1779. . . . George Baxter, for 24 yds. of "lining" [linen?] for use of the militia, ordered on duty to Richmond, at 2 shillings a yard, January 16, 1781. . . . To John Hopkins, for 4 head of cattle, estimated at 1900 gross, at 16s.8d. per cwt., for use of the militia ordered on duty to Carolina, October 3, 1780.¹⁷⁴

In his History of the United States, from the Discovery of the American Continent, George Bancroft stated that the people of Augusta sent one hundred thirty-seven barrels of flour to relieve the plight of Bostonians during the enforcement of the Coercive Acts.¹⁷⁵ This should not be a surprise since it has been pointed out that Augusta was composed almost entirely of Presbyterians and their sympathizers.

What is needed to disclose in fuller measure the support given by evangelical congregations in goods and services is a thorough perusal of the public service claims utilizing those lists of church members which are available. The results could lead to well-founded assumptions with regard to the influence of the clergy--by precept and example--on their parishioners vis-à-vis the Revolution. Again, it should be remembered that whatever moderate financial gains were enjoyed by these Calvinists was no indication of the intensity of their Patriotism. Sacrifices

¹⁷⁴ Bolls and Powell, Cooks Creek Presbyterians, p. 10.

¹⁷⁵ George Bancroft, History of the United States, from the Discovery of the American Continent (10 vols.; Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1846-1875), VII, 74.

were part of the daily wartime experience, and if those families shared what they had in short supply, they qualified as Patriots regardless of the remuneration which came to them. Inflation and fluctuating currency values reduced the excitement of a little additional money in the cookie jar just as they do today.

Presbyterian transactions were most numerous during the Southern Campaign as well (see Table 5). Commodities brought in most frequently were beef, wheat--whole grain and flour--and corn. Pork, bacon, mutton, rye, and meal were listed as food items, and tallow, a seven-year-old horse, and pastureage were mentioned.¹⁷⁶ Inflation was indicated in John McKnight's receiving £5 per peck for his wheat in October 1780, and in August John Todd¹⁷⁷ had gotten inflationary rates for his Indian corn, rye, and beef. Andrew McClure's beef was affected by the inflationary problems of the autumn of 1780 also, while Archibald McRoberts and John Blair Smith were paid at rates designated

¹⁷⁶On May 8, 1776, the Council of Virginia issued a warrant to Nathaniel Norman to be given a William Graham for £2 for a gun provided Capt. R. C. Anderson's Company. See the Journals of the Council of . . . Virginia, II, 501. William Graham, of Liberty Hall Academy, and this donor may not be identical; the evidence remains insufficient.

¹⁷⁷On May 30, 1782, Todd wrote to Col. Wm. Davies, the son of Samuel Davies, that two "waggon-loads" of four had been in his mill since the preceding autumn. Complaining that he could not get the commissioners to remove it, he stated his fear that it would spoil and asked Davies to use his influence to get action. See Calendar of Va. State Papers, III, 182.

Continental currency. Probably other values were determined at state money rates, as Smith's corn was.

Two clergymen, John Brown¹⁷⁸ and James Crawford, served several days each handling claims and/or supplies in Augusta County. And Crawford made at least one trip to Richmond transporting the public claims. Samuel Houston had the exasperating task of spending twenty-two days on an itinerary, the purpose of which was to collect beef and cattle from the farmers along the route. Such an adventure would most assuredly have made provocative reading, but alas, no diary exists as an account of Houston's exploits. In Prince Edward County, John Blair Smith was paid for two days of unusual service. Apparently, with no assistance he removed gunpowder that either had been stored or deposited at the court house, using a cart drawn by a team of oxen.

Presbyterian clergymen were not alone within their denomination in the variety of service rendered to aid the American cause. Lay leaders were also active in the war with Britain. As a reaction to the notorious Gunpowder Conspiracy at Williamsburg, Patrick Henry led a small force of one hundred fifty men--Hanoverian Presbyterian laymen mostly--to within sixteen miles of the Virginia capitol.

¹⁷⁸William Cabell, Sr., mentioned a John Brown in his diary who had "supplied the army with clothes, provisions, & Waggon's." "Diary, 1751-1795," photostat in the Virginia State Library, entry for Feb. 3, 1781.

Their resistance was aimed at the despotism of Governor Dunmore.¹⁷⁹ From fighting Indians along the frontier to the action of 1779-1781, the hardy western Virginia Presbyterians supported the Revolution. Daniel Morgan, an elder in the church, prayed with his men as he led them against the British in New England and New York and in the southern states.¹⁸⁰ At King's Mountain, the Patriot army was made up mostly of Presbyterian frontiersmen. Five of the colonels were elders, including one of the commanding officers, William Campbell. He has been called the hero of the battle because of a unique contribution he made to the rebel forces. An excellent marksman, he invented a gun which was reputed to be better than any in use at the time, and reports stated that he could even outdo the Indians in accuracy, regardless of body position.¹⁸¹ The same lay involvement occurred at Cowpens and Guilford Court House, as has been seen.¹⁸²

One of the most prominent laymen in the struggle for independence was Zechariah Johnston, the first dissenter to

¹⁷⁹William Wirt Henry, Patrick Henry: Life, Correspondence, and Speeches (3 vols.; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1891), I, 287.

¹⁸⁰H. A. White, Presbyterian Leaders, pp. 145, 158ff.

¹⁸¹Ibid., pp. 150-53; C. Campbell, History . . . of Virginia, p. 700; Sweet, Religion in the Development of American Culture, p. 11.

¹⁸²See A. W. Miller, Presbyterian Origin of . . . Independence, p. 98.

chair a major committee in the Virginia Legislature, the Committee on Religion. With James Madison providing major support, Thomas Jefferson's "statute for religious freedom" was sponsored by this committee until its passage was secured. Johnston's firm voice for civil and religious liberty was again effective in Virginia's ratification of the Federal Constitution in 1788.¹⁸³ Johnston was a product of the Christian libertarianism embraced by eighteenth-century dissenters, as were his denominational comrades in Virginia.

It is true that as the war progressed the rigors of campaigning reduced the ardor of many soldiers. The account of the threatened mutiny of Captain William McKee's south-valley Scots is an example of this.¹⁸⁴ There were reasons for the incident. Hunger from reduced rations, nearly-worthless currency, increased taxation, discrimination in calling militia, and too long periods of military service in the face of needs at home were factors creating unrest. Freedom and independence were still goals to be reached, but a man had to support his family! How could you maintain

¹⁸³See H. M. Wilson, "Story of Synod Presbyterians," pp. 17-18; Tinkling Spring, pp. 222-35; "Augusta County's Relation to the Revolution," Augusta Historical Bulletin, II, 16, 17.

¹⁸⁴Hart, Valley of Virginia, pp. 110-11.

a peak fighting condition when anxiety plagued you? Fortunately, a cancellation of the order reducing rations eased the situation. Most of the troops, however, subdued any feelings of disillusionment by being reminded of the major issues for which they fought. With the overt threat to Virginia, ardor and tenacity increased with rapidity.

Even the Synod of New York and Philadelphia gave evidence to a nagging weariness with the continuing conflict and its affect upon civic and religious life. Their calls for days of fasting and prayer in 1778, 1779, and 1780 were indicative of a troubled but devout people who believed their chief hope to be righteous and just God who nevertheless remains merciful, eager to forgive His people's sins and to restore them to the level where they receive His best. The directives spoke of the "chastenings" of God in afflicting "us with the sore calamity of a cruel and barbarous war" and called Presbyterians to "repentance and reformation." They were urged to beseech God to "graciously smile on our arms, & those of our illustrious ally, by land & sea; & grant a speedy & happy conclusion to the present war."¹⁸⁵

¹⁸⁵Records of the Presbyterian Church, pp. 481-483, 488. The 1788 session of the Synod of New York and Philadelphia convened in Bedminster, Somerset County, N.J., rather than in Philadelphia, the usual place of meeting. The logical cause of such a change is included in the minutes of that session: Philadelphia "is now in the possession of the enemy," ibid., p. 480.

Presbyterians complied with these requests as well as those that came from the Continental Congress.¹⁸⁶

At the same time, British maltreatment of Presbyterians, their property, and their houses of worship increased. Destruction visited more than fifty churches in the new country, and many others were ruined beyond refurbishing. Devotional materials were burned, and outside Virginia, attacks on the persons of clergymen occurred.¹⁸⁷

The attitude of the Presbyterians toward this maltreatment was summed up in the pastoral letter approved by the Synod of New York and Philadelphia in 1783 at the war's conclusion:

We cannot help congratulating you on the general and almost universal attachment of the Presbyterian body to the cause of liberty and the rights of mankind. This has been visible in their conduct, and has been confessed by the complaints and resentment of the common enemy. Such a circumstance ought not only to afford us satisfaction on the review, as bringing credit to the body in general, but to increase our gratitude to God for the happy issue of the war.

The letter, furthermore, reviewed the disastrous consequences, had the Revolution been quelled.

¹⁸⁶In April 1780, the Presbytery of Hanover received late word that the Congress had recommended a given day for fasting and prayer across the country. Thursday, May 11, was set by the presbytery for the observance within its bounds. Minutes of the Presbytery of Hanover, II, 109-10.

¹⁸⁷Pears, "Presbyterian and American Freedom," pp. 82-83; Sweet, Religion in the Development of American Culture, p. 9; Beard, "Presbyterianism in Virginia," pp. 480-81; H. A. White, Presbyterian Leaders, p. 155.

Had it been unsuccessful, we must have drunk deeply of the cup of suffering. Our burnt and our wasted churches, and our plundered dwellings, in such places as fell under the power of our adversaries, are but an earnest of what we must have suffered had they finally prevailed.

It called for thanksgiving "to Almighty God for all his mercies spiritual and temporal, and in a particular manner for establishing the Independence of the United States of America." In the letter's conclusions, the leaders of Presbyterianism voiced the gratitude of the entire denomination for the great gains that had accompanied the war in the arena of religious freedom.

Neither in [the Revolution's] rise nor progress was it intermixed or directed by religious controversy. No denominations of Christians among us have any reason to fear oppression or restraint, or any power to oppress others.¹⁸⁸

Civil liberty had been secured, and religious freedom guaranteed by statute was almost assured. Presbyterians could join with Baptists in the proclamation that "Almighty God . . . is the Supreme Disposer of all events, and to him belongs the glory, the victory, and the majesty."¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁸Quoted in "Presbyterians and the Revolution," Journal of the Presbyterian Historical Society, V (1909-1910), 127-31. Usually the text of pastoral letters was included in the body of the synodical minutes. However, in this case it was not done. A footnote in the article cited wrongly states that the letter was printed in the minutes for 1783. (The letter referred to was the Pastoral Letter of 1775.) Likewise it erred in stating that the letter was printed in John Witherspoon's Works, 1802 ed., III, 9-15. This, too, is the 1775 letter. The 1783 letter may also be found in full in Watchman of the South, III (Feb. 20, 1840), 104. See Records of the Presbyterian Church, p. 500.

¹⁸⁹Quoted in "Presbyterians and the Revolution," p. 128.

CHAPTER VII

AT WAR'S END

Peace brought thankful rejoicing tinged with a cautious concern to the evangelical dissenters of Virginia. Americans had succeeded in making their point with the leaders of the British Empire, and Baptists had joined with Presbyterians to play a major role in bringing about a victory over the British in the Southern Campaign. However, complaints in the area of religious freedom still remained in dissenter communities as a shadow over the full appreciation of independence fought for and now won. And the deterioration of public morals accompanied by a decline in religious observance and interest lengthened those shadows of anxiety.

From Amelia County came a memorial from the Baptists in May 1783 expressing the cacophony of feeling which permeated their congregations. Congratulations were sent the legislature on the coming of peace with independence, yet the petition read, "The general joy diffused throughout this continent on account of our Deliverance from British Tyranny, cannot make us insensible of certain Grievances remaining

among us." Religious property taxes and restrictive marriage laws governing officiating clergymen were mentioned specifically as complaints. The document's rationale for immediate change rested upon the Baptist wartime record:

We cannot conceive that our Conduct has been such in the late important Struggle, as to forfeit the Confidence of our Countrymen, or that the Church of England-men have rendered such peculiarly meritorious services to the State, as to make it necessary to continue the insidious Distinctions which still subsist.

Changes in the statutes were at first requested and then demanded, not as a favor "which you have a Privilege either to grant or withhold at Pleasure, but as what we have a just claim to as Freemen of the Commonwealth." The delegates were reminded that failure to carry through with the recommended changes might dampen "the general Joy, enervate the Springs of Liberty, and alienate the affections of the different denominations from each other." The real issue was the recognition of "the Natural Rights of all your Constituents," and the delegates were urged to consider this issue in the bright light of their roles as "Servants of the People" and not their masters.¹

Other postwar petitions were structured with the same or similar language as the Amelia memorial. Orange County

¹Amelia County Baptist Memorial, May 12, 1783, Religious Petitions Folder, Richmond: Virginia Baptist Historical Society. See Stoner, A Seed-Bed of the Republic, pp. 390-91.

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Baptists wrote in September 1785 that the act incorporating the Episcopal Church was "every way as inconsistent with American Freedom, as the royal establishment was." They feared that from this base the introduction of a new "arbitrary and despotic government" was likely to take place.² In the summer of 1786 several county associations of Baptists merged their petitioning efforts to job the thinking of their legislature with regard to the same incorporation act: the declaration of rights "made by the good People of Virginia" established principles for which "we advanced our property, and exposed our lives in the field of battle with our fellow Citizens." They were "often Stimulated" with the proclamation "of equal Liberty of conscience and equal claim of prosperity." They were surprised, therefore, when in 1784 the legislature, despite the Bill of Rights, incorporated the Protestant Episcopal Church as a body corporate and politic.³

²Orange County Baptist Memorial, Sept. 17, 1785, "Religious Petitions from the Counties of Virginia, 1774-1792," Part II, MSS. in Richmond: Virginia State Library. William Webber and John Waller signed the document as moderator and clerk respectively.

³Memorial of Several Baptist Associations in Virginia Assembled in Committee, Aug. 13, 1786, *ibid.* William Webber's signature was attached as both moderator and clerk. Examples of similar postwar petitions were those sent by Baptists in the counties of Powhatan, Nov. 6, 1783, and King and Queen, May 26, 1784. Powhatan Baptists may have authored a petition dated June 4, 1784, and several associations sponsored one on November 11 of the same year.

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Virginia Presbyterians were vociferous about the same inequities. In May 1784, the Hanover Presbytery sent a memorial to the House of Delegates chiding that body for forgetting so soon why dissenters had joined with their neighbors in "the late arduous struggle."

A desire of perfect liberty, and political equality animated every class of citizens. An entire and everlasting freedom from every species of ecclesiastical domination, a full and permanent security of the inalienable rights of conscience, and private judgment, and an equal share of the protection and favor of government to all denominations and Christians, were particular objects of our expectation, and irrefragable claim.

However, they continued, their expectations had not yet been fully realized. Recounting the grievances listed by the Baptists, the Presbyterians prodded the legislature:

Their continuance this long in a republic affords just ground for alarm and complaint to a people who feel themselves by the favor of God to be happily free. Such partiality to any system of religious opinion whatever, is inconsistent with the intention and proper object of well-directed government, and obliges men of reflection to consider the legislature which indulges it, as a party in religious differences, instead of the common guardian and equal protector of every class of citizens in their religious as well as civil rights.

They closed the memorial with a statement of anticipation and hope that measures would soon be adopted "to remove present inequality, . . . every real ground of contention, and . . . every jealous commotion on the score of religion."⁴

⁴Cited in Foote, Sketches of Virginia, I, 333-34. Samuel Stanhope Smith and James Waddell drafted the memorial. See also John R. Tucker, Influence of Presbyterian Polity on Civil and Religious Liberty in Virginia; An Address delivered

That gnawing discouragement which must have ameliorated the joy of victory was intensified by the moral and religious depression that accompanied the war years and remained to bedevil the dissenters when peace finally came. The fact that these evangelicals were apprehensive about spiritual conditions should come as no surprise to the student of church history, since aggressive Christianity has always been characterized by an evangelism that is burdened by the spiritual and moral plight of individuals and societies and, at the same time, is acutely aware of the adequacy of the gospel to be the remedy for those needs. Anything less than this is nominal Christianity which is both uninspired and ineffectual. This so-called "godly concern" must be present within the church for its condition to be sound and its mission valid. Baptist and Presbyterian clergy then would be expected to function with this concern being a normal aspect of their ministerial deportment. The question of the amount and nature of the anxiety could only be answered

before the Centennial Meeting of the Synod of Virginia. . . . Oct. 24, 1888 (Richmond: Whittet & Shepperson, 1889), pp. 32-34. Other Presbyterian postwar petitions used the revolutionary vernacular to express their concern over the guaranteeing of religious liberty for Virginia dissenters. Examples are a memorial from the Presbytery of Hanover, Oct. 27, 1784, prepared by William Graham and John Blair Smith (Foote, Sketches of Virginia, I, 336-38; Tucker, Influence of Presbyterian Polity, pp. 34-36); and a petition from "the Presbyterian Church in Virginia," Aug. 13, 1785, drawn principally by William Graham ("Religious Petitions from the Counties of Virginia," Part II; Foote, Sketches of Virginia, I, 342-44.

in relationship to the degree of spiritual decline and moral deterioration. The evidence points to a serious problem which developed through the war years and reached its zenith with the coming of peace.

As early as August 1776, the war was affecting the state of religion in Virginia. The Baptist Association, meeting in Louisa, received letters from seventy-four churches "bringing mournful tidings of coldness and declension." Some of the letters accounted for the decline by blaming an undo concern with politics within the church.⁵ Undoubtedly it was difficult to keep evangelical priorities in focus with peripheral vision being bombarded by all of the issues and demands that accompany the commencement of a revolution. Caleb Wallace saw this as the central problem in 1777, when he wrote: "The whole attention of the people is so given up to news and politics that I fear the one thing needful is neglected." He continued with the observation that while he could not be entirely pessimistic, there was little reason for optimism:

Vice in her most odious forms has not yet ventured to appear openly among us. I am doing my feeble endeavors as a Watchman on this part of Zion's walls; but we labor under many discouragements, because we can discern that the glory is departed from this part of the Israel of God.⁶

⁵ Semple, Rise . . . of the Baptists, p. 63.

⁶ Letter, April 8, 1777, cited in Whitsitt, Judge Caleb Wallace, p. 41.

In the few months before the Southern Campaign, religion was not the only area in which a creeping lethargy had begun. The eighteenth-century historian, David Ramsey, mentioned the decrease in Virginia's military ardor just before the British invasion posed a real threat to the Old Dominion. He accused Virginians of having had an increasing interest in "resuming their usual habits of life" and continued:

The gains of commerce, and the airy schemes suggested by speculations, and an unsettled value of money, cooperating with the temporary security which a great part of that state enjoyed, had rendered many of them inattentive to the general cause of America. Danger, brought to their doors, awakened them to a sense of their duty.⁷

The malaise that struck morals and religion had also affected morale. But while the British presence revived Virginia's esprit de corps, it failed to have the same effect upon the other areas of man's spirit. Spiritual decline continued.

⁷David Ramsey, The History of the Revolution of South-Carolina, from a British Province to an Independent State (2 vols.; Trenton, N.J.: Isaac Collins, 1784), II, 216-17. Fithian had detected this same lethargy on an earlier occasion. See Fithian, Journal: 1775-1776, p. 134, Nov., 1775. Timothy Dwight wrote an excellent analysis of the effect of economics on the country's moral life. The hoarding of wealth based on paper currency was followed by depreciation to a point where barter became the practice. An unstable currency bred unstable societal standards and an abundance of dishonesty. The resultant disillusionment combined with lack of faith in a weak government to produce much evil in the new country. See his Travels; in New-England and New-York (4 vols.; New Haven, Conn.: S. Converse, 1822), IV, 368-71. No wonder Dwight declared that the Revolutionary War "unhinged the principles, the morality, and the religion of this country more than could have been done by a peace of forty years." Quoted by E. T. Thompson, "The Synod and Moral Issues," p. 44.

The Presbyterians were called to prayer and fasting by their synod on the basis of the crucial spiritual situation which had developed through the years of warfare. The pastoral letter of 1779 enunciated the challenges which the country faced: "the great and increasing decay of vital piety, the degeneracy of manners, want of public spirit, and prevalence of vice and immorality."⁸ The 1780 communication repeated the list exactly.⁹ Clearly the evangelical clergy were appalled as they watched a wartime society enjoying its sin.

Even non-dissenter Robert Honeyman, writing in 1781, was cognizant of the moral disintegration in Virginia. Shortly after the Yorktown surrender, he observed: "In general there is a great and universal depravity and corruption of manners among all ranks of people. Morality is at a very low ebb and religion almost extinguished." He mentioned the increase in gambling specifically, declaring that it

is carried to a higher pitch at this time in this state, than (I believe) it was before; notwithstanding there is a late law still in force against

⁸Records of the Presbyterian Church, p. 483. The 1778 letter contained a shorter list of moral problems but expressed greater alarm over the rising amount of vice: "gross immoralities are increasing to an awful degree." Ibid., pp. 481-82.

⁹Ibid., p. 488. The wartime synodical sessions were generally small in attendance and short on available preachers and money. The atmosphere in the sittings apparently was disheartening enough to be depressing. It was indeed a time of great trial. See Records of the Presbyterian Church for these sessions; Gillette, History . . . Presbyterian Church, pp. 197ff.

that pernicious practice. Even in Richmond under the eye of the Assembly they carry it on with impunity, and (what is worse) many of the members themselves resort to the gaming Table.
 . . .¹⁰

As the war ended, conditions did not change immediately. The state of religion and the influence of the church on moral life were, as William Hill described it, "in a most deplorable condition. The Sabbath had been almost forgotten. . . . A cold & lukewarm indifference" accompanied "the ministrations of the gospel through all that region of country."¹¹ He actually was writing about Prince Edward County but the situation was fairly uniform throughout the state. Henry Toler's reaction to the moral life of Hanover County corroborated what others were saying: "Alas, I can but be distressed to see how little virtue there is in Hanover! Less than at any time since I knew it."¹² Since Hanover and Prince Edward were centers of evangelical dissenter strength and Baptist and Presbyterian clergy were known to have continuously warned their flocks against spiritual "leanness," the question of why this traumatic situation developed among evangelicals and what was done about it remains pivotal to any conclusions drawn from this study.

¹⁰Honeyman, Diary, p. 352. The entry was dated Dec. 23.

¹¹William Hill, Autobiographical Sketches, p. 106.

¹²Toler, Diary, p. 2.

Causal factors for the decline can be isolated so that they may be studied from the vantage point of hindsight. Letters to the Louisa Baptist Association and the analysis of Caleb Wallace have already pointed to the inroads made by political interest into the spiritual life of the congregations. John Leland undoubtedly agreed but added that from the autumn of 1780 to the year 1785 three factors contributed to the decline of religion among Baptists: "the siege of Lord Cornwallis, the refunding of paper money, and removals to Kentucky."¹³ In another place, Leland expanded on these:

But as they gained this piece of freedom; so the cares of war, the spirit of trade, and moving to the western waters, seemed to bring on a general declension. The ways of Zion mourned. They obtained their hearts desire (freedom) but had leanness in their souls.¹⁴

He lamented, "Very little religion was seen in Virginia in those days."¹⁵

Still another factor may have been the clergymen themselves. Busy with the war effort and denied the regular

¹³Leland, Writings, pp. 22-23. Leland was critical of the economic policies of the Confederation government: "The spirit of the people in the Revolution, achieved our Independence, with only a currency of rags, which died of a quick consumption, after the war closed; when the energy of the confederation was not sufficient to bring into action the natural resources and strength of the country." See Writings, p. 725.

¹⁴Leland, Virginia Chronicle, pp. 30-31.

¹⁵Ibid., (1789 ed.), p. 6.

routines of a stabilized peacetime life-style, sufficient numbers of them were incapacitated enough to destroy the shepherd-flock relationship with their people. Some may have even lost the sense of mission which had accompanied their initial entry into the ministry. William Hill accused Presbyterian clergymen and leading laymen north of the James River of succumbing to the influence of the times:

Those ministers . . . were zealous whigs & politicians, than preachers of the gospel. They became conformed to the world; companions of the great & influential men of the day; & gave into, & advocated the frivolous maxims & amusements of the world such as dancing etc.¹⁶

The toll taken by clergymen who had changed their interests and emphases and by the shortage of ministers was enough to discourage and even disillusion congregations as well as fellow ministers. David Thomas entered this despondent note into the minutes of the Broad Run Baptist Church in April 1785:

Several impediments being in the way, the Lord's Supper has not been celebrated among us, for several years past. Nor has a preached Gospel been attended with any apparent success.--The ways of our Zion have long languished. And as yet, but a few come to her solemn Feasts. It is winter! no wonder the birds are not heard to sing.¹⁷

Likewise the Presbytery of New Castle, which assisted Virginia with supply preachers, mourned "the declining

¹⁶William Hill, Autobiographical Sketches, p. 116.

¹⁷"The Broad Run Baptist Church Minute Book: 1762-1872," copy in Richmond: Virginia Baptist Historical Society, p. 33.

state of religion among us, and the numerous characters of apostacy which are marked upon the Congregations committed to our care."¹⁸

The heresy and apostasy which occurred at this time were, for the most part, the offspring of the French Enlightenment. Close relationships with the French allowed the literature of that ally to literally flood the new nation so that the names of Voltaire, Rousseau, D'Alembert, and Diderot were as common among the American educated as were the great Anglo-Saxon thinkers. Timothy Dwight explained the significance of this fact: the French philosophers were "men, holding that loose and undefined Atheism, which neither believes, nor disbelieves the existence of a God, and is perfectly indifferent whether he exists or not."¹⁹ America's colleges, which graduated America's preachers, received the full impact of the French thought. Princeton, Hampden-Sydney, schools begun by Presbyterians and Baptists in Pennsylvania, the Carolinas,

¹⁸Presbytery of New-Castle, Delaware; An Address to the Congregations under their Care: Setting forth the Declining State of Religion in their Bounds; and exciting them to the Duties necessary for a revival of decayed Piety amongst them, Aug. 11, 1784 (Wilmington, Dela., 1785), p. 3.

¹⁹Dwight, IV, 366. French infidelity did not hinder the Synod of New York and Philadelphia from congratulating the French in 1782 on the birth of a dauphin to the royal family. The synod, solidly Patriot and wishing to express its pleasure to America's ally at the happy event, appointed a committee of John Witherspoon, Joseph Montgomery, and Elihu Spencer to prepare the formal address. Records of the Presbyterian Church, p. 495.

Kentucky, and Tennessee--all were affected.²⁰ William Graham's little school near Lexington, Virginia, was not overlooked by the philosophical and societal trends. Graham described profanity, infidelity, and vice as common on campus. Indifference to studies and disobedience to teachers troubled and discouraged him. It was said of him that

he often doubted whether he was rendering any service to society, by educating profane and vicious young men, who would become more influential, and consequently more mischievous by having a liberal education.²¹

On several occasions he evidently considered leaving the teaching profession as a result of this despondency.

Clergymen of the caliber of Graham, Wallace, and Leland were not personally immune to the sorrows and sufferings of revolutionary conditions. It was only human for the ministerial profession to react with emotion to the batterings of the times. David Ramsey explained their plight: the depreciation of paper currency reduced their salaries to a shadow of what they were, which forced many to engage in other pursuits. Their churches, he continued, were desecrated and many were not yet rebuilt. The result for the country was that

²⁰See Beardsley, American Revivals, chap. IV.

²¹Virginia Evangelical and Literary Magazine, IV, 261.

the institutions of religion have been deranged, the public worship of the Deity suspended, and a great number of the inhabitants deprived of the ordinary means of obtaining that religious knowledge, which tames the fierceness, and softens the rudeness of human passion and manners.²²

Ramsey had prefaced his views succinctly: "War never fails to injure the morals of the people engaged in it. The American war, in particular, had an unhappy influence of this kind." For him, "no class of citizens [had] contributed more to the revolution than the clergy, and none have hitherto suffered more in consequence of it."²³

The migrations to the west, another factor of decline, had taken needed ministers away from the more heavily populated portions of Virginia and had broken home and family ties. Elderly clergymen and younger, inexperienced itinerants were left to fill the gaps left by the migrants. Congregations were torn to the point where new leadership emerged untested and often inept. Presbyterian strength surged to the south and west, and Baptists, relying on lay ministers, moved in to fill the vacuum.²⁴ It was a transitional period at best--a time for holding on, for regrouping, and for planning a counter-offensive.

²²Ramsey, The History of the American Revolution, II, 324-25.

²³Ibid.

²⁴See Benjamin R. Lacy, Jr., Revivals in the Midst of the Years (1943; rpt. Hopewell, Va.: Presbyterian Evangelistic Fellowship, Inc., 1968), pp. 64-66; R. Davidson, Presbyterian Church . . . Kentucky, pp. 48-49; H. A. White, Presbyterian Leaders, p. 171; Katharine Brown, "Presbyterian Dissent," p. 206.

Spiritual recovery in the form of a religious revival eventually did come. Leland reported that during the war "God showed himself gracious in some places,"²⁵ but the beginnings were small. The Synod of 1783 took steps to get the Scriptures into the hands of as many as possible. The many poor, "in danger of perishing for lack of knowledge," necessitated the raising of funds among the congregations "for the purchase of Bibles, to be distributed among such poor persons."²⁶ Missionaries--itinerant preachers--were sent out to proclaim the gospel and to increase the contacts with pastorless congregations. The regular administration of Communion was called for as "a blessing that cannot be too highly valued or purchased at too great a price." Pious young men were to be encouraged to prepare for the ministry, and much was made of providing adequate remuneration for pastoral services. This economic demand was made, the synod explained,

because it is founded upon the plainest reason--upon the word of God--upon general or common utility, and your own interest, and make no doubt that wherever there is true religion, it will be heard and complied with.²⁷

Of course, days of fasting and prayer were urged upon the people as well.

²⁵Leland, Virginia Chronicle, p. 31.

²⁶Records of the Presbyterian Church, p. 500.

²⁷Quoted in "Presbyterians and the Revolution," pp. 130-31.

Under the guidance of John Blair Smith, Hampden-Sydney experienced an awakening by 1789 which began to affect Presbyterianism throughout the southern and western portions of the Presbytery of Hanover.²⁸ There were clergymen of the presbytery from the northern part of Virginia who rejected the revival and remained away from presbytery meetings. They scoffed at the spiritual awakening with the result that several of them were cited by the presbytery to answer for their conduct. These few remained unmoved, however, and continued with their congregations to relish their apathy.²⁹ The revival was full-blown by the end of the century and became known as the Awakening of 1800.³⁰

As the Revolution closed, the strong stand Baptists and Presbyterians had taken for guaranteed civil and religious freedoms had assumed another dimension. Many dissenter

²⁸William Hill, Autobiographical Sketches, pp. 113-14. William Graham visited Smith's school and churches and participated in the revival. The two were natural rivals since each headed a Presbyterian educational institution. Hill commented: "Whenever they met in Presbyteries or Synods, [they] were wont to take different sides almost upon every subject that was introduced, & try their strength against each other." Hill reported that the revival ended any obvious jealousies and rivalry. Needless to say, Graham took the revival with him to his own school. Also see H.A. White, Presbyterian Leaders, pp. 175ff.

²⁹William Hill, Autobiographical Sketches, p. 116.

³⁰See Rice, "A Sermon on the Present Revival of Religion"; Beardsley, American Revivals, chap. V; Heman Humphrey, Revival Sketches and Manual (New York: American Tract Society, 1859), pp. 100-101; Foote, Sketches of Virginia, II, chap. XIII; H. A. White, Presbyterian Leaders, pp. 175ff.

clergymen had become deeply disturbed about the troublesome presence of slavery, finding it totally incompatible with their theological and philosophical convictions. While an intensive perusal of the issue is beyond the scope of this study, a brief statement about the dissenter position in Virginia is germane because it was a natural outgrowth of their belief-system. It is impossible to judge statistically how uniform their opposition to the slave institution was. Lack of records is the chief obstruction to that endeavor. This study has simply compiled some of the views of and decisions made by individual clergymen and their churches at the war's end or shortly thereafter. It is by no means definitive; rather the results may be said to be indicative of what further research would reveal.

Perhaps the most concise and accurate appraisal of the slave issue for dissenters was penned by David Rice. The statement seems to bring together the sentiments of all those Baptist and Presbyterian clergy who left for posterity some evidence of their position. Rice wrote: "When men are bought and sold, converted into beasts and sacrificed to Mammon, and that by advocates for equal liberty and the rights of humanity; then the pious patriot must feel the greatest anxiety."³¹ Dissenters were to make note that

³¹Rice, "A Lecture on Divine Decrees," p. 52.

while they were Americans--not Africans--and white--not black--their struggle for equal rights as dissidents paralleled the pathetic plight of the slaves. The greatest hypocrisy was practiced by those who demanded for themselves that which they would deny others.

John Leland's query pressed the evangelicals to face the same decision that Rice had advocated--that slavery was incomprehensible in a free society. Leland asked, "If we were slaves in Africa, how should we reprobate such reasoning as would rob us of our liberty." With candor he observed, "It is a question, whether men had not better lose all their property, than deprive an individual of his birth-right blessing--freedom."³² Leland's conviction was that any political system which was so inflexible that changes to implement justice were impossible must be destroyed--the sooner, the better.

The writings of David Rice, John Leland, David Barrow, William Graham, and Moses Hoge on slavery can be reduced to four major premises which may possibly reveal the Christian libertarian stance of many Virginia dissenters at the close of the revolutionary period. These points are:

1. As God's creation, all men are equal with respect to liberty. Those who deny this right to others are guilty of the greatest injustice possible.

³²Leland, Virginia Chronicle, p. 97n.

2. The slave is bound to obey laws to which he never consented, from which he receives no advantage, and by which he was meant to be punished as a person.
3. As a member of society, the slave, denied human rights, is properly in a perpetual state of war with his master, the tyrannous laws, and every free member of that society. On the part of the slave, the war is properly defensive.
4. The slave's cause is much greater than that which was the cause of war between the American colonies and Great Britain.³³

These men lived as they preached; Rice³⁴ and Leland³⁵ possessed no slaves, and Leland in 1789 presented a resolution to abolish slavery to the Baptist General Committee.³⁶ Barrow emancipated his slaves, which was a severe economic blow to his family and, according to Semple, "limited his usefulness."³⁷

³³See Rice, Slavery Inconsistent with Justice and Good Policy (Lexington, Ky.: 1792); Leland, Virginia Chronicle, pp. 94-98, "A Circular Letter of Valediction, On leaving Virginia, in 1791," appended to "The Yankee Spy"; Barrow, "Circular Letter," pp. 12-13; W. Graham, An Essay on Government, p. 7; M. Hoge, "The Sophist Unmasked," p. 331. The fourth point was specifically the view of Rice (see p. 13); however, one is tempted to believe that at least Leland and Barrow would have embraced the same conclusion.

³⁴Morrison, Hampden Sidney: Dictionary of Biography, p. 27.

³⁵Leland, "Circular Letter."

³⁶See "Minutes of the Baptist General Committee at Their Yearly Meeting Held in the City of Richmond, May 7th, 1790," MS. in Richmond: Virginia Baptist Historical Society; Samuel C. Mitchell, "Address at Bicentennial of Orange County, V., Sept. 26, 1934," Religious Herald, CVII (Oct. 18, 1934).

³⁷Semple, Rise . . . of the Baptists, (1894 rev. ed.), p. 466.

It is known that Jeremiah Moore and Lewis Lunsford favored freedom for slaves but accepted gradualism as the policy to be used. Lunsford desired the development of an equitable method of emancipation to benefit slave and master.³⁸ Moore was hesitant to free his slaves because "the State had made no provision for freed slaves and he knew not how to accomplish it."³⁹ His will states:

The Situation of the Laws at present, and the State of this unhappy Country generally leaves no opportunity to say anything about that part of my family that are Slaves by Law. I must leave them therefore to the mercy of my Children and hope they will do to and for them what is right.⁴⁰

In addition to Moore and Lunsford, John Blair Smith was recognized as an anti-slave dissenter, but as one writer put it, he was not "an incendiary" regarding the issue.⁴¹

It is not unjust nor unfair to demand of these dissenters that their sincerity and integrity regarding civil and religious freedom for themselves be broad enough to include the most miserable of all human beings, the slave.

³⁸Toler, "Funeral Sermons on the Death of Elder Lewis Lunsford, 1795," MS. in Richmond: Virginia Baptist Historical Society, p. 24n.

³⁹E. B. Jackson, "A Romantic Chapter," p. 8.

⁴⁰Jeremiah Moore, Last Will and Testament, drawn up Aug. 1, 1814, and recorded at Fairfax. Typescript in Richmond: Virginia Baptist Historical Society.

⁴¹Morrison, Hampden Sidney: Dictionary of Biography, p. 45.

How many passed this test and proved to be men of principles regardless of the economic and social implications is not known. It is gratifying to find that a firm commitment to abolition was made by some, and it is not pure speculation to believe that the "some" may indeed have been many.

Virginia Baptists and Presbyterians, at war's end, were a thankful and hopeful people. At the same time, independence and victory could not screen out the irritating presence of several lingering problems. The Royal Establishment was dead, but an incorporated Episcopal Church had replaced the old enemy. And there were the state church harassments such as religious taxes and certain restrictions that the legislature could eliminate, if it would. The moral and religious decline was something far more personal, for it touched every congregation and entered the doors of every educational institution. There was an answer to the question of why God had given America the victory with her spirit in such a desperate state. A sovereign God's grace and mercy had softened His judgment and were striving to get America to accept another chance to become His chosen people. The gospel was meant to flourish in the new nation, but the people must repent of their sin and return to the God who had given them the victory. Slavery was another matter; such a complex issue could not be solved quickly. Yet the framework of logic in which the dissenters had presented

their case matched the slave situation almost identically. Individual initiative apparently was the technique to use to get eventually a larger and more vociferous following. At war's end, there was still much to be done.

The record, however, would not permit Baptist or Presbyterian to hang his head in failure. Both denominations had come so far since those days of rigid and often brutal law enforcement before the war. Independence had opened the door for God to perfect the work He had begun among them. Presbyterians could join with Baptists in a sober but grateful look at what had transpired since the beginning of the war:

When we reflect that the other day, we emerged from slavery and darkness, from oppression and personal abuse--from prisons, pains, and fetters; to so glorious a state of civil and religious liberty--That the prejudices of thousands have subsided--the conversion of multitudes been promoted--faithful ministers multiplied--new openings made for the spread of the precious Gospel--peace and union growing among ourselves--a more friendly spirit prevailing among real Christians of other denominations-- . . . --superstition and bigotry, with all the horrors attending, vanishing into their native darkness--we are ready to say, This is the Lord's doing; The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad.⁴²

⁴²"Minutes of the Baptist General Committee Held at Nuckol's Meeting House in the County of Goochland, May 1791," MS. in Richmond: Virginia Baptist Historical Society. William Weber was moderator and Reuben Ford clerk.

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSION

Can study of Virginia in the period of the Revolution be complete without the inclusion of the religious struggle? This work has attempted to answer the question by a detailed look at Virginia Baptists and Presbyterians during that time. Although research was hampered by a disappointing lack of records, the findings do indeed indicate that dissenter attitudes, opinions, and actions were significant in influencing the outcomes of the twin struggles which were the Revolution in Virginia. Religious and political freedoms were sought by both denominations, with the former endeavor beginning earlier and providing the atmosphere out of which the second could mature.

For almost one hundred years, the issue of church and state had been constantly before the colonists in one way or another. This is not surprising since religion was important to most Virginians and vital to many. The supernaturalism of their day was shaped by the more pious seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, while our hindsight view is from the secular and materialistic twentieth century.

Public and private religious matters were controversial because they were personal, and in order to foster uniformity of faith and practice, it was believed they must be controlled by the civil authority. The increasing revolutionary atmosphere and activity served as a vacuum into which religious grievances were drawn. There they became part of the embroilment with political and economic issues and were almost lost to the student of history whose thinking had been conditioned to take religion lightly or to reject it altogether as a motivating force.

Virginia's dissenting evangelicals committed themselves to resistance to the mother country because their understanding of theology and philosophy told them that any government which denied them their God-ordained rights was guilty of tyranny and not worthy of their allegiance. From the doctrinal milieu in which they were schooled was born that body of truth which made religious freedom and political freedom inseparable. They believed that the American cause was a divine one because, in the shadow of tyranny, Americans were covenanting together to resist Great Britain and to form a free government with stated powers and cognizant of God-given human rights. Dissenter clergymen preached a fundamental faith regarding human worth as children of God, the necessity of political freedom that there be no interference with God's working out His will within the life of the

believer, and the justice of God's intervention in the affairs of men to the putting down of "the mighty from their seats," and the exaltation of "them of low degree."¹ Man's part, they believed, was to accept the will of God, follow the guidance of Scripture, and reject the worldliness that sapped the Christian's faith and vigor. Their dogma served as a catalyst to bind them together to their common purpose despite severe testing and near defeat.

This is not to say that other motives of a secular nature were inferior to the religious in the reactions of the dissenters. Economic betterment, protection of one's own, social pressure, self-aggrandizement, or a host of other factors as personal and diverse as each individual were influential in determining what one believed and/or did regarding the cause. Religion did animate the dissenters, however. In fact, it was an indispensable part of their response to the issues of the 1760s and 70s. Without it, the Baptist or Presbyterian front would not have been as uniform in their opposition to the mother country. Without it, their resistance might not have been as vigorous. Because of it, the Revolution became haloed with the divine approval. Their faith was an invigorating force, for it provided a logic for taking up arms, a conviction for continuing the fight, and a reward for the

¹Luke 1:52.

securing of victory. It was that special blending of dissenter religion with other motivations which permits us to set apart Baptists and Presbyterians for a distinct and unique study.

The dissenters were not warmongers, however. Presbyterians, we recall, had cautioned their constituency that the brave man "never fights until it is necessary, and . . . ceases to fight as soon as the necessity is over."² And the petition of Virginia Baptists, drawn up in August 1775, had stated "that in some Cases it was lawful to go to War, and also . . . to make a Military resistance against Great Britain." They carefully explained that their decision was based on Britain's "unjust Invasion, and tyrannical Oppression of, and repeated Hostilities against America."³ Both denominations had endeavored to remove religious and political inequities from within the law and without a revolution. Their involvement included petitions written as the result of popular support, sermons motivated by the need of certain basic rights guaranteed to the individual, face-to-face dialogues with the opposition, and debates carried on via the printed page. Some tested the existent laws; others ignored them and willingly accepted

²Records of the Presbyterian Church, p. 469.

³Journal of the Convention of Delegates, p. 16.

imprisonment. Armed resistance came when dissenters were convinced it was the only suitable response to tyranny.

Actually, civil and religious liberty was inevitable. Non-Anglican segments of the population, among them the numerous Scotch-Irish, were growing rapidly. The Great Awakening had given numbers and vitality to an evangelical voice that acknowledged the will of God to be above the will of the state.⁴ The clash with the state Church was unavoidable as the result of these developments. When that struggle included a collision with the system that sustained the Established Church, the fight for broad liberties was to the finish. When the British political yoke was broken, ecclesiastical ties were severed, too. Full religious freedom ultimately came despite the attempt to replace the royal church with an American-based Episcopalian structure.

Those first state constitutions made evident the importance of religious liberty by references to it either in the original drafts or in the amendments.⁵ Virginia was no

⁴Cedric Cowing was explicit in his appreciation of the evangelical role: "It seems clear that without the large evangelical component in the colonial population, there would have been no military victory over the redcoats, and beyond that no Independence, no Constitution, no legalized religious freedom, and no dramatic opportunity to be a beacon to the world. . . . The oral tradition of north and west England, the 'West Country,' Ulster and Wales, seasoned by Calvinism, and reinforced by the American environment, was the essential ingredient in the Spirit of '76." Great Awakening, p. 224.

⁵See Carl Bridenbaugh, Mitre and Sceptre: 1689-1775 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1962), p. xiii.

exception. Although this freedom was not established until 1786, petitions, proposals, and reports kept the ramifications of the issue before the Assembly from the early 1770s on.

The dissenters possessed the organizational machinery to provide the avenue for an effective dissemination of information and appeals for action. The Presbyterian synod and presbyteries, along with the Baptist associations, became pertinent as clearing-houses of activity.⁶ Pastoral letters contained political as well as religious materials; itinerant preachers carried the latest news to congregations along the far-flung frontiers of the church; fast days kept the people's minds on the issues and current needs. Beside channeling the energies of the churches into effective action against the state church, these larger dissenter bodies practiced and thus were examples of representative government.⁷ The revolutionary role of the dissenter movement in Virginia cannot be lightly passed over.

How important was religion as a cause for which one would resist the power of Great Britain? Clarence Vance affirmed it was "one of the greatest, if not the greatest,

⁶See Kramer, "Political Ethics of the American Presbyterian Clergy," p. 394.

⁷Ibid., pp. 204-207, 394.

of its underlying causes."⁸ As far as Virginia dissenters were concerned, Vance was correct because the whole issue rested upon the relationship between God and His master-creation Man. Vance continued:

It would appear that the religious strife between the Church of England and the Dissenters furnished the mountain of combustible material for the great conflagration, while the disputes over stamp, tea, and other taxes and regulations acted merely as matches of ignition.⁹

Again, the evidence points in this direction as far as dissenter convictions were concerned. And if the Virginia dissenting clergymen preached human rights, recruited troops, shouldered weapons, served in political offices, and provided supplies on the basis that their religious and philosophical beliefs would permit no lesser action, Bridenbaugh's persuasion must become our conviction: "It is indeed high time that we repossess the important historical truth that religion was a fundamental cause of the American Revolution."¹⁰

John Leland explained why he supported the American Revolution, and it seems probable that nearly all the

⁸Samuel Seabury, Letters of a Westchester Farmer, ed. by Clarence H. Vance (White Plains, N.Y.: Westchester County Historical Society, 1930), p. 1.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Bridenbaugh, Mitre and Sceptre, p. xiii.

Virginia dissenter community would subscribe to his commentary:

The revolution of America has been an event which . . . has promised more for the cause of humanity, and the rights of man, than any revolution that can be named. . . . The American revolution, therefore, may be justly esteemed the returning dawn of long lost liberty, and the world's best hope.¹¹

Baptists and Presbyterians, convinced of the rightness of their country's cause, joined with their non-dissenter neighbors to throw off the British yoke. The outcome is our own unique history.

¹¹Leland, "Oration, . . . , on the Celebration of Independence," p. 259.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

THE IMPRISONMENT OF VIRGINIA BAPTIST CLERGY

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THE IMPRISONMENT OF VIRGINIA BAPTIST CLERGY

Baptist religious practice, carried on without approval by the colony, met with abuse in Virginia at the same time the revolutionary atmosphere was building there. Anglicans believed that the Baptists were dangerous to the welfare of the colony for the met so often and their mode of worship was considered sacrilegious due to emotional excesses that were rumored to be so vital to the services of these dissenters. They were critical of the royal church and deemed Anglicans as a fertile mission field. The biographer of Edmund Pendleton observed that "the Baptists were singled out by the sheriffs of some counties as a public nuisance because their teachers persisted in holding night meetings outside regular meeting houses where proper order could not be maintained." He also stated that curiosity brought onlookers who sometimes "engaged in vice and crime" and that slaves were drawn by the appeal of the evangelists which intensified the fear of the planters that they might lose control of the black population.¹

¹Robert L. Hildrup, The Life and Times of Edmund Pendleton (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press), pp. 91-92.

Imprisonment became common then for a number of the denomination's preachers--ordained and unordained. For Baptists the call to preach did not necessarily mean a long preparation before the evangel began his ministry. And it did not necessarily mean ordination. Of course, this was another irritant to the establishment as it watched the Baptist excesses. Incarceration was usually preceded by the interruption of worship services and often accompanied by beatings.

The following Baptists will serve as examples of preachers who defied colonial laws, believing that the call to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ was a commission above the devices of men. Imprisonment was a result which some of them expected. The warrant for Jeremiah Moore's arrest and incarceration in Alexandria referred to him as a "Stroller," a derisive term for a circuit rider or itinerant minister.² To Moore's sentence was added this statement, born out of the most intense disgust: "You will lie in jail until you rot."³ Later when Moore founded the First Baptist Church of Alexandria, he placed in it a drawing of the Alexandria jail in memory of his imprisonment there.⁴

²E. B. Jackson, "A Romantic Chapter," p. 6.

³Quoted in Ryland, Monument Address, p. 12.

⁴Helen Hill, George Mason, p. 44.

Caroline County ordered Bartholomew Chewning, James Goodrich, and Edward Herndon to jail, there to remain "till they give security, each in the sum of twenty pounds & two securities each in the sum of two pounds, for their good behaviour twelve months and a day."⁵ John Young's imprisonment in Caroline lasted six months, and the sentence ordered him to give security to the amount of £50 "to keep the peace for a year and a day."⁶ James Ware's experience with the Caroline Court had a surprise ending. He was imprisoned for sixteen days on a charge of preaching in his house. Offering to provide bond for his good behavior, he did not state specifically that he would desist from preaching in his home. The court rejected his offer at first but later changed its mind.⁷

The Chesterfield jail was notorious for being used longer to hold Baptist preachers than any other in Virginia.⁸ The persecution in that county was so intense that from 1772 to 1774 all Baptist ministers entering were arrested and imprisoned.⁹ While Joseph Anthony, a

⁵County records quoted in Wingfield, Caroline County, pp. 316-17.

⁶Ibid., p. 330; T. E. Campbell, Caroline County, p. 436.

⁷Wingfield, Caroline County, p. 324.

⁸C. F. James, Struggle for Religions, p. 213.

⁹See Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, XI (1903-1904), 415; Ryland, Monument Address, pp. 11-12.

preacher possessing a powerful voice, was being held in Chesterfield, crowds gathered outside the jail to listen to his exhortations. It was "judged the best policy to dismiss him." However, getting rid of him was not that easy. His cell door was left unlocked, "that it might be reported he had fled from prison." Then the door was left ajar. This was followed by an appeal from his jailer, but Anthony refused: "They have taken us openly, uncondemned, and have cast us into prison; and now, do they cast us out privily? Nay; verily; but let them come themselves and fetch us out."¹⁰ It was by the Chesterfield court that Jeremiah Walker was put under a bond of £50 for good behavior.¹¹

Lewis Craig was imprisoned in Spotsylvania for approximately one month, and then, three or four years later, he had the misfortune of being incarcerated in the Caroline jail for three months.¹² Craig's misfortune worked favorably for John Waller, who had been on the grand jury that tried Craig in Spotsylvania. He was so affected by Craig's

¹⁰ See St. Paul's statement, Acts 16:37; J. B. Taylor, Virginia Baptist Ministers, I, 49.

¹¹ Robert K. Brock, Archibald Cary of Ampthill: Wheelhorse of the Revolution (Richmond: Garrett and Massie, 1937), p. 122.

¹² J. B. Taylor, Virginia Baptist Ministers, I, 85-91; Robert Davidson, Presbyterian Church . . . Kentucky, pp. 86-87; Wingfield, Caroline County, p. 324.

conduct, he attended Baptist meetings and experienced conversion. Following that event, he began to preach, was arrested, and spent one hundred thirteen days in four different jails. In Caroline, Waller's bond was set at £40, which he refused to pay.¹³

While Waller was in the Middlesex jail, he wrote a letter, dated August 12, 1771, in which he disclosed that he and his colleagues--probably three: James Greenwood, Robert Ware, and William Webber--had been searched for arms and then charged with mutiny.¹⁴ The charge seems far-fetched but may fit the nature of the alleged crime: "laboring to persuade many Persons in Communion of the Church of England to dissent from the same" and "raising factions in the minds of his majesty's Subjects."¹⁵ A similar charge was levelled against William McClanahan and Nathaniel Saunders. On August 21, 1773, they were served a warrant charging that they did "Teach and Preach Contrary to the Laws and usages of the Kingdom of Great Britain, raising Sedition and Stirring up Strife amongst

¹³ J. B. Taylor, Virginia Baptist Ministers, I, 78-85; T. E. Campbell, Caroline County, p. 222.

¹⁴ Quoted in Gewehr, Great Awakening, p. 130.

¹⁵ Quoted in "Baptists in Middlesex, 1771," 209.

his Majestie's Liege People."¹⁶ The charge was extremely harsh, but it is not certain whether it was reduced or how long the men remained in jail.

While being held in the Culpeper jail, James Ireland suffered greatly. His enemies attempted to kill him with an explosion of gunpowder. This failing, they tried to asphyxiate him with a fire of sulfur and Indian pepper. They finally succeeded in giving him poison, from which he never fully recovered. His constitution remained weakened throughout the remainder of his life. Ireland made the prison memorable by letters written during his confinement, which he dated from "My Palace in Culpeper."¹⁷

Nathaniel Holloway, who was jailed in Caroline for a time, later became the first dissenting minister to qualify to perform marriages by the Caroline court.¹⁸

As this work has already stated, Elijah Baker was imprisoned twice in Accomack--the first time in an attempt to deport him and the second for a period of fifty-six days. The charge was preaching without a license, perhaps

¹⁶Warrant, Court of Culpeper County, Va., Aug. 21, 1773.

¹⁷C. F. James, Struggle for Religious Liberty, p. 214; Kercheval, Valley of Virginia, pp. 65-66.

¹⁸T. E. Campbell, Caroline County, p. 284.

the last dissenter to be arrested on such a warrant in Virginia.¹⁹

It was a harsh period, and the effect on the Baptists was to make them--almost to a man--supporters of American civil and religious liberty, if it would take that to bring them deliverance.

¹⁹J. B. Taylor, Virginia Baptist Ministers, I, 110-15; Whitelaw, Virginia's Eastern Shore, I, 122-23; II, 1020. Baker's experiences took place in 1778.

APPENDIX B

TABLES

Table 1. Baptist Clergy Ministering in the Virginia Area during the Revolutionary Period

| Clergyman | Counties: Congregations | Life-Span, Removal (R) | Revolutionary Activity |
|---------------------|--|---------------------------|--|
| Alderson, John, Jr. | Rockingham: Smith's (or Linville) Creek--succeeded father Greenbrier: Greenbrier, Indian Creek, Big Levels | 1738-1821 | |
| Alderson, John, Sr. | Rockingham: Smith's (or Linville) Creek Botetourt (in 1777) Greenbrier (taken from Botetourt in 1778) | 1699-1781 | Furnished supplies |
| Ammon, Thomas | Culpeper | | |
| Anthony, Joseph | Itinerant work from Richmond to Hampton Chesterfield: 2 or 3 churches Goochland Bedford: Otter & Burton's Creek | 1746-1822 ^a | Furnished supplies |
| Baker, Elijah | Itinerant work in Eastern Virginia & Maryland; Boar Swamp, just east of Richmond (1773-75) Mecklenburg: Malones Northampton: Lower Northampton | 1742-1798 | Jailed as a "dissenter & trouble-maker" ^b (1778) |

^a A John Anthony was allegedly a Baptist preacher in Bedford at the time Joseph Anthony was there. It is likely the two were actually the same individual.

^b Whitelaw, I, 123.

Table 1 (cont'd.)

| | | | |
|--------------------|--|--|---|
| Barrow, David | Itinerant work in Lower Virginia Isle of Wight: Mill Swamp Southampton: South Quay, Black Creek | 1753-1814? R: North Carolina, then to Kentucky (1798) | Preached patriotism & independence Militia service |
| Bell, James | Sussex?: Sappony | 1745-1778 | Military service (before conversion) |
| Burrus, John | ? : Glebelanding (a founder, 1772) Caroline: Carmel (1773) | | Military service? |
| Cave, William | Essex: may have helped found Upper Essex (1772) Caroline: (1781) | 1740?-1803? R: Kentucky (1781) | Military service |
| Chandler, Jeremiah | Orange: North Pamunky Spotsylvania: Piney Branch | 1749-1834 | |
| Chastain, Rane | Buckingham: Cumberland, Providence, Mulberry Grove | 1741- | |
| Clay, Eleazer | Chesterfield: | 1756-1836 | Furnished supplies |
| Clay, John | Hanover: Chickahominy | -1783 | Furnished supplies |
| Clay, Thomas | Amelia: | | Furnished supplies |
| Conner, Lewis | Culpeper: Ft, Thornton's Gap, Battle Run | 1745-1832 | Military service Counselor of youth Held political office |

Table 1 (cont'd.)

| | | | |
|-----------------|--|--|---|
| Corbley, John | Culpeper: Mountain Run Itinerant work in Western Virginia: Muddy Creek, Pike Run, Peter's Creek, White Clay, Ten Mile Monongalia: | 1733-1803 R: Pennsylvania (1781) | Held political office |
| Courtney, John | Henrico: Richmond | 1744?-1824 | Preached to troops |
| Craig, Elijah | Orange: Rapidanne (Blue Run) Culpeper: itinerant work | 1743-1808 R: Kentucky (1786) | Furnished supplies Political activity |
| Craig, Joseph | Itinerant work in Virginia Caroline: Guiney's Bridge | R: Kentucky | |
| Craig, Lewis | Itinerant work in Caroline, Spotsylvania, King & Queen, Orange, Essex Essex: may have helped found Upper Essex (1772) Spotsylvania: Upper Spotsylvania (Craig's) | 1737-1828 R: Kentucky (1781) | Furnished supplies |
| Creel, John | Halifax: Birch Creek | | |
| Dawson, Martin | King & Queen: Tuckahoe ? : Ballenger's Creek | 1744- | |
| Dudley, Ambrose | Spotsylvania: itinerant work | 1750-1825 R: Kentucky (1786) | Military service Furnished supplies Recruiter |

Table 1 (cont'd.)

| | | | |
|------------------|---|--------------------------|--|
| Ellington, David | Amelia: Nottoway (1771 & after) Lunenburg: (1781 & after) | 1741- | Furnished supplies |
| Eve, George | Culpeper: FT Orange: Rapidanne (Blue Run) | 1748- R: Kentucky | Furnished supplies |
| Ford, Reuben | Goochland: Goochland (1771-) | 1742?-1817? ^C | Member, Goochland Committee of Correspondence (1775) Furnished supplies |
| Fristoe, Daniel | Itinerant work in Maryland & Virginia Fauquier: Brentown Frederick: Buck Marsh (one of the founders) | 1739-1774 | |
| Fristoe, William | Stafford: Chapawamsick, Potomac Creek (Hartwood) Frederick: Buck Marsh Fauquier: Thumb Run, Broad Run, etc. | 1742?-1828 | Furnished supplies |
| Garnett, James | Orange?: Crooked Run Culpeper: | 1743-1830 | Furnished supplies |
| Garrard, John | Frederick: Mill Creek, Buck Marsh | -1787 | Patriot |
| Goode, John | Henrico?: Chesterfield: Skinquarter (1780) | 1738-1790 | Furnished supplies |

^C See The William and Mary Quarterly, 2nd series, VII (1927), 53.

Table 1 (cont'd.)

| | | | |
|---------------------|--|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Greenwood, James | Essex: Piscataway (1774-1811) Itinerant work in Lower Virginia | 1749-1811? | Furnished supplies Dispatch rider |
| Harris, Samuel | Caroline, Orange: Pittsylvania: Fall Creek (1772) ? : Glebelanding (a founder, 1772) | 1724-1794? | |
| Hatcher, Jeremiah | Chesterfield: | -1804 | |
| Hickman, William | Chesterfield: Skinquarter, Tomahawk | 1746-1830 R: Kentucky (1784) | |
| Holloway, Nathaniel | Caroline: | | |
| Ireland, James | Itinerant work in Western Virginia Culpeper: Frederick & Shenandoah: Buck Marsh, Waterlick, Happy Creek, Shenandoah, South River | 1748-1806 | Authored patriotic literature |
| Kaufman, Martin | Berkeley (formerly Frederick): Mill Creek Left to form a peace sect after start of the war | -1805 | |
| King, John | Mecklenburg: Malones Henry: Leatherwood, Beaver Creek | | |

Table 1 (cont'd.)

| | | | |
|-----------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|--|
| Koontz, John | Berkeley (formerly Frederick) Mill Creek (1776) Culpeper & Rockingham: itinerant work | | Patriot |
| Lane, Dutton | Lunenburg: itinerant work Pittsylvania: Dan River (1772) | 1732- | |
| Layfield, George | Itinerant work along Eastern Shore | 1749-1814? | |
| Leland, John | Culpeper: Mt. Poney Orange, Lancaster: | 1754-1841 R: New England (1791) | Furnished supplies |
| Lewis, Iverson (Iverson) | Frederick?: King & Queen: Exol (1775-1815) | 1741-1815 | Furnished supplies |
| Lunsford, Lewis | Westmoreland: Wicomico Lancaster: Morattico (1780) ^d Stafford, Northumberland, Lancaster, the Valley of Virginia: itinerant work | 1753?-1793 R: Kentucky | Patriot |
| McClanahan, William | Culpeper, Fauquier, Westmoreland: itinerant work Fauquier: Carter's Run (assistant) | 1733- | Military service Furnished supplies |
| Major, Richard | Loudon: Little River | 1722-1802? | |

^dWilliam L. Lumpkin, "Col. Robert Carter, A Baptist," The Virginia Baptist Register (1969), p. 345.

Table 1 (cont'd.)

| | | | |
|-------------------|--|------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Marks, John | Rockingham: Loudon: Ketocotin | | |
| Marshall, William | Fauquier & Shenandoah: itinerant work Shenandoah: Happy Creek | 1735-1808 R: Kentucky (1780) | Furnished supplies |
| Maxfield, Thomas | Culpeper: | | |
| Maglamare, John | Essex: itinerant work Sussex: Raccoon Swamp (1771-), Mill Swamp, Black Creek, Seacock, High Hills | 1730-1799 | |
| Mintz, Edward | Nansemond: Western Branch (1779-) | | |
| Moore, Jeremiah | Itinerant work in Virginia, Maryland, the Carolinas, Tennessee, Kentucky, Deleware, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York Fairfax: Alexandria | 1746-1814 | |
| Morris, Joshua | Henrico?: Boar Swamp, just east of Richmond | | |
| Mullen, William | ? : Glebelanding (1772-1792) | | |
| Munroe, John | Fauquier: Upper Carter's Run, Long Branch Hampshire: New River, Crooked Run Frederick: Buck Marsh | 1749-1824 | |

Table 1 (cont'd.)

| | | | |
|--------------------|---|----------------------------|---------------------|
| Murphy, Joseph | Itinerant work in Virginia Lunenburg: | -1803 R: North Carolina | |
| Murphy, William | Itinerant work in Southwestern Virginia & the Carolinas Lunenburg: | | |
| Murrell, Robert | Itinerant work in North Carolina & Virginia | 1755-1826 | Military service |
| Noel, Theodorick | Essex: Upper Essex (1773 to end of war) King & Queen: Upper King & Queen (1780-) Caroline: | -1813 | |
| Picket, John | Fauquier: Carter's Run Culpeper & Western Virginia: itinerant work | 1744-1803 | Furnished supplies |
| Picket, Reuben | Shenandoah: Itinerant work in Virginia and North Carolina | 1752-1823 | |
| Pitman, James | Caroline | | |
| Pitts, Younger | King & Queen: Upper King & Queen (1774-) | | Furnished supplies? |
| Purrington, Elisha | Louisa: itinerant work | -1820? | |

Table 1 (cont'd.)

| | | | |
|-----------------------|--|----------------------------------|--------------------|
| Read, James | Itinerant work in Virginia & North Carolina | 1726?-1798 | |
| Redding, Joseph | Hampshire: Itinerant work in Northwestern Virginia, South Carolina & Kentucky | 1750-1815 | |
| Saunders, Nathaniel | Culpeper: itinerant work Orange: Mountain Run | | Military service |
| Shackleford, John | Caroline: Tuckahoe--later Upper Zion (1776-1792) | 1750-1829 R: Kentucky (1792?) | |
| Shaudoin, Lewis | Goochland: | | |
| Shelbourne, James | Lunenburg: Reedy Creek | 1738-1820 | |
| Shrewsbury, Nathaniel | Bedford: Goose Creek, Buffalo | 1739-1825 R: Kentucky | |
| Shrewsbury, Samuel | Bedford: | 1736-1784 | Furnished supplies |
| Smith, George S. | Chesterfield: Skingquarter, Tomahawk | -1809 R: Kentucky | |
| Sorrel, John | Essex: Tuckahoe, Salem | 1754?-1814 | |
| Stockton, Robert | Itinerant work in Western Virginia | 1743-1825 R: Kentucky | |

Table 1 (cont'd.)

| | | | |
|--------------------|--|---|--|
| Taylor, John | Itinerant work in Western Virginia | 1752- R: Kentucky | Preached to troops |
| Thomas, David | Fauquier: Broad Run, Chappawamsic Prince William: Occoquan (1776) Culpeper & Orange Northern Neck of Virginia | 1732-1812 R: Kentucky (1802?) | Patriot |
| Thomas, Joseph | Loudon: New Valley | | |
| Thompson, Zachary | Brunswick: (1777) | | |
| Tinsley, David | Albemarle: Powhatan | 1749-1802 | |
| Toler, Henry | King & Queen: itinerant work (1783) Westmoreland (1783): Nomini (1785- 1795) | R: Kentucky (1795?) | Preached to troops Recruiter? |
| Walker, Jeremiah | Chesterfield & Prince Edward: Amelia: Nottoway | | Known as a patriot Furnished supplies |
| Waller, John | Spotsylvania, Orange, Caroline, Middlesex, Hanover, Culpeper: itinerant work King & Queen: helped found lower King & Queen (1772-1773) ? : may have helped found Glebelanding (1772) | 1741-1802 R: South Carolina (1793) | |
| Waller, William E. | | 1747- | Military service |

Table 1 (cont'd.)

| | Caroline: | | Furnished supplies |
|-------------------|---|--------------|---|
| Ware, James | | | |
| Ware, Robert | Essex & Middlesex: King & Queen: Lower King & Queen (1773-1804) | -1804 | |
| Watkins, Benjamin | Began ministry in 1783 | 1755- | |
| Weatherford, John | Chesterfield: Charlotte: Cub Creek | 1743(4)-1833 | Military service |
| Webber, William | Itinerant work in Middle & Lower Virginia Chesterfield & Middlesex: ? : helped found Glebelandling (1772) | 1747-1809 | |
| Williams, John | Itinerant work Lunenburg: Meherrin (1772-1785) | 1747-1795 | Held political office Preached to troops Furnished supplies |
| Wright, John | Itinerant work York: Grafton (1777) | -1795? | |
| Young, John | Itinerant work in Lower Virginia Caroline: Reed's | 1739-1817 | Military service? |

This compilation was largely completed using information found in the following accounts:
 J. Biggs, A Concise History of the Kehukee Baptist Association; J. Bosher, A Brief History of Dover Baptist Association; L. Burgess, Virginia Soldiers of 1776, Vol. III; M. Clement, The History of Pittsylvania County, Va.; M. Edwards, "Materials Toward a History of the Baptists in the Province of

Table 1 (cont'd.)

Virginia," Vol. III; W. Fristoe, A Concise History of the Kettoctin Baptist Association; R. Jones, A History of the Virginia Portsmouth Baptist Association; J. McGill, Sketches of the Baptist Churches within the Limits of the Rappahannock Association in Virginia; Public Service Records, Virginia State Library; B. Riley, A History of the Baptists in the Southern States East of the Mississippi; R. Semple, A History of the Rise and Progress of the Baptists in Virginia; R. Stoner, A Seedbed of the Republic: A Study of the Pioneers in the Upper (Southern) Valley of Virginia; James Taylor, Virginia Baptist Ministers, Series I & II; John Taylor, Thoughts on Missions and Biographies of Baptist Preachers; Unpublished materials, Virginia Baptist Historical Society; Virginia Baptist Register (1964, 1967, 1969); Virginia Magazine of History and Biography (Vols. V, VI, XXIV); J. Wayland, Virginia Valley Records; R. Whitelaw, Virginia's Eastern Shore: A History of Northampton and Accomack Counties; M. Wingfield, A History of Caroline County, Va.

Table 2. Public Service Claims of Virginia Baptist Clergy

| Clergyman | County | Date (1700s) & Type of Record* | Supplies or Service | Value |
|-------------------------------|--------------|--|--|---|
| Ammon, ^a Thomas | Culpeper | 10/ 1/81 Cert. 11/19/81 Cert. | Beef, 325 lbs. Beef, 300 lbs. | f2.14.2 (2d. p. lb.) f2.10.0 (2d. p. lb.) |
| Anthony, ^b John | Bedford | 9/29/81 Cert. 10/ 9/81 Cert. | 2 beeves, 800 lbs. Beef, 1,025 lbs. | f10.0.0 (3d. p. lb.) f23.6.10 (about 5½d. p. lb.) |
| Clay, ^c Eleazer | Chesterfield | 11/13/81 Cert. 10/81 Cert. | 2 beeves, 425 lbs. "Waggoning grain to fatten Beeves," feeding & finding pasture Wheat | f5.6.3 (3d. p. lb.) f24.0.0 |
| Clay, ^d John | Hanover | 8/14/83 Court 7/20/81 Lists 9/19/83 Com. | 1 beef, 350 lbs. (same item) | f362.15.1 f4.7.6 (3d. p. lb.) |

*See the descriptions of these types in Chapter V, footnote 92.

^aCourt Book, Culpeper, I, 45.

^bCertificate Book, Bedford, I, 2.

^cCourt Book, Chesterfield, p. 14; Commissioners' Books, II (Chesterfield), 22.

^dLists of Certificates & Receipts, Hanover, I, n.p.; Commissioners' Books, III (Hanover), 170.

Table 2 (cont'd.)

| | | | | |
|-------------------------------|--------|-------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|
| Clay, ^e Thomas | Amelia | 8/10/81 Cert. | 1 beef, 290 lbs. | f3.12.6 (3d. p. lb.) |
| Craig, ^f Elijah | Orange | 6/4/76 Va. Council | Rifle for the use of Charles Smith in Capt. Thomas Walker's Co., 9th Va. Reg't | f5.0.0 ^g |
| | | 8/10/80 Lists Cert. | Bacon, 51 lbs. (same item) | f122.8.0 (48s. p. lb.) |
| | | 10/19/80 Lists Cert. | Wheat, 12 bu. (same item) | f240.0.0 (f20 p. bu.) |
| | | 10/20/80 Lists Cert. | Wheat, 250 lbs. (same item) | f250.0.0 (f1 p. lb.) |
| | | 6/ 9/81 Cert. Court | Beef, 375 lbs. (same item) | f4.13.9 (3d. p. lb.) ^h |
| | | 6/ 9/81 Cert. Court | Bacon, 64 lbs. (same item) | f2.8.0 (9d. p. lb.) |

^eCourt Book, Amelia, p. 47.

^fJournal of the Council of Colonial Virginia (6 vols.; Richmond, 1925-1966), II, 516; Lists of Certificates & Receipts, Orange, I, n.p.; Certificate Book, Orange, n.p.; Court Book, Orange, p. 6; Commissioners' Books, IV (Orange), 181.

^gThe Orange County Court Book states, April, 1782: "A gun impressed for Orange Militia & never returned, f2.5.0." p. 6.

^hThe Orange County Court reappraised the value of this beef in April, 1782, at f3.18.1½ (2½d. p. lb.). Ibid.

Table 2 (cont'd.)

| | | | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|----------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| Craig, Elijah (cont'd.) | 6/ 9/81 | Cert. | Dried beef, 31 lbs. (same item) | f0.15.6 (6d. p. lb.) ⁱ |
| | 6/ 9/81 | Court | Wheat, 27½ bu. (same item) | f6.17.6 (5s. p. bu.) ^j |
| | 8/17/81 | Court | Mutton, 60 lbs. | f1.0.0 (4d. p. lb.) ^k |
| | 9/ 9/81 | Cert. | Beef, 250 lbs. (same item) | f2.12.12 (2½d. p. lb.) ^k |
| | 10/10/81 | Court | Beef, 250 lbs. (same item) | f3.2.6 (3d. p. lb.) ^k |
| | 11/ 1/83 | Com. | Wheat | f3.0.0 |
| | 10/ 3/80 | Lists | Wheat, 183 bu. | f3,660.0.0 (f20.0.0 p. bu.) |
| Craig, ¹ Lewis | | | (same item) | f834.0.0 (f12.0.0 p. bu.) |
| | 10/ 4/80 | Cert. | Rye, 69½ bu. | f222.0.0 (f27.15.0 p. day) |
| | 10/23/80 | Lists | "Waggon hire," 8 days | f83.5.0 (f27.15.0 p. day) |
| | 10/23/80 3/10/81 | Lists Cert. | "Waggon hire," 3 days Beef, 650 lbs. | f5.8.4 (2d. p. lb.) |

ⁱThe court reappraisal in April, 1782, raised the value to f0.18.1 (7d. p. lb.). Ibid.

^jThe court reappraisal in April, 1782, lowered the value to f5.10.0 (4s. p. bu.). Ibid.

^kThe court in April, 1782, had revalued the beef from 3d. p. lb.

¹Lists of Certificates & Receipts, Spotsylvania, p. 3; Court Book, Spotsylvania, p. 2.

Table 2 (cont'd.)

| Dudley, ^m Ambrose | Spotsylvania | 5/15/83 | Court Com. | "Waggon hire," 122 days in 1780 (same item) | f67.2.0 (11s. p. day) ⁿ |
|----------------------------------|--------------|----------|---|--|--|
| Ellington, ^o David | Lunenburg | 3/84 | Court | Beef, 440 lbs. | |
| Eve, ^p George | Culpeper | 12/15/81 | Cert. | Beef, 150 lbs. | f1.17.6 (2d. p. lb.) |
| Ford, ^q Reuben | Goochland | | Court Com. Court Com. 1/81 Cert.? | Wheat, 40 bu. (same item) Wheat, 3½ bu. Corn, 2 bu. Oats | f9.0.0 (4½s. p. bu.) f1.7.6 ^r f0.11.6 |

^mCourt Book, Spotsylvania, p. 37; Commissioners' Books, IV (Spotsylvania), 260.

ⁿThe court had received a statement for "an account due from the United States to Ambrose Dudley" for wagon hire at the rate of 10s. per day. The court must have increased the rate to 11s. per day.

^oCourt Book, Lunenburg, p. 36.

^pCertificate Book, Culpeper, n.p.; Court Book, Culpeper, I, 43.

^qCourt Book, Goochland, p. 9; Commissioners' Books, III (Goochland), 62-63.

^rThis entry in the Commissioners' Book probably included the 43½ bushels of wheat and the 2 bushels of corn which together the court had valued at f10.7.6. The commissioner entered f10.17.6, which may have been an error.

Table 2 (cont'd.)

| | | | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|
| Fristoe, ^s William | Stafford | 11/20/81 Court /82 Lists | 1 beef, 200 lbs. (same item) ? | f1.13.4 (2d. p. lb.) f3.6.0 |
| | | | | |
| Garnett, ^t James | Culpeper ^u | 9/12/80 Cert. | 1 beef | f400.0.0 |
| | | 10/16/80 Cert. | 1 beef | f375.0.0 |
| | | 11/19/80 Cert. | Beef, 325 lbs. (same item) | f4.1.3 (3d. p. lb.) |
| | | 1/20/81 Court | "1 smooth gun" | f1.5.0 |
| Goode, ^v John | Henrico? | 11/19/81 Cert. | Beef, 325 lbs. (same item) | f2.14.2 (2d. p. lb.) |
| | | Court | | |
| | | 3/23/76 Va. Council | "Provisions & Waggon- hire to Capt. Flemings Co. of the 7th Regt." | f30.18.1½ |
| | | 3/23/76 Va. Council | "Ditto to Capt. Faulnors Co. of the 5th Regimt." | f0.18.0 |

^s Lists of Certificates & Receipts, Stafford, I, n.p.; II, n.p.

^t Certificate Book, Culpeper, n.p.; Court Book, Culpeper, I, 44, 54; Commissioners' Books, II (Culpeper), 86.

^u Garnett's residence has been placed in Orange County but without documentation. He may have lived in neighboring Culpeper; at least there is as much evidence for the latter decision as for the former.

^v Journal of the Council of Colonial Virginia, II, 464. It is not definite that John Goode, the minister, and this individual were the same, yet the clergyman's residence may have been in the Richmond vicinity at the war's beginning. This could have put him in contact with the Virginia forces moving in the Williamsburg-Richmond area at the time.

Table 2 (cont'd.)

| | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------|---|----------------------------------|---|---|
| Harris, ^w Samuel | Pittsylvania | 10/16/81 3/18/82 3/18/82 3/18/82 | Cert. Court Court Court | 3 beeves, 725 lbs. (same item) "Waggon & Team driving," 6 days Ditto, 17 days "For waggoning military stores from Peytonsburg to Charlotte Town" "Bacon for Southward Expedition" "Waggon hire" | f9.1.3 (3d. p. lb.) f3.0.0 (10s. p. day) f9.7.0 (11s. p. day) f9.0.0 |
| | | 11/10/83 11/10/83 | Com. Com. | | f5.12.3 f12.13.2 |
| | Lancaster | 10/80 | Cert. | Brandy, 3 gals. 2 qts., 1 pt. (same item) | f1.11.6 |
| | King & Queen | 4/ 9/82 | Court Com. | Beef, 560 lbs. (same item) | f7.0.0 (3d. p. lb.) |
| | | | | | |

^wCertificate Book, Pittsylvania, n.p.; Court Book, Pittsylvania, pp. 30, 47, 53, 59; Commissioners' Books, V (Pittsylvania), 13-14.

^xCourt Book, Lancaster, p. 15. The citation referred to the claimant as "Rev." Leland.

^yCourt Book, King & Queen, p. 10; Commissioners' Books, III (King & Queen), 226.

Table 2 (cont'd.)

| | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------|----------|----------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| McClanahan, ^z William | Culpeper | 10/28/80 | Cert. Court | Wheat, 5 bu. (same item) | £1.0.0 (4s. p. bu.) ^{aa} |
| | | 11/17/80 | Lists | Rye | £72.0.0 |
| | | 11/23/80 | Lists | Rye ("& Flowr") (same item) | £122.0.0 |
| | | 7/15/81 | Cert. | Beef, 300 lbs. (same item) | £2.10.0 (2d. p. lb.) ^{bb} |
| | | 10/16/81 | Cert. | Beef, 250 lbs. (same item) | £2.1.8 (2d. p. lb.) ^{cc} |
| | | 8/14/83 | Court Com. | Wheat | £1.5.0 ^{dd} |
| Maxfield, ^{ee} Thomas | Culpeper | 11/19/81 | Cert. Court | Beef, 590 lbs. (same item) | £4.18.4 (2d. p. lb.) |

^zLists of Certificates & Receipts, Culpeper, pp. 1-2; Certificate Book, Culpeper, n.p.; Court Book, Culpeper, I, 1, 30; II, 12; Commissioners' Books, II (Culpeper), 105.

^{aa}This commodity was listed in the court records for March 20, 1782--1½ years later than the certificate date--and must have been valued at the 1782 rate.

^{bb}McClanahan's certificate, given him in 1781, had valued the beef at 3d. p. lb.; the court's adjustment was dated Dec. 20, 1784.

^{cc}Here again the value of McClanahan's beef was changed from 3d. p. lb. by the court of Oct. 1, 1782.

^{dd}This entry may be for the 5 bu. of wheat (dated Oct. 28, 1780), but if so, it was revalued at 3d. p. lb. in the later record.

^{ee}Court Book, Culpeper, I, 39; Commissioners' Books, II (Culpeper), 104-105.

Table 2 (cont'd.)

| | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------|----------|---------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| Maxfield, Thomas (cont'd.) | | 11/19/81 | Cert. | 7 "diats" (forage for 7 days) (same item) Beef ^{ff} | f0.7.0 (1s. p. day) |
| Picket, ^{gg} John | Culpeper | 8/ 4/83 | Court Com. | | f7.12.9 |
| | | 12/16/81 | Cert. | Beef, 290 lbs. | f2.8.4 (2d. p. lb.) |
| | | 12/16/81 | Court | (same item) | |
| | | 12/16/81 | Cert. | 5 "diats" | |
| | | 8/14/83 | Court | (same item) | f3.16.3 |
| | | | Com. | Beef ^{hh} | |
| Shrewsbury, ⁱⁱ Samuel | Bedford | 1/ 4/81 | Lists | 3 beeves, 1,100 lbs. | f13.15.0 (3d. p. lb.) ^{jj} |
| | | | Cert. | (same item) | |
| | | | Court | (same item) | |
| | | 1/ 4/81 | Lists | Diets/forage | f18.0.0 |
| | | | Cert. | (same item) | |

^{ff}The item may have duplicated or included the earlier entry, but the difference in value cannot be explained.

^{gg}Court Book, Culpeper, I, 54; Commissioners' Books, II (Culpeper), 109.

^{hh}See footnote ff.

ⁱⁱLists of Certificates & Receipts, Bedford, II, 4, 10; Certificate Book, Bedford, n.p.; Court Book, Bedford, p. 10.

^{jj}The Bedford lists, p. 4, contain the amount of f1,320 to be paid for the three cattle, while the certificate stated the value included in the table. The former figure must be an error.

Table 2 (cont'd.)

| | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------|----------|-------------------------|---|----------------------------------|
| Waller, ^{kk} John | Caroline | 10/15/81 | Cert. | Beef, 525 lbs. Wheat, 10 bu. (same items) | f7.19.4½ |
| | | | Court | | |
| Ware, ^{ll} James | Caroline | 10/15/81 | Lists Cert. Court | Beef, 250 lbs. (same item) (same item) | f1,250 (f5 p. 1b.) ^{mm} |
| | | | | | |
| Williams, ⁿⁿ John | Lunenburg | 4/11/82 | Court | Gun "impressed for the militia" | f2.0.0 |

^{kk}Court Book, Caroline, II, 32.

^{ll}Lists of Certificates & Receipts, Caroline, II, 25; Court Book, Caroline, II, 33.

^{mm}Poundage and price were obliterated in the court book, but the lists provide information which seems to be exorbitant for that period of time. An explanation is not available as to the high value placed on this beef.

ⁿⁿCourt Book, Lunenburg, p. 25.

Table 3. Presbyterian Clergy Ministering in the Virginia Area during the Revolutionary Period

| Clergyman | Counties: Congregations | Life-Span Removal (R) | Revolutionary Activity |
|-------------------|--|--|--|
| Alexander, Joseph | Itinerant work (1767) Frederick: supplied Tuscarora | R: North Carolina (1767) | |
| Balch, Hezekiah | Itinerant work in Virginia & Pennsylvania Frederick: supplied Tuscarora & Opecquon | -1810 R: North Carolina & Tennessee | Participant in Mecklenburg Convention |
| Bard, David | Itinerant work in Virginia & Pennsylvania Loudoun: Kétoctin & Gum Spring (to 1782) | -1813 R: Pennsylvania | |
| Brooks, Ebenezer | Itinerant work (1775, 1777, 1780, 1782) | | |
| Brown, John | Teacher: Liberty Hall Academy Augusta (later Rockbridge): Timber Ridge (1753-67), New Providence (1753-95) | 1728-1803 R: Kentucky (1795) | Preached to troops Resistance to Tarleton Furnished supplies Deputy Quartermaster of Public Service Claims |
| Caldwell, David | Itinerant work (1767) | -1824 R: North Carolina (1768) | |

Table 3 (cont'd.)

| | | | |
|----------------------|---|--|--|
| Campbell, James | Itinerant work | -1792 ^a | |
| Carrick, Samuel | ? : Rocky Spring & Wahabs (1783-86) | 1760- R: Tennessee (1791) | |
| Clarkston, James | Itinerant work in Western Virginia (1780) Frederick: Old Providence (1780) Rockbridge: Timber Ridge (1780) | | |
| Cooper, Robert | Itinerant work (1760s) Frederick: supplied Tuscarora | 1732-1805 R: Pennsylvania | |
| Craig, John | Augusta: Augusta Stone (1739-74), Tinkling Spring (1739-64) | 1710-1774 | |
| Craighead, Thomas B. | Washington: Ebbing Spring (1782-90) | -1815 R: Tennessee | |
| Crawford, Edward | Washington: Sinking Spring & Spreading Spring (1778-82) Rockbridge: Oxford (1783-92) | -1816? R: Tennessee (after 1786) | |
| Crawford, James | Itinerant work (1779) | -1803 R: Kentucky (1784) | A "warm patriot" District Collector of Public Service supplies |

^a Foote dated Campbell's death Oct. 15, 1972 (II, 105). It is probable that the Foote date was an error; Campbell was licensed to preach in October 1771.

Table 3 (cont'd.)

| Creswell, James | Itinerant work | R: North Carolina | Member, Fincastle County Committee of Safety Chairman: Washington County Committee of Safety Safety Preached to troops; Chaplain Military service |
|-------------------|---|-------------------------------------|--|
| Cummings, Charles | Augusta: Brown's or North Mountain (1766-72) Fincastle: ^b Sinking Spring or Abingdon (1773-1812), Ebbing Spring (1773-82) | -1812 | |
| Doak, Samuel | Itinerant work in Western Virginia Washington: Salem (1779-) | 1749-1830 R: Tennessee (1777) | Preached to troops Military action |
| Dodd, Thaddeus | Itinerant work (1777) Hampshire: Patterson's Creek (1777-79) | 1740-1793 R: Pennsylvania (1779) | |
| Duffield, George | Itinerant work: Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia (1766-) Frederick: supplied Tuscarora | 1732-1790 R: Pennsylvania | Chaplain: Continental Army & Continental Congress (1776-) |
| Edmondson, Samuel | Itinerant work (1773) | R: South Carolina | |
| Erwin, Benjamin | Rockingham: Cooks Creek & Mossy Creek (1780-96) | -1796 | |

^bThis area became Washington County in 1777.

Table 3 (cont'd.)

| | | | |
|--------------------|--|---|--|
| Fithian, Philip V. | Itinerant work: Western Virginia & Pennsylvania (1775-76) | 1747-1776 | Recruiter? (1776) Chaplain (1776) |
| Graham, William | Augusta: Timber Ridge & Hall's (1776-96) Rector: Liberty Hall Academy (1776-96) | 1746-1799 R: Western North Carolina (1796) | Preached to troops Recruiter Military service Resistance to Tarleton Furnished supplies? |
| Green, Enoch | Itinerant work: Hanover (1760s) | -1776 R: New Jersey | Chaplain |
| Henderson, Joseph | Itinerant work: Northern Neck (1778-80) | | |
| Hoge, John | Frederick: Opecquon & Cedar Creek (1755-72), Tuscarora & Back Creek (1760-72) | R: Pennsylvania (about 1775) | |
| Hoge, Moses | Hampshire: South Branch of the Potomac (1781-87) | 1752-1820 | Military service |
| Houston, Samuel | Washington: Providence (1783-89) | 1758-1839 | Military service Furnished supplies |
| Hunt, James | Itinerant work: North Carolina & Lancaster County, Virginia (1758-63) Fairfax: supplied Alexandria (1772) | -1793 R: Maryland | |

Table 3 (cont'd.)

| | | | |
|-----------------|---|--------------|--------------------|
| Hunter, Andrew | Itinerant work: Virginia ^c & Pennsylvania | 1750(2)-1823 | Chaplain (1776-83) |
| Irwin, William | Albemarle: Rockfish & Mountain Plains (1772-76); D. S., Rich Cove & Mountain Plains (1776-92) | | |
| Jackson, Thomas | Augusta: Peaked Mountain & Cook's Creek (1769-73) | -1773 | |
| Keith, Isaac S. | Fairfax: Alexandria (1780-89) | | |
| Keith, Robert | Itinerant work: Pennsylvania & Virginia | -1784 | Chaplain |
| Kerr, Jacob | Itinerant work (1763) | | |
| Lacy, Drury | Tutor: Hampden-Sydney (1781) ^d | 1758-1815 | |
| Lang, James | Frederick: supplied Tuscarora Fairfax: supplied Alexandria (1772) Itinerant work: Northern Neck (1778-82) | -1807 | |
| Leake, Samuel | Albemarle: Rich Cove & North Garden (1769-75), D. S. (1770-75) | -1775 | |

^cHunter preached for a time in the Falling Waters Church, Frederick County.

^dLacy was licensed to preach in 1787 and ordained in 1788 by the Presbytery of Hanover.

Table 3 (cont'd.)

| | | | |
|---------------------|--|--|---------------------|
| Logan, William | Rockbridge: visited Timber Ridge (1778) | | |
| McAden, Hugh | Itinerant work (1760s) | -1781 R: North Carolina (1768) | |
| McCalla, Daniel | Pastored: Pennsylvania (1774-76) Hanover: Hanover (1776?-88) | 1748-1809 R: South Carolina (1788) | Chaplain (1776-) |
| McClure, Andrew | Campbell?: North & South Forks of Roan Oak (1782 to removal to Kentucky) | 1755-1793 R: Kentucky (before 1786) | Furnished supplies |
| McConnel, James | Rockbridge: High Bridge (1778-87); Oxford & Falling Spring (1778-85?) | R: west of the Alleghenies (1787) | |
| McCorkle, Samuel E. | Itinerant work (1775-76) | 1746-1811 R: North Carolina (1776) | Preached patriotism |
| McCreary, John | Itinerant work in Western Virginia (1760s) | -1800 R: Delaware (1769) | |
| McCue, John | Itinerant work (near end of the war) | -1818 | |
| McKnight, John | Augusta: Elk Branch (1775-83) | 1754-1823 | Furnished supplies |

Table 3 (cont'd.)

| | | | |
|----------------------------|--|---|--|
| McKnight, John, cont'd. | Berkeley: supplied Shepherdstown & Opecquon (1774-76) | R: Pennsylv- vania (1789) | Military service (1782) |
| McMillan, John | Itinerant work: Augusta (1775-76) | 1752-1833 R: Pennsylv- vania (1776) | |
| McMordie, Robert | Itinerant work: Virginia & North Carolina (1772) Augusta: Tinkling Spring (1777-84) Botetourt: New Dublin, Reedy Creek, Fourth Creek (1777-84) | -1796 R: North Caro- lina (1784) | Chaplain |
| McRoberts, Archibald | Minister: Church of England (1761-79) Separated from same; itinerant work (1779-87) Prince Edward: Walker's (1787-) | | Chairman: Chesterfield County Committee of Safety (1st months of war) Furnished supplies |
| Marshall, Robert | Clergyman after the war: Virginia & Kentucky | 1760-1832 | Military service |
| Marshall, William | Frederick: Old Providence (1775-76) | 1740-1802 | |
| Martin, James | Frederick: supplied Hopewell (1773?); Old Providence (1775-76) | 1725-1795 | |
| Martin, John | Missionary to the Indians (1758-) | R: South Caro- lina | |

Table 3 (cont'd.)

| | | | |
|-------------------|--|--|---|
| Miller, Alexander | Augusta: Peaked Mountain & Cook's Creek (1757-63); supplied Tinkling Spring (1764) | 1720?-1784(5)? | Loyalist |
| Mitchel, James | Tutor: Hampden-Sydney (1776) Itinerant work (1781-) | 1747-1841 R: Kentucky (after 1781) | Military service |
| Montgomery, John | Berkeley: Opecquon & Cedar Creek (1781-89) Frederick: Winchester (1781-89) | -1818 | |
| Murray, John | Frederick: Old Providence (1777) | | |
| Patillo, Henry | Cumberland: Cumberland & Deep Creek (1763-65) Amherst: Harris Creek (1763-65) | 1726-1801 R: North Carolina (1765) | Member: North Carolina Provincial Congress (1775) |
| Patton, Andrew | Frederick: Old Providence (1777) | | |
| Proudfoot, James | Rockbridge: visited Timber Ridge (1779) | | |
| Rankin, Adam | Washington: Sinking Spring & Tinker Creek (1783-85) | R: Kentucky (1785) | |
| Rhea, Joseph | Itinerant work: Frederick & Washington Frederick: supplied Tuscarora | | Chaplain |

Table 3 (cont'd.)

| | | | |
|------------------|--|------------------------------------|--|
| Rice, David | Hanover: Hanover (1762-66) Bedford: Peaks of Otter (1770-83); Concord (1770-1777) | 1733-1816 R: Kentucky (1783) | Member: Bedford County Committee of Safety Preached patriotism |
| Roan, John | Itinerant work: Valley of Virginia (1768) Frederick: supplied Tuscarora | -1775 | |
| Rodgers, John | Frederick: Old Providence (1782-90) Rockbridge: Timber Ridge (1782-90) | 1727-1811 | Chaplain (1776-) |
| Sankey, Richard | Prince Edward: Buffalo Creek (1760-90) | -1790 | Member: Prince Edward County Committee of Safety Petitioner |
| Scott, Archibald | Itinerant work (1777) Augusta: North Mountain, Bethel & Brown's ^e (1778-99) | -1799 | Preached patriotism Resistance to Tarleton |
| Shannon, Samuel | ? : Windy Cove & Blue Spring (1784-87) | -1822 R: Kentucky (1787) | |
| Slemmons, John | Itinerant work: Frederick (1772-75) Berkeley: supplied Opecquon | -1814 R: Pennsylv- vania | |
| Smith, John | Frederick: Old Providence (1778) | | |

^eA short time later, this pastorate was called Bethel as well.

Table 3 (cont'd.)

| | | | |
|------------------|---|--|--|
| Smith, John B. | Tutor: Hampden-Sydney President: Hampden-Sydney (1779-91) Cumberland: Cumberland (1779-91) Prince Edward: Briery (1779-91) | 1756-1799 R: Pennsylv- vania (1791) | Recruiter Military service Furnished supplies |
| Smith, Samuel S. | President: Hampden-Sydney (1775-79) Cumberland: Cumberland (1775-79) Prince Edward: Briery (1775-79) | 1750-1819 R: New Jersey (1779) | Member: Prince Edward County Committee of Safety Preached patriotism |
| Tamplin, Terah | Itinerant work (1780) | -1818 R: Kentucky | |
| Templeton, James | Itinerant work | R: South Caro- lina | |
| Thom, William | Fairfax: Alexandria (1772-73) | -1773 | |
| Thompson, Amos | Itinerant work (1764) Frederick: supplied Tuscarora & Opecquon Fairfax: supplied Alexandria (1772) Loudon: Ketocotin & Gum Spring (1776-) | 1731-1804 (1) R: Connecticut (1782?) | Chaplain (1776-) |
| Thompson, Samuel | Supplied congregations | -1787 | |
| Todd, John | Louisa: Providence (1752-93) | -1793 | Member: Louisa County Committee of Safety Commissioned officer Furnished supplies |

Table 3 (cont'd.)

| Turner, James | Began ministry (1791) | 1759-1828 | Military service (before ministry) Representative, Bedford County, Virginia Legislature (before ministry) |
|----------------|--|----------------------------------|--|
| Vance, Hugh | Frederick: supplied Opecquon Berkeley: Tuscarora & Back Creek (1772-92) ^f | -1792 | |
| Waddell, James | Lancaster & Northumberland (1762-78) Augusta: Tinkling Spring (1778-85); supplied Staunton occasionally (1778-85) Louisa, Albemarle & Orange (1785-1805) | 1739-1805 | Preached to troops Resistance to Tarleton Furnished supplies |
| Wallace, Caleb | Charlotte: Cub Creek & Little Falling River (1774-79) Botetourt: Roan Oak (1779-83) | 1742-1814? R: Kentucky (1783) | Recruiter Furnished supplies Representative, Virginia Legislature (1783) Member: Commission for the Adjudication of Western Accounts (1782-83) Assistant Judge of the Supreme Court, District of Kentucky (1783-) |

^fBerkeley County was formed from Frederick in 1772. John Hoge pastored these churches preceding Vance when they were part of Frederick County.

Table 3 (cont'd.)

| | | | |
|-----------------|--|---------------------------------|------------------------|
| Waugh, Samuel | Hampshire: supplied Patterson Creek (late 1770s) | -1807 R: Pennsylvania (1782) | |
| Wilson, William | Principal, Washington-Henry Academy (1777-78) Augusta: Augusta Stone (1780-1810) | 1751-1835 | Resistance to Tarleton |

This compilation was largely completed using information found in the following accounts:

S. Alexander, Princeton College during the Eighteenth Century; D. Beard, "Origin and Early History of Presbyterianism in Virginia"; W. Breed, Presbyterians and the Revolution; Katharine Brown, "The Role of Presbyterian Dissent in Colonial and Revolutionary Virginia, 1740-1785"; T. Cartmell, Shenandoah Valley Pioneers and Their Descendants: A History of Frederick County, Va.; R. Davidson, History of the Presbyterian Church in the State of Kentucky, with a Preliminary Sketch of the Churches in the Valley of Virginia; Encyclopedia of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America: Including the Northern and Southern Assemblies; Encyclopedia of Virginia Biography; P. Fithian, Journal: 1775-1776; W. Foote, Sketches of Virginia, Series I & II, and Sketches of North Carolina; W. Gibson, History of the Presbytery of Huntingdon; L. Kramer, "The Political Ethics of the American Presbyterian Clergy in the Eighteenth Century"; Records of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America; Roll of Ministers of the Presbyterian Church in America before 1776; W. Sprague (ed.), Annals of the American Pulpit: Vol. III, The Presbyterians; L. Summers, History of Southwest Virginia, 1746-1786, Washington County, 1777-1870; E. Thompson, Presbyterians in the South, Vol. I; Virginia Magazine of History and Biography (Vols. VI, XIII, XX, XXIII, XLI); J. Waddell, Annals of Augusta County, Va.: From 1726 to 1871; R. Webster, A History of the Presbyterian Church in America, from Its Origin until the Year 1760, with Biographical Sketches of Its Early Ministers; H. White, Southern Presbyterian Leaders; E. Williams, "Soldiers of God: The Chaplains of the Revolutionary War."

Table 4. Public Service Claims of Virginia Presbyterian Clergy

| Clergyman | County | Date (1700s) & Type of Record | Supplies or Service | Value |
|---------------------------------|------------|--|--|---|
| Brown, ^a John | Augusta | 7/79 Lists | 2 hogs, mutton, 66 lbs. | f14.0.0 |
| | | 7/79 Lists | Tallow, 8 lbs. | |
| | | 3/19/83 Court | "Deputy Quarter Master for examining & taking in claims," 17 days (same item) | f35.8.6 (about 2.1.8 p. day) |
| | | 9/ 6/83 Com. /83 Cert. 8/21/87 Court | ? (same claim) | f13.0.0 Warrant provided for \$43.33 |
| Crawford, ^b James | Augusta | 9/16/83 Court | District Collector of Public Service Supplies, 6 days | ? |
| | | 9/16/83 Court | Carrying public claims to Richmond | 20s. (Whether this was the total remuneration or daily rate was not stipulated.) |
| Houston, ^c Samuel | Rockbridge | 3/83 Court | "Drove 22 days collecting beef and cattle" | f5.10.0 (5s. p. day) |
| | | 11/17/83 Com. | "Services" | f4.19.0 |

^aLists of Certificates & Receipts, Augusta, II, 7; Certificate Book, Augusta, I, n.p.; Court Book, Augusta, I, 3; Commissioners' Books, II (Augusta), 357.

^bCourt Book, Augusta, I, 9, 11.

^cCourt Book, Rockbridge, p. 8; Commissioners' Books, V (Rockbridge), 77.

Table 4 (cont'd.)

| | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------|--------------------------------|---|---|
| McRoberts, ^d Archibald | Prince Edward | /82 Court /82 Court | Bacon, 19½ lbs. 1 horse, 7 yrs. old, "4ft. 10 inches high," impressed for dragoon service | ? f60.0.0 (Continental) |
| | | /82 Court /82 Court | Beef, 1,125 lbs. Wheat, 48½ bu. | f11.5.0 (almost 2½d. p. lb.--Continental) f9.14.0 (48d. p. bu.-- (Continental) |
| McClure, ^e Andrew | Augusta | 10/ 9/80 Lists | 1 beef | "Sum due f380.0.0-- appraised in value (Certificate Book) f5.3.9" |
| | | 3/ 1/81 Lists 5/30/81 Lists | Flour, 150 lbs. "Common flour," 943 lbs. | ? f471.10.0 (10s. p. lb.) |
| McKnight, ^f John | Berkeley | 10/20/80 Cert. | Wheat, 1 bu., 3 pks. | f35.0.0 (f5.0.0 p. pk.) |
| | Prince Edward | /82 Court | "Grass beef," 575 lbs. | f5.15.0 (almost 2½d. p. lb.--Continental) |
| Smith, ^g John B. | | | | |

^dCourt Book, Prince Edward, pp. 12, 17.^eLists of Certificates & Receipts, Augusta, I, 4-5; III, n.p.^fCertificate Book, Berkeley, n.p. The certificate was made out to "Rev. John McKnight."^gCourt Book, Prince Edward, p. 26. The record includes Smith's title of "Rev."

Table 4 (cont'd.)

| | | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------|--|---------------------------------------|
| Smith, John B. (cont'd.) | /82 Court | "Cart & Oxan, removing powder from the Court House ground himself," 2 days | f0.15.0 (7s.6d. p. day-- Continental) |
| | | | |
| Todd, ^h John | /82 Court | "20½ bu. Corn more than his Sp. tax" | f2.1.0 (2s. p. bu.-- State) |
| | | Indian corn, 20 bu. | f140.0.0 (f7.0.0 p. bu.) |
| | | Rye, 5 bu. | f60.0.0 (f12.0.0 bu.) |
| | | 1 beef, 425 lbs. | f425.0.0 (f1.0.0 p. lb.) |
| | | 1 beef, 550 lbs. | f550.0.0 (f1.0.0 p. lb.) |
| | | 2 beeves, 590 lbs. | f7.7.6 (3d. p. lb.) |
| | | Wheat, 25 bu. | f6.5.0 (5s. p. bu.) |
| | | (same item) | |
| | | 1 beef, 225 lbs. | f2.16.3 (3d. p. lb.) |
| | | (same item) | |
| | | "Pastureage for 16 Country Beaves," 5 days | f0.13.4 (2s.8d. p. day) |
| | | (same item) | |
| Waddell, ⁱ James | Augusta | Corn, 2¼ bu., bacon, 10 lbs., meal, 10 lbs. (same item) | ? |
| | | 1 beef, 330 lbs. Flour | f4.2.6 (3d. p. lb.) ^j |
| | | | f0.3.0 |
| | | | |
| | | | |

^hCertificate Book, Louisa, n.p.; Court Book, Louisa, pp. 13, 21, 42. Todd's title of "Rev." is included in the record.

ⁱCertificate Book, Augusta, I, n.p.; Commissioners' Books, II (Augusta), 360.

^jThe certificate was the only one examined which read: "Payable at two pence [specie?] per pound or in paper Money at the Depretiation Prevailing [sic] at the time of Payment."

Table 4 (cont'd.)

| | | | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|---|
| Wallace, ^k Caleb | Botetourt | 10/24/81 Cert. 3/14/82 Court | Beef, 487½ lbs. (same item) | f6.1.10½ (3d. p. 1b.) f4.1.3 ¹ (2d. p. 1b.) |
|--------------------------------|-----------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|---|

^k Certificate Book, Botetourt, n.p.; Court Book, Botetourt, p. 13.

¹ The Botetourt court revalued the beef in accordance with the depreciated currency.

APPENDIX C

CALVINISTIC OPINION IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

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Nineteenth-century interpretations of Baptist and Presbyterian opinion and action in the American Revolution were in large measure repetitious of the earlier period's expositions. However, throughout the nineteenth century, nationalism generated a style of writing both pompous and profuse in describing the American experience and destiny. Furthermore, in the atmosphere of centennial celebration in the 1870s, the popular literary subject was the founding of the nation, and the revolutionary performance of the two denominations became a salient feature in many publications, especially of a sectarian nature. Denominational pride tainted Calvinistic scholarship, yet much remained that was viable to the study of the serious historian.

One popular postulate in the nineteenth century related American revolutionary ideals to the Protestant Reformation, which, of course, meant that they originated in the Bible. Moses D. Hoge wrote that "the streams of liberty flowed" from "the Word of God, from which the true ideal of representative government is derived," and from

the Reformation. He credited the sixteenth-century reformers with (1) awakening the world to the sacred nature of the domain of conscience, (2) proclaiming the value of the citizen as well as the worth of the soul, (3) bringing human intelligence in contact with the Scriptures which have promoted the arts and sciences, and (4) emphasizing that rulers have duties, the ruled have rights, and just government rested on the consent of the people, who alone were the true source of power.¹ Hoge pointed out:

The man who has been accustomed to cringe at the feet of a spiritual master will readily cower under the frown of a temporal despot; and on the other hand, the man who will not brook sacerdotal tyranny in the Church will be the very man who will not submit to civil despotism in the State.²

The Reformation had been the spring which made such a resistance possible.

In an address attacking the Roman Catholic Church for its historic suppression of human freedom, T. V. Moore eulogized the Reformation for its providing a springboard from which "the birth and growth of American liberty" could

¹Moses D. Hoge, Memorial Discourse on the Planting of Presbyterianism in Kentucky One Hundred Years Ago (Louisville, Ky.: Courier-Journal Job Printing Co., n.d.), pp. 6-7. In the same citation, Hoge listed a third source of influence: the decisions and implementations necessitated by adversity of a civil and religious nature.

²Ibid., p. 9.

take place. He presented three propositions to support the allegation:

1. The Reformation was a simple revival of New Testament Christianity that "prepared the way, and secured the success" of the American Revolution.
2. The Reformation emancipated the human mind "from the trammels of ancient authority" and "found its earliest and most complete embodiment" in the struggle for independence.
3. The Reformation molded the principles and thus the character of the Revolution's leaders, thus producing a successful effort which must be ascribed to the workings of Almighty God.³

A similar expression of regard for Reformation principles was published three decades earlier than the Moore address. The unnamed author, who may have been on the editorial staff of the Evangelical and Literary Magazine which carried the article, ascribed to the Reformation "the mighty impulse" that raised the human mind and character to a "new elevation" preparing the way for the American birth of freedom. The eighteenth-century American was enlightened; public opinion did exist; self-government was already in evidence. A "wonderful ordering of events"

³T. V. Moore, The Reformation, the Source of American Liberty: An Address Delivered before the Union Society of Hampden Sydney College, June 9, 1852 (Richmond: Charles H. Wynne, 1852), p. 10.

had brought the people to the place where they would assert their liberty.⁴

Among Presbyterians, it was popular to trace cautions of the American milieu back to John Calvin's precepts, while others took them back to the ancient Hebrews. W. P. Breed asserted that Calvinism's impact upon Presbyterianism brought about "the strong affinity between Presbyterian and republican forms of government." He agreed with those who believed Calvinism and Presbyterianism shared common ideas. They were convinced that God ruled according to a plan fixed and certain. Government, too, represented order and stability. The affairs of the universe, of society, and of individuals should be founded on settled principles. Republicanism--such as that implemented in Geneva--established order through a system of local and general assemblies, which were united in effort and dedicated to the purpose of "vigorous government." At the same time, the assemblies were infused with energy for action and impatience with external control. They voiced their remonstrance against misgovernment and tyranny. John Knox had breathed the spirit of Calvin, and Scottish Presbyterianism had inherited the republicanism of Geneva.

⁴"The Influence of the Reformation on the American Revolution," Evangelical and Literary Magazine, VII (1824), 572.

It was not difficult to reason deductively that "republicanism [was] the Presbyterian principle."⁵ And it was for the protection of this precept that Great Britain was confronted with dissenter renitence as the revolutionary spirit developed.

The same reasoning guided E. W. Smith to the conclusion that two hundred years of Calvinism had brought a basic understanding of human rights under God and its political form, republicanism, from Geneva to America via Scotland. The task of founding the new nation, he said,

was not as difficult as some have imagined. They had a model to work by . . . Calvinism furnished the foundation principles . . . ; it supplied the best and largest part of the early material of our Republic; it served as the invaluable training school . . . ; it furnished the model for the immortal constitution⁶

⁵Breed, Presbyterians and . . . Revolution, pp. 23-27. See Foote, Sketches of North Carolina, pp. 82-83, 97. Foote declared that Locke owed his Calvinistic teachers for many ideas which he developed in his writings. p. 87. A similar explanation is found in A. W. Miller, Presbyterian Origin of Independence, pp. 81-83.

⁶E. W. Smith, Creed of Presbyterians, pp. 139-42. Smith included several pages of quotations by theologians, historians, and political philosophers to support his contention that Calvinism led to the American Revolution and government. See pp. 119-25. As recently as 1951, the Journal of the Presbyterian Historical Society contained an essay which claimed if anyone "is to be accounted the father of American Democracy, so far as his influence can be traced historically, it would be John Calvin rather than Thomas Aquinas." See Pears, "Presbyterians and American Freedom," p. 93.

Some Presbyterian writers recognized the governmental forms of the ancient Israelites as the first existential outgrowths of the comprehension of their political creaturehood under God. Divinity had directed them in the structure of their church and their state to the republican principle--in fact, the presbyterian principle.

The Presbyterian Church is older than the Reformation, older than the apostles, older than the New Testament. The Presbyterianism of the Old Testament Church did not originate with the Jewish dispensation, but ante-dated it, and had its rise in the earliest age, the patriarchal, the government of the church in that day being by presbyters or elders.⁷

In 1844 the same tie between the Hebrew and the Presbyterian forms was discussed by T. V. Moore before the Synod of Philadelphia. But he was convinced that the American political principles were related to the Hebrew structure as well.

All the essential principles which be at the basis of the Government of the United States--the principles of republicanism in contrast with democracy, on the one hand, and an aristocratic sovereignty, on the other--were found in the Jewish Church;--were fully developed in the Christian Church;--are clearly and prominently

⁷A. W. Miller, Presbyterian Origin of . . . Independence, p. 79. See also Samuel J. Wilson, "The Presbyterianism of Western Pennsylvania and Its Influence on the West," Addresses and Historical Sketches Delivered at the Centennial Anniversary of the Presbyterian Churches of Upper and Lower Ten Mile (Washington, Pa., 1879), p. 33.

presented in the system of doctrine and government adopted by the Presbyterian Church.

Moore stressed that politically and religiously the "religious men" of the age of American Independence had carried forward the ancient covenants.⁸ Of course, Presbyterians were numbered among those American Patriots.

A. W. Miller was not convinced that Baptists should share much of the credit for the advancement of civil and religious liberty in the founding of the American colonies. Basing his argument on three points, he rejected the suggestion that Roger Williams and his Baptist associates were first to assert those principles in America:

1. Williams' views regarding the power of the magistrate were not unique to him. Others before him "who were every way superior to him" believed as well that the magistrate's power was limited to the physical actions and outward state of men. Williams was not banished for espousing this principle.
2. Williams was "one of the most intolerant of men." His rejection of others who did not agree with him doctrinally and his attitude toward women were examples.
3. Williams was still a Congregationalist when the events took place that sent him scurrying out of Massachusetts. More than a year later, he joined the Baptists.

⁸T. V. Moore, "Relative Influence of Presbytery and Prelacy, on Civil and Ecclesiastical Liberty; a Sermon Preached before the Synod of Philadelphia, Oct. 16, 1844," Southern Presbyterian Review, I (March, 1848), 34-35.

Miller's concluding statement blends a trace of animosity with a dash of triumph: "If any glory belongs to this so-called 'martyr of liberty' because of his banishment, this glory of their pet hero Baptists cannot share!" Presbyterians, he declared, should not boast in the spirit of vain-glory because they were the bulwark of civil and religious liberty. The simple fact was that because of the composition of their movement, "the effect follows from the cause."⁹

C. F. James defended the Baptists by accusing the Presbyterians of not being able to differentiate between toleration and liberty as the Revolution came to an end. The fact that the Virginia Presbyterian clergy favored the inclusion of their own denomination in the Establishment and the enactment of a general assessment for religious purposes proved the allegation.¹⁰ Baptists, said James, were "the first and only religious denomination that struck for independence" and "made a move for religious liberty

⁹A. W. Miller, Presbyterian Origin of . . . Independence, pp. 102-104.

¹⁰C. F. James, Struggle for Religious Liberty, pp. 189-97. See also Hawks, Ecclesiastical History, p. 152. W. G. McLoughlin said that because of this compromise with the Episcopalians, "the Separate-Baptists in Virginia saw the Presbyterians as middle-class snobs" "The American Revolution as a Religious Revival," New England Quarterly, XL (1967), 109. At least one Presbyterian work agreed with James: McGill, Hopkins, and Wilson, American Presbyterianism, p. 129.

before independence was declared." They also were "the only denomination that maintained a consistent record" on behalf of religious liberty "and held out without wavering unto the end."¹¹ There was more truth than error in the analysis by James.

These nineteenth-century spokesmen placed major emphasis on only two of the main themes preached by their revolutionary ancestors. A. W. Miller alone touched on God's intervention in American affairs by declaring that the gospel had been given to Americans to disseminate in word and deed. He believed that the quality of Patriotism was dependent upon how widely diffused the Christian message was in any age. It was "the only guardian of man's rights and interests" in this world and the next.¹² The results of the war against Britain revealed a substantial amount of gospel knowledge among Americans. Ignored also as a topic of special concern was the quality of piety--the moral level of the citizens as it affected political progress and public

¹¹C. F. James, Struggle for Religious Liberty, p. 197. R. B. C. Howell, in his defense of the Baptist denomination, emulated Presbyterians E. W. Smith, W. P. Breed, T. V. Moore, and A. W. Miller. What they had stated on behalf of their movement, he repeated for Baptists. He declared that the spirit of liberty which Baptists had contributed to Virginia's role in the Revolution coincided with the political convictions of Baptists "in every age and country." Early Baptists, p. 81.

¹²A. W. Miller, Presbyterian Origin of . . . Independence, p. 76.

life. The two themes of natural rights and right of resistance remained popular in the writings of the nineteenth-century sectarians.

Both dissenting denominations believed that human laws must conform to the expressed will of God. Any law short of that standard ought not to be tolerated. It was impossible for them to divorce their religion from their politics, for intrinsic within their faith was their comprehension of man's rights under God. Foote observed that the Presbyterians "had advanced far in the knowledge of human rights" and were on "the high road to republicanism, without, perhaps, being aware of the lengths they had already advanced." Again, the fact that religion and politics had become one in shaping dissenter thought and action must be kept in mind as Foote's further commentary is considered:

They had acknowledged that the authority of human government was from the same divine hand that made the world, fashioning the fabric of human society to require the exercise of good and wholesome laws for the promotion of the greatest good;--and had also claimed the right of choosing those who should frame and execute these laws;--contending that rulers, as well as the meanest subjects, were bound by law.¹³

¹³Foote, Sketches of North Carolina, pp. 122-23.

These were the principles upon which they would base their society in America.

Why did Presbyterians love America above all other lands? This was the question answered by E. H. Gillette as he described what they found here.

There were no cumbrous hierarchies, no prescriptive rights of nobility or primogeniture, no courts of Star Chamber and High Commission, no obtrusive and impertinent interferences, save in a few instances, with freedom of worship, or the enjoyment of civil and religious rights. Here were institutions which, if left undisturbed, came nearer than any others on the globe to realizing the ideal of a free and liberal government. Here the citizen might hope to enjoy for himself, and transmit to his children, the blessings of equal laws and constitutional freedom.¹⁴

Gillette declared that Presbyterian opposition to the mother country was the result of an accumulation of grievances in reaction to Great Britain's threat to civil rights, conscience, and religious freedom¹⁵--the very things that were America's blessings.

A characteristic common to these later writers was the acceptance of resistance to British rule when restrictions became oppressive and despotism was enjoying its day. A confrontation with British authority was not only unavoidable--it was entirely justified because it was in

¹⁴ Gillette, History . . . Presbyterian Church, pp. 175-76.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 180. See T. V. Moore, "Relative Influence of Presbytery and Prelacy," p. 9.

defense of what God had willed.¹⁶ "In opposition to arbitrary power Presbyterians were true Whigs . . . staunch, unbending republicans."¹⁷ They would not surrender their God-given treasure "to the arrogant claims and encroachments of the British ministry, or . . . to the terror even of invading armies."¹⁸ They feared the English had "designs to enslave them,"¹⁹ and they knew if they yielded their civil rights, "spiritual despotism was sure to follow."²⁰ J. G. Craighead explained,

They clearly perceived the province and duties of the civil magistrate, and so long as he used his office to promote the welfare of his people he was to be respected and obeyed; but when he assumed the prerogatives of a spiritual ruler, and sought to bring the Church into bondage to the State, and deprive it of the rights and jurisdiction with which it was entrusted by Christ, his claims were to be denied.²¹

¹⁶ Foote, Sketches of North Carolina, p. 123. T. V. Moore called these "immemorial rights"--God-given and Bible-centered. "Relative Influence of Presbytery and Prelacy," p. 45.

¹⁷ "Essays on the Government and Discipline of the Presbyterian Church in the United States," Evangelical and Literary Magazine, IX (1826), 26-27.

¹⁸ Gillette, History . . . Presbyterian Church, p. 176.

¹⁹ "The Influence of the Reformation," p. 572.

²⁰ Craighead, Scotch and Irish Seeds, p. 347.

²¹ Ibid.

Foote's rationale for Presbyterian resistance was practically identical to Craighead's, but he added a brief commentary on how far such a revolution should go: "In extreme cases, revolution by force is the natural right of man; not a revolution to throw down authority, and give license to passion, but a revolution to first principles, and to the inalienable rights of man."²²

Craighead alone was explicit in the introduction of another dimension to the accusation of British tyranny. Venturing into the area of economics, he stated that Presbyterians were aware of England's policy "to use her colonies for her own interests, irrespective of their rights or their consent."

The trade of this country was already in English hands Oppressive laws which would destroy the manufactures and the agriculture of the new colony, . . . , might be enacted at any time; and the only way to prevent . . . the evils and the injustice . . . was firmly to resist the first encroachments of irresponsible authority.

But Craighead returned to the religious nature of the dissenter cause for resistance: the threat posed by the Established Church could mean "farewell to all liberty of conscience." That was too much for the Presbyterians--and, as has been seen, the Baptists--to take passively.²³

²²Foote, Sketches of North Carolina, p. 137.

²³Craighead, Scotch and Irish Seeds, pp. 316-17.

To pursue this phase of the study further would lead to redundancy. Laying aside their sectarian boasting,²⁴ the efforts of these nineteenth-century scribes still contributed to the body of knowledge concerning Calvinists in the Revolutionary War. Whether the subjects were Virginia dissenters or inhabitants of some other colony, the pattern of argument and activity described by these writers was accurate. The founding principles of the Calvinistic groups, the nature of their theology and philosophy in combining liberty and law, and the goals which they were pledged to cherish--all combined to make a unified, Patriotic response to British intrusions possible.²⁵

²⁴Perhaps the most flagrant example of denominational "horn-blowing" was penned by Samuel Wilson: "Without Presbyterian muscle, Presbyterian brain, Presbyterian valor and true Calvinistic endurance and perseverance, American Independence would not have been achieved." "Presbyterianism of Western Pennsylvania," p. 33.

²⁵Gillette, History . . . Presbyterian Church, p. 173.

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