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WAR FOR THE SOUL OF EMPIRE:  
COLONIAL BRITISH PROTESTANTS IN THE FRENCH AND INDIAN WAR,  
1754-1763.

BY

JONATHAN BRATTEN  
BA, Franciscan University of Steubenville, 2008

THESIS

Submitted to the University of New Hampshire  
in Partial Fulfillment of  
the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts  
in  
History

May, 2011

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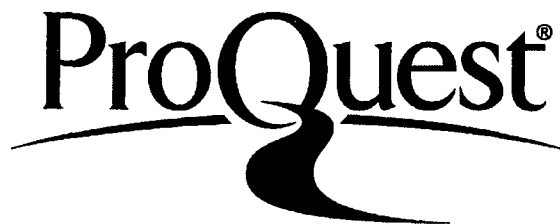
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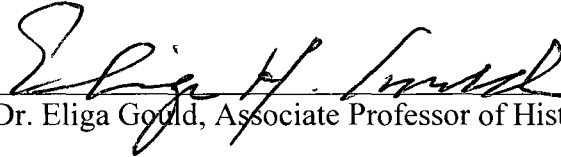


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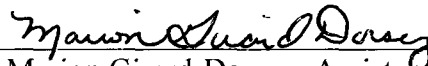
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This thesis has been examined and approved.

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Thesis Director, Dr. Cynthia Van Zandt, Associate Professor of History

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Dr. Eliga Gould, Associate Professor of History

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Dr. Marion Girard-Dorsey, Assistant Professor of History

I dedicate this to my loving wife, Margaret, without whose patience and ceaseless encouragement, this could not have been accomplished.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

As I researched and then wrote this paper, there were a number of people who gave me great help. Both of the Professors Dorsey, Kirk and Molly, were always available when I needed guidance and had questions. Dr. Eliga Gould was of great service in pointing me towards sources of information for chapter three and was incredibly helpful. Lastly, I would like to acknowledge my thesis advisor, Dr. Cynthia Van Zandt, who first encouraged me to continue my research on colonial sermons, served as a sounding board for all of my ideas, and gave so much of her time. I am extremely grateful for the support of these faculty members and the University of New Hampshire History Department as a whole.

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## FOREWARD

When researchers finally are able to look up from their vast collections of notes and pick up the pen to begin writing, they must confront the monumental question of “So what?” This can be a difficult task, as it is sometimes easier to just keep on writing because the research is already done and it would be a shame to waste it. For a paper to be effective, the writer must answer this question. One way to go about this is by researching what others have written before you have written. It is so with this paper. I would be nowhere without several historians upon whose backs I am most unworthily standing. Harry Stout and Nathan Hatch offered me my roadmap for navigating the masses of sermons that I culled. Their research into the New England sermon set the groundwork for my research. Their pronouncements that the war was indeed a crusade gave me the impetus to push the thesis forward even more to say that the sermons created a war for the soul of the British Empire. I am also indebted to Fred Anderson and Harold Selesky for their works on New England provincial troops. Their astoundingly comprehensive collections of data on the soldiery were of utmost value.

## ABSTRACT

## WAR FOR THE SOUL OF EMPIRE:

COLONIAL BRITISH PROTESTANTS IN THE FRENCH AND INDIAN WAR, 1754-  
1763

by

Jonathan Bratten

University of New Hampshire, May, 2011

As the British and French went to war in 1754, the British colonies readied themselves for another round of warfare. Unlike previous colonial wars, however, this conflict was supported by the zealous preaching of Protestant clergy who were calling for the destruction of Catholic New France. Colonial governments were loath to use the vitriolic rhetoric of the clergy, but still used religion as a justification for raising troops to send on campaigns. The soldiers themselves were drawn from the populace, which was extremely religious, and saw themselves as the emissaries of the Lord. These three forces combined to make the French and Indian War a colonial struggle for the dominant religion of North America.

## INTRODUCTION

When the first shots rang out in Jumonville Glen on May 27, 1754, heralding another round in the European wars of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, it was still twenty-six years before Carl von Clausewitz would be born, and another fifty years before his work *On War* would be published.<sup>1</sup> However, the events of that day would have enormous significance on his life as he would become embroiled in the Napoleonic Wars, a direct result of the Seven Years' War. The shots exchanged between the Virginia militia led by George Washington and a party of French soldiers containing an emissary was not another backcountry skirmish. Washington's victory in this fight and the subsequent killing of the emissary (who gave his name to the place in which he gave his life) would be the catalyst for the Seven Years' War, which would, in turn, result in the dominance of the British Empire for the next thirty years.<sup>2</sup>

That dominance would be challenged by the same George Washington in the 1770s and then again by the French in the 1790s, who still rankled from their defeat in the Seven Years' War. Racked by debt from that war and their assistance to America in her bid for independence, the French government collapsed and a new France arose, warlike, from the ashes of the old monarchy. As the armies of France, filled with citizen-soldiers and eventually led by Napoleon Bonaparte, challenged the established order of Europe, onlookers wondered what the result would be. Fifteen years after the final result was settled at Waterloo and Napoleon was a memory, Clausewitz looked back at the preceding decades of wars—the Seven Years' War, the American Revolution, and the

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<sup>1</sup> Carl von Clausewitz, *On War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), page xxxiv.

<sup>2</sup> Fred Anderson, *The War That Made America: A Short History of the French and Indian War* (New York: Penguin Books, 2005), page 47.

Napoleonic Wars—and made his oft-quoted statement, “War is Merely the Continuation of Policy by Other Means.”<sup>3</sup>

This explanation of war excited policy-makers, politicians, strategists, and theorists for years to come, but it is not particularly exciting for the common man to hear. No mother wants to hear that her son died because of a policy decision; no, war is such a destructive, all consuming, and horrific experience that some greater cause must drive the popular war effort. Clausewitz assuredly understood this, as his following chapter discussed how, “the more powerful and inspiring the motives for war, the more they affect the belligerent nations...”<sup>4</sup> This surely was the case in the Thirty Years’ War, which was fought for both religious and political reasons. One may argue that the war was fought for political purposes, but that the religious aspect brought its brutality.

But would men willingly wage war for political purposes alone? Historians often refer to the Seven Years’ War as the Great War for Empire, as it resulted in the dominance of the British Empire. Logically, with this interpretation, men would fight for the glory of the British nation. Some would argue that North American colonists could not do this as they did not find an affinity with a government that was thousands of miles away, yet contemporary documents show that colonists felt great unity with Englishmen all across the world.<sup>5</sup> For example on the death of King George II in 1760, Reverend Samuel Davies decried the colony’s loss when he said, “George, the Mighty, the Just, the Gentle, and the Wise, the Father of Britain and her colonies, the Guardian of Laws and

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<sup>3</sup> Clausewitz, *On War*, page 28.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, page 29.

<sup>5</sup> P.J. Marshall, “The Thirteen Colonies in the Seven Years’ War: The View from London,” in *Britain and America Go to War: The Impact of War and Warfare in Anglo-America, 1754-1815*, Julie Flavell and Stephen Conway, eds. (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2004), page 71.

Liberty, the Protector of the oppressed, the Arbiter of Europe, the Terror of Tyrants and France; George, the Friend of Man, the Benefactor of Millions, Is NO MORE!”<sup>6</sup>

So if the French and Indian War was merely a war for empire, then why do the majority of sermons that were published during that time place such an emphasis on the religious aspect of the conflict? This thesis will show how popular motivation for war in North America from 1754-1763 was shaped by Protestant clergy, directed by political ministers, and then was enthusiastically waged by the soldiery from the colonies. It is meant to show how religious rhetoric shaped public policy at a time when the wars for religion were supposed to have ended.

This thesis is organized into three chapters. The first shows the extent to which the Protestant clergy went in calling for all-out religious war against the Catholics. The second chapter deals with how the central political figures in the colonies, governors and assemblies, saw the war. The third chapter will show that the soldiers going to fight the war were convinced that they were the agents of God’s Providence to destroy the enemies of their religion. The thesis is organized this way because it shows how the clergy provided more impetus for the war than the politicians did and makes the religious aspect the central portion of the thesis.

It is also meant to replicate the three parts of colonial sermons: explication, doctrine, and application. Explication referred to the explanation of the religious text on which the sermons was based, which for our purposes will be the religious aspect. The doctrine will be the reasons for war that the politicians gave, and the application will be how the war was carried out by the soldiers. Since the central question posed by the

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<sup>6</sup> Brendan McConville, *The King’s Three Faces: The Rise and Fall of Royal America, 1688-1776* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), page 206.

thesis is why did men go to war, the following chapters will be focusing on the motivations of the individuals involved.

## CHAPTER I

## EXPLICATION

*“A People of God may be called to go forth to war.”*<sup>7</sup>

In 1648, the nations of Europe breathed a collective sigh of relief as the Peace of Westphalia brought an end to the bloody and divisive Thirty Years’ War.<sup>8</sup> The conflict had torn Europe apart, pitting Catholic states versus Protestant states in a struggle that had encompassed England, all of Continental Europe, Russian Cossacks, and even the Ottoman Empire.<sup>9</sup> Between 15-30% of the German population had been exterminated from war and disease.<sup>10</sup> A population weary of wars for beliefs turned to the secular world for answers, and what historians call the Age of the Enlightenment began in Europe. The book was now closed on the bloody wars of religion. Henceforth, some thought, wars amongst Europeans would be fought for king and country, with God taking a permanent leave of absence. It follows, then, that those who agree with that statement might possibly be startled by the following pronouncement made in 1757, over a hundred years after the Peace of Westphalia:

I pronounce it before Men and Angels that from the days of our Alfreds, our Edwards and our Henries downwards, the British sword was never

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<sup>7</sup> Jonathan Edwards, “Sermon on 1 Kings 8:44ff,” April 1, 1745 (repeated in 1755) Edwards Manuscripts, Boston Library.

<sup>8</sup> David G. Chandler, *Atlas of Military Strategy: The Art, Theory, and Practice of War, 1618-1878* (London: Cassell & Co., 1980), page 28.

<sup>9</sup> Chandler, *Atlas of Military Strategy*, page 24.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, page 22.



unsheathed in a more glorious or more divine cause than at present...to spread abroad the pure evangelical Religion of Jesus! behold Colonies founded in it! Protestant Colonies! free colonies! British colonies!<sup>11</sup>

These words, so reminiscent of the previous century's religious strife, were uttered by the minister William Smith, speaking to the Royal American Regiment in Philadelphia. In the audience was Lord Loudon, commander-in-chief of His Majesty's forces in North America.<sup>12</sup> These words reached his ears and those of his officers, who included Henri Bouquet, a Swiss officer who would rise to prominence for his role in putting down Pontiac's Rebellion in 1763.<sup>13</sup> Loudon would soon leave on his campaign to take the French fortress of Louisbourg, and the Royal America Regiment would leave Philadelphia with General Forbes' expedition to begin the second attempt to capture Fort Duquesne, at the forks of the Ohio.<sup>14</sup> The first attempt in 1755 had been a bitter defeat, with General Braddock's much larger British force being ambushed and routed just outside modern-day Pittsburgh. It was a major disaster for the British, and a humiliation for British arms. Forbes' Expedition aimed to remove the French from the Forks and recover the honor of Britain that had been lost by Braddock's defeat two years before.<sup>15</sup> That Reverend Smith would have chosen these words to deliver to the redeemers of Brittania's good name is particularly significant. It means that for many of those who were influential in the colonies, the wars of religion had not ended.

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<sup>11</sup> William Smith, *The Christian Soldier's Duty; the Lawfulness and Dignity of his Office; and the Importance of the Protestant Cause in the British Colonies, Stated and Explained* (Philadelphia: James Chattin, 1757), pages 26-27.

<sup>12</sup> Fred Anderson, *The War That Made America: A Short History of the French and Indian War* (New York: Penguin Books, 2005), page 98.

<sup>13</sup> Anderson, *The War That Made America*, page 165.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, pages 119, 164.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, page 163.

The Protestant clergy throughout the colonies had been by no means quiet as England and France headed for war. From the beginning of the war in 1754, they had been urging their congregations to support the war effort and their voices could be heard with the loudest British patriots when victory was proclaimed in 1763. However, their participation in support for the war effort was not limited to inspiring nationalistic feelings of patriotism. Nor were they simply an important source of information for colonists. Their words could be highly influential. Protestant ministers from New England, New York, and the Mid-Atlantic colonies attempted to place a religious interpretation on the war through their sermons. They feared the expansion of the French because they carried with them the “Mother of Harlots,” the Catholic religion.<sup>16</sup> If England were to fight another war with France then it should have as its goal the destruction of Catholicism in North America. In other words, they wished to create another war of religion.

While those in North America saw the war through the lens of religious symbolism, the British government in London was under no such illusions. They fought the war for the traditional reasons: to protect and expand their trade, to hinder the power of the French, and to expand their empire. This thesis does not purport to posit that Britain went to war for religion. Indeed, it at times shows the vast difference between the highly religious colonists and the somewhat more secular residents of the home country. This can be seen in the dichotomy between the colonial governors and their assemblies and between the red-coated regulars and their provincial counterparts. Colonists had a

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<sup>16</sup> Jonathan Mayhew, *A Sermon Preach'd in the Audience of His Excellency William Shirley, Esq; Captain General, Governour and Commander in Chief, the Honourable His Majesty's Council, and the Honourable House of Representatives, of the Province of the Massachusetts-Bay, in New-England* (Boston: Samuel Kneeland, 1754), page 49.

spiritual vision of themselves that those in power in Britain would have found hard to reconcile with their own materialistic ends for the colonies. Indeed, North American colonists were enraged just as much when the British government passed the Quebec Act in 1774, allowing Catholics in Quebec to openly practice their religion, as by the passage of the infamous Stamp Act a decade earlier.<sup>17</sup>

Britain and France had been at war on and off since the late 17<sup>th</sup> century and these conflicts had spilled over into North America, causing four “French and Indian Wars.” The last of these wars bears that name exclusively because it was the longest, harshest, began in North America, and ended that quartet of wars. Historians have called this period the Second Hundred Years’ War because of its length.<sup>18</sup> In fact, the war bears more resemblance to the Thirty Years’ War because of the religious aspect. Protestant England and Catholic France were engaged in more than a war for empire: they were fighting for religious dominance of the new world.<sup>19</sup> This chapter will show how Protestant English clergy influenced the populace through their sermons. They painted the French as having a Catholic army backed by the Pope, whose task was to destroy Protestantism, and thereby liberty, in North America.<sup>20</sup>

Some older historians of the American colonial period are tempted to dismiss the French and Indian War as merely a prelude to revolution, as historian Fred Anderson points out in his work *Crucible of War*. He states that too often, historians of the colonial era were so focused on the American Revolution that they were tempted to see the entire

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<sup>17</sup> McConville, *The King’s Three Faces*, page 265.

<sup>18</sup> James Levernier, *Sermons and Cannonballs: Eleven Sermons on Military Events of Historical Significance During the French and Indian Wars, 1689-1760* (Delmar, New York: Scholars’ Facsimiles and Reprints, 1982), page ix.

<sup>19</sup> William Warren Sweet, *Religion in Colonial America* (New York: Scribner’s Sons, 1942), page 10.

<sup>20</sup> Francis D. Cogliano, *No King, No Popery: Anti-Catholicism in Revolutionary New England* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1995), page 14.

era cast in the light of the Revolution.<sup>21</sup> They focused on the results of the war and the actions taken by the British government after the war that spurred colonial unrest. By seeing the French and Indian war as merely a nationalistic struggle where the future United States found its voice, historians overlook the symbolic and religious nature of the war.

Anderson's argument is reflected by historians take it as a given that rebellion would follow the British victory in 1763. Historians point out that the "long train of abuses and usurpations" laid out in the Declaration of Independence began as a result of the British war debt. It is tempting to believe that the colonists were always looking towards independence; this supports a cultural belief in an early separation from Europe. It is unsettling for adherents to this theory to remember that thirteen years before the signing of the Declaration of Independence, colonists were calling the king, "the Darling of every faithful British Subject."<sup>22</sup>

Modern-day scholarship has begun to examine the French and Indian War in its own right, not as a pre-cursor to an inevitable revolution, led by Fred Anderson, who argues that the French and Indian War was fought for the expansion of the British Empire. The colonists, Anderson writes, were fighting for the British Empire just as much as they were fighting for freedom from French and Indian raids.<sup>23</sup> The colonists saw themselves as being completely British. They rejoiced in British victory, and mourned British defeat.<sup>24</sup> This feeling was strong in the 1750s when the war began, and

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<sup>21</sup> Fred Anderson, *Crucible of War: The Seven Years' War and the Fate of Empire in British North America, 1754-1766* (New York: Random House, 2000), page xviii.

<sup>22</sup> Samuel Finley, *The Curse of Meroz; or, The Danger of Neutrality, in the Cause of God, and our Country* (Philadelphia: James Chattin, 1757), page 28.

<sup>23</sup> Anderson, *The War That Made America*, page viii.

<sup>24</sup> Levernier, *Sermons and Cannonballs*, page ix.

stronger yet during the celebrations of victory in the 1760s, as can be seen in the many sermons rejoicing in British triumph.

So if the French and Indian War was not a colonial dress rehearsal for the Revolution, was it merely a nationalistic war for God, king, and country? It was indeed a war for the national interest of the country, as Britain now reigned supreme on the seas and was uncontested in North America, so therefore it was a war for the king. Was it a war for God? England had been Protestant since 1534 and had fought a number of wars throughout that century and the 17<sup>th</sup> century in defense of the Protestant cause.<sup>25</sup> France had been a staunch defender of Roman Catholicism in this time and had also been involved in religious conflicts throughout the preceding centuries. The Treaty of Westphalia ended the last official war of religion, the Thirty Years' War, in 1648. It did not, however, end the wars between England and France. The year 1698 would see the commencement of another one hundred years of fighting between the two nations, this time on the continent of North America, namely over colonial borders.<sup>26</sup>

The French and Indian War, beginning in 1754, was the last stage of this conflict. By the end of the war in 1763, France had lost its colony in Canada and several of its Caribbean holdings. In all, almost half of a continent was in British hands.<sup>27</sup> Britain was the major power in North America, making Protestantism the dominant religion on the continent.

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<sup>25</sup> Chandler, *Atlas of Military Strategy*, page 18.

<sup>26</sup> Anderson, *The War That Made America*, page 10.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, page 217.

## Historiography

This paper is not blazing the trail into entirely new academic territory; others have been here first, namely Harry Stout of Yale and Nathan Hatch of Wake Forest University. Harry Stout has done exceptional work on wartime sermons in the 1700s. He offers considerable analysis on the development of the Protestant sermon in New England in his work *The New England Soul: Preaching and Religious Culture in Colonial New England*. He also covers the period of the French and Indian War in New England. Where his work differs with this paper's is in the realm of geography and argument. Stout's book covers New England exclusively, while this paper aims to capture the sentiments of ministers from Massachusetts to Virginia. Stout also does not go as far as this paper does in the argument that the war was spurred on by anti-Catholicism. Stout writes that the war was, "a crusade against Antichrist," not necessarily a war against Catholicism.<sup>28</sup> Stout was also writing a chronicle of New England Protestantism, not focusing primarily on the French and Indian War.

The other scholar whose work has been very influential is Nathan Hatch. He offers an exceptional perspective on civil millennialism in the late 18<sup>th</sup>-century New England. Hatch argues in "The Origins of Civil Millennialism in America: New England Clergymen, War with France, and the Revolution," that ministers began to accelerate their millennial message before the French and Indian War. He says that this began with

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<sup>28</sup> Harry S. Stout, *The New England Soul: Preaching and Religious Culture in Colonial New England* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), page 247.

the taking of Louisbourg in the 1740s.<sup>29</sup> He writes that the clergy of New England were able to take the civil and political goals of the war and turn the war into a religious cause of historical significance.<sup>30</sup> It is on the back of these works that this paper makes its argument.

### Sources of Research

The sources used to make up the background of this chapter are of particular note, as they are almost exclusively primary sources. While sermons in colonial New England are not a novel topic, the focus has been on the impact of the Great Awakening on sermons and how these were influential during the American Revolution. Caught in between these two events, the French and Indian War has been given little attention. In this chapter, the American Revolution will not be taken as a given. The French and Indian War will be viewed as it was by those who lived at the time it occurred: as a monumental conflict that was the capstone of a century of warfare for control of North America.

It is unfortunate that the sermons from the French and Indian War have been overlooked by the majority of scholars, as they hold a wealth of information. Over seventy sermons are used as sources for this chapter, with thirty-one being directly quoted. They were originally printed and distributed to the public, which is why they still survive today. These sermons begin in 1754 and track the highs and lows of the war all

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<sup>29</sup> Nathan O. Hatch, "The Origins of Civil Millennialism in America: New England Clergymen, War with France, and the Revolution" in *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Third Series, Vol. 31, No. 3 (Jul., 1974), page 420.

<sup>30</sup> Hatch, "The Origins of Civil Millennialism in America: New England Clergymen, War with France, and the Revolution" in *The William and Mary Quarterly*, page 420.

the way until 1763. They come from three principal regions: New England, New York, and the Mid-Atlantic states of Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia. These sermons restricted to any particular denomination. The goal of this piece is to capture an accurate representation of the overall Protestant reaction to the French and Indian War, and why they believed that it should be fought.

These sources are representative of over three hundred sermons that have been archived by the Early American Imprints Society. The sermons cited in this thesis were picked because of their clarity and relevance to the topic. It would have been redundant to use all of the sermons as so many of them echo each other. Some sermons were discarded for use in this thesis because although they were given during the war, they focus only on spiritual matters or matters of purely local significance. These formed about 10-15% of the sermons.

The sermons as sources can be divided into three distinct categories. The first category is sermons that were delivered to soldiers as on their mustering in, the election of officers, or on their departure for war. Militia companies would have to assemble and muster in before they could join their larger units to go campaign. Sermons were a traditional part of the mustering in ceremony. They were also often given at the election of officers in a unit. These were sermons set in a secular context, but still religious. They are an example of how religion could intermingle with the civil order.<sup>31</sup>

These sermons were incredibly important, as the audience would contain not just the minister's flock, but political and secular leaders as well.<sup>32</sup> The sermons were usually divided into two parts; the first portion would speak to the enlisted men and the second

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<sup>31</sup> Larry Witham, *A City Upon a Hill: How Sermons Changed the Course of American History* (New York: HarperOne, 2007), page 30.

<sup>32</sup> Cogliano, *No King, No Popery*, page 15.



part was ordered towards the officer. The content of each part would be different.<sup>33</sup>

These sermons tended to emphasize the duty of a Christian soldier in war and how they should act.

The second category that the sermons can be divided into is that of a warning to all Protestants of their danger. This danger could be physical danger, such as the approach of an enemy force. It could also be spiritual danger, such as that posed by Catholicism. The last danger, and most common, was that of sin. Ministers were conscious then as now that their words were sometimes more effective when administered with a modicum of guilt. They would remind their listeners of the sinfulness of society, and tell them to beg for God's mercy. This form of sermons was also known as the jeremiad.<sup>34</sup>

The third and last most common type of sermon during war was that of millennial typology. Millennialism will be addressed at further length in this chapter, but for purposes of clarity, a brief definition is needed. Millennialism developed from the Puritan religious society, which viewed itself as the new Israel. The famous "Citie upon a Hill" sermon was a product of this belief.<sup>35</sup> As the new Israel, the colonists believed that God had decreed that all of America would be theirs once they conformed to His will. Therefore, millennialism embraced a scriptural interpretation of all the events that occurred throughout the colonists' history. This history was to lead to the eventual triumph of English Protestantism in America, and thus bring the millennium, or peace on earth and the second coming of Jesus Christ.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Levernier, *Sermons and Cannonballs*, page xviii.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, page xxi.

<sup>35</sup> Witham, *A City Upon a Hill*, page 19.

<sup>36</sup> Levernier, *Sermons and Cannonballs*, page xii.

These sermons constitute a broad overview of what Protestant clergy were saying during the conflict. They represent the opinions of many different colonies and denominations, from Massachusetts to Virginia, and Congregationalists to Presbyterians. If the facts that can be drawn from these sermons show similarity to each other, then it is safe to say that they are important enough to be of concern to the northern American colonies as a whole. It is the impact on those who listened to the sermons that is important although this can be hard to measure.

Sermons were not just a religious medium for 18<sup>th</sup>-century colonists. Ministers had extensive influence, especially in small communities where many colonists were illiterate. On average, ministers would deliver about one hundred sermons a year, feeding a hungry audience the information that was not yet supplied by more modern forms of media. Rural areas had limited access to newspapers.<sup>37</sup> The weekly sermons were a source of news, as well as religious commentary. Ministers had the capacity to travel frequently and could bring back news from other towns that would not otherwise reach their flock. In the age of limited transportation, this service cannot be overemphasized for its importance.<sup>38</sup> Therefore, ministers had a profound impact on their listeners' opinions and state of mind.

Ministers were aware of the power of their words in their communities, and tried to shape their sermons to persuade their audience towards a certain course of action. This could range from trying to keep their flocks holy to attempting to influence their political

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<sup>37</sup> Levernier, *Sermons and Cannonballs*, page xvii.

<sup>38</sup> Lester D. Joyce, *Church and Clergy in the American Revolution: A Study in Group Behavior* (New York: Exposition Press, 1966), page 39.

mindsets. This was especially true during times of great crisis. In no other time did ministers have so much power as when a community was in crisis.<sup>39</sup>

Wartime definitely counts as a crisis, and the Protestant clergy were not slow to make commentary on war in their sermons, as will be shown further on. Their potential impact on the populace in this manner cannot be ignored. One must remember that for defense, the colonies largely relied on local militia, recruited from the community. They also relied on the local community to fund the expedition, although the British found that this did not spur patriotism during the French and Indian War, resulting in Parliament paying the community for war debts.<sup>40</sup> Thus, if a local minister decided that he was against the war, he could have a detrimental effect on the secular authority's efforts to raise troops and funds for the war.

Luckily for the British, very few ministers preached messages of peace during the war. The only group that declared its unwillingness to fight was the Quakers, who caused great unrest by their determination to do so. But they would have found it hard, according to their beliefs, to support almost any conflict. Chauncey Graham, a Presbyterian preacher in New York, thunders that, "Such a Religion [Quakerism] is a Rebellion against God, Disloyalty to our King, and Murder to his truest and best Subjects."<sup>41</sup> Indeed, some ministers preached that neutrality for *any* reason was tantamount to aiding and abetting the enemy. Samuel Finley, preaching in Nottingham, Pennsylvania in 1757, saw the seemingly endless numbers of refugees fleeing the depredations in western Pennsylvania and was moved to ask, "How can we esteem those

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<sup>39</sup> Levernier, *Sermons and Cannonballs*, page xvii.

<sup>40</sup> Anderson, *Crucible of War*, page 229.

<sup>41</sup> Chauncey Graham, *Some Few Reasons Suggested, why the Heathen are at Present Permitted to Rage in the British colonies in North-America* (New York: H. Gaine, 1756), page 19. Brackets are my own.

to be *innocent*, who for *Conscience-Sake*, are a *Clog* to the necessary *Defence* of the *Community* to which they belong? Who for *Conscience Sake*, would deliver us up and all our religious and civil Rights, into the Hands of our Enemies?"<sup>42</sup> He damns them of being "guilty of our Blood, and all the fatal Consequences of a Defeat."<sup>43</sup>

The Quakers excepted, Protestant clergy presented a strong front of support for the war, even in dark times. One reason for this is that their very livelihoods and core beliefs hung on British victory. A British defeat in this war meant that French incursions would continue and that British expansion westward would be hemmed in by new French colonies.<sup>44</sup> No Protestant minister could pretend that the French would allow free practice of the Protestant faith. Preaching in 1755, Solomon Williams reminds his audience, "We have no Reason to expect our Churches will meet a kinder Fate than the Protestant Churches in France, all Ruined and Demolished; the Members of them, either cruelly Destroyed, or forced into Gallies or Nunneries, the Ministers Shot and Hanged, and Massacred without Mercy, as obstinate Hereticks."<sup>45</sup> In addition he adds, "France has had a great Share in the Persecutions of the Church of Christ, from the Year 1124."<sup>46</sup> Thomas Barton of Philadelphia states, "Evils unnumbered complete the horrid Prospect. But the chief and greatest is the being obliged to exchange our holy Protestant Religion for Popish Error and Delusion...All freedom of debate, speech, and writing will be taken from us."<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Finley, *The Curse of Meroz*, page 17.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, page 17.

<sup>44</sup> Solomon Williams, *The Duty of Christian Soldiers, When Called to War, to Undertake it in the Name of God* (New London: T&J Green, 1755), page 19.

<sup>45</sup> Williams, *The Duty of Christian Soldiers, When Called to War, to Undertake it in the Name of God*, page 24.

<sup>46</sup> Williams, *The Duty of Christian Soldiers, When Called to War, to Undertake it in the Name of God*, page 26.

<sup>47</sup> Thomas Barton, *Unanimity and Public Spirit. A Sermon Preached at Carlisle, and Some Other*

Other sermon authors were quick to point out to their flocks what be lost in a British defeat. The notion that there was a chance that the French Catholic government might rule over them was intolerable. In 1755, John Lowell of Newbury, Connecticut, speaking to a group of troops, said,

Would you change your pure and holy Religion for one so full of Contrariety to the Gospel? ...A Religion which encourages Persecution, and which, in some Countries, has set up an Hellish Inquisition? Surely every Englishmen, every heart Subject of King George, every true Protestant, should do all in his Power to prevent such Tyranny, Superstition and Absurdity gaining Ground in our Nations, or making any further Progress in the World.<sup>48</sup>

Speaking in Philadelphia in 1755, Philip Reading spoke the following words, printed by one Benjamin Franklin: “Where they [Catholics] wield the Scepter, they govern with a Rod of Iron: Where they have the Authority to chastise, they inflict Chastisements with a Knot of Scorpions.”<sup>49</sup> In 1758, Joseph Emerson reminded the soldiers that composed his audience, “Our Land would soon be an *Acelanda*, a *Field of Blood*.<sup>50</sup> We must renounce our Religion, or suffer all that Malice can invent, and Power execute; our Children will be rent from us, and educated in the Popish Religion.”<sup>51</sup>

These were not just sermons delivered to common farmers to scare them into enlisting. In 1754, speaking to an audience full of clerical and political figures on the

*Episcopal Churches, in the Counties of York and Cumberland, Soon After General Braddock's Defeat* (Philadelphia: B. Franklin and D. Hall, 1755), pages 9-10.

<sup>48</sup> John Lowell, *The Advantages of God's Presence with his People in an Expedition Against their Enemies* (Boston: J. Draper, 1755), page 21.

<sup>49</sup> Philip Reading, *The Protestant's Danger, and the Protestant's Duty* (Philadelphia: B. Franklin, 1755), page 18.

<sup>50</sup> *Acelanda*—An Aramaic word; a reference from scripture to the field that Judas Iscariot bought with the thirty pieces of silver he received for betraying Jesus. It was here that he supposedly hanged himself.

<sup>51</sup> Joseph Emerson, *The Fear of God, an Antidote Against the Fear of Man* (Boston: S. Kneeland, 1758), page 20.

occasion of the Massachusetts election, Jonathan Mayhew painted this picture for his listeners:

Do I see christianity banished for popery! The bible for the mass-book! The oracles of truth, for fabulous legends! Do I see the sacred Edifices erected here to the honour of the true God, and his Son, on the ruins of pagan superstition and idolatry; erected here, where *Satan's seat was*; do I see these sacred Edifices laid in ruins themselves! and others rising in their places, consecrated to the honour of saints and angels...Do I see a protestant there, stealing a look at his bible, and being taken in the fact, punished like a felon!<sup>52</sup>

In the audience were assembled no less personages than the Colonial House of Representatives and Governor William Shirley, the newly appointed governor of Massachusetts. Mayhew knew his audience; New Englanders had a hatred of Catholicism dating to the days of Puritanism, and fully suspected the pope to have designs on the new world. This would not have been an unfamiliar sermon for them.<sup>53</sup>

Ministers were not loath to use Biblical imagery in their exhortations to their listeners to fight off the French in defense of God and country: "By so much the more are we bound to this, by how much the Cause is Christ's. Religion as well as civil Property is struck at. *The holy City must be trodden under Foot*. It is Jesus whom they persecute."<sup>54</sup> This line seems to speak of the suffering that the righteous would have to undergo before eventual victory, just as in the Bible Jesus had to suffer before resurrection.

The Biblical imagery was not uncommon in sermons of the time. Sermons were an art form that ministers perfected over the years. They were heavily impacted by the

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<sup>52</sup> Mayhew, *A Sermon Preach'd in the Audience of His Excellency William Shirley, Esq*, page 38.

<sup>53</sup> Cogliano, *No King, No Popery*, page 14.

<sup>54</sup> Jonathan Ellis, *The Justice of the Present War against the French in America, and the Principles that should Influence us in this Undertaking, Asserted* (Newport: J. Franklin, Printer, 1755), page 7, Italics are the original authors.

Great Awakening. The Great Awakening was a Protestant religious revival that swept through the English colonies in North America in the 1730s through the 1750s. Those who proselytized the tenets of this revival said that religion should be characterized by personal and immediate religious experiences that brought one closer to God. The Great Awakening was characterized by an intense form of preaching, designed to bring about an emotional response in the listener. It was hoped that this response would lead to repentance for sins and a greater resolution to holiness through the action of the Holy Spirit.<sup>55</sup>

The influence of the Great Awakening is clearly evident in the highly emotional language of many of the sermons and their emphasis on the war being a judgment for sin. Chauncey Graham wrote that the French and Indian raids that were devastating Pennsylvania at the time were the fault of the sinners in their midst and his religion's lack of zeal in converting the Indians.<sup>56</sup> Nathaniel Potter thundered to his flock that the cause of their "Misery" was their "Disregard of God and Religion—that Sin and Prophaness—Wantonness and Luxury—Debauchery and Injustice."<sup>57</sup> In describing the horrors and depredations of Catholic soldiery, Philip Reading does not refrain from painting a lurid picture of soldiers who "wanton in the Death of young Infants" and "cut the Flesh of Men off alive."<sup>58</sup> Similarly, Amos Adams told the soldiers of the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company of Boston and Governor William Shirley of the horrors of war, which were "to see our Wives and Daughters ravished, our young Men slain in Battle, our

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<sup>55</sup> Witham, *City Upon a Hill*, page 57.

<sup>56</sup> Graham, *Some Few Reasons Suggested, why the Heathen are at Present Permitted to Rage in the British colonies in North-America*, page 7.

<sup>57</sup> Nathaniel Potter, *A Discourse on Jeremiah 8th, 20th. Preached on the Lord's-Day Morning, Jan. 1, 1758. at Brookline* (Boston: Edes and Gill, 1758), pages 6- 7.

<sup>58</sup> Reading, *The Protestant's Danger, and the Protestant's Duty*, page 16.

Infant-Offspring dashed in pieces, our Houses laid in Ashes.”<sup>59</sup> William Hobby, a defender of George Whitefield in the debate that surrounded the Great Awakening, dramatically declared to his listeners that if a French victory were allowed, then “Farewell Religion; the Sun sets upon the Sanctuary; which is left dark and desolate! Farewell, ye Ministers of Christ, whose Mouths must now be stopped...O how must the Land mourn! and the Inhabitants of it be made Sacrifices in it, to Popish cruelty.”<sup>60</sup>

### Structure of Colonial Sermons

Sermons of the day, whether preached by ministers who were of the Great Awakening persuasion or those who preferred the more traditional didactic tone, usually conformed to a preset formula: explication, doctrine, and application. This format was the standard from Puritan sermons in the 1690s.<sup>61</sup> The explication was really an explanation of the text. The minister would break down for his sometimes illiterate and uneducated listeners what he saw as the thesis of the scripture. Then in the doctrine section, he would explain what the lessons of the scripture were. Finally, he would apply the lessons to events that were important to his community.<sup>62</sup> This format was perfect for ministers who wished to craft a sermon to their listeners’ particular concerns. They could interpret the text in a way that would play into how they wished the audience to react.

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<sup>59</sup> Amos Adams, *The Expediency and Utility of War, in the Present State of things, Considered* (Boston: Z. Fowle and S. Draper, 1759), pages 27-28.

<sup>60</sup> William Hobby, *The Happiness of a People, Having God for their Ally* (Boston: S. Kneeland, 1758), page 22.

<sup>61</sup> Levernier, *Sermons and Cannonballs*, page xvii.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, page xvii.



The application portion was where most ministers delivered their commentary on present day events and where they proposed solutions.

A perfect example of this is Hobart Estabrook's sermon entitled, *The Praying Warrior*, delivered to troops about to leave for Canada in 1758. He first delivers an extract of scripture from the book of Chronicles, consisting of merely a few lines of text.<sup>63</sup> He then delivers an explanation of what this text is talking about, in language that his listeners could understand. Estabrook then moves on to his doctrine, and lays out four lessons that his congregation can take from this text, all having to do with the necessity of waging a just war.<sup>64</sup> These lessons are broken into sub-sections, where Estabrook elaborates on them. Halfway through the entirety of his sermon, Estabrook begins the application section.<sup>65</sup> He directs his audience to apply what he has just said about the necessity of war from the reading of scripture to their present day issues of war and their vocation as soldiers.<sup>66</sup> He calls them to be good soldiers and not doubt the rightness of their cause, just as the characters referenced in scripture did not doubt. They were just and faithful, says Estabrook, and were rewarded by God with victory. He concludes with a prayer for humility and victory.<sup>67</sup> This was the standard ending for most sermons. From the texts of existing sermons, it would appear that most colonial sermons were over an hour in length.

Ministers of the time did not just fall into the practice of preaching sermons in this manner. For the most part, ministers were educated men who received training in

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<sup>63</sup> Hobart Estabrook, *The Praying Warrior: or, The Necessity and Importance of Praying unto, and Trusting in God, Especially in a Time of War* (New-Haven: James Parker and Company, 1758), page 5.

<sup>64</sup> Estabrook, *The Praying Warrior*, page 7.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, page 13.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, page 14.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, page 23.

religious schools in America or England. Harvard and Yale were both divinity schools where aspiring young men who felt called to the profession could go for schooling.<sup>68</sup> Gilbert Tennent, author of *The Happiness of Rewarding the Enemies of our Religion and Liberty* (by reward, he means destroy), was educated at Yale.<sup>69</sup> Thomas Barton, an Anglican minister who preached *Unanimity and Public Spirit* shortly after Braddock's defeat in 1755, was educated at Trinity College in Ireland.<sup>70</sup> Samuel Davies, vital in keeping unity amongst colonists during the war, was an exception to the rule. He was educated by local schools in Delaware, and was eventually licensed to preach by the Presbytery there.<sup>71</sup> These are all examples of the ways that ministers could gain an education. The most common seems to have been education at Harvard, Yale, or Princeton.

As noted earlier, a minister was expected to preach weekly and on special occasions. If these sermons were greatly acclaimed by the listeners, they would then be printed and be made available to the local community. Local printers would print the sermons for distribution. In this way, the sermons left the environs of the church, or even of a religious setting, and became political and secular works. Through the workings of the printing press, sermons could now travel great distances and their words could influence people who had never even heard of the minister that delivered them.<sup>72</sup>

The popularity of these sermons may be difficult for the modern mind to understand. The culture of the time was much more open to religion mixing with politics. Indeed, even future politics was affected by the religious tone of the time. All

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<sup>68</sup> Joyce, *Church and Clergy*, 38

<sup>69</sup> Levernier, *Sermons and Cannonballs*, page lvi.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, page lix.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, *Sermons and Cannonballs*, page lvii.

<sup>72</sup> Witham, *A City Upon a Hill*, Pages 1-3.

throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century, colonists and later citizens of the United States pressed westward, always hungering for more land. Not only did they desire it, but they believed that they had exclusive rights to it that God had bestowed on them. The birth of this way of thinking can be seen in the idea of millennialism. One way to understand the colonial mindset in their conflict with Catholicism is to understand what millennial thought was.

Simply put, millennialism was the belief that God had given all of North America into the hands of English Protestants so that they could create a “New Earth, whereon the Escaped Nations are to walk in the Light of that Holy City.”<sup>73</sup> This vision was inspired by the Book of Revelation in the Bible, where the second coming of Christ is prophesied. New England Protestants hoped that they could make a society that would be acceptable to God, in order for Jesus to come again. This idea remained strong throughout the late 17<sup>th</sup> century, the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and even survived into the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>74</sup>

Prideful Puritans did not just stop at hopes of a second-coming; indeed, that was the goal for most Christian religions, whether they remembered it or not. The Puritans saw themselves as the new Israel, sent into the wilderness of Canaan (North America), and beset by enemies who tried to turn them from the true faith (French Catholics and Native Americans). This was also known as typology, in which contemporary parties were placed in the “types” of Biblical groups.<sup>75</sup> Many sermons writers embraced this wholeheartedly, even by the time of the French and Indian War. New England was the “New Israel.”

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<sup>73</sup> Cotton Mather in James W. Davidson, *The Logic of Millennial Thought: Eighteenth Century New England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977), page 13.

<sup>74</sup> Davidson, *The Logic of Millennial Thought*, page 17.

<sup>75</sup> Levernier, *Sermons and Cannonballs*, page xxii.

The typology extended to the Native Americans, who, had they read and understood these sermons, would have been most displeased and alarmed at what they portended. Theodore Frielinghuysen, writing on the occasion of the Albany Congress (1754), refers to North America as “the land of the Heathen.”<sup>76</sup> The “Heathen” are, of course, the Indians, but the word chosen has special meaning for Frielinghuysen: he uses it in reference to the heathens of the land of Canaan. The Canaanites of the Old Testament dwelt in Palestine prior to the arrival of the Israelites, and were driven out, by God’s command. However, the Old Testament also relates that God would use the Canaanites to chastise the children of Israel when they strayed too close to paganism. This, says Frielinghuysen, is what God was using the Indian tribes for. They were His instruments to be “Briars and Thorns in our sides, to scourge us back to our God...”<sup>77</sup> He did not mention the inevitable destruction of the Canaanites in the Bible, but as most people would have been familiar with the Old Testament, they would have made the connection.

What then of the Catholic Church? If the New Englanders had managed to place a banal scriptural interpretation on the Indians, one which made them (unwilling) players in the act of purifying the believers, surely they would go easier on fellow Christians. Hearing the words of John Ballantine, preaching to an expedition that was about to set out for Crown Point in 1756, one gets the idea that this was not the case: “The People, you are going against, are a Limb of the Mother of Harlots, whom God has devoted to

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<sup>76</sup> Theodore Frielinghuysen, *A Sermon. Preached on Occasion of the Late Treaty Held in Albany, by his Honour our Lieutenant Governor, with the Indian Nations, and the Congress of Commissioners, from Several Governments in These British Colonies* (New York: William Weyman, 1754), page 9.

<sup>77</sup> Frielinghuysen, *A Sermon*, page 10.

utter Destruction, whose Destruction is plainly foretold in the Word of God.”<sup>78</sup> In Rhode Island, John Burt declares that, “Their conduct belies their Profession, and bespeaks them the Offspring of that scarlet Whore, that Mother of Harlots, who is so justly the Abomination of the Earth, for that she hath made herself drunk with the Blood of the Saints and the Martyrs of Jesus Christ... Their Religion, repugnant to the Religion of Jesus Christ, divests them of all Humanity.”<sup>79</sup>

In other places, the Catholic Church is referred to as the “Whore of Babylon,” a popular Protestant reference to the book of Revelation.<sup>80</sup> This reference has a twofold meaning. One, Babylon was the nation that took Israel into captivity. If New England is Israel, then Catholic France is Babylon. Babylon must be destroyed if Israel is to flourish. In the words of Samuel Chandler on the victory in Quebec, “Rejoice over Babylon, devoted to Destruction by vindictive Justice.”<sup>81</sup>

In millennial terms, the Catholic Church as the Whore of Babylon takes on much greater significance. In the Book of Revelation, the Whore of Babylon is one of those things that must be destroyed for Christ to return. In order to fulfill their millennial destiny, New England Protestants had determined that they must destroy all vestiges of Catholicism in America. Not until “Babylon the Great” had fallen could Christ return.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> John Ballantine, *The Importance of God's Presence with an Army, Going against the Enemy; and the Grounds on which it may be Expected* (Boston: Edes and Gill, 1756), page 19.

<sup>79</sup> John Burt, *The Mercy of God to His People, in the Vengeance He Renders to their Adversaries, the Occasion of their Abundant Joy* (Newport: J. Franklin, 1759), page 4.

<sup>80</sup> Hobby, *The Happiness of a People, Having God for their Ally*, page 19.

<sup>81</sup> Samuel Chandler, *A Sermon Preached at Gloucester, Thursday, November 29, 1759. Being the Day of the Provincial Anniversary Thanksgiving* (Boston: Green and Russell, 1759), page 23.

<sup>82</sup> Hobby, *The Happiness of a People, Having God for their Ally*, page 22.

## The Call for War

This, then, was the nature of the war to Protestant clergy. Not only was this war beneficial to the entire British empire, but it was of special importance to the British colonists. If they managed to force the French out of North America, then they would have completed one step in purifying the continent for the eventual second coming of Christ.

All of this rhetoric would be useless to a populace that was not sympathetic to the Protestant cause. Fortunately for the clergy, they were very sympathetic; and an important part of their Protestant heritage was distrust of the Church of Rome. This was a vestige of Britain that had come over with the first colonists, an inconvenient shipmate with religious tolerance (which turned out to be for Puritans only) and freedom of worship. Anti-popery and being English went hand-in-hand, and had done so since the 16<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>83</sup>

The Catholic Church was not just seen as being a religion that was inherently wrong; it was a religion that was inherently evil and opposed all good things. Not only that, it was seen as the dominant force in Europe, being the national religions of Spain and France, who both happened to be the traditional enemies of England. To paranoid Englishmen, isolated on their island nation, all of Europe was crawling with Catholics. As Timothy Harrington put it in a 1756 sermon, “a great part of the European Churches that are now under the impositions and usurpations of Antichrist.”<sup>84</sup> Much of the anti-Catholicism came from the massive influence of John Foxe’s *Book of Martyrs* published

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<sup>83</sup> Cogliano, *No King, No Popery*, page 5.

<sup>84</sup> Thomas Harrington, *Prevailing Wickedness, and Distressing Judgments, Ill-boding Symptoms on a Stupid People* (Boston: Edes and Gill, 1756), page 29.

in 1563.<sup>85</sup> This detailed the crimes committed against Protestants under Queen Mary. It equated Protestantism with being English and free.<sup>86</sup> This was a central tenet to English colonists who crossed the Atlantic. Along with the central idea of slavery and tyranny, Catholicism was hated because of the perception of its liturgy. Protestants labeled it idolatry and superstition, which corrupted the minds of the impressionable and uneducated. It was meant to keep the believers in a state of “blind faith” so that their rulers could control them more easily.<sup>87</sup>

Once across the ocean, this idea did not die. Rather, it adapted to the new environment. Catholicism became equated with European despotism and tyranny. It was also feared because they believed that the French were converting Native Americans in an effort to use them to destroy their neighbors to the south. The threat of French and Indian incursions made this a very real fear to English colonists, which contributed to fear of French popery rather than the traditional English fear of Spanish Catholics.<sup>88</sup> So when preachers began to foment anti-Catholic rhetoric, they knew that they were beating a familiar drum to which most people would march.

And march they did; colonial participation in the French and Indian war was unprecedented in both the size of forces recruited and the scope of operations in which they were involved. As Fred Anderson points out in his work on Massachusetts militia during the war, 87.9 percent of provincial troops were there of their own volition.<sup>89</sup> In the age of press-gangs, this was impressive. Nor do they seem to have been driven into

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<sup>85</sup> Foxe's *Book of Martyrs* was a catalogue of Christian martyrs from the 1<sup>st</sup> century to the 16<sup>th</sup> century, with special emphasis on those Protestants persecuted by the Catholic Church. It influenced public opinion about Catholics for centuries.

<sup>86</sup> Cogliano, *No King, No Popery*, page 6.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, page 9.

<sup>88</sup> Cogliano, *No King, No Popery*, page 8.

<sup>89</sup> Fred Anderson, “A People’s Army: Provincial Military Service in Massachusetts during the Seven Years’ War” in *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Third Series, Vol. 40, No. 4 (Oct., 1983), page 504.

the service by the necessity of want or the option of prison time. They were young men, for the most part, who seem to have been driven by the genuine desire to serve, and perhaps additionally to make some money and see the world.<sup>90</sup> The number who volunteered is also somewhat astounding: by contemporary estimates and modern statistics, about one man in three served.<sup>91</sup>

One part of the enthusiastic push to serve in the military forces engaged in the conflict was the sense that perhaps this was to be the last war against the French in North America and men joined the military in order to make sure that it would indeed be the last. Ever since they had landed on that continent's shores, both Britain and France had eyed each other with significant distrust. As the French moved south, building a fur trading empire and establishing relationships with Indian nations, and the English colonists moved north and west in search of land, distrust turned into actual fighting. Three conflicts occurred between 1689 and 1748, all offshoots of European wars.

The first, King William's War (1689-1697), was a bloody affair fought in Canada and New England. The European spur for the conflict was the War of the League of Augsburg, which was fought over several factors, the most pertinent of which was who would sit on the English throne, Protestant King William of Orange or King James II, who just happened to be Catholic.<sup>92</sup> The fighting in North America was characterized by small raids with Native American allies. Several towns in New England were ravaged by these raids, including York, Maine and Durham, New Hampshire. English offensives took the town of Port Royal in Nova Scotia, but stalled at Quebec. The French would

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<sup>90</sup> Anderson, "A People's Army" in *The William and Mary Quarterly*, page 518.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, page 526.

<sup>92</sup> Walter R. Borneman, *The French and Indian War: Deciding the Fate of North America* (New York: Harper Collins, 2006), page 6.



eventually retake Port Royal and reduce English operations to those of a defensive nature. The fighting ended with a treaty settled in Europe, with no clear gains for either side.<sup>93</sup>

Peace would not last long, as warfare again flared up on the northern and southern borders of the English colonies. Queen Anne's War (1702-1713), as the colonists called it, was part of the larger War of Spanish Succession. This war saw gains by the British, in taking parts of Newfoundland and Acadia. However, the fighting caused economic crises in some colonies, and was particularly devastating to Indian nations. Spanish Florida was also involved in the fighting. The war wreaked so much havoc on Spanish missions, towns, and allied Indian nations that the power of the Spanish was effectively broken there.<sup>94</sup> This was one reason that Protestant zealots did not call for the eradication of the Spanish as well as the French, because by the 1750s, Florida was not a significant threat.

The 1713 Treaty of Utrecht left doubts over borders in North America, and did nothing to quell the lingering hatred that had developed between English and French colonists in North America. Accordingly, when the next European war came along, the War of Austrian Succession, colonists began their own front to the war. King George's War (1744-1748) was strongly backed by the Protestant clergy and saw the taking of the French fortress at Louisbourg by a provincial force from New England.<sup>95</sup> In the end, Britain turned over Louisbourg to the French in return for Madras, India. When the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle was signed in 1748, nothing had changed for those in the English colonies save for empty chairs at home and a greater hatred for the French.<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> Borneman, *The French and Indian War*, page 6.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, page 7.

<sup>95</sup> Borneman, *The French and Indian War*, page 10.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, page 11.

The sermons from King George's War offer little in the way of anti-Catholic rhetoric. Three clergy members who would reprise their roles six years later, Samuel Checkley, Joseph Sewall, and Gilbert Tennent, all delivered sermons concerning this victory. Samuel Checkley spoke on the need to pray and fast in order to bring about a victory, but was uncharacteristically quiet on the subject of the enemy.<sup>97</sup> Ten years later he would declare that the Catholics were "enemies of the Son of God."<sup>98</sup> Likewise, Joseph Sewall, though calling for vengeance against their enemies, does not liken the conflict to a millennial struggle. He prays for the conversion of all in Louisbourg, but that is the extent of his comments on their Catholic enemies.<sup>99</sup> Even Gilbert Tennant, who would later accuse France of having a "Popish" government, does not make religious comments about the war.<sup>100</sup>

Their sermons do not contain the invective hatred for the Catholic Church or make the struggle in any way seem as though it was the final war for North America. Nor are there any passages describing the horror of living under a French Catholic government. It is also clear that they did not see the possibility of defeat, as so many sermon writers feared in the 1750s. It is evident that these sermon writers did not see King George's War as a serious conflict for the continent.

These three wars set the stage for the final struggle in 1754. All three were begun in Europe, and the bulk of the fighting happened there. While the colonial wars could be savage and deadly, they were not the central focus of the European powers. What

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<sup>97</sup> Samuel Checkley, *Prayer a Duty, when God's People go Forth to War* (Boston: B. Green and Co., 1745).

<sup>98</sup> Samuel Checkley, *The Duty of God's People when Engaged in War* (Boston: D. Fowle and Z. Fowle, 1755), page 28.

<sup>99</sup> Joseph Sewall, *The Lamb Slain, Worthy to be Praised, as the Most Powerful, Rich, Wise, and Strong* (Boston: D. Henchman, 1745), page 34.

<sup>100</sup> Gilbert Tennent, *The Necessity of Praising God for Mercies Receiv'd* (Philadelphia: William Bradford, 1745).

mattered was what happened in Europe. The French and Indian War has the distinction of being the first true world war in that it was fought on multiple continents, and it began in North America. Fighting began in Pennsylvania in 1754, spread through the colonies, and eventually into Europe and beyond. Perhaps it is for this reason that the Protestant clergy saw this war as being in some way significant and put forth so much effort to make it the final push against France. The British government in London certainly saw it as an opportunity to strike a severe blow against their rival, though, as noted before, they were going to war for reasons of trade and empire.

In all of these conflicts, both the British and the French used their Indian allies extensively. The way that the Indians were seen in a millennial sense has already been addressed; the way that the majority of the sermons deal with them has yet to be discussed. They are treated differently than the other enemy of the English, the Catholics. While Catholics are painted as being full of calculated evil and devilment, the Indians are generally seen as having some measure of natural innocence. The Catholics are the actors who have turned the Indians on the English. As Thomas Pollen accuses: “To have stirred up Heathens to destroy us their Fellow-Christians...to have made those very Heathens, who were before our hearty Friends, to become first Christians, and then our implacable Enemies.”<sup>101</sup> Chauncey Graham, writing in 1756, asks, “Who stirred up the Western Natives, who before, for a long Time, had continued our peaceable neighbors, to commit such Outrages, make such inhuman Carnages, and forced such

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<sup>101</sup> Pollen, *Sermon Preached in Trinity Church*, page 10

awful Desolation thro' the frontiers of our Western Provinces, but that Nation, which envies our Privileges, hates our Religion, and insatiably thirsts for our Blood?"<sup>102</sup>

Others place the blame for Indian attacks on themselves and their countrymen. Paraphrasing Psalm 2, Graham asks, "Why do the Heathen rage? What's the matter with the Indians?"<sup>103</sup> He quickly answers his own question: "Because we have not taken Care, and been at suitable Pains to gospelize them."<sup>104</sup> Writing in 1763, on the eve of victory, John Brown castigates his countrymen for not being as zealous as the Catholics in their efforts to convert the Indians. He states that the successes of the French in the late war were in part due to their capacity to convert the tribes.<sup>105</sup> Frielinghuysen, thinking on the Albany Congress of 1754, states that the English have failed in their alliance with the Indians. He says that the Indians have been abandoned by the English, and only prayer and fasting can bring them back.<sup>106</sup> The Indian attacks were seen as being God's punishment for straying from righteousness..

With their borders being assailed by both Indian raids and French assaults, the English colonists looked about them to see why this all-out assault on their lives and property was taking place. Some blamed their own sinfulness. A few blamed geopolitical factors. But as we have seen, most blamed the Catholic French for trying to bind them in slavery with "Silver Chains."<sup>107</sup> Was it only the French Catholics that were to blame? There were English Catholics within the colonies.

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<sup>102</sup> Graham, *Some Few Reasons Suggested, why the Heathen are at Present Permitted to Rage in the British colonies in North-America*, pages 4-5.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*, page 6.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, page 7.

<sup>105</sup> John Brown, *On Religious Liberty: A Sermon, Preached at St. Paul's Cathedral, on Sunday the 6th of March, 1763* (London: Davis and Reymers, 1763), page iv.

<sup>106</sup> Frielinghuysen, *A Sermon. Preached on Occasion of the Late Treaty Held in Albany*, page 14.

<sup>107</sup> Williams, *The Duty of Christian Soldiers, When Called to War, to Undertake it in the Name of God*, page 34.

The colony of Maryland was founded by Catholics and had the tenet of religious tolerance as one of its draws.<sup>108</sup> However, though the colony began with these lofty ideals in 1633, events in England would soon change them. The Glorious Revolution in 1688 put a Protestant back on the English throne after a brief Catholic interlude and Maryland became a royal colony. This meant that the law of England, including the penal code against Catholics, was in effect.<sup>109</sup> From then on, the Church of England was the official religion of the colony. In 1704, “An Act to Prevent the Growth of Popery in this Province” was passed by the Maryland legislature, restricting the activities of Catholic clergy. They could not proselytize, say Mass, or baptize children whose parents were not Catholic.<sup>110</sup> Further legislation through the years curtailed the activity of Catholics in society, such as forbidding them from being teachers or lawyers. In essence, the Protestant majority rendered the Catholics toothless.

Their non-threatening status notwithstanding, the Maryland legislature panicked when the fighting began in 1754 and attempted to place severe penalties on English Catholics. Because of the number of gentry sympathetic to Catholic business interests in the upper house, these laws were not passed. Instead, a separate tax was placed on Catholics to pay for the war effort.<sup>111</sup> This piece of Protestant legislation was a humiliation for Catholics in Maryland, as they were deemed second-class citizens and their money was paying for the bullets used to kill their fellow Catholics.

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<sup>108</sup> James J. Hennessy, *American Catholics: A History of the Roman Catholic Community in the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981), page 38.

<sup>109</sup> Hennessy, *American Catholics*, page 42.

<sup>110</sup> Jay P. Dolan, *The American Catholic Experience: A History From Colonial Times to the Present* (New York: Image Books, 1987), page 84.

<sup>111</sup> Dolan, *The American Catholic Experience*, page 85.

A second group of Catholics was moving into the colonies at this time, moving in lesser numbers to Pennsylvania. In 1765, the number of Catholics in Maryland was about 20,000; the number in Pennsylvania was significantly less, about 6,000. Most of these were of German ancestry.<sup>112</sup> Drawn by Quaker declarations of religious liberty, these Catholics settled mainly on the frontiers of society. However, Philadelphia also had a fair number of Catholics, judging by the grumblings of an Anglican minister that “this city is very much infested with Popery.”<sup>113</sup>

These Catholics were not exempt from paranoia during times of war. They suffered from harassment during King George’s War and accusations of complicity with the enemy in the French and Indian War.<sup>114</sup> Graham, always quick to find fault with anything Catholic, draws a picture of the plot: “...consider, who the first Settlers of Maryland were, and the Swarms of Popish Convicts, every year transported into those Western Colonies, who are of the same Religion, and without Doubt, with the same Interest as our national Enemies.”<sup>115</sup> He then goes on to say that these Marylanders are not quick to act when hostilities occur within their borders. They say that they are raising militia, he accuses, but no actions are ever taken. He fears for the British interest in that colony.<sup>116</sup>

Sermon authors could even spread rumors about the behaviors of the Catholics in their communities. Matthias Harris cautions his listeners to “be extremely vigilant and

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<sup>112</sup> Dolan, *The American Catholic Experience*, page 87.

<sup>113</sup> Hennessy, *American Catholics*, page 49.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, page 50.

<sup>115</sup> Graham, *Some Few Reasons Suggested, why the Heathen are at Present Permitted to Rage in the British colonies in North-America*, page 19.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*, page 20.

attentive” to those Catholics in their midst, to ensure that it does not grow or spread.<sup>117</sup> Philip Reading warns his audience in Philadelphia that the Catholics amongst them were not their bloodthirsty selves because they were in the minority. He explains that Catholics had been told by a Cardinal that they were not obligated to destroy heretics when they did not have the sufficient power.<sup>118</sup> However, if the French were to come in force, then Catholics would have the necessary strength to begin persecuting Protestants. Perhaps because of this kind of preaching, Protestants in Philadelphia were concerned that the French were corresponding with priests in that city. Indeed, Thomas Barton refers to Catholic priests as, “Tools of a foreign Yoke.”<sup>119</sup> Suspicion of Catholic priests was common; Lord Loudon himself warned Governor Sharpe of Maryland of a priest in Maryland who was taking letters to French forts.<sup>120</sup> Because of incidents such as these, Pennsylvania eventually banned the right of Catholics to bear arms in 1757.<sup>121</sup>

The English Protestants were still not as worried about their own Catholics as they were the French. They believed that they could control the Papists within their midst through the rule of law, as they did in Maryland. Many hoped that through the legislation that restricted Catholic baptisms, the Catholic faith would die out altogether and the colonists’ innate British sensibilities would take over.

It was not the Catholics in their midst that worried the colonists; it was the Catholics who lay to the north and west. Fear of French arms and their ability to influence Indian nations to go raiding with them was widespread and logical, given the

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<sup>117</sup> Matthias Harris, *A Sermon, Preached in the Church of St. Peters in Lewis, in Sussex County on Delaware, on July 8, 1757* (Philadelphia: James Chattin, 1757), page 36.

<sup>118</sup> Reading, *The Protestant's Danger, and the Protestant's Duty*, page 18.

<sup>119</sup> Barton, *Unanimity and Public Spirit*, page 10.

<sup>120</sup> Loudon to Sharpe, *The Correspondence of Governor Sharpe, 1753-1757* (Baltimore: Maryland State Archives, vol.6, 1890), page 518.

<sup>121</sup> Hennessy, *American Catholics*, page 50.

number of raids that colonies such as Pennsylvania were experiencing. However, a deeper fear underlay the physical fear of bodily harm: that of a spiritual crusade to destroy Protestantism and freedom in North America. It was rumored that the French king was not behind the war, but rather the entire Catholic Church. Philip Reading warned that the Catholic Church entered the new world,

loaded with its deserved Contempt. Yet contemptible as its appearance was...such is the restless Temper of its advocates, that no practicable Arts have, from Time to Time, been left unessayed for the Enlargement of its borders. For this the Banners of France are now displayed, her Fleets have sailed, her Armies been transported, to establish at once the Thrones of Tyranny and Superstition in the Western World.<sup>122</sup>

Reading explains that the Catholic Church is inherently bent on the destruction of the Protestant religion and cites the Roman Breviary and Church Councils that discuss the efforts to “root out Hereticks.”<sup>123</sup> The purpose for this crusade, says Reading, is, “the setting up of the pretended Vicar of Christ above all the Powers on Earth.”<sup>124</sup> This interpretation of the war would place the onus for hostilities on the pope.

Thomas Barton, also in Pennsylvania, similarly warns against what he sees as a Catholic conspiracy. He bids his audience to look around the world and see all the states under Catholic sway, and see “what an immense Majority of our Fellow-Creatures groan beneath the Iron Scourge of a few Tyrants.”<sup>125</sup> Solomon Williams says that the French are, “under the Power of Antichrist, of Popish Darkness, Bigotry, and Superstition; they are adherents of the Man of Sin.”<sup>126</sup> The idea that the Catholic Church was behind the

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<sup>122</sup> Reading, *The Protestant's Danger, and the Protestant's Duty*, page 11.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*, page 17.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*, page 18.

<sup>125</sup> Barton, *Unanimity and Public Spirit*, page 15.

<sup>126</sup> Williams, *Duty of Christian Soldier*, page 26.



war would not have been a surprise to English colonists, who remembered quite well the Catholic plot to blow up parliament via the intrigues of Guy Fawkes.

Others believed that French troops were being ordered to continue the destruction of Protestants that had begun in France. Philip Reading makes it clear that he think that the French carry the Catholic agenda on the points of their bayonets: “If some Accounts may be credited, the Soldiery of France are at this time commissioned to extirpate the Reformed of that Nation...And are not these the Armies who are now invading our Borders?”<sup>127</sup>

In the face of this onslaught of the world’s major religion, ministers urged their congregations never to give up hope. Samuel Checkley, speaking to soldiers in Boston in 1755, urged his listeners to put their faith in God, for “He will not cast off his People who acknowledge him in their Proceedings, and engage in his Strength and Fear.”<sup>128</sup> This confidence went further, however. Checkley continues, saying that not only will God attend their arms, but that He has already shown that they will be victorious. Their enemies, he says, are “the enemies of the Son of God, and of his Cause. They plainly discover themselves to be a Branch of the Antichristian Romish Church, spoken of in the Book of Revelation; the Downfall of which, is clearly foretold.”<sup>129</sup> Solomon Williams echoes this sentiment, saying, “Antichristian Powers are Doom’d to Destruction; sooner or later, God will, as He has said, Rev. 16.6—Give them Blood to drink, for they are

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<sup>127</sup> Reading, *The Protestant's Danger, and the Protestant's Duty*, page 18-19.

<sup>128</sup> Checkley, *The Duty of God's People when Engaged in War*, page 21.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*, pages 28-29.

worthy.”<sup>130</sup> Going back to an earlier quote, remember that John Ballantine also noted that their “Destruction is plainly foretold in the Word of God.”<sup>131</sup>

Not only does Ballantine believe in the future destruction of the Catholic Church, he sees that it is beginning now: “God has of late been pouring out the Vials of His Wrath on the Antichristian States. He has been testifying His Displeasure against them by tremendous Earthquakes.”<sup>132</sup> It is the firebrand Jonathan Mayhew who puts it the most eloquently: “God hath revealed his purpose, his unalterable purpose, in due time, tho’ gradually, to consume and destroy the beast and the false prophet, with their adherents.”<sup>133</sup>

For others, the predictions of doom for Catholicism went back to scriptural texts before Revelation, all the way back to Genesis with the story of Cain and Abel. Philip Reading, always ready to place a Biblical interpretation on the conflict, traces the animosity between Catholics and Protestants to the animosity between Cain and Abel, because Abel’s sacrifice was pleasing to God and Cain’s was not.<sup>134</sup> John Ballantine roared that “the Blood of Abel, cries aloud for Vengeance against them.”<sup>135</sup> The conflict now had a Biblical beginning and a Biblical end.

If God were decreeing judgment, then His people should surely not refrain from giving Him a helping hand, the ministers argued. “Nay,” spoke Thomas Pollen in 1755,

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<sup>130</sup> Williams, *The Duty of Christian Soldiers, When Called to War, to Undertake it in the Name of God*, page 28.

<sup>131</sup> Ballantine, *The Importance of God's Presence with an Army*, page 19.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid., page 19.

<sup>133</sup> Jonathan Mayhew, *Two Discourses Delivered October 25th. 1759. Being the Day Appointed by Authority to be Observed as a Day of Public Thanksgiving, for the Success of His Majesty's Arms, More Particularly in the Reduction of Quebec, the Capital of Canada* (Boston: Richard Draper, 1759), page 49.

<sup>134</sup> Reading, *The Protestant's Danger, and the Protestant's Duty*, page 11.

<sup>135</sup> Ballantine, *The Importance of God's Presence with an Army*, Page 19.

“tis a Breach of Charity to refuse to execute Judgment.”<sup>136</sup> In Rhode Island, Jonathan Ellis told a group of assembled soldiers that, “This Cause of Christ is to be maintained by Force.”<sup>137</sup> Following the defeat of General Braddock in Pennsylvania in 1755, Samuel Davies of Virginia told his listeners that it was their duty to take up arms to protect their religion for their posterity.<sup>138</sup> Amos Adams, upon hearing of the fall of Quebec, rejoiced as, “Such Enemies are the Scourge of Mankind, and their Fall is a publick Good, a common Benefit.”<sup>139</sup>

One point that ministers were quick to send home with their congregations was that this conflict would have only two results: victory or death. There was to be no defeat. Life under Catholics would be too horrible to bear. Solomon Williams prayed that, “if in Righteous Judgment, God will not let us Live free from Popish Tyranny, and Slavery, may He give us Faith, and Courage to Die like Protestants, and good Christians.”<sup>140</sup> Gilbert Tennent, giving a discourse to frightened citizens in a year of deadly French and Indian raids, cautioned that, “It is a Thousand Times better to be under the Government of Turks than Papists...Death, my Brethren, in the Field of Battle, the Bed of Honour, while nobly contending for our Religion and Liberty, is infinitely preferable to the sordid Life of a Slave.”<sup>141</sup> He declares that it is better that none survive the catastrophe of a defeat and that if he were to give up his religion, it would be better

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<sup>136</sup> Thomas Pollen, *Sermon Preached in Trinity Church, Newport, Rhode-Island, on Thursday, May 29. 1755. Upon Occasion of the Embarkation of Some of the Colony's Troops, in Order to Go Against the Enemy* (Newport, R.I.: James Franklin, 1755), page 7.

<sup>137</sup> Ellis, *The Justice of the Present War against the French in America*, page 5.

<sup>138</sup> Samuel Davies, *Religion and Patriotism the Constituents of a Good Soldier* (Philadelphia: James Chattin, 1755), page 5.

<sup>139</sup> Amos Adams, *Songs of Victory Directed by Human Compassion, and Qualified with Christian Benevolence* (Boston: Edes and Gill, 1759), page 7.

<sup>140</sup> Williams, *The Duty of Christian Soldiers, When Called to War, to Undertake it in the Name of God*, page 35.

<sup>141</sup> Gilbert Tennent, *Happiness of Rewarding*, page 31.

for him to be removed from men and live as a “Beast.”<sup>142</sup> Matthias Harris declares that the “Gates of Hell and Rome” shall not prevail against the Protestant cause.<sup>143</sup> These men speak for the majority of those who delivered sermons on the topic of the war: it would be better to die than live under French Catholic rule, which would be a dual slavery of body and mind.

Some ministers managed to deliver their message in clear and concise statements that encapsulated what their brethren said in thirty or forty pages. One such statement is from Joseph Emerson of Pepperell, Massachusetts, who declares that, “Let me put you in Mind, that the Cause in which you are engaged, is the *Cause of God, the Cause of Religion, the Cause of Liberty*...you are called to fight for the Recovery of our Rights, for the Protection of our Priveleges we enjoy as Protestants. The united Voice of our King, of our Brethren at home, of our Country here, of God in his Providence, is, *Canada must be subdued, Canada must be subdued*, or no Peace for Protestants, no Peace for the pure Profession of the Religion of Jesus.”<sup>144</sup> Another such author is Samuel Bird.

Speaking on the occasion of the fall of Quebec, Bird reminds his listeners of their goal:

Yea, that you are to draw the Sword in the Cause of King Jesus, the King of Kings, in the Defence of his Subjects; against the Emissaries and Incendiaries of Hell and Rome. You have undertaken for us, and we rely upon your Fidelity and Success, under God, to secure to us our religious Privileges, which our dearer to us than our Lives...the faithful Ministers of God’s Word must have a part in this Address to you, and that of no small Moment; for they can’t be insensible, what must be the Consequence of the Popish Enemies prevailing; namely, that their Mouths will soon be shut, and their Embassy at an end...finish the Dispute in North

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<sup>142</sup> Gilbert Tennent, *Happiness of Rewarding*, page 31

<sup>143</sup> Harris, *A Sermon, Preached in the Church of St. Peters in Lewis, in Sussex County on Delaware, on July 8, 1757*, page 52.

<sup>144</sup> Emerson, *The Fear of God, an Antidote Against the Fear of Man*, pages 19-20.

America... The Cause you have undertaken is a good Cause; the Cause of God and his People.<sup>145</sup>

In an impassioned plea to his flock, Samuel Davies of Virginia begged, “You that love your Religion, enlist; for your Religion is in Danger. Can Protestant Christianity expect Quarters from Heathen Savages and French Papists? Sure in such an alliance, the Powers of Hells make a third party.”<sup>146</sup> This particular sermon was read all the way in Boston. It offers a good example of the way that sermons could travel and influence readers, and serves as a suitable closing remark for this chapter.

Ministers had a profound influence on public opinion. Their words weighed heavily on their listener’s ears and helped them make the crucial decisions about whether to enlist or give financial support to the war. Protestant clergy stood together and delivered a strong statement on the war, one that eclipsed the momentary physical concerns of security or even empire: they believed that they were fighting for the future of freedom in North America. No sermon writers spoke out against the war and called for peace, not even in the darkest hours of British fortunes.

The sermon authors made it quite clear that this war was not a new phenomenon, but rather the conclusion of a long struggle between faiths. Their words paint a picture of the struggle in Biblical and millennial terms: it was the war that would establish them as the new Israel. In a broader sense, Protestant clergy believed that they were fighting to save the very soul of the British Empire in North America.

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<sup>145</sup> Samuel Bird, *The Importance of the Divine Presence with Our Host* (New Haven: James Parker and Co., 1759), pages 18-20.

<sup>146</sup> Samuel Davies, *The Curse of Cowardice* (Woodbridge: James Parker, 1759), page 9.

While we know that they had a large and influential audience, did anyone listen to their call to arms for the Protestant religion? The following chapter will show how politicians and statesmen took up the call for religion in unlikely places.

## CHAPTER II

## DOCTRINE

*“No nation now in Europe, on the earth, whose civil Government is like that of Great Britain.”<sup>147</sup>*

It is a historical tendency of Americans, whether colonial or not, to go to war for a purpose that they can identify with and see as defending their values. They are loath to follow a cause that seems merely utilitarian. Whatever one may say of the way that propaganda for war has twisted these values or twisted situations to meet these values, it remains true that Americans have always felt better when fighting a war with a cause. A good example of this is how Americans prefer to believe that the North fought Civil War to free the slaves; this sounds more appealing than fighting for the preservation of the Union. Psychologically, it is easier to give more of oneself to a costly struggle when you can be personally united to a cause that is greater than the sum of its parts.

As noted in the previous chapter, religion can be used as a spur for war. It has been used countless times in the past millennia, by believers of almost every creed, to justify the acts that leaders have taken to protect their perceived national interest. Religious warfare is a phenomenon that goes beyond the divide between east and west. In fact, it may be the single uniting factor for the world in human history.

So when Samuel Bird called for colonial Americans to “draw the Sword in the Cause of King Jesus,” he was following in a long tradition.<sup>148</sup> What made this significant

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<sup>147</sup> James Lockwood, *The Worth and Excellence* (New London, 1759), page 13.

was that religious war for the final destruction of Catholic New France was being invoked in the English colonies of North America. Ministers had made the call to arms in support of war against territorial invasion in the past. This time they transformed it in their sermons into a war for the true religion, Protestantism, and called for a final end to their traditional enemies to the north. Did this reshaped war message have the power to turn the war into a crusade against Catholicism? As this chapter will show, political figures were not united in the decision to wage religious war. Colonial assemblies were much more eager to pass laws against Catholics in their midst than vote for money to take the war to New France. Governors often had close ties to the crown and shared the crown's goals for the war. However, there were some notable exceptions who parroted the rhetoric of Protestant ministers.

This chapter covers how political figures and popular political debate were influenced by religious rhetoric. It is entitled "Doctrine," because, as noted in the previous chapter, this is where the deliverer of a sermon would place the crucial part of his oratory. In order for there to be a war in the first place, politicians had to pass the necessary acts, raise troops and funds, and appoint the necessary officers to oversee the strategy. To them would fall the task of making speeches to drum up support for the war, ensuring that their colonies sent enough troops to the front, and providing provisions for the royal troops.

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<sup>148</sup> Samuel Bird, *The Importance of the Divine Presence with Our Host* (New Haven: James Parker and Co., 1759), page 18.



## Structure of Colonial Governments

To properly understand the role of colonial governments, one must first understand how they were structured and composed. Even though the majority of colonists were English by heritage, a great many could trace their ancestry back to the days when both small and large European powers butted heads in the New World. The colony of New York contained large numbers of people of Dutch ancestry, many of them filling New York City. These were remnants of the colony of New Amsterdam that had fallen to the English in 1664.<sup>149</sup> This colony had failed largely because of the absence of Dutch citizens who wanted to leave the Netherlands for a cold, inhospitable land. There were more than just Dutchmen: Poles, Slavs, Nordic peoples, and Germans made the colony of New Amsterdam truly a microcosm of northern Europe.<sup>150</sup>

Although the English takeover was complete, compelling the Netherlands to relinquish their colony, the Dutch colonists still practiced their traditions and retained their culture, including their language. Because they were fellow Protestants, most English did not object to this, but even by 1705 some were saying that it was about time for the Dutch to start speaking English.<sup>151</sup> Sweden also briefly attempted a colony, but had the same problem as the Netherlands: not enough people wanted to leave Sweden for the colony to be a success.<sup>152</sup>

In contrast to the mixed ethnicities found in New York and other mid-Atlantic colonies, New England was soundly English. However, it made up for this by having a

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<sup>149</sup> Brendan McConville, *The King's Three Faces: The Rise and Fall of Royal America, 1688-1776* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), page 24.

<sup>150</sup> McConville, *The King's Three Faces*, page 24.

<sup>151</sup> *Ibid.*, page 25.

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid.*, page 23.

plethora of flavors of Protestant communities in many different colonies. As such, each colony's laws might and did differ from the others. Some colonies, like Rhode Island, tolerated several religions, while others, such as Massachusetts, only allowed one type of Protestantism. All were common in one thing: no Catholics allowed.<sup>153</sup>

Maryland and Pennsylvania presented problems to the New England colonies, as both had Catholic populations, as outlined in the previous chapter. Not only did this create friction inside the colonies, but also with other colonial officials. Virginia and South Carolina were also a frustration to the New England Protestants, as they soon became proponents of the Church of England, viewed by some as only being better than Catholicism by virtue of its Protestant affiliation.<sup>154</sup>

This mix of religious and ethnic backgrounds made each colony unique in its populace, and so the crown had to approach each one differently in their efforts to impose effective governance. Each colony also came under royal jurisdiction at different times. Some were royal colonies from the outset; others came under the control of the crown through long-term negotiations and power struggles. It seems odd at first that the English government would have to negotiate with its own citizens for government, but the distance between the colonies and England was such that royal authority was hard to impose. In addition, the varying degrees of Protestantism and ethnicities in the colonies also hindered direct control by the crown.<sup>155</sup>

One seminal event set the stage for the future course of the colonies: the Restoration Period of the Stuart Monarchy. In 1685, King James II proclaimed his Catholicism and began to try to assert more control over the colonies. Protestants in

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<sup>153</sup>McConville, *The King's Three Faces*, page 26.

<sup>154</sup>Ibid., page 28.

<sup>155</sup>Ibid., page 46.

North America saw this as an effort to “Damn the English Nation to Popery and Slavery.”<sup>156</sup> Even though James II and the Stuarts would eventually be ousted in 1688 by William of Orange, the events of this period would be defining for the Protestants in North America. From now on, Catholicism in any form would be associated with the stifling power of absolute monarchy.<sup>157</sup> Protestantism was the face of the English world. Even when the colonies all held royal charters by the time of the war in the 1750’s, they excused it because the government was associated with Protestantism. It was the birth of what Brendan McConville calls “the Protestant empire.”<sup>158</sup>

As each colony’s demographic was unique, so were the governments that ran each colony. Not all the colonies were founded by the crown. In fact, most were formed by early business venture groups which funded the colony with the expectation that they would receive a return for their investment. These were called corporate colonies.<sup>159</sup> Virginia was such a colony. Another type of colony was the proprietary colony; that is, a colony under the proprietorship of one man, such as William Penn in Pennsylvania and the Calverts in Maryland.<sup>160</sup> Lastly, some colonies were given their charters directly by the crown.

By the time of the French and Indian War, each colony, no matter where it got its charter from, had royal representatives in the form of a governor or a lieutenant

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<sup>156</sup> Gilbert Burnet, *History of His Own Time: From the Restoration of Charles II to the Settlement of King William and Queen Mary at the Revolution: to Which is Prefixed a Summary Recapitulation of Affairs in Church and State from King James I to the Restoration in the Year 1660*, Vol. I (London: Printed for Thomas Ward, 1724), pages 655-656.

<sup>157</sup> McConville, *The King’s Three Faces*, page 38-39.

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid.*, page 39.

<sup>159</sup> J.M. Sosin, *English America and Imperial Inconstancy: The Rise of Provincial Autonomy, 1696-1715* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1985), page 16.

<sup>160</sup> Sosin, *English America and Imperial Inconstancy*, page 4.

governor.<sup>161</sup> This path towards royal representation in each colony's government was not always smooth or free from violence. The transition from a religious state to an outpost of empire proved difficult for the colonies that originally formed Massachusetts. However, from 1702 to the French and Indian War, the English monarchy gradually gained control over their colonies. They had learned from the Stuart experience not to try to heavy-handedly force their colonies to accept the authority of the crown. Instead, the traditions and customs of imperial hierarchy were slowly introduced into colonial society; such as elaborate ceremonies at the installment of new governors and on the birthdays of royals. These ceremonies, as McConville posits, created a bond between the monarch and his people that did more to bring the colonies into the empire than perhaps anything else.<sup>162</sup>

Many colonists, especially those in New England who were still adhering to the Puritan theocracy, found these ceremonies shocking and even blasphemous. New England had basically been run by the Puritan oligarchy since 1630. Samuel Sewall, a Bostonian writing in 1702, noted with disgust that in the celebration of Queen Anne's coronation, secular government representatives preceded religious ministers in the order of the procession.<sup>163</sup> Religion was deeply rooted in the foundations of New England and continued to play a role in the minds of its people long after the crimson of the crown had replaced the plainness of the Puritan trappings.<sup>164</sup>

Nor was the crown itself free from the millennialism of the New Englanders. Rather than try to replace the millennial ideology with one of empire above all, the crown

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<sup>161</sup> Sosin, *English America and Imperial Inconstancy*, page 65.

<sup>162</sup> *Ibid.*, page 50.

<sup>163</sup> *Ibid.*, page 52.

<sup>164</sup> McConville, *The King's Three Faces*, page 55.

instead incorporated each monarch's story into the millennial framework, and showed how each was a tool for the ends of bringing about heaven on earth.<sup>165</sup>

All the colonies, by the time of the war, held some forms of government in common, as noted earlier. The colonial assemblies differed in name and somewhat in structure according to each colony. Most members of this body were elected to their position, such as those in Connecticut who were sent to represent their town.<sup>166</sup> The system mirrored England, with its Prime Minister and Houses of Parliament.

The role of the governor was to be the representative of the crown in the colony. The role of the lieutenant governor was "to execute and perform all and singular the Powers and Directions contained in our said Commission to the said Samuel Shute [governor], and such Instructions as are already or hereafter shall, from time to time, be sent unto him."<sup>167</sup> In short, the lieutenant governor was to take the place of the governor if anything were to happen that would render the governor unfit for service.

It was not necessary for the governor to be from England; in fact, by the time of the war, many had been born and raised in the colony that they would govern. They were appointed by the king, but were dependent upon the good will of the colonial assembly for financial remuneration and support.<sup>168</sup> This system was imperfect, but was intended to keep governors balanced between both crown and colonists. What often happened was that the governor's authority would be undermined by one or both parties. If he sided too strongly with the colonists, the crown might decide to recall him. If he sided with the

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<sup>165</sup> McConville, *The King's Three Faces*, page 83.

<sup>166</sup> Harold E. Selesky, *War and Society in Colonial Connecticut* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), page 120.

<sup>167</sup> Evarts Boutell Greene, *The Provincial Governor in the English Colonies of North America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1898), page 264.

<sup>168</sup> McConville, *The King's Three Faces*, page 148.

crown, then the colonial assembly would revoke his pay. The correspondence of many of the governors is full of frustration at the way in which the system pulled them back and forth.

The power of the governor was limited. Being the right hand of the king was all well and good, but the distance between the king and North America was such that it could take weeks for governors to hear back from London. In that time, the situation could have changed dramatically. Governors had the authority to appoint judges, sheriffs, and other agents of the crown, as well as to call up the militia. However, they were often held in check by the assembly, which might refuse to carry out the governor's orders. With the central authority of the empire a several-week voyage away, it was often the diplomacy and personality of the governor that led to successful policy making.<sup>169</sup> Governors who did not understand this balancing act often ended up in exile in their own houses.<sup>170</sup>

The colonial assembly was the body that represented the needs of the colony. It was most often democratically elected, although sometimes the process could be suspect. Drawn from across the colony, the members of the assembly were supposed to represent their own regions. Often, as in the case of Maryland, they were arranged into an upper house and a lower house.<sup>171</sup> The upper house tended to be made up of wealthier colonists. The assembly organized the colonial budget and took on the burden of collecting taxes. They also were responsible for raising and maintaining the colonial militia. Since in the colonial period most affairs of regional security were handled

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<sup>169</sup> Sosin, *English America and Imperial Inconstancy*, page 36.

<sup>170</sup> Greene, *The Provincial Governor in Colonial North America*, page 167.

<sup>171</sup> McConville, *The King's Three Faces*, page 149.

internally, this was a very important job. It could also be very expensive and unpopular, because the militia would have to be equipped with money from the colony's coffers.<sup>172</sup>

Within this structure of government, there existed many tensions. At the root, especially in New England, lay the struggle between the rights of the people and their obligations to the crown. In areas that had been governed by the Puritans, the rights of the people were synonymous with their religious credo. The rights of all men, particularly Englishmen, came to be seen as being only possible within the context of a Protestant state. This idea was prevalent amongst writings of the time, as seen from the sermons, as well as from statements such as this, from the lieutenant-governor of Pennsylvania, William Denny, where he calls for the protection of, "all our inestimable Privileges, as Britons and Protestants."<sup>173</sup>

This idea was not only to be found in North America, it could be seen in the writings of one of the great architects of the Seven Years' War, William Pitt, prime minister of England. When the fighting began, Pitt saw it as an opportunity to expand the borders of British influence far past North America. He had an imperial vision for Britain. He also had a specific idea of what the British Empire should look like: Protestant. Three years after the end of the war, Pitt spoke of the colonies as "loyal, free, and Protestant Americans."<sup>174</sup> With the man who headed the war effort speaking this way, some Protestant clergy may have seen this as a sign that even the government was behind them.

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<sup>172</sup> Greene, *The Provincial Governor in Colonial North America*, page 167.

<sup>173</sup> William Denny, *The Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: June 23, 1757).

<sup>174</sup> Pitt, speech of February 5, 1766, in R.C. Simmons and P.D.G. Thomas, eds., *Proceedings and Debates of the British Parliaments Respecting North America, 1754-1783* (London, 1982), II, 161.

## Tensions between Colonies

While the royal ministers in Whitehall might have looked askance at the unity in which the colonies embraced their identity as free Protestants with rights, they must have been glad to see some form of unity at all. From their beginnings, the colonies were fractious, engaging in bickering and infighting with each other. At times it seemed as though the colonies fought with each other more than they did their enemies to the north and south, the French and Spanish.<sup>175</sup>

The theocratic background of New England has already been mentioned, but unity in New England was hard to come by in the 17<sup>th</sup> and early 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. While a unified New England served the best interests of its citizens, for mutual defense and protection, the differences in religious sentiment of colonial leaders meant that any unity would be superficial.<sup>176</sup> The Puritans tried to keep control over the loose confederation of colonies as long as possible, but the threat of losing their religious freedom kept the other colonies from embracing the confederation.<sup>177</sup>

Even after the Puritan control of New England was lost and that part of the colonies became more unified, unity with the rest of the colonies was difficult to find. The principal idea blocking a union of colonies from Massachusetts to Georgia was the thought of their money and men going to defend a region that was outside their interests.<sup>178</sup> Indeed, when conflicts did arise, governors were quick to find fault with their neighbors and use it as an excuse not to send them the support they needed. For

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<sup>175</sup> Sosin, *English America and Imperial Inconstancy*, page 3,

<sup>176</sup> Harry M. Ward, *Unite or Die: Intercolony Relations 1690-1763* (London: Kennikat Press, 1971), page 3.

<sup>177</sup> Ward, *Unite or Die*, page 4.

<sup>178</sup> *Ibid.*, page 16.



example, Virginia's lieutenant governor, Robert Dinwiddie, excused his lack of support for Pennsylvania by reminding the crown that Pennsylvania was the most populous colony but was doing little for its own defense.<sup>179</sup> Horatio Sharpe, governor of Maryland, similarly noted to his proprietor, Lord Calvert, that Pennsylvania stood to lose the most if the French "incroachments are not suppressed & prevented, yet nothing have they contributed toward supporting the Cause."<sup>180</sup>

Deeply Protestant New England looked askance at the Mid-Atlantic colonies for allowing dissident religious groups into their midst. Lord Loudon perhaps echoed the sentiments of New England when he said that the Mid-Atlantic colonies were "under refractory Quaker influence."<sup>181</sup> As noted earlier, the Quakers were strongly disliked because of their pacifism. Their focus on virtue and simplicity in the earthly life led to a resistance of imperial reforms. One Quaker explained to a British officer, "Excesses... was a means to deprive the Subjects of an Heavenly Crown would by no means of gaining a blessing to the Earthly Crown."<sup>182</sup> In other words, Quakers would not exchange their heavenly gains for what the crown could give them in protection and revenues. In a time of war, this could easily be translated by other colonists as treasonous activity.

However, as much as other colonies disliked the Quaker influence in Pennsylvania, it was nothing compared to how they viewed the Catholic influence in Maryland. The previous century had seen monumental debates over the role of the crown

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<sup>179</sup> Marshall, "The Thirteen Colonies in the Seven Years' War: The View from London," in *Britain and America Go to War*, Flavell and Conway, eds., page 74.

<sup>180</sup> Horatio Sharpe to Lord Calvert, *The Correspondence of Governor Sharpe, 1753-1757* (Baltimore: Maryland State Archives, vol.6, 1890), page 95.

<sup>181</sup> Marshall, "The Thirteen Colonies in the Seven Years' War: The View from London," in *Britain and America Go to War*, Flavell and Conway, eds., page 74.

<sup>182</sup> James Kenny, Dec. 22, 1758, *Journal to the Westward, 1758-1761*, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

in a proprietary colony such as Maryland, but one of the biggest issues was the Catholicism of the proprietor. While listing the reasons for royal takeover of Maryland in the debates of 1711 and 1712, William Blathwayt of the Privy Council argued that since the residents of Maryland acknowledged a “foreign jurisdiction” because of their religion, they could not be trusted to a proprietary government.<sup>183</sup> Distrust of Maryland ran deep in colonial and royal memory.

The preceding chapter has shown how the Protestant clergy felt about Catholics in Maryland and Pennsylvania. But did anyone in the colonial government take issue with either delinquent colony? Historian P.J. Marshall stated that not only did other colonies look down on Maryland and Pennsylvania, both proprietary colonies, but even the colonies’ own governors saw them as outsiders.<sup>184</sup>

Because of their proprietary status, the crown saw them as trying to elude its control, which was quite often the case. For their part, the governors of Pennsylvania and Maryland spent the years prior to the war disputing the boundaries of their colonies, as evidenced by Lord Calvert of Maryland saying, “The Mess<sup>rs</sup> Penns want no Intelligence from their Province of the Lat: North & South & of Longitude the Maridian bet: any two Places East & West to Substitute Lines to perfect Cramp or Pillage the Inheritance of Maryland.”<sup>185</sup> This was hardly a united front to show to the rest of the colonies.

Maryland came under criticism from governors as well. Governor of Virginia, Robert Dinwiddie, wrote in a letter to Major Carlyle, “In our neighboring Colony of Maryland, I am told, 1/3 of the People are Catholicks, and I fear they would be glad of

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<sup>183</sup> Sosin, *English America and Imperial Inconstancy*, page 88.

<sup>184</sup> Marshall, “The Thirteen Colonies in the Seven Years’ War: The View from London,” in *Britain and America Go to War*, Flavell and Conway, eds., page 74.

<sup>185</sup> Loudon to Sharpe, *The Correspondence of Governor Horatio Sharpe*, page 18.

any Conquest that would establish their Religion.”<sup>186</sup> While he kept up good relations with Governor Sharpe of Maryland, Dinwiddie had a persistent fear of infiltration of his colony from Maryland.

But what rankled more than their uncertain status under the royal government was their favorable treatment of Catholics. The best evidence for this is a letter from the colonial assembly of Maryland to their very own governor, Horatio Sharpe. As was noted in the first chapter, while the upper house of the Maryland assembly was made up of the wealthier citizens who were from the old Catholic families, the lower house shared the anti-Catholicism of the majority of English. Which is why the following sentence makes sense, although its impropriety is remarkable: “The Countenance and Encouragement that hath been given to Popery, and the growth of it in the Province in Consequence thereof, is the Subject of the present Address to your Excellency.”<sup>187</sup> The assembly goes on to accuse Sharpe of not only allowing the open practice of Catholicism, but favoring it by appointing known Catholics to important positions of power in the colony, particularly attorney-general. As with most accusations of Popish interference, there are references to the Jesuit order, and how they are converting criminals so as to get them more favor from the attorney general.

It is easy to see how such a conspiracy would be attractive: in a wartime society, people look nervously inwards to make sure that there are no traitors in their midst. The assembly even makes the accusation of the ever-present fear in a slave-holding society:

These Instances abovementioned, and the constant and unwearied Application of the Jesuits to proselyte, and consequently to corrupt and

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<sup>186</sup> Robert Dinwiddie to Major Carlyle, *The Official Records of Robert Dinwiddie, Lieutenant-Governor of the Colony of Virginia, 1751-1758* (Richmond: Virginia Historical Society, 1873), page 325.

<sup>187</sup> Address to Governor Sharpe, *The Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: July 24, 1755), page 1.

alienate, the Affections of our Slaves from us, and to hold themselves in Readiness to Arm at a proper Time for our Destruction, together with every Consideration of Danger from a powerful Foreign Enemy, are Circumstances truly alarming.<sup>188</sup>

When the attorney-general is of the same religion as your enemy, then suspicion is bound to fall on him.

The assembly makes an attempt to mollify Sharpe by placing him outside their censure by saying that they know that his “Principles of Loyalty and Attachment to the present happy Constitution, in Church and State, are too conspicuous, to leave us Room to doubt of your Protection to his Majesty’s faithful Protestant Subjects.”<sup>189</sup> And yet one gets the sense that they do not trust Sharpe, as the message concludes with a reminder to do his duty to “issue your Proclamation, commanding all Magistrates and other Officers duly to execute the penal Statutes, mentioned in the Statute of the First of William and Mary, Chapter the 18<sup>th</sup>, against the Roman Catholicks or Papists, within this Province.”<sup>190</sup> In essence, the assembly is accusing the governor of being derelict in his duties.

The most striking sentence in this letter is not the appeal, however; it is the threat. Right before they remind the governor of his duty, the assembly says that they hope that they do not have to resort to “those Means of Safety, which Providence and the Care of our Mother Country hath put into our Hands.”<sup>191</sup> As mentioned before, many governors were run out of their colonies by the people. This seems to be a clear threat to the governor to do just that.

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<sup>188</sup> Address to Gov. Sharpe, *The Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: July 24, 1755), page 1.

<sup>189</sup> *Ibid.*, page 1.

<sup>190</sup> *Ibid.*, page 1.

<sup>191</sup> *Ibid.*, page 1.

That the assembly would say this to Horatio Sharpe shows the lengths to which they were willing to go. Sharpe was stalwart member of the government and served honorably in the army, helping put down the Jacobite Rebellion in 1745. He reached the rank of lieutenant colonel and his campaign experience was considerable, both in Scotland and in India with the Royal Marines. In fact, his service was so valuable that when hostilities began in the French and Indian War he was named Commander in Chief of the English forces in North America. In March of 1753, he was advised that intelligence reported French and Indian troops moving against the colonies, and to make defensive preparations. However, he was not to begin offensive operations as it was “his Majesties Determination not to be the Aggressor.”<sup>192</sup> He held this position until the arrival of General Braddock in 1755. Even after, he continued to support the efforts of this general and his successor, although he was significantly impeded by what he saw as the laziness of the council in failing to pass legislation for arms and provisions.<sup>193</sup>

If the colonial legislature was willing to challenge the man who the king trusted with the defense of the colonies, then one can infer that they felt deeply about the religious issues in the colony. Sharpe did not seem to be overly bothered by the insubordination of his lower assembly, although he does treat it in great deal in his correspondence to Lord Calvert. It is a most interesting letter, as he also expresses his feelings on the Catholics in his colony which is why such a large part of it is included.

I prorogued our Assembly yesterday Evening after they had twice requested me to be dismissed[;] in the Course of the Session they presented me with a furious Address against Roman Catholicks...as I thought it contained some indecent Reflections I thought it improper to let it pass unanswered...The Occasion of it was the late preferment of the Attorney General (who unhappily is no Favourite with the People) to the

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<sup>192</sup> Board of Trade to Sharpe, *Correspondence of Governor Horatio Sharpe*, page 4.

<sup>193</sup> Sharpe to Calvert, *Correspondence of Governor Horatio Sharpe*, page 220.

Naval Office of Potuxent...For my part I have not heard *but the Papists behave themselves peaceably and as good Subjects*, They are I imagine about one twelfth of the people & many of them are Men of pretty considerable Fortunes...As the Lower House first resolved that all the Penal Laws mentioned in the Tolleration Act are in force within this Province, tho some of them have been entirely & others in part repealed by later Acts of Parliament, I declined granting the Request in the Conclusion of their Address lest the Courts should govern themselves in some sort by the Resolve of the Lower House of Assembly & a *fiery Persecution ensue* [italics are mine].<sup>194</sup>

Sharpe clearly states that he does not have an issue with the Catholics of the colony and that he worries that the actions of the assembly could lead to persecution. Perhaps he also has on his mind the sermons that exhort colonists to take up arms against the “Emissaries and Incendiaries of Hell and Rome.”<sup>195</sup> Going forth against the French was one thing; persecuting English citizens inside the colony was another.

The only other mention he makes of this incident in his letters is that he moved the man who was attorney general to a position in the naval office. Overall, he views the assembly as being practically useless, although not because of its paranoia about Catholicism. He frets more at their inability to make decisions and writes, “I must attribute in great measure the Obstinacy that has appeared in the Lower House of Assembly during these two last Conventions to the near approach of another Election which as I intimated in my Last has no little influence on the Conduct of such Representatives as for the most part compose our present Senate.”<sup>196</sup>

Maryland was not the only colony to fall under criticism from her neighbors. The Quakers of Pennsylvania came under criticism by the Protestant clergy for their pacifism, and other colonists soon joined in crying out against them. In a newspaper from 1755, a

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<sup>194</sup> Sharpe to Calvert, *Correspondence of Governor Horatio Sharpe*, page 240.

<sup>195</sup> Samuel Bird, *The Importance of the Divine Presence with Our Host* (New Haven: James Parker and Co., 1759), pages 18-20.

<sup>196</sup> Sharpe to Calvert, *Correspondence of Governor Horatio Sharpe*, page 70.

mock question and answer session entitled, “A Dialogue between X, Y, and Z, concerning the present State of Affairs in Pennsylvania” addressed the problems in waging a war with Quakers present: “By this Act of Assembly, the Quakers are neither compelled to muster nor pay a fine if they don’t.”<sup>197</sup> This struck at the very heart of what colonists saw as treasonous activity. Since the defense of the colony was the militia, if some people refused to serve in the militia, then they must have wanted to see the downfall of the colony. The “Dialogue” goes on to say, “For my Part, I am no Coward; but hang me if I’ll fight to save the Quakers.”<sup>198</sup>

As noted, governors were not above implicating their neighboring colonies in their letters to the crown. After Braddock’s defeat, Governor Dinwiddie of Virginia wrote to Governor Morris of Pennsylvania: “I have not omitted writing to the Ministry the unaccountable Conduct of Your Assembly and the Dangers we are in from the German Roman Catholicks.”<sup>199</sup> In a letter to Lord Halifax in England, Dinwiddie made additional complaints against his neighbors. He brought forth the usual grievances about the laziness of colonists and their reluctance to contribute to the war effort. But he also claimed that there were dangerous currents running beneath the surface in Pennsylvania and Maryland:

They have great Numbers of Germans among whom there are many roman Catholicks, as also in M’[ar]yl’[an]d, that I dread if the Fr[ench] sh[oul]d be permitted to make a Settlem[en]t on the rich Lands of the Ohio, that by sending Invitations to them, from their religious Principles, they may be prevailed on to go to the Ohio and join the Fr[ench] in Expectat[i]o[n] of large Grants of Land.<sup>200</sup>

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<sup>197</sup> *The Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: December 18, 1755), page 1.

<sup>198</sup> *The Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: December 18, 1755), page 2.

<sup>199</sup> Dinwiddie to Morris, *The Official Records of Robert Dinwiddie*, page 207.

<sup>200</sup> Robert Dinwiddie to Lord Halifax, *The Official Records of Robert Dinwiddie*, page 406.

Perhaps Dinwiddie worried about immigrant and Catholic revolts because he knew of the laws restricting them from moving west that were in place in Pennsylvania. In an effort to keep such people as the Quakers and the evil Papists out of the backcountry, Pennsylvania passed an act barring all non-Protestants from moving westwards: "It is therefore enacted, that all persons, being protestants, who shall settle and reside on any lands situated to the westward of the Allegheny ridge, shall be exempted from the payment of all publick, county and parish levies, for the term of fifteen years next following."<sup>201</sup> While this act encouraged settlement in the contested territory of the Ohio country, it ensured that only those who were loyal to crown and the crown's religion would be settling there. In this way, the borders would be secured.

But when the borders broke, and Braddock fell, the reality of their situation struck the colonial governors. What was at first a land grab by the Ohio Company of Virginia turned into a conflict that would embroil all thirteen colonies and their mutual interests.<sup>202</sup> Even the fall of Braddock became tinged with a religious tone. As one Pennsylvania newspaper wrote, "But if we consider the Affair in a religious View, it increases the Horrors of the Scene beyond Expression."<sup>203</sup> The *Boston Evening Post* lamented, "What Englishman, what Protestant can bear the Thought, that a brave General should die by the hand of a Savage from the Wilderness?"<sup>204</sup> As the war grew, so did the religious response, even amongst the politicians.

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<sup>201</sup> *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: August 8, 1754), page 2.

<sup>202</sup> James Titus, *The Old Dominion at War: Society, Politics, and Warfare in Late Colonial Virginia* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1991), page 30.

<sup>203</sup> *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: September 5, 1754), page 1.

<sup>204</sup> From the *New-York Mercury*, of August 11, 1755, *Boston Evening-Post* (Boston, Massachusetts: August 25, 1755), page 1.



It became common for governors to proclaim days of fasting and penance in the colonies, in the hopes that God would hear their prayers. When one remembers the impassioned cries from clergymen that this war was a punishment from God for their sin, then one realizes that the governors were at least listening with half an ear. In 1757, Governor James Delancey of New York set aside a day of fasting for the entire colony of New York that they may, “implore the Divine Blessing on His Majesty’s Arms.”<sup>205</sup> In 1762, his successor, Colden Cadwallader, also made a day of fasting for the colony of New York so that God would see their humility and answer their prayers to end the war, by softening the heart of the French king.<sup>206</sup>

In a newspaper opinion article in 1756, the commentator makes remarks on the recent fast that was called for in Pennsylvania, and draws attention to those who visibly disregarded the fast:

In the Jews, a Refusal might, with some Reason, have been attributed to Contempt; in the Papists and Nonconformists, to Disaffection; in the Methodists, to perverseness; for they all protest appointed Forms of Worship; but with the Quakers it is not so; they know no Form; therefore they could not keep the Day, without disavowing those very Principles the Government had tolerated.<sup>207</sup>

In the same moment that the commentator condemns Catholics, Jews, and Methodists, he makes an excusal for Quakers. It is interesting to note that he does so not because of their religious beliefs, but because the government allowed their religion.

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<sup>205</sup> *New-York Gazette, or Weekly Post-Boy* (New York: July 4, 1757, Issue 755), page 1.

<sup>206</sup> *New-York Gazette* (New York: April 19, 1762, Issue 174), page 1.

<sup>207</sup> *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia: June 10, 1756, Issue 1433), page 1.

## Popular Political Opinion

So, in the end, did anyone in political positions pay heed to the cries from the pulpit? The difficulty in understanding the answer to this question lies in the nature of colonial society. Just as it was sometimes difficult to separate the politics from religious jargon in the sermons, it is an equally hard task to find what is real religious fervor in political speeches and what is just the religious tone of the time. The climate of the day was one in which religion could play a large role in events that were not overtly religious. Some good examples of this are the election day and mustering in sermons.

Another excellent example is that of the event known as Pope's Day. Pope's Day, as Brendan McConville writes, was an event especially crafted by the crown to tie the colonies to the idea of empire.<sup>208</sup> It was ostensibly a celebration of the apprehension of Guy Fawkes, before he could blow up the houses of Parliament on November 5. The crown ordained this a day to celebrate being "deliver'd from the bloody Designs of the Papists," as a Virginia newspaper wrote.<sup>209</sup>

Pope's Day consisted of celebrations all across the colonies. There were processions and sermons in the daylight hours, usually denouncing the Catholic Church and all that was associated with it. Night brought bonfires, burning effigies, and considerable state-sponsored drunkenness.<sup>210</sup> The nature of the day differed from locale to locale. It was more than just an expression of distaste for the Catholic Church; it was a religious and political statement denouncing what the English saw as a tyrannical system

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<sup>208</sup> McConville, *The King's Three Faces*, page 56.

<sup>209</sup> *Virginia Gazette* (Williamsburg: Feb. 4-11, 1736).

<sup>210</sup> McConville, *The King's Three Faces*, page 57.

of government. Hence, they struck at the very core symbol of what they saw as the vast Catholic empire: the pope.

The holiday immigrated to North America where it met some resistance from the Puritans of New England and the Quakers of Pennsylvania. Both groups opposed official holidays, as the idea smacked of religious coercion. However, the appeal of the day proved too much for the devout colonists. What Pope's Day did was unite the colonists in their bitter hatred of Catholicism and bring them together to rejoice in the miraculous salvation of a Protestant monarch, in an event that fit well into the millennial interpretation of history that New Englanders were wont to have.<sup>211</sup>

As time went on, Pope's Day became more politicized. It was a chance for the local community to come together and collectively denounce Catholicism. They also asserted their own Protestantism and defied all that they saw as trying to destroy it. For example, following the last of the Stuarts, the carts that carried the effigy of the pope began also carrying likenesses of the "Stuart Pretender."<sup>212</sup> It was the community's way of showing that they thought that the pope was behind the Stuart monarchs and that they held their unity to England, not a pretender.

By the time of the French and Indian War, Pope's Day celebrations were a staple in most large communities, and had taken on even more political overtones. These could extend even to the war itself. When Admiral Byng bungled his defense of Minorca and was executed on the quarterdeck of the *HMS Monarch*, the colonists of Boston did their part and added him to the panoply of villains on the cart.<sup>213</sup>

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<sup>211</sup> McConville, *The King's Three Faces*, page 57.

<sup>212</sup> *Ibid.*, page 58.

<sup>213</sup> *Ibid.*, page 59.

Did the anti-Catholic feeling expressed in these celebrations lead to actual actions? It is hard to tell. A Pope's Day mob in New York in 1755 did threaten to burn a captured French general's house, but desisted because he sent down money to the crowd.<sup>214</sup> An almanac for 1737 offered instructions to revelers on Pope's Day: "Ere you pretend / to burn the Pope /Secure the Papists /with a Rope."<sup>215</sup> Whether this dictum was ever followed, the almanac declined to say. Sometimes the actions followed reverses on the battlefield. After Braddock's Defeat in 1755, a Philadelphian reported that there was a "Mob here...[becoming] very unruly, assembling in great numbers, with an intention of demolishing the Mass House belonging to the Roman Catholics."<sup>216</sup> But whatever the practical application, the propagation of Pope's Day in the colonies shows a strong desire to unite religious and political sentiment together to denounce Catholicism and trumpet Protestantism. It is yet another example of how being Protestant was equal to being English.

### **Actions of Colonial Governors**

Even though they sponsored Pope's Day celebration, colonial governors during the war were, for the most part, sparse in religious rhetoric. Some few examples do stand out, however. Governor Dinwiddie's correspondence during the war shows that he was worried about an internal rebellion coming from the Catholics in Pennsylvania and Maryland. He also feared that the "bigoted Papists" would be a detriment to the people

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<sup>214</sup> McConville, *The King's Three Faces*, page 62.

<sup>215</sup> Nathaniel Ames, *An Astronomical Diary; or, An Almanack for the Year of Our Lord Christ 1737*, November 5 (Boston, 1737).

<sup>216</sup> "Extracts from the Diary of Daniel Fisher, 1755," ed. Mrs. Conway Robinson Howard, *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, 17 (1893), page 274.

of the colony and “debauch” the slaves.<sup>217</sup> Dinwiddie confided to Colonel William Fitzhugh of the Virginia legislature that he shared the colonel’s hatred of “our intestine Enemies, the Papists” and wondered why the assembly did not take some measures to “expunge those Vermin who are a Pest to Society.”<sup>218</sup>

Dinwiddie did not stand alone; he was acting in concord with his assembly. In 1756, the House of Burgesses in Virginia made their worries known to Dinwiddie in an address to him. The Burgesses expressed anxiety at the number of “Neutral French Roman Catholics” in their colony, and asked for permission to have them shipped to Great Britain, there to be judged by the crown. The Burgesses felt so strongly about this that they volunteered to pay for it themselves.<sup>219</sup> Dinwiddie appears to have acknowledged their fears and sent the request on to his superiors, and even to have arranged for the collection of the people in question.<sup>220</sup>

William Shirley of Massachusetts had very little to say on Catholics or Protestants in his correspondence. He makes note of the French Catholics in Nova Scotia in a letter to Sir Thomas Robinson in 1754, where he speaks of the dangers of allowing the “French Missionary Priests” access to French Catholics now in English lands. These would most probably be the Jesuits. Shirley instead advocates giving the population “one or more Romish Priests in each district, of another nation, for the Publick Exercise of their Religion.”<sup>221</sup> In this way, the population will warm to the English and this should keep

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<sup>217</sup> Dinwiddie to Sir Thomas Robinson, 1755, *The Official Records of Robert Dinwiddie*, page 306.

<sup>218</sup> Dinwiddie to Col. William Fitzhugh, 1755, *The Official Records of Robert Dinwiddie*, page 180.

<sup>219</sup> Burgesses to Dinwiddie, 1756, *The Official Records of Robert Dinwiddie*, page 379.

<sup>220</sup> Dinwiddie to Burgesses, 1756, *The Official Records of Robert Dinwiddie*, page 381.

<sup>221</sup> Shirley to Robinson, 1754, *Correspondence of William Shirley, Governor of Massachusetts and Military Commander in America, 1731-1760* (New York: The McMillen Company, 1912), page 64.

the peace until the populace's children, educated in Protestant schools, will eventually embrace the imperial and religious ethos.

Governor Sharpe's views have already been shown in this paper. He shows a remarkable clear-sightedness in his dealings with the Catholics of his colony. However, in standing up for the Catholics and refusing to allow more punitive legislation against them he incurred the ire of the legislature. This caused them to drag their feet even more than normal when it came to voting for funds and troops for the war. In attempting to swim against the tide of public opinion, Governor Sharpe inadvertently harmed the war effort.

South Carolina's governor, James Glen, was representative of his colony's anti-Catholicism when he told the Board of Trade in 1749 that he feared the French Catholics in Mobile more than the Spanish forces in St. Augustine, because of their ability to use their Indian allies against the colonists.<sup>222</sup> He specifically feared that the Jesuits were stirring up the Indians to go on the offensive. Glen's words are noteworthy, because since he was governor he was also the head of the Anglican Church in South Carolina.<sup>223</sup> He eagerly supported the war effort, being one of the few governors to send aid in the form of troops to Dinwiddie when he requested it in 1754.<sup>224</sup> His assembly also passed a number of anti-Catholic laws: Catholics were not permitted to vote, hold public offices, have regular churches, and were forbid to carry arms.<sup>225</sup>

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<sup>222</sup> John Wesley Brinsfield, *Religion and Politics in Colonial South Carolina* (Easley, South Carolina: Southern Historical Press, 1983), page 47.

<sup>223</sup> George C. Rogers, *Charleston in the Age of the Pinckneys*, (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1980), page 18.

<sup>224</sup> Rogers, *Charleston in the Age of the Pinckneys*, page 35.

<sup>225</sup> Brinsfield, *Religion and Politics in Colonial South Carolina*, page 47.

The governor most vocal in anti-Catholic rhetoric was North Carolinian Arthur Dobbs. Born in Scotland and serving as an officer and parliamentarian in Ireland, Dobbs was a strong Protestant with an aversion to anything Catholic.<sup>226</sup> In 1754, just as the storm clouds of war were brewing, Dobbs issued a message to the North Carolina assembly that was rife with anti-Catholic invective. The French have, said Dobbs, “for near Two Centuries, laid a Plan for enslaving Europe, by ruining the Liberties of the Germanick Body, and Protestant Interest of Europe.”<sup>227</sup>

With this millennial setting, Dobbs goes on to accuse the French of the crime of imposing their religion on their Indian allies: “When that is done; and they have, by Menaces, or by their hellish Jesuitical Missionaries, made Proselytes of them, not to the true Christian Religion, founded on Peace, Benignity, and Brotherly Love, but to the Pumps and outward Trappings of the Popish Hierarchy and Superstition; and have inspired an enthusiastick Fury in them against Protestants, whom they call Hereticks, making it meritorious in them to massacre and destroy them, upon which they assure them their future Happiness depends.”<sup>228</sup> This, says Dobbs, will result in the destruction of the English, or at the very least, they will “be forced out of our Religion.”<sup>229</sup>

As far as Dobbs could see, this French plan to unleash the Indian on the English could not have come from Versailles alone. Rather, he saw a more sinister figure in the background. He refers to it as, “This Scheme, hatched in Hell, and supported by the

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<sup>226</sup> Bill Hand, *Remembering Craven County: Tales of Tarheel History* (Charleston: The History Press, 2006), page 26.

<sup>227</sup> Arthur Dobbs, *A message from His Excellency Arthur Dobbs, Esq; Captain-General and Governor in Chief, in and over his Majesty's Province of North-Carolina. To the General Assembly, held at Newbern, the twelfth day of December, 1754. [Proposing] a plan of union with all the British Colonies, for our mutual future defence* (Newbern: Printed by James Davis, 1754), page 1.

<sup>228</sup> Arthur Dobbs, *A Message to the General Assembly*, 1754, page 2.

<sup>229</sup> *Ibid.*, page 3.

Court of Rome.”<sup>230</sup> But Dobbs did not despair in his cause. Drawing slightly from the rhetoric of Pope’s Day, Dobbs declared, “God Almighty, who by his Providence under the Conduct of our Messiah, hath, in many remarkable Instances, defeated all Popish Schemes, when the Protestant Interest and Liberties of Britain seem’d to be at the Brink of Ruin.”<sup>231</sup>

Dobbs’ rhetoric rings very much of the jargon of the Protestant clergy. But Dobbs was not merely a soldier and colonial governor; he was very much a well-rounded man. He was heavily involved in scientific pursuits (he is alleged to have discovered and named the Venus Flytrap) and was a proponent in the then-outrageous search for the Northwest Passage.<sup>232</sup> Not only that, but he had been known to deliver sermons back in Ireland to illustrate the truth of the Protestant faith, perhaps even to his friend Jonathan Swift’s congregation.

In one such sermon in 1746, Dobbs laid out the differences in the Apostle’s, Nicene, and Athanasian creeds, which were all proclamations of the Christian faith. In it, Dobbs refers to the Catholic Church as “blind and servile, and therefore inconsistent with the glorious liberty of the sons of God.”<sup>233</sup> Thus, the truths held in these creeds do not apply to Catholics, but rather to the “northern descendants of Japhet:” British Protestants.<sup>234</sup> The spirit of the British could not be overcome by the “anti-Christian tyranny” of the Catholic Church.<sup>235</sup> Dobbs concludes by laying out a millennial view of

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<sup>230</sup> Arthur Dobbs, *A Message to the General Assembly*, 1754, page 3.

<sup>231</sup> *Ibid.*, page 3.

<sup>232</sup> Bill Hand, *Remembering Craven County: Tales of Tarheel History* (Charleston: The History Press, 2006), page 26.

<sup>233</sup> Arthur Dobbs, *A Thanksgiving Sermon: Preach’d October the 9<sup>th</sup>, 1746, for the Happy Suppression of the Late Unnatural Rebellion* (London, 1746), page 11.

<sup>234</sup> Dobbs, *A Thanksgiving Sermon*, page 20.

<sup>235</sup> *Ibid.*, page 20.



the conflict between the Catholic Church and Britain, in which Rome will stop at nothing to destroy England and the Protestant stronghold that it was.<sup>236</sup>

Thus, Dobbs was the perfect spokesperson for the religious war that the Protestant clergy espoused. He was active in recruiting for the war, although his efforts were marred by colonial inefficiency. However, he would not be discouraged in his quest to break the Catholic presence in North America. Even in his advanced age (he was sixty-five when the war began in 1754) he was still trying to take an active part in the war. He requested for greater troop activity in the south, so that they could drive the French out completely. In his aged state, Dobbs was a Cato-like figure, as in a 1760 letter to Jeffrey Amherst, the commander of all British forces, he writes, “God grant you equal success to that which you have had already, and that you may be the Scipio of America; for Delenda est Carthago—at least on this Continent.”<sup>237</sup>

### **Public Opinion as Expressed in Newspapers**

Along with the speeches and letters of politicians, a good way to gauge the political tone of the society was by reading what they wrote for their newspapers. Much of their news was from London newspapers discussing the doings of the various European states. For all the distance from the Continent, the colonists did not live in a vacuum. They received all the news of Europe in their papers. However, being that they were a great distance away and already had some cultural separation from Europe, what they chose to include in their papers was significant.

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<sup>236</sup> Dobbs, *A Thanksgiving Sermon*, page 22.

<sup>237</sup> Arthur Dobbs to Jeffrey Amherst, 1760, *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society* (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1871), page 290.

One item that frequently showed up in the newspapers was the plight of how Protestants were being treated in France. It was common knowledge that Protestants in France were being persecuted by the French monarchy. Letters from those suffering in France were often published to stir the ardor of the reader. One such example from the *New York Mercury* in 1754 reads, “We beseech all good Protestant Souls to take a Part in our Desolations, and to offer their fervent Prayers unto our gracious God for our Relief.”<sup>238</sup> The writer goes on to talk about how all professing Protestants are being forced to become Catholic. Not only that, but their children are being forced into Catholicism as well by forced baptism and re-education.

Not only did the newspapers publish letters from Protestants, they also published the news from all the other Protestant countries. While the Seven Years’ War did begin as a land grab by Virginia in the Ohio Valley it spread to Europe and fighting raged there on conventional battlefields. The colonists received news of the war and how the allies of Britain were faring. It is important to see the perspective of how the colonists viewed the global war. It has not been referred to as “The Great War for Empire” for nothing; colonists would want to know how Britain was faring in her conquests.

But as this paper suggests, perhaps the colonists had a slightly different view of what type of empire it was going to be: religious rather than secular. This is evidenced by a quote from the *New Hampshire Gazette* referencing the recent British victories. It says that they “have Reason to hope he will be a Means in the Hand of Providence of defending and securing the Protestant Interest.”<sup>239</sup> This statement points away from a

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<sup>238</sup> Extract of a Letter from Our Correspondent in Languedoc, in France, Dated Feb. 28, 1754, *New-York Mercury* (New York: July 1, 1754, Issue 99), page 1.

<sup>239</sup> To the Publick, *New-Hampshire Gazette* (Portsmouth, New Hampshire: April 1, 1757, Issue 26), page 1.

nationalistic view of the war, and more to a religious point of view. The tone sounds as if the war is a war of religion again.

From the evidence at hand, one can surmise that each colony differed when it came to dealing with Catholics in their midst and the prospect of fighting a religious war. For some colonies, such as Maryland and Pennsylvania, the burden of their Catholic population was a detriment to their reputation amongst the colonies. This made it hard to prosecute the war effectively. It is evident that the other colonies feared the influence of Catholics in their midst.

Some governors were more outspoken in their pursuit of the war as a religious cause, such as Governors Dobbs, Glen, and, to a lesser extent, Dinwiddie. Dobbs and Glen both feared the Cherokee on their borders who might be incited by the French. Similarly, Dinwiddie was worried about the French incursions down the Ohio in territory that he saw as his own. Yet this explanation is too simplistic, as Governor Shirley also had imminent threats on his borders but did not engage in anti-Catholic rhetoric to drum up support for the war. The governors were complex individuals, pulled between the orders of the crown and the desires of their people, and so each had their own separate opinion.

Colonies that had Catholic populations saw more anti-Catholicism from their assemblies, such as Maryland. Virginia, from fear of what their neighbors to the north were doing, also shared a fair amount of paranoia. The legislature eventually ordered the disarmament of all who did not take the oath of supremacy, which Catholics could not do in good conscience.<sup>240</sup> However, none expressed these views vehemently enough to make the call for a war of religion. Only the government of the North Carolina in the

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<sup>240</sup> Titus, *The Old Dominion at War*, page 94.

person of Governor Dobbs expressed clear millennial rhetoric that would have been recognized as being similar to what colonists were hearing from the pulpit.

It is evident from the newspapers and the Pope's Day celebrations that anti-Catholic beliefs were deeply held and widespread in the colonies. It is also true that most colonists equated being Protestant with being English and having certain rights and freedoms, as evidenced from the newspapers. There was a shared belief that England's destiny was part of a larger Protestant autonomy.

While the message of the sermons was undoubtedly on lawmakers' minds, there is not enough evidence to show that governors and assemblies totally believed in the millennial destiny of New England enough to prosecute the war for the Protestant Cause alone. While they no doubt believed in the efficacy of the Protestant religion, as evidenced by their language, there was no clear rhetoric indicating a war for the soul of the continent that the clergy promoted. But this war could not be prosecuted without troops; and the rhetoric used to call for armed bodies of men was often different than that used in official correspondence. The next chapter will deal with the way that the men who would carry the war into Canada were raised and how they perceived the conflict.

## CHAPTER III

## EXPLICATION

*"It is no ways unbecoming a Christian to learn to be a Souldier."*<sup>241</sup>

No matter how many speeches are made, laws are signed, or sermons preached, war cannot occur unless the young men of the populace take up arms. What is it that makes men of a certain age eager to engage in the destructive nature of combat? Perhaps it is biological and social; that a young male population needs to assert its masculinity. Such is the argument of Ann Little in her book *Abraham in Arms: War and Gender in Colonial New England*.<sup>242</sup> Another theory is that it is for the love of one's country, for glory, honor, and patriotism. These are some of the reasons that Fred Anderson gives for the masses of volunteers in Massachusetts during the French and Indian War, as documented in *A People's Army: Massachusetts Soldiers and Society in the Seven Years' War*.<sup>243</sup> Or perhaps it is only for what they can get out of it: money, experience, or loot, as posited by Harold Selesky in *War and Society in Colonial Connecticut*.<sup>244</sup> Some combination of all three is the most likely reason. What of religious ideals? History can provide example after example of young men fighting in ferocious wars for their religious creed. This chapter will answer the question of whether or not this was one of

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<sup>241</sup> Ann M. Little, *Abraham in Arms: War and Gender in Colonial New England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007), page 1.

<sup>242</sup> Little, *Abraham in Arms*

<sup>243</sup> Fred Anderson, *A People's Army: Massachusetts Soldiers and Society in the Seven Years War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984).

<sup>244</sup> Harold E. Selesky, *War and Society in Colonial Connecticut* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990).

those wars. It will examine the motives of colonial soldiers as they went to war and show how their attitudes on campaign showed their underlying religious culture. As the following chapter will show, this culture so permeated every part of the soldiers' lives that going to war for their religion would have been natural. The way they differentiated themselves from the British regulars was by using religious and moral criteria. While on campaign, they noted examples of God's providence, and thought of themselves as instruments of that providence.

Ushered into the ranks of the military by the sermons of the clergy and the promises of adventure and monetary gain by the government, provincial soldiers would be the bulwark of defense against the French incursion. Along with the regulars, the colonial militia would carry the war to the enemy. They would also be carrying the ideals of their countrymen with them. At the center of these ideals was the fundamental idea of being a Protestant. As Ann Little posits, being a male Protestant meant that militarism was a symbol of manhood.<sup>245</sup> Therefore, going to war was not only a political necessity but also a societal obligation. It was necessary that Protestants show their masculine superiority over the Catholics, especially as they depicted Catholics as being feminine in nature.<sup>246</sup>

When the clergy talked of unsheathing the "British Sword" against their enemies, just what exactly was this formidable weapon of which they spoke?<sup>247</sup> Just as in politics, there was a military that answered to the crown and a colonial military that was raised in times of need by the assembly. Both had varying degrees of effectiveness and both

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<sup>245</sup> Little, *Abraham in Arms*, page 167.

<sup>246</sup> *Ibid.*, page 168.

<sup>247</sup> William Smith, *The Christian Soldier's Duty; the Lawfulness and Dignity of his Office; and the Importance of the Protestant Cause in the British Colonies, Stated and Explained* (Philadelphia: James Chappin, 1757), pages 26-27.

definitely had different visions of the war that they were fighting, so the perspectives of regulars and colonials will be handled separately in this paper. Before trying to understand the motivations of those who went to war, it is first important to understand their organizations.

### **British Regulars**

England eschewed a large standing army for centuries, relying on the water surrounding her borders and her navy on that water to keep the pesky French and Spanish out. The army was kept to ensure domestic tranquility, keep the Scots in line, and for minor European forays on the Continent.<sup>248</sup> The onset of the French and Indian War required a larger force to be mustered and sent to war. These men would be serving at the extreme limits of the Empire. Stephen Brumwell calls this force the “American Army” because it campaigned from Montreal to Ticonderoga, Pittsburgh to Detroit, and from South Carolina to Havana.<sup>249</sup> For the time, it was indeed a unique force. These were the men who fought the Indians in the brush and woods of New York, the French *Troupe de Marines* under the brilliant Montcalm at Quebec, and stormed the disease-ridden islands of the West Indies. They were a versatile and veteran force by 1763.

Who were the men who made up this force, where did they come from, and why did they choose the army as their lot in life? Much has been made of the typical stereotype of the British regular: the dregs of society, a clod, only held in the ranks by the

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<sup>248</sup> Stephen Brumwell, *Redcoats: The British Soldier and War in the Americas, 1755-1763* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), page 5.

<sup>249</sup> Brumwell, *Redcoats*, page 6

threat of physical punishment.<sup>250</sup> Indeed, even British officers such as James Wolfe, the hero of Quebec, had referred to his troops as, “vagabonds that stroll around in dirty red clothes from one gin-shop to another.”<sup>251</sup> There are three reasons for the continuation of this false definition. One is that the goodwill fostered by British victories in the Seven Years’ War was overshadowed by the conflict of the following decade in which redcoats were made the villains for posterity.<sup>252</sup> The second reason is that the British themselves always held a healthy distrust for any standing army, no matter how small.<sup>253</sup> The third reason comes from statements such as that written by Wolfe. British officers were representative of their class, and looked down on the enlisted as members of the lower class.<sup>254</sup>

The average soldier in the “American Army” was indeed of the lower classes. He made 8*d* a day, commensurate with most unskilled laborers of the time.<sup>255</sup> For all that, he was still technically a volunteer although recruiters could sometimes bend the rules, usually with the influence of alcohol. On average, the British soldier was in his early to mid twenties and around five feet seven inches in height as indicated by official British inspection reports.<sup>256</sup> This could vary in the “American Army” to include men who were under twenty and over thirty, as needed by the campaigns.<sup>257</sup> Colonel John Forbes, who would lead the second expedition against Fort Duquesne, stated that he did not care so much for uniformity in a time of war as, “I am told and have always heard the strength of

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<sup>250</sup> Brumwell, *Redcoats*, page 3.

<sup>251</sup> James Wolfe to Lord George Sackville, Portsmouth, 7 February 1758 in B. Willson, ed., *The Life and Letters of Wolfe* (New York, 1909), page 357.

<sup>252</sup> Alexander V. Campbell, *The Royal American Regiment: An Atlantic Microcosm, 1755-1772* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2010), page 7.

<sup>253</sup> Brumwell, *Redcoats*, page 55.

<sup>254</sup> *Ibid.*, page 72.

<sup>255</sup> *Ibid.*, page 57.

<sup>256</sup> *Ibid.*, page 73.

<sup>257</sup> *Ibid.*, page 73.



Armies reckoned from the numbers of Fire arms, and Not the height and strength of mankind.”<sup>258</sup>

Large numbers of what would be considered non-English troops could be seen in the ranks of the British army. Scots and Irish were present in large numbers, even in units that did not have provincial designation to those areas. This could be explained by the long years spent by the British army in Scotland and Ireland and the always present need for manpower: they had begun to recruit from the population that they were garrisoning.<sup>259</sup> This could be problematic when religion became involved, as recruiters has strict orders against bringing Catholics into the ranks. Yet this was inevitably going to happen, and did, when recruiting from Ireland. There were also considerable numbers of foreign-born soldiers from Germany and Switzerland, the mercenary centers of Europe. Many of these men were recruited with promises of land in North America. Some Europeans were already residing in the colonies and chose to enlist or were captured on French ships and given the choice of captivity or a red coat. Many chose the coat and became British soldiers.<sup>260</sup>

Many indentured servants or servants who were pressed into their work by force also joined the ranks of the army whenever possible. This especially happened when the regulars were recruiting in North America. In Pennsylvania alone, over four hundred servants escaped their masters and became redcoats. Servants made up almost two companies in the Royal American Regiment.<sup>261</sup> While this created strife between irate

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<sup>258</sup> Forbes to Loudon, 10 December 1757, in *Writings of General John Forbes, Relating to His Service in North America*, ed. A.P. James (Menasha, Wisconsin: 1938), page 23.

<sup>259</sup> Brumwell, *Redcoats*, page 74.

<sup>260</sup> Campbell, *The Royal American Regiment*, page 52.

<sup>261</sup> *Ibid.*, page 56-57.

masters and the army, the masters could take at least some solace in the idea that they would be gaining some protection from their lost property.

For men who were not servants, what was the incentive? Many men who enlisted already had a profession, albeit an unskilled one. For one, it meant a steady paycheck, however small it was. It also meant clothes on your back, food in your pocket, and the chance to see foreign lands.<sup>262</sup> Some thought of it as an escape from the long days of hard labor to which those of the lower classes were accustomed. Once in the ranks, they most probably found the life just as hard. Many who enlisted were young men who were unable to quite find their place in life, and who drifted from school to the tavern and thence into the army.<sup>263</sup> Henry Grace, a student at Winchester College, noted that he fell into the “Displeasure of my Tutor, and the Hatred of my Schoolfellows.”<sup>264</sup> This led him into the army. For many, it could mean an escape from an unpleasant profession, or one in which there was no upward mobility. In the army, there was a chance for promotion to a non-commissioned officer position which could bring more pay.<sup>265</sup>

The average literacy rate amongst the enlisted men was about thirty to forty percent, or one-third, which matched the literacy rate of the laboring class in England.<sup>266</sup> Literacy was categorized as being able to “read and write in a tolerable manner.”<sup>267</sup> From studies done on regimental rolls and administrative documents, it is evident that about one-third of soldiers could sign their own name rather than make a mark. Because of the

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<sup>262</sup> Brumwell, *Redcoats*, page 80.

<sup>263</sup> *Ibid.*, page 80.

<sup>264</sup> Henry Grace, *The History of the Life and Sufferings of Henry Grace, of Basingstoke in the County of Southampton. Being a Narrative of the Hardships He Underwent During the Several Years Captivity Among the Savages in North America... Written by Himself* (Reading, 1764), pages 3-4.

<sup>265</sup> Brumwell, *Redcoats*, page 79.

<sup>266</sup> *Ibid.*, page 83.

<sup>267</sup> Bennett Cuthbertson, *A System for the Compleat Interior Management and Oeconomy of a Battalion of Infantry* (Dublin, 1768), page 5.

perishable nature of letters, it is unclear just how many soldiers wrote correspondence.<sup>268</sup> But it is clear that these were not the unthinking clods of the Revolutionary propaganda.

When the colonists painted the soldiers as being godless and profane, they came nearer to hitting the mark. Most soldiers were irreligious and their behaviors shocked the pious colonists. Redcoats were notable for having a vocabulary that did not spare curses or blasphemies.<sup>269</sup> Provincial soldier Joseph Nichols noted “little profaneness among our provincials, but among the regulars, much profaneness.”<sup>270</sup> Another soldier, Caleb Rea, felt that this was a threat to their chance for victory: “as a moral cause I can’t but charge our defeat on this sin, which so prevails, even among our chief commanders.”<sup>271</sup> The redcoats’ penchant to work on the Sabbath also horrified the colonists. Caleb Rea exclaimed, “Sad! sad! it is to see how the Sabbath is profaned in the camp!”<sup>272</sup> It is notable that while almost every provincial regiment at Lake George in the summer of 1758 was accompanied by a chaplain, only one regular unit had one with them.<sup>273</sup> Perhaps the regulars were not as godless as the colonists painted them, as colonial society was still very religious. But it is important to see them as the colonists would have seen them in order to understand how colonial soldiers saw themselves in comparison.

The officer class of the regular army was of a different make than their enlisted counterparts. As the army mirrored society, the officer class was made up of gentlemen just as the ranks were filled with the laboring class. The process of purchasing officer commissions from the government kept this profession strictly in the hands of the

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<sup>268</sup> Brumwell, *Redcoats*, page 82.

<sup>269</sup> Anderson, *A People’s Army*, page 117.

<sup>270</sup> Joseph Nichols, 8 June 1758 in MS.HM 89 (Henry E. Huntington Library, San Marino, California).

<sup>271</sup> Caleb Rea, *The Journal of Dr. Caleb Rea* F.M. Ray, ed. (Salem, Massachusetts), 10 June 1758.

<sup>272</sup> Caleb Rea, *The Journal of Dr. Caleb Rea*, 11 June 1758

<sup>273</sup> Anderson, *A People’s Army*, page 210.

wealthy and privileged.<sup>274</sup> There were some who rose from the ranks or took the position of a volunteer cadet in a regiment in the hopes that their actions would win them a position as an ensign.<sup>275</sup> Many officers were younger sons of gentry who did not inherit the estate; the army offered them a way to advance. Officers were almost always educated and took of a dim view of the enlisted class. Indeed, regular army officers often seemed to think less of their own men than the enemy, as Wolfe's comments previously illustrate. They considered them the dregs of society, ill-fit for even the most menial tasks.<sup>276</sup> Yet it was upon these men that they depended when the shooting began.

In typical British tradition the regular army that gathered in North America was small, especially when compared to the armies of the European powers on the continent. When Britain went to war in her colonies, she needed to keep her regular line regiments at the front to make the best use of them. The 18<sup>th</sup>-century way of war demanded a massive rear echelon of soldiers to support the forward element. Supply trains needed to be manned and provided with security to and from the supply depots that linked an advancing army with its all-important base of supplies. Forts and defensive lines needed to be constructed and garrisoned. Most importantly, a network of roads needed to be built in order for all of these troops to get to their destinations.<sup>277</sup> While regular army soldiers were particularly adept at all of these things, they could not be spared from their task at hand: bringing massed, disciplined firepower to bear on their enemies.<sup>278</sup> Therefore, troops needed to come from somewhere to accomplish the myriad of tasks required to keep an army on the move.

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<sup>274</sup> Brumwell, *Redcoats*, page 84.

<sup>275</sup> *Ibid.*, pages 92-93.

<sup>276</sup> *Ibid.*, page 70.

<sup>277</sup> Anderson, *A People's Army*, page 83.

<sup>278</sup> Campbell, *The Royal American Regiment*, page 82.

## Provincial Soldiers

Provincial soldiers would take up the slack in order for the British war machine to roll forward. On each British campaign, provincials accompanied the main element of British line regiments as they attempted to cut off French lines of advance into the colonies. Each colony would recruit the troops needed for that campaign season in the spring. The example of Connecticut is sufficient to show how burdened the colonies could become from requests for troops. Connecticut sent soldiers to the field every year from 1755 to 1762.<sup>279</sup> From 1758-1760, they sent about 5,000 men each year from the estimated 20,000 military age men who were eligible for the militia.<sup>280</sup> Even though few provincial regiments saw direct military action in proportion to their numbers, it is safe to say that the campaigns could not have been successful without the provincials.

The background of a provincial soldier had few similarities with that of a regular. The one aspect that both shared was that they came from a similar place in the social strata. However, even this was different, as provincials who tended to enlist were better off than regular soldiers.<sup>281</sup> The reason for this lay in the terms of enlistment. Most regulars enlisted for a period of six years to twenty. This meant that for most of them, the army was the only life they knew.<sup>282</sup> Provincials enlisted for the duration of the coming campaign, which meant that provincial soldiers had very different motivations and backgrounds than the regulars.

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<sup>279</sup> Selesky, *War and Society in Colonial Connecticut*, pages 147-148.

<sup>280</sup> *Ibid.*, page 166.

<sup>281</sup> Anderson, *A People's Army*, page 35.

<sup>282</sup> Brumwell, *Redcoats*, page 78.

For the most part, they were farmers, as that was the predominant occupation of the time. Many were craftsmen and laborers. Some were students and sons of merchants. Most were young men who thought that soldiering would be a good chance to make money and see the world around them. The principle difference was that they never expected to be soldiers for a time longer than a year at most. They would return to their families and their professions after the campaign was over.<sup>283</sup>

Provincial officers differed significantly from their regular counterparts. For one thing, none of them purchased commissions. Instead, they gained their commissions by recruiting from amongst their community, and even their relatives. A good example is that of Captain Belknap of Massachusetts, who swore both his son and son-in-law into service.<sup>284</sup> Officers tended to be better off economically than the men who enlisted under them. Many were leaders in their community who used their influence to get men to join. They did not view their men with the same disdain that regular officers did, because they knew most of their men on a personal basis in civilian life. As Fred Anderson notes, this meant that the provincial forces were held together by common kinship and community rather than the severe discipline of the regular army.<sup>285</sup> A consequence of this is that enlisted soldiers might not be in awe of their officers, so officers would have to come up with different ways to make their men respect and obey them.

The use of provincial forces to augment the regulars was a standard practice of the time. Provincials had even been used successfully as infantry when they took the fortress of Louisburg in 1745, an act that fully confirmed colonial suspicions that they were

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<sup>283</sup> Anderson, *A People's Army*, page 53.

<sup>284</sup> *Ibid.*, page 42.

<sup>285</sup> *Ibid.*, page 44.

superior to regular troops.<sup>286</sup> It was also a sign to colonials that God was on their side in the conflict with the French, as the taking of Louisburg was considered a miracle by colonials and regulars alike, though probably for different reasons. Because of these prior campaigns, provincials knew that soldiering could be deadly business, both from bullets and disease. What made them sign on for a campaign?

### **Gone for Soldiers**

A number of factors contributed to the phenomenal support that the French and Indian War saw over the years, as evidenced by the large numbers of men who enlisted. The first was no doubt monetary. When Pitt offered what was in essence a blank check to the colonies to fund their war-making capabilities, local governments were able to offer their residents salaries that were greater than what regular soldiers enjoyed. They also gave cash bounties and paid for living expenses for the march to the front.<sup>287</sup> Massachusetts paid what was called “billeting money,” so that soldiers had enough money to stop at inns on the way to the front. Jealous regulars complained that this money was sufficient to house five or six men over the same amount of time.<sup>288</sup> Provincial soldier Lemuel Wood recalled that on their way to their camps in New York they went “to the tavern and drunk a gallon and a half pint of wine and there lodged that night merry as milord.”<sup>289</sup> By the late 1750s, Connecticut was gaining most recruits because of the pay that many provincials had come to depend on. In 1759, the

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<sup>286</sup> Selesky, *War and Society in Colonial Connecticut*, page 144.

<sup>287</sup> Anderson, *A People's Army*, page 69.

<sup>288</sup> *Ibid.*, page 69.

<sup>289</sup> *Ibid.*, page 70.

indomitable Rev. Samuel Bird, who still called for a crusade against the Papists, railed at those soldiers who “instead of serving their country, mean nothing but to serve themselves.”<sup>290</sup> When Harold Selesky examined the pay records of Connecticut soldiers, he found that while pay stayed fairly stable during the war, bounties for returning veterans shot up. This was a powerful factor in bringing back soldiers to campaign year after year.<sup>291</sup>

Of course, both examples are from the New England colonies, where large numbers of soldiers were used to campaigning against the French. In one sense, it was a tradition to go to war with France. This was the fourth large scale war with France in a hundred years. The middle colonies, by contrast, did not relish going to war. Colonists in Virginia failed to rally to the call for war coming from Governor Dinwiddie in 1754.<sup>292</sup> Planters did not see the value of leaving their profitable farms for the depredations of war on the Ohio. Most saw it as a politically driven move by Dinwiddie to try to claim land in the Ohio Country.<sup>293</sup> Politics failed to cause large masses of men to spring to the colors and enlist.

Still, enough colonists rallied that military units could be formed and sent to the frontier. The average wage was about the same for mid-Atlantic soldiers as that of New Englanders. The pay was slightly better for those members of the militia who enlisted into provincial units.<sup>294</sup> The evidence also shows that soldiers from the mid-Atlantic colonies were of the same demographics and came of the same social strata as their counterparts in New England. Enlistments tended to be higher in the late 1750s and for

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<sup>290</sup> Selesky, *War and Society in Colonial Connecticut*, page 148.

<sup>291</sup> *Ibid.*, page 149.

<sup>292</sup> Titus, *The Old Dominion at War*, page 37.

<sup>293</sup> *Ibid.*, page 36.

<sup>294</sup> *Ibid.*, page 45.



the remainder of the war, when victories were more plentiful and the crown paid more to veterans, just as in Connecticut.<sup>295</sup>

The second factor inducing colonists to enlist was religious fervor and what might now be called nationalism. Often the two could go hand-in-hand. In earlier wars, religion had not been a major factor whereas the urge to protect their communities had sent many men into the ranks.<sup>296</sup> The exception was the 1745 expedition to Louisbourg, when New England clergy united in the midst of the Great Awakening to induce men to enlist. George Whitefield, a critical figure in the Great Awakening, provided the departing New England army (the largest purely colonial force ever assembled) with their motto: *Nil Desperandum, Christo Duce* ("Christ Leads, Never Despair).<sup>297</sup> Clergy support enabled the expedition to have enough manpower to succeed. However, that was the exception. Even during King Philip's War (1675-1676), which had more deaths per capita than any other American war, the clergy did not focus on recruiting; they spent their time calling for repentance so that God would grant them mercy from the Indian attacks.<sup>298</sup> The French and Indian War was different, as we have seen from the first chapter. The provincials were sent off from their homes with great fanfare, which included the preaching of virulent ant-Catholic sermons. This certainly helped generate enthusiasm for the cause which made recruiting easier.<sup>299</sup>

Harold Selesky is of the opinion that these sermons, while encouraging enlistments, were not the principal reason that soldiers entered the ranks, and his research

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<sup>295</sup> Titus, *The Old Dominion at War*, page 135.

<sup>296</sup> Selesky, *War and Society in Colonial Connecticut*, pages 53-54.

<sup>297</sup> Stout, *The New England Soul*, page 234.

<sup>298</sup> *Ibid.*, page 78.

<sup>299</sup> Selesky, *War and Society in Colonial Connecticut*, pages 145-146.

shows that when colonists wrote home, it was mainly about money.<sup>300</sup> However, while money was a strong incentive for colonials, it should not be forgotten how important religion was in colonial society. The French and Indian War came on the heels of the Great Awakening, which had shaken many colonials into more intense religious practices. For those who did not find it attractive, it had at least renewed religious debate. Most colonials were incredibly devout, even in wartime; in 1758, out of the fifteen chaplains present at the encampment at Lake George, fourteen were provincial.<sup>301</sup> Provincials witnessing the results of an Indian attack, scalping and mutilations, were horrified; not so much at the physical disfigurement, but by what it would mean for the Second Coming when they expected their bodies would be resurrected.<sup>302</sup> As noted before, colonials were shocked at the way that the regulars swore and ignored the holiness of the Sabbath. They noted when regulars exhibited behaviors that were abhorrent to colonial society, such as sexual indiscretion. David Holden wrote, “A mighty discord amongst the regulars this night disputing who had the best right to a woman and who should have first go at her, even until it came to blows, and their hubbub raised almost the whole camp.”<sup>303</sup> These examples are indicative of a society that was bound up with religious principles.

As far as individual records are concerned, it is very difficult to gauge how many soldiers actually went to war for religion alone, as most began keeping journals and writing letters when the campaign actually began.<sup>304</sup> Many did talk about the money that

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<sup>300</sup> Selesky, *War and Society in Colonial Connecticut*, page 146.

<sup>301</sup> Anderson, *A People's Army*, page 210.

<sup>302</sup> Campbell, *The Royal American Regiment*, page 174.

<sup>303</sup> David Holden, 4 October, 1758 in “Journal of Sergeant Holden,” Massachusetts Historical Society, *Proceedings*, XXIV (1889), pages 387-409.

<sup>304</sup> Anderson, *A People's Army*, page 66.

they were earning, but that would be something that would be important for them to note so that they could keep their accounts. In addition, money would be something that they would write home about, as they often sent money back to their families. Wolsey Scott of Waterbury, Connecticut, wrote that he joined the army to make some money “to make some beginning on a small farm left [to] him.”<sup>305</sup> But religious fervor would not have been considered something out of the ordinary to write home about. Therefore it is difficult to ascertain how many soldiers went to war for a religious cause.

That is not to say that religion was not a spur for recruitment. While most provincial recruitment was handled by officers who needed to fill quotas to get their commissions, some traditional recruiting did also occur.<sup>306</sup> Officers and non-commissioned officers would assemble at the local village green and give an example of martial life. Here, they would wax eloquent to prospective soldiers on the benefits of being a soldier. David Perry of Dighton, Massachusetts, reported that he was drawn to enlist in the militia when he saw that “there were officers on the parade-ground, to enlist men for the next campaign.”<sup>307</sup> For men who had never been out of their own county, let alone their own colony, the urge to see the world was strong. One of the most attractive points, especially at the beginning of the war, would have been to join the army to finally destroy the French threat. It became apparent to most people, especially as the crown began pouring more money and soldiers into the fight, that this was to be the last push which would utterly destroy their traditional enemy. It would have been a strong incentive, especially as the new recruit may have just heard the following at a sermon that Sunday: “When a Popish Prince settled Canada with a People which bare the Image of

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<sup>305</sup> Selesky, *War and Society in Colonial Connecticut*, page 176.

<sup>306</sup> Anderson, *A People's Army*, page 40.

<sup>307</sup> *Ibid.*, page 44.

the Beast, how visible is the Truth and Justice of the divine Proceedings in pouring this Vial of his Wrath upon them!”<sup>308</sup>

Such a large number of militant sermons were given on election days and mustering days that it is safe to say that the sermon was a strong recruitment tool. In Virginia, clergy were openly utilized as recruiters at one point, their sermons attracting men to the recruiting area.<sup>309</sup> Similarly, calls for recruits in newspapers could take a religious tone. In July 1754, Benjamin Jones of Virginia, writing in the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, urged the Pennsylvanians to his north to take up arms to resist the growing threat on their borders:

‘Tis the joint and common Cause of every Englishman on the Continent; Warn them of their Danger; press them to Unite, come forth and join us, their Neighbors, and fight like Men, for their Religion, Property and Liberty; or they (and if not they, assuredly their Posterity) must be content to submit to a slavish, papal, tyrannical Yoke; become Beasts of Burden; their most excellent and pure Religion changed into the vilest Idolotry and Superstition. As an Englishman and a Protestant, ‘twere better, far better, honourably to die, than to behold so melancholy a Change. With God’s Assistance, we will give the Flesh of these French Vagabonds to the Birds of the Air, and the Beasts of the Forest.<sup>310</sup>

Here at last is the type of language that rings of the sentiment from the clergy, from one who was not a member of the clergy. Even as Virginia reached out to grasp at the Ohio country for expansionist reasons, they could still call upon religious zeal to provide troops for their cause. Admittedly, letters such as these and the impassioned appeals from Dinwiddie did little to bring Pennsylvanians rallying to the cause.

Still, it at least brought the discussion to the forefront of Pennsylvanian politics and society. They could not have been pleased at what they saw as the hornet’s nest

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<sup>308</sup> Nathaniel Appleton, *A Sermon Preached October 9, Being a Day of Public Thanksgiving, Occasioned by the Surrender of Montreal, and All CANADA* (Boston: John Draper), page 26.

<sup>309</sup> Titus, *The Old Dominion at War*, page 143.

<sup>310</sup> Benjamin Jones to John Jones, *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia: July 17, 1754), pages 4-6.

being stirred up by the Virginians in the backcountry. In June 1754, just as George Washington and the Virginia militia were building Fort Necessity, the debate about military readiness was heating up around Philadelphia. For some, such as the author of this newspaper article, the militia was not just for the protection of Pennsylvania from foreign enemies:

Again, if we are safe from foreign Enemies, it is not right to neglect the Keeping up of the Militia, because it is well known that we have numerous, or rather, numberless, Enemies amongst us, many of them fed at our Tables, and nurs'd up in our Bosoms, as it were, who are ill-wishers to the Protestant Interest, and may, if they have an Opportunity, rise to such a Height in Rebellion, that neither Church Discipline, nor the civil Law, can quash them.<sup>311</sup>

This is the familiar sound of anti-Catholicism, this time being used to justify the militia. It shows that the topic was under discussion even at this early date. Many men might have enlisted to protect their homes from the perceived threat of Catholics on the western border. Ironically, it was those very settlers that Pennsylvania needed to form the first line of defense against Indian raids, and who consequently bore the brunt of the border savagery. Many of them joined the 60<sup>th</sup> Regiment, the “Royal Americans,” in frustration with the bigots in the east.<sup>312</sup>

The Royal American Regiment was an interesting amalgamation of the old world and the new. It was made up primarily of foreign born officers and provincial enlisted soldiers. While the guidelines said no recruits could be Catholic, a few managed to slip in because of the regiment’s reliance on German and Swiss soldiery. However, the majority were indeed Protestant. They recruited any way that they could, because it was a difficult task to draw men away from the more profitable and less dangerous provincial

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<sup>311</sup> *The Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia: June 13, 1754).

<sup>312</sup> Campbell, *The Royal American Regiment*, page 59.

service.<sup>313</sup> One notable recruiting effort was by using a prominent Swiss pastor to drum up soldiery from his extensive flock in the Carolinas. James Prevost, colonel of the 60<sup>th</sup>, promised Reverend Johann Gasser a battalion chaplaincy in return for raising troops for the regiment.<sup>314</sup> The Royal American Regiment in consequence had a higher percentage of religious soldiers than the other regular regiments, and was unique in always having a chaplain with them.

The recruiting process amongst provincial forces was much less controversial than that of regulars, as we have seen. There were not as many chances for men to be forced into service against their will.<sup>315</sup> However, the regular army had an advantage that was not shared by their colonial counterparts: when they enlisted a man into service, it was for a period of time of usually no less than three years. The provincials could usually only recruit men for the coming campaign. This meant that enlistment quotas needed to be filled by the colonial governments every year of the conflict. This produced a certain war weariness that was often counteracted by paying larger bonuses to veterans, as noted before.

Still, the numbers of men needed over the seven years of war show how much of the populace was caught up in the war. Connecticut supplied no fewer than 2,300 soldiers for every year of the conflict; some years, as noted earlier, it contributed nearly 5,000.<sup>316</sup> Massachusetts had similar numbers, though usually higher. Fred Anderson estimates that at least thirty percent of males in Massachusetts between the ages of sixteen and twenty-nine served in the French and Indian War. Given the family size of

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<sup>313</sup> Campbell, *The Royal American Regiment*, page 72.

<sup>314</sup> *Ibid.*, page 64.

<sup>315</sup> Anderson, *A People's Army*, page 39.

<sup>316</sup> Selesky, *War and Society in Colonial Connecticut*, pages 116-117.

the time, Anderson argues that it is conceivable that almost every family in Massachusetts had a member who participated in the war.<sup>317</sup>

With the manpower needs of the conflict, the enormous numbers of colonials who were in the ranks, and the intensely religious nature of the society, it is probable that religion played a large part in filling the ranks. Whether the spur came from the local preacher, individual feelings of Protestant duty, or the promise of steady income, colonial men flocked into the ranks of the provincial army in numbers that were unprecedented. It is significant that the regular army did not see this corresponding rise in recruits; it meant that the colonials saw this as their own war to end the French Papist hold on Canada.

### **Viewpoints of the War**

It was by no means the first time that the English colonials had fought the French in the New World; nor was it the first time that they had fought as part of a larger European war. However, this was the first conflict between the French and English that originated in North America. Perhaps because of this, colonials felt keenly connected to the global war. Newspapers were full of the events of the war in Europe and the progression of the “Protestant Cause.”<sup>318</sup> The last war of religion that had embroiled England on the Continent, the Thirty Years’ War, had been a century before, in the 1640s. The colonists had taken little part in it, as the colonists from each country were

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<sup>317</sup> Anderson, *A People’s Army*, page 60.

<sup>318</sup> *The Boston Gazette* (Boston: March 25, 1755), On Prince Frederick of Hesse changing his religion from Protestantism to Catholicism. *The Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia: November 18, 1756), On the alliances of the Protestant States in Europe. *The New Hampshire Gazette* (Portsmouth: December 17, 1756), On the death of Admiral Byng and the strength of the Protestant Cause. *The New-York Gazette* (New York: May 2, 1757), On the French Edict of Religion and the persecution of Protestants in France.

too busy trying to survive. In one sense, the colonies from Sweden failed because of the distraction of the Thirty Years' War. Fifteen years after the Treaty of Augsburg, English forces conquered the Swedish colony. However, these were power struggles for survival, not religious conflicts. The last two French and Indian wars were the first wars for the English colonists that involved religious motivation, with the last one having the most intense religious overtones.

For the regular forces, the war was yet another foray against their traditional enemies, the French, and yet another native force. The British Army had a long tradition of fighting native peoples: the Scots and the Irish come to mind.<sup>319</sup> In their wars to subjugate these lands, British soldiers had committed atrocities that were equal to those that they lamented when speaking of the “monsters of butchery,” the North American Indian.<sup>320</sup> In Ireland, in the 1500s, British soldiers often beheaded the leaders of the opposition and lined the roads to their camps with these gruesome reminders of British power.<sup>321</sup> Troops that had fought in Scotland as recently as the Jacobite Rebellion of 1745 could remember that no quarter was given to Highland troops at Culloden Moor, on the grounds of their barbarism. Following the Jacobite defeat, Highlanders were hunted on punitive expeditions by the occupying British army.<sup>322</sup> These wars of colonization were fought with ferocity that would not have been expended against European armies. The distinction that British troops made between rebellious natives and soldiers of another army was marked: natives did not deserve the laws of war.

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<sup>319</sup> Brumwell, *Redcoats*, page 272. Indeed, often the Highland regiments of the British Army were thought to have some special connection with the native tribes they were facing in North America, as Brumwell points out.

<sup>320</sup> *Ibid.*, page 204.

<sup>321</sup> Nicholas P. Canny, “The Ideology of English Colonization: From Ireland to America” in *The William and Mary Quarterly* (Third Series, Vol. 30, No. 4, October, 1973), pp. 581-582.

<sup>322</sup> Brumwell, *Redcoats*, page 271.



Ironically, the American Army was full of conquered natives from Ireland and Scotland. The Highland battalions comported themselves well in battle. Indeed, they did so well that the crown requested more Highland regiments than could be made, resulting in many ex-Jacobites being given the king's pardon in exchange for taking up arms for him.<sup>323</sup> The large numbers of Irish soldiers in the ranks of the British army worried some in command, but their performance was satisfactory overall.<sup>324</sup>

The regulars did not see this as a war of religion. It was simply another exercise in colonization and another step in bringing down the French. They went into battle because that was their job. It was what they were trained and paid to do. As professional soldiers existing in the age of belief, it is possible that some regulars saw the hand of God in their lives. But the majority, from experience, believed that it was skill and strength that won battles.<sup>325</sup>

Provincial diaries and letters show a remarkably different reason for their willing participation in battles. Fred Anderson has done an excellent job collecting and analyzing the data concerning provincial forces and their motivation in battle. He finds that the greatest motivator to get men into combat was the idea of Providentialism.<sup>326</sup>

Providentialism can be defined as a belief that every action and event is part of a larger plan that is directed by God. More specifically, most colonials believed that God was interacting in the world in the present and that His hand could be seen guiding events in accordance with His will. Provincials referred to this frequently in letters and diaries. Seth Metcalf recorded a random blizzard in October and interpreted it as a sign from God

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<sup>323</sup> Brumwell, *Redcoats*, page 277.

<sup>324</sup> *Ibid.*, pages 60, 63. Even though many of the Irish were Roman Catholic, the British commanders saw fit to look the other way because of manpower shortages amongst the regulars.

<sup>325</sup> Anderson, *A People's Army*, page 209.

<sup>326</sup> *Ibid.*, page 196.

to “awaken me to a holy life and conversation. May it cause me to see my dependence upon God who can command even the wind and storm to destroy me.”<sup>327</sup> In this vision of the world, nothing was accidental; weather, disasters, and even battles were all part of a divine plan. For instance, when an accidental discharge from a provincial’s musket killed another soldier, Joseph Nichols interpreted it as a sign from God, hoping that this “sudden and awful stroke of divine providence [might] be sanctified to all of our regiment.”<sup>328</sup> Colonial Protestants took comfort in the belief that everything happened for a reason.<sup>329</sup>

However, it also meant that when disasters befell the British army, as they did in the years between 1754 and 1760, the colonials were quick to point out the spiritual implications. Caleb Rea, reflecting on the lost battle of Ticonderoga in 1758, believed that the defeat came about because of “the horrid cursing and swearing there is in the camp, more especially among the regulars.”<sup>330</sup> Similarly, Joseph Nichols in 1758 hoped that “our men may humble themselves before our Maker and repent of our sins, so that God would remember mercy and give success to our army.”<sup>331</sup> Both Rea and Nichols were at the Lake George encampment and witnessed the ravages of disease, the defeat at Ticonderoga, Indian raids, and finally heard of the joyful news of the fall of Louisbourg. Nichols would eventually conclude, “Victory undoubtedly comes from the Lord.”<sup>332</sup> While Amherst and Wolfe would have liked to hear that they had at least something to do

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<sup>327</sup> Seth Metcalf, *Diary and Journal (1755-1807) of Seth Metcalf* (Boston, 1939), Journal of 1765.

<sup>328</sup> Joseph Nichols, 24 June 1758

<sup>329</sup> Anderson, *A People’s Army*, page 197.

<sup>330</sup> Caleb Rea, *Diary of Dr. Caleb Rea*, 10 July 1758.

<sup>331</sup> Joseph Nichols, 17 July 1758.

<sup>332</sup> Joseph Nichols, 25 August 1758.

with the victory, the change in morale amongst the provincials after Louisbourg was at least comforting. For the provincials, it meant that God's favor had returned.<sup>333</sup>

As the war progressed in Britain's favor, the more so did colonials interpret this as God's vindication of the Protestant cause. When Captain Samuel Jenks marched into Montreal in 1760, he remarked that, "Heaven apparently fights for us, and therefore it is our duty to acknowledge it's the hand of divine providence, and not done by any force of ours, or arm of flesh."<sup>334</sup> The militia commander of western Massachusetts, Colonel Israel Williams, wrote to a subordinate in 1759 that, "In all these things the hand of Heaven is very visible...if it be for the glory of God's name, he will make your arms victorious."<sup>335</sup> This belief that God was guiding the war against the Papists surely reinforced the belief that this was to be the final conflict between the Protestants and the Catholics. It fed into the millennial beliefs that once the Catholics were kicked out of North America, and the continent purified, then heaven and earth could become one.

This sentiment could be heard often in the sermons that the colonials heard back home. Even at the front, however, there was no shortage of instructional sermons. The provincials were accompanied by preachers from back home. Some of these men were the very ones who had preached religious war, such as Rev. Samuel Chandler. They seem to have represented every persuasion of the Protestant religion.<sup>336</sup> Soldiers recorded about 134 sermons in their diaries and letters over the course of the war, even going so far as recording portions of them for further reading.<sup>337</sup> This indicates that the

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<sup>333</sup> Anderson, *A People's Army*, page 205.

<sup>334</sup> Samuel Jenks, 30 August 1760 in "Samuel Jenks, His Journall of the Campaign in 1760," Massachusetts Historical Society, *Proceedings*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Series, V (1890), 352-391.

<sup>335</sup> Israel Williams to John Burk, 13 August 1759, John Burk Correspondence, American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Massachusetts.

<sup>336</sup> Anderson, *A People's Army*, page 210.

<sup>337</sup> *Ibid.*, page 211.

soldiers found them important enough to note in their journals. Bear in mind that this only represents those soldiers who were literate. The structure that the daily prayers and weekly sermons brought to the soldiers was an important reminder to them of their lives as citizens and emphasized their difference with the regulars. Some soldiers even got upset when the preachers gave only infrequent sermons or their sermons were deemed too short: one officer noted that a sermon lasted a mere “eight minutes by the watch,” which appeared to upset the soldiers.<sup>338</sup>

The texts that they copied carry a pattern of sermons that were full of typology. In these cases, the soldiers were reminded how God had saved the children of Israel in battle and of His divine intervention in wars. It would have been natural for the soldiers to see themselves as Israel, as they had been raised to think of New England as the “New Israel.”<sup>339</sup> Preachers would remind soldiers that as long as they continued to be righteous, God would eventually bring them victory.<sup>340</sup>

The battlefield could be a horrendous place, especially for the untrained provincials. It was at this time that their religion was most important. Held together by their common community, provincials also gained great strength from their common religion. Sermons and prayers were delivered before the battle from the clergy, echoing the anti-Catholic sentiments from their civilian lives.<sup>341</sup> The sermons exhorted the men to do their Christian duty and gave examples of martial spirit from scripture, often centering on the idea of self-sacrifice in battle. Joseph Nichols wrote that Rev. John Cleaveland,

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<sup>338</sup> Samuel Jenks, 5 October, 1760.

<sup>339</sup> Anderson, *A People's Army*, page 211.

<sup>340</sup> *Ibid.*, page 214.

<sup>341</sup> *Ibid.*, page 156.

“gave us a very good exhortation to pray and not fail; in particular when we are going to jeopardize our lives in battle.”<sup>342</sup>

One aspect of 18<sup>th</sup> century warfare was the formal preparation of troops before battle. This involved speeches from officers, preaching from clergy, and inspirational music from bands. There were some instances where the religious aspect trumped all the others as the provincials prepared for battle. The patriotic speeches were often trumped by the sermon’s fiery rhetoric, and provincials were even known to sing hymns in battle.<sup>343</sup> For provincials, religion was as large a part of war as it was in peace.

One other vignette may provide some insight to the soldiers’ thoughts on why they were fighting. In an unattributed poem written in 1796 in Massachusetts, the author painted a vivid picture of the war that encompassed the general experience of the provincial troops. As well as depicting the usual wartime scenes, the poem seems to center on God’s providence in giving the British the victory. The phraseology used is of special note, as it leaves no doubt that the author believed the war was fought for religion. The French cause is named as “Antichrist” in several places. Its fall is noted as being a victory for Christ, not just the British: “And God did hear when they did call/ And Antichrist received a fall./ Oh, may she bleed and also die,/ That Christ may gain the victory.”<sup>344</sup> Referring to “Antichrist” as “she” is telling, as the author is probably not talking about France, but rather the “Whore of Babylon:” a popular Protestant title for the Catholic Church. Written in 1796, possibly by a former soldier, this poem shows the lasting influence of the religious aspect of the war. The author clearly placed the war within the millennial context of New England.

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<sup>342</sup> Joseph Nichols, 2 July 1758.

<sup>343</sup> Anderson, *A People’s Army*, page 157.

<sup>344</sup> *Ibid.*, page 221.

When provincial soldiers went to war, it was for a variety of reasons. The Protestant cause sent many men into the ranks and held them there through the tough living conditions during the campaigns. The familiarity of religious rites and traditions helped men to connect their past lives as civilians with their temporary occupations of soldiering. When in battle, the untrained provincials found that their strength lay in their religious beliefs. Without questions, the average provincial soldier was a religious man who held deep conviction about the activity of God in his world. He would have listened intently to the sermons preached by the men he respected and looked up to and taken them to heart.

Given the number of men who took up arms across the colonies and their intense religious beliefs, it is easy to see how the anti-Catholic rhetoric would have been easily received. From the examples in this chapter, most soldiers did not express this rhetoric verbally or in their writings. However, their actions show that they heeded the words of the clergy to take up arms against the Papists. Combined with patriotism and the promise of steady pay, this caused the massive influx of men into the ranks that made it possible for victory in 1763.

## CONCLUSION

As the diplomats of the combatant nations met in Paris in 1763 to negotiate the terms of Britain's victory, British citizens all across the globe rejoiced. Those in North America could take pride in the accomplishments of British arms as they had contributed much of their blood to the cause. The average citizen could not grasp the reality of empire, however, as most people had never left their own colony. What they could understand was that the religion that played a role in their daily lives was now safe. This made the victory a personal one for the men who had labored on the roads and forts that brought the regulars into Canada. The majority of men who went to war believed that God acted directly on and in the world around them. This belief was based in their assurance of salvation given to them by their Protestant faith. The threat of having their faith taken from them was seen as a dire occurrence. Men were perfectly willing to fight to the death to preserve their faith. More than that, they viewed the Catholic faith as an eternal threat to their own survival, both physically and spiritually. It was incumbent upon them to rid their continent of their oldest enemy.

Thus, Protestant ministers saw the French and Indian War as the chance to finally bring about the millennium. Because provincial soldiers were drawn from the flocks that the clergy shepherded, they shared a special bond of understanding: the Catholic threat must be ended. Ministers from Massachusetts to Virginia cried for the downfall of the Catholics in New France. They used all the tools at their disposal, such as millennialism and providentialism, to shape popular opinion. Always a staple at political events,

ministers did not shrink from using these outlets as a platform from which to preach their crusade against Rome. They called for Protestant men to answer the call to war to prove their manhood and their birthright as the New Israel. Once war began, clergy members accompanied the army to the front and ministered to the soldiers there. Those at home preached sermons of repentance and called for days of fasting in the dark days of 1754-1756. Likewise, as British victories began in 1757, they preached celebratory sermons expressing the providence of God and His devotion to the British people. At no time did they fall silent; without their inspiration and exhortation, the long, costly war could not have been prosecuted to the finish.

To the politicians fell the undesirable task of working with the crown and their citizens to try to raise troops and funds for the war. Because of their close proximity to the imperial system, most governors tended to shy away from using religion as a spur for war. Their assemblies, as can be seen in the anti-Catholicism of Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Maryland, were more prone to be susceptible to the rhetoric of the clergy. Colonial governors carefully balanced between fulfilling the crown's requests and the wishes of their assemblies. Moderate governors were able to keep anti-Catholic legislation to a minimum. Those with less qualms allowed strict penal laws to be passed and, in the case of Virginia, permitted the deportation of some Catholics. While colonial governments never kept an open mind about English Catholics, they also did not allow mass persecutions of the large populations of Catholics in Maryland and Pennsylvania.

While the politicians were not openly calling for a crusade against the Catholics, they were also not contradicting those who were. Not once does any politician, even the moderate Governor Sharpe, try to silence the clergy. This silence speaks volumes to the



power of the clergy. The politicians knew that the rhetoric of the Protestant churches made their job of gaining support for the war much easier. By not stopping the calls for crusade against Canada, they were implicitly encouraging it.

This made it that much easier for provincials to flock into the army. Encouraged by the promise of adventure, good pay, and the knowledge that they were going to war for the Lord, British colonists enlisted in the army in record numbers. Their efforts were vital to winning the war, as they freed the professional British army to do the fighting. Colonists built roads, forts, and infrastructure for the advancing “American Army.” They brought their religious ideals to war with them. Provincial soldiers at the front decried the immorality that they perceived in the regular army, thereby defining their own behavior as being religiously based. Their providential worldview helped them understand the often chaotic scenes they confronted and their faith gave them inspiration as they went into battle.

The three-pronged assault on New France eventually brought its fall in 1763. The war that began in North America had spread across the globe, making it the first true world war. Britain gained the most out of the war, emerging as the victor. However, she also was massively in debt from the way that she financed the war. Much of that money had gone to the politicians and provincial soldiers of the American colonies. The clergy had been winners in the war as well. Due to their efforts in mobilizing the populace, the Protestant religion was safe from the influence of Papist theology and Romish armies. They had so successfully polarized the colonials against Catholics that it would be a decade after the American Revolution until some state governments lifted penal codes against them. Clergy who looked for the coming of the millennium could not have been

disappointed by what they saw in the world at the end of the war: a new Protestant empire, spanning the globe, with an elite navy to carry the Protestant cause to every corner of the earth. Truly, the soul of the empire had been saved.

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