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JONAS CAST UP AT LONDON:
THE EXPERIENCE OF NEW WORLD CHURCHES IN REVOLUTIONARY
ENGLAND

By

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

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My dissertation, “Jonas Cast Up at London: The Experience of New World Churches in Revolutionary England,” offers a completely new way of approaching the history of religious struggle and debate during the English Revolution--blending the history of religious polemic and identity-formation with the history of the book and of print culture, and, for the first time, placing these epochal struggles over church government and religious freedom within a dynamic Atlantic context. With over one hundred printed books and pamphlets as my research base, my project uncovers the hitherto under-explored importance of English Atlantic colonial churches on the fiery debates over further reformation of the Church of England, and reveals a bustling world of preachers, polemicists and printers who refashioned the experiences of religious life in the Americas for English readers eager to recreate their own church according to what they took to be God’s will.

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INTRODUCTION

A year after his return from Rhode Island to London in 1645, the preacher Samuel Gorton published a scathing attack on the churches in New England entitled *Simplicities Defence Against Seven-Headed Piety*. Having stepped too far beyond the boundaries of Massachusetts' orthodoxy with his preaching at Plymouth, Gorton had been banished to Rhode Island in 1638. As a victim of New England's intolerance, Gorton must have felt perfectly justified when in *Simplicities Defence* he accused the leaders of New England of being "a company of grosse and dissembling hypocrites" who "bath themselves in blood and feed themselves fat, by devouring the good name, estates, and lives of their brethren."¹ The magistrates of New England did not stand idly by while this dissatisfied return migrant hurled vindictive epithet after vindictive epithet at them. Instead, they commissioned Edward Winslow, a former governor of Plymouth and an agent for Massachusetts in England at the time, to craft a defense. What followed a few months later was his rebuttal, *Hypocrisie Unmasked*, in which Winslow called Gorton a "gross disturber of the Civil peace and quiet of that government [of Plymouth], in an open factious and seditious manner."² Gorton responded in kind, refuting Winslow's arguments with a book entitled *Incorruptible Key*³ in 1647. While Winslow did not respond directly to Gorton's second attack, he did respond with *New England's*

¹ Samuel Gorton, *Simplicities Defence Against Seven-Headed Piety* (London, 1646), pgs.25, 2.

² Edward Winslow, *Hypocrisie Unmasked* (London, 1646), unmarked page.

³ Wing G1306.

*Salamander*⁴ (1647) to another virulent anti-New England pamphlet, *New-England's Jonas Cast Up at London*,⁵ which had been published earlier in 1647 by John Child.

Gorton, Winslow, and Child were not the only New Englanders who returned to Old England in the 1640s and 1650s. Susan Hardman Moore estimates that during the 1640s and 1650s a minimum of 1,500 settlers returned to England.⁶ Additionally, these three men were not the only return migrants who, upon their return to Old England, published pamphlets during the English Revolution attacking or defending the colonial system of church-government and its secular allies. In fact, they were part of a large group of remigrated settlers who believed there was much Old England could learn from the churches in the Atlantic colonies both as models of what would be acceptable and as examples of what to avoid. In the Congregational model of church-government, or the New England Way, full church membership (and its privileges) was reserved only for proven saints. Membership in a particular church was extended only after individuals had made a confession of faith demonstrating their own godliness. Neither birth nor residence in a parish automatically admitted one as a member of the church. Furthermore, each individual church acknowledged no higher authority. Each church was independent from every other church, and it was not beholden to conform to the dictates and decrees of higher ecclesiastical bodies such as synods. The New England Way's church-government represented a fundamentally different vision of and execution

⁴ Wing W3038.

⁵ Wing C3851.

⁶ Susan Hardman Moore, *Pilgrims: New World Settlers & the Call of Home* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), p. 55

of ecclesiology from the Church of England, reform of which was one of the battle cries at the outbreak of civil war.⁷

The New England Way was also at odds with Presbyterianism whose advocates comprised the majority of Parliamentary leaders in Revolutionary England.⁸ In fact, the New England Way represented a competitive alternative to the Presbyterian model. Presbyterianism was structured along a hierarchical system of church-government in which local churches were under the aegis of a local classis, which was in turn subordinate to a regional classis, and so on. Every church was ultimately under the authority of a national assembly. Its tightly ordered and hierarchical ecclesiology offered the nation not only a catholic church, but one to which the whole nation belonged. Unlike the New England Way, birth alone was the sole requirement for church membership.⁹

During the 1640s and 1650s, English ministers and politicians, tradesmen and elites, men and some women published hundreds of tracts, pamphlets, and books on the colonial churches in the Americas. My research has uncovered over 150 pamphlets and treatises on the Congregational Churches in the Americas, the New England Way,

⁷ For a broader analysis of New England's ecclesiology, see Perry Miller, *Errand Into the Wilderness* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1956); and *Orthodoxy in Massachusetts* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1959). For church membership practices, see Edmund Morgan, *Visible Saints: The History of a Puritan Idea* (New York: New York University Press, 1963) and Geoffrey F. Nuttall, *Visible Saint: The Congregational Way, 1640-1660* (Oxford: B. Blackwell, 1957). For a history of the theology of the New England Way in the broader context of sixteenth and seventeenth century European Calvinism, see David Hall, *The Faithful Shepherd: A History of the New England Ministry in the Seventeenth Century* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc.: 1972).

⁸ For Presbyterianism in politics during the English Revolution, see Derek Hirst, "The Failure of Godly Rule in the English Republic," *Part & Present* 132 (1991), p. 33-66; Ann Hughes, "The Frustrations of the Godly," in John Morrill, ed., *Revolution and Restoration: England in the 1650s* (London: Collins and Brown, 1992), p. 70-90; Jacqueline Eales, "Puritan Rule and the Failure of Cultural Revolution, 1645-1660," in Christopher Durston and Jacqueline Eales, eds., *The Culture of English Puritanism, 1560-1700* (Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1996), p. 220-243.

⁹ For Presbyterian ecclesiology, see E.C. Vernon, "The Sion College Conclave and London Presbyterianism during the English Revolution," (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Cambridge, 1999).

published in England during the 1640s and 1650s.¹⁰ This explosion of printed matter forms the core of my research into the influence that religious life in colonial America had on revolutionary English debates about church government. The publication of polemical pamphlets on New World churches during the English Revolution was a deliberate media strategy, executed by an alliance between American ministers and their political and religious supporters in England in order to influence the remaking of the English national church. These explanations, defenses, and apologies aimed to deliberately cultivate English public opinion, and their proliferation reveals the hitherto unexplored importance of the colonial church experience in revolutionary English religious debates. During an age of radical flux and debate over the future of the English church, these tracts offered the example of colonial churches as lessons about ecclesiastical structure for a nation struggling to recreate and redefine its religious life. As part of the explosion of revolutionary print culture in the 1640s and 1650s, these printed controversies reflected and in turn molded debates in politics and among the public.

Debates on national religious settlement favoring one church government over another were also complicated by the appearance of an initially minor, but sustained and increasingly important transatlantic conversation about liberty of conscience. Presbyterianism and Congregationalism shared an abhorrence of religious toleration. Presbyterians like Thomas Edwards and William Prynne and the Scottish Westminster Assemblyman Robert Baillie portrayed the Congregational New England Churches and its sister churches in the Chesapeake and Bermuda as a breeding ground for heterodox

¹⁰ See Appendix A.

sects.¹¹ New England Way ministers were quick to respond, strongly reaffirming not only their commitment to maintaining orthodoxy, but also their ability to do so within the structures of Congregational Church government. American dissenters, like those in Rhode Island and Eleutheria, whose unorthodox beliefs had provoked the colonial governments into forcibly removing them from the established New World colonies proved to be among the strongest supporters of liberty of conscience. They joined and substantively added to revolutionary print debates for liberty of conscience, using their own experiences of intolerance in the Americas not only to counter supporters of the New England Way, but also to urge the wider acceptance and legalization of liberty of conscience.

By blending the history of religious polemic and identity with the history of the book and print culture, I want to position religious revolutionary print culture within a trans-Atlantic context, providing a novel way of approaching the history of religious struggle and debate during the English Revolution.¹² Following Ann Hughes, I contend that the history of religious polemic and identity-formation has to be integrated within the history of the book and of print culture. But I extend Hughes' approach by situating these processes within an Atlantic world dynamic. Clusters of pamphlets on New World churches appeared at particular key moments, revealing that the timing of their publication was not random. Rather, they were calculated responses to high political maneuverings over the reformation of the English national church, such as the calling of the Westminster Assembly in July 1643 and the signing of the Solemn League and

¹¹ Thomas Edwards, *Gangraena* (London, 1646); William Prynne, *Fresh Discovery* (London, 1645); Robert Baillie, *Dissuasive From the Errours of the Time* (London, 1645).

¹² My approach is modeled on Ann Hughes' work *Gangraena and the Struggle for the English Revolution* in which she linked religious identity formation to print culture.

Covenant in September 1643. At these crucial moments, English men and women in the colonies and in the metropole recognized the potential importance of the experience of New World churches and their possible influence in England. By mapping out the religious networks these publications followed, from the New World to England, from manuscript to print, I want to demonstrate how these coordinated print campaigns were tactical moves made at specific moments to ensure maximum impact.

This project offers a dramatic way of revisiting the English Revolution. It breaks down the historiographical barriers that separate England from her colonies by recognizing that the English Revolution was not just an English or British phenomenon.¹³ By incorporating the English Atlantic colonies into the history of the English Revolution, my work is not simply arguing that the English Revolution was played out in a broader Atlantic context. Rather, I argue that the broader context of England's colonies influenced and directed the course of religious debate in England itself. Instead of tracing the changes and continuities that are the inevitable result of expansion and settlement in the colonies, my project explores the reverse process. By tracing the impact of changes and continuities backwards from the colonies to the mother-country, I uncover the role of colonial religion in a country where the national religious establishment was in the process of becoming deeply and violently unsettled. These "backward linkages" from the colonies to the metropole and then back out to the colonies again were increasingly influential and complex routes that offered the examples of colonial experience for

¹³ For British angle on the English Revolution, see J. Kenyon and Jane Ohlmeyer, eds., *The Civil Wars: A Military History of England, Scotland and Ireland 1638-1660* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998); Ian Gentles, *English Revolution and the War of Three Kingdoms, 1638-1653* (Longman, 2007); Trevor Royle, *Civil War: The Wars of the Three Kingdoms, 1638-1660* (London: Little, Brown, 2004); Conrad Russell, *The Causes of the English Civil War* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990).

English men and women in England to learn from, thereby substantially and qualitatively altering the discourse of popular politics and religious debate in the 1640s and 1650s.¹⁴

*

Godly Englishmen and women had settled throughout the English Atlantic world between the 1610s and the 1630s.¹⁵ They settled from the coast of the North American seaboard, to islands throughout the Atlantic and Caribbean. Plymouth Plantation was founded in 1620. In 1628, the New England Company was granted a patent for the area around the Massachusetts Bay. A year later, the company was reorganized as the Massachusetts Bay Company. In the face of continued persecution under the Laudian

¹⁴ The term backward linkages comes from David Hancock's *Citizens of the World: London Merchants and the Integration of the British Atlantic Community, 1735-1785* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997). Hancock uses the term in relationship to financial and mercantile ties from the colonies to London. Other historians of the early modern Atlantic world have also recognized the transmission of ideas from the colonies back to mother country. Please see James Delburgo and Nicholas Dew, eds., *Science and Empire in the Atlantic World* (New York: Routledge, 2008); James Delbourgo, *A Most Amazing Scene of Wonders: Electricity and Enlightenment in Early America* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2008); Londa Schiebinger and Claudia Swan, eds., *Colonial Botany: Science, Commerce and Politics in the Early Modern World* (Philadelphia: The University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005); Londa Schiebinger, *Plants and Empire: Colonial Bioprospecting in the Atlantic World* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2004); Antonia Barrera-Osorio, *Experiencing Nature: The Spanish American Empire and the Early Scientific Revolution* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2006); James McClellan, *Colonialism and Science: Saint Domingue in the Old Regime* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992); Kapil Raj, *Relocating Modern Science: Circulation and the Construction of Knowledge in South Asia and Europe, 1650-1900* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007). However, historians of the English Revolution and of religion in seventeenth century England have yet to fully incorporate the role of colonial religion into histories of the English Revolution.

¹⁵ I use the term "godly" and "Puritan" interchangeably. Both serve as umbrella terms for Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and Independents, recognizing that all shared core beliefs. For the problem of contested labels during the English Revolution, see J. H. Hexter, "The Problem of the Presbyterian Independents," *The American Historical Review* 44:1 (October, 1938), p. 29-49. My use of godly and Puritan, however, is not intended to imply that godly or Puritan reflects a unified, cohesive group. Rather, it is to suggest that they did share common goals and beliefs that could serve to bind them to one another. These included a commitment to a further reformation of the Church of England that included an engaged, preaching ministry. Accordingly, my use of the terms godly or Puritan reflects occasions when the divisions were not as important as consensus. A more extensive discussion of the divisions and consensus-making tactics of pre-Civil War Puritan London can be found in Peter Lake and David Como "Orthodoxy and Its Discontents: Dispute Settlement and the Production of Consensus in the London (Puritan) Underground," *Journal of British Studies* 39:1 (January 2000), p. 34-70.

Church regime of the 1630s, by the eve of the English Revolution an estimated 21,000 English men and women had migrated to New England.¹⁶ About two-thirds of them settled in Massachusetts, with the others settling in New Haven and Connecticut.¹⁷ These migrants claimed that their “errand into the wilderness” would complete the half-finished Reformation in England. In New England they would be at liberty to erect a government, both civil and ecclesiastical, according to the terms of their interpretation of the Bible. And in doing so, if they were successful, God’s providence would see to it that their efforts would be recognized in England and implemented there.¹⁸

The colonies in New England were not the only English colonies home to the godly, nor were they the first godly colonies in the New World. That distinction lies with the Somers Islands, or Bermuda, where settlement began in 1612.¹⁹ In 1609, the Virginia bound *Sea Venture* was shipwrecked off of the Bermuda coast. The captain of the vessel was Sir George Somers, an officer of the Virginia Company. It was from him that Bermuda took one of its names, the Somers Islands, and the finances, government, and religious life of the island were administered from England by the Somers Island Company. Historians have argued that Bermuda was the first English colony in the New

¹⁶ By New England, I am referring specifically to the colonies of Plymouth, Massachusetts, New Haven, and Connecticut. While I realize it is a polemical move to separate Rhode Island from the other colonies in New England, I believe that by deliberately separating it from “New England” it accurately reflects its ideological separation from the Congregationalism of the New England Way.

¹⁷ Francis Bremer, *Congregational Communion* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1994), p. 109.

¹⁸ Perry Miller, *Errand into the Wilderness* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1956), p. 11. For religion in seventeenth century New England, see Virginia DeJohn Anderson, *New England’s Generation: The Great Migration and the Formation of Society and Culture in the Seventeenth Century* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991); Francis Bremer, *The Puritan Experiment: New England Society from Bradford to Edwards* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1976); Francis Bemer, *Shaping New England: Puritan Clergymen in Seventeenth-Century England and New England* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1994); Stephen Foster, *The Long Argument: English Puritanism and the Shaping of New England Culture, 1570-1700* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1991); David Hall, *The Faithful Shepherd: A History of the New England Ministry in the Seventeenth Century* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1972); Edward Morgan, *The Puritan Dilemma: The Story of John Winthrop* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1958).

¹⁹ Providence Island was founded in 1630, almost twenty years after Bermuda.

World deliberately erected as a Puritan settlement. In 1622, the Company ordered that four churches be erected throughout the island, but they failed to adequately staff them with clergy. From 1612 to 1650, only eighteen clergymen ever served on the island. At most, there were only four clergymen on the island at one time, but more often than not, the number was closer to two. The strong Puritan tendencies of the Company, however, were reflected in their choices of ministers. Of the sixteen men that served as clergymen on the island from 1620 to 1639, at least eleven of them were committed Puritans. In fact, most of them emigrated to Bermuda because they had run into difficulties securing employment in England because of their nonconformity. Like New England, Bermuda served as a refuge for some of the godly preachers persecuted by Archbishop Laud. However, there was not an organized Puritan structure to the religious life of the island like the one in New England, and Bermuda did not escape the religious turmoil of 1630s England. It was not until 1643, however, that Bermuda established its first church governed like those in New England, under the leadership of Nathaniel Whyte (White), William Goulding, and Patrick Copeland.²⁰

Migration to the colonies did not signal an end to the migrants' former lives in England. Beyond the "networks of credit and debt [that] extended across the Atlantic, linking English and colonial associated, heir and executors"²¹ were the networks of what

²⁰ Babette Levy, "Puritans in the Southern Colonies" *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society*, 70 (1960); Louise Timko, "Puritans in Bermuda 1612-1650" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Drew University, 1996); Michael Jarvis, "'In The Eye of All Trade': Maritime Revolution and the Transformation of Bermudian Society, 1612-1800" (Ph.D. Dissertation College of William and Mary, 1998); Gregory Shipley, "Turbulent Times, Troubled Isles: The Rise and Development of Puritanism in Bermuda and the Bahamas, 1609-1684" (Th.D. Dissertation, Westminster Theological Seminary, 1989).

²¹ David Cressy, *Coming Over: Migration and Communication Between England and New England in the Seventeenth Century* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p. 188.

Bremer has termed “Congregational Communion”.²² Meeting at university, usually Cambridge, Puritan men formed lifelong friendships, sustained by the exchange of news, ideas, and letters that united them in networks of mutual support lasting long after they graduated. Friendship and networks were maintained through close contact, traveling together, lectureships, and correspondence. Despite the ocean between them, this communion of saints persevered in a trans-Atlantic form. These networks of saints were determined to maintain their unity in spite of the thousands of miles separating them. Central to these networks was the constant exchange of letters and manuscript tracts. John Winthrop’s correspondence from the 1630s and 1640s alone is remarkably extensive, providing historians with a rich archive from which to cull evidence of the maintenance of ties and information throughout the Atlantic. His correspondents included fellow New England lights like John Davenport and Thomas Hooker, the godly Bermudian Patrick Copeland, and godly English grandees like Sir Ferdinando Gorges, Sir Nathaniel Barnardiston, and Lord Saye and Sele. Manuscript tracts of theological points and sermons also traversed the Atlantic. David Hall has recently begun the painstaking task of compiling a list of these scribal publications, though research into this matter is far from complete.²³ A picture emerges of a vibrant transatlantic Puritanism, united not only by the hand of fellowship, but by quill and paper as well.

²² Francis Bremer, *Congregational Communion: Clerical Friendship in the Anglo-American Puritan Community, 1610-1692* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1994).

²³ David Hall, “Scribal Publication in Seventeenth-Century New England: An Introduction and Checklist,” *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society* (April 2005), pp. 29-80; David Hall, “Scribal Publication in Seventeenth-Century New England: A Second Checklist,” *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society* (Summer 2009), pp. 267-96. Please also see David Hall, *Ways of Writing: The Practice and Politics of Text-Making in Seventeenth-Century New England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008). I am grateful to Dr. Hall for sharing with me a copy of his second checklist prior to its publication.

It is vital to recognize that correspondence among the godly in the early English Atlantic world did not flow solely out of England into the Atlantic, nor were the recipients only to be found in New England. Bermuda was also part of this early seventeenth century English Atlantic godly network through which correspondence, books, and people circulated. Letters among the colonial godly kept each other abreast of developments within their own colonies, and they also advised and counseled each other on particular matters relating to the progress of their churches. New Englander Hugh Peters' 1638 letter to Bermudian Copeland in Bermuda mentioned the late difficulties in Massachusetts arising from the Free Grace Controversy.²⁴ Less than a decade later, Roger Wood in Bermuda complained to Winthrop of the religious turmoil on his island.²⁵ Relying on their correspondents in England, colonial godly also shared information about the political upheavals in England, paying careful attention to how they affected their own cause. Wood and Winthrop are clearly of one mind with regards to England, as Wood calls it "our miserable distracted cuntrey". They are also both on the side of Parliament, with Wood prophesizing that England "is likely to become to a great vassalage if not vtterly ruined, the King prevailing against the Parliaments Armies if god in mercie prevent it not".²⁶ The relative distance among England, New England, and Bermuda did not entail isolation. By tracing these networks, we can identify a much more complicated picture of the early seventeenth century English Atlantic world than has hitherto been realized. In this world, England was not the center from which all events of

²⁴ *Winthrop Papers*, Volume IV (Massachusetts Historical Society: 1944), p. 84-85. Hereafter cited as *WP*.

²⁵ *Winthrop Papers*, v. IV, p. 493-94

²⁶ *Ibid.*

notice stemmed. Developments in the colonies could be just as important as those in the mother country, and bore as much time and attention as those in England did.

In many respects, the godly brought with them into the New World many of the potentially divisive characteristics of Old English Puritanism. Peter Lake and David Como have characterized pre-Civil War Puritan London as “a world of interministerial dispute and rivalry”.²⁷ While the London Puritan establishment allowed for dispute, it strove to keep it a private affair. Consequently, “ministerial rivalry and ambition, competing visions of orthodoxy, and the exuberant initiative and activity of the godly laity seethed just beneath the smooth surface of apparent Episcopal control and doctrinal consensus”.²⁸ Internal policing of the godly was equally important for Puritans in New England. Degrees of doctrinal difference were permitted, so long as they remained a private affair that did not threaten the public image of the Puritan community as a whole. The Puritans organized the entire colony, both churches and towns, upon the contractual model of the national covenant. Free will was central to the covenant: members voluntarily promised to obey both scriptural and temporal (though Biblically inspired) laws. Congregationalism proved to be a source of stability in New England society, for the most part. It was flexible enough to accommodate moderate differences of opinion, allowing for toleration for some idiosyncrasies among people perceived as godly.²⁹ New England’s flexibility benefited from its geography: those who found elements of the churches in the Massachusetts Bay area problematic could simply remove themselves to a

²⁷ Peter Lake and David Como “Orthodoxy and Its Discontents: Dispute Settlement and the Production of Consensus in the London (Puritan) Underground,” p. 34.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

²⁹ Michael Winship, *Making Heretics: Militant Protestantism and Free Grace in Massachusetts, 1636-1641* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002); Timothy Breen and Stephen Foster, “The Puritans’ Greatest Achievement: A Study of Social Cohesion in 17th Century Massachusetts,” *The Journal of American History*, 60:1 (June 1973), pp. 5-22.

location further inland.³⁰ Indeed, such was the impetus behind the founding of the colonies of New Haven and Connecticut. For example, differences between John Cotton and Thomas Hooker over issues of grace and admission to church membership prompted the latter to move his Newtown church to Hartford in 1636.³¹ Despite his departure from the Massachusetts Bay Colony, Hooker remained one of the godly luminaries of New England whose opinions and advice were sought throughout the English Atlantic. John Davenport likewise felt that the churches in the Bay were too lax in their religious observances, and he moved his congregation to New Haven in 1637.³²

As flexible as the New England Way proved in some instances, at other times it was not enough. As the trials of Anne Hutchinson and John Wheelwright and the expulsion of Roger Williams in the middle of the 1630s revealed, there was a violent strain of dissension that threatened to explode into unchecked and destabilizing radicalism within godly New England. While New England managed, in its early decades, to remove these elements within its society—due in large part to the fact that the offenders could migrate yet again, thereby physically removing their heretical ideas out of the colony—the Free Grace Controversy demonstrated the structural weakness of Congregationalism in policing itself effectively and consistently, and, as Presbyterians in England would later argue, it threatened to make the colonies a breeding ground for sectaries.³³

³⁰ Timothy Breen and Stephen Foster “The Puritans’ Greatest Achievement: A Study of Social Cohesion in 17th Century Massachusetts,” *The Journal of American History*, 60:1 (June 1973), p. 10.

³¹ Perry Miller, *Errand Into the Wilderness*, Chapter Two.

³² I.M. Calder, *The New Haven Colony* (Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1970).

³³ Michael Winship, *Making Heretics: Militant Protestantism and Free Grace in Massachusetts, 1636-1641* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002).

The godly in New England managed to erect their “city on a hill” in the 1630s only to develop a reputation for cruelty and intolerance. A victim of New England intolerance, Roger Williams founded the first permanent settlement in Rhode Island in 1636, a colony that granted religious toleration, in stark contrast to its neighbor to the north. In the coming years, Rhode Island proved to be a place of refuge for other New England nonconformists like Anne Hutchinson, John Clarke, and Samuel Gorton. In 1643, Roger Williams secured a charter for Rhode Island with the help of Sir Henry Vane the Younger. Sir Henry had spent several years in Massachusetts, serving as its governor for a time, and was attracted to the nonconformist ideas of the New England heterodox like Anne Hutchinson and John Wheelwright. Back in England during the Civil War, Vane’s championing of Independency made him a key political figure in the fight against Presbyterianism. During the Interregnum and the Protectorate, Rhode Island’s guarantee of liberty of conscience attracted the sects persecuted in England and its colonies, like the Baptists and Quakers.³⁴

Religious dissension was not confined to New England, nor was Rhode Island the only English Atlantic colony that attempted to create a more tolerant settlement. The formation in 1643 of the first Bermudian congregation along the lines of the New England Way was not greeted with jubilation by the entire colony. Some, including the sometime governor of the colony Josias Forster, were vehemently opposed to this development, a debate that played out in pamphlets in England, which included as a participant the Laudian martyr William Prynne. Most Bermudians, however, like their Company leader the Earl of Warwick, believed that the settlement of the Bermudian

³⁴ Carla Gardina Pestana, *Quakers and Baptists in Colonial Massachusetts* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

church should “tary” until Parliament reached a decision. The fiery factional minorities held positions of power on the island, however. Consequently by the middle of the 1640s, a minority in Bermuda was divided into Presbyterian and Congregationalist factions. And in spite of the Parliamentary directive of 1645 that there should be religious toleration in Bermuda, the more conservative faction succeeded in driving the Congregationalists, headed by William Sayle, out of the colony. William Sayle and his followers emigrated and founded the island of Eleutheria in the Bahamas. Sayle, along with Goulding, returned to England in early 1645 and secured a charter for Eleutheria, the Greek word for freedom, where freedom of conscience was legally enshrined in the Articles and Orders of the colony. Eleutheria, despite its grandiose ideals, proved to be a short-lived venture. By 1650, Parliament in England ordered that Bermuda welcome back the Eleutherian exiles and most did return.³⁵

Churches were erected in the Atlantic colonies not simply for the benefit of the local migrants. A much larger prize was at stake: the Church of England. Godly settlers bided their time in the Americas, waiting for the day when their churches would serve as the model for the further reformation of the Church of England. Their moment of recognition came in 1640. With the breakdown of relations between Charles I and Parliament, calls for religious reform sounded in the halls of government and throughout the country.³⁶ Throughout the 1640s, the Long Parliament and the Westminster Assembly labored and debated the terms of the English national church settlement.³⁷ This debate

³⁵ The histories of Bermuda and Eleutheria are elaborated in much greater detail in Chapters Three and Five.

³⁶ David Cressy, *England on Edge* (New York: Oxford University Press), Part II.

³⁷ For the central role of religion in the English Civil Wars, see John Morrill, *The Nature of the English Revolution* (New York: Longman Group UK Limited, 1993); Conrad Russell, *The Causes of the English Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990); Richard Cust and Ann Hughes, eds., *The English*

swiftly and deliberately spilled outside of the Houses of Parliament into the street, facilitated greatly by the explosion of tracts, pamphlets, and books advocating or attacking one system of church government, and bemoaning or sometimes cautiously celebrating the rise of heterodoxy.³⁸ For Congregationalists in the Puritan colonies and their supporters in England, the experience of the American churches provided the exemplar upon which Parliamentary leaders could recast the English church. For others, such as Presbyterians, the examples of the colonial churches provided the lived experience of what would happen in England if Presbyterianism was not adopted. Disgruntled return migrants, such as Child and Gorton, joined their voices to the fray, using testimony of their own experiences of persecution to further undermine the supporters of the New England Way. And in the midst of all this printed matter debating, often venomously, the merit of the New England system of church-government, arose the first sustained conversation over liberty of conscience in England. It was in the Americas, not among the radicals in Old England, where the practice of liberty of conscience first took root.

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Civil War (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997). For the role of radical religion in the English Revolution, see Christopher Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down* (London: Penguin Books, 1972); F.D. Dow, *Radicalism in the English Revolution 1640-1660* (Oxford: Basil Blackwood Ltd, 1985); J. F. McGregor and B. Reay, eds., *Radical Religion in the English Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984); Barry Reay, *The Quakers and the English Revolution* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1985). For the role of popular religion in the English Revolution, see John Walter, *Understanding Popular Violence in the English Revolution: The Colchester Plunderers* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Keith Lindley, *Popular Politics and Religion in Civil War London* (Brookfield, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 1997).

³⁸ For religious debates in print during the English Revolution, see Ann Hughes, *Gangraena and the Struggle for the English Revolution*; and "The Meaning of Religious Polemic," in Francis Bremer, ed., *Puritanism: Transatlantic Perspectives on a Seventeenth-Century Anglo-American Phenomenon* (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1993), p. 201-29; Dagmar Friest, *Governed by Opinion: Politics, Religion, and the Dynamics of Communication in Stuart London, 1637-1645* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1997).

In 1641, William Hooke's 1640 sermon *New Englands Teares for Old Englands Feares* was printed in London for John Rothwell and Henry Overton. Hooke's sermon was one of the earliest salvoes for New England during the Revolution, a fact that could explain its popularity, as it was reprinted two more times that year.³⁹ However, it was hardly the first news Old England had received of their countrymen in the New World. Since their departure, the godly in the New World had been diligent about keeping those left behind informed about their progress and settlement. For their part, those who remained in Old England took a great deal of interest in the development of the colony in North America. From both New and Old England, missives, tracts, questions, and legal documents traversed the Atlantic.⁴⁰

Accordingly, many of the first tracts on the colonial churches published in revolutionary England came from these trans-Atlantic manuscripts. Harold Love argues that many authors deliberately chose scribal over print publication, a move designed to circumscribe the work within a smaller, more sympathetic audience.⁴¹ New England migrants deliberately committed their thoughts on church government to manuscript to circulate them among networks of godly. Authors who "presented a short topical text to a small number of chosen readers would do so in the knowledge that copies would multiply

³⁹ Wing H2624, Wing H2625, Wing H2626.

⁴⁰ David Hall, "Scribal Publication in Seventeenth-Century New England: An Introduction and Checklist," *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society* (April 2005), pp. 29-80; David Hall, "Scribal Publication in Seventeenth-Century New England: A Second Checklist," *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society* (Summer 2009), pp. 267-96. Please also see David Hall, *Ways of Writing: The Practice and Politics of Text-Making in Seventeenth-Century New England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008). I am grateful to Dr. Hall for sharing with me a copy of his second checklist prior to its publication.

⁴¹ Harold Love, *Scribal Publication in Seventeenth Century England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993).

by being transmitted through interlocking networks of friends and neighbours”.⁴² Scribal publication differed fundamentally from print not only in the form of communication, but also in the extent of the intended audience. Scribal publications, by their very material form, circumscribed its potential audience to an audience believed to be sympathetic, or at the very least, deeply concerned with its contents. However, it was not a foregone conclusion that others perhaps less sympathetic to the project of New England had no access to their scribal publications. Membership in one network of scribal publications did not preclude membership in another network. A minor godly gentleman in Essex who had access to New England scribal publications might also find himself a member of a town or court network with which he shared them. As such, despite their decision to restrict themselves to scribal publications, New Englanders also faced the very likely possibility that their scribal publications could reach an audience of less like-minded men.⁴³

The transition from scribal publication to print denied authors any semblance of control over the circulation of their works. Accordingly, when New England scribal

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 81.

⁴³ Peter Lake and Steve Pincus in “Rethinking the Public Sphere in Early Modern England,” *Journal of British Studies* 45 (April 2006), p. 270-292 provide a concise narrative of the development of political networks of scribal publications that constitute what they term a post-Reformation public sphere. It is important to note, however, that, like the New England scribal publications, these political scribal publications had the potential to reach larger and more diverse audiences than the scribal publication networks Love allows. These political scribal publications in turn elicited replies. The seminal work on this topic is Richard Cust, “News and Politics in Seventeenth Century England,” *Past & Present* 112 (1986), p. 60-90. See also Peter Lake and Michael Questier, “Puritans, Papists, and the ‘Public Sphere’ in Early Modern England,” *Journal of Modern History* 72, no. 3 (2000), p. 587-627; Peter Lake and Michael Questier, “Agency, Appropriation and Rhetoric under the Gallows,” *Past & Present*, no. 153 (1996), 64-107; Peter Lake, “The Monarchical Republic of Elizabeth I Redefined (by Its Victims) as a Conspiracy,” in Barry Coward and Julian Swann, eds., *Conspiracies and Conspiracy Theory in Early Modern Europe* (London: Ashgate Publishing, 2004); Peter Beal, *In Praise of Scribes* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998); H.R. Woudhuysen, *Sir Philip Sidney and the Circulation of Manuscripts, 1558-1640* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003); Kevin Sharpe, *Sir Robert Cotton: History and Politics in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979); Kevin Sharpe, *Reading Revolutions: The Politics of Reading in Early Modern England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000).

publications were set to print in the 1640s, their audience was no longer the smaller circle of the godly within England. The scores of tracts that then followed in their wake in the 1640s and 1650s were written specifically for a national audience. Therefore, for the authors, their agents, and their supporters, printing these tracts at the moments they did must be seen as a carefully calculated move. In publishing these tracts on the New England Way in print, the printing agents, be they printers, publishers, authors or their proxies in England, were making an explicit appeal to the public about the importance of their content. At this crucial time in England, English men and women in the colonies and in the metropole recognized the potential importance of the experience of New World churches and their possible influence in England. These concerns were not confined to debates rehearsed in Parliament or to items circulating in manuscript among elites. Rather, they were played out in public through print, in a move deliberately calculated to ensure wider influence.

Printed matter on colonial churches was an instrument of creation and survival. It created, for the first time, an image of churches and religion in the colonies that could be widely dispersed throughout England. These were not manuscript publications, circulating among a select few. Instead, through print publications, the authors of these texts attempted to create a fixed description of American churches. The fact that these creations were often, and viciously, contested turned an act of creation into a struggle for survival. Competing visions of colonial churches battled in print across the political and public stage. Survival not only ensured vindication, but potentially the enshrinement of their religious truth within the Church of England.

As print is central to my project, the question necessarily arises of how many people read the texts that form the core of my argument. In truth, it is impossible to determine how many people actually read these texts. Since we cannot know for sure, I rely on multiple other measures to assess the accessibility and impact of these texts. The cost of the text is one of the first indications of its potential breadth of circulation, and to a lesser extent has implications for the potential for access. It is impossible to determine with any degree of accuracy what the cost of any tract was unless there is a retail list of it somewhere. I have not located one for any of the American tracts that form the core of my project, and therefore am unable with any degree of certainty to postulate their exact prices. The most expensive part of any book in the seventeenth century was the paper, a sheet of which cost about one pence. The format and size of the book was determined by how many times a sheet of paper was folded. In a folio, the sheets are folded once, in a quarto twice, and in an octavo three times.

Many of the works in my sample qualify as pamphlets, printed in quarto form. According to Joad Raymond, a pamphlet contained anywhere from one sheet to twelve sheets of paper, thus running from eight to ninety-six pages in quarto form. Pamphlets were printed not on high quality paper, but on “pot paper,” a smaller, cheaper quality paper.⁴⁴ A printed broadside, made from one sheet of low quality paper, sold for about a penny by 1640.⁴⁵ Accordingly, a two-sheet pamphlet in quarto at sixteen pages would cost about two pence. The average laborer in mid-century England earning eight pence a day could therefore afford to buy a pamphlet of two or three sheets. In what follows, I

⁴⁴ Joad Raymond, *Pamphlets and Pamphleteering in Early Modern Britain* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

⁴⁵ Henry Peacham in *The Worth of a Penny* (1641) explains that “For a penny, you may have all the Newes in England, of Murders, Floods, Witches, Fires, Tempests, and what not, in one of Martin Parkers Ballads,” sig. D1.

define cheap print with these economic considerations in mind. A pamphlet of three sheets at twenty-four pages in quarto would readily qualify as cheap print. The boundaries of cheap print probably did not extend so far as the ninety-six-page pamphlet and a day's earnings, but at four or five pence, the forty-eight to sixty page pamphlet could have. My use of the term cheap print must be understood as a price distinction, not a value judgment on the contents of the printed matter.⁴⁶ Cheap print did not belong exclusively to the print culture of the lower orders, but was equally shared by the printed culture of elites. As Chartier has demonstrated with the blue books of pre-revolutionary France, "the humblest of citizens handled texts that were also read by 'notables' great and small".⁴⁷

Nonetheless, it would be futile to argue that price did not play a role in the circulation of a text. The more expensive a tract was, the fewer people who could afford to buy it. The high price of a text, however, does not preclude the possibility of it having been widely read or discussed. Literacy and purchasing power were not the sole determinants of access to a text, especially in a culture in which print was shared from hand-to-hand and orally. Just because the text was not cheap does not necessarily mean it was not popular. Authors and printers of New World matter believed that their texts would have popular appeal, that they would be of interest to more than just ministers and magistrates. This is because their contents were understood to resonate with a growing and identifiable English public deeply concerned with the issues and questions surrounding church-government and church reform these pamphlets addressed. The

⁴⁶ In arguing so, I follow Tessa Watt's *Cheap Print and Popular Piety, 1550-1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 5. Unlike Watt, however, I do not restrict cheap print to printed matter costing one or two pence.

⁴⁷ Roger Chartier, *The Cultural Uses of Print in Early Modern France*, trans. L. G. Cochrane (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987) p. 180.

English public was particularly interested in these issues during the 1640s and 1650s when the very future of the Church of England was uncertain. The subject of my project, the domestic potential for influence from the churches in the colonies, was not the exclusive provenance of an educated and politically powerful elite.

Accordingly, not all popular print was cheap print. Print could be popular without being cheap; the influence and importance of a text was not wholly dependent on its price. And it was very possible for a tract that was far from cheap, such as Thomas Edwards' massive *Gangraena*, to be, in early modern terms, a runaway bestseller. As such, other means by which to measure the popularity of a text must be utilized to gain a more nuanced understanding of its impact. The most obvious way of evaluating the popularity of any given text is based on the number of editions it went through.⁴⁸ During the English Revolution highly polemical works went through several print runs.⁴⁹ For example, John Winthrop's tract on Antinomians went through four editions, and was recast in its second edition by Thomas Weld in highly polemical terms. William Prynne's *A Fresh Discovery* went through two editions in 1645/46, and also prompted a response. In what follows, I treat as a bestseller any text that was reprinted at least once.

Which brings me to my next measure of the impact of a text: the intertextual histories of these works. Did the text stand alone, or did it become part of a reflexive debate? Was it itself a response to an earlier text, possibly ensuring a wide readership? How often was it responded to by other texts, or incorporated in the animadversions of

⁴⁸ Sizes of editions from the seventeenth century are not exactly known. Based on economics, a print run of less than 500 but more than 2,000 was not financially sound.

⁴⁹ This is contrary to Ian Green who argues that it was not the polemical works that lasted long in the nation's psyche, but rather the steady sellers and best-sellers of the day were overwhelmingly "edifying and didactic aimed at middle-rank, middle-brow readers by middle-of-the-road authors and publishers." See Green, *Print and Protestantism in Early Modern England* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 557.

other tracts? In short, did the life of the text extend beyond its own shelf life? The majority of the printed matter on American churches was profoundly intertextual, implicated in many other texts, whether they were responses to others, prompted responses themselves, or were part of a series of works on the same subject, such as the progress of the gospel among the natives in Massachusetts.⁵⁰ Some writings, particularly the works of John Cotton, were cited extensively in other texts, both by New Englanders and by others in England. Long after the book had disappeared off the shelves of the bookseller, it lived on in other texts. Its continued existence in other printed matter reveals explicitly its continued relevance and is also a testament to its continued marketability.

It is perhaps useful to think of multiple audiences for these texts. For tracts on the churches in their colonies, there existed a core group of people for whom these texts mattered deeply. Beyond the ones engaged with producing these texts, there are those, such as magistrates and ministers, who consumed these texts because of political or professional commitments. Members of the Westminster Assembly and the Long Parliament, godly grandees, leaders of religious factions all would have been reliable potential consumers of these texts, or were at least imagined as a key audience. Their interest in such debates is readily apparent. However, there were others audiences. There were those to whom these religious debates would have been deeply personal, and they would have read these texts in a sustained manner, but perhaps not as rigorously as

⁵⁰ See Richard Hollingworth, *An Examination of Sundry Scriptures alleadged by our Brethren* (London, 1645); Daniel Cawdrey, *Vindiciae Clavium* (London, 1645); Robert Baillie, *A Dissuasive From the Errours of Our Times* (London, 1645); all are discussed in greater detail in Chapter Three. Texts in direct dialogue with each other include the above mentioned Winslow-Gorton-Childe exchanges, discussed in more detail in Chapter Four and the Williams-Cotton debate discussed in Chapter Five. The Eliot Tracts, the series of texts on the progress of the conversion of the Indians in New England, is discussed in Chapter Four.

the first audience. Another audience, the broadest audience, would have been interested in this matter intermittently, such as when certain issues arose that interested them, such as the clusters of books that appeared over specific issues like the threat of Antinomianism, or when the author of the texts was a well known media figure, like William Prynne.⁵¹ Texts published in response to events of the day, such as the calling of the Westminster Assembly or the signing of the Solemn League and Covenant in 1643, might also have taken advantage of a public interested in the news of the day to gain readership. Furthermore, the fact that all these texts dealt with America, which was still exotic in the imagination of the English public, would undoubtedly helped to further along sale and increase readership.⁵²

In the process of transforming manuscripts from the colonies into print in Old England, inevitably much of the authorial intent in many of the New World tracts was obscured, particularly when we are dealing with texts that were penned thousands of miles and an ocean away. The production process of these texts removes authorial intent from the final product to a high degree. Authors in New England did not have the luxury of seeing their manuscripts into print. It was physically impossible for them to supervise their printing, make corrections to the text as the text was printed or even add personal

⁵¹ William Prynne, lawyer and pamphleteer, was found guilty of sedition by the Star Chamber in 1633 for his pamphlet against stage plays, and the Queen, *Historiomatrix*. While his ears were only lightly cropped, when he was hauled up again for the Star Chamber in 1637, his ears were entirely cut off, his nose slit, and the initials "S.L." were burnt into his cheeks. Prynne responded that they actually stood for Stigmata of Laud. Prynne became a martyr to the public. Upon his return from exile in 1640 in the Channel Islands, his return was triumphed of that of a returning hero. Prynne was hugely popular among the public. Parliament took advantage of his sway over the public for their benefit of their own public relations, commissioning him to write its official defense in the civil war and the official account of the trial of Laud.

⁵² Karen Kupperman in *Indians and English: Facing Off in Early America* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000) argues that there was a massive literature created in the first wave of American colonization. This literature included letters, sermons, pamphlets, treatises, and official propaganda of colonial companies. Material on Native Americans was of particular interest. Kupperman states "The English public had an insatiable thirst for knowledge about these hitherto hidden peoples, and this thirst made for a rich and varied collection of documents" (p. 4).

addenda. Instead, they were forced to rely on others to not only carry the texts from the New World to Old England, but also to then oversee their printing. It was also common for manuscripts intended only for manuscript circulation to be printed without the author's consent. When they were left at the printers, the texts could be modified in a myriad of ways, with additions, prefaces, and dedications inserted.⁵³ The very shape and form that their manuscripts took, to say nothing of their content, was beyond the control of many of the authors.⁵⁴ Thus, the printed text was presented to an audience, possibly not even the audience the author intended, in many ways removed from the author though still bearing his name.

With so many hands involved in the production of a text from New England, it is perhaps more useful to think in terms of what David Hall has termed "social authorship".⁵⁵ With so many people involved in the production of texts, altering the "author's" intent along the way, to identify one author as responsible for the final product alone is counter-intuitive. As "[e]veryone who served as a go-between had an agenda of his own that left its mark upon the text that he was facilitating," it is reductive to claim the finished printed product represented the interests of the author alone.⁵⁶ This was a fact not lost on the reader, and, accordingly, it is one that the scholar must be conscious

⁵³ Adrian Johns, *The Nature of the Book: Print and Knowledge in the Making* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998).

⁵⁴ G. Thomas Tanselle persuasively argues that the study of book production and the study of books as the tools of disseminating ideas are inextricably intertwined. He contends that "If book history is to be concerned—as it rightly should be—with the role of books in spreading ideas, then textual matters are central to it; and the analysis of physical evidence found in books is, in turn, central to the elucidation of textual questions. Textual study, in other words, provides a direct and inevitable link between analytical bibliography and l'histoire du livre" (p. 10). Accordingly, analysis of textual changes and additions to New England printed matter is central to understanding these texts not simply as evidence for their value in religious debates, but also how they were transformed into polemics directed at a wide audience. See G. Thomas Tanselle, *A History of Books* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: The University of North Carolina Press, 1981).

⁵⁵ David Hall, *Ways of Writing: The Practice and Politics of Text-Making in Seventeenth-Century New England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008)

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 106.

of as well. Consequently, published texts often attempted to assert their reliability. For example, “[o]ften, though not always, they responded to anxieties about authenticity by insisting that the writer had reviewed the copy text or entrusted an original manuscript to them”.⁵⁷ Nathaniel Homes, who co-wrote the preface to Cotton’s *The Way of the Churches of Christ in New-England*, informs his readers that Cotton himself sent Homes this tract, “together with his letter under his own hand unto me”. Cotton further requested that Homes “*would assist the Press*” in its publication.⁵⁸ Despite their claims to authenticity, virtually every tract on colonial churches bears the mark of someone beside the author, usually in the form of a preface or an address to the reader. For the dozens of texts published about the churches in the Americas during the Revolution, the social authorship of a text (re)structured the text itself, more often than not in an attempt to limit the text’s exposure to censure and also to guide the reader. Thus, our analysis must pay attention to the paratextual content of any publication.

Consequently, these tracts could be read in many ways and juxtaposed against each other, creating the possibility of multivalent readings. There was a fluidity of responses possible, for the context each text was read in was rich with competing arguments and narratives. However, while it is largely impossible to uncover individual reader reaction to a specific text, it is nonetheless possible to determine the techniques deployed to shape reader response.⁵⁹ Typography, for instance, mattered immensely, as,

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 107.

⁵⁸ Nathaniel Homes, “An Epistyle Pacificatory,” in John Cotton, *The Way of Congregational Churches Cleared*, p. A2^r.

⁵⁹ For the historiography of reading, please see Roger Chartier, *Cultural History* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988); Chartier, “Culture as Appropriation: Popular Cultural Uses in Early Modern France,” in Steven Kaplan, ed., *Understanding Popular Culture: Europe from the Middle Ages to the Nineteenth Century* (Berlin, 1984); Chartier, “Texts, Printing, and Readings,” in Lynn Hunt, ed., *The New Cultural History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989); and Chartier, ed., *The Culture of Print: Power*

in Robert Darnton's formulation, "typography opens unto sociology," demonstrating how "the typographical disposition of a text can to a considerable extent determine the way it is read".⁶⁰ Including addresses to the reader (in the text itself) implies a consciousness on the part of the author or the printer/bookseller that the public was wider than one or two people, and there was pressure to write more accessible works.⁶¹ In these dedications, we find a shift from a traditional language of clientage and patronage to a newer language of anonymous readers whose judgment and intelligence authors tried to flatter. Prefaces to the reader were also a way for the author/bookseller/etc. to reduce the risk of misreading the text. A preface was an immensely effective means by which to not only situate the book within its larger context, such as by identifying the other authors and texts the book was in dialogue with, but also to highlight the themes of the text, its importance, the veracity of the author, and to diffuse potential criticism.⁶² A preface was an attempt to assert control over a text that was lost once it fell into the hands of the reader. Titles of texts also kept the reader abreast of the developments in an exchange. There were

and the Uses of Print in Early Modern Europe, trans. L.G. Cochrane (Cambridge, 1989). Kevin Sharpe, *Reading Revolutions: The Politics of Reading in Early Modern England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000); Robert Darnton, "How to Read a Book," *New York Review of Books*, 6 June 1996; Stanley Fish, *Is There a Text in this Class? The Authority of Interpretive Communities* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1980); David Cressy, *Literacy and the Social Order: Reading and Writing in Tudor and Stuart England* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1980); H. Small and N. Tadmor, eds., *The Practice and Representation of Reading in England* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Kevin Sharpe and Steven Zwicker, *Refiguring Revolutions* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998); Adrian Johns, *The Nature of the Book*; J. Boyarin, *The Ethnography of Reading* (Berkeley: The University of California Press, 1992).

⁶⁰ Robert Darnton, *The Kiss of Lamourette* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc.: 1990), p. 185, 182.

⁶¹ Please see Joad Raymond, *The Invention of the Newspaper: English Newsbooks 1641-1649* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996) and *Pamphlets and Pamphleteering in Early Modern Britain* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006) regarding the growing awareness of the reading public in politics and attempts to cultivate it during the Civil Wars.

⁶² One of the most striking examples of this can be seen in the prefaces to Cotton's *The Keyes of the Kingdom of Heaven* (1644), written by the leading Independents Thomas Goodwin and Philip Nye. See Chapter Four.

answers, dialogues, responses, replies, duplies.⁶³ Manuscript and printed texts were absorbed into and incorporated by other texts, responding to them.⁶⁴ Other paratextual strategies were deployed to shape the reader's experience and reception of a text. Extensive quotations, marginal glosses, changes in font, all served to shape and guide the reader's response.

With these definitions in mind, we can then begin to assess the impact of print during the English Revolution.⁶⁵ Following the English Reformation, state control over printing effectively censored critical opinion voiced in print, but this did not prevent its complete expression. A pre-Revolutionary popular audience for news and information developed, best witnessed through the explosion of libels ifrom 1580-1640. Englishmen and –women, in the counties and the capital, and across social classes, shared this growing hunger for news and information. Libels were not restricted to the halls of the court and Parliament, thereby remaining essentially private, but rather were brought to wider audiences through the circulation of scribal publications and episodic oral performances. While libels “lack the amplification provided by commercialized print reproduction...they do create a space, a public, and publicity”.⁶⁶ Consequently, this early Stuart news culture, which clearly conforms to certain criteria of Habermas' public

⁶³ A duply is a response to a reply.

⁶⁴ The inclusion of manuscripts into printed publications can be seen to great effect in the highly charged polemics of the second half of the 1640s. For example, see William Prynne, *A Fresh Discovery* (London, 1645); Samuel Gorton, *Simplicites Defence against Seven-Headed Policy* (London, 1646); and Thomas Edwards, *Gangreana* (London, 1646-47).

⁶⁵ My project is not concerned with answering the question, Does print make revolutions? Robert Darnton in *The Literary Underground of the Old Regime* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1982) argues that it does. Cf. Roger Chartier, *The Cultural Origins of the French Revolution* trans. L. G. Cochrane (Durham: Duke University Press, 1991), Chapter Four.

⁶⁶ Alastair Bellany, “Railing Rhymes Revisited: Libels, Scandals, and Early Stuart Politics,” *History Compass* 5:4 (2007), p. 1154.

sphere, though not consistently, primed the English public for the explosion of print in 1640.⁶⁷

During the English Revolution, manipulators of print deployed it in sophisticated and national propaganda campaigns. The idea of using print to mobilize public support in the English Revolution was not novel. Rather, what was new was the “intensity, speed, and sheer volume of popular and public political discussion”.⁶⁸ The publication and circulation of printed matter encouraged English men and women to think about themselves, their government, and their nation in new and novel ways. *A Remonstrance of Londons Occurences* in 1642 marveled at how “There was never such a confusing of babbling and pro and conning...at bake-houses, barbers’ shops, and ale-houses” where common people, both men and women, debated “the whole estate of this kingdom”.⁶⁹

During the period of the English Revolution, a plethora of literary forms, of pamphlets, and treatises was deployed as political weaponry. With England’s (comparatively) high literacy rates, an alliance between commerce and controversy, and the breakdown of censorship, appeals to public opinion on political and religious matters became increasingly more important. As printed matter multiplied, it dramatically affected political dialogue: it shaped public opinion and opened public debate. Dialogues

⁶⁷ Bellany’s reappraisal of the pre-Revolutionary public sphere c.1580-1640 counters the Lake and Pincus model of the public sphere in early modern England. In the century after the English Reformation began, religious issues, Lake and Pincus argue, “came together with issues of dynastic and geopolitical rivalry to create a series of public spheres”. What characterizes these public spheres is “a series of exchanges not so much between the rulers and the ruled as between elements within the regime and their allies, clients, and connections”. Lake and Pincus claim that these Post-Reformation public spheres, with their previously private disputes, which had been episodic, became normalized with the proliferation of print with the outbreak of the English Revolution. Peter Lake and Steve Pincus, “Rethinking the Public Sphere in Early Modern England,” *Journal of British Studies* 45 (April 2006), p. 273-274, 275. The Lake and Pincus model fails to recognize the geographical scope of and broad public participation in political libel in the early Stuart period that expanded the demand for news, forming an engaged citizenry.

⁶⁸ Peter Lake and Steve Pincus, “Rethinking the Public Sphere in Early Modern England,” *Journal of British Studies* 45 (April 2006), p. 285.

⁶⁹ *A Remonstrance of Londons Occurences* (1642), p. A4-A4r.

and exchanges between the king and Parliament were presented through pamphlets, encouraging readers not only to read these debates, but also to criticize, respond, and choose sides.⁷⁰ Radical movements and individuals could print pamphlets to define and disseminate their agendas or to fabricate rumors. Likewise royalist writings became a tool of monarchy to defend or reestablish political authority, to no greater effect than in *Eikon Basilike*. Print culture in the English Revolution became an essential part of political life, not the preserve of Parliamentarians, Sectarians, Royalists, or Independents alone. Pamphlets, treatises, and other printed materials were the pre-eminent models of public speech of all factions during the English Revolution.⁷¹

And print exercised a great deal of social influence. Pamphlets and tracts published by supporters of the king or Parliament were responded to in turn by demonstrations and petitions by the populace. The 1640s witnessed an increasing awareness among all parties that people outside the traditional realms of government could be molded politically and in turn could mold politics. Simultaneously, the allegiances of the people were stirred by appeals to religious reform. Popular concern was incited from the onset of the crisis through the attack on Archbishop Laud in December of 1640, the trial of the Earl of Stafford in January 1641, and the Grand Remonstrance of November 1641. As Morrill argues, “It was the force of religion that drove minorities to fight, and forced majorities to make reluctant choices”.⁷² And if

⁷⁰ David Zaret in *Origins of Democratic Culture* refers to this process as “the imposition of dialogic order”. Printed political materials responded to, quoted, and alluded to other printed materials, thereby presenting texts in dialogue with one another, urging readers to compare and evaluate the texts and their arguments in relation to other texts.

⁷¹ Jason Peacey, *Politicians and Pamphleteers: Propaganda during the English Civil Wars and Interregnum* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2001).

⁷² John Morrill, “The Religious Context of the English Civil War”, in Richard Cust and Ann Hughes, eds., *The English Civil War* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1997), p. 161.

religion steered the courses people chose, the path was littered with printed matter, urging one set of beliefs over another.⁷³

Printed polemics not only produced arguments, but also manufactured identities. In the religious polemics of Revolutionary England, authors attempted to fashion allegiances and commitments that would have a political force for a public to whom these issues deeply mattered. Or, if the public did not care greatly, polemicists relied on fear and terror to inspire action. Ultimately, complete and accurate definitions of confessional stances mattered far less than deliberately selective and polarizing portraits of them. And, in the space vacated by negative identities, it created the possibility of a plurality of identities. Labeling these identities as “Independent,” “Sectarian,” “Separatist,” or “Congregationalist” created a fixed image of a broadly constituted group with permeable boundaries that, in reality, defied easy and ready definition. These labels deeply mattered in Revolutionary England because they shaped perceptions. Labeling differentiated confessional stances that substantively differed only in matters of ecclesiology, not in theology. For example, calling the New England Way Independency allowed Presbyterians to discredit Independency, but they also termed the New England Way Brownism to discredit the former. Labels did not reflect an objective truth, but they did construct reality for their public and their readers. Revolutionary polemical labels served to separate orthodoxy from heterodoxy, acceptable from unacceptable, right from wrong. In creating and naming the other, polemicists could demonize it as the scourge of English society.

⁷³ For popular mobilization during the English Revolution, see Brian Manning, *The English People and the English Revolution, 1640-1649* (New York: Penguin Books, 1978); David Cressy, *England on Edge* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006); and John Walter, *Understanding Popular Violence in the English Revolution* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

Recognizing the central role of print in the 1640s and 1650s, my project's focus on printed matter on colonial churches does so not at the exclusion of wider debates about the future of the Church of England during the English Revolution. Rather, I reveal the extent to which these hitherto underexplored tracts were an integral part of these debates. As Ann Hughes does in her book on *Gangraena*, a three-volume tome published in 1646-47 by the self-proclaimed Presbyterian heresiologist Thomas Edwards,⁷⁴ I use the printed matter on colonial churches not as information about the colonial churches *per se*, but rather as evidence for how the churches were presented to an audience. I treat these books as remarkably rich and dynamic *texts* from the 1640s and 1650s operating within a shifting ideological battleground. Instead of focusing on one text, as rich as it may be, my project examines the context of scores of texts, not just their genesis, but also their impact. The various rivalries competing for the enshrinement of their ecclesiological "truth" and the allegiance of public opinion created a fiercely contested battle in Revolutionary England. By appreciating the context of American printed matter, of its political and cultural influences and inspirations, I reveal the importance of religious division in mobilizing and driving public opinion. But more so, I also draw attention to the importance of religious life in the New World for the Church of England.

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⁷⁴ Ann Hughes, *Gangraena and the Struggle for the English Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004).

By focusing my dissertation on polemical, religious works on American churches, my dissertation brings a heretofore understudied Atlantic dimension to the study of revolutionary print culture in England in the 1640s and 1650s. That the English Revolution involved more than just England has long been recognized.⁷⁵ More recently, historians have shifted their attention to the Atlantic effects of the English Revolution. Acknowledging the Atlantic dimension of the English Revolution was the focus of Carla Pestana's book, *The English Atlantic in an Age of Revolution*.⁷⁶ Yet there remains a gaping hole in the scholarship on the English Revolution that the historiography has not addressed. If colonists and their brethren both desired the same end result—the further reformation of the English Church—the question begs to be asked: what was the reaction in the metropole to the colonial churches? How did the religious experiences and structures of the English American colonies influence religious debate in England? I answer these very questions. My dissertation dramatically expands the field of vision for the English Revolution in a unique and underexplored manner. By examining the profound ways in which the experiences of the colonies and of the colonists significantly participated in revolutionary print debates in the metropole in the 1640s and 1650s, my dissertation reverses the traditional trajectory of narratives of the English Revolution.

⁷⁵ For the War of the Three Kingdoms, please see J. Kenyon and Jane Ohlmeyer, eds., *The Civil Wars: A Military History of England, Scotland and Ireland 1638-1660* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998); Ian Gentles, *English Revolution and the War of Three Kingdoms, 1638-1653* (Longman, 2007); Trevor Royle, *Civil War: The Wars of the Three Kingdoms, 1638-1660* (London: Little, Brown, 2004); Conrad Russell, *The Causes of the English Civil War* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990). For the importance of Scotland to English Revolution, please see David Stevenson, *The Scottish Revolution 1637-1644: The Triumph of the Covenanters* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 2003). For the importance of Ireland, please see Micheál Ó Siochrú, ed., *Kingdoms in Crisis: Ireland in the 1640s* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2001). Jonathon Scott in *England's Troubles: Seventeenth Century English Political Instability in a European Context* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000) situates the English Revolution within the wider European context.

⁷⁶ Carla Gardina Pestana, *The English Atlantic in an Age of Revolution* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2004).

Instead of only acknowledging the revolutionary experiences of the American colonies, I argue that the colonies themselves attempted to steer the direction of the Revolution.

In doing so, I have relied heavily on theoretical works on Atlantic history, as well as necessarily formulating my own paradigms. I have drawn, for instance, upon David Armitage's concept of cis-Atlantic history.⁷⁷ Armitage argues that cis-Atlantic history "studies particular places as unique locations within an Atlantic world and seeks to define that uniqueness as the result of the interaction between local particularity and a wider web of connections".⁷⁸ In other words, cis-Atlantic history involves exploring the history of a particular place in relation to the wider Atlantic world. Cis-Atlantic history has the advantage of overcoming the artificial boundaries of a particular island, city, or settlement and their own particular histories by reorienting the focus of their narratives to the Atlantic world. In essence, by remembering that this place borders the Atlantic Ocean, or in some cases sat in the middle of it, the historian recognizes how it was part of a larger community or multiple communities that traversed the Atlantic world and thereby influenced it. In the case of my project, this entails reorienting England itself as part of a broader Atlantic community. And it was this broader Atlantic community, not England itself, which played a hitherto underexplored yet central role in debates over the further reformation of the Church of England during the English Revolution.

⁷⁷ David Armitage, "Three Concepts of Atlantic History," in David Armitage and Michael Braddick, eds., *The British Atlantic World, 1500-1800* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2002), 11-30. Cis-Atlantic history has seen the most activity in recent years. See Michael Winship, *Making Heretics: Militant Protestantism and Free Grace in Massachusetts, 1636-1641* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002); Carla Pestana, *The English Atlantic in an Age of Revolution* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2004); April Lee Hatfield, *Atlantic Virginia: Intercolonial Relations in the Seventeenth Century* (Philadelphia: The University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004); Evan Haefeli *The Creation of American Religious Pluralism: Churches, Colonialism, and Conquest in the Mid-Atlantic, 1628-1688* (Ph.D. diss. Princeton University, 2000).

⁷⁸ David Armitage, "Three Concepts of Atlantic History," in David Armitage and Michael Braddick, eds., *The British Atlantic World, 1500-1800* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2002), p. 21.

This broader Atlantic community of godly has never fully been integrated into the history of the English Revolution. The communion among saints on the western side of the Atlantic, on so-called “peripheries” of the English Atlantic world, did not develop free from England’s influence. Rather, it developed without dependence on England. Acknowledgement of this complicates the traditional narrative of English colonial expansion. Furthermore, tracing the circulation of goods and ideas through the networks of the godly reveals the extent to which the colonies influenced each other and were incorporated into Old English debates and discourse. As such, this project represents a necessary revision to our picture of the English Revolution. From authors and printers in London, news of Bermuda and New England circulated throughout England. Links among Bermuda, London, and New England did not flow in one direction, from England to the colonies or from New England to Bermuda. Rather, through these Atlantic networks, news, correspondence, and printed matter circled throughout the godly Atlantic. In an age of limited means, these networks were central to the transmission of information to and from their respective corners of the world. Neither New England, Bermuda, nor Old England were isolated communities of godly, but rather were intimately connected with the fortunes of their fellow godly throughout the English Atlantic world, bound to each other in ties of fellowship and communion.

Furthermore, as Armitage persuasively argues, cis-Atlantic history has the potential to “overcome artificial, but nonetheless enduring, divisions between histories”.⁷⁹ In the instance of my dissertation, cis-Atlantic history breaks down the boundary between “colonial” North America and “early modern” England. By separating the histories of

⁷⁹ David Armitage, “Three Concepts of Atlantic History,” in David Armitage and Michael Braddick, eds., *The British Atlantic World, 1500-1800* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2002), p. 23

these regions, historians anachronistically teleologize each region, the former set up to become the United States and the latter situated as increasingly closer to becoming “modern”. But more importantly, these labels, while still necessary for convenience, continue to impose a separation between those places all along the Atlantic that comprised the English-speaking world in the seventeenth century. Recent scholarship has reminded us that migration to the English colonies in the Americas was an extension of mobility within England itself.⁸⁰ If historians are increasingly aware of the Englishness of settlements in the New World, then these settlements need to be incorporated into the history of the major events of England, not as extensions or aberrations, but as inextricably interconnected and influential in their own right.

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My dissertation begins at the beginning of the English Revolution in 1640. While civil war did not break out for another two years, the calling of the Long Parliament in 1640 triggered the first, sustained attempt at further reformation of the Church of England since the Elizabethan settlement almost a century before. The question remained, however, of what form this reformation would take. In the early 1640s, printers in London began publishing explanations of the New England Way. The timing of these publications was not a coincidence. Many of these tracts had circulated among the godly in England in manuscript form for years before 1640. Publishing them in print was a

⁸⁰ James P. P. Horn, *Adapting to the New World: English Society in the Seventeenth-Century Chesapeake* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 1994); Alison Games, *Migration and the Origins of the English Atlantic World* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1999).

calculated move, designed to ensure a wider audience and elicit more support among the wider English public for the New England Way. The potential for the influence of the New England Way is further evinced by the request for John Cotton, Thomas Hooker, and John Davenport to return to England to take part in the Westminster Assembly.⁸¹ While they declined the invitation, the Massachusetts Bay Colony did send Hugh Peter and Thomas Weld to England. Once in England, Peter and Weld busied themselves with the publication of further statements on the New England Way, often timing the publication of New England printed matter to coincide with important events in London, such as the calling of the Westminster Assembly in the summer of 1643.

Chapter Two investigates a case study of early 1640s New England printed matter: two pamphlets published on New England's Free Grace Controversy in the 1630s. Seen into print by Thomas Weld, the two pamphlets were published within weeks of each other and are identical save for the addition of a preface penned by Weld to the second tract. The treatises demonstrated the effectiveness of the New England ministers and magistrates at rooting out schism and heresy in their midst. Furthermore, as reinforced by Weld's preface to the second tract, New England was specifically set as an exemplar for Old England. These two texts are also important for understanding the spirit of accommodation that still existed between Presbyterians and Independents in the early 1640s. While Independents most readily identified with the New England Way at this point, Weld's tracts demonstrate a sincere attempt between the two religious parties to settle their differences.

⁸¹ *WJ*, p. 345-46.

This spirit of accommodation between Independents and Presbyterians collapsed with the publication of the Independent *Apologeticall Narration* in early 1644. Unity, however tenuous it had been, between Presbyterians and Independents was lost. Whereas once relations between Presbyterians and New Englanders returned to Old England were marked by an effort to find an accommodation between the two systems of church-government, we now see the dramatic appearance of Presbyterian tracts that attack the churches in New England and Bermuda on multiple fronts. The identification of the New England Way with sectarianism and Independency can most readily be seen in the theological publications of Presbyterians in the mid-1640s, the subject of the third chapter of my dissertation. By identifying the New England Way with Independency, Presbyterians established it as an increasingly undesirable system of church government, one that promoted instability and dissension, gave rise to sectaries, and threatened to undermine the political, social, and religious order of the country. It was not, as earlier tracts defending the New England Way had argued, the system of church government most like the example set in the New Testament, but rather a dangerous and subversive system capable of the outright destruction of England.

Return migrants proved to be potent sources of criticism of the churches in the New World but were also among its strongest defenders. Vindications of the New England Way, which I explore in Chapter Four, printed by return migrants relied not only on the tracts penned by godly luminaries like John Cotton, but also incorporated the Native American population into their content. While conversions among the native population had not achieved staggering numbers, the Eliot Tracts of the late 1640s and 1650s consistently maintained that New England had not been delinquent in their duty to

bring the “heathens” to the light. Rather, they painted a picture of a painstaking and careful ministry, slowly but surely establishing a missionary presence among the native tribes of the Massachusetts Bay that had already begun to affect sincere and lasting change.

Finally, I conclude by examining the appearance of an initially minor, but sustained and increasingly important transatlantic conversation about liberty of conscience. American dissenters, like those in Rhode Island and Eleutheria, whose unorthodox beliefs had provoked the colonial government into forcibly removing them from the established New England colonies proved to be among the strongest supporters of liberty of conscience. Victims of New England’s intolerance, men like Roger Williams and John Clarke, returned to England during the Civil War to become fierce advocates for religious toleration. They joined and substantively added to revolutionary print debates for liberty of conscience, using their own experiences of intolerance in the Americas not only to counter supporters of the New England Way, but also to urge the wider acceptance and legalization of liberty of conscience.

CHAPTER ONE

“Deliverance From Everlasting Misery”: The Beginnings of Revolution and the Promise of the New England Way

Edmund Calamy's fast sermon preached before the House of Commons on December 22, later printed as *Englands Looking-Glasse, Presented in A Sermon, Preached before the Honourable House of Common, At their late solemne Fast, December 22, 1641* was a punishing appraisal of the state of England's soul. England, racked with sin, justly faced the wrath of God. Its only cure, Calamy preached, was to repent of individual sins and the nation's sins, and then to complete the work of the Reformation. Calamy pleaded that "There must be a Court-Reformation, a Countrey-Reformation, a City-Reformation, a Church and State-Reformation, a Generall-Reformation".⁸² For, according to Calamy, "It cannot be denied but that this Nation needs Reformation, not onely in reference to the Common-wealth, but also to the Church....Many pollutions have crept into our Doctrine, much defilement into our Worship, many illegal innovations have been obruded upon us; the very posts and pillars of this House, many of them are rotten....*reform the Reformation itself*".⁸³ Only through a thorough Reformation, one that is both personal and national, would England please God so that He will "deliver us from everlasting misery".⁸⁴

Calamy's prescription to finish the English Reformation appeared about to be fulfilled when the Westminster Assembly of Divines convened in July 1643. When the long desired Assembly first met, the differences between Independents, Separatists,

⁸² Edmund Calamy, *Englands Looking-Glasse, Presented in A Sermon, Preached before the Honourable House of Common, At their late solemne Fast, December 22, 1641* (London, 1642), p. G3.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. G3^r

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. H2

Congregationalists, Presbyterians, and Erastians that soon came to plague its progress had yet to irreparably divide the divines. Rather, clerics had worked diligently since 1640 to contain any number of theological and exegetical differences that threatened to explode forth, irrevocably dividing the godly and removing any chance of a religious settlement. Since the Aldermanbury Accord of 1641, the godly actively sought to silence extremists and stop the differences among them from becoming public until the issues that divided them could be discussed in the more appropriate atmosphere that the Westminster Assembly could provide. For four years, they united behind a common cause—the completion of the reformation of the Church of England—and shared mutual respect of one another.⁸⁵

The question remained, however: what form should this reform take? If the Church of England in its present state was done away with, what should replace it? What form should the national settlement take? Should it adopt the Presbyterian system of church-government, like that of Scotland and increasingly favored by many godly divines in England? Presbyterians believed in a national, unified Protestant church—the visible church—which included everyone in its membership. Its catholicity is central to understanding the Presbyterian system of church-government. There is no trial for membership, no need for a public declaration of God’s working in one’s spirit for admission to the local church. Birth alone is a guarantee of membership in the visible church. Furthermore, this national church unites all the local churches through a

⁸⁵ Elliot Curt Vernon, “The Sion College Conclave and London Presbyterianism during the English Revolution” (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Cambridge, 1999), Chapter One. The godly’s deliberate public silence over the differences among them did not prevent them from becoming politically active supporters of the Parliamentary party. The Royalist newsbook, *A Letter from Mercurius Civicus to Mercurius Rusticus* in 1643 charges the clergy of London with being one of the chief fomenters of the rebellion against the king.

hierarchical system encompassing the entire country. Local congregations are under the leadership of ruling elders called presbyteries, who answer to the authority of a classis, which in turn were under the authority of a provincial synod. At the top of this pyramid is the national synod. This hierarchical system of church-government, in which no local church exists independently of any other and in fact is bound to the authority of the national synod, creates a tightly organized, highly centralized system of ecclesiastical power. The end result is a national, visible church, in which the entire nation is automatically included, with painful and careful oversight over all congregations. In theory, schism, separation, and heresy are all swiftly and efficiently stamped out through the power of classes and synods, thereby maintaining the catholicity of the visible church. The appeal of a Presbyterian system of church-government to seventeenth century clerics lay in its ability to create and maintain unity, thereby limiting the potential for radical and subversive elements to take root, threatening to undermine not only the church, but also the state.⁸⁶

Or should the divines of the Westminster Assembly look to a foreign system of church-government, such as that of the Netherlands? Many English godly, escaping Laudian authorities, had voluntarily exiled themselves to the Netherlands. As such, there were many familiar with this Anglo Protestantism in the Netherlands, either through first hand experience or through letters and books written about it. The role of the Netherlands in the development of religion in England before and during the Revolution cannot be underestimated. Many exiles were important figures to Presbyterians and

⁸⁶ For Presbyterianism during the English Revolution, please see Elliot Vernon, "A Ministry of the Gospel: The Presbyterians during the English Revolution," in Christopher Durston and Judith Maltby, eds., *Religion in Revolutionary England* (New York: Manchester University Press, 2006), p. 115-36.

Independents alike, such as William Ames. Prominent godly during the Revolution, such as Nathaniel Eaton and John Bastwick, studied under Ames in Leiden. Hugh Peter, John Paget, Thomas Hooker, John Forbes, John Davenport, Samuel Eaton, as well as the Dissenting Brethren were all part of the Ames orbit in the Netherlands during the 1630s.⁸⁷

Perhaps the answer lay even farther away, in the English colonies in New England. Publications explaining and defending the New England Way provided a comprehensive model for the structure, implementation, and running of a Congregational church in England.⁸⁸ The New England Way was supported in print through the publications of godly luminaries like John Cotton, John Davenport, and Richard Mather, and presented to the political and popular public through the agency of well-connected return migrants like Hugh Peter and Thomas Weld. Particularly interesting in these debates is how exactly the New Englanders themselves responded. Not only did they publish statements clarifying their beliefs and position, but they also actively participated in what Zaret refers to as the dialogic order of printed materials. New Englander apologists “clarified” confusing points for English readers and countered attacks and criticisms. From these printed debates, it becomes clear that the New England church

⁸⁷ For background on English godly in the Netherlands, please see Keith Sprunger, *Dutch Puritanism: A History of English and Scottish Churches of the Netherlands in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Leiden: Brill, 1982); Sprunger, *The Learned Doctor William Ames; Dutch Backgrounds of English and American Puritanism* (Urbana: The University of Illinois Press, 1972); Raymond Stearns, *Congregationalism in the Dutch Netherlands* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1940).

⁸⁸ The godly, whether Presbyterian, Independent, or those of the New England Way, all agreed on the abolition of episcopacy. However, their different readings of the examples of churches in the New Testament provided the foundation for their ecclesiological differences. As such, Presbyterians, Independents, and New England Congregationalists all relied on the same biblical examples. Accordingly, the texts from these debates all cite exactly the same churches, but their author’s respective exegesis varied from ecclesiology to ecclesiology. For a discussion of the doctrines of the English Reformed tradition, both within England and in a continental context, please see David Hall, *The Faithful Shepherd: A History of New England Ministry in the Seventeenth Century* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1972), Chapter Two.

was not perceived of as an inconsequential backwater church without importance to events unfolding in England. Rather, this was the moment when John Winthrop's prophecy of New England being a "city on a hill" for the world held the possibility of coming true.

Furthermore, throughout these early publications, we find the evidence of the attempt at accommodation that had shaped English debates since 1640/41. Such evidence can be traced through the publications on churches in New England from 1640 through January of 1644. Prior to the publication of the *Apologeticall Narration* in January of 1644, little invective polemic against the churches and divines in New England appeared in print in Old England. Rather, we find many examples of printed matter from authors on both sides of the Atlantic reaching out to one another, trying to clarify and resolve their differences and find room for accommodation for all. During these early years of the Revolution, no unbridgeable gulf yet separated the ecclesiastical structures of the Old England godly from the New. On the contrary, we repeatedly see them acting with a reasonable expectation of accommodation and a belief that unity could be found.

II.

Civil War broke out in the autumn of 1642, but beyond repeated calls both inside and outside Parliament for religious reform, Parliament still dallied. It was the Scots that gave Parliament the final push they needed to take dramatic and real steps towards the effecting of any long lasting changes and reformation in the Church of England.

Parliament desperately needed the military support of the Scots in their war against Charles. But if they were going to have it, the Scots made it clear that England and Parliament were going to have to make radical changes to the Church of England.⁸⁹ In mid-spring of 1643, the House of Commons and the House of Lords debated back and forth and in committee over the calling of an assembly of learned and godly divines. Finally, on June 12, 1643, Parliament ordered the calling of what was to become known as the Westminster Assembly of Divines. Dr. William Twisse was appointed prolocutor of the Assembly, which began its work at 9 am on July 1. One hundred and thirty divines were nominated as members, forty of whom would constitute a quorum.⁹⁰

The Ordinance of June 12th clearly laid out the purpose of and work for the Westminster Assembly. Recognizing many of the complaints directed at the Church of England, not just from the past three years, but also almost from its Henrician inception, the Ordinance declared “that as yet many things remain in the Liturgy, Discipline and Government of the Church, which do necessarily require a further, and more perfect Reformation then as yet hath been attained”.⁹¹ Likewise, the Ordinance appreciated that “the present Church-Government by Archbishops, Bishops, their Chancellors, Commissaries, Deans, Deans and Chapters, Archdeacons, and other Ecclesiastical

⁸⁹ For the politics of the calling of the Westminster Assembly, please see Robert S. Paul, *The Assembly of the Lord: Politics and Religion in the Westminster Assembly and the ‘Grand Debate’* (Edinburgh: T & Clark, 1985), p. 63-70.

⁹⁰ Only one return migrant from New England attended the Westminster Assembly. It was John Phillip, originally from Suffolk, who migrated to Massachusetts in 1638 to escape the demands of Laudian conformity. He returned to England in 1641. Phillips was not one of the ministers invited to sit in the Assembly, and thus while he was the only one in the Assembly with first hand experience of the churches in the New England, he was not there as representing the New England Way. Furthermore, his tenure in the Westminster Assembly is not marked by any particular support for the New England Way. Please see Susan Hardman Moore, *Pilgrims: New World Settlers & the Call of Home* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), p. 123-24.

⁹¹ The full text of the Ordinance for a calling of an Assembly of Divines can be found at C.H. Firth and R.S. Rait, eds., *Acts and Ordinances of the Interregnum, 1642-1660* (1911).

Officers depending upon the Hierarchy, is evil, and justly offensive and burthensome to the Kingdome, a great impediment to Reformation and growth of Religion, and very prejudicial to the State and Government of this Kingdome”. With this opening declaration, Parliament reaffirmed its commitment to addressing the deluge of complaints about the evils of the Laudian order and the detrimental effects it had had on both church and state, and, in addition, openly declared the validity of public complaints on the same matter. This Ordinance represented a synthesis of both political and popular grievances and the implementation of an attempt at reform.

The Ordinance rather ambiguously defined the boundaries and scope of the Assembly’s work. The Assembly was instructed to develop a pattern for church-government that was “most agreeable to Gods Holy Word, and most apt to procure and preserve the Peace of the Church at home, and nearer Agreement with the Church of Scotland, and other Reformed Churches abroad, and for the better effecting hereof, and for the vindicating and clearing of the Doctrine of the Church of England from all false Calumnies and Aspersions”. This left unclear the extent to which the divines were to reform the Church. Which doctrines qualified as “false Calumnies and Aspersions”? What exactly did “nearer Agreement with the Church of Scotland” entail? Did it mean that the Assembly should follow and recommend a Presbyterian system of church-government, as in Scotland? But what if Presbyterianism should conflict with the example of “other Reformed Churches abroad”, such as those in the Netherlands or in the English colonies in the New World? None of these questions are answered in the Ordinance, leaving the door open for varied opinion and dissent amongst the divines of the Assembly. The divines were only to

confer and treat amongst themselves, of such matters and things touching and concerning the Liturgy, Discipline and Government of the Church of England, or the vindicating and clearing of the Doctrine of the same from all false aspersions and misconstructions as shall be proposed unto them by both or either of the said Houses of Parliament, and no other, and to deliver their Opinions and Advices of or touching the matters aforesaid, as shall be most agreeable to the Word of God, to both or either of the said Houses, from time to time, in such manner and sort as by both or either of the said Houses of Parliament shall be required.

The lack of a clear program of reform and the ambiguity of the Ordinance inevitably created a situation that let loose the myriad of opinions voiced within the halls of the Assembly. The intrinsic weakness of the Ordinance also resulted in constant delays and a seeming inability for the Assembly to develop a form of church-government that would be agreeable to both the public and to the Parliament.

Furthermore, the divines were specifically enjoined to keep their discussions confined to the halls of the Assembly and to Parliament, and “not to divulge by Printing, Writing, or otherwise, without the consent of both or either House of Parliament”. Expressly forbidden them was the printing of the matters discussed in the Assembly, a stipulation which belies Parliament’s recognition not only of public interest in the debate and outcome of the Westminster Assembly, but also of the potential power of public opinion to shape the direction of further debate. The Ordinance demanded that the Westminster Assembly be kept under the close supervision and control of Parliament. The scope of their activities was to be determined by Parliament and the divines were enjoined to report directly to both Houses of Parliament.⁹² No other outside influence

⁹² Reading through the personal journals of members of the Assembly, such as John Lightfoot and George Gillespie, as well as the records of the minutes of the Westminster Assembly reveals that Parliament did maintain close supervision over the Assembly. Committees of the Assembly were requested to report the state of their affairs to Parliament on a regular basis, repeated requests came from Parliament for the Assembly to hurry its work along, and materials from Parliament were sent to the Assembly for review. In total, the Assembly remained in almost daily contact with Parliament. See John Lightfoot, *The Journal of the Proceedings of the Assembly of Divines, from January 1st, 1643, to December 31, 1644*, Volume XIII of

was permitted—in theory—to influence the topics and direction of debate and resolution in the Assembly. Matters open for discussion were determined by Parliament, with only the “Word of God” to serve as their guide. Ultimately, the intention was to keep the final approval of the changes to the structures of church-government and church-worship up to Parliament, not the divines or the public.

III.

Their great distance from England did not keep the colonial settlers of the Massachusetts Bay and their off-shoot colonies of New Haven and Connecticut from remaining well informed about events that transpired in their home country. As Francis Bremer has detailed in his work, *Congregational Communion: Clerical Friendship in the Anglo-American Puritan Community, 1610-1692*, godly ministers throughout the English Atlantic world were “knit together by the thread of grace and a legacy of shared experiences....Members of this communion formed a network of friends who were determined to maintain their unity as they labored together to advance the reform cause”.⁹³ Lifelong friendships were made at colleges where these men met and formulated ideas. These friendships united them in networks of mutual support that were sustained through the decades and across the Atlantic, complemented by the inclusion of laymen like John Winthrop. These networks were maintained through close contact,

The Whole Works of Reverend John Lightfoot, John Rogers Pitman, ed., (London: J. F. Dove, 1824), hereafter cited as *Lightfoot Journal*; George Gillespie, *Notes and Proceedings of the Assembly of Divines and other Commissioners at Westminster. February 1644 to January 1645*, David Meek, ed., (Edinburgh: Robert Ogle and Olver & Boyd, 1846).

⁹³ Francis Bremer, *Congregational Communion: Clerical Friendship in the Anglo-American Puritan Community, 1610-1692* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1994), p. 5.

traveling together, lectureships, and correspondence. As these godly men moved between England, the Netherlands, and the colonies, letters, manuscripts, and books maintained their contact with one another and clerical communion was preserved across the godly diaspora. In the later years, particularly during the Civil War, these same networks of clerical communion were extended into publication networks, and as the once cohesive godly community splintered, the newly separated networks ensured the publication of their brethren's manuscripts and works, even as they pitted themselves against those with whom they were once united in a common cause.

For those who had left England for the shores of the Americas, interest in the events leading up to the outbreak of civil war, the wars with Scotland, and the callings of the Short and Long Parliaments was intense. New Englanders eagerly consumed news of English developments. Networks of patronage and of friendship kept their brethren in New England up-to-date as events unfolded through both letters and forwarding on of printed matter. The godly London turner, Nehemiah Wallington, in 1641 wrote to a friend in New England, thanking him "for the benefit and profit of your prayers in New England which should in courage us still to goe on in praying and begging now the Lords hand is open in giving". Wallington explained that because of "many great meetings of us in private fasting and prays," God has brought many wondrous things to pass.

Through

the marcy of God we have obtained a bloody warr to cease, by prayer we have a parliament. By prayer good men chose for the parliament By prayer the policy and projects of ye wicked is brought to nought. By prayer the snare they made to teach Gods children in hath in tangeled themselves as that filthy booke of Cannons with that cursed oath which was a snaire to teach the poore children of god they themselves are insnared.⁹⁴

⁹⁴ BL Sloane Mss 922, f. 92.

Likewise, John Winthrop's steady stream of correspondence from England kept him abreast of developments in England. John Harrison sent him news of the king's progress in the Bishop's War⁹⁵ and of the outbreak of the rebellion in Ireland.⁹⁶ When the Short Parliament was called, Sir Ferdinando Gorges wrote to Winthrop celebrating "the suddian approach of our longe wished for Parliament".⁹⁷ Another correspondent of John Winthrop, Sir Nathaniel Barnardiston, wrote to him shortly before his attendance at the Short Parliament of April 1640, wishing that his godly friends in New England were in Old England at that moment, for "now we see and feele how much we are weakened by the loss of those that are gonn from us, who should have stood in the gap, and have wrought and wrasled mighthely in this great busines".⁹⁸ By May of 1640, letters were sent to Winthrop informing him of the dissolution of the Short Parliament.⁹⁹ When Parliament was recalled in November of 1640 and the Earl of Strafford, the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland was impeached, New Englanders continued to be kept up to date as best as distance would allow.¹⁰⁰

Not all in New England rejoiced at the political crisis in England, however. If William Hooke's sermon from July 1640 is any indication of the colonial reaction, it is clear that, as for many in England, the Bishop's War inspired cautious and hesitant reactions among the New Englanders as well. Despite the prosperity of New England, Hooke cautioned his listeners not to rejoice at the outbreak of the Bishops' War in England, but rather to bemoan and mourn it. Hooke reminded his listeners that those in

⁹⁵ *WP*, v. IV, p. 138.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 194.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 219.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 218.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 243, 248-249.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 329.

England are their brethren, and, as such, they should cry with them at their sorrow: “Now it is the part of friends and fellows to beare one anothers burdens,”¹⁰¹ for “true friendship and brotherhood goes further, it will, nay it must, if need be, lay downe its life for the brethren”.¹⁰² It was their duty, if his listeners “desire to approve your selves the true friends, and brethren of your deare Countrey-men in old *England*, to condole with them this day in their afflictions”.¹⁰³ For Hooke, this was the worst of all possible wars and it was visited upon them as a judgment of the Lord because of their sin. He stressed that while New Englanders may not be physically present in England at the outbreak of war, their sins counted towards the tally that pushed God to inflict this punishment. The example of their sins begat other sins: they are part of the cause (as war is divine judgment against a sinful nation) of the war. Likewise, the continued influx of the news of Ireland and the strained relations between the king and Parliament proved a source of concern and anxiety for the New Englanders. Their response was to repeatedly, as Nehemiah Wallington’s letter indicated, hold fast days and days of public humiliation.¹⁰⁴

Hooke also detailed the exalted place that the godly of New England have in the opinions of their brethren in England. Hooke described how

they (I mean all this while, multitudes of well affected persons there) talke of *New-England* with delight! How much nearer heaven doe some of their charities account this Land, then any other place heare of in the world? Such is their good opinion of us! How have some among them desired to dye, if they might not be vouchsafed to live in this Land? And when sometimes a *New-England* man returnes thither, how he is looked upon, lookt after, received, entertained, the ground he walks upon beloved for his sake, and the house held the better where he

¹⁰¹ William Hooke, *New Englands Teares, for Old Englands Feares* (London, 1641), p. 5.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 6.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

¹⁰⁴ Michael McGiffert, ed., *God’s Plot: The Paradoxes of Puritan Piety Being the Autobiography and Journal of Thomas Shepard* (The University of Massachusetts Press, 1972), p. 173, 183, 190, 208; Richard Dunn, James Savage, Laetitia Yeandle, eds., *The Journal of John Winthrop 1630-1649* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1996), p. 341, 365. Hereafter cited as *WJ*.

is? how are his words lissened to, laid up, and related frequently when he is gone. neither is any love or kindnesse held too much for such a man.¹⁰⁵

Whether or not Hooke exaggerated the extent to which the godly in Old England admired those in New England, it was clear that the latter's experience in erecting a godly society was recognized as a possibly important model for England at this juncture. Lord Saye and Sele, in a letter from 1640 to John Winthrop, declared, "I will grant that God is with you, that you are glorious churches, that he sent you theather in handfulls untill you might grow unto a body fitt to doe him service".¹⁰⁶

The continued good relations between the godly in New England and in Old England are most evident in the repeated requests from Old England for New England to send representatives back to England. In February of 1641, Winthrop recorded in his journal how "some of our friends there wrote to us advice to send over some to solicit for us in the parliament, giving us hope that we might obtain much, etc.". ¹⁰⁷ Despite financial assistance from England throughout the 1630s, the Massachusetts Bay Colony had not financially prospered. Initial investors in the colony, men such as Lord Brooke, the Earl of Warwick, and Lord Saye and Sele, had begun to re-direct their investments into the West Indies. Poor reports of the climate and agricultural opportunities of the colony had also deterred other investors and possible migrants. Conditions by the end of the 1630s resulted in an economic depression. The future development of the colony was further aggravated by charter troubles.¹⁰⁸ The intended purpose of this request from England was to provide the government of the colonies with the opportunity to solidify

¹⁰⁵ William Hooke, *New Englands Teares, for Old Englands Feares* (London, 1641), p. 21.

¹⁰⁶ *WP*, v. IV, p. 265-266.

¹⁰⁷ *WJ*, p. 345-46.

¹⁰⁸ Raymond Phineas Stearns, "The Weld-Peter Mission to England," *Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts*, volume XXXII (Boston: Colonial Society of Massachusetts, 1937), p. 188-190.

their political position and collect funds and supplies desperately needed to sustain the colony; not to provide direction and advice for the settlement of the Church of England. However, the leaders of the Massachusetts Bay Colony “declined the motion for this consideration, that if we should put ourselves under the protection of the parliament, we must then be subject to all such laws as they should make, or at least such as they might impose on us; in which course though they should intend our good, yet it might prove very prejudicial to us”.¹⁰⁹

Despite recognizing the potential political jeopardy they might be placing themselves in, the colony’s government eventually decided that “it was thought fit to send some chosen men in her with commission to negotiate for us, as occasion should be offered, both in furthering the work of reformation of the churches there which was now like to be attempted, and to satisfy our countrymen of the true cause why our engagements there have not been satisfied this year”.¹¹⁰ The men selected for this mission were Hugh Peter, the pastor of the church of Salem, Thomas Weld, the pastor of the church of Roxbury, and William Hibbins, a merchant from Boston. For Weld, this was not uncharted territory; indeed, in light of his earlier years in England, it is safe to assume that such a project would have been close to his heart. Furthermore, his connections to godly Old Englanders and his correspondence with them would have found him well positioned in England to propagate and popularize the New England Way. A graduate of Trinity College, Cambridge, Weld became the vicar of Terling in

¹⁰⁹ *Winthrop’s Journal, Volume II*, ed. James Kendall Hosmer (New York: Barnes and Noble, Inc.: 1908), p. 24. Hereafter cited as Hosmer’s *WJ*.

¹¹⁰ Hosmer’s *WJ*, v. II, p. 25.

Essex in 1625 and established himself as a member in the Essex Puritan networks.¹¹¹ His nonconformity came to the attention of Archbishop Laud in 1628 and he was eventually deprived of his living by the High Commission in 1632. After his excommunication, Weld briefly went to the Netherlands, but by June of 1632 he migrated to Massachusetts. By July he was the pastor of the church of Roxbury. In a 1633 letter sent back to his former parishioners in Terling, Weld described the colony as a New Jerusalem, one in which “all things are done in the form and pattern shewed in the mount: members provided, church officers elected and ordained, Sacraments administered, scandals prevented, censured, Fast days...and all such things by Authority commanded and performed according to the precise rule”.¹¹² Like Weld, Peter was a graduate of Trinity College, Cambridge, with connections to the Essex godly and Puritan grandees like the Earl of Warwick. His step-daughter was married to John Winthrop and he had taken a leading role during the Free Grace Controversy in Massachusetts in 1636-38 in rooting out Anne Hutchinson and her supporters. Accordingly, both ministers were well connected in England, with a record of commitment to the New England Way.¹¹³

Initially, however, the selection of these men, in particular Hugh Peter, was met with a great deal of resistance from the people of the colony. In a letter to John Winthrop, John Endecott explained why he thought it a bad plan to send Peter to

¹¹¹ For Puritan networks in Essex, please see Tom Webster, *Godly Clergy in Early Stuart England: The Caroline Puritan Movement, 1620-1643* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

¹¹² My old friend and favorite Puritan, Nehemiah Wallington, obtained a copy of this letter and copied it into his letter book. Please see Paul Seaver, *Wallington's World: A Puritan Artisan in Seventeenth Century London* (Stanford, Cali.: Stanford University Press, 1985), p. 162.

¹¹³ Stearns, “The Weld-Peter Mission to England”.

England.¹¹⁴ Firstly, with regards to the financial and political reasons for the mission, Endecott argued that it would send the message that “new England can no longer subsist without the helpe of old England”. With regards to the second purpose of the mission, in furthering the work of reformation of the churches, Endecott believed that

if priuately some Godlie wise men in seuerall townes were spoken to (who are well knowen in England, and haue bene men of eminency and esteeme amongst them, As Mr. Cotton, Mr. Esek: Rogers, Mr. Norrice, and many others such) to write to their acquaintances who are likelie to doe vs good, by way of Counsell to aduize them, that it might be pleasing to God to further the worke of the Lord here by their purses and persons, etc. This we thinck wilbe more effectuell then the other.¹¹⁵

For the time being, the opponents of this scheme were triumphant and the proposed mission was stalled. The delay was only temporary, however, and in June of 1641, after securing the approval of the churches of Roxbury and Salem, Peter and Weld, along with Hibbins, were dispatched to England.¹¹⁶ They arrived in England by September of 1641.

Another request was received in Massachusetts in September of 1642. Members of both the House of Commons and the House of Lords requested that John Cotton, Thomas Hooker and John Davenport return to England “to assist in the synod there appointed, to consider and advise about the settling of church government”.¹¹⁷ Hooker, who was living in Connecticut by that time, replied that he “liked not the business”. Davenport and Cotton were more intrigued by the idea. However, shortly thereafter, “letters came out of England, upon the breach between the king and parliament...and from Mr. Welde and Mr. Peter, to advise them to stay till they heard further; so this care

¹¹⁴ Endecott arrived in New England in 1628 where he served as governor until the arrival of Winthrop in 1630. During the time this letter was written, Endecott was one of the leading citizens and a powerful magistrate in Salem. *ODNB*.

¹¹⁵ *WP*, v. IV, p. 314-315.

¹¹⁶ *Records of the Governor and Company of the Massachusetts Bay in New England, Volume I* (Boston: W. White, 1853-54), p. 332.

¹¹⁷ *WJ*, p. 403.

came to an end”.¹¹⁸ It is possible that the limited success Weld and Peter had met with in England over the past year heavily influenced their advice to the Massachusetts General Assembly. Upon their arrival in September 1641, Peter and Weld immediately set about securing more money and supplies for the colony in Massachusetts.¹¹⁹ The two organized a fund drive in the parishes of London and outside the city. They succeeded in collecting £875 for the transportation of pauper children to the colony, only to see most of it misapplied and drained away by delays. Finally, in the summer of 1643, around twenty children were transported to the colony. By the winter of 1643, Weld had applied to the Warwick Commission, the Parliamentary committee under the leadership of the Earl of Warwick appointed to oversee the colonies in the New World, for a patent for the Narragansett territory, land the Massachusetts Bay Colony government and Roger Williams disputed control over. Weld failed to obtain the necessary number of signatures from the committee for the patent, however, and Williams obtained a charter for the territory in March of 1644. In terms of the political and financial objectives of the mission then, it is clear that it was not a success.¹²⁰

With their decision, in New England they chose once and for all not to send ministerial representatives to attend any possible synod, such as the Westminster Assembly. Despite this seeming disconnect between Old England and New England, New England still managed to engage with the debates in the Westminster Assembly, using print as their weapon of choice to influence debate and opinions both within the

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 403-404.

¹¹⁹ Of the three representatives, Peter became by far and away the most prominent member of the party. For more information on the Peter-Weld mission as a whole, please see Raymond Phineas Staerns, “The Weld-Peter Mission to England,” *Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts*, volume XXXII (Boston: Colonial Society of Massachusetts, 1937), p. 188-246.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 220.

Assembly and without. During the early years of the Civil War, Weld and Peter were in many instances the midwives who saw tracts on the New England birthed into print from previously circulating manuscripts. Upon their return to England, Weld and Peter set about to share with a wider audience the glory of their New Jerusalem in the New World. Early in 1643, Weld and Peter published *New Englands First Fruits*.¹²¹ This twenty-six page pamphlet, dated by Thomason to January 31, 1642/3 and printed for Henry Overton, contains three parts, each designed to vindicate and support one aspect of the Massachusetts colony. The first part concerns itself with the condition of the Indians and plans for their conversion.¹²² The second part of the tract details the founding of Harvard College and the third and final part praises the bounty of the land and climate in New England. *New Englands First Fruits* was clearly intended as a piece of propaganda for the colony of Massachusetts, one designed not only to refute rumors of instability and dissension, but also to encourage further investment and settlement in the colony. But Weld and Peter did not stop with just one pamphlet. Indeed, the major pamphlets in support of the New England Way published in 1643 with the calling of the Westminster Assembly and in early 1644 owe their existence to the connections and machinations of these two men.

IV.

¹²¹ *New Englands First Fruits* (London, 1643). For authorship of this pamphlet, please see Worthington C. Ford's notes from *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society, Volume XLII* (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society), p. 259-66.

¹²² This is discussed in much more detail in Chapter 4.

New Englanders were forced to confront two main charges against them in their attempts to influence the re-making of the national Church of England: accusations of separatism and that the churches in New England proved a breeding ground for sectarianism and heresies.¹²³ Since the earliest days of their migration from Old England to New England, the colonial settlers had faced accusations of separatism. For the godly in Old England, migration threatened to undermine and destroy the heavy investment of English Puritans in the Church of England and the population of England at large. For many, to leave England as the settlers were was tantamount to a rejection of the English national church. In a letter from 1640, John Winthrop was still at pains to reassure his reader that the foundation of churches in New England did not amount to a denial that the Church of England was a true church, a unifying belief of the English godly.¹²⁴ Winthrop insisted, “It cant be that the Covenant (if it be rightly knowne) should give offence, if it did not seeme to strike at the foundations of the Churches in Engld. which (as wee heere conceive) is but in semblance only, for we acknowledge many true Churches in Engld.”.¹²⁵ Even worse, their migration amounted to separatism. Those who left England carefully and repeatedly attempted to justify their departure, to clarify that they did not reject and separate from the Church of England, but were simply opposed to some of the ceremonies and church discipline instituted under Charles I and Laud.¹²⁶ Hooke’s

¹²³ A more extensive discussion of the theme of New England as a breeding ground for sectaries and heresies can be found in Chapter 3.

¹²⁴ Most of the godly who circled the Calamy orbit in the early 1640s believed that the Church of England, despite its faults (largely introduced under Laud) was a true church. Their belief in the catholicity of the Church of England is a defining characteristic that distinguished them from those who become Independents.

¹²⁵ *WP*, v. IV, p. 169-170.

¹²⁶ See Susan Hardman Moore “Popery, Purity, and Providence: Deciphering the New England Experiment”, in Anthony Fletcher and Peter Robert, eds., *Religion, Culture, and Society in Early Modern Britain* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

sermon, with his affirmations of ties of friendship and loyalty that bound migrants to Old England, was an example of this New England rhetoric. It was the Laudian innovations that threatened the position of the Church of England and the nation of England as God's chosen people and drove them from the country, however unwillingly. Thomas Hooker's departure sermon from his ministry at Chelmsford in Essex admonished his listeners: "Oh *England* plead with your God! and let him not depart. You should onely part with your rebellions, he will not part with you".¹²⁷ The timing of the publication of Hooker's sermon—1641—was no accident. Like Hooke, Hooker's sermon served to confirm the ties that bind the churches in New England to Old England. Accusations of separation fell to the wayside here.

Likewise in 1641, a letter from John Cotton was printed in London.¹²⁸ In this very short, six page pamphlet, Cotton clearly made the case that the New England churches were not separate from the congregations of England—they were not a separatist church and did not require separation of its members from the Church of England. They were most definitely of the Church of England. In fact, Cotton and his fellow New Englanders despised separation. Cotton referred to it as the "bitternesse of Separation".¹²⁹ Rather, Cotton was in perfect harmony with attacks in England on separatists. Cotton continued in his attempts to defend the New England Way throughout the Civil War period. One of his earliest public demonstrations was the publication of *The Doctrine of the Church, to which is committed the Keyes of the Kingdome of Heaven*

¹²⁷ Thomas Hooker, *The Danger of Desertion: Or, A Farwell Sermon...Preached immediately before his Departure out of Old England* (London, 1641), p. 7.

¹²⁸ John Cotton, *A Copy of A Letter of Mr. Cotton of Boston, in New England, sent in an answer of certaine Objections made against their Discipline and Orders there, directed to a FRIEND* (London, 1641).

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 3

in 1642. The text was a clearly delineated statement of the government of the churches in New England. What makes this work so important was its popularity. At thirteen pages, it was an easily affordable tract, a fact that is reflected in the number of editions it went through. *The Doctrine of the Church* was published twice in 1642 and 1643: an incomplete version printed for Samuel Satterthwaite and a “more exact copy” was printed again in 1643 printed for Benjamin Allen and Satterthwaite.¹³⁰ It was reprinted, for a third time, under the title *The True Constitution of A particular visible Church, proved by Scripture*, also in 1642 by Satterthwaite. What is evident by the three editions this text went through in less than a year was that there was clearly a market for printed matter on the churches in New England. This was something that the public was consuming, eagerly.

The most in-depth and important statements clarifying and defending the New England Way, however, came with the calling of the Westminster Assembly. The first was Richard Mather’s *Church-Government and Church-Covenant Discussed, In an Answer to the Elders of the Severall Churches in New-England To two and thirty Questions, sent over to them by divers Ministers in England, to declare their judgments therein*. Mather, a minister from Toxteth Park near Lowton (present-day Liverpool), was suspended from his ministry in 1633 following a visitation from the Laudian divine Archbishop Richard Neile. By 1635, along with his family, Mather migrated to Massachusetts, settling in Dorchester near Boston.¹³¹ Despite his lack of a formal university education, Mather became one of the leading lights of the New England

¹³⁰ First edition: Wing C6428; Second edition: Wing C6429; Third edition: Wing C6468, Thomason Tracts E.107[15].

¹³¹ ODNB.

church. When reports regarding New England innovations traveled back across the Atlantic to Old England, those who had remained in Old England responded with many questions and comments. By the late 1630s, many of the godly in Old England became concerned about what they were hearing, and began to send letters and questions to their godly brethren across the Atlantic. One of the chief defenders of the New England Way was Richard Mather, who answered a deluge of questions from his native Lancashire.

In one such letter, composed in 1636 to an unidentified Lancashire minister, Mather answered thirty-six questions clarifying the system of church-government in New England.¹³² It was one of the Massachusetts Bay Colony's first complete statements of church polity. In this letter, we find many of the questions regarding the New England Way that were later to appear in print in the 1640s, as well as many of New England's answers. By this time, the New England Way had already developed its procedure for admitting new members, requiring those requesting membership in a church to make a profession of faith and were denying the privileges of church membership, such as communion and baptism, to non-members. A "visible profession of faith is necessary to the beeing of a visible church and of every member of the same",¹³³ for "such confession is requisite in the admission of members as may make the repentance and faith of the

¹³² B. Richard Burg, "A Letter of Richard Mather to a Cleric in Old England," *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd Series, Vol. 29, No. 1 (Jan., 1972), p. 81-98. This letter was never printed. The only reason it has survived was because Mather included it in his response to attacks on New England, "A Plea for the Churches of Christ in New England" a copy of which can be found at the Massachusetts Historical Society in Boston. This work also was never printed. This manuscript was not the only manuscript of Mather's defending or explaining the New England Way. David Hall has identified another manuscript of Mather's, "Arguments tending to prove the Removing from Old England to New, or some such like place, to be not only lawful, but also necessary for them that are not otherwise tyed, but free" (1635). This manuscript, which no longer survives, descended within the Mather family and was eventually printed in Increase Mather, *The Life and Death of that reverend man of god Richard Mather* (Cambridge, Mass., 1670) p. 12-19. David Hall, "Scribal Publication in Seventeenth-Century New England: A Second Checklist," *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society* (Summer 2009), pp. 267-96

¹³³ *Ibid.*, p. 87

partyes visible before the whole congregation”.¹³⁴ Therefore “neither may shee [the church] administer the seales to any, but such as are members”.¹³⁵ With membership in the Church of England open to anyone, with no profession of faith required for admittance into the Church, the implication of these policies was a rejection of the Church of England as a true church. Rather than concede this point, however, Mather maintained that even churches that

are defective in the purity of their Combination, having some unworthy men mixed among them, cannot for this truly bee denied to bee Churches, because the substance of the thing is found in them; though not so playne and pure as were to bee wished; and thus it is with many churches in England.¹³⁶

Even more important to the development of the New England Way was Mather’s clear denial of a national, hierarchical system of church-government: “in the New. Test. a nation or country is not spoken of as one church, but there is mention of many churches in one nation or one country”.¹³⁷ Each church is a distinct, independent church, and no church has power over another. For

True churches are distinct societyes, all of them of equall and independent spirituall power within themselves, as sisters (Cant. 8:8) and subject onely to the power and authority of Christ Jesus (James 4:12) and therefore one true church hath no authority to impose their injunctions and decrees upon another true church.¹³⁸

Rather than rely on national synods or classes, churches in New England could only counsel and advise one another. No one church could dictate to another. Mather explained, “whether a synod or counsel of one church or many churches, have power to impose their Determinations and Decrees upon another church as that of Jerusalem did

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 92.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 92.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 88.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 89.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 95.

(Acts 15:28 and 16:4) to mee is something doubtfull”.¹³⁹ This was a power, Mather believed, that could only belong to the Apostles, not to “ordinary churches or synods”.¹⁴⁰

Mather’s answers eventually found their way from personal letters and other manuscripts into print with the publication of *Church-Government and Church-Covenant Discussed*, which is dated by Thomason to June 15, 1643, just three days after Parliament ordered the calling of the Westminster Assembly. The timing of this publication can be no accident.¹⁴¹ The Westminster Assembly convened for the first time in less than a month, and the text of Mather’s pamphlet was a clear and systematic explanation and defense of the New England system of church-government. *Church-Government and Church-Covenant Discussed* consisted of a series of thirty-two questions written by their godly brethren in England and the answers of the New England ministers. As we have already seen, this question and answer format was found in earlier manuscript exchanges between ministers in Old England and New. It was composed in June of 1642, and forwarded to Hugh Peter, already in England, who edited and published it with the printer Benjamin Allen.¹⁴² Allen had become one of the main publishers for works on New England churches.

Church-Government and Church-Covenant Discussed was a text comprised of two main parts. The first part, as will be discussed in more detail below, consisted of thirty-two questions and answers. The second part was a reprint of a previously

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 94-95.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 95.

¹⁴¹ Peter was not the only one to publish print matter on the state of church affairs in the months leading up to the calling of the Westminster Assembly and the month immediately following its convening. My research has concluded that there were at least eighty tracts debating various forms of church government published during this time period.

¹⁴² Hugh Peter, “Preface” in Richard Mather, *Church-Government and Church-Covenant Discussed, In an Answer to the Elders of the Severall Churches in New-England To two and thirty Questions, sent over to them by divers Ministers in England, to declare their judgments therein* (London, 1643).

published text by Mather, *An Apologie of the Churches in New-England for Church-Covenant. Or, a Discourse touching the Covenant between God and men, and especially concerning Church-Covenant, that is to say, The Covenant which a Company doe enter into when they become a Church; and which a particular person enters into when he becomes a member of a Church*. This work was also published separately in 1643, again by Benjamin Allen.¹⁴³ However, as indicated on the title page, *An Apologie of the Churches in New-England for Church-Covenant* was the printed edition of a manuscript that had been circulating since 1639. Mather sent a manuscript copy of this text to Richard Bernard, a graduate of Christ's College, Cambridge. Although he had early leanings towards nonconformity, Bernard quickly rejected those ideas, penning several publications attacking separatism.¹⁴⁴ Sometime in 1635-36, he wrote to the church elders and magistrates in the Massachusetts Bay Colony, requesting an explanation of their church and magisterial government.¹⁴⁵ *An Apologie of the Churches in New-England for Church-Covenant* was Mather's reply. As was the case with Cotton's *The Doctrine of the Church*, the reprinting of Mather's *Apologie* indicated interest by the public in consuming texts on New England churches.

One of the most interesting aspects of *Church-Government and Church-Covenant Discussed* was its preface, penned by Peter. Within the preface, Peter captured not only the public spirit of the moment of publication, but also clearly established the intent behind the publication of *Church-Government and Church-Covenant Discussed*. Having been in England since 1641, Peter was active in the halls of Parliament, in the pulpits of

¹⁴³ Wing M1267.

¹⁴⁴ *Christian Advertisements and Counsels of Peace* (1608) and *The Separatists Schisme* (1608). The latter is no longer extant, but it is quoted and refuted in Henry Ainsworth, *Counterpoyson* (1608) and John Robinson, *A Justification of Separation* (1610).

¹⁴⁵ ODNB. Richard Mather, *An Apologie of the Churches in New-England for Church-Covenant*.

London, and in the press, supporting the Parliamentary cause and the New England Way, along with Thomas Weld.¹⁴⁶ Nehemiah Wallington in his journal recorded hearing Peter preach no less than three times during the first half of 1643.¹⁴⁷ As such, Peter was undoubtedly well acquainted with the high political and public demands for the calling of a national synod. Thus, in the preface, he admitted that there will be those who “will be apt to question the tyning such light as this”, particularly in what he admits to be a “pamphlet-glutted age”. Indeed, the reader would do well to question the intentions behind Peter’s publication of this text, as he explicitly stated that in presenting such a straightforward account of the New England system of church-government, perhaps “if we agree let us work by our plat-forme, and may thy soule flourish”.¹⁴⁸ The evidence of Peter’s preface and the timing of the publication of the text, taken as a whole, added up to a deliberate attempt on the part of Peter to influence debate, both within the Westminster Assembly and without, with the intended result being the adoption of the New England Way as the system of church-government for the Church of England.

Even more interesting than the timing and intent behind Peter’s publication of *Church-Government and Church-Covenant Discussed*, was when he noted, “Presbytery and Independency (as it is cal’d) are the wayes of worship and Church fellowship, now looked at”.¹⁴⁹ The small clarification of Independency “as it is cal’d” revealed Peter’s recognition that even by this stage, mid-1643, Independency was already a polemical term. What exactly it refers to, as Peter implied, was not exactly clear. Independent churches were first established in England under the leadership of Henry Jacob in 1616.

¹⁴⁶ Stearns details Peter’s actions in the early 1640s in “The Weld-Peter Mission,” p. 207-214.

¹⁴⁷ BL Additional Mss 408833.

¹⁴⁸ *Church-Government and Church-Covenant Discussed*, Epistle to the Reader.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

Jacob argued that individual churches must be governed by the free consent of its members. Not only was membership in the church voluntary, not compulsory like the national Church of England, but also the idea of consent was also extended to include the government of the church, such as the election of officers or excommunication. The Jacob Church was completely autonomous to parish churches: every congregation was separate from every other congregation, and membership in one congregation was held only in that one congregation, not in any other congregation. Thus, the visible church was composed solely of the godly, not everyone in the community. Their intention was to limit membership in the church only to visible saints. Members of the Jacob Church believed that “the right and power of spiritual administration and government in itself and over itself by the common and free consent of the people, independently and immediately under Christ”.¹⁵⁰

The Jacob Church in London became the parent church and model for Independent churches that began to appear before and during the Civil War period, such as St. Stephen's, Coleman Street in London. It also was the source for later nonconformist, radical churches such as Baptists. In 1630, a group of members succeeded from the Jacob Church under the leadership of John Duppa, which held a strict separation from the parishes of the Church of England. In 1632, the head of the Jacob Church, John Lathrop, migrated to New England. By the breakdown of relations between the king and Parliament in 1640, the third head of the Jacob Church was Henry Jessey, who later became a Baptist in 1645.¹⁵¹

¹⁵⁰ Murray Tolmie, *The Triumph of the Saints: The Separate Churches of London 1616-1649* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1977), p. 11.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 11-33.

The decision to form a gathered church committed its members to a rejection of the universality and uniformity of both the Episcopal Church of England and of the Presbyterian system of church-government. However, Independents did not deny that the Church of England was a true church. In fact, they continued to place great emphasis of the continued reformation of the English national church. This was a fine line, and while Independents maintained that they were not guilty of schism, those who disagreed with their system of church-government could easily make the case that they were.

The situation is further complicated by the fact that Independents continued to be part of the larger English Puritan circle through the early 1640s. In 1636, a split divided the godly ministers in London over New England's ecclesiology. Those who supported New England left England for the Netherlands, the most prominent exiles being the men who would later become the Dissenting Brethren. Most of them returned to England by May of 1641, and they became part of the group of godly ministers that had gathered around Calamy's house in Aldermanbury, joining in their calls for a further reformation of the Church of England. While the potential to split already existed between them, for the earlier part of the 1640s, the Presbyterians and Independents labored to bury the divisions between them for the sake of harmony and unity. In November of 1641, the godly ministers of London met at Calamy's house in Aldermanbury. Known as the Aldermanbury Accords, a fragile truce was established among the godly, designed the silence extremists and prevent the differences between them from becoming public. Years later, Thomas Edwards would describe how they were "sensible how much our differences and divisions might distract the Parliament, and hinder the taking away of Episcopall Government, and the Reformation intended". As such, they decided it would

be best if there was a “mutuall silence” established over matters of church-government.¹⁵²

It was agreed that the best place to work out and settle these differences would be in a grave environment—what would become the Westminster Assembly. Until such a situation existed, they united behind a common cause and shared mutual respect of one another.¹⁵³

Because of this truce, until the publication of *An Apologeticall Narration* in 1644, there was no clear printed statement of the Independent system of church-government. As such, as Peter implied, there was no clear understanding among the divines or the public of what Independency entailed. The New England Way was grouped together with the Independents, but without any real understanding of how and where their beliefs concurred and differed. However, as *Church-Government and Church-Covenant Discussed* made clear, the defenders of the New England Way emphatically maintained their distance from whatever Independency may actually be. In fact, the system of church-government that Mather described in the text could more aptly be termed Congregationalism, not Independency, whatever that may have entailed. Nonetheless, it remains important to note that at this juncture, polemical terms and classifications were already well-established in the English public and print culture of the early 1640s, even if they bore little resemblance to practice or the self-definition of the practitioners themselves.

¹⁵² Thomas Edwards, *Antapologia: Or, A Full Answer to the Apologeticall Narration* (London, 1644), p. 240-242.

¹⁵³ Elliot Curt Vernon, “The Sion College Conclave and London Presbyterianism during the English Revolution,” Chapter One.

What these polemical blurrings entailed was a conflation of Independency with the New England Way. And it was an understandable one at that. One need only look at the example of John Davenport, one of the ministers in New England whose presence was requested at the Westminster Assembly, to understand how this conflation could and did occur.¹⁵⁴ In 1624, Davenport was elected vicar of St. Stephen's, Coleman Street in London, arguably the most notorious nonconformist church in London, both before and during the English Revolution. Through his work at St. Stephen's, Davenport would have had the opportunity to become closely acquainted with other leading nonconformists and future Independents, such as Thomas Goodwin and Philip Nye. Both of these men would later become members of the Dissenting Brethren in the Westminster Assembly, the five divines who came to define what Independency stood for. Because of their association with St. Stephen's, Coleman Street, this parish during the Civil War was equated with Independency. Any association with St. Stephen's, by extension, would, in the public eye, associate the person with Independency. Convinced in 1633 by John Cotton that the demands for conformity as required by the Laudian church were too much to bear, Davenport left for the Netherlands. In Amsterdam, Davenport found himself at odds with John Paget.¹⁵⁵ In a series of letters, he defended himself against the accusations Paget hurled at him.¹⁵⁶ They were later published as an addition to Mather's

¹⁵⁴ For a biography of John Davenport, please see David Hall, *The Faithful Shepherd: A History of the New England Ministry in the Seventeenth Century* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1972), Chapter Four; Isabel Calder, *The New Haven Colony* (Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1970); Calder, ed., *Letters of John Davenport, Puritan Divine* (New Haven: Published for the First Church of Christ in New Haven by Yale University Press, 1937).

¹⁵⁵ Paget was the founder of the English Reformed church in Amsterdam and was a champion of Presbyterianism. It is not surprising, therefore, that Paget and Davenport, whose profession of faith from the founding of his church at New Haven in August 1639 argued for Congregationalism, found themselves at odds.

¹⁵⁶ BL Add Mss 24666, f. 39-45.

Church-Government and Church-Covenant Discussed in 1643. The previous year, Davenport's *The Profession of the faith of that Reverend and worth Divine Mr. J.D. sometimes Preacher of Stevens Coleman-street* was published. On the title page of this pamphlet, Davenport was described as both a preacher of St. Stephen's and a minister in New England. Announced to the English public as both a minister of St. Stephen's and a minister in New England, the identification of the New England Way with Independency is made even more understandable. Accordingly, one of Peter's objectives was to provide a clear definition of the New England Way, not simply substitute it with the label Independency.

Clarifying the New England Way's relationship with Independency is only one of Mather's projects in *Church-Government and Church-Covenant Discussed*. As mentioned previously, the main text of *Church-Government and Church-Covenant Discussed* consists of the New Englanders' response to thirty-two questions posed by ministers in Old England regarding the practices of the New England churches. While the questions are posed as questions, their subtext is really a critique of the New England Way, mostly tending towards accusations of separatism. Mather was at pains throughout his responses not only to counter these accusations of separatism, but also to maintain the position that the New England Way did not serve as a breeding ground for heresies and sectarianism, the other main accusation leveled at it. For example, when in questions nine through eleven, they are pointedly asked whether they hold the churches of Old England to be true churches, Mather affirmed that they are, albeit with qualifications. He stated that "we doubt not but of Ancient time there have been many true Churches in *England* consisting of right matter and compacted and united together by the right forme

of an holy Covenant”.¹⁵⁷ He referred his readers to John Foxe’s *Book of Martyrs* for proof of that. Foxe’s *Book of Martyrs* painstakingly detailed at length a Protestant version of England’s history, complete with a multitude of references to examples of God’s past blessings in saving England from the iniquity of the Church of Rome. Foxe’s work formed one part in a whole system of Protestant remembrances, designed to inspire national unity around the theme of anti-popery. In addition, it gave England a Protestant past, as Foxe argued that there had been a Protestant church, not a Catholic one, and a true, visible church at that, in England since the time of the Apostles. Mather implicitly reaffirmed Foxe’s narrative of Protestantism in England. However, because of growing corruptions in doctrine, worship, and government in the Church of England—something that ministers on both sides of the Atlantic could agree on—some found it necessary to emigrate to New England.

This does not mean, however, that they regarded all the congregations in England as false churches. Rather, Mather and his brethren in New England

acknowledge that where the people do with common and mutuall consent gather into settled Congregations ordinarily every Lords day, as in *England* they do, heare and teach this Doctrine, and do professe their subjection thereunto, and do binde themselves and their Children (as in Baptisme they do) to continue therein, that such Congregations are true Churches.¹⁵⁸

There are congregations in England that New Englanders acknowledged as true churches. The churches in New England did not separate from these *true* English churches. And if they had remained in England, New Englanders “should willingly join in some parts of Gods true Worship, and namely in hearing the Word, where it is truly Preached in sundry

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

Assemblies there”.¹⁵⁹ Accordingly, the truth of congregations in England is a refrain of New Englanders we have heard before: we saw it in Mather’s 1636 letter to a cleric in Lancashire, and it is one that is oft repeated in texts to come.

Nonetheless, despite being true churches, there still existed corruptions within the churches in England, largely as a result of the innovations introduced into the Church of England under Laud. Mather pressed home the importance of the corruptions in the Church of England, arguing that they have even increased in recent years. He counseled his reader:

We are not without feare (and with grieve we speake it) what things may com unto at length. If Corruptions should still increase and grow they might come in time (if the Lord be not more mercifull) unto such an height as unto obstinacy in evill, and to willfull rejection of the Reformation, and the meanes thereof.¹⁶⁰

Were things to reach this point, Mather claimed that a true saint might be perfectly justified in separating from this Church. Thankfully, the situation in England had not reached such a tipping point, yet. But were it to, separation “might be just with God”.¹⁶¹ If separation might be justifiable in such an extreme case, then surely the migrants to New England could have done no harm in removing themselves from the present corruptions in the Laudian Church of England. For in doing so, as Mather stressed, they did not separate from the Church of England; they simply took themselves away from the corruptions found in it. Despite these corruptions, the Church of England, having not (yet) rejected the Reformation, remained a true church.

In qualifying his definition of what constituted a true church, by admitting that one can still be one of the godly in English churches so long as they do not conform to

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*

the corruptions of the churches found in them at present, Mather accomplished two things. Firstly, he countered accusations of separatism by maintaining a common fellowship with the godly in England. He spread a very wide net that enabled him to capture within it many who might otherwise be considered separatists in New England—according to the logic of those in Old England—and thus reaffirmed the ties that bound the congregations in New England with those in Old. While admitting to corruptions in the Church of England, which prompted the migrants to New England to leave England in the first place, Mather insisted on recognizing the Church of England as a true church. They have not separated from the Church of England; New England had simply and only removed itself from its corruptions.

Secondly, implicit within this argument was an attempt on the part of Mather and other ministers in New England to find agreement and accommodation with the ministers in Old England convened at the Westminster Assembly. Both could agree that in its present state the Church of England was corrupted and requires reform. It was merely a question of determining what direction that reform should take, and the distance between Old England and New had not irrevocably divided them. In particular, Mather was willing to find common ground with the Presbyterians in the Assembly. In question fifteen, Mather granted the presence of elders or presbyters in New England churches, clearly stating that they “doe believe that Christ hath ordained that there should be a Presbytery or Eldership”.¹⁶² However, “power is not in the Officers alone”.¹⁶³ In fact, Christ is the ultimate ruler in any church. Neither elders nor presbyters “rule, as to doe

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 47.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

what themselves please, but they must do whatsoever *Christ* hath commanded”.¹⁶⁴ Every congregation is subject only to Christ, and Mather used examples from the New Testament to prove his point.¹⁶⁵ Such a position was one that no Christian would disagree with. However, Mather’s agreement with Presbyterian ecclesiology regarding presbyters easily accommodated a central element of Presbyterian church-government. Simultaneously, however, he denied church Presbyters ultimate power in the church in such a way that Presbyterians could find no fault with.

These two goals of Mather—countering accusations of separatism and attempting to find accommodation with Presbyterianism—are found throughout the later half of the text. By questions seventeen and eighteen, when asked how the New England churches preserve unity and verity, Mather explained that they had no need for a platform of doctrine and discipline in their churches, as each church governed itself with Christ at its head. A church dependent “on Christ their head and King for guidance, in their worke, we know no necessity for such a supposal, that they must needs be divided in their votes”.¹⁶⁶ The implication was that a truly godly church, such as those in New England, comprised solely of truly godly members, would not disagree over matters in the church. The same principle held true for preserving unity amongst all the churches in New England. For while they were not bound to each other in a hierarchical system of church-government, each church with Christ at its head was bound to agree with all other godly churches.¹⁶⁷ As Mather boasted, “we know there is no materiall point, either in constitution, or government, wherein the Churches in *N.E.* do not observe the same

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 59.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 57.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 61.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

course”.¹⁶⁸ For greater edification, they may ask for counsel and support from other churches, but binding themselves to the word of a classis would make themselves imperfect. A classis’ purpose was for advice, not for compulsion or constraint. Once again, for support of this argument, Mather relied on examples of the churches in the New Testament.¹⁶⁹

Accordingly, while Mather granted the existence of classes, one of the main tenets of Presbyterianism, he qualified the power of them, as it was not a power granted by the Bible. Presbyterianism held that the power of classes lay not as an advisory body, but as a governing body. However, Mather was willing to concede their existence and usefulness as the former, but not the latter. Thus we find Mather again reaching for accommodation between New England Congregationalism and Presbyterianism. He strived to find a middle ground that could incorporate both systems of church-government, conceding some points essential to Presbyterianism, such as the existence of classes, but limits their power by providing scriptural proofs as evidence that they held no power over congregations in the New Testament. By the end of the pamphlet, Mather conceded that he wanted the churches in New England to be a light to the other churches in the world. However, he was also willing to admit criticism of their churches, provided they are based on scriptural proofs. If other churches find the churches in New England to be in error, they were willing to receive the light from them.¹⁷⁰

In sum, *Church-Government and Church-Covenant Discussed* was a clear and straightforward defense of the New England Way, a system of church-government based

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 82.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 61-67.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*.

solely on the example of biblical churches, with scriptural examples for proof.

Throughout the text, Mather reiterated the ability of the New England churches to maintain uniformity amongst their particular congregations without needing to resort to a hierarchical Presbyterian or Episcopal system of church-government. Simultaneously, he countered accusations of separatism from the churches in England while also granting the possibility of accommodation between the churches in New England and the Presbyterian model of church-government. In light of Peter's preface and the timing of the publication of *Church-Government and Church-Covenant Discussed*, it is clear that this text is intended to be a model for the further reformation of the Church of England, but indicate, too a willingness to work towards accommodation with Presbyterians in England.

Peter's publication of Mather's work at this time, besides being a public relations strategy, was further served by the workings of Westminster Assembly during its opening months. When the Westminster Assembly began its work in July of 1643, its first order of business was to review the thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England. What characterizes the debates from these opening months is an almost deliberate refusal to actually accomplish this task. Indeed, Robert Paul has persuasively argued that the divines of the Westminster Assembly consciously stalled and delayed the true work of the Westminster Assembly until Parliament's relations with Scotland were finalized, which they were with the signing of the Solemn League and Covenant in September 1643.¹⁷¹ After the signing of the Solemn League and Covenant, the early business of the Westminster Assembly did become somewhat pointless. This was because of the terms of the Solemn League and Covenant, in which Parliament pledged support for "the

¹⁷¹ Robert S. Paul, *The Assembly of the Lord*, p. 52-101.

preservation of the reformed religion in the Church of Scotland, in doctrine, worship, discipline and government". Parliament also agreed to "the reformation of religion in the kingdoms of England and Ireland, in doctrine, worship, discipline and government, according to the Word of God, and the example of the best reformed Churches".¹⁷² The ambiguity of this statement left the door for debate wide open in the Westminster Assembly, as Parliament was careful not to commit itself to a Presbyterian reformation, however much Scottish Presbyterians and their brethren in England perceived it to be so. Debate over the future settlement of the Church of England was not confined to Parliament or the Westminster Assembly. My research has uncovered dozens of pamphlets published during the opening six months of the Westminster Assembly. Reflecting the theological diversity of the nation, the pamphlets encouraged a variety of forms of church-government.¹⁷³

Mather's statement of the New England Way thus also served as an important counter-point to these other pamphlets published at the same time, also designed to influence debate on the future reformation of the Church of England. In July 1643, two London Presbyterians and members of the Westminster Assembly, Simeon Ash and William Rathband, published *A Letter of Many Ministers in Old England*.¹⁷⁴ A graduate of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, Ash was a confirmed Presbyterian and served as

¹⁷² For a full text of the Solemn League and Covenant, please see S.R. Gardiner, ed., *The Constitutional Documents of the Puritan Revolution, 1625-1660* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1906) p. 267-271.

¹⁷³ For example, see Henry Hammond, *Considerations of present use concerning the danger resulting from the change of our church-government* (London, 1643); William Prynne, *Twelve considerable serious questions touching church government: sadly propounded (out of a reall desire of vnitie, and tranquillity in church and state) to all sober-minded Christians, cordially affecting a speedy settled reformation, and brotherly Christian vnion in all our churches and dominions, now miserably wasted with civill vnnaturall wars, and deplorably lacerated with ecclesiasticall dissensions* (London, 1643); Paul Baynes, *The Diocensans Tryall* (London, 1643).

¹⁷⁴ Thomason dates his copy from July 10, 1643.

chaplain to the radical puritan Lord Brooke and to the regiment of Lord Mandeville in the earl of Essex's Parliamentary army. Ash was in London from 1640, preaching throughout London, both to churches and to the Houses of Parliament. Nehemiah Wallington records hearing him preach,¹⁷⁵ and he is listed in the vestry minutes for St. Bartholomew by the Exchange as a Sunday lecturer in 1641.¹⁷⁶ In addition to *A Letter of Many Ministers in Old England*, Ash also edited a number of other key Presbyterian works.¹⁷⁷

The text combined a series of exchanges between ministers in England and in New England from several years well before the publication date. Ministers from Old England sent to their brethren in New England in 1637 a series of nine positions.¹⁷⁸ Each position, more accurately labeled an accusation, consisted of certain points of doctrine and worship that the ministers in Old England believed that those in New England practiced without just cause and scriptural precedent. Each position was responded to and justified by the New England ministers in a letter from 1639. The English ministers replied to the responses and sent it back to New England in 1640. It seems very likely that the militant Presbyterian Thomas Edwards saw a copy of the New England response in manuscript form. In his *Reasons Against the Independent Government of Particular Congregations: As Also against the Toleration of such Churches to be erected in this KINGDOME*, Edwards referred to them being "sent to from *England* by some godly Ministers their brethren, men otherwise approved by them, as being against Ceremonies, who being in danger of leaving the Land, sent to know if they might have liberty

¹⁷⁵ BL Add Mss 40883.

¹⁷⁶ GL, St. Bartholomew by the Exchange vestry minutes, Ms 4384, vol.1.

¹⁷⁷ ODNB.

¹⁷⁸ While the text claims that there are nine positions, there are, in fact, only eight.

according to their Consciences to goe in a Church way, something differing from theirs". Their response, according to Edwards, claimed that "they could not grant any other forme of government" and they will "not tolerate, or admit into fellowship the godliest Christians, unlesse they will enter into Covenant, professe their faith, submit to their Church Orders, though they would be of their Church".¹⁷⁹

A Letter of Many Ministers was the printed compilation of these letters.

Accordingly, the text of the work was formed by the declaration of the position, followed by the New England justification of such a practice or doctrine, concluding with the Old England ministers' reply. Ash and Rathband's decision to print in full the responses of the New England ministers was an interesting one. Rather than simply state their perceived version of the New England Way, they presented the reader with the actual justifying text of the New England ministers, albeit followed by the Old English ministers reply. In doing so, the text provided the opportunity for the reader to examine both sides of the argument and reach his or her own conclusions about the truth and validity of each position. In what David Zaret terms the "imposition of dialogic order on conflict,"¹⁸⁰ the compilation of and reference to other texts, both printed and scribal, "reoriented political discourse so that its [printing] production increasingly involved simultaneous constitution and invocation of public opinion".¹⁸¹ The juxtaposition of New England ecclesiastical structures, supported by biblical proofs, with Old English responses, also "proven" with biblical evidence, encouraged readers to interpret these debates and compare each side's position. By offering up these debates to the judgment of the readers, there was not only

¹⁷⁹ Thomas Edwards, *Reasons Against the Independent Government of Particular Congregations: As Also against the Toleration of such Churches to be erected in this KINGDOME* (London, 1641), p. 32-33.

¹⁸⁰ Also referred to the reflexivity of texts, in the sense that texts responded to other texts.

¹⁸¹ David Zaret, *Origins of Democratic Culture: Printing, Petitions, and the Public Sphere in Early-Modern England* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000), p. 177.

an implicit awareness of the existence of public opinion, but of the power it had in influencing the course of high political and religious debates. Nonetheless, Ash and Rathband did attempt to prompt readers to arrive at their conclusions, which remained to disprove the New England Way.

The Old England replies were penned by John Ball, a friend of Simeon Ash, who died in 1640. Ash was responsible for the posthumous publication of his friend's works. A second edition of these trans-Atlantic exchanges was published in 1644 by the same printer, Thomas Underhill, as *A Tryall of the New-Church Way in New-England and in Old*, this time clearly identifying Ball as the author of the responses.¹⁸² While the title page of the second edition is different and the pagination is off, it is the same text. Thus, despite the scholarly tenor and tone of this text and its length of over eighty pages, thereby placing it outside the boundaries of easily affordable cheap print, the work was still popular enough to convince its printer that there was enough profit to be made to justify a second edition.

This was not a slanderous, gossipy work by any means, with nasty comments being thrown across the pond. Rather, it was a sober and reasoned piece of exposition and justification, but it is clear that the ministers in Old England accused the ministers of New England of separatism. The main focus of the Old England ministers was their concern that the ways of their brethren in New England placed them on a slippery slope to separatism, if they had not already arrived there. For example, Position Two asked if it was not lawful to join in prayer when a stinted liturgy was used. The ministers in Old England made it clear that they were worried that the justifications the New Englanders

¹⁸² Wing T2229.

used for their actions were the same arguments and justifications that Separatists used to legitimize their own separation from Church of England congregations: “The grounds on which that Author builds are one and the same with the grounds of the Separatists” and “the reasons mentioned in the letters are the proper grounds of Separatists, and not common to all them that seeke the purity of religion”.¹⁸³ In Positions Three and Four, which questioned the New England practice of refusing baptism and the Lord’s Supper to those who are not members of the church, once again the ministers of Old England counseled their Atlantic brethren that their practices were like those of Separatists.¹⁸⁴ When, in Position Five, the New Englanders maintained that the body of the congregation had the power to excommunicate members, the ministers in Old England countered, “And here lyeth the stone at which they of the Separation stumble, and which we conceive to be your judgment and practice, ...And if your judgment and practice be according to that of Separation (which we feare)..we cannot but dissent from you”.¹⁸⁵

The New English ministers’ epistle response was to state, unequivocally, “But wee professe unfaindly, we separate from the corruptions which we conceive to be left in your Churches, and from such Ordinances administered therein as we feare are not of God, but of men”.¹⁸⁶ The practices and members of the churches in New England were not Separatist. Rather, as we have heard before, they merely removed the corruptions of the Church of England from their churches. From the opening epistles, both sides appeared very conciliatory. England’s ministers leveled serious charges against New

¹⁸³ Simeon Ash and William Rathband, *A Letter of Many Ministers in Old England, Requesting the Judgment of their Reverend Brethren in New England concerning Nine Positions* (London, 1643), p. 9.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. L2.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, unmarked pagination.

Englanders, that their system of church-government had proved itself to be a breeding ground for sectarianism and heresy and that there existed dangerous separatist tendencies in the New England churches. However, both constantly claim that they carefully read the others' response and kept an open mind. Thus, in spite of accusations made in the text, its overall effect was not one of malicious attacks determined to callously subvert the other side. It was not a vindictive, polemical pamphlet by any means. Rather, we can still detect both ministers from Old England and from New England grasping at an accommodation, some form of understanding. This remained an argument between friends. No irreparable gulf yet separated them.

Despite the conciliatory tone of Old England's authors' tracts, New Englanders and their supporters in Old England recognized the importance of putting out clear statements of their system of church-government. They could not depend on the spirit of goodwill that prevailed at the time to ensure that their churches received a fair hearing. And as New England chose not to send any ministerial representatives to the Westminster Assembly, they judged it imperative to present their system of church-government to the public, recognizing the growing importance of public opinion in revolutionary England. The awareness of the role of the public, a fact that both sides recognized, is noteworthy to historians. However, the overarching theme of these publications was one of two sides actively working towards an accommodation.

V.

From these early publications, we can already detect certain trends that would come to characterize printed matter in the later years of the English Revolution. It is clear that these tracts did not arise solely out of a culture of print, but rather that they reflect a stage in the transition from manuscript culture to print culture. Many of these tracts had their beginnings in letters; they were not composed and circulated solely with the intention of making their way into print. Furthermore, we can see the reliance authors had at this stage on networks of people to shepherd their tracts from manuscript into print. This was particularly important for the ministers who stayed in New England, as they were dependent upon return migrants such as Peter and Weld to set their manuscripts to print. Peter and Weld, in turn, came to rely on specific printers, which would seem to suggest that printers did not choose their wares solely on the basis of potential profit. Rather, their commitment to publishing similar thematic tracts indicated that they themselves were invested in the scope and content of them as well. These are themes that we will later find throughout the history of revolutionary print culture.

For the purposes of the influence of the New England Way in England at this time, however, we can also make several statements. First, despite both insinuations and fully explicit accusations of Separatism, the New Englanders themselves consistently maintained that they were not Separatists. Rather, they repeatedly reiterated that they still consider themselves to be congregations of the Church of England, only having removed themselves from the corruptions and innovations that even ministers in Old England agreed needed to be reformed. Divines in England, of whatever stripe, and

divines in New England, are best understood at this juncture to be working together for a common purpose: the further and complete reformation of the Church of England. And while they may not agree in all the particulars, they agreed on this most important point. Furthermore, through the machinations of carefully timed publications, the New England Way stood a chance of convincing their brethren in England and the public as well that their way of church-government was the way of the primitive churches, the examples of which are found in scripture. Both sides of the Atlantic fervently desired that their long awaited dream of completing the work of the Reformation in England be achieved without any irrevocable splintering of the various clusters of godly practices. Instead, through open-minded debate of theological exposition and exegesis, an accommodation could be reached. These early publications on the New England Way are a testament to this spirit of hope of the early years of the 1640s.

CHAPTER TWO

The Example of the New England Way: A Case Study

William Laud, the Bishop of London, deprived Thomas Weld of his living as the vicar of Terling in Essex in 1631.¹⁸⁷ The loss of his living profoundly affected Weld, both physically and emotionally, for the rest of his life. Most immediately, it was the cause of his leaving Essex, first for Amsterdam, and then for the Massachusetts Bay Colony in the New World, where he, along with thousands of other godly English men and women, found the freedom to worship according to what they believed was the form prescribed by the word of God. However, Weld never forgave Laud. Twelve years later, after his return to England, Weld visited Laud, now Archbishop of Canterbury and imprisoned in the Tower by Parliament. According to Laud's account of their reunion, Laud had no idea who this man was or why he "in a boisterous manner demanded to know, whether I [Laud] had Repented or not?" The rest of the meeting did not go any better, with Weld accusing Laud of bringing "Popery into the Kingdom, and he hoped I should have my Reward for it." Laud responded by telling Weld that "he and his Fellows, what by their Ignorance and what by their Railing and other boisterous Carriage would soon actually make more Papists by far, than ever I intended."¹⁸⁸

Weld did not return from Massachusetts in September 1641 simply for the chance to insult his former persecutor. Nor did he have any other pressing personal need to return. In Massachusetts, as minister of Roxbury, he was one of the leading ministers of

¹⁸⁷ S.R. Gardiner, ed., *Reports of the Cases in the Courts of the Star Chamber and High Commission* (Westminster, 1886), p. 260.

¹⁸⁸ William Laud, *The History of the Troubles and Tryal of William Laud To Which is Prefixed the Diary of His Own Life* (London, 1695), p. 213-14.

the colony. He was one of the most zealous participants in the Free Grace Controversy of 1636-38, fiercely criticizing Anne Hutchinson and her supporters. And along with John Cotton, Richard Mather, and John Eliot, Weld collaborated on the *Bay Psalm Book*, which was published in 1640. The *Psalter* was the first book printed in New England, and it was regularly reprinted throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Nonetheless, along with fellow minister Hugh Peter and the merchant William Hibbins, Weld returned to England in the summer of 1641.¹⁸⁹

By the early 1640s, the nascent colony was in financial distress, heavily dependent upon England for supplies and funds, and its charter was in jeopardy. Weld and Peter, along with a Boston merchant William Hibbins, were dispatched in 1641 to secure the financial and political future of the colony, as well as lend support to the cause of furthering the reformation in England. While Peter and Weld did have some success in fund-raising, due to poor financial mismanagement (as well as accusations of corruption), success was evanescent. Peter became involved in the radical religious politics of the day, eventually serving as a chaplain to Cromwell's army and becoming an advocate for liberty of conscience. Weld, despite the colony's attempt to recall both him and Peter to New England in 1645, chose to remain in England, serving as a rector at Wanlip, Leicestershire briefly in 1646. Soon after the Restoration of Charles II, Weld died in London on March 23, 1661.¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁹ *WP*, v. IV, p. 314-315; *Records of the Governor and Company of the Massachusetts Bay in New England, Volume I*, p. 332.

¹⁹⁰ *ODNB*.

In his classic 1937 article, “The Weld-Peter Mission to England,” Raymond Phineas Stearns details the Peter and Weld’s lives in England upon their return.¹⁹¹ However, Stearns fails to pay adequate attention to the activities of the New England representatives in all arenas of the English Revolution, most notably revolutionary print culture. While the evangelical activities of Hugh Peter, understandably so, receive the bulk of Stearns attention, much of Thomas Weld’s efforts to position the New England Way as a model for the further reformation of the Church of England receive short shrift. In fact, Weld’s major contribution to this effort, his publication of two tracts detailing and defending Massachusetts’s experience with Antinomians in 1636-38, appears only as a footnote on page 223.

In what follows, I argue that Weld, and in particular his role in the publication of *Antinomians and Familists Condemned* (1644) and *A Short Story of the Rise, reign, and ruine of the Antinomians* (1644), is deserving of much more attention from scholars. Weld’s publications implicated him in the wide networks of political and religious reformers in early revolutionary England, of political grandees in Parliament and leaders in the Westminster Assembly, and placed him in the center of the debates over the future national religious settlement. He was caught up in the delicate maneuverings and shifting alliances of the period, and in the increasingly uncontrolled world of publishing and print culture and the influence it wielded over the public. It was Weld’s participation in this complex and dynamic scene of late 1643-early 1644 London that demonstrated the extent to which New England was not simply a bystander to these tumultuous times, but rather an active and engaged participant, determined to see that their experiences of erecting a

¹⁹¹ Raymond Phineas Stearns, “The Weld-Peter Mission”, *Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts*, Volume XXXII (1937), p. 188-246.

godly society in the New World were relevant to the future of England. While both *Antinomians and Familists* and *A Short Story* were ostensibly about New England's experience with Antinomians in the 1630s, they were deliberately designed to do more than just recount events in New England. Rather, they were published at a specific time—early 1644—to serve as a solution to the perceived rising Antinomian problem in England. While these were texts on New England, they were in fact for Old England

II.

As discussed in Chapter One, in addition to defending themselves against accusations of separatism, tracts on the New England Way from 1640 through early 1644 also countered allegations that New England was a breeding ground for sectaries and heresies. The basis for these Old England claims stem from the Free Grace Controversy in New England. The Free Grace Controversy of 1636-38 in New England revolved around the rise of Antinomian nonconformists in the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Antinomianism was in many ways the bastard offspring of Puritan theology. For decades in England, there was a subterranean world of intra-puritan debate that contained within it the seeds of Antinomianism. Peter Lake and David Como's depiction of Stuart Puritanism reveals the extent to which Puritanism cannot be understood as a homogeneous community.¹⁹² Lay activism, godly discussion, and the godly discussion group, the conventicle, fostered an environment that constantly threatened to undermine the Calvinist consensus of the Jacobean Church from within. In London, "a number of

¹⁹² Peter Lake and David Como, "Orthodoxy and Its Discontents: Dispute Settlement and the Production of Consensus in the London (Puritan) Underground".

ideological and emotional currents might mingle and miscegenate, react and repel. Here the claims of orthodoxy...might interact both with each other and with the divergent responses and spiritual experiences of a socially heterogeneous godly laity”.¹⁹³ Among the godly, consensus was only the result of constant effort and the continuous striving of the leading godly divines to keep these potentially destabilizing elements at bay and out of the public medium of print.

One of the largest of these disturbing tenets was Antinomianism; indeed, the Antinomian community of pre-Civil War England was the spawning ground for later forms of sectarian religiosity. As David Como persuasively argues in *Blown by the Spirit*, what made Antinomianism so insidious, such a threat, was that Antinomianism was a response to the predominant culture of Puritanism. Antinomians rejected the rigid and preponderant Puritan obsession with divine precepts and sanctification. They saw mainstream godly divinity as a new form of works-righteousness, an outward, literal, and “legalistic” religiosity that nurtured a slavish devotion to the Law. Orthodox Puritanism was deeply susceptible to this Antinomian critique; it contained within the germ of Antinomianism. It was not separate from Puritanism, but rather was within and a part of Puritanism and cannot be understood apart from the Puritan community as a whole.¹⁹⁴ And Antinomianism was a by-product of Puritanism. Como suggests that some of the characteristic modes of Puritan piety, including compulsive sermon gadding, collective Bible-reading, sermon repetition, group prayer sessions, exchange of letters and manuscripts—the conventicular culture of Stuart Puritanism—were well suited to

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 68-69.

¹⁹⁴ David Como, *Blown By the Spirit: Puritanism and the Emergence of an Antinomian Underground in Pre-Civil-War England* (Stanford, Stanford University Press: 2004).

produce not an orderly and orthodox religious community, but rather permutations that would come to be regarded as deviant, such as Antinomianism.

This possible natural outgrowth of early Stuart Puritanism became readily apparent in the New England colony of Massachusetts in the 1630s.¹⁹⁵ New England settlers, reflecting the diversity of the godly in England, were recruited from a broad spectrum of Puritanism. As a result, as in England, religious disagreement seemed to plague the colony from its earliest years. Roger Williams, who arrived in Massachusetts in 1631, was banished in 1636 for his attacks on the religious-political system of government of the colony. In the same year, the minister Thomas Hooker, alarmed at his fellow minister John Cotton's preaching, led his people out of Massachusetts and established a colony at Hartford. The most serious threat to the spiritual well-being of the godly community, though, came from one of Cotton's own devoted followers, Anne Hutchinson. Hutchinson, herself a daughter of a godly divine and a midwife, had followed Cotton to Massachusetts with her husband and fourteen children in 1634. In Boston, Hutchinson attracted a large following by holding meetings in her home where they discussed religious issues and she explicated sermons. These conventicles were attended by both men and women, and included a number of prominent public officials, including Sir Henry Vane the Younger, the governor of the colony from 1636-37. When Vane lost the governorship to John Winthrop, Hutchinson and her followers, including her brother-in-law John Wheelwright, also a minister, found their political support had

¹⁹⁵ For the most recent and nuanced analysis of the Free Grace Controversy in Massachusetts, please see Michael Winship, *Making Heretics: Militant Protestantism and Free Grace in Massachusetts, 1636-1641*. Please also see Stephen Foster "New England and the Challenge of Heresy, 1630-1660: The Puritan Crisis in Transatlantic Perspective", *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 38:4 (October, 1981), p.624-660.

disappeared. Winthrop and his allies denounced Hutchinson and her followers for Antinomianism, and Hutchinson and Wheelwright were placed on trial for sedition in 1637. Perceived of as a threat to the very existence of the church and state, Hutchinson, Wheelwright, and their remaining followers were banished from Massachusetts in 1638.

The seeds of the Free Grace Controversy in Massachusetts from 1636-38 were laid in the foundations of English Puritanism whose largely amorphous structure and poorly-defined categories of orthodoxy and unorthodoxy were exposed in the Massachusetts dispute. In their effort to maintain an outward show of consensus, “too much of importance had been left unsettled in the conventicles of the mother country, and too many strange alliances had gone unexamined for the sake of convenience”.¹⁹⁶ Thus the events in Massachusetts from 1636-38 revealed not only the potentially explosive diversity of English Puritanism, but also the deep-seated fears that the Puritans had of “heresy” when that diversity spilled beyond their traditional means of control. The realized potential for splintering of Puritanism in New England prefigured the development of sectaries and heresies in Revolutionary England. With the collapse of ecclesiastical censorship in the early 1640s, previously suppressed and banned Antinomian books began to appear in London. Sermons of the Antinomian Tobias Crisp were published posthumously as *Christ Alone Exalted* in 1643, with an introduction from another Antinomian Robert Lancaster. *Christ Alone Exalted* was published three more times before the end of the decade.¹⁹⁷ Other deceased notorious Antinomian nonconformists of the previous regime also witnessed a resurgence in print. The

¹⁹⁶ Stephen Foster, “New England and the Challenge of Heresy, 1630-1660: The Puritan Crisis in Transatlantic Perspective,” p. 654.

¹⁹⁷ Wing C6958, Wing C6955, Wing C6956, Wing C6958A.

followers of John Eaton, for example, who had been dead since at least 1631, printed his works *The Honey-Combe of Free Justification by Christ Alone* and *The Discovery of the Most Dangerous Dead Faith* in 1642.¹⁹⁸ As the scholarship of Foster, Lake, and Como demonstrates, the explosion of sectarian publications in the early 1640s was not an unexpected development of the political and religious crises of the time. Rather, when the traditional structures that had repressed them for the previous decade collapsed, these long-existing theological experiments no longer had anything to restrict them to the underground. The Antinomians and their literature were free now to publish and preach freely in the nascent public sphere of early Civil War London. Political and ministerial authorities were not slow to respond to this development. Suppression of all forms of sectaries was on their list, and Antinomians were foremost among them.

III.

Ideally, and prior to the outbreak of the Civil War, the print trade was kept under surveillance by its own members and a licensing system run by the state and the church. Both Houses of Parliament each set up a special committee as early as 1641 to deal with the publication of speeches, unlicensed printing, and seditious matter.¹⁹⁹ Committees re-evaluated the politics of censorship of the 1630s and rehabilitated certain books and authors, such as the Puritan martyrs of the Laudian regime like William Prynne, who had been condemned by the old licensing bodies of those years. Parliament also recognized

¹⁹⁸ Wing E 115.

¹⁹⁹ Joad Raymond, *Pamphlets and Pamphleteering in Early Modern Britain* (New York, Cambridge University Press, 2003), Chapter Six.

the impact of publications on public opinion and began to effectively use the press for its own ends. Pamphlets and other printed matter were quickly becoming essential elements of political life and became central to the formation of public opinion. They were the pre-eminent model of public speech. And they exercised a great deal of social influence. However, the breakdown of the mechanisms of censorship in 1641 led to an explosion of uncensored printed matter, and Parliament was ultimately unable to reverse the unexpected consequences that their own actions had inadvertently let slip. With the end of the stranglehold the clergy had previously possessed over the publication of religious matter, there was an unprecedented rise of lay authorship or previously condemned religious tracts, including Antinomian literature of the preceding decades.

When the Antinomians began to publicize their doctrines, seemingly without fear of official reprisal, it did not go unnoticed. In 1643, John Sedgwick published his first and only pamphlet, *Antinomianisme Anatomized. Or, A Glasse for the Lawlesse*, which Edmund Calamy, one of the leading Presbyterian divines, declared to “very fit to be Printed, and very necessary for these times”.²⁰⁰ This was not Sedgwick’s first foray into the world of seventeenth century publishing. Over the previous twenty years, Sedgwick, a graduate of Magdalen College in Oxford and the rector of St. Alfege, London Wall, had published four other sermons. Despite the popularity of his sermons among the soldiers of the Earl of Essex’s parliamentary army, he remained somewhat overshadowed by his older brother, Obadiah. A favored minister of the Earl of Warwick, Obadiah’s network of friends included John Pym, Edmund Calamy, and Stephen Marshall. His sympathy for the Scottish cause and Presbyterianism placed him in good standing with many of the

²⁰⁰ John Sedgwick, *Antinomianism Anatomized* (London: 1643), p. A4^v.

leaders of the Long Parliament. The same year that his younger brother published *Antinomianisme Anatomized*, Obadiah was appointed one of the licensers of books on divinity. While John Sedgwick never achieved the fame and success that his elder brother did, they did share an abhorrence of sectaries. As the title suggests, *Antinomianisme Anatomized* bemoaned the reappearance of “the old odious Heresie of the Antinomians (condemned by the Doctrine of our Church) taking advantage of the times Distractions newly to revive itself, to appear with its wonted face that cannot blush”.²⁰¹ Likening it to a physical sickness, Sedgwick described the resurgence of Antinomians as an infection of gangrene, “especially among the weaker, more ignorant, and rude sort”.²⁰²

Thomason dates his copy of Sedgwick’s exposition on the errors of Antinomianism to August 2, 1643, and Sedgwick was not alone in widely airing his warnings through print. Also in 1643, Thomas Bakewell published *A Short view of the Antinomian errors*.²⁰³ The following year he continued his confutation of Antinomians with *A faithful messenger after the Antinomians* and *The Antinomian Christ Confounded*.²⁰⁴ Another minister, Stephen Gere, published his own attack on the doctrine of free grace, and in particular, Tobias Crisp, that same year in *The doctrine of Antinomians by evidence of Gods truth, plainly confuted*.²⁰⁵

Since the demise of political and religious control with the outbreak of hostilities between the king and Parliament, precipitated by the Bishop’s Wars between England and Scotland, previously dormant or underground heresies came to the surface of

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. A2^f.

²⁰² *Ibid.*, p. A2^v.

²⁰³ Wing B537.

²⁰⁴ Wing B 533, Wing B527.

²⁰⁵ Wing G606.

English, in particular London, society. Throughout the 1630s, the Laudian authorities were convinced that a radical sectarian underground persisted throughout London, and that despite their best efforts, “sundry sorts of separatists and sectaries, namely Brownists, Anabaptists, Arians, Thraskists, Familists, Sensualists, Antinomians, and some other sorts” remained.²⁰⁶ The Laudian authorities never faced the explosion of sectaries that they imagined existed in their midst, but with the demise of episcopal oversight with the end of the High Commission, the ghostly spectre of radical religion became a substantial and tangible force in Revolutionary England. The early 1640s witnessed an explosion in the numbers of people, from elite to low, men and women, who began to express alternative and previously suppressed forms of religiosity. As the Church of England came under mounting political and public attack, “English religious culture was irreversibly fractured, and out of the cracks crawled swarms of sectaries, from Brownists to Anabaptists to radical activist women”.²⁰⁷

This unchecked rise in Antinomianism, aided by print, did not go unnoticed by politicians and politically active divines. Almost from its inception in July of 1643, the Westminster Assembly had been concerned about the rise of sectaries and heresies let loose by the political troubles in England, and the divines became increasingly more concerned as the months went on. Antinomianism, around since the mid-sixteenth century and known in various guises as Familism or Libertinism, was first and foremost on their list of heresies besieging the kingdom. At about the same time that John

²⁰⁶ SP 16/256/6.

²⁰⁷ David Cressy, *England on Edge: Crisis and Revolution, 1640-1642* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 211. For radical religion during the English Revolution, see F.D. Dow, *Radicalism in the English Revolution 1640-1660* (Oxford: Basil Blackwood Ltd, 1985); J. F. McGregor and B. Reay, eds., *Radical Religion in the English Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984); Christopher Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down* (London: Penguin Books, 1972); Barry Reay, *The Quakers and the English Revolution* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1985).

Sedgwick published his attack on the Antinomians, the divines of the Westminster Assembly delivered a petition to Parliament. This petition, published according to order, submitted on July 19, 1643, pleaded with the Houses of Parliament to “instantly to take into your more serious consideration, how you may most speedily set up CHRIST more gloriously in all his Ordinances within this Kingdome”.²⁰⁸ In particular, the divines wished that “the bold venting of corrupt Doctrines, directly contrary to the sacred Law of God, and religious humiliation for sin, which open a wide door to all Libertinisme and disobedience to God and man, may be speedily suppressed everywhere”.²⁰⁹ The following month, the Assembly submitted another petition to the House of Commons, this one complaining of the publication of Antinomian texts. In particular, Lightfoot singles out ““The Honey-Comb;” “Christ alone exalted;” “The dangerous Dish;” “Faith, a Sermon upon Rev.iii.18;” “The Doctrine and Conversation John the Baptist” as the dangerous books and the persons of “Mr. *Randall*, Mr. *Batte*, Mr. *Lancaster*, My *Symeon*, of -----, Mr. *Heydon*, Mr. *Emmerson*, Mr. *Erbury*, Mr. *Towne*, Mr. *Pen*”.²¹⁰ On September 1, 1643, Robert Lancaster was called before the Assembly to answer for publishing Tobias Crisp’s *Christ alone exalted* (1643) and John Eaton’s *The Honey-Combe of Free Justification by Christ Alone* (1642). For the divines of the Assembly, these Antinomian texts were “replenished with abundance of erroneous and abominable doctrines”.²¹¹

The House of Commons was not slow to respond to the divines’ requests that something be done about this surge of Antinomianism. On August 23, 1643, the

²⁰⁸ *A Copy of the Petition of the Divines of the Assembly, Delivered to both Houses of Parliament, July 19, 1643* (London: 1643), p. 2.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

²¹⁰ *Lightfoot Journal*, p. 9.

²¹¹ *Lightfoot Journal*, p. 13.

Commons appointed a committee and ordered “that all that will come shall have Voices at the Committee for the Ministers Petition, to receive Information against the Antinomians”.²¹² Two weeks later, on September 8th, the Commons further ordered “that a Report be made to-morrow concerning the Antinomians”,²¹³ only to, on the next day, defer the matter for a few days. When the Westminster Assembly delivered their report concerning the Antinomians on the 12th of September, the House ordered the Assembly “to compare the Opinions of the Antinomians with the Word of God, and with the Articles of the Church of England; and to return their Opinions and Judgments upon them speedily”. They also ordered that Antinomian books, which had recently resurfaced with the demise of effective censorship, “be referred to the Examination and Consideration of the Assembly”.²¹⁴

In response to the House’s orders, the Assembly established a committee of its own that included such notable members as Edmund Calamy, Charles Herle, and John Goodwin “to compare the opinions of the Antinomians with the word of God, and with the Articles of Religion...and make report to this Assembly”.²¹⁵ The Assembly genuinely believed that if the Antinomian opinions were not suppressed, and quickly, not only would it become impossible to prevent the rise of heresy and sects, but that any hope of re-establishing a unified national church would vanish as well. Typical of the work of the Assembly, however, the members of committee for the Antinomian business quickly realized that, since accomplishing tasks in a timely manner was something they were incapable of doing, they would undoubtedly require more time than the Commons

²¹² ‘House of Commons Journal Volume 3: 23 August 1643’, *Journal of the House of Commons: Volume 3: 1643-1644* (1802), p. 215-216. Hereafter cited as *CJ*.

²¹³ *CJ*, iii, pp. 233-34.

²¹⁴ *CJ*, iii, pp. 237-38.

²¹⁵ Quoted from Robert Paul, *Assembly of the Lord*, p. 83.

originally had intended for them. Thus, on September 23, Dr. Temple reported to the House of Commons that they found their work to “be a Business of a large Nature, and will require Time to give present satisfaction: Yet, as Time will give Leave, they will Fall on that Work also; and, in Time, give Answer to this Honourable House”.²¹⁶ A few weeks later, on October 10th, Dr. Burgess presented a paper and a petition to the House of Commons. A committee of the House of Commons was immediately appointed, instructed to “consider of the Business concerning the Antinomians; and the Paper and the Petition presented from the Assembly: And is to take care to hinder those of the Antinomian Opinion from preaching”.²¹⁷ Dr. Burgess reported back to the Assembly “the success and issue of that committee that was instructed with the message to the Houses about restrain of the Antinomians”.²¹⁸ This success was qualified, however, when the House of Commons further ordered the Assembly on October 25 that “the Opinion presented to the House from the Assembly, concerning the Antinomians, be returned to the Assembly, to review and enlarge; and that, after such Review and Enlargement, it be printed”.²¹⁹

While the Antinomian business was returned to committee,²²⁰ the Assembly did not remain isolated from outside concerns over Antinomians. On November 20, they received a letter from London divines who, in addition to urging the speedy settlement of the national church, also asked “For some cause against Brownism, Anabaptism, Antinomianism” and “Against scandalous and debauched persons”, all of which “they

²¹⁶ *CJ*, iii, pp. 252-54.

²¹⁷ *CJ*, iii, pp. 271-72.

²¹⁸ *Lightfoot Journal*, p. 24.

²¹⁹ *CJ*, iii, pp. 288.

²²⁰ Lightfoot wrote in his journal on November 6, 1643, “After this there was some question about the committee for the Antinomian business, whether the old committee should stand, and join with the rest that we chose the last day; and it was voted accordingly that they should”, *Lightfoot Journal*, p. 40.

desire us to make all possibly speed”.²²¹ Robert Baillie, one of the Scottish Covenanter representatives in the Westminster Assembly and inveterate gossip, was probably referring to this petition when in his letter of December 7th to his cousin William Spang, he described how,

The other day a number of the citie and countrie ministers gave in an earnest and well penned supplication to the Assemblie, regraiting the lametable confusion of their church under the present anarchy; the increase of Anabaptists, Antinomians, and other sectaries; the boldnesse of some in the citie, and about it, in gathering separate congregations; requesting the Assemblies intercession with the Parlaiment for the redress of these evils; and withal for the erection at London, during the time of these troubles, of a colledge for the youth, whose studies are interrupted at Oxford. This was well taken by the Assemblie.²²²

In a letter later that year, Baillie further bemoaned how “In the time of this anarchie, the divisions of people weeklie encrease: the Independent partie growes; but the Anabaptists more; and the Antinomians most”.²²³ The slow progress of the committee for the Antinomian business, like almost all of the business of the Assembly, was a cause for constant complaint. Motions were made in the Assembly on December 12, 1643 that “we should hasten our work against the Antinomians”.²²⁴ These sentiments were reiterated again a week later when, on the morning of December 19th, “there was a motion to add some more company to the committee for the Antinomian business, because of its weight and haste; and so were Mr. *Vines*, Mr. *Hall*, Mr. *Lightfoot*, and Mr. *Conant*, accordingly added”.²²⁵ Despite the addition of these new members, the progress of the committee still was not proceeding quickly, possibly because of the number of Antinomian texts the

²²¹ *Lightfoot Journal*, p. 56-57.

²²² David Laing, ed., *The Letters and Journals of Robert Baillie, Volume II* (Edinburgh: Robert Ogle, 1841-42), p. 111. Hereafter cited as Baillie.

²²³ *Ibid.*, II, p. 117.

²²⁴ *Lightfoot Journal*, p. 79.

²²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 84.

committee was examining. Once again, on January 8, 1644, “Mr. Burgess moved to hasten the business against the Antinomians”.²²⁶

Despite the delays, it is clear that Antinomianism was a pressing business for Parliament and the Westminster Assembly during the second half of 1643 and the beginning of 1644. Their anxiety and concerns were further augmented by public pleas for action. Baillie recorded that “the first day of our sitting [after vacation]...a number of complaints were given against the Anabaptists and Antinomians huge increase and insolencies intolerable”.²²⁷ Unbounded sectarianism, on the rise in early 1640s England, and further disseminated through print was not treated with benign indifference by the authorities. While hindsight may make it obvious to the modern-day historian that these men and women were powerless to effectively control Antinomianism’s spread under their conditions and limitations, the members of Parliament and the divines of the Assembly did not see it as such. Their fears over the situation prompted an ultimately inchoate but no less sincere series of attempts to rein heresy in. The question remained, however, of what was the best way to do so. Which system of church-government would prove the most effective, the best equipped and qualified to stem the tide of radical sectarianism? How were the divines to reform the Church of England in such a manner that would force the retreat of Antinomians and other sectaries?

IV.

²²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 106.

²²⁷ Baillie, II, p. 215.

The New Englanders never tried to hide the events of the Free Grace Controversy from their countrymen, but rather they endeavored to keep them well informed of all the discoveries and proceedings, undoubtedly to vindicate themselves, their churches, and their government. As with Peter's preface to Mather's *Church-Government and Church-Covenant Discussed*, the most enlightening part of *A Letter of Many Ministers in Old England* was the front matter of the text, not necessarily the actual text itself. The English ministers first request to the ministers in New England stemmed from their brethrenly concerns that the ways of the churches in New England were wrong, and that reports of these errors in New England were leading people to ruin, as their practices were without merit. They claimed that "since your departure into New England, we heare (and partly believe it) that divers have embraced certaine vain opinions, such as you disliked formerly, and we judge to be groundlesse and unwarrantable".²²⁸ Accusations of building a breeding ground for sectaries and heresies had long been leveled at the godly settlers of the New England colonies. Even those sympathetic to the colonizers of the Massachusetts Bay Colony were disappointed with the discovery of heretics in the midst of the New Jerusalem in 1636. In a letter to John Winthrop, Jr. from March of 1637, Edward Howes sadly wrote, "but of the fight amonge yourselues Bellum lingarum, the strife of tongues, I haue heard much, but to little purpose. I wonder that your people that pretend to knowe soe much, doe not knowe that Loue is the fulfilling of the Lawe, and that against Loue there is noe Lawe, but noe marvell".²²⁹ Others, however, such as Emmanuel Downing, wrote to John Winthrop in late 1637 to inform him that in England

²²⁸ Simeon Ash and William Rathband *A Letter of Many Ministers in Old England, Requesting the Judgment of their Reverend Brethren in New England concerning Nine Positions* (London, 1643), unmarked pagination.

²²⁹ *WP*, v. IV, p. 21-22.

there “hath been great Joy for your great victories, but farr more for vanquishing your erroneous opinions then for conquering the Pequots”.²³⁰

Following the trials of Anne Hutchinson, John Wheelwright, Captain Underhill, and the others implicated in their heresy, “all of the proceedings of this court against these persons were set down at large, with the reasons and other observations, and were sent into England to be published there, to the end that all our godly friends might not be discouraged from coming to us, etc.”.²³¹ This account, sent to England in 1637, was not, as Winthrop’s journal entry indicated, published immediately upon its arrival. Nor could it have been printed in Massachusetts, as the Cambridge printing shop was not established until 1639. Instead, this account, which was later printed in England in 1646 as Cotton’s *A Conference Mr. John Cotton Held in Boston with the Elders of New-England*, circulated in manuscript in England. Archbishop Laud received a copy of it in October 1637.²³² Some in New England were concerned that reports of the Antinomian Controversy might damage the colony, or “bring a prejudice upon the plantations”. Thomas Hooker, however, believed that “the most plain and naked relation ever causeth the truth most to appear”.²³³ New England’s government’s printed vindication of its role in the Free Grace Controversy had to wait almost seven years before its print publication. When Weld returned to England in 1641, he brought with him another manuscript account, penned by John Winthrop, of the Free Grace controversy that he published.

John Winthrop’s account of the Free Grace Controversy was published for the first time early in 1644. Thomason dates his copy to January 16, 1644. Entitled

²³⁰ *WP*, v. III, p. 512.

²³¹ Hosmer’s *WJ*, v. I, p. 241.

²³² *CSP, Colonial* 1/9, No. 72[October 15, 1637].

²³³ John Gorham, *Palfrey, History of New England, Volume II* (Boston 1860), p. 173. I am grateful for David Hall to tracking this reference down.

Antinomians and Familists Condemned By the Synod of Elders in New England: With The Proceedings of the Magistrates against them, And their Apology for the same.

Together with A Memorable example of Gods Judgements upon some of those Persons so proceeded against, this sixty-six page quarto tract consisted of three major parts. The first part was a catalog of the eighty-two errors “as were found to have beene brought into *New England*, and spread under-hand there, as they were condemned by an Assembly of the Churches, at *New Town, Aug. 30 1637*”.²³⁴ Each error was identified and followed by a “confutation,” usually relying on scripture, to disprove its validity. The second part of the text, and indeed the bulk of the work, was an account of the proceedings of the General Court against the “erroneous and seditious persons for their disturbances of the publick peace”.²³⁵ Winthrop took great pains in his retelling of the court proceedings to make clear that the accused were not tried because of their opinions, however heretical they might be, but rather because their actions posed a threat to the stability of the colony. In the case against a Mr. Cogshall, a follower of Mr. Wheelwright, Winthrop explained,

it plainly appeared that he had been a very busie instrument, in occasioning of our publicke disturbances, and his justifying of *Mr. Wheelwrights* Sermon...that if he had kept his judgment to himselfe, so as the publicke peace had not been troubled or endangered by it, we should have left him to himselfe, for we doe not challenge power over mens consciences, but when seditious speeches and practices discover such a corrupt conscience, it is our duty to use authority to reforme both.²³⁶

With Wheelwright, the main accusation leveled against him was not for his doctrinal beliefs, but rather for the political and social ramifications they had in the Massachusetts colony. His teachings were seditious not because they were heterodox, but rather

²³⁴ John Winthrop, *Antinomians and Familists Condemned* (London, 1644), p. 1.

²³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

²³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

because publicized heterodoxy caused unrest and dissension within the colony, turning the colonists against each other.²³⁷ Anne Hutchinson, likewise, was charged with political subversion: “shee had not failed of her ayme, to the utter subversion both of Churches and civill state, if the most wise and merficull providence of the Lords had not prevented it by keeping so many of the Magistrates and Elders free from the infection”.²³⁸ Because of her public disturbances, “many families are neglected, and much time lost, and a great damage comes to the Common-wealth thereby”.²³⁹

The treatise also demonstrated the effectiveness of the ministers and magistrates in New England at rooting out schism and heresy in their midst. While the main emphasis of the tract was on the disorder created by the Antinomians within the colony, the authorities were depicted as patient and humble, willing to admit a wide degree of latitude to people in their private opinions, but able and willing to take effective action when their society was threatened. The third part of the text was a “briefe Apologie in defence of the generall proceedings of the Court”, and while it was written specifically to justify the proceedings against John Wheelwright, it was also a vindication of the whole sum of actions taken by the court during the Free Grace Controversy. The Court was, indeed, according to *Antinomians and Familists*, a lawful proceeding of a “civill nature” and the effect of Wheelwright’s publicly pronounced heretical opinions “did require that the Civill power should speedily allay that heat, and heare witnesse against all seditious courses tending to the overthrow of truth and peace amongst us”.²⁴⁰ As Wheelwright “did intend to trouble our peace, and hee hath effected it, therefore it was contempt of

²³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

²³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

²³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 36.

²⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 46, 47.

that authority which required every man to study Peace and Truth, and therefore it was a seditious contempt, in that he stirred up others, to joyn in the disturbance of that peace”.²⁴¹ Stressing that they were not cruel or harsh with Wheelwright, Winthrop argued that they labored to make him see the error of his ways gently and with all possible Christian charity. But despite their repeated attempts to do so, the magistrates and ministers of the colony failed. As these heretics constituted a clear and present danger to the peace and stability of their colony, the leaders were forced to take action against them. And when it became clear that there was no other option open to them but legal prosecution, the magistrates and ministers were swift to act, effectively ridding their colony of the dangerous sickness that threatened to destroy them.

Less than a month after its first printed appearance, Weld had printed a second edition, re-titled *A Short Story of the Rise, reign, and ruine of the Antinomians, Familists, & Libertines, that infected the Churches of New England: And how they were also confuted by the Assembly of Ministers there: As also of the Magistrates proceedings in Court against them*. Weld’s version—with a different title page and additional preface penned by Weld but otherwise the exact same text as Winthrop’s—was printed by the same printer, Ralph Smith. Thomason purchased his copy on February 19, 1644. Why would Weld have Winthrop’s *Antinomians and Familists* reprinted so soon? The most obvious and mercenary reason is financial. If the printer was willing to republish this work, especially so soon after its initial publication, it indicates that there was a remunerative market for this text. While it certainly was no massive tome of theological exposition, at sixty-six pages, it was right at the cusp of cheap print. Smith must have

²⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 54.

known there was a market for this text, and one that was willing to buy it. It seems fairly safe to assume then that Winthrop's *Antinomians and Familists* must have been something of a bestseller, and it was reset and published for a third time later in 1644. Its popularity also seems to have outlasted its immediate significance, as it was reprinted for a fourth time almost fifty years later in 1692.

As the main body of the text of the second edition was the same as Winthrop's *Antinomians and Familists*, what was Weld's role in this second version? What was his purpose in not only the republication of the text, but also in making the changes to the title page and adding a preface? To begin with, his position in England at the time makes him an ideal person to polish out the flaws in Winthrop's text. He was in England, after all, as a representative of the Massachusetts Bay Colony whose goal was to secure public support, political leverage, and ecclesiastical advantage. Furthermore, he had already gotten his feet wet in the world of revolutionary London printing with his publication of *New Englands First Fruits*. This was not uncharted territory for Weld; rather, he had already become familiar with the world of printing. Despite the obvious propaganda value in *Antinomians and Familists*, though, the republication of the text does not seem to have been Weld's idea. If the title page and epistle to the reader from *A Short Story* can be believed, Weld was not the instigator of the republication of Winthrop's work. According to the title page, *A Short Story* was "published at the instant request of sundry, by one that was an eye and eare-witnesse of the carriage of the matters there" and Weld himself was "earnestly pressed by diverse to perfect it" and he "was more slow unto it".²⁴²

²⁴² Thomas Weld, *A Short Story* (London, 1644), title page, p. *2.

Weld's justifications for his actions in publishing *A Short Story* are twofold. First, was his wish to "[lay] downe the order and sense of this story, (which in the Book is omitted)".²⁴³ Weld was correct in pointing out this weakness in the original publication. On the whole, Winthrop's account of the Free Grace Controversy was somewhat disjointed. The work lacked a strong narrative flow, concluding stories of the participants pages after he last mentioned them. The work read very much like it was largely copied out of the minutes of the court proceedings with additions from a private journal, where people disappeared from the record only to reappear at a later date. For example, Anne Hutchinson's trial occupied pages thirty-one through forty-three, but then the account of her was interrupted by an announcement of the monstrous birth to Mary Dyer, another one of the accused, and then the apology of the court in defense of the proceedings against John Wheelwright. The conclusion of Hutchinson's story finally appeared after these, at the end of the work, on page fifty-nine. As a result of these alternations, for those unfamiliar with the basic narrative and participants of the events of 1636-38 in the Massachusetts Bay Colony, *Antinomians and Familists* was not altogether easy to follow. While Weld did nothing to alter or edit the text of Winthrop's work in *A Short Story*, his preface did provide a basic outline of how the Free Grace Controversy in New England came about thereby helping the reader navigate the structural problems with the text.

In executing his first goal—recounting the events leading up to the Free Grace Controversy and the success of the New England authorities in squashing it—Weld was able to accomplish his second goal: parallel the events from the previous decade in New

²⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. *2.

England with those in Old England now. In particular, by doing so, Weld could hold up the exemplar of New England—its church and its government—to Old England. While this was certainly a theme of Winthrop’s work, the additions and changes in the Weld edition served to highlight, expand, and reinforce them for the reader. Weld’s *A Short Story* was much more explicit in making New England’s experience with Antinomians into a useful example for Old England. It even appeared on the title page in which this tract was declared to be “Very fit for these times; here being the same errours amongst us, and acted by the same spirit”.²⁴⁴ With more depth and explication, Weld’s preface highlighted the dangers of the Antinomians: how they insinuated themselves within the community, how they secured powerful friends in high places, and how they came to threaten the well-being of the colony. The free grace doctrine of the Antinomians, Weld was at pains to point out, “takes so well in London, and other parts of the kingdom, and you see so many dance after this pipe, running after such and such, crowding the churches and filling the doores and windows”.²⁴⁵ The appeal of these heresies in New England, and by extension in Old England, laid in two things. First, the heretics would present the appearance of godliness, be “very humble, holy, and spirituall Christians” in their manners and behaviors. Their powers of seduction were so cunning, so persuasive, that “a stranger that loved goodnesse, could not but love and admire them, and so be the more easily drawne after them”.²⁴⁶ Secondly, the Antinomians would also prey on the fears and doubts of their community members. As Weld correctly insinuated, the spiritual life of the godly was one beset by uncertainties and worries about salvation. The

²⁴⁴ Thomas Weld, *A Short Story* (1644), title page.

²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, unpaginated from the Preface.

²⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, unpaginated from the Preface.

main appeal of the doctrines of the Antinomians laid in their release of the believer of the endless cycle from fear and doubt. With free grace, the believer could “come to such a settled peace that they might never doubt more, though they should see no grace at all in themselves”.²⁴⁷

Having insinuated themselves among the common sort with such seductive doctrines, the Antinomians then solidified their position within the community at large by securing allies amongst the colony’s elite. In what appeared to be a subtle indictment of Sir Henry Vane the Younger, the onetime governor of the colony and now a Parliamentary leader in Old England as well as a firm supporter of the Independents, Weld described how upon the arrival of newcomers into the colony, the Antinomians, signaling out “men of note, worth, and activity, fit instruments to advance their designe”, “would be sure to welcome them, show them all coutersie, and offer them roome in their owne houses, or some of their owne Sect, and so having gotten them into their Web, they could easily poison them by degrees”.²⁴⁸ By the time the Antinomians felt sheltered enough to publicly air their true opinions and openly and seditiously confront the ministerial and magisterial leaders of the colony, they were (falsely) secure in their protection to do so without fear of reprisal or punishment. For, by such a time,

they had some of all sorts, and quality, in all places to defend and Patronise them; Some of the Magistrates, some Gentlemen, some Scholars, and men of learning, some Burgesses of our Generall Court, some of our Captaines and Souldiers, some chiefe men in Townes, and some men eminent for Religion, parts and wit. So what wheresoever the case of the Opinions came in agitation, there wanted not Patrons to stand up to plead for them, and if any of the Opinionists were complained of in the Courts for their misdemeanors, or brought before the Churches for conviction or censure, still, some or other of that party would not onely suspend, giving their vote against them, but would labour to justifie them,

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, unpaginated from the Preface.

²⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, unpaginated from the Preface.

side with them, and protest against any sentence that should passe upon them, and so be ready, not onely to burden the Delinquent against all meanes of conviction, but to raise a mutinie if the major part should be against them; So in Towne meetings, Military trainings, and all other societies, yea almost in every family, it was hard if that some or other were not ready to rise up in defence of them, even as of the apple of their owne eye.²⁴⁹

By accusing the Antinomians of securing these friends in high places in order to protect them against prosecution, Weld clarified how the Antinomians were allowed to further rent and divide homes and society at large with their seditious doctrines. The dangers of the Antinomians laid not only in their pernicious doctrines, but also in how they infected the civil elements of society. By doing so, they not only ensured their own survival, but also the corruption and destruction of their society at large. The threat of the contamination of their heresies lay not only in the spiritual realm, but in the secular as well.

A reader in 1644 England, and in London in particular, which was, as Weld points out, rife with such similar heretics, would not help but make the connection between the events of the proceeding decade in New England and there in contemporary Old England. *A Short Story* clearly served as a warning to Old England of the dangers of these heretics, and, in particular, of sect friendly politicians who patronized and protected these malignant serpents in their midst. Just as New England witnessed the sudden and dramatic increase in sectaries “in a short times, and what a spirit of pride, insolency, contempt of authority, division, sedition they were acted by: It was a wonder of mercy that they had not set our Common-wealth and churches on a fire, and consumed us all therein”,²⁵⁰ so too would Old England if their rise continues not only unchecked, but

²⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, unpaginated from the Preface.

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, unpaginated from the Preface.

abated by political grandees like Sir Henry Vane the Younger. The parallels between New and Old England were too pronounced to be ignored. Old England's present troubles were mirrored almost exactly by New England's. This was the message of Weld's preface and this was his intent in republishing Winthrop's text with its addition.

New England as an exemplar for Old England was further reinforced by the events surrounding the New Englanders ultimate triumph over the nest of sectaries nurtured in their midst. The colony of Massachusetts owed their deliverance to two things: the continued patience and efforts of the uncorrupted magistrates and ministers uncorrupted to see the Antinomians returned to the fold, and the wonder-working of God's providence to further demonstrate the heretics' errors. Despite the public preaching and private counseling of ministers to show them the error of their doctrines, the Antinomians persisted in their beliefs. The New Englanders had some success with the calling of a synod at Cambridge, in which the truth of the way of the New England churches was roundly proved through scripture, but ultimately it failed to convince the majority of the Antinomian party. In a process almost exactly like the structure of the debates at the Westminster Assembly, the divines of New England labored to convince the heretics of the fallacy of their doctrines with much debate, rebuttal, and scriptural proof. After gaining some ground with the Antinomians, the divines of the Cambridge Synod were forced to watch as the heretics "went on in their former course, not onely to disturbe the Churches, but miserably interrupt the civill Peace, and that they threw contempt both upon Courts and Churches, and began now to raise sedition against us, to the indangering of the Common-wealth".²⁵¹ There was no way that Weld could have

²⁵¹ *Ibid.*, unpaginated from the Preface.

foreseen the failure of the Westminster Assembly, both in terms of ministerial unity and ultimate implementation of their reforms, early in 1644. Nonetheless, his tale of the Cambridge Synod presented a clear warning to the Westminster Assembly about the future of England's national church should sectaries be countenanced and tolerated. In no way was Weld's preface a plea for liberty of conscience. Rather, it was an argument for a strong, policing ministry.

This effective ministry was to be joined by an equally rigorous magistracy. It was the success of the magistrates in demonstrating the deception and lies spun by the Antinomian leaders in court that ultimately succeeded in convincing their followers of the truth. The Antinomian leaders like Anne Hutchinson became bold in their behaviors, not only by airing their pernicious doctrines and by their public confrontations with ministers, but also by growing "very loose and degenerate in their practices...As no prayer in their families, no Sabbath, insufferable pride, frequent and hideous lying".²⁵² Their contempt for authority and their wanton deceptions finally repelled many of their followers only when they were confronted and exposed by the authorities. "These things exceedingly amazed their followers, (especially such as were led after them in the simplicity of their hearts, as many were) and now they began to see that they were deluded by them".²⁵³ By laying bare their lies, the New England authorities triumphed in their campaign to persuade the majority of the followers of the Antinomians of the error of their ways and bring them back into the godly fold.

Godly magistracy and ministry were further buttressed by God's demonstrable favor for their cause. Evidence of God's providence was provided with the monstrous

²⁵² *Ibid.*, unpaginated from the Preface.

²⁵³ *Ibid.*, unpaginated from the Preface.

births to Mary Dyer and Anne Hutchinson: “by testifying his displeasure against their opinions and practices, as clearly as if he had pointed with his finger”.²⁵⁴ He caused these women to “produce out of their wombs, as before they had out of their braines, such monstrous births as no Chronicle (I think) hardly ever recorded the like”.²⁵⁵ While Mary Dyer gave birth to a “woman child, a fish, a beast, and a fowle, all woven together in one”, Anne Hutchinson, as one of the leaders of the Antinomians, received even more special signs of God’s displeasure. “The wisdom of God fitted this judgement to her sinne”, for as she held thirty heretical opinions, so God caused her to “bring forth deformed monsters, and as about 30. Opinions in number, so many monsters”.²⁵⁶ News of these monstrous births had long since made it back to England. In October 1637, Winthrop sent a report to England on the monstrous birth to Mary Dyer that is recorded in the State Papers. The diarist Walter Yonge of Stutcombe recorded into his journal in June 1638 John Winthrop’s report of the monstrous birth of Mary Dyer.²⁵⁷ In 1639, Edward Howes had written to John Winthrop, Jr. that he had “receiued with 2 relations of Monstrous births and a generall earthquake. When I had read them; they seemed to me like Pharaohs dreames; but whoe can tell certainly wherefore God sent them; where is there such an other people then in N:E:?”.²⁵⁸ In 1642, a short pamphlet was printed in London entitled *Newes From New-England*. It reported the monstrous birth of Mary Dyer, describing how she had delivered of a baby girl with “ears which were like an Apes

²⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, unpaginated from the Preface.

²⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, unpaginated from the Preface.

²⁵⁶ Thomas Weld, *A Short Story* (1644), unpaginated from the Preface.

²⁵⁷ Valerie Pearl and Morris Pearl, “Governor John Winthrop’ on the Birth of the Antinomians ‘Monster’: The Earliest Reports to Reach England and the Making of a Myth”, *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, 102 (1990), p. 21-37. Pearl and Pearl argue that the entry in the Yonge diary was copied by Yonge from a document sent to England written by John Winthrop.

²⁵⁸ *WP*, v. IV, p. 115.

ears, grew upon the shoulders”. On her forehead grew “four perfect horns” and her “breast and shoulders were full of scales, sharp and pricking”. And, “instead of toes, it had on each foot claws with sharp Talens like a fowl, in the upper part of the back it had two great mouths”.²⁵⁹

These prodigious births were common signs in early modern culture that served to warn of divine displeasure and future misfortune.²⁶⁰ By reminding his readers of these events in the preface, however, Weld was able to provide demonstrable proof not only of the errors of the Antinomian heresy, but also a sign of God’s mercy towards the leaders of the New England colony. Belief in providence was pervasive in seventeenth century England and the wonder-working of God’s providence provided tangible proof of the magnitude of the sin of holding Antinomian doctrines. As Blair Worden has explained for Cromwellian England, examples of God’s providence “were not random or arbitrary displays of God’s sovereignty. They formed a pattern, a chain or series, visible to the true believers”.²⁶¹ Evidence’s of God’s favor towards them would have served to validate not only their core doctrinal beliefs, but also their system of church-government and civil government. It was a validation that would not have gone unnoticed by Weld’s readers and would have lent further strength to the party supporting the New England Way in Parliament, the Westminster Assembly, and among the public.

Taken as a whole, Weld’s preface served not only as a corrective to the flaws of the earlier Winthrop edition, but also as a cunning work of propaganda for the New

²⁵⁹ *Newes From New-England* (London, 1642), p. A2.

²⁶⁰ Please see Katherine Park and Lorraine Daston “Unnatural Conceptions: The Study of Monsters in 16th and 17th Century France and England,” *Past and Present* 92 (1981), p. 20-54.

²⁶¹ Blair Worden, “Providence and Politics in Cromwellian England”, *Past and Present*, No. 109 (Nov. 1985), p. 63. See also Alexandra Walsham, *Providence in Early Modern England* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).

England Way. Much more so than *Antinomians and Familists*, the new title page and preface to *A Short Story* explicitly made New England into an example for Old England. New England's experience with Antinomians in the 1630s proved not only that their system of church-government was tenable and effectively able to deal with heretics, but also that God's favor was with them. Their system of church-government, the New England Way, was effective in the enforcement of conformity and not a breeding ground of sectaries. They also had demonstrable proof of the righteousness of their way with evidence of God's providence. The future of the Church of England as to be determined by the Westminster Assembly needed no further debate: the New England Way was the answer. The example of New England was the example by which the Westminster Assembly could model the English Church.

Weld clearly was not alone in his thinking that New England could prove itself to be a fruitful example of church-government to the Westminster Assembly. As described earlier, Weld was motivated, in part, to re-publish *Antinomians and Familists* by others. Who exactly are these others? Robert Baillie reported to Scotland in 1641 that "All the Ministers of Holland, who are for New-England Way, are now here",²⁶² by which he meant members of the future Dissenting Brethren such as Thomas Goodwin and Phillip Nye. One possible answer could be these Independents in the Westminster Assembly, men such as Thomas Goodwin or Phillip Nye, who initially seemed ideologically aligned with their New England brethren. Both *A Short Story* and *Antinomians and Familists* testified to the triumph Congregationalism had over heresies, and thus, by extension, defend the system of church-government advocated by the Independents in the

²⁶² Baillie, I, p. 311.

Westminster Assembly. On the surface, these divines would appear to be the logical and most likely instigators for the publication of the Weld and Winthrop tracts.

This answer becomes complicated, however, by the events of late 1641. As we saw in Chapter One, Presbyterians and Independents at the home of the English Presbyterian Edmund Calamy in Aldermanbury had bound themselves to a strategy that would contain and silence extremists and pledged themselves to a display of public unity, despite the increasingly apparent differences between them. By trying to unite behind a common cause and shared mutual respect of one another, hopefully one of the great works of the Revolution, the further reformation of the Church of England, could be peaceably achieved and all accommodated.²⁶³ For the most part, over the next three years, the English Independents did adhere to the Aldermanbury Accord and kept themselves quiet. This did not prevent, them, however, from continuing their correspondence with their brethren in New England, soliciting more tracts and defenses from them on the New England Way, and arranging for their publication in England.²⁶⁴

However, in light of the timing of the publication of both the Winthrop and Weld editions, the English Independents do not seem to be the likely sponsors. The Independent classical statement, *An Apologeticall Narration*, written by the Dissenting Brethren, appeared almost simultaneously with the publication of Winthrop's *Antinomians and Familists*. Thomason dates his copy of *An Apologeticall Narration* to January 3, 1644. While the authors of *An Apologeticall Narration* claimed that they have much to learn from the example of the ways of church-government in the New

²⁶³ Elliot Curt Vernon, "The Sion College Conclave and London Presbyterianism during the English Revolution".

²⁶⁴ Francis Bremer, *Congregational Communion: Clerical Friendship in the Anglo-American Puritan Community, 1610-1692* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1994), p. 134. Please see the discussion of John Cotton's tracts from the mid to late 1640s in Chapter Four.

England colonies, they did not feel bound to conform to it absolutely. Therefore, it seems unlikely that the Dissenting Brethren would have encouraged the re-publication under Weld of *Antinomians and Familists*, particularly after having published their own statement of church-government.

The much more likely answer to the question of the impetus behind the pamphlet lies, surprisingly, with the Presbyterians. The first indication of this was the identity of the printer of both texts, Ralph Smith. As discussed previously, this was not Weld's first foray into the world of publishing. His earlier text, *New Englands First Fruits*, co-written with Peter, was printed for Henry Overton. Overton was a notorious printer of Independent and radical texts, with close ties, often familial, among radical luminaries of the England Revolution.²⁶⁵ He was also the printer for many texts on New England, including some of John Cotton's works. Printing *A Short Story* with Overton would have immediately associated the text with the Independent camp, and would have been recognized as such by the reading and publishing public.

Instead of sticking with the same printer, however, Weld chose to have the text printed for Ralph Smith. Smith, as Ann Hughes discusses in her work on Thomas Edwards' *Gangraena*, while not nearly as well documented as some of the other revolutionary printers, was definitely not a printer of Independent works. Rather, his output clearly demonstrated an abhorrence of the radicalism of the period and was characterized by a repugnance towards liberty of conscience and a support for a zealous Presbyterianism. Often with John Bellamy, Smith printed tracts during the 1640s and

²⁶⁵ Edwards described Overton as "an Independent Book-seller and member of Master John Goodwin's Church" in *Gangraena, Part II*, p. 9.

1650s for men such as the Presbyterian divines Simeon Ash,²⁶⁶ Thomas Edwards,²⁶⁷ Cornelius Burges,²⁶⁸ Samuel Rutherford,²⁶⁹ and George Gillespie.²⁷⁰ As the printer of *Gangraena*, one would really not expect anything less. Smith was also responsible for many of the official works of the Westminster Assembly, including 1643's *Certaine Considerations to dissuade men from further gathering of churches* and one of the publishers of the Directory for Public Worship in 1644.

While printing both *Antinomians and Familists* and *A Short Story* with Smith may not indicate that it is a Presbyterian text, it was certainly read with great interest by Presbyterians. In 1645, Baillie promised to send his cousin William Spang a copy of it.²⁷¹ In fact, I would argue that the publication of this New England Way text with a Presbyterian printer was an indication that the ministers and magistrates of New England and the Presbyterians in England still believed that an accommodation between their two systems of church-government, as first devised in the Aldermanbury Accord of 1641, could be worked out in the Westminster Assembly. While it could and indeed later did become a source for attacks on the New England Way, its original purpose was not as such. Rather, from its start as one of the manuscript publications detailing the careful manner in which the Massachusetts authorities stamped heresy out in their colony to the

²⁶⁶ Simeon Ash, *Living loves betwixt Christ and dying Christians* (London, 1654).

²⁶⁷ Thomas Edwards, *Antapologia: or, A full answer to the apologeticall narration of Mr Goodwin, Mr Nye, Mr Sympson, Mr Burroughs, Mr Bridge, members of the Assembly of Divines. Wherein is handled many of the controversies of these times* (London, 1644); *Gangraena: or a catalogue and discovery of many of the errours, heresies, blasphemies and pernicious practices of the sectaries of this time, vented and acted in England in these four last years* (London, 1646).

²⁶⁸ Cornelius Burges, *Sion College what it is, and doeth* (London, 1648).

²⁶⁹ Samuel Rutherford, *The tryal & triumph of faith: or, An exposition of the history of Christs dispossessing of the daughter of the woman of Canaan* (London, 1645).

²⁷⁰ George Gillespie, *An usefull case of conscience, discussed, and resolved. Concerning associations and confederacies with idolaters, infidels, hereticks, or any other known enemies of truth and godlinesse* (London, 1649).

²⁷¹ Baillie, II, p. 311.

addition of Weld's preface to the second printed edition, these tracts were intended to not only vindicate New England from attacks, but also to demonstrate its successes. When confronted with the insidious threat of Antinomianism, the New England Way responded with the full support of its ministers and magistrates to exterminate it. The print and manuscript publications that originated in the colony testify to this fact.

Scholars of the religious history of the English Revolution argue that until the publication of *An Apologeticall Narration*, there was no unbridgeable gap between the Presbyterian and Independent godly. Rather, the opposite was true, in that both amorphous groups before 1644 labored with exceptional diligence and patience to attempt to bury their differences, particularly in public, uniting behind a common cause and shared mutual respect of one another.²⁷² I believe that Weld's *A Short Story* was evidence of this fragile but well-intentioned truce between the Presbyterians and the Independents. Until the final rupture with the appearance of *An Apologeticall Narration*, the godly in England sincerely attempted to reach a settlement that would have been accepted by all. When one considers the themes of *Antinomians and Familists* and the preface of *A Short Story* with their emphasis on the effectiveness of the New England Way's ability to root out heresy and its depiction of New England not as an unlicensed breeding ground for sectarianism, it becomes clear that it was designed to appeal to that pre-*Apologeticall Narration* sentiment. While Presbyterians would later seize upon the Free Grace Controversy as demonstrative of the inherent instability of the New England Way conflated with Independency, the Winthrop and Weld publications in early 1644

²⁷² Elliot Curt Vernon, "The Sion College Conclave and London Presbyterianism during the English Revolution," Chapter One; Robert S. Paul, *The Assembly of the Lord: Politics and Religion in the Westminster Assembly and the 'Grand Debate'*.

were a testament to that spirit of accommodation of the early years of the English Revolution that existed among the godly in England.

V.

The situation changed dramatically, however, in the wake of the publication of *An Apologeticall Narration*, which Thomason dated to January 3, 1644. John Pym, the unofficial leader of the middle way party in Parliament, had died on December 8, 1643.²⁷³ With his death, political power in Parliament passed from the hands of Pym's moderate party into the hands of Sir Henry Vane the Younger, a man much more radical in both his religious and political views, despite being one of the main architects of the Solemn League and Covenant.²⁷⁴ Vane's ascendancy, and his support of the Independents and religious toleration, may have been the impetus behind the publication of *An Apologeticall Narration*, the first clear statement of the Independent form of church-government. Its authors were the five Dissenting Brethren in the Westminster Assembly: Thomas Goodwin, Philip Nye, Sidrach Simpson, Jeremiah Burroughes, and William Bridge. This short, succinct pamphlet laid clear the Independent system of church-government, and with its publication, the climate in England changed irrevocably.

Claiming that the recent "noyse of confused exclamations" had forced their beliefs to have "laine under so dark a cloud of manifold misapprehensions",²⁷⁵ the authors of *An Apologeticall Narration* finally put pen to paper to explain their

²⁷³ For the role of Pym in Parliamentary affairs, please see J.H. Hexter, *The Reign of King Pym* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1941).

²⁷⁴ *ODNB*.

²⁷⁵ *An Apologeticall Narration, Humbly Submitted to the Honourable Houses of Parliament* (London, 1644), p. 1

ecclesiastical system. Like the Presbyterians and advocates of the New England Way before them, the Dissenting Brethren maintained that they used only the New Testament and the examples of the primitive church as the foundation of their church government and practice. Furthermore, they likewise had the examples of other Reformed Churches, of the “Brownists”, and of the New England colonies to learn from. However, they did not follow wholly any of their examples: “We resolved not to take up our religion by or from any partie, and yet to approve and hold fast whatsoever is good in any, though never so much differing from us, yea opposite unto us”.²⁷⁶

As a result, they rejected Presbyterianism because they did not believe that the primitive Churches were governed according to the Presbyterian system of church-government: “We could not therefore but judge it a safe and an allowed way to retain the government of our severall congregations for matter of discipline within themselves, to be exercised by their own Elders”.²⁷⁷ Simultaneously, they rejected Brownism, arguing that they are not Separatists or Sectarians, for they existed and practiced in communion with the other godly and Reformed Churches. Having rejected Presbyterianism and Brownism, the Dissenting Brethren did “hereby publiquely professe, we beleieve the truth to lye and consist in a *middle way* betwixt that which is falsly charged on us, *Brownisme*; and that which is the contention of these times, the *authoritative Presbytericall Government* in all the subordinations and proceedings of it”.²⁷⁸

²⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

²⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

²⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 25.

The publication of *An Apologeticall Narration* heralded the demise of the fragile truce of the Aldermanbury Accords of 1641. In the wake of its publication, pamphlet after pamphlet was published loudly attacking it.²⁷⁹ Unity, however tenuous it had been, between Presbyterians and Independents was lost. What is more, the remainder of the debate in the Westminster Assembly was a foregone triumph for the Presbyterians who held the majority. While this did not stop the Independents from fighting for their cause, they had effectively lost the battle within the halls of Westminster. Where the battle was not lost, however, was in the pamphlet wars in the streets of London. The Independents were the winners outside the Westminster Assembly, but the price they paid was aligning themselves with the radicals they had previously claimed to disavow.

²⁷⁹ See, for example, Thomas Edwards, *Antapologia* (1644); Alexander Forbes, *Anatomy of Independency* (1644); Adam Steuart, *Some Observations...Upon the Apologettical Narration* (1644); Samuel Rutherford, *Due Right of Presbyteries* (1644); William Prynne, *Full Reply* (1644). This list is by no means exhaustive.

CHAPTER THREE

“Pretenders to Chastity, Reformation, and Christian Liberty”: Attacks on the New England Way

1645 was a watershed year in the publishing of tracts against the system of church-government in New England. While 1644 witnessed an outpouring of vitriolic diatribes against Independents in the wake of the publication of the *Apologeticall Narration*, the full impact of its force on the New England system of church-government was not felt until the next year. Because of the admiration expressed for the New England Way in the *Apologeticall Narration* and its writers desire to model their churches on the New England churches to a certain extent, the New England Way found itself not only openly accused of breeding sectaries if not being outright sectarians themselves, but also largely conflated with Independency. It is ironic that this polemical labeling of New Englanders as Independents came at a time when the positions of the Independents in Old England with their pleas for liberty of conscience were becoming anathema to their brethren in New England.²⁸⁰ Thus, while polemically the system of church-government in New England became more clearly identified with Independency in Old England, it was, in reality, farther from it than it had ever been.

The years following the publication of the *Apologeticall Narration* saw the publication of many tracts that openly attacked the New England Way. This was a sharp departure from the earlier years of the Civil War, in which printed matter related to the New England system of church-government was marked by concerted attempts to find an accommodation between it and Presbyterianism, arguably the dominant system of

²⁸⁰ Please see Chapter Five.

church-government increasingly favored by godly ministers in England. While return migrants, such as Samuel Gorton and Roger Williams, provided much of the fodder for the post-*Apologeticall Narration* printed matter, the networks of correspondence between the godly in Old England and New England and Bermuda served as sources for others, such as William Prynne and Thomas Edwards, godly men who had not migrated to the New World. These networks proved to be valuable sources of information, and also demonstrated the reliance that print had on older forms of communication, such as letters and manuscripts, and also on oral transmission through conversation. While print was the medium through which these attacks reached their broadest possible audience, its continued reliance on these older forms revealed the extent to which older forms of communication, such as oral tradition and manuscript circulation and publication, existed side-by-side with and buttressed the new print culture. Print was by no means, despite its importance, the only means of communication in the Revolutionary English Atlantic.

Also important to note at this juncture are not just the Atlantic networks of the godly and the role that they played in the creation of printed matter, but the networks of printers, booksellers, and political grandees and their importance in publication. Just as printers such as Benjamin Allen can be identified as playing a role in the publication of tracts in support of the New England Way, so too can printers such as John Macock and booksellers like the Sparke family be identified as important Presbyterian players in the world of print. Their repeated involvements in the printing and selling of these new attacks on the New World written both by return migrants and those who had not migrated, implies that they possessed a level of agency in the direction of printed matter and its intended impact on a wide public. They were not just printing and selling for

profit. Rather, their commitment to the ideas found in the materials published is evidenced by their repeated involvement in tracts of a similar tenor and tone.

Attacks on the New England Way were not just penned by Presbyterians. Earlier tracts written almost exclusively by Presbyterians in 1644 and 1645 were joined in later years by disaffected return migrants and Royalists. These new texts often differed in substantially profound ways from Presbyterian attacks. Return migrants offered the English public a first hand account of the cruelty of New Englanders and their hypocritical system of church-government. They did not have to rely on letters from the New World as they had lived it themselves. As such, their narrative relations of their dealings with preachers, politicians, and people in Massachusetts and its off-shoot colonies had a dramatic immediacy to them that relied not on discourses of theological difference, but rather on detailed accounts of relationships with the well-respected godly, such as John Cotton, that undermined their position in the English public's mind in ways that theological exegesis never could. Royalist newsbooks took the immediacy of tales told by disgruntled return migrants one step further by recounting speeches and doings of other return migrants within England. These demonstrated the discord and injustices of the New England Way, and brought then vividly home to their English readers.

Thus, we find in the tracts from the mid-1640s a shift away from the theological exegeses that had characterized both defenses and questionings of the New England Way. Instead of relying on biblical exegesis to support or dispute structures of church-government, writers of the mid-1640s utilized comprehensive narratives or anecdotes that often relied on manuscript sources. These narratives, unlike the earlier tracts, had a broader appeal to wider audiences, as they did not require an intimate knowledge of

scripture. Furthermore, on a more basic level, they were more engaging texts, with tales of cruelty, hypocrisy, and terror that would undoubtedly capture broader publics.

The appearance of this printed matter with a wider appeal coincided with the foregone conclusion that the Westminster Assembly would adopt a Presbyterian system of church-government. However, the Assembly's recommendation of a Presbyterian system was complicated by the Erastian tendencies of Parliament, which ultimately undermined any successful establishment of a Presbyterian Church of England outside of London. As such, these texts from the mid-1640s also responded to the political and religious transformations of the time. Parliament was increasingly under pressure from extra-Parliamentary pressures groups: the New Model Army, the City government, and the London citizenry, each with their own, often conflicting, agendas, that seriously affected the ability of Parliament to operate as an autonomous political body. As a result, the mid-1640s witnessed the rise of Parliamentary political parties with extra-Parliamentary alliances and constituencies: political presbyterians and independents.²⁸¹

Within this context of dynamic and revolutionary change within England proper, what possible import could the Atlantic colonies hold? In fact, the Atlantic context became even more important as the decade passed. No longer were just the New England colonies in play in print in England, but the Atlantic field of vision was broadened to include Bermuda. For detractors of the New England Way, which included both Presbyterians and Royalists, as well as a series of disgruntled return migrants, the colonies in New England and Bermuda provided examples of locations where Independency and/or Sectaries were allowed or institutionalized. For these men, these

²⁸¹ When referring to religious parties, I use the terms Presbyterian and Independent. Political parties are identified by lower-cases, i.e. presbyterian and independent.

stories demonstrated the hypocrisy and the cruelty of those who would seek to establish this sort of system of church-government in England. Proof of their cruelty was further manifested in their treatment of the Native American populations they encountered. Additionally, through the examples of return migrants like Hugh Peter and Hanserd Knollys, England itself had first hand evidence of the sort of chaos that the New England Way brought with in its wake. While return migrants such as Peter and Weld previously sought to demonstrate the viability of implementing the New England Way in Old England, thereby demonstrating the inherent importance of the Atlantic colonies in a positive light, the polemical fortunes of the English Atlantic colonies took a dramatic downturn in the middle years of the 1640s. But they still remained an integral and expanding part of the religious discourse in England.

II.

The New Model Army was formed by the Self-Denying Ordinance in December of 1644. In a response to the belief that the army's failure on the battlefield was a sign of divine providence, the New Model Army was structured out of the already existing Parliamentary forces in January 1645, with Fairfax as its commander-in-chief. By the end of the first civil war in 1646, many throughout England had come to believe that the New Model Army formed a core of strength for extra-Parliamentary support for independents in the House of Commons. Certainly, a myriad of religious identities flourished in the New Model Army, but the historical causes of the situation remain debated. Kishlansky, in his *The Rise of the New Model Army*, claims that it was the

shortage of army chaplains that accounted for contemporary perceptions of the Army's radicalism as lay preaching flourished under such conditions. Thus,

[r]adical chaplains and mechanic preachers did exist within the New Model. They were supported by groups within the Army that held to independent and sectarian doctrines. Their existence, however, should not imply that the Army as a whole espoused or supported such viewpoints. Both existed in far greater profusion in London and had little success in spreading radical theology.²⁸²

Other historians, such as Ian Gentles, argue the Army as a whole engaged in wide range of religious activities, such as fasting, days of humiliation, expounding of scriptures, sermon gadding, and lay preaching. Within the New Model Army there was "a great store of spiritual and intellectual energy. This energy was expressed in the vocabularies of both Calvinistic Puritanism and libertarian antinomianism".²⁸³ Austin Woolrych's research confirms Gentles' assessment of the religious radicalism of the New Model Army, both among the officers and the rank and file.²⁸⁴

Even more important than tracing the origins of religious radicalism in the New Model Army was the effect the New Model has on the political and religious debates of the country. Among the more conservative elements in the country, in which I also include Presbyterians, the New Model Army was a source of fear and anxiety because they believed it actively propagated new and radical religious and political ideals. Not only was the New Model Army perceived to be an essentially a mobile missionary army, but as the war progressed, it became a powerful political force that forced its radicalism on the government and nation.

²⁸² Mark Kishlanksy, *The Rise of the New Model Army* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), p. 72.

²⁸³ Ian Gentles, *The New Model Army in England, Ireland, and Scotland, 1645-1653* (Blackwell: Cambridge, 1992), p. 103.

²⁸⁴ Austin Woolrych, *Soldiers and Satesmen: The General Council of the Army and its Debates, 1647-1648* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), p. 17.

As the New Model Army triumphed on the battlefield against Royalist forces, other extra-Parliamentary pressure groups formed in London. By 1646, the government of the City of London increased dramatically its efforts to influence Parliamentary decision-making, a right it felt it deserved in light of its significant financial contributions to the Parliamentary cause. In January 1646, the City presented the House of Commons with a petition complaining of lay sectarian preachers in the city, and further stressing their desire for a speedy settlement of the church.²⁸⁵ The Scottish continued to pressure Parliament into establishing a Presbyterian national church, arguing forcefully that they were bound to do so according to the terms of the Solemn League and Covenant. Furthermore, they argued that only a strong Presbyterian Church was an effective preventative measure against sectaries. The House of Commons published in April 1646 a declaration reaffirming their commitment to create a political and religious settlement that would reunite the nation. However, despite having “so fully declared for a Presbyterian Government”, the House further added that they have “yet resolved, how a due Regard may be had, that tender Consciences, which differ not in Fundamentals of Religion, may be so provided for, as may stand with the Word of God, and the Peace of the Kingdom”. Out of their desire to protect these “tender consciences” religion in England remained unsettled.²⁸⁶

By May 1646, fears of sectaries, the unchecked spread of heresies and the continued unsettlement of the Church in England reached its zenith. Petitions from the citizens of London were presented to the Parliament, demanding a final church

²⁸⁵ ‘House of Commons Journal Volume 4: 15 January 1646’, *Journal of the House of Commons: volume 4: 1644-1646* (1802), pp. 407-408. URL: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=23595>.

²⁸⁶ ‘House of Commons Journal Volume 4: 17 April 1646’, *Journal of the House of Commons: volume 4: 1644-1646* (1802), pp. 512-514. URL: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=23670>.

settlement. In May 1646, the City of London's Common Council presented Parliament with two separate remonstrances. The first, presented to the House of Commons, repeated previous requests that the Church of England be finally settled. Furthermore, Independents, sectaries, and heretics were not to be tolerated. The House of Commons' April declaration promising toleration for tender consciences was attacked, with the City demanding that a Presbyterian system of church-government be established. A similar remonstrance was presented to the House of the Lords.²⁸⁷

From the end of the first civil war in 1646 through 1647, the New Model Army felt abused by presbyterian politicians in London who wished to reorganize the New Model Army and send it to reduce Ireland. From the point of view of many in the Army, these presbyterian politicians, led by Denzil Holles, who was closely allied with the Scots, religious Presbyterians, and other conservatives, continued to ignore the Army's demands for payment. Furthermore, the Army's religious enthusiasm, not always for Presbyterianism, increasingly placed them at odds not only with the moderates in Parliament, but also with the Presbyterians in the Westminster Assembly, the government of the City of London, and also Scotland.

Accordingly, Kishlansky's argument that the Army was not inherently radical, but rather the New Model Army's political consciousness and organization was a result, over a brief two to three month span in the spring of 1647, of increasing fears over the security of their person and centered around arrears, indemnity, rights, and the Army's honor, is far too simplistic a picture of the birth of the New Model Army as a political force.

²⁸⁷ Mark Kishlansky *The Rise of the New Model Army* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), p. 86-87; Hughes, *Gangraena and the English Revolution*, Chapters Four and Five; Lindley, *Popular Politics and Religion in Civil War London*, Chapter Eight.

Rather, as Woolrych has argued, “it seems more plausible to suppose that a keen but latent political awareness was roused into overt political activity by treatment which soldiers and officers found not only intolerable to themselves but threatening to the causes for which they had fought”.²⁸⁸ The Army’s radicalization culminated in its Army’s march on London in the summer of 1647 and their kidnapping of Charles I, which exposed Parliament’s increasing weaknesses as the political leader in the country and undermined its authority. In addition, the emergence of the New Model Army gave political and religious radicals a new focus for their agitation.

These political and religious transformations of the mid-1640s dramatically changed the polemical stakes of revolutionary print culture. Sectarianism was perceived by many to be proliferating unchecked, aided and nurtured by the New Model Army’s notorious radicalism. Parliament had proven itself unable to steer the political course of the nation, succumbing to extra-Parliamentary pressure groups that eroded consensus politics and replaced it with a form of adversarial, party based politics. What is more, after seven years of conflict and division, the country was no nearer to peace. For many in mid-1640s England, particularly in London, the landscape looked chaotic. Fear and anxiety are the byproducts of an uncertain climate. Polemicists and preachers harnessed this fear for their own purposes, exposing the horrors, the terrors, the utter hypocrisies of the Independents and sectaries. By clearly identifying them, by naming them, and describing them, religious polemicists attempted to unite the rest of the nation in common cause against them, thereby strengthening their own political and religious position in England.

²⁸⁸ Woolrych, *Soldiers and Statesmen*, p. 21.

III.

Whereas once relations between Presbyterians and New Englanders returned to Old England, as we saw in the previous chapters, were marked by an effort to find an accommodation between the two systems of church-government, we now find the dramatic appearance of Presbyterian tracts that attack the churches in New England on multiple fronts. Presbyterians did not rely entirely on new works, however, in their campaign to undermine the New England Way. Ash and Rathband's *Letter of Many Ministers*, first printed in the summer of 1643, was reprinted in 1644 under the title *A Tryall of the New-Church Way in New-England and in Old* by John Ball.²⁸⁹ The two texts, save their respective title pages, are identical. The only thing that changed between the first edition and the second was the publication of the *Apologeticall Narration*. In the Presbyterian responses that followed, the New England Way was identified with sectarianism and Independency in a move that was deliberately calculated not to the advantage of the New England Way.

Thomas Edwards took hold of the Dissenting Brethren's professed admiration for the New England Way and used it to undermine both groups. In his *Antapologia: Or, A Full Answer to the Apologeticall Narration*, sold by Ralph Smith, Edwards countered the Independents' claims that their system of church-government did not attempt to augment

²⁸⁹ Wing T2229.

their power by taking what rightfully belongs to the civil government.²⁹⁰ While Independents may argue, using the example of the churches in New England, that their church-government did not constitute a threat to the civil government, Edwards responded that when the churches in New England “began to multiply and encrease, this government had like to have ruined them,” because in New England they have “enterposed, (and since doe daily) the power of the Magistrate”.²⁹¹ Furthermore, Edwards goes on to argue, the Independent assertions about the godliness of the ministers in New England have been much exaggerated. Rather, of “the holy and judicious Divines of New England, there are not above three or foure at most were ever accounted so eminent, (I might say but two)”. Even their most celebrated minister, John Cotton, was guilty of “being deceived (for a time) in the business of M. *Wheelwright* and Mistris *Hutchinson*, and some of those opinions about Sanctification evidencing Justification”.²⁹² Edwards did not end his attack on the New England Way there. In fact, he entirely discounted the qualification of the churches in New England as Reformed Churches. It was not until the publication of the *Apologeticall Narration*, he said, that he ever heard that they “were stiled the reformed Churches, as the Brownists and Separatists never yet were”.²⁹³

Other texts from the summer of 1644 likewise tried to undermine the Independents by attacking the New England Way and its ministers. The Scottish Westminster Assemblyman, Alexander Forbes, response to the *Apologeticall Narration*, *Some Observations and Annotations Upon the Apologeticall Narration*, continued

²⁹⁰ Thomason dates this tract to July 13, 1644.

²⁹¹ Thomas Edwards, *Antapologia: Or, A Full Answer to the Apologeticall Narration* (London, 1644), p. E3-E3^r.

²⁹² *Ibid.*, p. F4^v.

²⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. G2^r.

Edwards' tactic of questioning the reputations of the New English godly and their churches.²⁹⁴ While migrants to New England might justify their departure from England only to "to worship God more purely," Forbes claimed to have "known some to have been invited, and others to have gone by other motives besides that". The Independents repetition of the New Englanders justification was "excessive hyperbolicall encomiasticks, whereby they magnifie the actions and qualities of men of their own profession."²⁹⁵

The extent to which the Independent system of church-government was identical to the New England Way was also questioned. Adam Steuart in *Some Observations and Annotations Upon the Apologeticall Narration*, claimed that Independent churches would admit those not admitted as members to their church to communion. However, in their "Writings and Letters, from *New-England*, which heretofore we have seen, testifie to no such thing; so that in this ye dissent from them, unless they within this yeer, dissent from themselves".²⁹⁶ And, while Independents "condemn not others who approve set Formes of Prayers *prescribed*, and the *Liturgies*," Steuart pointed out that "whether these of *New-England* and others of their Profession will not condemn this we know not".²⁹⁷

While some polemicists worked at dismantling Independency by pointing out its differences with the New England Way, others used the Independent's own admiration with the colonial system of church-government to equate the ecclesiologies, but for the same ends. Richard Hollingworth's *An Examination of Sundry Scriptures alleadged by*

²⁹⁴ Thomason dates his copy to June 14, 1644.

²⁹⁵ Alexander Forbes, *An Anatomy of Independency, or, A Briefe Commentary, and Moderate Discourse upon The Apologeticall Narration* (London, 1644), p. 10.

²⁹⁶ Adam Steuart, *Some Observations and Annotations Upon the Apologeticall Narration, Humbly submitted to the Honourable Houses of Parliament; The most Reverend and Learned Divines of the Assembly, And all the Protestant Churches here in this Island, and abroad* (London, 1644), p. 18.

²⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 25.

our Brethren, In Defence of some Particulars of their Church-Way, published in early 1645,²⁹⁸ was the first of the year to conflate the New England Way with Independency. This was a very short text, only thirty pages, placing it well within the bounds of cheap print. As a staunch Presbyterian, Hollingworth's goal was to disprove the positions of the Independents. What is very interesting is that he took as his basis for the Independent positions almost entirely texts published by New Englanders on the New England Way: Thomas Weld's *An answer to William Rathband* (1644), Richard Mather's *Church-Government and Church-Covenant Discussed* (1643) and *An Apologie of the Churches in New-England for Church-Covenant* (1643). Hollingworth also identified Cotton as the leader of the Dissenting Brethren.²⁹⁹ By using New England Way tracts to disprove Independency, it is clear that Hollingworth saw the two systems of church-government as identical.³⁰⁰

John Bastwick's *Independency Not Gods Ordinance: Or A treatise concerning Church-Government, occasioned by the Distractions of these times*, published in 1645,³⁰¹ followed closely by *The Second Part of that Book call'd Independency Not Gods Ordinance*³⁰² were both printed by John Macock for Michael Sparke junior. At almost 170 pages, the former is clearly not within the realms of cheap print, but this did not preclude it from having popular appeal. He did not rely on published texts or godly materials to prove his point; it was based almost exclusively on scriptural examples and writings of the early church fathers. Furthermore, when he did refer to non-Presbyterian

²⁹⁸ Thomason dates his copy to January 8, 1645.

²⁹⁹ Richard Hollingworth, *An Examination of Sundry Scriptures alleadged by our Brethren, In Defence of some Particulars of their Church-Way* (London, 1645), p. A^v.

³⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

³⁰¹ Thomason dates his copy to May 21, 1645.

³⁰² Thomason dates his copy to June 10, 1645.

or Independent printed matter, he did not quote directly. Rather, he summarized the argument of the oppositional tract, usually to his own advantage. By not quoting directly, Bastwick precluded the possibility of his readers reaching their own conclusions. Instead, by only providing his interpretation of the tract, he forced the reader to accept his analysis as the only analysis. Most important, however, was his conflation of the New England Way with Independency. He did not see them as separate systems of church-government. Rather, they were the same thing.³⁰³ Throughout these two tracts, we also find accusations of the cruelty of New Englanders, such as how they refuse to admit the known godly as members of their churches.³⁰⁴

Likewise, the Scottish Presbyterian Robert Baillie in *A Dissuasive from the Errours Of the Time* equated Independency with the New England Way. Printed for Samuel Gellibrand at the Brasen Serpent in Pauls Church-yard in 1645, Thomason dated his copy to January 22, 1646, noting that this copy is the second impression of the text, the first appearing in November of 1645. Accordingly, while the Baillie's work was far beyond the realms of cheap print, coming in at over 250 pages, two editions of the text indicate that it was nonetheless a popular and lucrative enough work to be printed twice. It was very readable, with marginalia for the reader, and not much high-brow theological dispute. Rather, it was essentially a catalog of heresies, specifically of the Independents in London at the time. Baillie traced their origins from Brownism and the New England Way, noting how the Independents of London have gone further in their errors than the former and how they differ from the latter. The main direction of complaints was against

³⁰³ John Bastwick, *Independency Not Gods Ordinance* (London, 1645), p. 105, 107, 109, 110; John Bastwick, *The Second Part of that Book call'd Independency Not Gods Ordinance* (London, 1645), p. 30.

³⁰⁴ John Bastwick, *Independency Not Gods Ordinance*, p. T4^r-T4^v.

the Independents and how they were destroying the nation, both in terms of religion through the Westminster Assembly and the civil state. Baillie saw the Independents in England as working against the Solemn League and Covenant, not unsurprising considering Baillie was Scottish. There was a palpable taste of Baillie's growing annoyance with the Independents in the Westminster Assembly as the source of continuous disruption and as a stumbling block to the settlement of the Church of England, as should be clearly established along Presbyterian lines according to Baillie's understanding of the terms of the Solemn League and Covenant. In Baillie's work, the Independents were cast as the underminers of social, religious, and political stability.

A Dissuasive from the Errours Of the Time was deeply embedded in the print culture of revolutionary England. Following the dedicatory epistle, Baillie presented his reader with a list of "the Principall Authors whose Testimonies are cited in the case of the *Independents*". Immediately after listing *An Apologeticall Narration*, Baillie listed almost every work by John Cotton, Thomas Weld, and Richard Mather published since 1640.³⁰⁵ The principal texts of his Independent opponents were defenses and explanations of the New England Way, fusing the two in the mind of his reader. However, Baillie did more than conflate Independency with the New England Way: he also accused them both of separatism. For "What Master *Cotton*, and the Apologists, his followers, have testified of Gods displeasure and judgements upon the way of the Brownists, is as evidently true of the way of the Independents; not only because, as it will

³⁰⁵ Baillie lists John Cotton's *Keyes of the Kingdom of Heaven*, *The Way of the Churches in New-England*, *Sermons upon the Seven Vials*, *Catechisme*, or the *Doctrine of the Church*, and *Letter to Mr. Williams*; Richard Mather's *An Apology of the Churches in New-England*; Thomas Weld's *A Short Story*, *An Answer to W.R. His Narration*. Robert Baillie, *A Dissuasive From the Errours of the Time* (London, 1645), unmarked pagination.

appear hereafter, both wayes really are one and the same”.³⁰⁶ Baillie traced the geneology of the Independents in Old England through the New England Way to the Separatists in Holland:

Master *Robinson* did derive his way to his separate Congregation at *Leyden*; a part of them did carry it over to *Plymouth* on *New-England*; here Master *Cotton* did take it up, and transmit it from thence to Master *Thomas Goodwin*, who did help to propagate it to sundry others in *Old-England*.³⁰⁷

Cotton himself was the cause of this, the source of the error that now finds itself in England. While Cotton was “a man of very excellent parts,” upon his departure from England “yet so soon did he taste of the *New-English* air, he fell into so passionate an affection with the Religion he found there [the Separatists at Plymouth]”.³⁰⁸ Under the stewardship of Cotton, the churches in New England

have much exceeded any of the *Brownists* that yet we have heard of: first in the vilness of their Errours; secondly, in the multitude of the erring persons; thirdly, in the hypocrisie joined with their errours; fourthly, in malice against their neighbours, and contempt of their Superiours, Magistrates and Ministers for their opposition to them in their evill ways; and lastly, in their singular obstinacie, stiffly sticking unto their errours, in defiance of all that any upon earth could doe for their reclaiming, or that God from heaven, almost miraculous, had declared against them. All this I will make good by the unquestionable Testimonies of their loving friends.³⁰⁹

According to Baillie, the New England Way was a further decline into error from the one originally learned from the Separatists at Plymouth. Through Cotton, with the assistance of Hooker and Davenport, this error made its way to John Goodwin in Old England where it has become Independency.

³⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 58.

³⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 54.

³⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 55-56.

³⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 61.

Evidence of the polemical conflation of the New England Way with sectarianism can also be seen before Baillie. In his *Some Observations and Annotations Upon the Apologeticall Narration*, Steuart responded to the Independents' claim that their system of church-government does not produce heresies by retorting, "who can tell how many Schismes and Heresies your Government is subject unto? What Divisions and immoral hatreds it has bred in *New-England*".³¹⁰ Daniel Cawdrey's *Vindiciae Clavium*, published in 1645 was even more pronounced in its identification of the New England Way with sectarianism.³¹¹ Cawdrey has two main arguments in this text. The first was that the way of the churches in New England was not the middle way desired by the Dissenting Brethren in the *Apologeticall Narration*, but rather it was the same as the Brownists.³¹² Secondly, Cawdrey openly attacked Cotton and his texts, claiming that Cotton often contradicted himself and his description of the practices of the churches in New England.³¹³ According to Cawdrey, Cotton's exegesis of scriptures found in his tracts, most particularly in *The Keyes of the Kingdom of Heaven*, was entirely wrong. Cotton's New England Way actually created a system of church-government that actually exceeded the license and disorder created by Brownists, Anabaptists, and other sectaries. Presbyterianism, with the unity and harmony that only a national church can create, was far closer to the middle way of the *Apologeticall Narration*, not the far more radical churches of New England.

Like Cawdrey, William Rathband in *A Briefe Narration of Some Church Courses Held in Opinion and Practice in the Churches lately erected in New England* equated the

³¹⁰ Adam Steuart, *Some Observations and Annotations Upon the Apologeticall Narration*, p. 13.

³¹¹ Thomason dates his copy to September 4, 1645, but the date imprinted is July 4, 1645.

³¹² Daniel Cawdrey, *Vindiciae Clavium*, p. p. 51, 64, 65, 67, 70, 73, 75.

³¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 48, 53, 55.

New England Way with separatism. Printed in 1644 and dated by Thomason to March 9, 1644, *A Briefe Narration* was another anti-New England text that followed in the wake of the publication of the *Apologeticall Narration*. While its length at over sixty pages printed in quarto does place it slightly beyond the margins of cheap print, its intended audience was clearly a popular one with long “animadversions” that are for the benefit of the vulgar reader. The body of the text consisted of fourteen (possibly more, as copy is missing two pages at the end) chapters, with each chapter centered on a particular theme or practice of the churches in New England. Each practice of the New England Churches was supported by references to printed tracts and manuscripts and letters that proved the point Rathband listed. Usually Rathband used more than one or two sources—sometimes up to ten. Most of his evidence came from a core group of sources: John Cotton, Richard Mather, and Hugh Peter. However, Rathband also relied on many letters from the New England godly, thereby implicating him in the wider Atlantic world of manuscript publications.

But unlike earlier, pre-*Apologeticall Narration* tracts on the New England Way, Rathband’s tone was not sober and respectful. Rather, it was quite biting. While bemoaning how “letters are sent over with strong lines, to dissuade our people from living any longer in the way they have done, out of church order...Sermons are likewise preached, bookes printed, and private discourses made, and in all these arguments artificially used, and passionately and preswasively urged,”³¹⁴ if adopted in England, it would be “destructive to our Churches, so is it apt to cause schismes and separations of

³¹⁴ William Rathband *A Briefe Narration of Some Church Courses Held in Opinion and Practice in the Churches lately erected in New England* (London, 1644), p. 14.

one Church from another even amongst themselves”.³¹⁵ For the churches in New England were riddled with false practices and heresies, many that they learned from the Brownists. If the churches in New England gave each church the power of the keys as they do, it is only because “The necessitie of which consequence some Brownists perceiving therefore of late (here in *London*) have claimed and contended for them also,” not because God granted this power.³¹⁶ Rathband likewise bemoaned how in New England, “the people of late, grow more violent in clayming that their pretended libertie and priviledge of publicke prophecyng, uring for it the writings and arguments of *Mr. Rob. the Brownist*”.³¹⁷ The license permitted in the New England Way made it “appeare they make as much for women to rule as men”.³¹⁸ Rathband ended *A Briefe Narration* with a postscript that lists seven additional reasons how the New England Way is like Brownism.

What these examples demonstrate is the instability of polemical labeling at this time. The New England Way could at times be understood as identical as Independency. Making this discursive move in the post-*Apologeticall Narration* world of print was an easy step for polemicists in 1645, for the Independents themselves had identified themselves as admirers of the New England Way. And as such, Presbyterian polemicists felt perfectly justified in using tracts defending and clarifying the New England Way to attack Independents in Old England. They fail, deliberately or otherwise, to acknowledge the self-admitted differences between them, which growingincreasling grew as the Independents in Old England became more and more radical, allying with religious

³¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

³¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

³¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 46.

³¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

radicals and hoping to secure toleration for their own practices in the process: an impossibility should the Presbyterians secure the establishment of their system of church-government in England.

In contrast, the New England churches, which, despite their claims of patient care and understanding, and the use of painful measures to bring their local nonconformists in line with their system of church-government, were markedly less accommodating and accepting of theological differences among their populace than their Independent supporters were to become. The publications of return migrants made this abundantly clear. While New Englanders could spin their intolerance as punishment of civil disobedience, tracts by disgruntled return migrants proved otherwise. The end result is that by the mid-1640s, the ministers in New England held very different political aims for their church than the Independents in Old England. These differences, however, were ignored by Presbyterian polemicists who continued to conflate the two.

The New England Way was then re-defined within an understood context in Revolutionary England. Buzzwords such as “Independency” or “Sectarianism” were fluid and unstable labels, not stable signifiers or positions. Theological and ecclesiological differences mattered much less than popular perception. By identifying the New England Way with Independents, Presbyterians established it as an increasingly undesirable system of church government, one that promoted instability and dissension, gave rise to sectaries, and threatened to undermine the political, social, and religious order of the country. It was not, as earlier tracts defending the New England Way had argued, the system of church government most like the example set in the New Testament, but rather a dangerous and subversive system. Equating the New England

Way with Independency and Sectarianism implied that giving credence to the arguments of New England Way apologies and defenses was to invite ruin and destruction.

IV.

New England was not the sole focus of Presbyterian and Royalist attacks at this time. The first Puritan colony, Bermuda, also came under close scrutiny and was found to be, like New England, home to cruel and intolerant godly who smacked of sectarianism, creating division and instability throughout the island.³¹⁹ Settlement of Bermuda began in 1612.³²⁰ Puritan nobles like the Earl of Warwick and Puritan friendly nobles like the Earl of Manchester and John Pym dominated the Somers Island Company, a subsidiary of the Virginia Company until 1615. Of the sixteen clergymen who served in Bermuda from 1620 to 1639, at least eleven were strongly Puritan. In fact, most of them migrated to Bermuda because they had run into difficulties securing employment in England because of their nonconformity. However, while Bermuda served as a refuge for some of the radical preachers persecuted by Archbishop Laud, a great deal of religious variance was tolerated and church membership was not restricted to visible saints. And it was not until 1643 did Bermuda establish its first Independent congregation under the leadership of Nathaniel White, William Goulding, and Patrick Copeland. In 1642, Josias Forster became governor of the colony. Scholars have

³¹⁹ Babette Levy, "Puritans in the Southern Colonies" *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society*, 70 (1960); Louise Timko, "Puritans in Bermuda 1612-1650" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Drew University, 1996); Michael Jarvis, " 'In The Eye of All Trade': Maritime Revolution and the Transformation of Bermudian Society, 1612-1800" (Ph.D. Dissertation College of William and Mary, 1998); Gregory Shipley, "Turbulent Times, Troubled Isles: The Rise and Development of Puritanism in Bermuda and the Bahamas, 1609-1684" (Th.D. Dissertation, Westminster Theological Seminary, 1989).

³²⁰ Providence Island was founded in 1630, almost twenty years after Bermuda.

identified him as a religious nonconformist, a rather broad and somewhat unhelpful marker, but the non-conservative nature of his religious beliefs is important for understanding his later actions.³²¹

By late 1643 or early 1644, three ministers on the island, Patrick Copeland, Nathaniel White, and William Goulding seceded from the Presbyterian Church to form an Independent Church that agreed with the New England churches in its main articles of faith and polity.³²² This move, naturally enough, did not go uncontested in the island, as is evident from the letters William Prynne reprints in *A Fresh Discovery*.³²³ Furthermore, the political stability of the island was consistently wracked over the next few years with a constant shifting of governors. Forster was replaced in 1643 by the conservative William Sayle, only to be returned to office two years later, this time only as one-third of a ruling triumvirate which also included Stephen Paynter and William Wilkinson—two members of the controversial Independent congregation.³²⁴ Along with Goulding and White, Forster arrived in London sometime in 1644 or 1645 to drum up support in Parliament for their cause and church in Bermuda. By 1645, Parliament and the Somers Islands Company declared that there should be religious freedom on the island.³²⁵ Despite this declaration, the more conservative elements in the colony were

³²¹ Gregory Shipley “Turbulent Times, Troubled Isles: The Rise and Development of Puritanism in Bermuda and the Bahamas, 1609-1684” (Th.D. Dissertation, Westminster Theological Seminary, 1989).

³²² I deliberately label the Bermudian church as an Independent Church rather than a Congregational Church along the lines of the New England Way. For while their ecclesiology was identical to the churches in New England, the Bermudian’s stance on liberty of conscience aligns them closer to Independents in Old England. This is an important distinction between New England and Bermuda and I reflect it as such in my labeling.

³²³ For the religious history of Bermuda, please see Babette Levy, “Puritans in the Southern Colonies,” *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society*, 70 (1960), p. 69-348.

³²⁴ J.H. Lefroy, *Memorials of the Discovery and Early Settlement of the Bermudas or Somers Islands 1515-1685* (London: Longmans, Green, & Co., 1877), p. 560-90. Hereafter cited as Lefroy.

³²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 600.

able to silence, to a certain extent, the Independents on the island, temporarily driving them out of the colony in 1646.³²⁶

It is at this point, when the Independents from Bermuda have returned to England and secured religious toleration, that we find the publication of William Prynne's and Nathaniel White's tracts. William Prynne's *A Fresh Discovery of some Prodigious New Wandring-Blasing-Stars, & Firebrands, Stiling themselves New-Lights, Firing our Church and State into New Combustions* was published in 1645.³²⁷ This was hardly Prynne's first foray into the world of print. By the time Prynne was called to the bar in 1628, this young lawyer had already written his first pamphlet. Over the course of his pamphleteering career, he would produce over two hundred pamphlets. He earned his status as a Puritan martyr with his continued attacks on Laudian policy in the 1630s, culminating in 1637 when he was brought before the Court of Star Chamber and found guilty of sedition. His ears were cut off, his nose was slit, and the initials "S.L."—seditious libeler—were burnt into his cheeks. Following his punishment, Prynne went into exile in the Channel Islands, only to return in triumph with the call of the Long Parliament in 1640.³²⁸

As the political situation in England deteriorated, Prynne continued to produce pamphlet after pamphlet. Many of his pamphlets were sold at Michael Sparke's bookshop. Sparke had been selling Prynne's works since 1627. According to Leona Rostenberg, "Sparke exemplifies the crusading Puritan spirit which chose to conquer the

³²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 603-31. The creation of the colony of Eleutheria will be discussed in greater detail in the Chapter Five.

³²⁷ Thomason dates his copy to July 24, 1645.

³²⁸ *ODNB*.

evil in man and the state of corruption in which he dwelt”.³²⁹ Sparke was a fervent Puritan, who, for printing Prynne’s *Historio-Matrix*, the book that brought Prynne before the Court of Star Chamber, was pilloried along with Prynne, fined 500 pounds, and sentenced to a six month prison term. In addition to writing and publishing tracts by Puritan divines throughout his career, which lasted from 1610 till his death in 1653, Sparke also published a number of books on the New World. One of his earliest publications was of Captain John Smith’s *The Generall Historie of Virginia, New-England, and the Sommer Isles* in 1624.³³⁰ In 1630, he published *New-England’s Plantation* three times.³³¹ He was also responsible for the publishing of Edward Sandys’, the one time treasurer of the Virginia Company’s book, *Europae Speculum or a View or Survey of the State of Religion in the Western Parts of the World* in 1629, 1632, 1637, and 1638.³³² Sparke had a personal interest in the Americas: his brother, Thomas, migrated to Bermuda. It seems likely that the other Sparke remained there, as in his will; Michael Sparke bequeathed a legacy to his nephew Nathaniel in the “Barmoodies”.³³³

With Prynne’s return in 1640, his continuous flow of pamphlets more often than not found a home at Sparke’s bookshop. In 1641, Sparke sold Prynne’s *Mount-Orgueil*³³⁴ and *The antipathie of the English lordly prelacy*.³³⁵ In 1642, he sold A

³²⁹ Leona Rostenberg, *Literary, Political, Scientific, Religious, and Legal Published, Printing, and Bookselling in England, 1551-1700: Twelve Studies* (New York: Burt Franklin, 1965), p. 161.

³³⁰ STC (2nd ed.), 22790. Sparke went on to reprint this work four more times: in 1625 STC (2nd ed.), 22790a; in 1626 STC (2nd ed.), 22790b; in 1627 STC (2nd ed.), 22790c; and in 1631 STC (2nd ed.), 22790c.5.

³³¹ STC (2nd ed.), 13451; STC (2nd ed.), 13450; STC (2nd ed.), 13449.

³³² STC (2nd ed.), 21718; STC (2nd ed.), 21719; STC (2nd ed.), 21720; STC (2nd ed.), 21721; STC (2nd ed.), 21722.

³³³ *Ibid.*, p. 201.

³³⁴ There are four possible imprints for this text: Wing P4013, Wing P4013A, Wing P4013B, Wing P4013C.

³³⁵ There are two imprints of this text: Wing P3891 and Wing P3891A.

pleasant purge.³³⁶ A customer in 1643 would find *The opening of the Great Seale of England*,³³⁷ *The Popish royall favourite*,³³⁸ *The soveraigne povver of parliaments and kingdoms*,³³⁹ *The doome of cowardize and treachery*,³⁴⁰ and *A catalogue of printed books written by William Prynne*³⁴¹ all at Sparke's shop. By the next year, Sparke's bookshop would have almost all of Prynne's works published that year, including *A breviat of the life, of William Laud Arch-bishop of Canterbury*,³⁴² *Independency examined*,³⁴³ *Twelve considerable serious questions touching church government*,³⁴⁴ *A true and full relation of the prosecution, arraignment, and condemnation of Nathaniel F*,³⁴⁵ *The falsities and forgeries of the anonymous author of a late pamphlet*,³⁴⁶ *A moderate apology against a pretended calumny*,³⁴⁷ and *A vindication of Psalme 105.15*.³⁴⁸ Clearly, Prynne and Spark had a long-standing professional and personal relationship.

It therefore comes as little surprise that Prynne's *A Fresh Discovery* would be sold at Sparke's bookshop. John Bastwick, as mentioned previously, also relied on Sparke and he was Prynne's fellow martyr in 1637. Along with Prynne, Bastwick lost his ears to the Laudian regime. Furthermore, the printer for *A Fresh Discovery* was John Macock. Macock had the added distinction of being Sparke's brother-in-law. While

³³⁶ Wing P4038.

³³⁷ Wing P4026.

³³⁸ Wing P4039, Wing P4039A.

³³⁹ Wing P4087A. This text was also printed in four parts that were printed separately: Wing P4088, Wing P4089, Wing P4103, and Wing P3962.

³⁴⁰ This text was printed twice in 1643: Wing P3947 and Wing P3947A.

³⁴¹ Wing P3921A.

³⁴² This text was printed twice in 1644: Wing P3904 and Wing P3904A.

³⁴³ Wing P3985.

³⁴⁴ Wing P4117.

³⁴⁵ Wing P4111.

³⁴⁶ Wing P3953.

³⁴⁷ Wing P4010.

³⁴⁸ Wing P4126. This text had been printed twice already in 1642 anonymously and no printer identified: Wing P4125 and Wing P4125A.

Macock only began printing in 1645, by the time he and Sparke collaborated on the publication of *A Fresh Discovery*, they had already established a shared professional relationship in the publication of other Presbyterian tracts. Macock and Sparke were responsible for the publication of the Presbyterian John Bastwick's attacks on Independency, *Independency Not Gods Ordinance* (1645) and *The Second Part of that Book call'd Independency Not Gods Ordinance* (1645). Macock was also responsible for printing Prynne's *A vindication of foure serious questions of grand importance* (1645).³⁴⁹ This collaboration between Macock, Sparke, and Prynne continued after the publication of *A Fresh Discovery* in 1645, with Macock once again serving as printer of Prynne's *Canterburies doom*³⁵⁰ and *Scotlands ancient obligation to England and publicke acknowledgement thereof*³⁵¹ in 1646, both of which were sold at Sparke's shop. Their long history together implies that Sparke would have been Prynne's natural choice as bookseller for his latest work, *A Fresh Discovery*. Both Macock and Sparke, like Prynne, were firm Presbyterians, and if their publication record is any indication, they also shared an abhorrence of Independents and Sectaries. At the very least, they appreciated the popularity of anti-Independent polemic.

However, in light of their long collaborative history, the evidence leads one to conclude that Prynne and Sparke shared a common belief in the need for a Presbyterian system of church-government and the threat that Independents and Sectaries posed to the religious and political stability of England. Arguably, Sparke's publishing of *A Fresh Discovery* was compounded by his own interest in the Americas, as demonstrated in his

³⁴⁹ Wing P4124.

³⁵⁰ Wing P3917.

³⁵¹ Wing P4059.

publishing record. Furthermore, Sparke's own familial relationship with Bermuda brings up an interesting set of questions. Was it through the Sparke familial connection that Prynne gathered much of his information about Bermuda? What, if any role, did brother Thomas and nephew Nathaniel Sparke play? Did they serve as focal points of a trans-Atlantic network connecting Prynne and Sparke in London with anti-sectarian and anti-Independent communities in Bermuda?

A Fresh Discovery was primarily concerned with what Prynne viewed as the unchecked rise in sectaries, complemented by an explosion in Independent and Sectarian printed works, many of which attack Prynne personally. In his Dedicatory Epistle to Parliament, Prynne appealed to the Long Parliament to stem this rise in Sectarian unlicensed printing. These "*Anabaptisticall Independent Sectaries, and New-lighted FIRE-BRANDS*" were responsible for inciting the "Common people so earnestly excited to mutiny against the *Parliament Assembly, Presbytery, Government and Ministers of our Church of England*".³⁵² Prynne conflated Independents with Sectaries, not bothering to differentiate between the Independents such as the Dissenting Brethren of the Westminster Assembly and the other, newer forms of religious belief only unified through their common opposition to Presbyterianism. However, his polemical joining of Independents and Sectaries allowed Prynne to emphatically warn Parliament in his epistle that the freedom and license granted to them to preach and publish, without punishment from Parliament, was undermining the stability of the political and social order. Prynne pleaded, "but if these New seditious Lights and Fire-brands, will needs set up New Churches, Heresies, Church-government, and vent their new errors or opinions against

³⁵² *A Fresh Discovery*, Title page^v.

your Power and Authority, let them doe it onely in *NEW-ENGLAND*, or other *NEW-FOUNDLANDS*, since *OLD ENGLAND* needs them not, unlesse it be to set her all on fire”.³⁵³ In light of the concluding section of *A Fresh Discovery*, in which Prynne printed several letters sent to him from the Somers Islands, which was already wracked by the ravages of Independents and Sectaries, Prynne exposed the dangers that tolerating, or at least not bothering to check, Independents and Sectaries posed to Old England. The results of doing so were already apparent in the colonies of the New World, as evident by Bermuda. Thus, the inclusion of these letters was a rhetorical move on Prynne’s part to caution his readers and the Long Parliament about the dangers of tolerating Independents and Sectaries, as he had evidence from Bermuda as to what happened when no political action is taken to curtail their activities.

A Fresh Discovery was printed twice in 1645, both times with Macock and Sparke.³⁵⁴ The two editions are not identical. The second edition deviated from the first after the first four sheets, on page thirty-three. From then, most of the text is identical, but the second edition has been edited and further content inserted. An additional paragraphs are inserted on pages thirty-eight; an additional sentence added to the end of the both the first query propounded to Independent ministers and their members on page forty-six and the fifth query on page forty-eight. The second addition also continuously numbered the pages of the Somers Island materials, whereas the first edition restarted the numbering of the pages at page one. It was not printed separately and combined in the second edition, as it was in the first edition. Finally, the first edition of *A Fresh*

³⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. A2^v.

³⁵⁴ Thomason dates the second edition to December 16, 1645. First printing: P3963; second printing: Wing P3964

Discovery ended with Richard Norwood's postscript to his March 1642 letter, whereas the second edition continued with the inclusion of several additional documents: the Somers Island Company's Warwick Declaration of 1644 which ordered the colony, like England, to tarry until Parliament had reached a decision regarding the further reformation of the Church of England, thereby expressing official disapproval at the actions of the Independent ministers in gathering their own church on the island,³⁵⁵ and two petitions from Bermuda, one to the Company and the other to Parliament, both undated, complaining about the Independents.³⁵⁶

The main text of *A Fresh Discovery* consisted of chapters detailed the beliefs and actions of Independents and Sectaries, with Prynne using selective quotations from their printed works to demonstrate the threat they posed to the future stability of England. These published works, often unlicensed (as Prynne points out), subverted the authority of the Parliament, thereby posing not only a threat to the religious unity of the nation, but also to its political security. Their pleas for liberty of conscience, Prynne argued, should fall on deaf ears. One need only look at what happened in Munster to understand what sort of anarchy would ensue should sectaries be tolerated. Furthermore, despite their pleas to be granted toleration for their beliefs, the Independents and Sectaries continued to publish "scandalous, seditious, scurrilous passages against" the Parliament, the Solemn League and Covenant, the Westminster Assembly of Divines, the Scottish, and Presbyterians. Prynne's extensive marginal glosses in his text further led the reader to conclude that despite their pleas for a toleration, Independents and Sectaries were

³⁵⁵ Prynne, *A Fresh Discovery* (2nd edition), p. 77-80.

³⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 81-88.

actually hypocrites, and their forms of worship “admit no appeal, and so are merely Arbitrary and Tyrannical”.³⁵⁷

In the final part of the first edition of *A Fresh Discovery*, Prynne included two letters from the Somers Islands, one from schoolmaster Richard Beake and another from Richard Norwood, a surveyor and mathematician. Prynne’s inclusion of these letters in *A Fresh Discovery* was most likely partially the result of the timing of Sparke receiving them, but the accusations leveled against the Independent faction in Bermuda corresponded to many of the accusations Prynne made against Independents and Sectaries in *A Fresh Discovery*. Furthermore, the Independent faction from Bermuda were in London at this point, shoring up support from Parliament and their Company for their nascent church. Accordingly, it seems likely that Prynne’s inclusion of Beake’s and Norwood’s letters was a response to Bermudian actions in London, serving as a warning to the public of the dangers of countenancing sectaries.

Beake’s letter detailed at great length the errors and heresies of the Congregational ministers and their followers on the Island, whom Prynne, in his marginal glosses for the letter, terms “Independents”. While the Independent faction was begun by one “Doctor *Oxenbridge* of *London*,”³⁵⁸ he left before it could take root. White, Goulding, and Copeland succeeded Dr. Oxenbridge. Nathaniel White was identified by Beake as “the chiefe Actor of their Faction, *a most seditious, turbulent, and hatefull malicious person, and as politick as Achitophell, and as crafty and subtle as the*

³⁵⁷ Prynne, *A Fresh Discovery* (1st edition), p. 43. Unless specifically referring to the second edition, I am using the first edition of *A Fresh Discovery*.

³⁵⁸ *ODNB*. Oxenbridge was a tutor at Magdalen Hall, Oxford before being deprived of his position by Archbishop Laud. He left England for Bermuda in 1635, provoked controversies with typical Puritan behaviors such as the convening of conventicles, only to return to England in 1641.

Devill".³⁵⁹ Like other accusations of hypocrisy directed against ministers in New England for conforming while in England, only to abjure the Church of England upon arrival in New England,³⁶⁰ Beake claimed that when White was first sent by the Somers Island Company to the island, for his first three years on the island, "*he was as hot a zealot as possible might or could be, both for the Book of Common-Prayer, as also for all other Ceremonies of the Church, as kneeling at the Sacraments, Crossse in Baptisme, Ring in the Marriage, and all other things whatsoever*".³⁶¹ Goulding was described by Beake as "a young head but well learned in Schismaticall Science".³⁶² As for the system of church-government they have attempted to erect upon the island, Beake assured Prynne that he was certain "it is derived partly from the *Anabaptists*, partly from the *Brownists*, but most especially from the *Donatists*, having in it a smatch of each; however they feign it to the Church of *New-England*, which, as they say, is the purest Church this day in the world; yet come they farre wide of it, so that it is but their saying not their doing".³⁶³

Furthermore, the Independent faction on the island desired liberty of conscience. Similar to accusations that the Independents in Old England desire toleration only to then deny it to Presbyterians, Beake's letter served to reinforce this Presbyterian fear.³⁶⁴ For, as Beake writes, "though they proclaime Liberty of conscience to all Sects, and Religions whatsoever; yet they have so harsh an opinion of *Presbyterians*, and all others, who

³⁵⁹ *A Transcript of a Letter lately written from the Sommer Islands, to William Prynne of Lincolnes Inne Esquire*, p. 2. Italics in the original. As mentioned earlier, this letter is annexed to *A Fresh Discovery* with new pagination, beginning on page 1. Furthermore, the sheets restart at A.

³⁶⁰ See below, fn ????.

³⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 9. Italics in the original. Polemically this further smears the Congregationalists in Bermuda because it elides Independency with Laudianism.

³⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 5.

³⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

³⁶⁴ This theme is elaborated in Chapter Five.

submit not to their *Independent Modell*; that they esteem them no better than Heathen, Infidels, unbelievers”.³⁶⁵

Several elements of Prynne’s printing of Beake’s letter within this text are important to note. First, was his use of manuscript sources. In *A Fresh Discovery*, Prynne, like many authors of the time, quoted selectively from other printed matter. In doing so, he firmly establishes his text within the world of Revolutionary English print debate. *A Fresh Discovery* participated in the reflexivity of texts as Prynne selectively picked from printed matter to expose what he asserted are the multitude of errors and heresies that abound, unchecked, in England. However, by printing Beake’s letter as an addition to *A Fresh Discovery*, the text revealed the extent to which Prynne and his texts are part of world in which older modes of communication, such as manuscript letters, are still very much present. At the close of the letter, Prynne informs his readers

This Letter is seconded by sundry others from thence to the same effect, and to move the Honourable Houses of Parliament to take some speedy course for the quenching of those flames of Schisme and Sedition, which these New Independent Lights and Firebrands have kindled in this Plantation, and taking off the unsupportable yoak of Tyrannical and Arbitrary Government over the Persons, Estates, and Consciences of the *Free-borne English Subjects* there, which these Lordly Tyrants have imposed on them, threatening ruine to this Plantation.³⁶⁶

The transmission of information through older forms of communication existed side by side with print, and, in some instances, buttressed the burgeoning world of print.

What we find in Prynne’s selective use of manuscript sources in his print was a strategic use of print, like our New Englanders from previous chapters, to buttress his own Presbyterian cause. Prynne used print’s publicity and potential political impact to

³⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

³⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

support the establishment of a hierarchical and controlled Presbyterian system of church-government. He used print to create a fixed image in the public mind of the horrors of sectarian behavior, of the disorder and disarray created in society through the slightest toleration of a non-Presbyterian form of church-government, and to label groups and associate them with each other. While my analysis has demonstrated the extent to which the labels employed by polemicists are haphazardly applied with poor understanding of confessional differences, it mattered little or none at all to polemicists like Prynne. The point was to simplify the real confusion very much present in the colonies and in England to one tangible identity: sectarian. Rallied around this loaded term, with all its connotations for social and political disorder, the public could purge its country of this threat.

While Prynne did not comment directly on Beake's letter, he still directed his readers' understanding of the letter with his marginal glosses that repeatedly pointed out the hypocrisy of the Independents in Bermuda, their cruelty to their supposed godly brethren, and their heretical practices. His glosses attacked the supposed liberty of conscience that Independents desire for themselves, but deny to others once they are in power.³⁶⁷ They suggested Independents hold the power of Parliament in contempt.³⁶⁸ And they insisted that Independents are schismatics and Anabaptists who smack of popery.³⁶⁹

Prynne's *A Fresh Discovery* was undoubtedly a popular work. Despite its length, which totals seventy-six pages in quarto, thus placing it at the margins of cheap print, it

³⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, marginal glosses, p. 1-2, 7

³⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, marginal gloss, p. 3.

³⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, marginal glosses, p. 5, 9.

went through two editions within six months.³⁷⁰ Compared to many of the earlier texts on colonial churches in the Americas, it is understandable why this work would have been so popular. Unlike earlier tracts, such as those by Mather and Cotton, Prynne's *A Fresh Discovery* presented the reader not with a theological exposition on the New Testament, but rather with tantalizing tales of cruelty and hypocrisy that were sure to interest a broader audience than the former. What this marked was a noticeable and extended use of narratives in texts printed on the churches in the New World instead of theological exposition. We had seen this previously with John Winthrop's *Antinomians and Familists*, but it had not been done successfully to this extent before. And, as we shall see, narratives played an increasingly prominent role in these texts. As such, it was not surprising that Macock and Spark reprinted *A Fresh Discovery*, despite its length, nor that in between its two printings, a response from the Bermudian minister Nathaniel White appeared. Entitled *Truth Gloriously Appearing, From Under The sad and sable cloud of Obloquie. Or, A Vindication Of the Practice of the Church of Christ in the Summer-Islands, in an Apologetical Answer unto some Letters and Papers sent from the Summer-Islands, by Richard Beake and Mr Norwood, lately published by Master Prynne in his Fresh Discovery of some prodigious New-wandering-blazing-Stars, &c. wherein the Truth and that Church are much reproached*. Thomason dates his copy to October 14, 1645. There was no printer or bookseller identified on the title page of this tract, but it did claim to be officially licensed and published. The fact that White's pamphlet was officially licensed is important to note, as the majority of licensors were Presbyterian which resulted in a preponderance of Presbyterian works among those appearing with

³⁷⁰ Thomason dates his copy of the second edition to December 16, 1645.

official sanction, and an increasing number of non-Presbyterian printed matter printed without license. A clear Independent tract such as White's *Truth Gloriously Appearing*, that not only defended an Independent system of church-government, but also attacked Prynne, appearing with an official sanction to print indicated that White most likely had friends well placed within the government.

White's *Truth Gloriously Appearing*, like Prynne's *A Fresh Discovery*, addressed its dedicatory epistle to Parliament, a rhetorical move on White's part to earn its support. White proclaimed that the letters Prynne received and published "from *sons of Belial*, and *enemies capital*", served only to "exasperate[s] your Honours against Gods people at *Bermudas*, as against those whose proceedings are Schismatical, Illegal, Tyrannical".³⁷¹ In the face of the uncharitable lies printed by Prynne, White pleaded with the Parliament to "not now put out that little spark that is left to us, in those remote parts of the world (after all our sufferings and privations) our Christian liberty, i.e., that the Rights and Liberties Christ hath purchased by his own precious Blood, and left the Saints as his last legacy; may not be taken away by the Secular power".³⁷² In other words, White asked the support of Parliament for the cause of the Independents in Bermuda who were driven out of the island. *Truth Gloriously Appearing* was intended not only as a corrective to the lies printed in Beake's letter, but also as a public appeal to Parliament to reinstate the rights of the Independents in Bermuda to worship as they choose.³⁷³

White's pamphlet is particularly interesting in and of itself because of the ways it self-identifies the church in Bermuda, and situated it within a broader Atlantic context.

³⁷¹ Nathaniel White, *Truth Gloriously Appearing* (London, 1645), p. A2^v.

³⁷² *Ibid.*, p. A3^v.

³⁷³ The success of the Sayle Mission to England will be discussed in Chapter Five.

White proudly and openly proclaimed, “*we are Independents: I would we had a fitter name (as a godly and revered man speaketh) sith it is so ill understood and construed: but since we have not a fitter than then Independents, for herein we are contents, and desire to be accounted and called by that name*”,³⁷⁴ though he prefers the label “Congregationall Independencie”.³⁷⁵ Furthermore, he adds,

If the Anabaptists, Brownists, and Donatists doe hold any truths (as they doe many) we are not ashamed to receive them from them.....We are not against Magistracy, Baptisme of the children of Church-members, the efficacy of the ordinances dispenced by unworthy Ministers, we neglect not the ordinances, expecting revelations; all of which the Anabaptists hold. We separate not from the Communion of Churches, as the Brownists doe, because of corruptions, but from the corruptions. We denie not remission of sinnes to the lapsed, upon repentance, nor doe we hold that Church to be no true Church which hath corrupt members, as the Donatist hold.³⁷⁶

Despite White’s emphasis on the differences between the gathered churches in Bermuda and the Anabaptists, Brownists, and Donatists, he admitted if these groups hold any truths, then the Bermudians would not be ashamed to acknowledge them. It would seem that White was a novice to the game of polemic in mid-1640s England, for if he were better read and better advised, he would have probably not admitted such a thing. For to admit that any of the sectaries possess any truths was to quickly inspire accusations by Presbyterians and Royalists that the Bermudians were sectarians themselves.

What is even more interesting was White’s identification with the churches in New England. White proudly stated,

Now verily (Reader) though we drew not our mould after the pattern of the Churches of *New-England*; for there is a great distance betwixt them and us: yet the Lord was pleased by a gracious providence so to direct us, that we differ not from them in any one substantiall, as we have heard by

³⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. B^r.

³⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

³⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 50.

those that have come unto us from them; which will appear in this, that they give us the right hand of fellowship, and own our Church as a Sister-Church, yes, as they have since written unto us, as they have filled their mouths, and pulpits to, with the high praises of God for what he hath done for us.³⁷⁷

The churches in New England, according to White, were identical to the church White, Goulding, and Copeland gathered in Bermuda. However, despite White's claim that it was God who directed them to erect their church in the same mold as those in New England, it is very likely that some advice from New England had been forthcoming. For, in spite of that "great distance betwixt them and us," there was a steady stream of correspondence between New England and Bermuda. Evidence of Copeland's correspondence with John Winthrop, for example, exists from as early as 1639, when Copeland writes to Winthrop noting that Winthrop had sent twelve Indians from New England to Bermuda, adding that he had written at length to Cotton regarding their progress of converting the Natives in Bermuda.³⁷⁸

The extent to which the churches in New England agreed with the practices of their "Sister-Church" in Bermuda is called into question in a letter from one Roger Wood of Bermuda to Winthrop in 1644, in which he wrote that the setting up of an "Independent Church" in Bermuda has been the cause of distractions and "hartburnings" amongst them. In a similar vein to Beake's letter to Prynne, he confessed "we thinke it very strange, that one man having beene so zealous for the Ceremonies of the Church of

³⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 53.

³⁷⁸ *WP*, v. IV, p. 157-159. While it is unclear as to whether the godly in Bermuda and in New England provided ecclesiological counsel, the Bermudian ministers kept their brethren informed of the developments in their church. Copeland in his letter to Winthrop from September 1647, "suppose[s] brother white hath more at large written of our Troubles to your Teacher Mr. Cotton, or to your Pastor, Mr. Wilson, who I doubt not will imparte what he hath written, to your selfe, as you may be pleased to imparte to them and the rest of our reverend fathers and brethen with you, what here I have sent to your selfe" *WP*, v. V, p. 183.

England, should so suddenly cry them downe, and sett up a discipline of his owne for he hath professed not to follow the discipline, either of the Church of Old England, or of new England”. What is most interesting about Wood’s letter, however, was its evidence for the transmission of printed matter across the Atlantic. In his letter, Wood mentioned having read Thomas Edwards’ *Antapologia*. *Antapologia*, Edwards’ first attack against the Independents in Old England, was published in 1644.³⁷⁹ Wood’s letter to Winthrop is dated the 3rd of September of the same year.³⁸⁰ If this is any indication of broader circulation, it would appear that not only was printed matter from England circulating throughout the English Atlantic, but was circulating rather quickly as well.

To end this tracing of the circuits of Atlantic printed and manuscript matter, I would like to return to William Prynne. After the publication of Prynne’s *A Fresh Discovery* with its addition of Richard Norwood’s letter, Norwood wrote back to Prynne in May of 1647, commenting on the publication of his earlier letters as well as on White’s response. In his initial letter to Prynne, Norwood advised him that he thought it best that before implementing any serious reforms or changes in their church, they should tarry till Parliament decided on which form of church-government to adopt.³⁸¹ Nonetheless, it “was a singular ease and comfort to my mind, and Conscience, when I saw they were published.”³⁸² With this later letter, Norwood felt it necessary to update Prynne on the reception of *A Fresh Discovery* in Bermuda and on the religious state of the island. In striking contrast to Prynne’s strategic use of manuscript sources to promote the

³⁷⁹ Thomason dates his copy from July 1644. This is likely very close to its date of publication, as Robert Baillie wrote to a correspondent in early June of his anticipation of “a piece of twenty-six sheets, of Mr Edwards, against the Apologetick Narration, near printed, which will paint that faction in clearer colours than yet they have appeared”. Baillie, II, p. 190.

³⁸⁰ *WP*, v. IV, p. 493-94.

³⁸¹ William Prynne, *A Fresh Discovery*, p. 12, 14.

³⁸² Bodleian Library, Tanner Mss 58 f. 102.

Presbyterian cause, celebrating its virtues at the expense of the Independent's, Norwood, now retreating from the polemical stance of his earlier letter and Prynne's appropriation of it, bemoaned how in Bermuda "the Ministers on either side doe much instigate the people on either side one agt another, which is like to produce much bitternesse in the end".³⁸³ In fact, Norwood openly declared that he finds "the most part of those which doe indeed fear God, doe rather adhere to the Independt side then to the Presbyterian".³⁸⁴ As such, he informed Prynne that he "should doe very well (because it seemes that the most or many those that truly fear God doe rather adhere to the Independt way then to the Presbyterian, being necessitated to choose one) you should doe very well to use some Christian Information (by way of Apology or otherwise as you shall thinke fit) into their favor, and good opinions".³⁸⁵ Rather than see continued quarreling between Presbyterian and Independents, Norwood preferred to use abundant expressions of love and compassion to convince Independents of the errors of their ways, a position widely differing from his previous stance. In his earlier letter, printed in Prynne's *A Fresh Discovery*, Norwood stated that he wanted from the Independents a clear statement of their system of church-government, in particular how it compared with the other Reformed churches like those in New England.³⁸⁶ Norwood admitted this change in his position at the close of his letter to Prynne: "This in hast, having rudely altered my thoughts, I crave pardon for my Boldnesse toward you".³⁸⁷ It is fascinating to see how Norwood, separated as he was from England, yet present in a place equally wracked with religious division, modified and moderated his opinion.

³⁸³ *Ibid.*

³⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁸⁶ William Prynne, *A Fresh Discovery*, p. 19.

³⁸⁷ Bodleian Library, Tanner Mss 58 f. 102.

V.

Return migrants from the English Atlantic colonies proved to be excellent sources of polemic against the New England Way, both as providers of polemic themselves and as examples of the dangers of sectarianism. Those who had suffered at the hands of the Massachusetts Bay government, such as John Wheelwright, Samuel Gorton, John Child, and Roger Williams became particularly vocal mouthpieces against the adoption of the system of church-government of New England in Old England. John Wheelwright was a name that would have been familiar to English audiences by the time he or his son published *Mercurius Americanus* in 1645.³⁸⁸ As a mercury, *Americanus* consciously identified itself as a news pamphlet, an increasingly popular genre of print that became one of the standards of revolutionary print culture.³⁸⁹ Newsbooks first appeared in November 1641, a few weeks after the convening of the Long Parliament. The outbreak of rebellion in Ireland at the same time was instrumental in the creation of a public in England eager to consume news. David O'Hara estimates that between the beginning of the Irish Rebellion and the outbreak of civil war in England, approximately 92% of newsbooks printed contained news about Ireland.³⁹⁰

While the rhetorical flourishes of newsbooks evolved substantially over the 1640s, newsbooks throughout the period all shared certain stylistic elements, namely the

³⁸⁸ Thomason dates his copy to November 25, 1645.

³⁸⁹ See Joad Raymond, *The Invention of the Newspapers: English Newsbooks, 1641-1649* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996).

³⁹⁰ David O'Hara, *English Newsbooks and Irish Rebellion 1641-1649* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2006), p. 54.

narration of fact and the reproduction of original documents.³⁹¹ Even though they may not always have been as short as newsbooks were, publications by return migrants adopted these stylistic devices of newsbooks in their tracts. Like newsbooks, return migrants included reproductions of speeches, letters, legal documents, and petitions. While the inclusion of original documents may have created an interpretive space for the reader, they also served to legitimate claims and accusations return migrants leveled against the colonists in the New World.

John Wheelwright had featured prominently in the two Antinomian pamphlets published by Thomas Weld, discussed in Chapter Two. During the Antinomian Controversy in Massachusetts in 1636-38, Wheelwright was convicted of sedition and banished out of the colony in November of 1637. Relations between Wheelwright and the Massachusetts government improved over time, and in May 1644 the court lifted its sentence of banishment. However, with the publication of the Weld and Winthrop Antinomian pamphlets, Wheelwright or his son composed *Mercurius Americanus* to defend Wheelwright against the charges laid against him in the former pamphlets.³⁹² At less than thirty pages in quarto, *Mercurius Americanus* was well within the boundaries of cheap print.

Wheelwright's text was a defense and vindication not only of himself, but also of the others accused in the Free Grace Controversy and slandered in Weld's and Winthrop's publications from the previous year. Not only did Wheelwright place all the

³⁹¹ Joad Raymond, *The Invention of the Newspaper*, Chapter Three.

³⁹² The named author of this text is John Wheelwright Junior. The appellation "Junior" was commonly understood as a joke in 17th century print, indicating that the text is not actually by John Wheelwright, but one of his supporters. I am grateful to David Hall for pointing this out to me. See Joad Raymond, *Pamphlets and Pamphleteering in Early Modern Britain*, Chapter Two on the Marprelatical tracts by Martin Marprelate, Junior.

blame for the entire situation in New England on the heads of the Massachusetts authorities, but also was personally vindictive to Weld, basically accusing him of being a shameless publicity seeker, overly interested in seeing his name and his work in print. According to Wheelwright, the Massachusetts authorities became “*prelaticall* your selves, else why did not you admit those men, who left Bishops as well as ye, to a freedome of spirit, and conscience which they came for? Or at the least, why did you not protract their censures, and give them leave to recover, and recollect themselves after they were out of the hands of those Prelates?”.³⁹³ They were “Pretenders to so much chastity, Reformation, Christian liberty”.³⁹⁴ In fact, Wheelwright implied that the Free Grace Controversy stemmed from dissension and jealousy amongst the governors and other senior officials, most notably jealousy of Sir Henry Vane the younger.³⁹⁵ Weld was not spared in Wheelwright’s vindication. Wheelwright described him as a man who wished others to think of him as “an Oracle of Imperiall depths, A considerable penman upon whom States depend, and whose writings the exigencies of Kingdoms expect”.³⁹⁶ However, in reality, he created “*polemicall* Essayes, where he doth but lose himself and *over-balance* his muddy intellectuals”.³⁹⁷

Roger Williams proved to be a particularly prolific critic of the New England Way, an understandable reaction considering his relations with the prominent ministers and magistrates of the Massachusetts Bay colony. Williams emigrated to Massachusetts in 1631, but quickly moved south to the Plymouth Plantation, where he stayed until 1632, during which time he formed several close friendships with Native American leaders. It

³⁹³ John Wheelwright *Mercurius Americanus*, p. 3.

³⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

³⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 19-24.

³⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

³⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 20.

was his defense of Native land rights that caused him to leave Plymouth in 1632 for Salem. At Salem, his controversial preaching brought him to the attention of the Massachusetts Bay authorities, and in 1636, they banished Williams from the colony. Instead of returning immediately to England, however, as his banishment dictated, Williams went south again, this time to the Narragansett Bay, to land he had purchased from the Native Americans. It was there that he established his colony of Providence. Providence became a haven for other dissenters in Massachusetts, and it was the first Puritan colony committed to the principle of liberty of conscience. Williams returned to England in 1643, and, using his contacts among the Puritan grandees like the earl of Warwick, secured a patent in March 1644 that united Providence and the other settlements around it to form the colony of Rhode Island.³⁹⁸

While in England, Williams became a staunch supporter of liberty of conscience, and a fierce opponent of the New England Way, and in particular a vocal critic of New England's ministers, most notably John Cotton.³⁹⁹ In 1644, he published *Mr. Cottons Letter Lately Printed, Examined and Answered*,⁴⁰⁰ an attack on Cotton himself that depicted him as a hypocrite and a liar, and a tacit plea for liberty of conscience. The plea for liberty of conscience also accompanied a critique of the New England Way for their intolerance and hypocrisy. At just over fifty pages in quarto, *Mr. Cottons Letter Lately Printed* is right at the cusp of cheap print. In this tract, Williams responded to what he claimed was a letter written to him by John Cotton at some point during his banishment.

³⁹⁸ Further exploration of Williams in Old England is discussed in Chapter Five. For the best biography available, see the notes in Glenn LaFantasie, ed., *The Correspondence of Roger Williams* (Providence, R.I.: Published for The Rhode Island Historical Society by Brown University Press, 1988).

³⁹⁹ Williams' involvement in printed debates over liberty of conscience will be discussed at length in Chapter Five.

⁴⁰⁰ Thomason dates his copy to February 5, 1643/44.

In the dedicatory epistle to the reader, Williams detailed the background of his relationship with Cotton, and while he professed love and admiration, nonetheless depicts Cotton as a hypocrite and a liar, as well as a very cruel and unchristian man. The text consisted of excerpts from the Cotton letter, often with Williams paraphrasing Cotton's words, followed by Williams' response. This discursive strategy of presenting the reader with only excerpts from another source was by now a familiar strategy among polemicists, allowing them to selectively quote from their source only the very choicest passages to buttress their argument. The margins of the text were filled with Williams' glosses and summaries, intended to sum up the main points and arguments of the text. One could just read the marginalia and have a fairly basic idea of the main points of the full text and the argument of the pamphlet.

There is no printer or bookseller, nor any indication that it was licensed or printed by order. The text itself is a reprint of a letter Williams received John Cotton sometime in early 1636 during his banishment. Williams answered Cotton's letter in this printed edition with a paragraph by paragraph, in some places, almost line-by-line refutation of Cotton's argument. The text was poorly composed and edited, with quotation marks used infrequently and often no indication given whether Williams is quoting Cotton or not.

While Cotton and his fellow New England ministers professed to be against separation, their practices in New England betrayed them. And yet, they persecuted others for separation while they continue to deny the legitimacy of a national church. "First hee [Cotton] publickly taught, and teacheth (except lately Christ Jesus has taught him better) that body-killing, soule-killing, and State-killing doctrine of not permitting, but persecuting all other consciences and wayes of worship but his own in the civill

State”.⁴⁰¹ In New England, contrary to his practice in Old England, Cotton refused to “receive persons eminent for personal grace and godlinesse, to the Lords Supper, & other priviledges of Christians (according to their Church-estate) until they be convinced of the necessity of making & entering into a Church covenant with them”.⁴⁰² Their claims of communion with churches in England, Williams argued, are false:

But Mr. *Cotton* having made a locall departure from Old *England* in *Europe*, to New *England* in *America*, can he satisfie his owne soule, or the soules of other men, that he hath obeyed that voice, *come out of Babel my people, partake not of her sins &c.* Doth he count the very Land of *England* literally *Babel* and so consequently *Aegypt* And *Sodome. Revel. 11.8* and the land of new England *Judea, Canaan? &c.*⁴⁰³

In fact, Williams declared that while Cotton maintained that national churches are not true churches, he continues to insist to the godly in England that they are true churches and the churches in New England are not separatist churches.

Upon these his owne confessions, I earnestly beseech Mr. *Cotton* and all that feare God to ponder how he can say he walks with an even foot between 2 extreames, when according to his own confession, National Churches, Parish Churches, yea a Church constituted of godly person given to inordinate love of the worlds are false and to be separated from, for the remnant of pollution (I conceive he meaneth ceremonies & Bishops) notwithstanding that he also acknowledggeth, that the generality of every Parish in *England* consisteth of unregenerate persons, and of thousands of unbondaged, not only to worldliness, but also ignorance, superstition, scoffing, swearing, cursing, whoredome, drunkenness, lying...I remember by worthy adversary of that state and condition, from which he own confessions say he must separate, his practice in gathering of Churhces, seems to say he doth separate, and yet he professeth there are not some remnants of pollution amongst them for which he dares not separate.⁴⁰⁴

The oft-repeated New England line that they separated not from the Church of England, which was a true church, but from the pollutions and impurities introduced into the

⁴⁰¹ Roger Williams, *Mr. Cottons Letter Lately Printed, Examined and Answered* (London, 1644), p. 6-7.

⁴⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 19.

⁴⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

⁴⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 36-37.

church under Laud was, according to Williams, a lie. New England churches were in fact separatist churches. Despite this fact, however, the ministers of New England continued to persecute others, like Williams, for practicing what they themselves practiced as well. They were hypocrites, as well as liars.

One of the most detailed attacks on New England, its ministers, and its magistrates appeared in 1646. Samuel Gorton migrated to Massachusetts in 1636, but by 1638 he was banished out of the colony. According to his own account, published upon his return to Old England in 1646, *Simplicities Defence against Seven-Headed Policy. Or, Innocency Vindicated, being unjustly Accused and sorely Censured by that Seven-Headed Church-Government United in New-England*, Gorton's party, immediately upon arrival in New England, found they were not in agreement with New England churches and were banished. They settled near Roger Williams in Rhode Island, but the government of New England continued to persecute them by sending agents to live amongst them. According to Gorton, the government of Massachusetts wanted nothing less than his death. As Gorton and his company refused to acknowledge the authority of Massachusetts over them, in response, Massachusetts sent commissioners into Rhode Island. The government of Massachusetts' attempts to control Gorton and his followers ultimately culminated in a siege by the Massachusetts militia upon their homes in Rhode Island and the capture of Gorton. Gorton and his men were imprisoned by the colonial authorities in Massachusetts, from which they were eventually released, but the

Massachusetts General Court ordered their total banishment, not only out of Massachusetts, but out of their homes in Rhode Island.⁴⁰⁵

Gorton's *Simplicities Defence against Seven-Headed Policy* related in horrifying detail the cruelty and hypocrisy of which Massachusetts was capable. As noticed earlier, this narrative style had become a more prominent feature of works in the later 1640s. These sensationalist forms, markedly different from the sobered reasonings of biblical exegesis, capture in heightened detail the lived wrongs of the churches in New England. By exposing the cruelties and horrors of these churches, polemicists laid bare the true effects of the system of church-government proposed and supported by the colonies in New England and their supporters in Old England. This shift to narrative presents the reader with the actual results of the implementation of the New England system of church-government. Far different from the rosy picture of brotherly communion and support that their proponents claimed was the result of their system of church-government, these tales of horror from return migrants like Samuel Gorton made explicit the actual terrors produced at their hands. At a time of rising Independent and sectarian political and military power in England, works such as Gorton's present to their audience the unmasked truth of the unchecked license and power of non-Independents. As such, it is a powerful and potent warning of the dangers of the New England Way.

From the first page, Gorton announced that the New England government wanted "to make themselves appear, in the eyes of men, more holy and honourable in the things

⁴⁰⁵ Samuel Gorton, *Simplicities Defence against Seven-Headed Policy. Or, Innocency Vindicated, being unjustly Accused and sorely Censured by that Seven-Headed Church-Government United in New-England* (London, 1646).

of God, then others of their Brethren”.⁴⁰⁶ In reality, however, they “bath themselves in blood and feed themselves fat, by devouring the good name, estates, and lives of their Brethren”.⁴⁰⁷ Gorton proclaimed that he has found the ministers and magistrates of Massachusetts “to be a company of grosse and dissembling hypocrites, that under the pretence of Law, and Religion, have done nothing else but gone about to established themselves in wayes to maintain their owne vicious lusts”.⁴⁰⁸ The ministers of New England, according to Gorton, “cast reproach upon all the world, in that you profese yourselves a choice people pickt out of it, and yet you goe one with such practices as you doe, maintaining them as your own glory”.⁴⁰⁹ In order to maintain power, the magistrates, if they “cannot maintaine a jurisdiction...reject all inroads upon other mens priviledges”.⁴¹⁰ The pride of the New Englander is such that each believed “*I am holier then thou*, the men of *Plimouth*, coming thither from *Amsterdam*, and the other out of *hot persecutions* of the Bishops in *Old England*”.⁴¹¹ And their cruelty is not just confined among themselves and other colonists, no, for “these men doe not onely intrench causelessly upon their country-men, but also upon the poore *Indians*, inhabiting in those parts”.⁴¹²

In total, Gorton’s attack was a scathing indictment not only of the government of Massachusetts, but also of its ministers, depicting a collection of people who are not only cruel and hypocritical, but self-aggrandizing and merciless in their treatment of others.

⁴⁰⁶ Samuel Gorton, *Simplicities Defence against Seven-Headed Policy*, p. 1.

⁴⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

⁴⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 25-26.

⁴⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

⁴¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 25.

⁴¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 92.

⁴¹² *Ibid.*

Simplicities Defence against Seven-Headed Policy was published in 1646.⁴¹³ Its printer was John Macock, by now a familiar presence among Presbyterian networks, which perhaps implied that Gorton was persuaded to pen this tract by Presbyterians. They certainly approved it, as not only was it printed by John Macock, but it was also licensed and approved by authority. Gorton dedicated *Simplicities Defence against Seven-Headed Policy* to the Puritan grandee, the earl of Warwick, and it is also possible that Warwick was involved in its publication, perhaps as patron, assuring its license and printing. Despite its decidedly sensationalist character, *Simplicities Defence against Seven-Headed Policy*, coming in at over one hundred pages, was too long to be categorized within the realms of cheap print.

In many respects, *Simplicities Defence against Seven-Headed Policy* was typical of popular printed matter, such as Prynne's *A Fresh Discovery* and Edwards' *Gangraena*. *Simplicities Defence against Seven-Headed Policy* was not simply composed of Gorton's account of his dealings with the New England magistrates and ministers, but also contained copies of summons, warrants, and charges Gorton received from the Massachusetts court, copies of letters between Gorton and friends still in America, and also a poem (possibly a ballad) composed by Gorton. Gorton also inserted marginal glosses throughout the text, not only of scriptural citations, but also of commentary designed to exemplify incidents in the text to guide the reader's response. Thus while the size of *Simplicities Defence against Seven-Headed Policy* seemingly places it beyond the purchasing power of the poorest reader of printed matter in seventeenth century London, it was clearly intended for a wide audience. As was also common with revolutionary

⁴¹³ Thomason dates his copy to November 7, 1646. However, it was licensed to print, according to the title page of the tract, on August 3rd of that year.

print, Gorton's tract engaged with several other pamphlets. Edwards' *Gangraena* and Prynne's *A Fresh Discovery* are mentioned by name as being "books so intituled written upon uneering reports, tales, and conjectures to cure the Church".⁴¹⁴ Thus, despite Gorton's recent return to England, both he and his text are not only well read in the current literature of Revolutionary England, but become part of the reflexivity of texts that characterized it.

The magistrates of New England did not stand idly by while this dissatisfied return migrant hurled vindictive epithet after vindictive epithet at them. Instead, they commissioned Edward Winslow, a former governor of Plymouth and an agent for Massachusetts in England at the time, to craft a defense. What followed a few months later was his rebuttal, *Hypocrisie Unmasked*, in which Winslow called Gorton a "gross disturber of the Civil peace and quiet of that government [of Plymouth], in an open factious and seditious manner."⁴¹⁵ Gorton responded in kind, refuting Winslow's arguments with *Incorruptible Key* in 1647. While Winslow did not respond directly to Gorton's second attack, he did respond with *New England's Salamander* to another virulent anti-New England pamphlet, *New-England's Jonas Cast Up at London: Or, A Relation of the Proceedings of the Court at Boston in New-England against divers honest and godly persons, for Petitioning for Government in the Common-wealth, according to the Lawes of England, and for the admittance of themselves and children to the Sacraments in their Churches; and in case that should not be granted, for leave to have Ministers and Church-government according to the best Reformation of England and*

⁴¹⁴ Samuel Gorton, *Simplicities Defence against Seven-Headed Policy*, A1^v.

⁴¹⁵ Edward Winslow, *Hypocrisie Unmasked* (London, 1646), unmarked page. Winslow's responses are discussed in greater detail in Chapter Four.

Scotland,⁴¹⁶ that had been published earlier in 1647 by John Child. Child's text, which was itself a response to Winslow's *Hypocrisie Unmasked*, was typical of other printed matter composed by return migrants. Like Gorton's, it was composed of copies of petitions and remonstrances against the Massachusetts court at Boston, the sum of which accused the magisterial authorities of Boston of attempting to exert tyrannical authority over all those in New England. In the petition included in Child's text, the authors pleaded "that Civil liberty and freedom be forthwith granted to all truly *English*, equall to the rest of their Country-men, as in all Plantations is accustomed to be done, and as all Free-borne enjoy in our native Country".⁴¹⁷ Like Gorton's text, Child's work was mired in revolutionary print culture. *New-England's Jonas Cast Up at London* was not only a response to Winslow's *Hypocrisie Unmasked*, but also referred to Gorton's publications, as well as to the Scottish Presbyterian Robert Baillie's *A Dissuasive from the Errours of the Times*.⁴¹⁸ What was perhaps most interesting about Child's tract, however, are printers: Thomas Ratcliffe and Edward Mottershed. Less than two years later, these two men would be responsible for the publication of *Eikon Basilike*, Charles I posthumous vindication of himself and his reign.⁴¹⁹

⁴¹⁶ Thomason dates his copy to April 15, 1647.

⁴¹⁷ John Child, *New-England's Jonas Cast up at London*, p. 10.

⁴¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

⁴¹⁹ The increasing radicalism of the New Model Army, combined with its evolution into the political force in Revolutionary England in the late 1640s, turned many Presbyterians into Royalists. See Austin Woolrych, *Britain in Revolution*, p. 376-79.

VI.

Just as return migrants proved to be an invaluable source of anti-New England sentiment based on their own experiences, for others, most notably Thomas Edwards, return migrants could also be exemplars of the perils and evils of the New England Way, let loose to preach and create havoc in Old England. Recently, Ann Hughes has revisited in remarkable detail the book *Gangraena: Or A Catalogue and Discovery of many of the Errours, Heresies, Blasphemies, and pernicious Practices of the Sectaries of this time, vented and acted in England in these four last years*, a three volume tome published in 1646-47 by the self-proclaimed Presbyterian heresiologist Thomas Edwards.⁴²⁰ By analyzing *Gangraena* not as a sourcebook for information about the Civil War sects but rather as a remarkably rich and dynamic *text* from the 1640s, Hughes is able to re-examine culture, religion, and politics during the English Civil War from productive new angles. As she situates Edwards' work in its 1640s context, Hughes formulates a broader understanding of the fragmentary nature of Parliamentary politics, of the role of Presbyterianism in Parliament, and of the significance of print culture in this period. Her appreciation of the context of *Gangraena*, of its political and cultural influences and inspirations, produces a work of impressive range and scholarship. My present goal in revisiting *Gangraena* is not to serve as a corrective to her incomparable work, but rather to discuss Edwards' varied treatment of the system of church-government in New England and the Somers Islands, and of the return of Hugh Peter to England.

⁴²⁰ Ann Hughes, *Gangraena and the Struggle for the English Revolution*.

In the first part of *Gangraena*, Edwards bemoaned the spread of sectaries and Independents in England. The extent of England's present affliction was so well-known, that even "*New-England* speaks much of the heresies, errorrs, and all sorts of sects amongst us, wondring that the Assembly suffers them, and that they do not stirre up the Parliament to suppress them. Mr *Shepards* Letter written from then, shews their knowledge of the heresies, errorss, and sects amongst us".⁴²¹ Simultaneously, Edwards declared that the New England Way was identical to the way of the Independents, with "sad and woefull effects".⁴²² Clearly, then, as Hughes discusses in her study, despite Edwards' attempt to fashion for himself an identity as a heresiologist as accomplished as St. Augustine, his end result is something much more chaotic. His work was not a systematic, well-ordered, and structured delineation of the heresies and schisms abounding in England, but rather an inchoate attempt to systematically label and define each one. This conflation of the New England Way with Independency was, as we have seen, a common polemical move, but Edwards' failure to maintain this move consistently revealed the extent to which it was indeed a polemical move. Edwards and his contemporaries failed to, or neglected to, appreciate the growing differences between Independents in Old England and the godly in New England. Whereas they may have been very similar in ecclesiastical structures in 1640/1, by the time *Gangraena* is published, the Independents' agitation for liberty of conscience and their alliance with Sectarians polarized them irrevocably from their brethren in New England. Edwards and his fellow authors' failure to acknowledge this divide meant that their labeling of the New England Way as either Independency or not was a polemical move, one that bore no

⁴²¹ Thomas Edwards, *Gangraena, Part I*, p. 11.

⁴²² *Ibid.*, p. 124-125.

relation to any actual semblances or differences between the two groups at the time.

Instead, as Hughes clearly explains, “Edwards polemical career is a prime example of the importance of religious divisions in driving public debate. Religious polemic had a central role in the conjuring up of an informed, polarized, mobilized public opinion”.⁴²³

The polemical maneuverings in Edwards’ work—and also in Hollingworth’s, Bastwick’s, and Cawdrey’s—were intended to influence the public, uniting it behind the Presbyterians and their system of church-government.

Edwards’ frequent failure to appreciate the differences between Independents in Old England and the New England Way did not stop him from decrying the return of some from New England. In one letter in Part I, one of Edwards’ correspondents related how two return migrants from New England (one possibly Thomas Weld) “had behaved themselves most politickly, craftily, with fair pretences untill they got possession of our Churches, and then played their pranks; and told them how and in what they and all their party had deluded us with fair words”.⁴²⁴ These are people, according to Edwards, who

would not be endured or suffered in other countries and Churches..., how many cast out of *New-England* for their Antinomianisme, Anabaptisme, & c. have come over, and here printed Books for their Errors, and preach up and down down freely; so that poor *England* must lick up such persons, who like vomit, have been cast out of the mouth of other Churches, and is become the common shore and sinke to received in the filth of Heresies, and Errors from all places.⁴²⁵

Another return migrant from New England, Edwards told his readers, while already married with a wife and child in New England, upon his return to Old England, proceeded to marry “others” in England.⁴²⁶

⁴²³ Ann Hughes, *Gangraena and the Struggle for the English Revolution*, p. 411.

⁴²⁴ Thomas Edwards, *Gangraena, Part I*, p. 69.

⁴²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 147-48.

⁴²⁶ Thomas Edwards, *Gangraena, Part III*, p. 93-94.

One particular focus for Edwards' pen was Hugh Peter. Upon his return to Old England, Peter had served as a chaplain in the naval forces, (his half-brother was the admiral of the fleet) sent to subdue Ireland in June 1642. He returned in September 1642, and published the official account of the venture, commissioned by the House of Commons, using his own daily journal as the basis for his record of events. *A True relation of the Passages of Gods Providence in a Voyage for Ireland* was printed by the religiously radical printer, Henry Overton, and served to reinforce fears of a popish plot. In the following summer, Peter was commissioned by Parliament to raise troops and money in Sussex, only to be sent by Parliament in September 1643 to Holland to gather money there. In Holland, he was also tasked with gaining the support of the Reformed Churches. Peter remained in Holland until the following March, at which point he returned to England and joined the Parliamentary navy under the command of the Earl of Warwick.⁴²⁷ His efforts in Holland did not go unrewarded; nor were they unnoticed or uncriticized by Royalists. *Mercurius Civicus* reported in March 1644 that

Parliament have honoured [Peter] with much acceptance and thanks his indefatigable labours, adventures, and travels, and testified it by a present of their true sence of all his endeavours for the publique, by bestowing upon him an 100 pounds in moneys, and a Library of bookes of equall worth; and manifested their resolution to take him into their further care, which as it is an encouragement to all that with true faithfulness and diligence serve the publique, that they shall not lose their labours in fruitlesse serving the commonwealth and God therein: so it may fill those faces with shame, and stop those foule mouthes, which have foamed out their venomous bitterness against a man of such piety towards God, and merit of his owne native Countrey, and of all men.⁴²⁸

However, shortly thereafter, Peter joined Essex's Parliamentary army in the west.

⁴²⁷ Stearns, "The Peter-Weld Mission," p. 204-218, 226-232.

⁴²⁸ *Mercurius Civicus*, March 6-14, 1644, p. 434.

When the New Model Army was formed in 1645, Peter served as one of its chaplains. He routinely traveled back and forth between the New Model Army and London. After each victory, Fairfax or Cromwell would dispatch Peter to London to inform Parliament of its victory. Peter then would publish these accounts: *Mr. Peters report from the Army* (1645);⁴²⁹ *Mr. Peters report from Bristol, made to the House of Commons, from Sir Thomas Fairfax* (1645);⁴³⁰ *Mr. Peters message delivered in both Houses, to the Lords and Commons in Parliament; from Sir Thomas Fairfax. With, the narration of the taking of Dartmouth* (1646);⁴³¹ *Mr. Peters last report of the English vvars occasioned by the importunity of a friend pressing an answer to seven quaeres* (1646).⁴³²

From both his work for the Parliament and the New Model Army, it is clear that Peter was a very visible propagandist of the Parliamentary cause and for the New Model Army. Much of Peter's success as a public figure, particularly as a sermonizer, stemmed from his ability to tailor his addresses to his audience. Whether addressing a learned audience or a popular audience, Peter altered his style according. As such, his work as a propagandist was highly effective, which attracted the ire of many a Presbyterian pen. Of him, Edwards wrote in *Gangraena*, "one Mr. Peter the Soliciter Generall for the Sectaries, who came out of *New-England* about four years and four months ago, concerning whose Preaching, practices and proceedings in city and country, I could write a whole book". According to Edwards, Peter "is so bold, daring, and active for the Sectaries, that against all their own Church-principles (their most sacred, that of the

⁴²⁹ Peter wrote three reports from the Army in 1645: Thomason Tracts 44:E.261[7]; 48:E.294[28]; 49:E.296[12].

⁴³⁰ Wing P1715.

⁴³¹ Wing P1710.

⁴³² Wing P1707.

power of the Church) Mr. *Peter* is kept here, and must not go to *New-England*'.

Furthermore, Edwards accused Peter of being so seduced by his desire for money that he embezzled the funds he collected for orphans to be sent New England.⁴³³ Despite the repeated calls from New England for Peter to return, Edwards wrote, "every Spring taken [Peter] leave in the Pulpit of old *England*, and yet he is not gone of his juggling and indirect walking between the West and *London, London* and other Countries".⁴³⁴ In the final part of *Gangraena*, Edwards devoted twenty-six pages to detailing how Peter "a great Agent for the Sectaries, who hath many wayes, by preaching, writing, conference, and discourse, and above all by acting In severall kinds, promoted the Independent Way".⁴³⁵ And by promoting the "Independent Way," Edwards clearly meant not only promoting their system of church-government, but also of formenting trouble, dissension, and division in England with his toleration of Sectaries.

Presbyterians were not the only ones to bemoan the return of Peter and the havoc his activities wreaked across the country. Royalists were also fierce critics of Peter, and began their attacks much earlier. In October of 1643, the Royalist newsbook *Mercurius Aulicus* reported how

there is one *Peter* is reported to have preached so many Sermons in London, that those who heare him are much affrighted at his uncharitable doctrines, for he doth with a loud voice tell them continually that all those who will not freely contribute to the maintaining of this Rebellion now on foot, and marching under their Lord Generall and *Sir Wil.* shall be all without bayle or mainprise carried directly into hell; and it is reported that a boy having heard him use these words often in his Pulpit, till he had worne them as thread bare as his Gowne was at Amsterdam, at his coming out of the *Church* askt him what cart should carry them to hell, thus *Peteres* is but the flout of every boy; and is reported that he cousened a Butchers wife of so many loines of veale that her husband missing them askt his wife

⁴³³ Thomas Edwards, *Gangraena, Part I*, p. 98-101.

⁴³⁴ Thomas Edwards, *Gangraena, Part II*, p. 84.

⁴³⁵ Thomas Edwards, *Gangraena, Part III*, p. 120, 120-146.

which way they went, and she by his perswasions confessing that she had at severall times sent them to a godly man, meaning *Peter*, he went and demanded his money, which being by him denyed, he beat satisfaction out of *Peter* bone: hence may be noted that *Peter* and all those Spiritual Preachers love the flesh, a loine of veale and the Butchers wife were no spirituall matters, yet he handled them better then ever he did his Text in St. *Sepulchres* Church.⁴³⁶

Aulicus' depiction of Peter is incredibly rich polemically, undermining both Peter and Puritan claims to godliness in familiar parodies. His characterization of Peter as glutton who conned the butcher's wife out of "so many loines of veale" rehearsed Ben Johnson's mockery of Puritans in *Bartholomew Fair*, in which the Puritan Zeal-of-the-Land Busy consumed two whole pigs in order to prove he is not a Jew. Peter, like other Puritans before him, publicly worried about the sin of gluttony, but were gluttons themselves. The sexual innuendo in Peter's relationship with the butcher's wife further satirized Puritan's public rejection of sexual immorality. While the godly may publicly denounce illicit sex, exposure of their private lives revealed them to be hypocrites. By 1645, *Mercurius Academicus* was describing Peter as "the mad Preacher [who] hath been a principall Instrument in promoting the *grand Rebellion*".⁴³⁷

Another focus of Presbyterian attacks was the return migrant Hanserd Knollys. Another victim of the Laudian High Commission, Knollys fled with his family to Boston by 1638, only to return to London by 1641. Despite his friendship with leading Presbyterians like John Bastwick, by 1645 Knollys had become a Baptist and gathered his own Baptist Church in London, the first Baptist Church congregated anywhere.⁴³⁸ His conversion to and promotion of Baptism led Knollys to become to focus of

⁴³⁶ *Mercuris Aulicus*, October 4, 1643, p. liii rev, 560.

⁴³⁷ *Mercurius Academicus*, February 23, 1645, p. 97.

⁴³⁸ *ODNB*.

Presbyterian attacks. Prynne described Knollys as “the illiterate Anabaptist”.⁴³⁹ In *Gangraena*, Edwards related the biography of Knollys, detailing his preaching in the Parliamentary army and in Suffolk, claiming that he not only preached his “strange Doctrine” but “in such a tumultuous, seditious, factious way, (going as I have been informed) with some armed men accompanying him, and Preaching in the Churchyard, when he could not in the Church, and getting up the Pulpit when the Sermon or Lectures had been ended, against the will of the Minister and Parish, so that there were several Riots and tumults by his means”.⁴⁴⁰

VII.

When the colonists had left England for the New World in the 1630s, New England held the promise of a site of renewal. Not only would the New World be an example for the further reformation of the Church of England, but they would erect there a model society. Freed from the corruptions and innovations of the Laudian church, the churches in the Americas would achieve the purity of worship that the promise of the English Reformation held. In the New World, godly ministers and magistrates would work hand in hand, bearing witness to the truth of the Gospels, and creating their city on a hill for all the world to behold. Their triumphs would be shared with their brethren in Old England. Seeing the truth and efficacy of the New England Way, they could not fail to adopt it in their homeland. The promise of reform appeared within the grasp in their early 1640s. With loud and bountiful cries for reform in the halls of Parliament and in

⁴³⁹ William Prynne, *A Fresh Discovery*, p. 48.

⁴⁴⁰ Thomas Edwards, *Gangraena Part I*, p. 97-98.

the streets and the calling of the Westminster Assembly, surely this was the moment for God's elect.

But it was not to be. The polemical fortunes of the Atlantic colonies suffered a serious downturn in the mid-1640s. The spirit of accommodation among the godly that had characterized the early years of the Revolution gave way to public polemic debates, more heated and more vitriolic than any seen before. Venomous pages traversed the Atlantic to the printing presses of England, recounting horrific tales of tyranny and cruelty. Attacks leveled against the godly in the New World shared more in common with vitriolic anti-papery rhetoric than with the discourse of the communion of brethren. The Atlantic colonies were vilified from all sides, most significantly from within their own midst. Return migrants and disgruntled settlers provided much of the ammunition. Letters from the colonies and England, copies of government warrants and summons, local testimonies were all fodder for the cannon.

And opponents of the New England Way made good use of them. It mattered little to polemicists what proponents of the New England Way had to say in their defense, how they themselves defined and justified their churches and their actions. What mattered was how the examples of the colonial churches could be harnessed to their own projects, whether it be presenting the dangers of the New England Way or further undermining Independency in England through its relationship to New England. By redefining the colonial churches in terms readily accessible to the English public that carried with them threatening connotations, opponents of the New England Way, be they Presbyterian or Royalists, could identify the colonial churches under comprehensible labels. The truth, with all its subtleties and nuances, was jettisoned in favor of

confessional rhetoric and scare tactics. They could take existing cultural resources, familiar tropes of disorder and conflict, and establish the New England Way within these categories. It was a brilliant move. Not only did it recast the terms of the debate, but it moved the battleground from theological exegesis to the immediacy of narrative. Using a form more readily accessible to a popular audience ensured more popular support for themselves, at the expense of the colonial churches.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Colonists Write Back: Atlantic Responses

In the early years of the war, religious aims did not necessarily neatly align with sharply defined political parties with specific goals. Politicians devoted to the successful prosecution of the war, meaning the complete surrender of the Royalists and the subjugation of the king to a peace solely on their terms, could be Presbyterians as well as Independents or more radical groups. The majority of Parliamentarians all shared common limited constitutional goals and a desire for the further reformation of the Church of England. However, this Parliamentary party, composed of a broad based coalition that included Presbyterians, Independents, and a radical minority, ultimately proved unable to maintain its unity. As we have explored, with the publication of the *Apologeticall Narration* in early 1644, the fragile alliance uniting Presbyterians and Independents was destroyed. Presbyterians publicly denounced Independents in highly polemical terms, seeing them, along with sectaries, as a radically destabilizing and threatening element in England. Their fear of Independents and sectaries was magnified with the successes of the New Model Army, which they constructed as a hotbed of religiously and political radicalism that spread its dangerously subversive message throughout the country.

Two large and amorphous political parties emerged in 1644: political presbyterians and political independents. Obvious differences separated the two. The independents were committed to expelling the Scots, preventing the erection of an intolerant Presbyterian church settlement, and to maintaining the New Model Army until

Charles I had accepted peace on Parliament's terms. The presbyterians were more amenable to negotiating a peace with Charles, provided he submit to a Presbyterian ecclesiology, and in favor of the quick dismemberment of the New Model Army, or at least its detachment to subdue Ireland. The independents' support of the New Model Army and a Parliament dictated peace that could only be secured through a triumphant New Model Army earned them the allegiance of the radicals in the Army, as well as many of Pym's "middle group" and religious Independents. Neither group, however, were parties in the contemporary sense, in which each M.P. was bound to vote according to the position of his party. Individuals could and did, quite frequently, vote their conscience, not their party. Accordingly, both the presbyterian and the independent parties were loose alliances of disparate groups, not two separate and circumscribed committed, voting blocks.

The Independent/New Model Army alliance of the mid 1640s that manifested in the independent political party, however, was broken in the spring of 1648. Throughout the summer of 1647 into the winter of 1648, the Parliamentary alliance of Independents, those of the middle way, and the New Model Army radicals was destroyed by the radicalization of the Army and the actions of the king. Charles, who had been detained by the Army since June 1647, escaped its custody and fled into the arms of the Scots in November. Throughout the spring of 1648, the more moderate elements of Parliament, including both Independents and Presbyterians, became increasingly alienated from the radicals, both politically and religiously, in the New Model Army. When, in April of 1648, the Scots raised an army in support of the king, the Parliamentary alliance of Independents, the middle way Parliamentarians, and the New Model Army radicals was

broken, with the moderate Independents shifting their allegiances away from the Army's radicalism towards the Presbyterians.⁴⁴¹

These shifting alliances were reflected in the print matter of the late 1640s, once again with the colonial churches playing a central role in its development. Confessional identity in England in the mid to late 1640s was a confusing array of shifting claims and unstable labeling. Terms such as "Independent" or "Sectarian" often lacked a firm definition. While terms may not have been entirely understood, they prompted a reaction nonetheless. And the reaction was one of fear. Polemicists took advantage of their situation for their own benefit, but in doing so, added to the confusion. Simply calling the New England Way Independency, often deliberately without an understanding of how the two stood in relation to one another, was enough to provoke a negative reaction. Separated as they were from the scene of the debate in London by the expanse of the Atlantic Ocean, New Englanders' ability to navigate this world of polemical labels was hindered, but not defeated. Tactics needed to be shifted, but with the future of the Church of England at stake, they could not and would not lose so easily. Additionally, the political fortunes of their own colonies were in jeopardy. Their futures lay in the balance in more than one way.

New England publications from the mid- to late 1640s relied on both new return migrants and established supporters of their system of church-government to counter the attacks of their detractors. While they continued to publish statements of church-government proving the righteousness of the New England Way, they also moved into different genres. With a new agent representing their interests in London, Edward

⁴⁴¹ David Underdown, *Pride's Purge: Politics in the Puritan Revolution* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), p. 90-97.

Winslow, they shifted to rhetorical narratives that presented the public with more engaging and immediate texts by which to judge the truth of their claims against their adversaries'. However, the realignment of moderate Independents with Presbyterians in late spring, early summer of 1648 necessitated a further renegotiation of Presbyterianism's relationship with the New England Way. This repositioning of the churches in New England within the reconstituted alliance between Presbyterians and some of the Independents, is best demonstrated by their shared commitment to conversionary efforts among the native peoples in New England. New Englanders too, used accounts of the progress of the gospel among the Native Americans to their advantage. These accounts also combined two popular print genres: tales of the foreign and the exotic and polemical celebration of the New England churches. The result was a series of tracts with widespread popular appeal, and the potential to gain the support of a whole new group of readers.

II.

New Englanders and their supporters did not stand idly by while their churches were attacked in print. They embarked on a campaign to challenge the accusations leveled against them by their detractors in England, relying not only on the biblical exegesis that had characterized their early 1640s explanations, but also on highly charged polemics similar to those their enemies had used in the mid to late 1640s. The arrival in London of Edward Winslow, the former governor of Plymouth, as the agent for the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1646 added a new voice into the fray. Winslow not only

wrote polemics in defense of the New England Way, but he also carried with him manuscript accounts of the progress of the New England mission to convert the native Indian populations. New England accounts of the work of John Eliot, the Apostle to the Indians, and of the Indians in his praying towns in Massachusetts proved to be another weapon in the case for the New England Way.

Rebuttals began with the work of Thomas Weld, who published in 1645 *A Brief Narration of the Practices of the Churches in New-England. Written in private to one that desired information therein; by an Inhabitant there, a Friend to Truth and Peace*. Dated by Thomason to August 30, 1645, the tract was printed by Matthew Simmons for John Rothwell. Simmons, as we shall see, was a central player in the publication of defenses of the New England Way from this period. Essentially, *A Brief Narration* was a very brief and distilled version of previously published statements on the New England Way. There were marginal glosses scattered throughout the text to aid the reader in following the text, as well as scripture cited in the margins to justify their practices. Other than the Bible, the only other text referenced in the margins was John Cotton's *The Way of Churches in New-England*. Reliance solely on these two texts revealed not only the perception of Cotton's works as definitive, but also that they were fundamental to legitimating the practice as the Bible itself. Cotton, above all others, was synonymous with the New England Way. An attack on one was to undermine the other. At only eighteen pages, Weld's tract was well within the scope of cheap print, which could explain why it was reprinted several times, in 1647 and 1651. With both the shortness of the text and the marginal glosses in mind, we can assume that this tract was intended for a broad audience, possibly not continuously engaged with the printed debated on colonial

churches. As such, *A Brief Narration* provided the casual reader with a brief, but comprehensive statement. Indeed, with the repeated printings of the tract, it would appear to have been a very popular tract. It was both published and composed after Cotton's *The Way of Churches in New England*, which explains why Cotton's book is cited in the marginalia several times.

While *A Brief Narration* did not respond directly to specific tracts, the whole purpose of the text was to refute the accusations leveled against the churches in New England. There was also a detailed description of how individual churches dealt with censuring delinquents, thereby demonstrating their ability to deal with heretics and others possessed of erroneous opinions. Weld demanded of his reader to judge

what error or iniquity is in our Practice, so much cryed out upon by the sons of men, and some of our deare Brethren, who cry us down for *Separatists*, *Schismatics*, *Anabaptists*, and what not? *The foundations are cast down, and what hath the righteous done?* Oh, let men shew us from the blessed Word of truth, where our error lies; let them set down a purer pattern before us, and wee hope God will not so far leave us, but that he will open our eyes, and bow our hearts to entertain it; but it upon mature thoughts they judge this to be the very Way of God, (as we believe verily God is now about to cleer it, so to be to all the world) let them in the name of God, lay away all prejudice against our persons and practice, and follow us so far as we follow Christ.⁴⁴²

Likewise, there was also a thorough explanation of how churches, in communion and fellowship with each other, as was the New England Way, dealt with delinquent congregations.⁴⁴³

Weld's publication signaled the beginning of a slew of tracts defending the New England Way over the next five years. Essential to this rehabilitation campaign was

⁴⁴² Thomas Weld, *A Brief Narration of the Practices of the Churches in New-England. Written in private to one that desired information therein; by an Inhabitant there, a Friend to Truth and Peace* (London, 1645), p. 18.

⁴⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 9-16.

Edward Winslow. In October of 1646, Winslow, who had served three terms as governor of Plymouth Plantation, returned to England as an agent of the Massachusetts colony. Once in London, Winslow joined the polemical fray, becoming part of a pamphlet war with Samuel Gorton and John Child. Gorton and Child, as discussed in the previous chapter, were both authors of anti-New England matter who published harsh critiques of the government and church in New England, using the examples of their own injustices suffered at the hands of the colony's ministers and magistrates to demonize the New England Way. In response to Samuel Gorton's *Simplicities Defence*, Winslow published *Hypocrisie Unmasked: By A true Relation of the Proceedings of the Governour and Company of the Massachusetts against Samuel Gorton (and his Accomplices) a notorious disturber of the Peace and quiet of the severall Governments wherein he lived: With the grounds and reasons thereof, examined and allowed by their Generall Court holden at Bostin in New-England in November last in 1646*. Printed by Richard Cotes for John Bellamy, Thomason dated this tract to October 1646. Despite its length at over one hundred pages printed in quarto, *Hypocrisie Unmasked* was a popular text, as it was printed again in 1649.

In his dedicatory epistle to the Earl of Warwick, Winslow claimed that he was justified in printing this text in order to "give a particular answer to your Honours, and the rest of the Honourable Committee...because I find a more grosse deformatory aspersion cast upon the Countrey to the publick view of our Nation...so wee desire to remove whatsoever may sadden the thoughts of our Nation against us".⁴⁴⁴ Of Gorton and

⁴⁴⁴ Edward Winslow, *Hypocrisie Unmasked: By A true Relation of the Proceedings of the Governour and Company of the Massachusetts against Samuel Gorton (and his Accomplices) a notorious disturber of the Peace and quiet of the severall Governments wherein he lived: With the grounds and reasons thereof*,

his followers, Winslow described how, “they belched forth such horrid blasphemies, not onely against them in particular, and Civill Government in generall, but against the received Christian Religion of all the Reformed Churches in Europe, as well as our selves”.⁴⁴⁵ Winslow felt compelled to publish this rebuttal to Gorton, even though he would rather not do so, knowing that “the world is too full of bookes of this kind”.⁴⁴⁶ However, he “conceived my selfe bound in duty to take off the many grosse and publicke scandalls held forth therein, to the great amazement of many tender consciences in the Kingdom, who are not acquainted with his proud and turbulent carriage,” and to “defend *New-England* against the injurious complaints of *Samuel Gorton, &c*”.⁴⁴⁷ By publishing *Hypocrisie Unmasked*, his intention was to “clearly answer to matters of fact, such as hee chargeth the severall Governments withal, so as any indifferent Reader may easily discerne how grossly wee are abused, and how just and righteous censures were against him for disturbing the civill peace of all societies where hee came, in such a manner as no Government could possibly beare”.⁴⁴⁸ There was no ambiguity in Winslow. Accusations, insults, and falsehoods were hurled unjustly at New England. Winslow’s project was to disabuse the public of these, and then vindicate New England.

Winslow’s text consisted of two parts: a narrative of Gorton’s activities in Massachusetts, thus justifying the colony’s actions against him, and a response to Gorton’s allegations in *Simplicities Defence*. As was typical of printed matter from this time, Winslow relied heavily on manuscript matter. In order to buttress his claims,

examined and allowed by their Generall Court holden at Bostin in New-England in November last (London, 1646), p. A2r.

⁴⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. A3^v.

⁴⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 64.

⁴⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 63-64.

⁴⁴⁸ *Ibid.*.

Winslow included in the text copies of letters from Gorton heartily abusing the Massachusetts authorities.⁴⁴⁹ However, as evidence of their “their insolent and injurious courses” against them and a series of letters from those in Providence complaining of Gorton and the Gortonists demonstrated, Gorton’s destructive behavior was not confined to Massachusetts. Rather, it was characteristic of himself and his followers, who are bound to disrupt society wherever they are. In November of 1642, Gorton and his followers wrote a letter the government of Massachusetts, informing them that they “play the part of Wisards, or Necromancers, not the part of true Naturalists, in the things of the kingdome of god”.⁴⁵⁰ They were “false and self-seeking interpreters...are ignorant of the Contract, and Covenant of God,”⁴⁵¹ “a company of grosse dissembling hypocrites, that under the pretence of Law and Religion, have done nothing else, but gone about to establish themselves in wayes to maintaine their owne vicious lusts”.⁴⁵² Less than a year later, Gorton and his followers wrote the Massachusetts’ authorities another letter, wherein Gorton informed them how “we know our course, professing the kingdome of God and his righteousnesse, renouncing that of darknesse and the devil, wherein you delight to trust...o yee generation of vipers”.⁴⁵³ They criticized their handling and treatment of Anne Hutchinson and hold them accountable for her death: “according to your owne shallow, humane, and carnall capacities, which, howsoever may get the highest seates in your Synagogues, Synods, and Jewish Synedrions, yet shall it never enter into the kingdome of the God to be a doore-keeper there”.⁴⁵⁴

⁴⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 10-35.

⁴⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 11-12.

⁴⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

⁴⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 23.

⁴⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

⁴⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

Winslow then enumerated for his reader “Their reproachfull and reviling Speeches of the Government and Magistrates of Massachusetts”.⁴⁵⁵ He listed forty-eight in total, noting the page in the text in the marginal notes for the reader to go back and check for himself. Winslow claimed that there was no warrant at all for this sort of language: “If indeed the Magistrates had given them any sore provocation of returning ill language, there might have been some excuse, but alas, all the cause that can bee given of most of this ill language, is nothing but writing friendly unto them, to send some from themselves to clear up the differences between them and the *Indians*, and to shew their just title to the land they possessed”.⁴⁵⁶ Following this list, Winslow presented his reader with another list, this time of “*Their reviling Language not onely against the Magistrates and Government here in particular, but also against Magistracy it self, and all Civill power*”.⁴⁵⁷ Like the preceeding list, Winslow noted the page number, in addition to quoting extensively from the text of the letters. The Gortonists were essentially anarchists. They were totally and wholly resistant to all civil authority.

If this was not enough to convince his readers of the threat that Gorton and his followers posed to the Massachusetts’ authorities, Winslow followed Gorton’s letters with a series of letters written by those in Providence complaining of him. Roger Williams complained of him in a letter to Winthrop, accusing him of Familism. In a letter to the governor of Massachusetts from the inhabitants of Providence in November 164, they requested help in dealing with Gorton: “If it may therefore please you of gently curtesie, and for the preservation of humanity and mankinde, to consider our condition,

⁴⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 38.

⁴⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

⁴⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 43.

and lend us a neighbour-like helping hand”.⁴⁵⁸ One William Arnold likewise complained that Gorton and his Company “are not fit persons to bee received in, and made members of such a body, in so weake a state as our Town is in at present”.⁴⁵⁹

Gorton’s account of his “persecutions” in New England was further undermined in the second part of the book, Winslow’s response to Gorton’s *Simplicities Defence*. Winslow went page-by-page, point-by-point, through *Simplicities Defence*, refuting Gorton’s arguments and defending New England against his charges. Gorton’s descriptions of New England and his accusations against its magistrates and ministers were “notorious slander”.⁴⁶⁰ Winslow clarified the actions taken against Roger Williams and John Wheelwright, vindicating the actions of the Massachusetts’ authorities.⁴⁶¹ In addition, Winslow explained, Gorton greatly exaggerated his “sufferings”. Winslow provided his readers with anecdotes of Gorton’s own turbulent behaviour and his attempts to raise sedition in the colonies. He invalidated many of Gorton’s accusations, stating that they are false or wholly exaggerations. Furthermore, Gorton’s claims to have printed exact replicas of manuscripts are untrue. They must be printed from memory, Winslow argued, for they are not accurate. Perhaps even more damaging were Gorton’s highly questionable relationships with the Indians, as Winslow narrated through a history of the Pequot War. Gorton, according to Winslow, “held such familiarity with Malignant Indians” as threatened the success and survival of the English settlers.⁴⁶² Indeed, “*Weeks* one of your [Gorton] stoutest Champions, lent *Myantonimo* an Armour, in which he was taken in battell against *Uncas*, who was under the protection of the English united

⁴⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 58.

⁴⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 59.

⁴⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 65.

⁴⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 65-66.

⁴⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 68.

Colonies: for which *Uncas* put him to death, and in your own book you hold forth more familiarity then becomes you”.⁴⁶³ Gorton and the Gortonists’ villainy was so dangerous that “if the *Gortonians*...be suffered to live so neare them, it will bee our ruine”.⁴⁶⁴

The inclusion of other manuscript letters in the text from other notable sources, further supported Winslow’s argument that Gorton is not a man to be trusted. According to Nathaniel Ward, Gorton was “*a man whose spirit is starke drunke with blasphemies and insolencies, a corrupter of Truth, and a disturber of the Peace wherever hee comes*”.⁴⁶⁵ And “many precious godly men affirme that *Sam, Gorton* and his company needlesly in their writings and conference belched out such blasphemy as they thought God was offended with the Country for giving them the liberty they had”.⁴⁶⁶ While these reports were perhaps not necessary after Winslow’s account of Gorton, they rhetorically reiterated Winslow’s main point: Gorton was a liar, a blasphemist, a Famillist, a traitor, and a threat to the peace and stability of any government under which he resides. All of his accusations against New England should be discounted.

Winslow followed his rejoinder to Gorton with a rebuttal of John Child titled, *New Englands Salamander, Discovered By an irreligious and scornfull Pamphlet, Called New-Englands Jonas cast up at London, &c. Owned by Major John Childe, but not probably to be written by him* in 1647. Like *Hypocrisie Unmasked*, this tract was printed by Richard Cotes for John Bellamy. It was dated by Thomason to May 29, 1647. John Child’s *New Englands Jonas Cast up at London* itself was a response to Winslow’s *Hypocrisie Unmasked*. Accordingly, this text was mired in the reflexive, intertextual print

⁴⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 70-71.

⁴⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 74.

⁴⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 77.

⁴⁶⁶ *Ibid.*.

culture of the period. Winslow's main project in this text was to refute the claims made by John Child's brother, Roger Child, in *New Englands Jonas*, which Winslow called "a two penny jeering Gigge, penned rather to please the fancy of common understandings, then to satisfies any solid judgements".⁴⁶⁷ Winslow claimed that the three that were committed, "namely Doctor *Childe*, *John Smith*, and *John Dand*," "are persons that have no proprietie or knowne proper estate in the government where they are so busie to disturbe and distract".⁴⁶⁸ Furthermore, he cast insinuations upon the character of Roger Child, implying that he was a Catholic, who not only studied in Italy at the university at Padua, but also "speaketh sometimes highly as I have heard reported in favour of the Jesuites".⁴⁶⁹ Winslow argued, contrary to Child's charges, that "there were none committed for petitioning, but for their Remonstrance and the many false charges and seditious insinuations tending to faction and insurrections sleighting the government, &c.". ⁴⁷⁰ He also was careful to remind the reader that "the Presbyterian Government was as freely tendered them by the Governour in the open Court without any contradiction of any the Assistants or other, as I ever heard any thing in my life".⁴⁷¹

There are two things to note in this text. The first was Winslow's insistentence that the government of New England is not tyrannical. It did not restrain liberty, as the Child text alledged, but acted in a lawful manner. The alledged "victims" were not "committed for petitioning, but for their remonstrance and the many false charges and

⁴⁶⁷ Edward Winslow, *New Englands Salamander, Discovered By an irreligious and scornfull Pamphlet, Called New-Englands Jonas cast up at London, &c. Owned by Major John Childe, but not probably to be written by him* (London, 1647), p. 4.

⁴⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 7. Child's account of the unfair imprisonment of these men at the hands of the Massachusetts Court in *New Englands Jonas*.

⁴⁶⁹ *Ibid.*.

⁴⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

⁴⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 12-13.

sedition insinuations, tending to faction and insurrection sleighting the government”.⁴⁷²

Its “libertie is granted in our Patents to make our own Lawes”.⁴⁷³ The patent for New England in no way bound them to Old England’s laws, and they had the freedom to enact their own, “for the Law of England...was never intended for *New-England*, neither by the Parliament, nor yet in the Letters Patent...but all that is required of us in the making of our Lawes and Ordinances, Offices and Officers, or to goe as neare the Lawes of *England* as may bee”.⁴⁷⁴

Secondly, the tract offered a window onto the Atlantic world of print and manuscript. Winslow described to Child’s text as “being but a two penny jeering Gigge, penned rather to lease the fancy of common understandings, then to satisfie any solid judgment”.⁴⁷⁵ But the writings of the Childs were not confined to print, but also circulated in manuscript throughout the entire Atlantic world. Of the Remonstrance penned by Child’s brother, Roger, Winslow describes how

Copies of it were dispersed into the hands of some knowne ill affected people in the severall governments adjoyning, as *Plymoth, Conectacut, New Haven, &c.* who gloried not a little in it; nay the Petitioners spared no paines, for before our coming away wee heard from the *Dutch Plantation, Virginia, and Bermudas*, that they had them here also, with such expressions in their Letters as the present governour of *Bermudas* was bold to affirm to a Gentleman from whom I had it, who was then bound for *New-England* to get passage for *England*, that hee was confident he should finde *New-England* altogether by the eares as well as *England*.⁴⁷⁶

Thanks to the widespread circulation of manuscript materials throughout the Atlantic world, the reputation of New England was called into question not just in England, but throughout the English and Dutch Americas. Events in New England were of interest to

⁴⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 9.

⁴⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

⁴⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

⁴⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

⁴⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

the English and Dutch godly everywhere, and news of New England circulated in both manuscript and print in the English Atlantic world.

III.

The most prolific author of tracts defending the New England Way in the second half of the 1640s was, perhaps unsurprisingly, John Cotton. Over ten tracts authored by Cotton were printed, some of which were reprinted more than once. Several of them dealt explicitly with the attacks on the New England Way based on the Antinomian Controversy of the 1630s. The first of these was *Sixteene Questions of Serious and Necessary Consequence* published in 1644. It was republished again in 1647 under the title *Severall Questions of Serious and necessary Consequence* with a different printer. In December of 1636, in the midst of the Antinomian Controversy, Winthrop noted that

About this time the rest of the ministers, taking offence at some doctrines delivered by Mr. Cotton, and especially at some opinions, which some of his church did not broach, and for he seemed to have too good an opinion of, and too much familiarity with those persons, drew out sixteen points, and gave them to him, entreating him to deliver his judgment directly in them, which accordingly he did.⁴⁷⁷

Sixteene Questions was Cotton's answers to these questions, of which, Winthrop recorded, "many copies therefore were dispersed about".⁴⁷⁸ At least one of these copies made its way to England where it was published in 1644. As a document arising out of the Antinomian Controversy, the tract posed and answered questions about faith and sanctification, not church-government or church-discipline, but the tract did make clear

⁴⁷⁷ Winthrop, *History*, I, p. 239-240.

⁴⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

that the doctrines of the New England Way were not a gateway to sectaries and heresies. At less than twenty pages in quarto, both editions would have been easily affordable, making them cheap as well as popular.

The Antinomian Controversy was revisited in 1646 with the publication of *A Conference Mr John Cotton Held at Boston With the Elders of New-England*. Like *Sixteene Questions*, *A Conference* was Cotton's response to questions posed to him during the Antinomian Controversy in 1636. Also like *Sixteene Questions*, manuscript copies of *A Conference* circulated throughout the English Atlantic World. Archbishop Laud, for instance, received a copy of it in October 1637.⁴⁷⁹ The printed version was seen into print by an English minister, Francis Cornwell.⁴⁸⁰ It is unclear how Cornwell, a relatively obscure minister in England, acquired a copy, but his possession of a manuscript copy is testimony to the reach of manuscript publication networks on both sides of the Atlantic.

Cotton's remaining tracts are most readily understood by dividing them into two groups. The first group was comprised of shorter tracts that are characterized best as clear statements of the faith and church-government practiced in New England. They included *The Covenant of Gods Free Grace* from 1645 and *Milk For Babes* in 1646. *The Covenant of Gods Free Grace* was dated by Thomason to September 23, 1645. It was published twice that year, once by John Downname for Matthew Simmons and once printed by Matthew Simmons for John Hancock. Simmons, as we have seen and will continue to see, was a major printer of Cotton's works. Added to this tract of Cotton's

⁴⁷⁹ *Calendar of State Papers, Colonial, I*, p. 259.

⁴⁸⁰ David Hall identifies Cornwell as possibly the Francis Cornwell who graduated from Cambridge in 1621/22. See David Hall, ed., *The Antinomian Controversy, 1636-1638* (Middletown, Conn: Wesleyan University Press, 1968), p. 173.

was John Davenport's *Profession of Faith*. This was not the first time this had been printed: it was previously published in 1642 for John Hancock.

The Covenant of Gods Free Grace reminded Cotton's readers that "although we can do little in reforming kingdoms and nations, yet we may take care for our own houses". For, one must "not so be quieted with the disorders in our families, as to drive us to neglect, but labour to purge them more and more, and not to suffer them to come in".⁴⁸¹ This was a clear allusion to the major difference between Presbyterianism and the New England Way: the Congregational system of church-government was not a national church. By extension, Cotton did not approve of admitting unreformed sinners into his communion of Saints. It was the duty of one another "to observe what is amisse in one another, and labour to purge out all our corruptions, thus mutually to help one another in the knowledge of those things which wee of ourselves may be ignorant of, that so wee may come to cleanse our selves in some measure from all sins".⁴⁸² This was a not a call for a national system of Presbyteries and classes, but rather for the fellowship and communion of gathered congregations such as were found in New England. Men and women, like gathered congregational churches, were to rely on one another for support, to help them see the error of their ways if there be any, but in no way were they formally bound to obey one another.

Milk For Babes, dated by Thomason to April 10, 1646 and printed by J. Coe for Henry Overton, likewise continued to provide support and justification for the New England Way. It was a brief, thirteen page pamphlet consisting of a series of questions and answers that provided the basis for Calvinist theology and also the New England

⁴⁸¹ John Cotton, *The Covenant of Gods free Grace* (London, 1645), p. 8-9.

⁴⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 10.

Way. Every answer that Cotton provided was proven through reference to Scripture, identified in marginal annotations. Cotton defined *the communion of Saints* as “the fellowship of the Church in the blessings of the Covenant of grace, and the seales thereof” and *the Church* as “a Congregation of Saints joyned together in the bond of the Covenant, to worship the Lord and to edify one another, in all his Holy Ordinances”.⁴⁸³ Furthermore, only by “confession of their sinnes and profession of their faith and of their subjection to the Gospell of Christ” was an individual and their children “received into the fellowship of the Church, and the seales thereof”.⁴⁸⁴

Both *Milk for Babes* and *The Covenant of Gods Free Grace* were largely removed from the world of revolutionary print culture from the mid to late 1640s. While both were clear statements of faith and justifications of the New England system of church-government, they very easily could have been printed in the early 1640s. Indeed, part of *The Covenant of Gods Free Grace*, Davenport’s *Confession of Faith*, was printed in 1642. They did not reflect the change in style that followed in the wake of the publication of the *Apologeticall Narration*, a style characterized by reflexivity and more highly charged polemic. However, the second group of Cotton’s publications was closer to this new style. This group consisted of *The Keyes of the Kingdom* from 1644, *The Way of the Churches of Christ in New-England* from 1645, and *The Way of Congregational Churches Cleared* from 1648. All three of these works shared several characteristics. Firstly, all were printed by Matthew Simmons. Secondly, whether in the preface or in the

⁴⁸³ John Cotton, *Milk for Babes. Drawn Out of the Breasts of both Testaments. Chiefly for the spiritual nourishment of Boston Babes in either England: But may be of like use for any Children* (London, 1646), p. 10

⁴⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

body of the text itself, these works were firmly situated within the post-*Apologeticall Narration* reflexive world of print.

And finally, and perhaps most significantly, they all dealt with the relationship of New England to the Independents of Old England. As we saw in the previous chapter, Independency as a polemical term was highly unstable, signifying not a fixed meaning, but rather invoked to provoke an unfavorable response in the reader. As Independency itself was poorly understood, its relationship to the New England Way was even less clear. At times, Independency was understood to be the same as the New England Way; at other times, entirely unlike it. New Englanders were forced to confront their confused polemical relationship with Independency. Edwards in the third part of *Gangraena* related the story of a return migrant from New England who publicly in London at Guildhall declared, “the Independents in *Old-England* are nothing like to them of *New-England* no more than black to white: you Independents here do that which we abhorre there”.⁴⁸⁵ It was imperative that Cotton address these issues, and his tracts *The Keyes of the Kingdom*, *The Way of the Churches of Christ in New-England*, and *The Way of Congregational Churches Cleared* all did so in the text and in the prefatory matter penned by Independents in England.

The Keyes of the Kingdom of Heaven, and Power thereof, according to the Word of God was dated by Thomason to June 14, 1644. The text was slightly over sixty pages in quarto, thus placing it outside of the boundary of cheap print. It was typical of early 1640s texts, in that it consisted entirely of biblical exegesis to justify the system of church-government in New England. While the text was readable, there were no

⁴⁸⁵ Thomas Edwards, *Gangraena, Part III*, p. 99.

marginal glosses to guide the reader, with scriptural references imbedded in the text and more than a few Latin phrases sprinkled throughout, although they were translated into English. It was a very sober and clear explanation of the New England Way, but it was not a colorful text by any means.

On the title page, it clearly identified the publishers as Thomas Goodwin and Philip Nye, two members of the Dissenting Brethren and authors of the *Apologeticall Narration*, thus signaling the alliance between the New England Way and the Independents in Old England. In almost all respects, they identified their system of church-government with that in New England. They declared that

*As for our selves, we are yet, neither afraid, nor ashamed to make profession (in the midst of all the high waves on both sides dashing on us) that the substance of this briefe Extract from the Authors larger Discourse, is, That very Middle-way (which in our Apologie we did in the generall intimate and intend) between that which is called Brownisme, and the Presbyteriall-government.*⁴⁸⁶

However, while declaring the New England Way as their middle way, they also “assent not to all expressions scattered up and downe, or all and every Assertion interwoven in it; yea, nor to all the grounds or allegations of Scriptures; nor should wee in all things perhaps have used the same terms to expresse the same materials by”.⁴⁸⁷ More specifically, they had no problem with prophesying by “*Brethren gifted*,” not just the Elders of a church. Furthermore, they granted less authority to synods than the New England Way. Independents defined a synod as a consultation, for they were not convinced “that the Apostles to the end to make this [the example of the Church of Antioch seeking assistance from the Church of Jerusalem] a Precedent of such a formall

⁴⁸⁶ John Cotton, *The Keyes of the Kingdom of Heaven, And Power thereof, according to the Word of God* (London, 1644), p. A4^r.

⁴⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. A4^v.

Synod, did act therein as Ordinary Elders, and not out of Apostolicall guidance and assistance”.⁴⁸⁸

Identifying and qualifying the relationship of the New England Way with Independency was also found in the preface of *The Way of the Churches of Christ in New-England*, dated by Thomason to April 4, 1645. Like *The Keyes of the Kingdom*, this was not a complicated tract, but a typically, sober biblical exegesis justifying the New England Way, rehearsing the same arguments and the same examples that had been seen many times before. However, at over a hundred pages, it too was beyond the bounds of cheap print. It was a justification of the New England Way using biblical examples, textual exegesis, and writings of the early church fathers to justify the way of churches in New England. It was not a polemical tract—except for its prefatory epistle.

The authors of the “Epistle to the Reader” were Nathaniel Homes and John Humphrey. Homes was an Independent minister who, along with Henry Burton, gathered one of the earliest Independent congregations in London. He was also the subject of Edwards’ ire in *Gangraena*.⁴⁸⁹ Humphrey was a return migrant, having returned to England in 1642. It is possible that he carried Cotton’s manuscript of *The Way of Churches of Christ in New-England* back with him. He was also involved in publishing Cotton’s sermon series on Revelations.⁴⁹⁰ In the “Epistle to the Reader,” Homes and Humphrey listed the following tracts as ones that “*satisfie (if it might be) those clamourers for a larger Narration*” of Independency: Richard Mather’s *Church-Government and Church-Covenant Discussed, In an Answer to the Elders of the Severall*

⁴⁸⁸ *Ibid.*.

⁴⁸⁹ *ODNB*.

⁴⁹⁰ I am very grateful to David Hall for identifying John Humphrey for me.

*Churches in New-England To two and thirty Questions, sent over to them by divers Ministers in England, to declare their judgments therein, The Apologeticall Narration, Cotton's The Keyes of the Kingdom, and The Reasons of the Dissenting Brethren.*⁴⁹¹ To this list was added this tract, Cotton's *The Way of the Churches of Christ in New-England*. Clearly, the New England Way was conceived of by Independents as part of and essential to Independency, if not identical to it. The authors of the preface also remarked upon the splintering of the godly and the rise of polemical invective that characterized the post-*Apologeticall Narration* world of print, commenting on "with what a different spirit have the adverse part replied; as if personall invectives, and imbittring a stile, were Gods way of setting a cause, or battering an opinion?"⁴⁹²

Cotton's *The Keyes of the Kingdom* presented a clear statement of the New England Way. He detailed the nature of the relationship between the brethren of the church and their elders, and also of the role that synods play in the New England Way. In the New England system of church-government, the key of power or liberty was given to the brethren of the church, or the admitted church members. Brethren could choose their own officers, send elders as messengers to do public service, admit church membership, judge public scandals, even if they involved an elder. The Key of Authority or Rule that was committed to the elders gave them the authority to preach, administer sacraments and seals, for ordinary brethren many not prophesy publicly; call the church together; examine potential church members; ordain officers; open the doors of speech and silence in the Assembly; reject causeless complaints and handle just complaints before the

⁴⁹¹ John Cotton, *The Way of the Churches of Christ in New England. Or The Way of Churches walking in Brotherly equalitie, or co-ordination, without Subjection of one Church to another*. (London, 1645), p. A2^v.

⁴⁹² *Ibid.*, p. A3r^v

congregation; dismiss the church; charge people in private. In the handling of an offence, the elders had the power to inform the church of what the law is for censure of the offense. Cotton made it clear that the liberty individual churches had to choose their own ministers and elders did not breed instability in the church. For

If it should be further objected, Yea, but give the people this power and libertie in some cases, either to cast off their Teachers, or to cut them off, the people will soon take advantage to abuse this libertie unto much carnall licentiousnesse. The Apostle preventeth that with a word of wholesome counsel: *Brethren* (saith he) *on have been called unto libertie: onely use not your libertie as an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another*, v. 13. and thereupon seasonably pursueth this councill with a caveat to beware of abusing this libertie to carnall contention, (an usuall disease of popular liberty) and withal dehortheth them from all other fruits of the flesh, to the end of the Chapter.⁴⁹³

With regards to synods, they should be called “if one church see matter of offence in another, and be not able to heal it in a more private way”.⁴⁹⁴ It was only when

the church, or a considerable part of it fall into error through ignorance, or into a faction by variance, they cannot expect the presence of Church with them, according to his promise to passe a binding sentence. And then as they fall under the conviction and admonition of any other sister church, in a way of brotherly love, by vertue of communion of churches; so their errors and variance, and whatsoever scandals else do accompany the same, they are justly subject to the condemnation of a Synod of Churches.⁴⁹⁵

Furthermore, the power given to them was only to give counsel:

And seeing also a Synod sometime meeteth to convince, and *admonish* an offending church or Presbyterie, they have *power* therefore, (if they cannot heal the offenders) to *determine to withdraw communion from them*. And further, seeing they meet likewise sometimes for generall reformation; they have power to *decree* and publish such *Ordinances*, as may conduce according to God, unto such reformation.⁴⁹⁶

⁴⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

⁴⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

⁴⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

⁴⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 25.

Critics of this system of church-discipline could argue that the synod, lacking any power to punish the offending church, was in effect powerless. However, Cotton answered that such was not the case. Rather, synods were effective because a meeting would not have been called in the first place if the elders of a church had not thought it necessary: “For what need churches send to a Synod for light and direction in wayes of truth and peace, if they be resolved afore-hand how far they will go?”⁴⁹⁷

Arguably the most topical component of Cotton’s *The Keyes of the Kingdom* was his discussion of the New England Way’s relationship with Independency. While Nye and Goodwin explicitly connected their Independency with the New England Way in the Preface, Cotton argues that a church was not independent. Rather, “The Church is not independent on Christ, but dependent on him for all Church-power”.⁴⁹⁸ Cotton’s choice of the word “independent” was deliberate: it was consciously chosen to counter accusations that the New England Way was Independency. Cotton’s insistence that a church was dependent upon Christ was continued in his explication of the church’s relationship with the secular authorities. He argued that ministerial power was subject to magisterial power in matters that concern the civil peace, thereby producing an effective alliance between magistracy and ministry. In matters of civil peace, the church was dependent upon magistracy in the disposing of goods or land. It was also in the power of the civil magistrate to establish and reform religion. In matters of the exercise of public spiritual administration, the church was dependent upon the magistrate, such as in times of war or pestilence, and the magistrate may proclaim a fast. Also, ministers could take up the sword in their own defense or overthrow civil peace. Rather, they were dependent

⁴⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

⁴⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

upon the civil magistrate to do so.⁴⁹⁹ But this dependency of the church upon magistrates in matters of civil peace was mutual, for “as the Church is subject to the sword of the Magistrate in things which concern the civill peace, so the Magistrate (if Christian) is subject to the keys of the Church, in matters which concern the peace of his conscience and the kingdome of heaven”.⁵⁰⁰

Just as a church was dependent upon the secular authorities in matters concerning the civil peace, it was also dependent upon other churches as well, to a certain extent. A particular congregation walking rightly would be independent of other churches. But if it fell into offence, it was no longer independent: it was subject to the admonition of any other church and to the determination of a synod. Cotton was careful to maintain that “it is a safe and wholesome, and holy Ordinance of Christ, for such particular churches to joyn together in holy Covenant or Communion, and consultation amongst themselves, to administer all their church affairs, (which are weighty, and difficult and common concernment) not without common consultation and consent of other churches about them”.⁵⁰¹ However, the power of this dependency was not subversive of the independent power of the particular congregation. For, as Cotton said,

*let it suffice the Churches consociate to assist one another, with their counsel, and right hand of fellowship, when they see a particular Church use their libertie and power aright. But let them not put forth the power of their communitie, either to take such Church acts out of their hands, or to hinder them in their lawfull course, unlesse they see them (through ignorance or weaknesse) to abuse their libertie and authorities in the Gospel.*⁵⁰²

Ultimately, both dependency and independency were limited.

⁴⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 50-53.

⁵⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 53.

⁵⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 54.

⁵⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 57.

In *The Way of Congregational Churches Cleared*, Cotton continued to refine and clarify the definition of and use of the term “Independency” with regards to the New England Way. It was by far the most reflexive tract he had written. Dated by Thomason to February 9, 1647/8, this tract was a response to earlier attacks on the New England Way. It was composed of two parts. The first was a response and rebuttal to Baillie’s *A Dissuasive From the Errours of the Time*, and the second was a rebuttal to Cawdry’s *Vindicae Clavium* and Rutherford’s *The Due Right of Presbyteries*. The first part of the text was slightly over a hundred pages and the second forty-four pages, making the text beyond the realm of cheap print. The dedicatory epistle, or the “Epistle Pacificatory, to the Brethren dissenting from this Way,” was penned by Nathaniel Homes, who also co-wrote the preface to *The Way of the Churches of Christ in New-England*. Homes’ preface was striking for a number of reasons, and deserves closer attention. Homes began his preface by establishing the veracity of this text. Impugning the legitimacy of other tracts purported to be written by the authors identified, Homes informed his readers that Cotton himself sent Homes this tract, “together with his letter under his own hand unto me”. Cotton further requested that Homes “*would assist the Press*” in its publication.⁵⁰³ This was thus a legitimate statement of the New England Way. As such, readers should pay more careful attention to what it says. They should not be credulous of “reports, or letters, or Books, unlesse they be handed to us from the Authors themselves, with whom ye have to do. Otherwise (as this books bears notable witnes) our eyes and ears shal be abused, and our judgements warped from the simplicity and straitnesse of Truth”.⁵⁰⁴

⁵⁰³ Nathaniel Homes, “An Epistyle Pacificatory,” in John Cotton, *The Way of Congregational Churches Cleared*, p. A2^r.

⁵⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. A3^r-A3^v.

Aside from establishing this text within the world of revolutionary print culture, Homes' preface also further distinguished the New England Way from both Presbyterianism and Independency. For, while Homes was one of the founders of the first Independent congregations in London, throughout the 1640s and 1650s he became more and more radical. Unlike the Independent churches in Old England but like the churches in New England, Homes, according to the Presbyterian John Vicars, refused his "parishioners from Christian communion in their own parish church, except they would enter into a covenant with him".⁵⁰⁵ Homes also became increasingly interested in millenarianism, publishing several tracts on the subject during the Interregnum. It is perhaps Homes' own distancing from Independency that explained why his preface is addressed "To the Brethren dissenting from this Way." As discussed earlier, throughout the fall of 1647 into the spring of 1648, Presbyterians and Independents, who had only recently viciously denounced each other in the press, had coalesced into an alliance in response to the increased radicalism of the New Model Army. Homes, with his own budding radicalism, would have not have been part of this realignment, and he undoubtedly would have been alienated by this move by the moderate Independents. Accordingly, "Brethren dissenting" would immediately call to the mind of the reader the Dissenting Brethren, the leading Independents in the Westminster Assembly, whom Homes now found himself at odds. In addition, "Brethren dissenting from this Way" would also include Presbyterians, for they also disagreed with the New England Way. Homes differentiates the New England Way from both:

⁵⁰⁵ John Vicars, *The Schismatic Sifted* (London, 1646), quoted from Murray Tolmie, *The Triumph of the Saints*, p. 110.

*You say SAINTS in outward profession is the Matter of such a Church; and an implicit uniting, viz. a walking and communicating with you is sufficient evidencing of the form. We judge that real SAINTS uttering in discourse of the breathings of the Holy Spirit, and experiences of conversion, witnessed in a stricter conversation, to be the Matter; and their solemn confession of their Faith, and expresse open covenanting with the Lord to walk with such a body of Saints in all the wayes of Christ too their light and power for reciprocal edification, to be the Manifest Form.*⁵⁰⁶

Homes' position on Independency, and indeed his own position among the Independents, mirrored the murky grey area that Cotton himself navigated in the text. New Englanders distanced themselves from some forms of Independency, while some Independents themselves identified with it.

In the first part of the book, Cotton selectively quoted from Baillie's text and responded to those points that tended towards the undermining of Independency, the New England Way, and Cotton himself, as well as other ministers in general in New England. Baillie was not the sole focus of Cotton's pen, though. Cotton also responded to charges laid against him and the New England Way by Edwards, Williams, and Lechford.⁵⁰⁷ Cotton extolled the virtues of the New England Way by speaking of its widespread acceptance throughout the English colonies, mentioning how "Some honest minded people in *Virginia* discerning their want of spirituall Ministry, sent earnest letters, and one or more messengers, to the Elders of the Churches here for some of our Ministers to break the Bread of Life to them".⁵⁰⁸ And then there are "Others of the Western Islands (as *Barbados, Antegua, Mevis*) have desired the like helpe from us".⁵⁰⁹ The fame of the New England Way was so well-known that "Some of the Jesuits at *Lisborn*, and others in

⁵⁰⁶ Nathaniel Homes, "An Epistyle Pacificatory," in John Cotton, *The Way of Congregational Churches Cleared*, p. A3^v.

⁵⁰⁷ Cotton, *The Way of Congregational Churches Cleared* counters Edwards' Attacks: p. 24, 26; counters Williams' attacks: p. 28, 55-56, 72, 79-82, 89; counters Lechford's attacks: p. 71

⁵⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 76.

⁵⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 77.

the Western Islands have professed to some of our Merchants and Mariners, they look at our Plantations (and at some of us by name) as dangerous supplanters of the Catholicke cause”.⁵¹⁰ Not only was the New England Way the favored system of church-government throughout the Atlantic world, but as a force against popery it was unmatched.

Cotton devoted Chapter Three of the text to clarify the labeling of the New England Way. “The way of the Churches in *New-England*,” he said, “is neither justly called a Sect, nor fitly called Independency. Not a Sect, for we professe the Orthodox Doctrine of Faith, the same with all Protestant Churches”.⁵¹¹ They could not be called separatists either, for “onely we separate from the world, that is, from the worldly sort of them, who either live in open scandal”.⁵¹² With regards to Independency, “Nor is Independency a fit name of the way our Church” for “whereas indeed we doe professe dependency upon Magistrates for civil Government and protection: Dependency upon Christ and his Word, for the sovereign government and rule of our administrations: Dependence upon the counsell of other Churches and Synods”.⁵¹³ As Independency “neither truly describeth us, nor faithfully distinguish us from many others,” Cotton claimed that he knew of a label “none fitter, then to denominate...our Congregationall”.⁵¹⁴

However, Cotton also sung the praises of Independency, though he was quick to clarify that

⁵¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 21-22.

⁵¹¹ John Cotton, *The Way of Congregational Churches Cleared: In two Treatises* (London, 1648), p. 10.

⁵¹² *Ibid.*, p. 11.

⁵¹³ *Ibid.*.

⁵¹⁴ *Ibid.*.

when I say Independents, I meane not those corrupt Sects and Hereies, which shroud themselves under the vast title of Independency, and in the meane time cast off all Church Government, and Churches too; but such as professe the Kingdome of Christ in the government of each holy Congregation of Saints within themselves.⁵¹⁵

And of these latter Independents, Cotton argued they “by the blessing of Christ doth speedily, safely, and effectually purge out such grievous and dangerous evils, as threaten the ruine of Church and States: therefore Independency is safely allowed, and justly, and wisely established in any civil State”.⁵¹⁶ Independency then could be like New England’s Congregationalism. For during the Antinomian Controversy, Congregationalism’s effectiveness in purging heresy was proven: “in discovering and suppressing those errors of Antinomians, and Familists, which brake forth here amongst us, and might have proceeded to the subversion of many soules, had not the blessing of Christ upon the vigilancy of Congregationall discipline, either prevented or removed, or, healed the same”.⁵¹⁷

The line Cotton walked between the dependency and independency of churches was a fine one. His insistence that “In the new Testament, it is not a new observation that wee never reade of any nationall church, nor of any nationall officers given to them by Christ;”⁵¹⁸ his disavowal of a Presbyterian national church; and his concomitant rejection of the label “Independency” while explicit approving of Independents, all placed him beyond the bounds of easy definition. The confusion we as scholars have in sifting through the chaos today was shared by readers in the 1640s. The liminality of his position and that of the New England Way within the world of revolutionary print culture

⁵¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 103.

⁵¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 84.

⁵¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 102. Cotton devotes considerable time to disproving the allegations leveled against the New England Way that stem from the Antinomian Controversy. See *Ibid.*, p. 47-66, 85-93.

⁵¹⁸ *The Keyes of the Kingdom of Heaven*, p. 31.

was not a testament of Cotton's own confusion, but rather of the permeability and contestability of labels such as Presbyterian and Independent during the English Revolution. For, along with Presbyterianism, Independency and Congregationalism did not differ in doctrine or theology, but only in church-government. The foundations of these differences, dependent as they were upon biblical exegesis, derived from the same texts. The example of the primitive churches in the New Testament could be read as Presbyterian or Independent or Congregational, depending almost entirely upon the applied exegesis of the reader. The interchangeability of labels like "Independent" and "Congregationalism" testify to the absence of clear boundaries between them and role of print in attempting to construct these boundaries and the confusion that ensued.

IV.

Cotton also mentioned in *The Way of Congregational Churches Cleared* on more than one occasion the progress the ministers in New England have made in converting the Native American populations. According to Cotton,

of late (through the grace of Christ) one of our fellow-Elders, Mr. *Eliot*, Teacher of *Rocksbury*, having gotten the knowledg of the Indian language preacheth to them everyweek: one week to one Congregation on the fourth day, to the other on the sixt the week following. And to him they willingly give eare, and reform their vicious living according to his Doctrine; and some of them offer themselves to be trained up in English Families, and in our Schools: and there be of them that give good hope of coming on to the acknowledgement of the grace of Christ.⁵¹⁹

⁵¹⁹ *The Way of Congregational Churches Cleared*, p. 21.

In fact, “the *Indians* resort more and more to these Assemblies, [and] heare with reverence and attention”.⁵²⁰ This success proved that contrary to allegations otherwise “there is no principle or allowed practice of ours that doth hinder (much lesse exceedingly hinder) the work or hope of the conversion of the Natives”.⁵²¹ Cotton’s references to the growing success of the New Englanders conversionary efforts were not the only ones found in the transatlantic polemics of the period. From the start of the colonization of Massachusetts, missionary motivations were evident. The first charter of the Massachusetts Bay Colony hoped that the English inhabitants there, “maie be soe religiously, peaceable, and civilly governed, as their good life and orderlie conversation maie wynn and incite the natives of [that] country to the knowledg and obedience of the onlie true God and Savior of mankind, and the Christian fayth...[this] is the principall ende of this plantation”.⁵²² In his farewell sermon to the Winthrop fleet, Cotton urged the colonists to “win...[the Indians] to the love of Christ”.⁵²³

The problem was that these official statements did not reflect the actual actions of the colony in its early years. Massachusetts Bay Colony did not conduct the sort of active missionizing advertised by its charter and encouraged to do so by Cotton. Throughout the 1630s and early 1640s, no active missionizing took place. Rather, as Cotton told a correspondent in the mid 1630s, the colonists did not want “to compel” the Indians “but to permit them either to believe willingly or not to believe at all”.⁵²⁴ Prior to 1644, the colonial government enacted no law that required Native Americans to receive

⁵²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 77-78.

⁵²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 74.

⁵²² William Macdonald, ed., *Select Charters and Other Documents Illustrative of American History, 1606-1775* (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1899), p. 26.

⁵²³ John Cotton, *Gods Promise to His Plantations* (London, 1630), p.19.

⁵²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

Christian instruction, nor were they forbidden to practice their own religious traditions. The only exception to this was Pequot War captives.⁵²⁵

Winthrop sought advice from Patrick Copeland in Bermuda about how to convert the natives. Having traveled extensively throughout the world and been witness to the missionary campaigns of Catholics in the East and in the West, Copeland advised Winthrop on the best methods. He told Winthrop of the success of the Dutch in converting the Indians in the East Indies. The Dutch learned how to do so from the Jesuits in Asia, Copeland had seen their successes himself during his own travels in the East Indies. He suggests that Winthrop follow their methods, which are demonstrably successful, in his own endeavours in converting the Indians. Copeland further mentions that he has written a letter to Cotton about this as well.⁵²⁶ Evidently, there were no skilled missionizers among the ministers in the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

The only printed text from the early 1640s regarding missionizing in New England was Peter and Weld's *New Englands First Fruits*, published in 1643. It was printed by Richard Overton and Gregory Dexter for Henry Overton and dated by Thomason to January 31, 1643. The text consisted of twenty-six pages, but it was rather shoddily composed with a great deal of mispagination. Despite its rushed assembly, *New Englands First Fruits* is significant because it was the first piece of propaganda written by the agents back in Old England. It was composed of three parts: the progress of the Gospel in the colony, the founding of Harvard College, and "Divers other speciall Matters concerning that *Country*". With respect to the progress of the conversion of the Indians, there was not much to report. The authors justified this lack of progress by

⁵²⁵ *WP*, v. III, p. 457; v. I, p. 157, 159.

⁵²⁶ *WP*, v. IV, p. 157-59.

reminding their readers of the fact that the native population had never been exposed to Christianity before and was completely uncivilized. Furthermore, language barriers, between the England and the natives and the diversity of native tongues had made missionizing difficult. These were clearly justifications and excuses for the paucity of information that follows, and it was evident that Peter and Weld were aware of this deficiency.

By 1632, only one Native American had been admitted as a church member.⁵²⁷ The authors did mention how “some of them will not be absent from a sermon or family duties if they can help it; and we have knowne some would use to weep and cry when detained by occasion from the sermon”.⁵²⁸ However, other than the one admitted member, few were identified specifically as having any sustained interest in converting. They named a man from Plymouth, someone named Sagamore John, identified as the “Prince of the Massagueses,” the Indian Maid of Salem, and four more unnamed Indians and “Divers of the Indians Children”.⁵²⁹ This handful of Indians, only one of whom could be identified as an actual convert and admitted member of a church, revealed that Christianized Natives were clearly not in the majority among the Indian population. When Weld and Peter claimed that “much more might be added,” for “one may easily imagine, that here are not all that may be produced,” it was clear that very few have been produced. Evidently, no sustained, collective interest in missionizing had taken place.

Lack of interest and/or success on the part of the colonists in converting the native population did not go unnoticed by their contemporaries, on both sides of the Atlantic.

⁵²⁷ *New Englands First Fruits*, p. A4^r.

⁵²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. A3^r.

⁵²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. A2^v-A3^r.

Return migrants and Presbyterians alike used the absence of a sustained mission in New England to discredit the colony, and, by extension, its religious practices. New England's failure to engage in any sort of successful missionary activity became another log to fuel the fire of the attacks on the New England Way in Old England. Thomas Lechford began the attacks in 1642 in his *Plain Dealing: Or, Newes from New-England*, which were reprinted two years later as *New-Englands Advice to Old-England*.⁵³⁰ He complained how "there hath not been any sent forth by any Church to learne the Native language, or to instruct them in the Religion". This situation he attributed directly to the New England Way, for when "churches among them are equall, and all Officers equall, and so betweene many, nothing is done that way".⁵³¹ Gorton described how badly the Massachusetts authorities had treated the Narragansett Indians by aiding and abetting the Massachusetts Indians. The similarities between the colony's treatment of the Indians and the Gortonists were not lost on the former, who told the latter "seeing the *Massachusetts* had not onely taken *our estates from us in goods and chattels, but also our houses, lands and labours, where we should raise more, for the preservations of our Families* and withal, told us that their condition, might (in great measure) be paraleld with ours".⁵³² Baillie, relying on the word of Roger Williams, wrote how "of all that ever crossed the *American* Seas, they are noted as the most neglectfull of the work of Conversion".⁵³³

In March of 1644, the relations between the Massachusetts Bay Colony and the native populations changed dramatically, having a profound impact on the English missionary efforts. Five sachems that lived on the boundaries of the colony submitted to

⁵³⁰ Thomas Lechford, *Plain Dealing: Or, Newes from New-England* (London, 1642), p. 32-35.

⁵³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

⁵³² Samuel Gorton, *Simplicities Defence* (1646), p. 81.

⁵³³ Robert Baillie, *A Dissuasive from The Errours Of the Time* (London, 1645), p. 61.

the Massachusetts General Court. Prior to the submission, the Boston area Indians had suffered through two epidemics since the arrival of the Europeans. The first, from 1616-1619, resulted in a population loss of 90%. The second, from 1633-34, was a small pox epidemic. These two epidemics left much of the country around Boston empty of native peoples, increasing the territory available for New English settlers' expansion and settlement. The devastating population losses, coupled by the arrival of European settlers in ever-increasing numbers in the area, destabilized local politics among the native tribes. Alliances with the Europeans were sought among the natives as a means of increasing their own power.⁵³⁴ According to Harold Van Lonkhuyzen, "missionaries were sought as a means of escaping traditional alliances, of gaining new ones with the English, or, within bands, as a means of subverting existing relationships".⁵³⁵ The most important alliance for the purposes of missionizing occurred in early 1644. In February of 1644, Winthrop recorded in his journal the submission of three sachems, commenting, "We now began to conceive hope that the Lord's time was at hand for opening a door of light and grace to those Indians...for this example gave encouragement to all these Indians to come in and submit to our government, in expectation of the like protection and benefit".⁵³⁶ Two other sachems submitted as well, promising "to be governed and protected by them" and "to bee willing from time to time to bee instructed in the knowledg & worship of God".⁵³⁷ The submission of the five sachems prompted the Court to enact a series of missionary directives in June and November 1644, and in October 1645. However, none

⁵³⁴ Please see Andrew Lipman, "'A meanes to knit them togeather': The Exchange of Body Parts in the Pequot War," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 65, 1 (2008).

⁵³⁵ Harold W. Van Lonkhuyzen, "A Reappraisal of the Praying Indians: Acculturation, Conversion, and Identity at Natick, Massachusetts, 1646-1730," *The New England Quarterly*, 63, 3 (Sept., 1990), p. 402-403.

⁵³⁶ *WJ*, p. 494-495.

⁵³⁷ *RCM* 2:55.

of the Court's directives produced any results. Until John Eliot undertook the task, conversion of the native populations had been haphazard at best, nonexistent most of time.

John Eliot was born in Hertfordshire in 1604. After graduating from Cambridge in 1622, the record of his life is spotty. However, in 1629 he became Thomas Hooker's assistant in Chelmsford, Essex. Following Hooker's immigration to Holland, Eliot resolved to emigrate to Massachusetts, where he arrived in 1631 brought by the *Lyon* that also carried Roger Williams and John Winthrop, Jr.. He was selected as teacher in the church of Roxbury under the leadership of Thomas Weld. As teacher of Roxbury, Eliot published four treatises: *The Christian Commonwealth* (1659), *The Communion of Churches* (1665), *The Harmony of the Gospels* (1678), and *A Brief Answer to a Small Book Written by John Norcot against Infant Baptism* (1679). With the exception of *The Christian Commonwealth*, all of these were printed in Massachusetts. After Weld left for England in 1641, Eliot served as the Roxbury church's de facto pastor until Samuel Danforth was hired in 1650. Eliot's activities in Massachusetts were not confined to his parish. He was involved in the Antinomian Controversy, serving as one of Anne Hutchinson's interrogators and wrote a justification of Roger Williams' banishment. He was also one of the translators, along with Weld, Mather, and Cotton, of the Bay's Psalm Book.⁵³⁸

In late 1646, Eliot delivered two sermons to the Massachusetts Indians that are credited as marking the beginning of the first sustained effort of the New Englanders to convert the native populations. The first, in September, was not well-received, but the

⁵³⁸ For more on Eliot, please see Richard Cogley, *John Eliot's Mission to the Indians before King Philips's War* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999).

second, in October, with a completely different audience, was considered a triumph. Neither sermon was delivered in the native language of the audience; both were delivered in English and translated by an Indian.⁵³⁹ Only after Eliot was selected by colonial officials in November to continue and expand his missionary work did he begin to study the local dialect of the Massachusetts. Like his contemporaries, Eliot believed that the Indians could only be converted after they had been civilized. As Eliot explained, “I finde it absolutely necessary to carry on civility with Religion”.⁵⁴⁰ Consequently, central to his missionary campaign was the removal of potential converts out of their homes and communities into newly erected “praying towns,” of which Natick in 1650 was the first. Thirteen other praying towns were built, but the highest their population ever reached was 1100 in 1674.⁵⁴¹

It is not my intention to provide a full and detailed account of John Eliot, “Apostle to the Indians,” and the success (or lack thereof) of his mission. Rather, my intention is to focus on the propagandizing efforts of return migrants in Old England on its behalf. The perceived success of the mission was a symbol of the success of the whole colony. Attacks on New England’s failure to produce droves of converts, and Gorton and Williams’ success in Old England, increased the Massachusetts Bay Colony’s need to shore up its reputation in England. The Eliot Tracts published in England were designed to refute attacks on New England that followed in the wake of the *Apologeticall Narration*. Furthermore, the return of Gorton’s associate, Randall Holden, from London

⁵³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 40-45.

⁵⁴⁰ Edward Winslow, *The Glorious Progress of the Gospel Amongst the Indians in New England* (London, 1649), p. 16.

⁵⁴¹ For a more complete account of Eliot’s mission, please see Richard Cogley, *John Eliot's mission to the Indians before King Philip's War*; Neil Salisbury, “Red Puritans: The ‘Praying Indians’ of Massachusetts Bay and John Eliot,” *William and Mary Quarterly*, 31 (1974).

in September 1646 galvanized the colony into action. He had brought with him the warrant from the Warwick Commission for the Gortonists to occupy Shawomet. His success alarmed the Massachusetts Bay Colony authorities. Accordingly, in November 1646, Edward Winslow was appointed the colony's agent in London. He replaced Weld and Peter, both of whom had been unsuccessful and now refused to return to New England. Winslow departed in December 1646, and, as we have seen, as an agent of New England in Old England, Winslow was clearly aware of New England's loss of face and prestige, as well as the explosion of attacks on the New England Way in print. This context explains the quick succession of letters carried by or sent to Winslow printed in Old England regarding the progress of the gospel in the New England colonies. Known as the Eliot Tracts, they were the first comprehensive narratives in print of the colonists' success among the native population. And one of their primary functions was to produce and disseminate positive reports of New England in order to rehabilitate its reputation.

The Eliot Tracts consisted of ten works, published from 1647 to 1670. By 1653, the following six were published: Thomas Shepard, *The Day-Breaking if not The Sun-Rising of the Gospel With the Indians in New England* (1647); Thomas Shepard, *The Clear Sun Shine of the Gospel Breaking Forth Upon the Indians in New England. Or, An Historicall Narration of Gods Wonderfull Workings upon sundry of the Indians, both chief Governors and Common-people, in bringing them to a willing and desired submission to the Ordinances of the Gospel; and framing their hearts to an earnest inquirie after the knowledge of God the Father, and of Jesus Christ the Saviour of the World* (1648); Edward Winslow, *The Glorious Progress of the Gospel Amongst the Indians in New England. Manifested By three Letters, under the Hand of that famous*

Instrument of the Lord Mr. John Eliot, And another from Mr. Thomas Mayhew jun: both Preachers of the Word, as well to the England as Indians in New England (1649); Henry Whitfield, *The Light appearing more and more towards the perfect Day. Or, a farther Discovery of the present state of the INDIANS in New-England, Concerning the Progress of the Gospel amongst them. Manifested by Letters from such as preacht to them there* (1651); Henry Whitfield, *Strength Out Of Weaknesse; Or a Glorious Manifestation Of the further Progresse of the Gospel among the Indians in New-England. Held forth in Sundry Letters from divers Ministers and others to the Corporation established by Parliament for promoting the Gospel among the Heathen in New-England* (1652); and John Eliot and Thomas Mayhew, *Tears of Repentance: Or, A further Narrative of the Progress of the Gospel Amongst the Indians in New-England* (1653). Several key themes that we have previously seen characteristic of New England printed matter were repeated in the Eliot Tracts. First was the continued importance of manuscript publication. In addition to the fact that all of these tracts were composed in New England in manuscript and sent to Old England for printed publication, many of the tracts contained letters written by the godly to each other and to others in Old England. These letters were themselves publications, not personal correspondence, but intended to be shared and circulated among the godly on both sides of the Atlantic. And, the second theme was fund-raising. These tracts, in addition to vindicating the New England Way by demonstrating their missionary success, were designed, often explicitly, to attract donations, whether it be through private donations or urging Parliament to create the Corporation for the Propagation of the Gospel, which they did in 1649. Finally and most importantly, these tracts served to counter malignant reports published in Old England.

Thomas Shepard's *The Day-Breaking if not The Sun-Rising of the Gospel With the Indians in New England* was the first of the Eliot pamphlets published in the late 1640s and 1650s. Printed by Richard Cotes, who we have seen before, having been the printer for Winslow's *Hypocrisie Unmasked* and *New-Englands Salamander*, it recounted the beginning of their going among the Indians in October of 1646 to preach to them. The text consisted of narratives of their first four visits among them, and the wondrous success they had. It was a short pamphlet, twenty-five pages in quarto, making it well within the boundaries of cheap print. As the end of the pamphlet made very clear, though, this was a piece of propaganda for fund-raising purposes. With the imminent success of their mission, the missionaries needed money to support the many Indians and their children that have come to them, not only for religious purposes, but also to be educated. It was clear to them that, within a few years, they would need to build a college for them as well. Such a venture required money, and the implicit message was they wanted their readers to send it to them. Contrary to negative reports abroad concerning the New England missionaries, Shepard stressed the dedication of the Missionaries: "wee did thinke to forbear going to them this winter, but this last dayes work wherein God set his seale from heaven of acceptance of our little, makes those of us who are able, to resolve to adventure and thorow frost and snow".⁵⁴²

Shepard's next tract, *The Clear Sun Shine of the Gospel Breaking Forth Upon the Indians in New England*, was published in 1648 and was also printed by Richard Cotes. Thomason dated his copy to March 8, 1647/8. *The Clear Sun Shine of the Gospel* was important for more than its identification as one of the Eliot Tracts. Rather, it was also

⁵⁴² Thomas Shepard, *The Day-Breaking if not The Sun-Rising of the Gospel With the Indians in New England* (London, 1647), p. 14.

demonstrative of the realignment of the alliance between Presbyterians and Independents in response to the increased politicization of the radicals in the New Model Army. Both opening epistles, one to the Parliament and one to the reader, were composed by Independents and Presbyterians, including Edmund Calamy, Stephen Marshall, and William Greenhill, and three of five of the Dissenting Brethren (Goodwin, Nye, Simpson). This shared commitment to the efforts to propagate the gospel in New England reflected more than the Presbyterian and Independent approval of such a venture, but also of their recent alignment. Whereas once the New England Way, strongly identified with Independency, was for Presbyterians the example of the inevitable ruin Independency would cause to England, the authors now glorified it and religious life in New England. It was in New England that one “*mayst see, the Ministry is precious, the feet of them who bring glad tidings beautiful, Ordinances desired, the Word frequented and attended, the Spirit also going forth in power and efficacy with it, in awakening and humbling of them*”.⁵⁴³ New England was compared especially favorably to England where “*The Ordinances are as much contemned here, as frequented there, the Ministry as much discouraged here, as embraced there, Religion as much derided, the ways of godlinesse as much scorned here, as they can be wished and desired there*”.⁵⁴⁴ The godliness of the colony was superior to England’s. New England had achieved what Old England has not: a godly commonwealth. That Presbyterians joined Independents in heaping this lavish praise on New England was reflective of the shifting religio-political context of 1647-1649.

⁵⁴³ Thomas Shepard, *The Clear Sun Shine of the Gospel Breaking Forth Upon the Indians in New England* (London, 1648), p. A2.

⁵⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. A2^v.

The themes of the introduction to *The Clear Sun Shine of the Gospel* were reinforced by Shepard's comments on religion in England and his disavowal of abusive reports of New England. Shepard mentioned on several occasions how the Indians were more godly, more willing to hear the Word and seek out God than many English he had seen.⁵⁴⁵ The godliness of the English was questioned outright when Shepard remarked "I have seen so much falsenesee in that point among many English".⁵⁴⁶

Throughout the text, Shepard worked to demonstrate the success of the mission, how the Indians "have utterly forsaken all their *Powwows*, and given over that diabolically exercise...so they doe pray unto God constantly in their families, morning and evening, and that with great affection...they are carefull to instruct their children...Likewise they are carefull to sanctifie the Sabbath".⁵⁴⁷ He claimed that "because some persons maligning the good of the Country, are apt, as to aggravate to the utmost any evill thing against it, so to vilifie and extenuate any good thing in it," the truth of New England had been obscured.⁵⁴⁸ In contrast, his report was based on his own eye witness testimony and also on reports that he had from others, testifying not only to his veracity as a source in comparison to others, but also implicating him within the wider world of oral and manuscript culture in New England that transmitted information to England to be set to print. What success has been achieved in New England he himself has been witness to, and it was done publicly, not behind closed doors. Consequently,

if any man in *England* doubt of the truth of what was formerly writ, or if any malignant eye shall question and vilifie this work, they will now speak too late, for what was here done at *Cambridge* was not set under a Bushell, but in the open

⁵⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 3, 15.

⁵⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

⁵⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 18-19.

⁵⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

Sunne, that what *Thomas* would not beleeeve by the reports of others, he night be forced to beleeeve, by seeing with his own eyes and feeling Christ Jesus.⁵⁴⁹

Shepard used actual examples—anecdotes—to present evidence of their success, reporting how the Indians “desired that they might have Court among them for government, at which motion wee rejoiced, seeing it came from themselves, and tended so much to civilize them”.⁵⁵⁰ Their success was juxtaposed with Roger Williams’ time with the Indians. Not unsurprisingly, Williams’ success was poor by comparison: “why did they not learn of Mr. *Williams* who hath lived among them divers years? and he soberly answered that they did not care to learn of him, because hee is no good man but goes out and workes upon the Sabbath”.⁵⁵¹ Shepard also included letters from fellow New Englanders, as well as transcripts of Massachusetts’ law, such as the laws of Natick, as evidence. In a letter Shepard included in this tract, Eliot painted a picture of himself as a preacher constantly and always available to his disciples to answer any questions they might have. He was a painstaking and devoted missionary, thus by extension should be funded from donations back in England.⁵⁵²

As the agent of its publication, Winslow intended this tract to also draw the attention and support of Parliament for missionizing in New England. The publication of *The Clear Sun Shine of the Gospel* was successful in this regard, as shortly after its publication, the House of Commons resumed “the Consideration of affording some Encouragement and Charity to the Inhabitants now in *New England*, for the promoting

⁵⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

⁵⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

⁵⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

⁵⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 16-29.

Piety and Learning in that Plantation”.⁵⁵³ Several days later, on March 17, 1648, the Committee for Foreign Plantations was ordered to “bring in an Ordinance for the Encouragement and Advance of Piety and Learning in the Plantation of *New-England*”.⁵⁵⁴ The Puritan grandee, the Earl of Warwick, was heavily involved in this committee. From his letters, it is clear that Winslow also was heavily involved in this committee.⁵⁵⁵

Progress in the committee stalled, however, prompting Winslow to publish the third of the Eliot Tracts, *The Glorious Progress of the Gospel Amongst the Indians in New England* in 1649.⁵⁵⁶ This was the first of Winslow’s tracts not visibly identified as printed by Matthew Simmons or Richard Cotes. The printer is unidentified. Coming in at thirty-five pages in quarto, it was within the confines of cheap print. The text itself was composed of letters from John Eliot and Thomas Mayhew Junior. Winslow claimed he published after “having received some Letters, and others brought to me by divers of quality here residing at present, that appertaine to *New-England*; and being exceedingly pressed to publish them by many godly and well-affected of the City and parts adjacent”.⁵⁵⁷ Only the epistle to Parliament was composed by Winslow. There was an appendix, composed by John Davenport, identified as a minister of the gospel in New England. Of all the previous tracts, this one was by far and away the most obvious and

⁵⁵³ 'House of Commons Journal Volume 5: 13 March 1648', *Journal of the House of Commons: volume 5: 1646-1648* (1802), pp. 493-495. URL: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=25323> Date accessed: 15 December 2009.

⁵⁵⁴ 'House of Commons Journal Volume 5: 17 March 1648', *Journal of the House of Commons: volume 5: 1646-1648* (1802), pp. 502-505. URL: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=25327> Date accessed: 15 December 2009.

⁵⁵⁵ *HMC, 4th Report, Appendix* (1874), p. 274.

⁵⁵⁶ Dated by Thomason to June 1, 1649.

⁵⁵⁷ Edward Winslow, *The Glorious Progress of the Gospel Amongst the Indians in New England* (London, 1649), p. 2.

direct in its plea for money. There was far less narrative about the progress of the conversions, but much more about what the missionaries needed in order to continue their work. There were a few examples of Indians demonstrating their progress, but on the whole, the emphasis was much more on how much more they need to continue in their efforts. As such, it made sense that the dedicatory epistle is to addressed to Parliament. The Ordinance for the encouragement and advancement of Learning and Piety in New England from March of 1647 stalled in committee, prompting Winslow to plead with Parliament to “perceive how these poor Creatures cry out for help; Oh come unto us, teach us the knowledge of God, tarry longer with us, come and dwell amongst us, at least depart not so soon from us”.⁵⁵⁸

Finally, in the summer of 1649, Winslow’s campaign in Parliament was successful. On July 27, 1649, Parliament passed “An Act for the Promoting and Propagating the Gospel of Jesus Christ in New England”.⁵⁵⁹ The passage of this act was not an achievement confined to the halls of Parliament. Parliament ordered it to be printed, and it was by Edward Husband.⁵⁶⁰ The first two pages of the Act largely rehearsed the praise lavished upon the New England godly from the earliest Eliot Tracts published by Winslow. Parliament commended the “pious care and pains of some godly English of this nation,” and their early successes in “drawing them [the Indians] from death and darkness, into the life and light of the glorious Gospel”.⁵⁶¹ The Act provided for the establishment in England of a body of sixteen persons, called The President and

⁵⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. A2^r.

⁵⁵⁹ 'House of Commons Journal Volume 6: 27 July 1649', *Journal of the House of Commons: volume 6: 1648-1651* (1802), pp. 270-271. URL: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=25721> Date accessed: 15 December 2009.

⁵⁶⁰ Wing E2505A.

⁵⁶¹ *An Act For the promoting and propagating the Gospel of Jesus Christ in New England* (London, 1649), p. 407-08.

Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in New-England. Generally referred to as the New England Company, the earliest members of the Company included return migrants Edward Hopkins from Connecticut; Herbert Pelham, a former treasurer of Harvard from Massachusetts; and Richard Hutchinson, the brother in law of Anne Hutchinson who, upon his return to England 1643, acted as Vane's deputy.

Following Winslow's publication of his and Shepard's tracts, two tracts by Henry Whitfield were printed. The first was *The Light appearing more and more towards the perfect Day* from 1651. This was another propaganda/fund-raising tract. However, the inscription from Joseph Caryl, an Independent minister frequently called upon to preach before Parliament, encouraged the reader to view this tract as "testimony, That our dear Brethren who with-draw from the heat of trouble in *Old England*, have been used as Instruments in the Lords hand to draw som (I might say many) of the poor Heathens to behold and rejoyce in the light of the everlasting Gospel in *New-England*".⁵⁶² The pamphlet itself, coming in at about fifty pages in quarto, thus making it within the realms of cheap print, was composed almost entirely of letters from John Eliot and Thomas Mayhew, buttressed by a dedicatory epistle to Parliament at the front and an appendix from Whitfield at the end. The dedicatory epistle to Parliament was intended to refute the scandalous rumors that the New England government was not supportive of the new Old England government and Parliament. While

Some are heard to question the affections of New-England towards Parliament, and the present state...so farre as I know or have observed, or can learn, have been faithful and cordial to the Parliament from the first, and do own this present Government, and Common-weath, giving in this as a reall argument, in being

⁵⁶² Henry Whitfield, *The Light appearing more and more towards the perfect Day* (London, 1651), unmarked pagination.

*your Honours Remembrancers at the throne of grace, both praying to God for you in your straits, and praising God for the enlargement of his good hand upon you.*⁵⁶³

Furthermore, in his address to the Christian Reader, Whitfield assured his readers that the monies contributed to the missionary cause have been misspent or embezzled.

Accordingly, Whitfield wished to “*undeceive such as are either apt, or do believe, that things are reported of them are but a fable, and a device or engine used by some to cheat good people of their money, and so discourage them from yeelding any help towards this great work*”.⁵⁶⁴

The letters themselves were fairly long and detailed accounts of the progress of the gospel in New England, generally written at the request of Whitfield. However, considering the detail and narrative of the letters, it seems fairly certain that Mayhew and Eliot wrote these letters with the intention that they would find an audience beyond their recipient and were intended to circulate and be read by many others. The main theme of Eliot’s letters was how he was in great need of funds, not only to purchase books, but also for tools and supplies with which they can build a town for the praying Indians to separate them from their heathen brethren. In this town, the Indians would not only be free from their pernicious religious ways, but also would erect a society modeled on English society, with English laws, government, and social customs. Of particular note was Eliot’s letter from February of 1651, in which he recounted how Indians, after visiting near the Gortonists in Warwick, returned to him having heard the great many errors and blasphemies they teach there. The Gortonists taught that there is no heaven or

⁵⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

hell, they are Baptists, and against ministers and magistrates.⁵⁶⁵ The implication is clear: how can Gorton be trusted when even the Indians can recognize the heresy in his teachings?

Whitfield's second publication, *Strength Out Of Weaknesse*, published in 1652 and printed for Matthew Simmons, was another promotional tract to encourage fund-raising for the Indians in New England. This one was composed of letters, not only of ministers who work amongst the Indians, but also from other godly New Englanders, including the governor of the colony at Massachusetts, testifying to the progress of the gospel. The authors of the dedicatory epistle to Parliament reads like a who's who of influential Independent ministers in London: John Owen, Joseph Caryl, William Greenhill, William Bridge, William Carter, George Griffith, Thomas Goodwin, Sidrach Simpson, Phillip Nye, William Strong, Henry Whitfield, Ralph Venning. Combined with the endorsements on the earlier tracts, it was clear that the New England mission was strongly supported by leading ministers on all sides. While Thomas Allen complained of how "It seemes that some of late have been so impudently bold (which I cannot sufficiently wonder at) as to report and publiquely affirme, that there was no such thing as the preaching and dispersing of the Gospel amongst the Natives in *New England*,"⁵⁶⁶ Parliament's July 1649 Act providing for the founding of the Corporation for the Propagating of the Gospel in New England and New England's mission itself continued to receive the support of many influential divines.

The final tract printed before the establishment of the Protectorate was John Eliot and Thomas Mayhew's *Tears of Repentance: Or, A further Narrative of the Progress of*

⁵⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 34-35.

⁵⁶⁶ Henry Whitfield, *Strength Out Of Weaknesse*, p. 38.

the Gospel Amongst the Indians in New-England in 1653. The main part of this text consisted of translations of the confessions of faith of the Indians at Natick. It comes in at close to sixty pages in quarto putting it on the cusp of cheap print. The confessions themselves were not the most striking part of this treatise. Rather, both of the authors, Mayhew and Eliot, and Richard Mather wrote a series of introductory prefaces to the text. Mayhew's Letter to the Corporation for the Propagation of the Gospel announced how "he hath through mercy brought two hundred eighty three Indians (not counting young children in the number) to renounce their false gods, Devils, and Pawwaws".⁵⁶⁷ Eliot's letter declared, "It is plainly to be observed, That one end of Gods sending so many Saints to NEW-ENGLAND, was the Conversion of these Indians".⁵⁶⁸ Mather's Letter to the Christian Reader challenged his reader to remain "doubtful whether any found said saving work be yet wrought in them or no: Such an one I would with seriously to weigh and consider the ensuing Confessions, and then perhaps he will be satisfied touching this Point".⁵⁶⁹ His letter to the reader was almost a point-by-point rebuttal of all the accusations that had been laid at the door of the mission.

Viewed as a whole, the Eliot Tracts presented an overwhelmingly celebratory, albeit selective, account of the progress of New England in converting the native peoples. While the mission was largely confined to the area surrounding Boston, the accounts transmitted by the godly in New England told of a successful mission on the brink of even greater accomplishments. All they lacked are the necessary funds to do so. In recounting their past successes, Shepard, Eliot, Winslow, and the other New Englanders

⁵⁶⁷ John Eliot and Thomas Mayhew, *Tears of Repentance* (London, 1653), p. B3^r.

⁵⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. B2^r.

⁵⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. B4^v.

also put to rest any rumors surrounding their progress, strongly refuting them with demonstrable evidence such as the praying towns and the Indians' own desire to embrace the gospel. The Eliot Tracts did more than counter abusive rumors, however. They also challenged attacks on the entirety of the New England Way by demonstrating the fundamental righteousness of the New England Way. Any success that the New Englanders have had converting the Indians is evidence of God's pleasure at these people and their religious practices. God could not have provided more tangible proof of the infallible rightness of their system of church-government than the success of the New England mission.

V.

While it would be easy to see the New England Way as a victim of the highly charged revolutionary print culture of the 1640s, such a position oversimplifies New England's agency in the construction of its reputation. From the start, migrants to New England saw themselves as part of a larger movement with a specific aim. In fleeing the persecution of the Laudian authorities in the 1630s, New England migrants justified their removal from England by relying on the familiar spectre of anti-papery. They were not separatists, disavowing the Church of England, but rather they sought the purity of worship deprived them by Laudian innovations. New England migrants were hardly alone in their response to Laud, but there remained a profound sense of ambiguity about

their migration felt by both the migrants themselves and those they left behind.⁵⁷⁰

Consequently, both before and after the outbreak of the English Revolution, New Englanders campaigned not only to justify their departure, but also to establish the truth of their system of church-government.

Throughout the 1640s, the New England Way found itself attacked on all sides. The uneasy peace that had formed as a result of the Aldermanbury Accords disintegrated in 1644 with the publication of the *Apologeticall Narration*. Whereas once public questioning of the New England Way had been confined to the publication of debates that had largely circled throughout godly networks in the 1630s, printed publications following in the wake of the *Apologeticall Narration* took on a completely different tone. Debates previously characterized by extensive biblical exegesis became highly charged polemics. Carefully worded doubts about their system of church-government became full-fledged attacks designed to entirely undermine the very foundations of the New England colonies. Relying on reports gathered from both sides of the Atlantic, critiques of the New England Way became stories of the colonies' endemic instability, indicting the New Englanders on a long list of charges that included sectarianism, heresy, cruelty, and hypocrisy.

Having already thrust themselves into the fray, both through manuscript publications in the 1630s followed by printed explanations in the early 1640s, New Englanders responded. And their responses shared much in common with their attackers. Manuscript and oral reports were assembled into printed tracts, often relying on the same

⁵⁷⁰ Susan Hardman Moore "Popery, Purity, and Providence: Deciphering the New England Experiment", in Anthony Fletcher and Peter Robert, eds., *Religion, Culture, and Society in Early Modern Britain* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

printers, such as Richard Cotes and Matthew Simmons. As attacks on the New England Way became less scholarly and more polemical, so too did their responses. What is clear is the extent to which all these printed matters, both for and against the New England Way, relied upon each other. Not only could one not have existed without the other, but their tone, scope, and structure were largely similar and evolved together. As attacks on the New England Way became more polemical, so did the rebuttals. As the attacks increasingly relied on narrative, so too did the rebuttals. The reflexive nature of these texts was not simply that they responded to one another, but in how similar the texts themselves were.

CHAPTER FIVE

“The Common-weale cannot without a spiritual rape force the consciences of all to one Worship”: The Fight for Libery of Conscience

The military successes of the New Model Army affected more than the course of the civil wars. The religiously diverse and increasingly religiously and politically radical New Model Army became a political force within the city of London, allied with Independent religious and political figures. While many of the godly of the Westminster Assembly, Parliament, and London remained politically and religiously conservative, by which I mean religiously Presbyterian, allied with the Scottish Covenanters, and still hopeful of a peaceful settlement with Charles I, as we have seen in the previous chapter, they no longer took pains to hide their dislike of the Independents. Presbyterian abhorrence of Independency and Sectarianism is hardly surprising, considering intolerance lay at the very heart of the English Civil Wars. Anti-popery was an almost universal sentiment in England, and one of the recurring themes justifying the revolt against Charles I.⁵⁷¹ While the triumph of the godly party in 1640 intensified the persecution of Catholics, the calls for the further reformation of the Church of England and its delays in erecting a final church settlement created a vacuum in which previously suppressed sects could flourish.⁵⁷² By the end of 1644, the divisions between the Independents and Presbyterians in the Westminster Assembly had become potentially wholly separate confessional stances, with no hope of accommodation between the two. Presbyterian success in the Westminster Assembly was assured by virtue of their

⁵⁷¹ Peter Lake, “Anti-Popery: The Structure of a Prejudice,” in Richard Cust and Ann Hughes, eds., *Conflict in Early Stuart England* (London: Longman, 1989); Caroline Hibbard, *Charles I and the Popish Plot* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1983)

⁵⁷² David Como, *Blown by the Spirit*.

majority. Independents, on the other hand, remained a small, but fiercely vocal minority in the Assembly, determined to air their beliefs even in the face of apparent defeat within the walls of the Assembly.

However much the Independent loss within the Assembly may have been a foregone conclusion by the end of 1644, their ties to Cromwell and his troops and political allies in Parliament implied a different sort of victory lay in store for them. Because of the historical context in which these confessional stances took place, Presbyterianism and Independency represented far more than just confessional positions: they also represented the wider struggles in which the nation was locked. Presbyterians continued to seek a national, covenanted church that would maintain, they argued, uniformity and stability in England. A Presbyterian national church would stand as a bulwark against sectaries. In truth, Independents and Presbyterians were almost doctrinally identical, but when it became apparent that no accommodation between the two parties could be found, Independents began to ally themselves with the sectaries and push for liberty of conscience. Their advocacy of religious toleration was not their natural state. Rather, they were pushed to it out of necessity.⁵⁷³

1644 witnessed a fundamental turning point in the debate over liberty of conscience and religious toleration in England. It was the year in which some of the major tracts on liberty of conscience were published: John Milton's *Areopagitica*, Henry Robinson's *Liberty of Conscience*, and William Walwyn's *The Compassionate Samaritane*. Tolerationist literature was based on theological argument and biblical exegesis. While some secular arguments were used, such as examples of princes and

⁵⁷³ Robert S. Paul *The Assembly of the Lord*, p. 436.

states, the core of the debate centered around the exegesis of the covenant of Israel and its application to the churches of the New Testament. Advocates of toleration argued that God's covenant with Israel and its national church was abrogated with the coming of Jesus, and that national churches were not the model of churches provided by the examples of churches in the New Testament.

Once again, the American colonies were never far from the debate, whether in the form of American polemicists or as subjects of the polemics. A now familiar cast of characters joined in the debate. Roger Williams, drawing on his own experiences in Massachusetts, engaged in a fierce pamphlet war with John Cotton. While the details of their debates stemmed from their entanglements in Massachusetts and Rhode Island, both chose the world of print in England to air their opinions. Hugh Peter, who had returned to England as a representative of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, found himself drifting away from the strictures of the New England system of church-government and becoming a public advocate for liberty of conscience. Bermudian Independents continued to publish the details of the evolution of their island churches, drawing the English public into the upheavals of a world even further removed from England than mainland colonial North America. As they had in the past, colonial pamphleteers relied on the power of print to disseminate their message and influence the direction of England's religious settlement.

II.

At the end of the *Apologeticall Narration*, the Dissenting Brethren asked their readers to think upon them “as those that do pursue no other interest or designe but a subsistence (be it the poorest and meanest) in our own land (where we have and may do further service, & and which is our birth-right as we are men) with the enjoyment of the ordinances of Christ (which are our portion as we are Christians) with the allowance of a latitude to some lesser differences with peaceableness, as not knowing where else with safety, healthy, and livelyhood, to set our feet on earth”.⁵⁷⁴ This fragment, which ends the tract, with its plea for liberty of conscience, set off a maelstrom in England. The weeks and months following its publication witnessed an explosion of polemics condemning its authors and their system of church-government, and emerging horror at the suggestion that they could peacefully coexist with other confessions, no matter how small their differences. Presbyterians led the charge, bemoaning the anarchy that would ensue were liberty of conscience granted to Independents and sectaries. Liberty of conscience threatened not only to destroy the church, but also undermine the stability of the entire nation. Such a liberty was anathema to Christians and to the Christian state.

Adam Steuart in *Some Observations and Annotations Upon the Apologeticall Narration, Humbly submitted to the Honourable Houses of Parliament* declared that religious toleration of any sort “is dangerous for the State, it may breed factions and divisions betwixt all persons of whatsoever relation” and “God in the Old Testament granted no Toleration of divers Religions, or Discipline”.⁵⁷⁵ Thomas Edwards, as was typical of him, composed a ranting, vitriolic tract of over three hundred pages,

⁵⁷⁴ *An Apologeticall Narration*, p. 31.

⁵⁷⁵ Adam Steuart, *Some Observations and Annotations Upon the Apologeticall Narration, Humbly submitted to the Honourable Houses of Parliament; The most Reverend and Learned Divines of the Assembly, And all the Protestant Churches here in this Island, and abroad* (London, 1644), p. 61-62. Thomason dated it to February 29, 1643/44.

Antapologia: Or, A Full Answer to the Apologeticall Narration, to refute it. “[H]ow ever you may be free of *Monsters and Serpents of opinions lurking in your bosomes*,” he raved,

yet there is much of a *Monster and Serpent* lurking in this Apologie, and to be sure one *Monsters of opinions* you all hold generally, and some of your have preacht for, A Toleration of divers sects and opinions...daily the Independent Churches like Africa doe breed and bring forth the *Monsters of Anapabtism, Antinomianism, Familisme*, nay that huge *Monster and old flying serpent* of the Mortality of the soul of man, and indeed there is no end of errors that the Independent principles and practices lead unto.⁵⁷⁶

Alexander Forbes in *An Anatomy of Independency, or, A Briefe Commentary, and Moderate Discourse upon The Apologeticall Narration* used the example of the Independent churches in the Netherlands to argue against the reformation of the Church of England, detailing the dissension and disorder created abroad by toleration of Independents.⁵⁷⁷

Pleas against liberty of conscience poured into London from both within the City and across the country. The Presbyterian ministers from Sion College in London presented a letter to the Westminster Assembly in January 1645 that was printed by Samuel Gellibrand. Claiming that a “[s]uch a Toleration is utterly repugnant and inconsistent with that Solemn League and Covenant for Reformation and defence of Religion,”⁵⁷⁸ they warned the Assembly that “many mischiefs will inevitably follow upon this Toleration, and that both to Church and Commonwealth”.⁵⁷⁹ Ministers in

⁵⁷⁶ Thomas Edwards, *Antapologia: Or, A Full Answer to the Apologeticall Narration* (London, 1644), p. L13^v. Thomason dated it to July 13, 1644.

⁵⁷⁷ Alexander Forbes, *An Anatomy of Independency, or, A Briefe Commentary, and Moderate Discourse upon The Apologeticall Narration* (London, 1644), p. 6, 20, 23, 24, 28, 34, 49.

⁵⁷⁸ *A Letter of the Ministers of the City of London*, p. 5

⁵⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 3-4.

Colchester quickly followed suit, echoing the sentiments of their brethren in London in February 1645. They too are against liberty of conscience, for

sad Experience teacheth us for the present, and right Reason convinceth us, will prove for the future, the Mother of Contention, the Root of Schism, the Back door to Heresie, the Nullity of Church-government, the plain Breach of Covenant with God and man, the very undoing of our several Congregations and Ministeries, destructive to the peace and union of the Kingdom, and full of Scandal, if not dangerous to the other Reformed Churches.⁵⁸⁰

Parliamentary authorities in London were not the only ones to receive petitions against liberty of conscience. The newsbook *The Moderate Intelligencer* reported in December of 1646 that a petition of Londoners requesting “that Religion may be settled, Heresie and Schismes extirpated according to the Covenant: That such may be suppress from publique preaching, as have not been duly ordained, and that a competent maintenance for Ministers bee provided” had been, by the direction of Charles, printed in Newcastle.⁵⁸¹

Over the next few years, attacks against the Dissenting Brethren, Independents, Sectaries, and their pleas for liberty of conscience, increased. Preachers delivering sermons before Parliament, like Obadiah Sedgwick, roundly decried any toleration.⁵⁸² The inevitable horrors of a toleration were continuously listed. One text from 1646 bemoaned “if a liberty be given to every man as his erring conscience shall guide him, what errour, or heresie, or blasphemy is there in the world or that hell can invent, that will not bee preached in Conventicles to seduce the people?”⁵⁸³ Contrary to Independent

⁵⁸⁰ *A true copy of a Letter from divers Ministers about Colchester in the County of Essen, To the Assembly of Divines, against a TOLERATION* (London, 1645).

⁵⁸¹ *The Moderate Intelligencer* December 21, 1646, p. 809.

⁵⁸² Obadiah Sedgwick, *The Nature and Danger of Heresies* (London, 1647). This text was also printed by Samuel Gellibrand.

⁵⁸³ *An Alarum: To the last warning peece to London By way of ANSWER: Discovering the danger of Sectaries suffered: and the necessity of Order, and Uniformity to bee Established* (London, 1646), p. 7.

arguments, it was the duty of the Magistrate “to punish all the evill works of the flesh in us!” If he did not, “he sinneth against God, and doth Gods work negligently”.⁵⁸⁴ The theme of the duty of Christian magistrates to stem the tide of heresies was constant. John Mayer, another Presbyterian, declared “if a Christian Magistrate drawes not his Sword against errour, his Christian Kingdome will be in dangered, as ours is at this day”.⁵⁸⁵

Not unsurprisingly, considering the respect for the New England churches expressed in *An Apologeticall Narration*, the system of church-government in New England was also unsparingly criticized in these tracts. As was typical of attacks on the New England Way, most of them described it as a breeding ground for sectaries and divisions. “[W]ho can tell,” Steuart asked, “how many Schismes and Heresies your [Independency] Government is subject unto? What Divisions and immoral hatreds it has bred in *New-England*”.⁵⁸⁶ Yet, despite the growth of sectaries in New England, Steuart went on to argue, they “tolerated not their Brethren...but made them go again...to seek out some new Habitations in strange Countreyes, yes, in strange *Wildernesses*, for themselves”.⁵⁸⁷ Edwards claimed that if New England had established Presbyterian structures of church-government, like classes and synods, there would not have been “so many imprisoned, banished for errors”.⁵⁸⁸

Also in response to the publication of *An Apologeticall Narration*, the Scottish Presbyterians in London for the Westminster Assembly published their own statement of

⁵⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸⁵ John Mayer, *Christian Liberty Vindicated from grosse Mistakes, occasioning so great Divisions in England* (London, 1646), p. 14.

⁵⁸⁶ Adam Steuart, *Some Observations and Annotations Upon the Apologeticall Narration, Humbly submitted to the Honourable Houses of Parliament; The most Reverend and Learned Divines of the Assembly, And all the Protestant Churches here in this Island, and abroad* (London, 1644), p. 13.

⁵⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 64.

⁵⁸⁸ Thomas Edwards, *Antapologia: Or, A Full Answer to the Apologeticall Narration* (London, 1644), p. Y3^v.

church-government: *Reformation of Church-Government in Scotland, Cleered from some mistakes and Prejudices, By The Commissioners of the Generall Assembly of the Church of Scotland, now at London.*⁵⁸⁹ As the title suggests, this was an explanation and defense of the Reformed church-government of the Church of Scotland. Contrary to claims that there was no example of a national church in the New Testament, the authors of this tract argued, “Christ had provided a way, and there is a necessitie of a common Nationall Government, to preserve all the Churches, in Unitie and peace”.⁵⁹⁰ A national church was not only divinely ordained, but also absolutely necessary in order to stem the destabilizing consequences of countenancing Independents and sectaries. A national church would bring peace and harmony to England, the means to destroy the chaos currently running amok throughout the country. The system of church government by which to organize this national church was Presbyterianism, the way that most closely follows the example set by the Primitive Church in the New Testament. With a further reformation of the Church of England according to Presbyterian strictures, the Church would be one that helps to “unite and not to divide, to compose rather than to create differences; which we conceive also to be one principall end, of the calling of the Assembly of Divines”.⁵⁹¹ Presbyterian church-government, with its clearly demarcated hierarchy, could provide the Church of England with the structure and order that England so desperately needed at this critical point. “[T]he power of Presbyteries is intrinsicall and naturall,”⁵⁹² as evidenced in the Primitive Church.⁵⁹³ Furthermore, “too frequent in

⁵⁸⁹ Thomason dated this to January 24, 1643/4. The title page lists the authors as “namely Mr. Henderson ye Lord Maitland Mr. Gilaspey Mr. Hitherford Mr Bayly”.

⁵⁹⁰ *Reformation of Church-Government in Scotland, Cleered from some mistakes and Prejudices, By The Commissioners of the Generall Assembly of the Church of Scotland, now at London*, p. 18.

⁵⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

⁵⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 25.

this place at this time, to the perverting and abusing of simple and unstable mindes which will never be brought to a consistence and unity, without this our order and government of the *Church*.⁵⁹⁴

III.

It was in this context of a post-*Apologeticall Narration* world that Roger Williams published his first plea for liberty of conscience, *Queries of the Highest Consideration, Proposed to the five Holland Ministers and the Scotch Commissioners (So Called)*. As the title of this tract suggested, it was a response to both the publication of *An Apologeticall Narration* and the Scottish declaration *Reformation of Church-Government in Scotland*. Both of these texts were printed in January of 1644. The Scottish response to the Dissenting Brethren, with a response time of less than a month, was already striking for its rapidity. Williams' text was dated by Thomason to February 9, 1643/44. The reflexivity of these texts was remarkable. Over the course of little more than a month, not only had the Scottish responded to the spurring publication with a clear and concise explanation of their system of church-government, but within an even shorter time, Williams' text was printed. This was done so, as Williams made clear in his dedicatory epistle to Parliament, despite great difficulty in finding a printer and without a license.⁵⁹⁵ While Williams was not alone in London in printing without a license, his declaration of having done so, and his mention of the great difficulties he encountered in

⁵⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

⁵⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

⁵⁹⁵ Roger Williams, *Queries of the Highest Consideration, Proposed to the five Holland Ministers and the Scotch Commissioners (So Called)* (London, 1644), p. A2^r.

doing so, made this a tacit plea for freedom of the press. Williams' position on this point was not all that surprising. He was a friend of John Milton whose own plea for unlicensed printing was published later that year.⁵⁹⁶

But Williams' *Queries* was not a polemic for freedom of the press. Rather, it was a plea for liberty of conscience. Williams argued that the Parliament had no right at all, even in Scripture, to determine a national church for the whole of England and/or the Three Kingdoms. Whenever the civil government takes it upon itself to reform religion, bad things ensue:

You will please to say: We are constantly told, and we believe it, that Religion is our first Care, and Reformation of that our greatest taske. Right Honourable, your Wisdomes know the fatall Miscarriages of Englands Parliaments in this point; what setting up, pulling downe, what Formings, Reforming, and again Deformings to admiration.⁵⁹⁷

Acutely aware of the temporality and context of Parliaments that determine the religion and church of the Commonwealth, Williams' maintained that this was not conducive for a stable church. Rather, England's reliance on a civil government, which, as history has shown, created a variable and mutable national church, which forced men to believe what they might not.⁵⁹⁸ Furthermore, there was no scriptural example for the pattern or authority of the Westminster Assembly.

The variability of civil government and the lack of authority for the Westminster Assembly, did not worry Williams so much as the forcing of men's consciences that was necessarily entailed by a national church. For Williams, "the Common-weale cannot

⁵⁹⁶ John Milton, *Areopagitica; a speech of Mr. John Milton for the liberty of unlicenc'd printing, to the Parliament of England* (London, 1644).

⁵⁹⁷ Roger Williams, *Queries of the Highest Consideration, Proposed to the five Holland Ministers and the Scotch Commissioners (So Called)*, p. A3^r.

⁵⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 2-3.

without a spiritual rape force the consciences of all to one Worship”.⁵⁹⁹ Furthermore, can one “find one footstep, Print or Pattern in this Doctrine of the Son of God, for a Nationall holy Covenant, and so consequently (though we conceive the one of you stumble at it) a Nationall Church?”.⁶⁰⁰ And can a national church “possibly be framed without a racking and tormenting of the Soules, as well as of the Bodies of persons, for it seems not possible to fit it to every conscience”?⁶⁰¹ His questions had a clear answer: it was not the duty or responsibility of the state to order the faith and religious life of all its people.

Contrary to widespread popular belief at the time, Williams even questioned the use of divine providence as evidence of God’s favor to a particular church.⁶⁰² Challenging an almost fundamental tenet of seventeenth century belief, Williams’ suggested that the truth of a faith cannot be verified by worldly success. Indeed, he asked, “Whether that be a demonstrative argument from the Scriptures, for a Truth of a Church, or Government of it, since even the Church of *Rome* may boast of the same against many Schismes and Heresies”.⁶⁰³ Williams then turned his pen to specifics, objecting to both Presbyterian and Independent intolerance. “Since you both professe to want more Light, and that a greater Light is yet to be expected; yea, that the Church of *Scotland* may yet have need of a greater Reformation, &c. we Querie, how you can professe and Sweare to Persecute all others as Schismatiques, and Hereticks, &c. that

⁵⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

⁶⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 5-6.

⁶⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

⁶⁰² For the importance of and pervasiveness of a belief in providence in seventeenth century England, particularly as it relates to the Civil Wars and Interregnum, please see Blair Worden, “Providence and Politics in Cromwellian England,” *Past and Present*, No. 109 (Nov. 1985); and Alexandra Walsham *Providence in Early Modern England* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).

⁶⁰³ Roger Williams, *Queries of the Highest Consideration, Proposed to the five Holland Ministers and the Scotch Commissioners (So Called)*, p. 10.

beleeve they see a further light, and dare not joyn with either of your Churches?”⁶⁰⁴

Holland, in contrast, was offered up as an example where liberty of conscience is permitted. As such, it had pleased God to make Holland prosper. The fact that this contradicted Williams’ former argument against worldly success as indicative of God’s divine providence did not seem to bother Williams. Williams concluded his plea for liberty of conscience by arguing that the example of the national church of Israel was not a model for Christ’s churches. The institution of a national church vanished with the coming of Jesus. For Christians, a national church was “Opposite to the very Essentials and Fundamentalls of the nature of a Civill Magistracie, a Civill *Common-welae* or *combination* of Men, which can only respect *civill* things...Opposite to the civill Peace, and the lives of Millions, slaughter’d upon this ground”.⁶⁰⁵

Williams’ opening salvo against a national church was not to be his only publication on the matter. Indeed, several followed, for this was a topic deeply personal to him, for both religious and personal reasons.⁶⁰⁶ Born in London in 1606, Williams was brought to the attention of Sir Edward Coke who employed the teenager as a stenographer in the Star Chamber. He graduated from Pembroke College, Cambridge in 1627, but did not find steady employment for another two years until, upon the recommendation of Coke, Sir William Marsham in Essex installed him as his household

⁶⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

⁶⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

⁶⁰⁶ There is no decent biography about Roger Williams. A comprehensive biography of Williams has not been written in decades, and the earlier ones almost universally have a political project of casting Williams as a founder of religious toleration, while failing to present a fully realized and nuanced portrait of the man, his beliefs, and his context. The one exception to this can be found in the editorial notes of Glenn La Fantasie’s *The Correspondence of Roger Williams* (Hanover: Brown University Press, 1988). See p. xxv-xlv, 12-23 for Williams’ banishment, 103-06 for ideas of liberty of conscience, and 217-219 for the years 1641-45.

chaplain.⁶⁰⁷ At the end of 1630, Williams and his wife sailed from Bristol to Massachusetts, where they arrived in February 1631.⁶⁰⁸ Despite having been offered the position of minister in Boston, Williams turned the offer down. Winthrop in his journal noted how Williams

had refused to ioyn with the Congregation at Boston because they would not make a public declaration of their repentance for having Communion with the Churches of England while they liued there, & besides had declared his opinion that the magistrate might not punishe the breache of the Sabbath nor any other offence as it was a breache of the first table. therefore they [the Boston congregants] mervayled that they would chuse him.⁶⁰⁹

Winthrop's entry from April 1631 provided the first solid indication of Williams' position on the relationship between magistracy and ministry, with the severe limitations on the former to involve itself in church matters. Furthermore, it also made very clear Williams' position on separation. Boston's godly still believed that the Church of England could be reformed from within. Williams' insistence on leading a church that had publicly separated from the Church of England revealed that he no longer, if ever, believed this.

Instead of the Boston position, Williams and his wife moved to Salem, intending to accept their church's offer of a teacher's position. When the magistrates in Boston advised the church in Salem not to hire him, Williams moved south to the separatist plantation at Plymouth. Williams remained in Plymouth until the fall of 1633, when he "began to fall into some strange opinions, and from opinion to practice, which caused some controversy between the church and him".⁶¹⁰ So Williams once again left, this time

⁶⁰⁷ For the importance of godly networks in Essex, please see Tom Webster, *Godly clergy in early Stuart England: the Caroline Puritan movement c.1620-1643* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

⁶⁰⁸ *ODNB*.

⁶⁰⁹ *WJ*, p. 50.

⁶¹⁰ William Bradford, *History of Plymouth Plantation*, p. 257.

to return to Salem where he became an assistant to the church's pastor, Samuel Skelton. While this was not an official post, he did preach in Salem. Williams quickly became embroiled in controversies. He raised serious charges about the legitimacy of James I's patent for the Massachusetts Bay Colony, arguing that the native population had been deprived of their land without compensation. He composed a treatise of his opinions on this subject that he sent to William Bradford in Plymouth.⁶¹¹ In late December 1633-January 1634, the General Court met to discuss Williams' treatise, but voted not to censure him. Nonetheless, the colonial magistrates became increasingly alarmed over the radical nature of Williams's opinions, made even more dangerous by his public airing of them. With Skelton ill and Williams' presumably more active in the church, the possibility of Williams' taking over from Skelton became more and more likely. By the time Skelton died in August in 1634, Williams' had the support of much of the Salem community. Much of his popularity stemmed from his position on separatism, a popularly held opinion in Salem.

Then, in November 1634, some of the colonists cut out the ("popish") cross on the English flag. While John Endicott had ordered this act, Williams' preaching was implicated, and the Massachusetts authorities were convinced that it was exactly this sort of disruptive and radical action that Williams' preaching was nurturing and inciting. Williams went on to further anger the General Court of Massachusetts the next year by questioning the religious dimension of the political oath of allegiance all male inhabitants over the age of sixteen had to swear to the colony and the Crown. Despite repeated attempts from both the magistrates and ministers of the colony, notably John Cotton, to

⁶¹¹ A copy of this treatise has not survived. Winthrop did summarize Williams' main points, however, in a letter to John Endicott from January 3, 1633/34.

silence him, Williams persisted in his preaching. Even from his sickbed in August 1635, Williams called upon the Salem church to renounce communion with all churches in the colony. This was the final straw for the colonial authorities, and in October they banished Williams out of the colony to England. They refrained from enforcing this sentence, however, as Williams was ill, but when they received reports the next year that Williams continued to preach, active steps were taken to remove him out of the colony. Warned by Winthrop ahead of time, Williams fled south in January 1636, while still sick, to Narragansett Bay in what would become Providence.

In Providence, Williams was shortly joined by some of his supporters from Salem. Other dissenters soon followed. Anne Hutchinson and Samuel Gorton, along with their followers, settled in the area, attracted by the Williams' community commitment to religious toleration. The growth of the colony did not go unnoticed by their neighboring colonists in Massachusetts, New Haven, and Connecticut. Increasingly concerned, the government of Massachusetts instructed Thomas Weld and Hugh Peter as part of their mission to England to secure their rights to the territory to the exclusion of Williams. Williams himself was eventually persuaded of the need to return to England in order to secure his charter and the rights to the land he had purchased from the Narragansett Indians. Williams had close ties to the native populations, and was well liked and respected among them. During his return voyage to England in March 1643, Williams composed *A Key into the Language of America*, an ethnography of the peoples and customs of the area. Upon his return, relying upon the networks of Essex godly he had been a part of during his tenure as Sir William Masham's household chaplain,

Williams secured a patent in March 1644,⁶¹² joining his settlement at Providence with the other local settlements under the name Providence Plantations. Later, Providence Plantations came to be known as Rhode Island. Williams' time in England was not long, however. He returned to Providence in September 1644.

Partly as a result of his experiences in the English colonies in North America, Williams became a committed advocate for liberty of conscience. He penned and set to print several tracts defending liberty of conscience during his brief time in England. While the major theme of his work was religious toleration, all of them dwelt on the Massachusetts colony and on John Cotton. Williams was unflinching in his attacks on them. Almost simultaneous to the publication of his *Queries*, Williams published *Mr. Cottons Letter Lately Printed, Examined and Answered*.⁶¹³ While much of the text was dedicated to impugning Cotton by depicting him as a hypocrite and a liar, Williams' text also contained a plea for liberty of conscience. In no way, Williams made clear, did his request present a threat to undermine the authority of the civil magistrate. Rather, he made the case that under a national church

whole Nations and Generations of men have been forced (though unregenerate and unrepentant) to pretend and assume the name of Christ Jesus, which only belongs, according to the Institution of the Lord Jesus, to truly regenerate and repenting soules. Secondly, that all others *dissenting* from them, whether Jewes or Gentiles their Countreymen especially (for strangers have a libertie) have not been permitted *cavali cohabitation* in this world with them, but have been *distressed and persecuted* by them.⁶¹⁴

When people are forced to conform to a national church, when others “had laid the raines upon the necks of their consciences, and like the Dogs lickt up their vomit of former

⁶¹² Sadly, Williams' record in England is largely blank. Any correspondence written by him or to him from March 1640 to June 1645 is gone.

⁶¹³ Thomason dates his copy to February 5, 1643/44. This text was discussed earlier, in Chapter Three, Section V.

⁶¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 26-27.

loosnes and prohanes of lip and life; and have been so farre from growing in grace, that they have turned the grace of God into wantonness".⁶¹⁵ A national church, which compels the consciences of the people of the nation, does not bring the nation and its people closer to God. In fact, it has the opposite effect. And compulsion does not bring grace. Only God can grant grace. And it is wrong of the church to presume it can do so.

Mr. Cottons Letter in many respects prefigures Williams' next publication, *The Bloudy Tenent, of Persecution, for the cause of Conscience, discussed in A Conference between Truth and Peace. Who, In all tender Affection, present to the High Court of Parliament, (as the Result of their Discourse) there, (amongst other Passages) of highest consideration.* The arguments Williams' developed in the earlier tract were greatly expanded in the latter, with the plea for liberty of conscience more roundly and extensively argued, and the attacks on Cotton and the New England churches covered in greater detail. Dated by Thomason to July 14, 1644, this is Williams' famous exposition on liberty of conscience. Williams' printer was Gregory Dexter. This was not Williams' first book to be printed by Dexter, nor was it the only book regarding the churches in New England that Dexter printed. Dexter had for several years been the most prolific printer of matter on New England. In 1641, he printed *A Coppy of a Letter of Mr. Cotton*, and the next year printed Cotton's *A Modest and Cleare Answer to Mr. Balls Discourse of set formes of Prayer*. In 1643 he was the printer for Cotton's *The Churches Resurrection* and *The Doctrine of the Church, To which are committed the Keys of the Kingdom of heaven*, as well as Mather's *Church-Government and Church-Covenant Discussed*. He was also the printer for *New Englands First Fruits*, published in 1643.

⁶¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 41.

Accordingly, by the time Williams' returned to England in 1643, Dexter was well established as one of the main printers for New England theological books and pamphlets. Though no printers are named on the texts, through imprints, Dexter has been identified as the printer for Williams' publications from 1643 and 1644, *Queries*, *Mr. Cottons Letter*, and *The Bloudy Tenent*.⁶¹⁶

Dexter himself was connected both professionally and personally with radical and Independent networks in London long before the Civil Wars. As the printer for Prynne's *Instructions to Church Wardens* in 1637, a text that taught Puritan churchwardens how to thwart Laudian episcopacy, he was questioned by the Laudian authorities of the Commission for Ecclesiastical Causes.⁶¹⁷ He partnered frequently with Richard Oulton and Henry Overton and was a Baptist.⁶¹⁸ Thus, while Williams could have sought out Dexter on the basis of his previous work with New England publications, it is also possible that Dexter's political and religious views influenced the former's decision to employ him as a printer. It has been speculated that John Milton introduced Dexter and Williams, as Dexter had been Milton's printer. It is also further possible that Dexter and Williams met in London through Baptist circles, as Williams had flirted briefly with Baptist teachings in 1639 and helped to found the first Baptist church in the English colonies. However the two met, they remained close friends till Williams died.⁶¹⁹ Around the time that Williams returned to Providence in 1644, Dexter migrated to Providence as well.

⁶¹⁶ Bradford Swan, *Gregory Dexter of London and New England* (Rochester, NY: The Printing House of Leo Hart, 1949), p. 42-54.

⁶¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 7-13. No copy of this text has survived.

⁶¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 18-42.

⁶¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 54-62.

The Bloody Tenent was a direct response to Cotton's defense of the Congregational churches in New England. According to Williams, a separation between church and state was not only founded in biblical scripture, but also would not produce the instability and disorder that others assumed. Instead, Williams claimed that it was state mandated religion and conformity that led to war and destruction. Liberty of conscience, on the other hand, would produce peace. The civil government had no place in directing the consciences of its citizens and it should leave them alone. Framed as a dialogue between Truth and Peace, *The Bloody Tenent* took as its basis a letter of Cotton's in response to a prisoner in Newgate. Like many other polemicists of the period, scribal publications comprised important elements of his work. The final section of the text, a selective quoting and analysis of a manuscript publication entitled "A Model of Church and Civill Power," that was composed by Cotton and other ministers in New England, and sent to guide the church at Salem. Overall, the text was very clearly written, but the page number—over 250 pages in quarto—put it beyond the realm of cheap print. As such, one would imagine that the earlier publication of *Mr. Cotton's Letter*, being so much shorter, would have the potential to read a wider public and thus have a possible larger impact. Nonetheless, the second work was not a complicated theological exposition. Rather, it was very clear and lucid, with glosses in the margin to aid the reader. Accordingly, one must assume, that it was designed for a larger audience. It was printed twice in 1644.

The text of *The Bloody Tenent* was composed of three sections. The first examined Cotton's biblical proofs justifying persecution and dismisses them. In part two, Williams refuted Cotton's examples of princes who favored persecution. Finally, in the

last section, Williams contradicted Cotton's examples of ancient and contemporary authorities who argued in favor of persecution. Several arguments buttressed Williams's themes. First, Williams railed against the carnage produced by religious persecution. He drew many of his examples from Europe's own recent history of religious warfare, despairing of

the cry of those precious *soules* under the *Altar* (Rev. 6) the *soules* of such as have been persecuted and slaine for the testimony and *witnesse of Jesus*, whose *bloode* hath been spilt like *water* upon the *earth*, and that because they have held fast the *truth* and *witnesse* of *Jesus* against the *worship* of the *States* and *Times*, compelling to an *uniformity* of *State Religion*...the cry of the *whole earth*, made *drunke* with the *bloud* of its *inhabitants*, slaughtering each other in their *blinded zeale* , for *Conscience*, for *Religion*, against the *Catholicks*, against the *Lutherans*, &c.⁶²⁰

Whatever the justifications may be for their actions, the results of the persecutions was nothing but blood. Persecution brought with it "bloody & slaughterous conclusions; bloody to the souls of all men, forc'd to the Religion and Worship which every civill State or Common-weale agrees on".⁶²¹

Williams rejected contemporary arguments that uniformity of religion was necessary for the stability of the state. Liberty of conscience did not undermine civil peace. In fact, it was because of religious toleration that did not enforce conformity to a Christian church that "so many glorious and flourishing Cities of the World maintaine their Civill peace, yea the very Americans & wildest Pagans keep the peace of their Towns or Cities; though neither in one nor the other can any man prove a true Church of

⁶²⁰ Roger Williams, *The Bloody Tenent*, p. 18.

⁶²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

God in those places”.⁶²² Indeed, Williams asked, did not the existence of Jews and Pagans prove that religious conformity is not necessary for stability?

And I askee whether or no such as may hold forth other Worships or Religion, (jewes, Turkes, or Antichristians) may not be peaceable and quiet Subjects, loving and helpful neighbours, faire and just dealers, true and loyall to the civil government? It is cleare they may from all Reason and Experience in many flourishing Cities and Kingdomes of the World, and so offend not against the civill State and Peace; nor incur the punishment of the civill sword, notwithstanding that in spiritual and mysticall account they are ravenous and greedy Wolves.⁶²³

It was not “false and idolatrous practices” that caused civil strife, but rather “that wrong and preposterious way of suppressing, preventing, and extinguishing such doctrines and practices by weapons of wrath and blood, whichs, stockes, imprisonment, banishment, death &c. by which men commonly are preswaded to convert Hereticks, and to cast out uncleane spirits”.⁶²⁴ Uniformity did not breed stability. Rather it was its enforcement that led to civil unrest.

Key to understanding Williams’ stance was his limitations on the powers and roles of magistracy in church matters. Once again, contrary to widely held opinions, Williams did not envision an alliance of magistracy and ministry, but rather a separation. Civil magistrates were not qualified for the task of ensuring conformity to religious doctrine.⁶²⁵ In fact, having them do so was not Christian, for “according to *Christ Jesus* his command, *Magistrates* are bound not to persecute, & to see that none of their subjects be persecuted and oppressed for their *conscience* and *worship*, being otherwise subject and peaceable in Civill Obedience”.⁶²⁶ The weapons of the civil government, the sword,

⁶²² *Ibid.*, p. 25.

⁶²³ *Ibid.*, p. 67.

⁶²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

⁶²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 97-98.

⁶²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 98.

were not appropriate for use in religious matters, and, consequently should not be wielded. As history had proven, the power of the civil magistrate, was

so farre from bringing or helping forward an *opposite* in *Religion* to *repentance*, that *Magistrates* sinne grievously against the *worke* of *God* and *blood* of *Soules*, by such proceedings. Because as (commonly) the sufferings of *false* and *Antichristian Teachers* harden their *fellows*, who being blind, by this meanes are occasioned to tumble into the *ditch of Hell* after their *blinde leaders*, with more inflamed zeale of lying confidence.⁶²⁷

Spiritual leaders and civil leaders each had their own weapons at their disposal, and it was not appropriate for the one to use the other's. Civil weapons were not proper for spiritual matters, for, unlike spiritual weapons, they could produce true and sincere change in the soul.⁶²⁸

However, the ultimate basis for Williams' advocacy of liberty of conscience was not because he believed it would produce less war or that it was not the civil magistrate's place to interfere in spiritual matters. Rather, the key to Williams' position lay in his millenarian theology and typology.⁶²⁹ According to Williams' reading of the Bible, Israel, with its nationally covenanted church, was the type for the Christian churches antitype. As antitypes, the Christian churches were not national churches. Christian antitypes had no one favored nation status like Israel, and, accordingly, no national churches. There were "vast *differences* between that holy *Nation* of typicall *Israel*, and all other *Lands* and *Countries*, how unmatchable then and now, and never to be parallel'd".⁶³⁰ It was the failure of others to discern the difference between the type and

⁶²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 65.

⁶²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 79-80.

⁶²⁹ Please see W. Clark Gilpin, *The Millenarian Piety of Roger Williams* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1979) for a fuller explanation of Williams' millenarian theology. This book, aside from the aforementioned LaFantasie, is the only nuanced and complicated intellectual biography of Williams worth reading.

⁶³⁰ Roger Williams, *The Bloody Tenent*, p. 241.

antitype, between Israel and the Christian churches, that was the “*rocke* whereupon...thousands dash, and make wofull *shipwrak*”.⁶³¹ Accordingly, Christian magistrates did not have the same power over religious and spiritual matters that the Israelites did:

All lawfull *Magistrates* in the World, both before the coming of *Christ Jesus*, and since, (excepting those unpareld *typical Magistrates* of the *Church of Israel*) are but *Derivatives* and *Agents* immediately derived and employed as *eyes* and *hands*, serving for the good of the whole: Hence they have and can have no more *Power*, then fundamentally lies in the *Bodies* or *Fountaines* themselves, which *Power*, *Might*, or *Authority*, is not *Religious*, *Christian*, &c. but naturall, humane, and civill.⁶³²

Furthermore, a national church under civil compulsion blasphemed god. For

although the Magistrate by a Civill sword might well compel that Nationall Church to the external exercise of their Naturall Worship: yet it is not possible (according to the rule of the New Testament) to compel whole Nations to true Repentance and Regeneration, without which (so farre as may be discerned true) the Worship and holy Name of God is prophaned and blasphemed.⁶³³

God would eventually reveal his religious truth to people. They could be compelled to true faith by persecution and the laws of man. Until such time as one received true faith and grace from God, it was the duty of the godly to peaceably and mildly instruct others and reveal the errors of their ways. It was not the duty of magistrates to persecute or compel.⁶³⁴

Williams also used this publication to continue his attacks on the New England churches and its ministers, most notably John Cotton, not only for their use of persecution, but also for their hypocrisy and lying. Once again, Williams called attention

⁶³¹ *Ibid.*.

⁶³² *Ibid.*, p. 230.

⁶³³ *Ibid.*, p. 202.

⁶³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

to the New England ministers' practice of certain rituals in England which they now disdain:

The New-English Ministers, when they were new elected and ordained Ministers in New England, most undeniably grant, that at that time they were no Ministers, notwithstanding their profession of standing so long in a true Ministry in Old England, whether received from the Bishops (which some have maintained true) or from the People, which Mr. Cotton & others better liked, and which Ministries was always accounted perpetuall and indelible; I apply, and aske, Will it not always follow, that if their new Ministry and Ordination be true, the former was false? And if false, in the exercise of it (notwithstanding abilities, graces, intentions, labours, and (by Gods gracious, unpromised, & extraordinary blessing) some succeſſe) I say, will it not according to this distinction follow, that according to visible rule, Fellowship with God was lost?

Secondly, concerning Prayer: The New-English Ministers have disclaimed and written against that worshipping of God by the Common or set formes of Prayer, which they themselves practices in England.⁶³⁵

Despite the fact that Cotton and other New England ministers often bemoaned the persecution they themselves suffered under Laud in England, upon their arrival in New England, they soon forgot their own sufferings and did to others what had been done to them.

When Mr. *Cotton* and others have formerly been under *hatches*, what sad and true complaints have they abundantly powred forth against *persecution*?...But coming to the Helme (as hee speaks of the *Papists*) how both by *preaching, writing, printing, practice* doe they themselves (I hope in their persons *Lambes*) unnaturally and partially expresse towards others, the cruel nature of such *Lions and Leopards*?⁶³⁶

Cotton was singled out as the grossest abuser and hypocrite in New England by Williams throughout the text. Williams called into question Cotton's professions of Christian charity and meekness. He accused him of being the cause of much of Williams' own persecution at the hands of the civil magistrates in Massachusetts, implying that "It is indeed the *ignorance* and blind zeal of the second *Beast*, the *false Prophets*" who

⁶³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 22-23.

⁶³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 108.

persuaded the magistrates to persecute others in spiritual matters.⁶³⁷ Thus, while New England is scathingly attacked, it was Cotton himself who bore the brunt of these accusations.

Williams could not have chosen a better time politically to make his plea for religious toleration. Throughout 1645, Parliament had passed legislation dismantling the old episcopacy of the Church of England. In January 1645, the Book of Common Prayer was abolished, followed a few months later in April with a ban on lay preaching. However, the triumphs of the New Model Army on the battlefield in the summer of 1645, with the public support of Cromwell for religious toleration, frightened the Presbyterians. Baillie worried “what retardment we may have from this great victorie, obtained by the Independent partie...we doe not know; only we expect a very great assault, how soone we know not, for a tolleration”.⁶³⁸ With the Independents working closely with Erastians in Parliament to weaken the Presbyterians in the House and the Westminster Assembly, the establishment of a national Presbyterian settlement was thwarted. In July, Parliament issued an ordinance to elect elders to a national Presbyterian church, but with Parliamentary oversight of the elected. Furthermore, the erection of Presbyterian classes would be limited to London.⁶³⁹ Parliament had voted for an Erastian settlement of the church, one in which the civil magistrates oversaw church doctrine and discipline. Presbyterians, on the other hand, held that Christ had two kingdoms on earth. The first was the kingdom of the civil magistrate, whose duty it was to maintain civil peace. The second kingdom was the national, visible church, free from civilian oversight, led by the

⁶³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 62.

⁶³⁸ Baillie, II, p. 291.

⁶³⁹ 'House of Commons Journal Volume 4: 25 July 1645', *Journal of the House of Commons: volume 4: 1644-1646* (1802), pp. 218-219. URL: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=23454> Date accessed: 16 December 2009.

clergy. Thus Parliament's 1645 ordinance seriously abrogated the establishment of a true and separate Presbyterian national church in England.

Relations between Independents and Presbyterians within the Assembly further deteriorated with the former's publication of *A Copy of the Remonstrance Decaring the Grounds and Reasons of their declining to bring into the Assembly, their Modell of Church-Government* in November 1645. Parliament intervened, ordering the Assembly to work towards accommodation again. However, the Independents further antagonized the Presbyterians when they declared their intention not "to set the bounds and limits of forbearance unto all tender consciences".⁶⁴⁰ Into the winter and spring of the 1646, Presbyterians and Independents continued to fight within and without the Westminster Assembly, and no progress towards an accomodation was made. Baillie complained bitterly that "blasphemous heresies are now spread here more than ever in any part of the world; yet they [the Independents] are not silent, but are patrons and pleaders for libertie almost to them all. We and they have spent many sheets of paper upon the tolleration of their separate churches".⁶⁴¹ Compelled no doubt by concern for their own well-being but also because of their sectarian allies in the New Model Army, the Independents continued to push for liberty of conscience. In February, they submitted another statement to the Assembly, urging that the religious settlement in England be erected "without tyranny

⁶⁴⁰ This statement to the Committee for Accomodation was printed as part of *The reasons presented by the Dissenting Brethren against certain propositions concerning presbyteriall government. And the proofs of them voted by the Assembly of Divines, sitting by authority of Parliament, at Westminster. Together with the Answer of the Assembly of Divines to those reasons of dissent* (London, 1648), p. 20.

⁶⁴¹ Baillie, II, p. 361.

and pressing mens consciences beyond the severall degrees of light, which God vouchsafes to severall churches, more or less”.⁶⁴²

Despite the dissension within the Assembly, Parliament still hoped that some accommodation could be achieved between the Presbyterians and Independents, a situation that would not force them to admit a general toleration for the radicals and sectaries. Finally, in April 1646, a full statement of the House of Common’s intentions towards religion was promulgated. They intended “to settle Religion in the Purity thereof, according to the Covenant”. In doing so, they “fully declared for a Presbyterial Government... without any material Alteration”. However, they “have received no Satisfaction in point of Conscience or Prudence; nor have we yet resolved, how a due Regard may be had, that tender Consciences, which differ not in Fundamentals of Religion, may be so provided for, as may stand with the Word of God, and the Peace of the Kingdom”.⁶⁴³ This clause, maintaining a care for tender consciences, along with Parliament’s reiteration that the Presbyterian Church is subservient to Parliament, meant that Parliament was unwilling or unable to allow Presbyterians to establish their national church throughout England. In addition, the presence of Independents and the growing influence of the New Model Army thwarted Presbyterian goals.

IV.

⁶⁴² This statement was printed as part of *The reasons presented by the Dissenting Brethren against certain propositions concerning presbyteriall government. And the proofs of them voted by the Assembly of Divines, sitting by authority of Parliament, at Westminster. Together with the Answer of the Assembly of Divines to those reasons of dissent* (1648), p. 91.

⁶⁴³ “House of Commons Journal Volume 4: 17 April 1646,” *Journal of the House of Commons: volume 4: 1644-1646* (1802), pp. 512-514.

After being so pointedly and personally attacked by Williams, Cotton responded in a similar manner, by vindicating himself, New England, and his system of church-government in print in England. He first responded in 1646 with *The Controversie concerning Liberty of Conscience in Matters of Religion, Truly stated, and distinctly and plainly handled, By Mr. John Cotton of Boston in New-England. By way of answer to some Arguments to the contrary sent unto him. Wherein you have against all cavils of turbulent spirits, clearly manifested, wherein liberty of conscience in matters of Religion out to be permitted, and in what cases it ought not, by the said Mr. Cotton*. It went through three editions: two in 1646 and a third in 1649.⁶⁴⁴ As a response to Williams' *Mr. Cottons Letter*, it was Cotton's first clear, in his own words, explanation and defense of New England's policy concerning liberty of conscience. According to Cotton, so long as the person keeps their opinions to themselves and conducts themselves in a peaceable manner, with all meekness and gentleness, they would not be persecuted by the state. This was assuming that the "error" was not a fundamental error. Cotton was willing to let the adiaphora, the minor, indifferent points, be tolerated so long as they were peaceably held and quietly maintained. However, if a person expressed these opinions, if they were "seditiously and turbulently promoted," the situation changed dramatically. He would be advised by properly godly ministers of the error of his ways and instructed in the truth. If he continued in these beliefs, then he would be persecuted, not because of his beliefs per say, but because he was sinning against himself.⁶⁴⁵ He must be "restrained...from blaspheming the truth, and from seducing away into pernicious

⁶⁴⁴ Wing C6420 (1646), Wing C6421 (1649). Thomason bought all three editions, dating the first one to October 9, 1646; the second edition to December 3, 1646; and the third edition to November 7, 1649.

⁶⁴⁵ John Cotton, *The Controversie concerning Liberty of Conscience in Matters of Religion, Truly stated, and distinctly and plainly handled, By Mr. John Cotton of Boston in New-England*, p. 8, 10-11.

error”.⁶⁴⁶ State persecution and intervention came when the person was a disturber of the civil peace, and the civil magistrates had the authority to banish the offender from the community: “if the Heretique will still persist in his heresie to the seducing of others, he may be cut off by the civill sword, to prevent the perdition of others”.⁶⁴⁷ Cotton’s distinction between a person who sins against himself and the disturber of the civil peace was a slippery one. As the major distinction was between someone who kept their opinions quiet and one who did not, the latter was immediately subject to accusations of civil disturbance and the punishments associated with it.

Cotton’s thoughts on liberty of conscience were more fully explored in his 1647 *The Bloudy Tenent, Washed, And made white in the bloud of the Lambe: being discussed and discharged of bloud-guiltinesse by just Defence. Where The great Questions of this present time are handled, viz. How farre Liberty of Conscience out to be given to those that truly feare God? And how farre restrained to turbulent and pestilent persons, that not onely raze the foundation of Godlinesse, but disturb the Civill Peace where they live? Also how farre the Magistrate may proceed in the duties of the first Table? And that all Magistrates ought to study the word and will of God, that they may frame their Government according to it. Discussed, As they are alledged from divers Scriptures, out of the Old and New Testament. Wherein also the practice of Princes is debated, together with the Judgement of Ancient and late Writers of most precious esteeme. Whereunto is added a Reply to Mr. Williams Answer, to Mr. Cottons Letter.*⁶⁴⁸ Cotton’s printer was Matthew Symmons (Simmons). As we have seen, Simmons had been the printer for

⁶⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

⁶⁴⁸ Thomason dated his copy to May 15, 1647.

many of Cotton's other tracts, including *The Keyes of the Kingdom of Heaven* (1644), *The Covenant of Gods Free Grace* (1645), *The Way of the Churches of Christ in New England* (1645), and *The Way of Congregational Churches Cleared* (1648). He also printed other New England matter, like Thomas Shepard's *Certain Select Cases Resolved* in 1648 and one of the Eliot Tracts, Henry Whitfield's *Strength Out Of Weaknesse* (1652), and Edward Winslow's *Good news from New-England* (1648). Interestingly, Simmons was also the printer for a number of tracts by Independents during the Civil War, often in conjunction for the radical bookseller, Henry Overton. He printed John Goodwin's *Calumny arraign'd and cast* in 1645, a vindication of sectaries called *A Declaration by Congregationall societies in, and about the city of London; as well of those commonly called Anabaptists, as others* in 1647, and the Antinomian Tobias Crisp's *Christ Alone Exalted* in 1648.

Simmons' publication record begs an interesting question: to what extent were the New England churches grouped by those in England along with Independents and Sectaries? Despite continued public insistence by New Englanders such as Mather and Hooker that they were not separatist, Chapter Three has amply demonstrated that many, especially Presbyterians, viewed them as such. Furthermore, as Chapter Four demonstrated, leading Independents still identified, albeit with qualifications, Independency with the New England Way. Simmons, a printer clearly with Independent and Sectarian sympathies, despite responsibility for their extensive explanations of how and why the New England system of church-government was neither separatist nor sectarian, might have seen New England as Independent too. As such, one must wonder if the New England apologies and defenses carried any weight. Were sentiments against

the New England system of church-government too strong, too firmly held, too widely published and accepted, for anything they wrote in defense of it to be effective? Was the image of New England in the minds of the English as a separatist land, a breeding ground for sectaries, too strong for anything they said or did to sway opinion in their favor?

All of these are indeed likely reasons for the continued conflation of the New England Way with Independency and ready identification with separatism and sectarianism. For, despite the continued efforts of supporters of the New England Way to clarify and explain their system of church-government, their method of doing so, print, implicated their tracts in the wider world of revolutionary print culture in the 1640s and 1650s. The example of the churches in New England, as we have seen in Chapters Three and Four, was battered about. It was claimed, with caveats, by the Independents, identified as both Independency and not Presbyterianism, and its own followers rejected the label of Independency itself. Presbyterians wielded the label of the New England Way without precision, but rather as a blunt instrument that inspired fear. Added to this situation were the stories of cruelty circulating in Old England, put out by both Presbyterians and return migrants, and the blurriness of the New England Way is readily understood. While there had been clear statements of the New England Way printed in the 1640s, they were merely one part of a much wider and unstable polemical discourse that left the definition of the New England Way unclear and fluid.

The Bloody Tenent, Washed had two main parts. The first part was a response and rebuttal to Williams' *The Bloody Tenet*. Cotton went chapter by chapter through Williams' texts, from the reprinting of Cotton's *Letter* to the main text and argument of *The Bloody Tenet*, unpacking the former's arguments and disproving them. The second

part of the text, *A Reply to Mr. Williams his Examination; And Answer of the Letters sent to him by John Cotton*, was a response and rebuttal to Williams' *Mr. Cottons Letter, Examined* in which he likewise moved chapter by chapter to respond. He offered no marginal notes or glosses. His method was to selectively quote and reprint answers from his letter and William's response to Cotton's answers. He then followed with his own rebuff to Williams' responses. Cotton took particular pains not only to refute Williams' arguments concerning liberty of conscience, but also to vindicate himself from the pointed attacks in Williams' texts and the attacks and aspersions cast upon the churches in New England. Instead of being the cruel and hypocritical man painted in Williams' version of events, Cotton portrayed himself as the model of Christian charity and goodness, striving at every opportunity to dissuade Williams from the error of his ways and bring him back into the fold of the New England churches and godliness. It was Williams' obstinacy and folly that was the cause of his sufferings, not Cotton or the New England magistrates.

Cotton was also quite angry that these letters of his were published without his consent. He maintained very clearly that they were written for private perusal, not as manuscripts to be published, whether through scribal publication, or being set to print. He mentioned this on more than one occasion and it is clear that the publication of his letter without his permission was a source of great concern and anger for him. Cotton clearly believed that his was private letter, not intended for public use.⁶⁴⁹ Accordingly, this asks larger questions about the nature of publication from this time period. If Cotton's letter was written as a private letter, it was not his intention or his wish that it

⁶⁴⁹ John Cotton, *The Bloudy Tenent, Washed* (1647), p. 2; John Cotton, *A Reply to Mr. Williams his Examination* (1647), p. 1.

circulate beyond its intended recipient. Given the fact that many letters written among the godly were commonly copied and circulated as scribal publications, the line separating private letters and public letters was a blurry one. It begs the question of how many of the godly manuscript letters that were later set to print were intended for a wider audience when composed by their authors? Did the authors actually have control over the future life of their letters once they were sent? Did they specify whether or not they were to be circulated, or even whether they could be printed? How many were consulted on this point? Without actual evidence confirming or denying it, it may very well be impossible for scholars to ever definitively answer these questions for all instances. If this example of Cotton is any indication, it would appear that letters and perhaps other treatises were indeed circulated and printed without authorial consent. And this did not always go over well with the author. Cotton's anger is perhaps indicative of a widely held sentiment, one that was perhaps shared by many published authors who never intended their words to be read by anyone more than their recipient.⁶⁵⁰

Several themes reoccurred consistently throughout *The Bloudy Tenent, Washed* that served to illuminate Cotton's major arguments. As Cotton and other New England ministers have continuously maintained since their departure from Old England, the churches in New England were not separatist churches. However, in one matter, Cotton did concede that Williams is right. While the New English ministers have "bemoaned" national churches as an invented form of worship, he nonetheless continued to maintain a carefully qualified non-separation with churches in England. New England kept

⁶⁵⁰ For the distinction between private and public texts among the godly, see David Hall, *Ways of Writing*, p. 48-54. For a broader discussion of print and privacy in early modern England, see J. W. Saunders, "The Stigma of Print: A Note on the Social Bases of Tudor Poetry," *Essays in Criticism* 1 (1951), p. 139-64; Steven W. May, "Tudor Aristocrats and the Mythical 'Stigma of Print'," *Renaissance Papers* 10 (1980), p. 11-18.

communion with England's parish churches, but not with the Church of England's national constitution.⁶⁵¹ New England churches were not separated churches.⁶⁵² It was not New England that was the separatist, but rather Williams himself.⁶⁵³

As Cotton explained in *The Controversie Concerning Liberty of Conscience*, New England did not persecute others for their beliefs, but rather for the public expression of seditious opinions. There were fundamental points of faith that cannot be challenged. If these were challenged, and one persisted in holding them even after admonition by godly ministers, then one was guilty of sinning against one's conscience.⁶⁵⁴ If someone were to "hold forth Truth in some boisterous and arrogant way...He may in so doing disturbe the Civill Peave, and for such disturbances be justly punished".⁶⁵⁵ For, "in destroying Religion they are also disturbers of the Civill State, and accordingly are to be dealt withal by Civill Justice".⁶⁵⁶ While it was true that the magistrate did not have power over the souls and consciences of men, he did have power over their bodies. And what the magistrate must do "is punish the bodyes of men for destroying, or disturbing Religion".⁶⁵⁷ Accordingly, the power and duty of the magistrates, the civil sword, was necessary: "it is not onely every mans duty, but the common duty of the Magistrates to prevent infection, and to preserve the common health of the place, by removing infectious persons into solitary tabernacles".⁶⁵⁸ Cotton justified this, in direct contrast to Williams' argument, by claiming that this duty of the civil magistrate was appointed by

⁶⁵¹ John Cotton, *A Reply to Mr. Williams his Examination; And Answer of the Letters sent to him by John Cotton*, p. 77-78.

⁶⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 115, 119, 138, 139.

⁶⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 121.

⁶⁵⁴ John Cotton, *The Bloudy Tenent, Washed*, p. 27.

⁶⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 36.

⁶⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 91-2.

⁶⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 125.

⁶⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 65.

God in the Old Testament, “nor did he ever abrogate it in the New”.⁶⁵⁹ “It is no dishonor to Christ, nor impeachment to the sufficiency of the Ordinances left by Christ, that in such a case, his Ministers of Justice in the Civill State, should assist his Ministers of the Gospel in the Church-State”.⁶⁶⁰ Furthermore, history also legitimized Cotton’s arguments. For, “in all civill Nations, whose *Acts* are recorded, either in sacred or prophane Authors, their Magistrates have not onely a due care of Justice and honesty, but a reverend care of Religion also”.⁶⁶¹

Given the detailed and scathing personal attacks in the Williams’ tracts, Cotton also devoted considerable attention to vindicating himself at the expense of Williams’ own reputation. Rather than being the head persecutor of Williams, Cotton described his role in Williams’ expulsion from Massachusetts as one of continued protector. On several occasions, Cotton tried to convince Williams of the error of his ways, not persecute him. In doing so, Cotton behaved exactly with a heretic precisely as a godly minister should. He tried, in private, to admonish Williams and lead him into the light out of the darkness.⁶⁶² When he failed, despite his best efforts and intentions, and Williams continued to disturb the civil peace, then he was banished. It was not for his religious beliefs that Williams was banished.⁶⁶³ Williams, according to Cotton, had consistently distorted the truth of events in Massachusetts.⁶⁶⁴ And now, upon his return to England, Williams had brought with him his disruptive and seditious opinions that once threatened to undermine the stability of the colony:

⁶⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 67, 126.

⁶⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 91.

⁶⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 108.

⁶⁶² John Cotton, *A Reply to Mr. Williams his Examination; And Answer of the Letters sent to him by John Cotton*, p. 17, 25, 35, 36, 38, 47.

⁶⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 27, 30, 33, 41, 64.

⁶⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 105.

That seeing Mr. *Williams* hath been now as a branch but off from the Church of *Salem* these may yeares, he should bring forth not spirituall good fruits in due season: and that which he bringeth forth not at the last is bitter, and wild fruit: and that in such a season, when the Spirit of Error is let loose to deceive so many thousand soules of our English Nation: So that now their hearts are becoming Tinder, ready to care and kindle at every sparke of false light.⁶⁶⁵

Cotton's message to Old England was clear: Williams should be, at the very least, ignored. Like New England, Old England would be wise to cast Williams out, or their entire nation was at risk.

As well-connected as Williams was in England, among both Presbyterians and Sectaries, his tracts on liberty of conscience provoked few responses besides Cotton's. Perhaps it was because of his friendships with Presbyterians, such as Robert Baillie, that they refrained from disputing with him in print. Politically it would have made little difference, as Williams was successful in securing a patent for Rhode Island in 1644, separating it from the Massachusetts Bay Colony. This was due, in part, to his political grandee friends, the earl of Warwick, Sir Thomas Barrington, and Sir William Masham. Williams' defining statement on liberty of conscience, *The Bloody Tenent*, was followed in print by only one Presbyterian rebuttal: George Gillespie's *Wholsome Severity Reconciled with Christian Liberty. Or, The true Resolution of a present Controversie concerning Liberty of Conscience*. Published in early 1645, printed and sold by Christopher Meredith, it is dated by Thomason to January 8, 1645. Meredith was a printer of many Presbyterian tracts. Among the more notable Presbyterians who published with him were Edmund Calamy, Matthew Newcomen, Adam Steuart, Samuel Hudson, and Cornelius Burges. However, Meredith also published several of the more conservative New England tracts. He was the printer for Thomas Hooker's *The Faithful*

⁶⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

Covenanter in 1644 and Nathaniel Rogers *A Letter Discovering the Cause of Gods continuing Wrath against the Nation, notwithstanding the present endeavours of Reformation* in 1644. The Imprimatur is from Edward Calamy, and it is possible that Rogers letter was given to Meredith by Calamy in order to be set to print.

Gillespie, a Scottish Covenanter, wrote *Wholsome Severity reconciled with Christian Liberty* as a response to various Independent tracts calling for liberty of conscience. On the title page, the tracts were specifically identified: William's *The Bloody Tenent*, William Walwyn's *The Compassionate Samaritane*, and John Goodwin's *M.S. to A.S.* Thus, this was a highly reflexive text, and also within the margins of cheap print as it comes in at forty-five pages in quarto. The text itself was littered with marginalia, though almost exclusively in Latin, which would imply a more learned audience. It consisted mainly of biblical examples to prove his argument against the Independent arguments for liberty of conscience, as well as examples from the early church fathers and from Calvin, Beza, and Luther. Sectaries, Gillespie wailed, under "fair colours and handsome pretexts doe...infuse their poyson, I mean their pernicious, God-provoking, Truth-defacing, Church ruining, & State-shaking toleration".⁶⁶⁶ With regards to Williams' arguments in support of liberty of conscience, Gillespie dismissed Williams' typology of the church of Israel.⁶⁶⁷ Williams' exegesis of the parable of the tares and the wheat was likewise summarily dismissed: "his exposition of the Parable contradicteth the ordinance of God for punishing Idolaters and Hereticks".⁶⁶⁸

⁶⁶⁶ George Gillespie, *Wholsome Severity reconciled with Christian Liberty. Or, the true Resolution of a present Controversie concerning Liberty of Conscience* (1645), p. A2^r.

⁶⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

⁶⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

Gillespie's attack on Williams was very reflective of the confusions of the time, by which I mean the conflation of the New England Way with Independents in England so often made in the mid 1640s, as we have seen in the previous chapter. In denouncing Goodwin's desire for individuals to be left unmolested by the secular authorities for the sake of their consciences, Gillespie reminded his readers,

in *New England* there hath been severity enough (to say no worse) used against Hereticks and Schismatics. And here I must appeal to the consciences of those who now plead so much for liberty of conscience and toleration in this Kingdome, were they able to root out the Presbyterians and their way, & could find civil authority inclinable to put forth the coercive power against it, whether in that case would they not say, that the Magistrate may repress it by strong hand, if it cannot be otherwise repressed.⁶⁶⁹

Gillespie, like many other Presbyterians in London in the mid 1640s, grouped Independents in Old England together with Congregationalists in New England. While doctrinally almost identical, as they were with Presbyterians, all three differed in terms of discipline and church-government. Most notably, by the time *Wholsome Severity reconciled with Christian Liberty* was published, Independency in Old England had become irreconcilable with the New England Way, precisely over the matter of liberty of conscience. Thus, while Gillespie scoffs at Old England's Independents for their hypocrisy—"what a mocking of the Parliament and of the Kingdome? to plead generally for liberty of conscience, when they intend only liberty to themselves, not to others that are opposite to them—"⁶⁷⁰ he constructed a conflation in a context of contested labeling and fluid identity.

V.

⁶⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

⁶⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 20.

Williams was not the only return migrant to argue for liberty of conscience before the English public. Hugh Peter became a strong advocate for liberty of conscience, no doubt a position evolving out of his role as a chaplain to the New Model Army and Oliver Cromwell. As early as 1646, in one his many pamphlets on the military successes of the New Model Army, Peter made his feelings towards liberty of conscience clear. In *Mr. Peter Last Report of the English Wars*, dated by Thomason to August 27, 1646 and printed by Matthew Simmons for Henry Overton, Peter urged his readers to consider tender consciences. Bemoaning the strife that has arisen among the godly ministers throughout the kingdom, Peter wished that “we that are Ministers might pray together, if that cannot be, let us speake together, eate and drinke together, because if I mistake not, estrangement hath boyled us up to jealousie and hatred”.⁶⁷¹ Peter argued for

the present Church-government [to] goe on, and walk softly and tenderly, let those that longed for it improve it, & *valeat quantum valere potest*: Let others that are godly know it may helpe, at least to hew stone, and square timber for a more glorious building, to bring from one extremitie to another.⁶⁷²

For Peter, persecution for religion would lead to nothing but more strife and bloodshed: “I am confident the chiefe meanes to greater an error will be by violence and opposition”.⁶⁷³ The polemical wars between Presbyterians and Independents have produced nothing but more diatribes, turning godly against godly, further obscuring the overlap between their beliefs. Rather than see this continue, Peter wished that “every one might be severely punished that spoke against either Presbytery or Independencie till they

⁶⁷¹ Hugh Peter, *Mr. Peter Last Report of the English Wars, Occasioned by the importunity of a Friend Pressing an Answer to Seven Quares* (1646), p. 7.

⁶⁷² *Ibid.*

⁶⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 8

could define that aright, and distinguisht about them and their wayes”.⁶⁷⁴ Despite having reached this comparatively liberal stance on religious toleration, Peter continued to extol the virtues of the New England system of church-government, reminding his readers that “amongst those faithfull, learned, godly brethren, whose way of worship if we professe, it will not be groundlesse when their Writings are examined”.⁶⁷⁵

Furthermore, having served as an army chaplain, Peter loathed seeing the Army attacked in print by the man who had attacked him personally, Thomas Edwards. As a champion of the increasingly radical army, Peter vindicated it in print, not only by heralding its martial successes, but also celebrating its intense religiosity. Edwards’ attacks upon the New Model Army, according to Peter, said nothing about the truth of the army, but rather revealed how little Edwards himself knows. For Peter “look[s] upon that Author as a great stranger to the *Armie*, as he is often to his owne principles, and his whole course to be a trade of Retreating, and leave him to another pen”.⁶⁷⁶ Nor was the Army or the toleration agitated for by the Army the nation’s serpent in the grass, lying in wait to destroy England. Liberty of conscience was not a disease afflicting the army, “nor is a generall toleration the *Armies* Gangraena, when as they never hindered the State from a State Religion, having onely wished to enjoy now what the Puritans beg’d under the Prelates”.⁶⁷⁷

Peter’s position as a chaplain in the radical New Model Army and advocate for liberty of conscience was not something that went unnoticed back in Massachusetts. This was hardly surprising, considering the authorities of the Massachusetts Bay Colony had

⁶⁷⁴ *Ibid.*.

⁶⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

⁶⁷⁶ Hugh Peter, *A word for the Armie* (1647).

⁶⁷⁷ *Ibid.*.

commissioned his return to England in 1641, with specific instructions to shore up support for the struggling colony and to lend assistance to the further reformation of the Church of England. The trajectory of his career upon his return to England was clearly not what they had envisioned when they sent him back. Furthermore, despite attempts to recall Peter back to New England, Peter never returned.

The growth of advocacy for religious toleration and Peter own continued stay in England were subjects of a letter the New England minister, Thomas Shepard, sent to Peter in 1645. Shepard informed Peter that he “ever thought that it was a divine hand that sent you from us for a time, & therefore till yor work be done in England I would not have you to returne to New”.⁶⁷⁸ However, while he cautioned Peter to “to show the utmost forebearance to godly men if for a time deluded,”⁶⁷⁹ if they cannot be persuaded to the truth, they needed to be persecuted. Shepard reminded Peter of his own experience with heresy in Massachusetts during the Free Grace Controversy during the 1630s: “you have had experience of the gangriene in New England & how soone it spread in a little time”.⁶⁸⁰ If England did not “seasonably suppressse & beare publick witnesse against delusions which fill the land like locusts without any king & will certainly (if suffered) eat up the green grasse of the land”.⁶⁸¹ Toleration should not be supported. Shepard even congratulated himself for “Toleration of all upon pretence of Conscience I thanke god my soule abhors it”.⁶⁸² He further reminded Peter that he needed to be “watchfull over yorself least yor hart herein out of love to some men growes cold to gods truth: there is but one truth (you know) & is it not your dayly prayer to god to blot out all errour beside

⁶⁷⁸ Bodleian Library, Clarendon Mss 26, f. 110.

⁶⁷⁹ *Ibid.*.

⁶⁸⁰ *Ibid.*.

⁶⁸¹ *Ibid.*.

⁶⁸² *Ibid.*.

from off his earth & from under these heavens, & can your spirit then close with such or beare with such evils in your ministry or judgment”.⁶⁸³ Here, then, was a clear warning to Peter. For, despite the proliferation of debate and political support for liberty of conscience, as one of the godly, Peter should have no traffic with it.

VI.

While the conflicts between Rhode Island and the Massachusetts authorities have taken pride of place in American historiography, Rhode Island was not the only New World colony established in an effort to free its settlers from the confines of a state-imposed uniformity of religion. Turmoil and quarrels between Independents and more conservative authorities in Bermuda also drove the former out of the island in hopes of forming their own settlement where liberty of conscience would be guaranteed. While the Independent William Sayle was replaced as governor by Josias Forster in February 1642, Sayle was reappointed the following September, and held on to that post until February 1645. Josias Forster became governor again, this time as one of a triumvirate consisting of Stephen Paynter and William Wilkinson. While both Paynter and Wilkinson were favourable to the Independents, the Independents must have felt as though their position in the colony and their freedom to worship as they chose was under threat.

⁶⁸³ *Ibid.*

Consequently, ministers Nathaniel White and William Goulding returned to England in early 1645 to plead their cause before the Somers Island Company and, if necessary, Parliament.⁶⁸⁴

White and Goulding's timing of their return was propitious: Parliament's dismantling of episcopacy in 1645 had culminated in July with the establishment of Presbyterian classes in London, however, with Parliamentary oversight. Furthermore, in March 1645, Parliament added several new members to the Committee for Foreign Plantations, formed in 1643.⁶⁸⁵ Members appointed to the Committee in 1643 broadly reflected the political spectrum. It included Arthur Haselrig, John Pym, as well as Oliver Cromwell, Henry Vane, and the regicide Cornelius Holland. Several international merchants were appointed to the committee—Myles Corbet, Samuel Vassall, and John Rolls—who brought practical experience with them. However, the committee members appointed in March 1645 were far less conservative. While the Presbyterian John Clotworthy and Philip Stapleton, who, along with Denzil Holles, was one of the leading Presbyterians in the House,⁶⁸⁶ were appointed, so too were Alexander Rigby, a man described as “A most desperate Enemy to the Presbyterians Church Discipline,”⁶⁸⁷ and the regicide William Purefoy.⁶⁸⁸ Involvement in the trial of the king was another characteristic of the new members, such as George Fenwick, a return migrant from

⁶⁸⁴ ODNB.

⁶⁸⁵ *Two Ordinances of the Lords and Commons Assembled in Parliament, The one dated November 2. 1643. the other March 21. 1645. Whereby Robert Earle of Warwick is made Governor in church, and L. high Admirall of those Islands and other Plantations, inhabited planted or belonging to any His Majesties the King of Englands Subjects, within the bounds, and upon the Coasts of America* (1645).

⁶⁸⁶ ODNB.

⁶⁸⁷ John Vicars, *Dagon demolished: or, Twenty admirable examples of Gods severe justice and displeasure against the subscribers of the late engagement, against our lawfull sovereign King Charls the second; and the whole house of peeres, in these words* (1660), p. 12.

⁶⁸⁸ ODNB.

Connecticut and client of both Warwick and Lord Saye and Sele, and also served as army officer in the New Model Army and was appointed as one of the commissioners at the king's trial.⁶⁸⁹ Richard Selwey was one of the Parliamentary representatives in the Westminster Assembly and was also appointed as one of the judges of the king's trial, though he, like Fenwick, refused to sit.⁶⁹⁰ Henry Mildmay, an Independent allied with the Independent Puritan grandees, who was listed, inaccurately, as one of the regicides.⁶⁹¹ Another member appointed was Francis Allen, another regicide, identified by Lindley as a "parochial Independent," a "midway position between Presbyterianism and Independency...in which a parochial structure for the church was valued and maintained, but, unlike in Presbyterianism, the Erastian nature of parliament's church settlements was favoured and toleration for gathered churches upheld".⁶⁹² The Independent Edmond Prideaux was among the more conservative M.P.s appointed in 1645.

With the Committee for Foreign Plantations composed of so many opponents of Presbyterians, White and Goudling's mission had a much higher chance of success than it would have had even just the year previously. At the end of September 1645, the petition from the inhabitants of Bermuda complaining of the religious disturbances wrecked upon the island by Ministers White, Copeland, and Goulding was read aloud in the House.⁶⁹³ Less than a month later, however, the pleas of the petitioners were rejected in favor of religious toleration. In October of 1645, White and Goulding's mission to London

⁶⁸⁹ ODNB.

⁶⁹⁰ ODNB.

⁶⁹¹ ODNB.

⁶⁹² Lindley, *Popular Politics and Religion in Civil War London*, p. 278.

⁶⁹³ 'House of Commons Journal Volume 4: 25 September 1645', *Journal of the House of Commons: volume 4: 1644-1646* (1802), pp. 284-288. URL: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=23503> Date accessed: 17 December 2009. This petition was annexed to the second edition of Prynne's *A Fresh Discovery*.

achieved its aim. By an act of Parliament, the inhabitants of Somers Island “shall without any molestation or trouble haue and enjoy the libertye of their Consciences in matter of God’s worshipp”.⁶⁹⁴ The matter was then referred to the Committee of Lords and Commons for Plantations, to see this Order put in due Execution.⁶⁹⁵

This act of Parliament, influenced by the radicalized Committee for Foreign Plantations, was a development in the history of religious toleration that has been negelected by historians. Several months after the establishment of a truncated Presbyterian church in London with Erastian overtones and Parliament’s public declaration of their commitment to the “care for tender conciences,” Parliament granted a complete liberty of conscience in Bermuda. Here was an island, much like England, in the midst of its own deeply devisive explosion of competing confessions that was causing endless local strife. Instead of committing the issue to a learned assembly of divines, as they had in England, Parliament acted on its own initiative to permit liberty of conscience to all its inhabitants. This was more religious liberty than the Erastian settlement granted in England. As such, it signaled a turning point in the history of religious toleration in England. While certainly not all in Parliament were committed to such principles, this declaration in late October 1645 revealed that there were increasingly influential elements in Parliament that was willing to accept toleration. The limited and de facto toleration that prevailed in England from 1649 onwards was anticipated explicitly and deliberately in Bermuda.

⁶⁹⁴ House of Commons Journal Volume 4: 27 October 1645’, *Journal of the House of Commons: volume 4: 1644-1646* (1802), pp. 322-325. URL: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=23529> Date accessed: 17 December 2009.

⁶⁹⁵ *Ibid.*.

However, Parliament's order did not mean the end of the troubles in Bermuda. In fact, things seemed to get worse following Parliament's declaration of liberty of conscience. In the spring of 1646, Thomas Turnor assumed the post of governor of Bermuda, and he had no intention of following Parliament's declaration of liberty of conscience. A letter he wrote to John Winthrop in August of that year makes it clear that Turnor is unknown to Winthrop, which could imply that Turnor is not one of the godly, or, at the very least anti-Independent/Congregationalist.⁶⁹⁶ The actions he took against the Independent party in Bermuda revealed that he certainly was adamantly opposed to their system of church-government, and by every means necessary sought to exterminate their presence and influence in the colony.

According to the Independent William Reyner's account of Turnor's actions in a letter to Winthrop in March 1646, immediately upon Turnor's arrival, he called an Assembly. The initial purpose of this was to remove from elected office all who had been friendly to the Independent party, and, in their place, fill the government with those opposed to them. Turnor was successful. Consequently, Reyner feared that "soe vile are the spirits of men amongste us, that Ordinance of Perlement will take noe place, but herelye spurned at. In soe much that we feare we shall not onelye be afflicted withe depriuation of Libertye, but peace alsoe".⁶⁹⁷ Copeland also shared with Winthrop the miseries the godly suffer in Bermuda, informing him that "some of our Counsellours our friends" had "escaped out of prison," and that "our Pastor [Nathaniel White] being layd in as they got out".⁶⁹⁸ As a result of this shift in government, the Independents in

⁶⁹⁶ *WP*, v. V, p. 99.

⁶⁹⁷ *WP*, v. IV, p. 71-73.

⁶⁹⁸ *WP*, v. V, p. 96-97.

Bermuda planned to remove themselves from the island and settle elsewhere in the Atlantic. Reyner told Winthrop that they “haue sent 2 shippes vnto the Bohamahs Ilands neare Floridah, to dicouer some considerable Iland for us to settle upon; hoping there to enjoye Christe, in the puritie of his ordinances, without this Bermudian Imbitterment”. Both ships failed to find such an island, and one was even lost, but the Independents remained “vnwillinge to cease the designe”. Accordingly, when next there was “a ship in harbour to be procured; we are fullye determined, indede necessitated therunto, to sett her for the once more upon discouerye, peraduenture the Lorde maye answer (in mercye) our desires, for I am confident the aime and end if Righte, holye”. They had hoped to procure a ship from New England, but decided that the wait for such a vessel would be too long, and they would be better off taking advantage of any ship in their own harbor willing to carry them.⁶⁹⁹ Copeland echoed these sentiments in his own letter to Winthrop, advising him that their “desire to goe out is not that for wee are weary of the place, but that wee are sick of the present Government under which wee now live. Besids wee now live scatteredly and enjoy not that sweet society of saints which wee long after more frequently to enjoy”.⁷⁰⁰ In pursuit of this aim, former governor William Sayle and minister William Goulding left Bermuda for London. Copeland informed Winthrop of this, telling him “Capt. Sayle and brother Golding come in your vessel to waite for a passage in some ship with you to Parliament. Help them by our selfe and friends, seeing the cause is Gods”.⁷⁰¹

⁶⁹⁹ *WP*, v. IV, p. 71-73

⁷⁰⁰ *WP*, v. V, p. 96-97.

⁷⁰¹ *WP*, v. V, p. 96-97.

While Sayle and Goulding were in London in 1647, things in Bermuda only got worse for their party. Turnor informed the Independent ministers that as he did not wish to punish them for their continued nonconformity, he would allow them to preach in certain places and at certain times. However, they could “take no more in couenant or raise a partie to the disturbance of the peace of the Islands...moreouer that you shall neither minister the Lords Supp. Baptize nor marry”.⁷⁰² At the end of 1648, White reminded the colonial government of Parliament’s ordinance granting liberty of conscience, but “it was voated that we would not admitt of that toleration”.⁷⁰³ In January 1649, the governor and council issued a proclamation “suppressinge of all conventicles and private meetinges, and that all such that will not conforme to the discipline established must prepare to goe out of the land”.⁷⁰⁴

Copeland wrote another letter to Winthrop in 1647, keeping him abreast of the plight of the godly in Bermuda. He reminded Winthrop that “wee have met with much opposition both in the Government of Capt. Forster, and also since our present Governor Capt. Thomas Turnor his being sent to vs from our Company”. The progress of their doctrine is slow, for “The Congregationall way still gets footing, but with much opposition of evil and vnreasonable men, yea with the whole ignorant and malignant body of the Kingdome”. Since Sayle and Goulding’s departure to England, “more wrongs are put vpon vs then ever before”. Copeland believed that White had written more at length on this issue to John Cotton and to Winthrop’s pastor Wilson, revealing even more of the extent of the networks of godly between Bermuda and New England. He

⁷⁰² Lefroy, p. 626.

⁷⁰³ Lefroy, p. 642.

⁷⁰⁴ Lefroy, p. 643-44.

suggested to Winthrop that if “it seems good to you after you have perused them [the letters] you may imparte them to Mr. Dunster, Mr. Shepheard (that he may acquiante them with his father in law Mr. Hooker, Mr. Davenport, and other of our brethren with them, what are remote from Boston and Cambridge) your reverend Teacher Mr. Cotton and pastor Mr. Wilson”.

Copeland enclosed in his letter to Winthrop a copy of Richard Norwood’s *Considerations tending to remove the present Differences, and to settle Unity, Peace, and Piety for the present and future*, published in London in 1646. The themes and substance of Norwood’s *Considerations* are the same as those found in his *Advertisement*, published as part of Prynne’s *A Fresh Discovery* in 1645. Like Prynne’s work, Norwood’s *Considerations* was published by Michael Sparke. In light of Sparke’s own connections to Bermuda, and the previous use of this network to supply manuscripts, it seems likely that Norwood had become a part of Sparke’s network. Copeland certainly was displeased with Norwood’s publications. To Winthrop, he said, “You may perceive by our scholemasters Considerations what a friend wee have of him; or rather what a secret vnderminer of truth”. His intentions by sending Winthrop a copy was not simply to share this with him, but rather he did so because he wished Winthrop to “imparte them to such as you know will make best vse of them”.⁷⁰⁵

Sayle’s mission to England met with a great deal of success. In July of 1647, Parliament granted his petition, and he secured a charter to develop a colony at Eleutheria. The Independents’ goal of having a place to remove themselves to in the Bahamas where they would be free to practice their religion according to their way of

⁷⁰⁵ WP, v. V, p. 182-85.

worship was well on its way to being realized. The *Articles and Orders* for the newly formed Company of Adventurers for the Plantation of the Islands of Eleutheria made clear that the foundational principle of this colonization project is to protect religious liberty. For, as the *Articles and Orders* stated, “experience hath shewed us the great inconveniencies...by a rigid imposing upon all an uniformity and conformity in matters of judgement and practice in the things of Religion, whereby divisions have been made, factions, fomented, persecutions induced, and the publick peace endangered”. Their intention was for all to “be received and accepted as Members of the said Company...notwithstanding any other difference of judgement”. Furthermore, “there shall be no names of distinction or reproach, as *Independent, Antinomian, Anabaptist*, or any other cast upon any such for their difference in judgement,” nor “shall any man speak reproachfully of any person for his opinion, or of the opinion it self, otherwise then in the *Scripture Language*”.⁷⁰⁶ The *Articles and Orders* for the Company, in terms of religious liberty, preceded England’s own government by six years.

The *Articles and Orders* for Eleutheria were not just committed to Sayle’s hands. They were printed on a broadsheet, an act that opened the development of Eleutheria up to the wider English public. As a broadside, its primary function was to advertise Eleutheria, both for financial support and to attract migrants. It is interesting, then, that the *Articles and Orders* did not contain the usual glowing descriptions of the lush life and potential for agriculture typically found in advertisements of colonization. Rather, one quarter of it was dedicated to Eleutheria’s promise of liberty of conscience. More so, it was the first quarter of the broadside. The author of the *Articles and Orders* began the

⁷⁰⁶ “A Broadside Advertising Eleuthera and the Bahama Islands, London 1647,” *Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts*, v. 32 (Boston: The Colonial Society of Massachusetts, 1937), p. 78-86.

piece with it, signaling that this was the most important feature of Eleutheria, not its abundant foliage. Undoubtedly the author hoped that such a place would appeal the sentiments of many in July 1647, a moment in which agitation for religious toleration was growing.

Sayle returned to Bermuda, charter in hand, in October 1647. He and about seventy other Independents, including Copeland who was now almost eighty years old by Winthrops's reckoning, soon set out for Eleutheria. However, things did not run smoothly. The account of what happened is detailed in Winthrop's Journal, which was not wholly surprising considering the interest that Winthrop took in developments in Bermuda among the Independents and his and other New England godly's connections among the Bermudian Independents. According to Winthrop's account, while onboard the ship bound for Eleutheria, the captain of the vessel, Butler, refused to allow the Independents their freedom to worship. Upon landing, he forced Sayle and his group to remove themselves to another island, but their ship was destroyed in the harbor and all their goods and provisions were lost. Consequently, "they were forced (for diverse monthes) to lye in the open Ayre, & to feed vpon suche frutes, & wild creatures as the the Iland afforded: but finding their strengthe to decaye, & no hope of any Releife". In response to these dire conditions and facing starvation, Sayle provisioned a shallop with eight men, hoping to reach Bermuda, Virginia, or New England. They landed in Virginia, where they were furnished with provisions. Sayle tried to convince some of the Virginian settlers to return with them to Eleutheria, but the Virginians declined to do so, "for the Church were very Orthodox, & Zealous for the Truethe," until they received the

advice of the godly in New England. From New England, “Lettres were returned to them, dissuadinge them from ioyning with that people vnder those terms”.⁷⁰⁷

A Royalist revolt in September 1649 in Bermuda forced more Independents to leave the island for Eleutheria, including Nathaniel White and his congregation. When the godly in New England heard of their plight, they raised 800 pounds to aid them. In thanks, the colonists sent back to Boston ten tons of Brazilwood. In addition to this exceptionally valuable wood, the ship carried onboard the son of Nathaniel White, who attended Harvard College and graduated in 1646 along with the son of Bermudian George Strike. Out of the four students who graduated that year, half had a close Bermudian connection, bringing Bermuda closer into the orbit of New England. The brazilwood was sold, with the proceeds donated to Harvard. In spite of the support of New England and their aid, the settlement at Eleutheria failed to thrive. By 1650, seventy colonists asked the governor of Bermuda, once again Josias Forster, to return. In 1656, Sayle and his family returned to Bermuda. The settlement had failed to flourish and survive in its current incarnation.⁷⁰⁸

Despite this, Eleutheria remains an important anecdote in England’s history of religious toleration. For while it failed, the support the venture received from Parliament, as well as Parliament’s order that Bermuda allow liberty of conscience, reveal a gradual shift in the thinking of the Parliamentary government. Parliament could hardly be described as wholly committed to the idea of a uniform church if they permitted its colonial subjects the freedom to worship as those chose. Perhaps Parliament, distracted by more pressing concerns at home, could not be bothered to ensure the reduction and

⁷⁰⁷ *WJ*, p. 720-21.

⁷⁰⁸ Babette Levy “Puritans in the Southern Colonies,” p. 185.

conformity of the Independent party in Bermuda. Or perhaps they wished to see the effects that liberty of conscience would have on an English government and economy, and Bermuda presented them with the opportunity to do so with little inconvenience to themselves. Whatever the rationale behind Parliament's actions might be, the fact remains that they were not married to the necessity of religious uniformity.

VII.

In December 1648, the New Model Army marched upon and occupied London. On the morning of December 6th, several regiments of Colonel Pride's troops blocked the lobby of Parliament, purging the government of most of its elected representatives. Over the next week, forty-five members of the House of Commons were imprisoned. How many exactly were prevented from taking their seats is unclear. Many may have stayed away voluntarily or in protest at the Army's actions. For the next two months, no more than seventy members attended the House. The House was stripped of its moderate and conservative members, and even some of its known Independents, in order to achieve one purpose: the trial and execution of King Charles I. They succeeded, and on January 30, 1649, Charles I was beheaded outside of the Banqueting House at the Palace of Whitehall.⁷⁰⁹

This purged Parliament, known as the Rump Parliament, ruled England until 1653.⁷¹⁰ However, despite the revolutionary actions of its regicides, it did not remain a

⁷⁰⁹ Woolrych, *Britain in Revolution*, p. 428-433.

⁷¹⁰ See Blair Worden *The Rump Parliament 1648-1653* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1974) for a complete and thorough history.

revolutionary force in England. Shortly after the king's execution, the previously absent members of Parliament began to return. In the three weeks that followed the regicide, the battle between the revolutionaries who had executed the king and the moderate returnees was fought, and the latter came out the winners. For the next four years, the Rump Parliament devoted a considerable amount of time and energy towards the discussion of reform. Law reforms, religious reforms, social reforms were all debated. However, very little was done towards the execution and accomplishment of these reforms. Various schemes were proposed in all areas, but were rarely enacted. For the Rump Parliament was not a revolutionary body. When its right to rule was considered by many to be highly dubious at best, it wanted stability and obedience throughout the country, not revolution. Deeply unpopular, the Rump Parliament did its best to appease moderates and Presbyterians, not alienate them.

Nowhere was the Rump's reticence to act more visible than its pursuance, or lack thereof, of religious reform. Despite cries from all around throughout the 1640s, religious reform had been slow to take place. While the Long Parliament did much to abolish episcopacy, Presbyterianism had not been established outside of London, and only then in a modified form.⁷¹¹

This did not spell the end of Presbyterianism, however. In April 1647, the Westminster Assembly presented to Parliament the Presbyterian Westminster Confession of Faith. Later that year, it presented two catechisms, a short one and a long one, to Parliament, both of which were approved. For a brief moment in August 1648, it seemed

⁷¹¹ For a nuanced assessment of the success of the Presbyterian London Provincial Assembly, see Elliot Curt Vernon, "The Sion College Conclave and London Presbyterianism during the English Revolution," p. 140-191.

as though the Presbyterians would have the national church they had striven for.

Parliament passed an ordinance establishing a truly Presbyterian system of church-government.⁷¹² However, this was merely a political move to prevent the Presbyterians from switching their allegiance from Parliament to Charles I, and Presbyterianism made little headway outside of London. Accordingly, by the time the Rump Parliament took control over the nation, much of the previous religious establishment had been legally destroyed, but little was officially established in its place with any degree of success. It seemed natural that the Rump Parliament would rectify this situation.

Alas, it did not. The Rump Parliament made little headway in the settlement of religion. While Presbyterianism had been set up in 1648, it can in no way be described in any meaningful way as having existed outside of the capital. Much was done to impose Puritan morality on the country. Sabbath keeping was enforced, the death penalty became the punishment for adultery, and swearing and blasphemy were made illegal. However, as much as Presbyterians must have abhorred it, a limited, de facto toleration seemed to prevail. In late 1649, Parliament declared its intention of passing a universal toleration, but failed to do so, in spite of pressure from the Army to do so.⁷¹³

Finally, on August 1650, following Cromwell's victory at Dunbar, Parliament passed the Blasphemy Act.⁷¹⁴ Directed primarily against the most extreme and radical sects, such as Ranters, Seekers, and atheists, its intention was to suppress "prophaneness,

⁷¹² 'House of Commons Journal Volume 5: 5 August 1648', *Journal of the House of Commons: volume 5: 1646-1648* (1802), pp. 662-663. URL: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=25439> Date accessed: 18 December 2009.

⁷¹³ *A declaration of the army of England, upon their march into Scotland. Signed in the name, and by the appointment of his excellency the Lord General Cromwel, and his council of officers* (1650).

⁷¹⁴ *An Act against several atheistical, blasphemous and execrable opinions, derogatory to the honor of God, and destructive to humane society* (1650).

wickedness, superstition and formality”.⁷¹⁵ However, the next month, Parliament repealed the recusancy laws passed during the reign of Elizabeth.⁷¹⁶ While these recusancy laws were declared null by the Rump Parliament, the same act continued to require that everyone “shall (having no reasonable excuse for their absence) upon every Lords-Day, Days of publique Thanksgiving and Humiliation, diligently resort to some publique place where the Service and Worship of God is exercised, or shall be present at some other place in the practice of some Religious Duty, either of Prayer, Preaching, Reading or Expounding the Scriptures, or conferring upon the same.”⁷¹⁷ No one would be forced to attend a particular church service against their conscience; they would have to attend some church service nonetheless. The Act of Uniformity was also repealed, destroying the legal structure for a uniform Church of England.⁷¹⁸

While the years of the Rump Parliament were notable for their mild enforcement of the Blasphemy Act and other forms of religious persecution, the question of establishing a national church remained. In response to the publication of the Socinian Racovian Confession in early 1652, Parliament acquiesced to the petition of fifteen leading divines, including John Owen, and appointed a Committee for the Propagation of the Gospel in February 1652.⁷¹⁹ The committee’s proposals were submitted at the end of the year, and printed in December 1652 as *Proposals for the furtherance and propagation*

⁷¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

⁷¹⁶ 'House of Commons Journal Volume 6: 27 September 1650', *Journal of the House of Commons: volume 6: 1648-1651* (1802), pp. 474-475. URL: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=25989> Date accessed: 18 December 2009.

⁷¹⁷ 'September 1650: Act for the Repeal of several Clauses in Statutes imposing Penalties for not coming to Church.', *Acts and Ordinances of the Interregnum, 1642-1660* (1911), pp. 423-425.

⁷¹⁸ Worden, *The Rump Parliament*, p. 119-138.

⁷¹⁹ 'House of Commons Journal Volume 7: 10 February 1652', *Journal of the House of Commons: volume 7: 1651-1660* (1802), pp. 85-86. URL: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=23947&strquery=Gospel> Date accessed: 18 December 2009.

of the gospell in this nation. As the same were hubly presented to the Honourable Committee of Parliament by divers ministers of the gospell, and others. Their proposals came too late for the Rump Parliament, however, for while the proposals were debated in Parliament in early 1653, in April 1653, Cromwell dissolved the Rump Parliament, bringing an end to republican government in England.

VII.

In 1652, while the Committee for the Propagation of the Gospel debated the future of religion in England, New Englanders were once again part of the debate. Roger Williams and another return migrant, John Clark, relied on their experiences of intolerance in New England to agitate for religious toleration. With his successful completion of his mission to England in order to secure a patent for the colony of Rhode Island, Williams returned to his colony in September 1644. Despite its legal separation from its neighbor to the north, Massachusetts, Rhode Island continued to be plagued by charters. One such was William Coddington, a supporter of Anne Hutchinson who settled with others at Portsmouth on Aquidneck Island. Coddington's well-placed connections in England allowed him to secure his own commission, appointing him the lifetime governor of the colony. As this violated Williams' patent for the colony, Williams was forced to return to England in 1651 in order to lobby for his own patent. He was ultimately successful, returning to Rhode Island in the summer of 1654. As he had done during his last political struggle in England, Williams set to print another tract defending liberty of conscience, *The Bloody Tenent Yet More Bloody: By Mr Cottons*

endeavour to wash it white in the Blood of the Lambe; Of whose precious Blood, spilt in the Blood of his Servants; and Of the blood of Millions spilt in former and later wars for Conscience sake; That Most Bloody Tenent of Persecution for cause of Conscience, upon a second Tryal, is now found more apparently and more notoriously guilty, published in 1652 and printed by Giles Calvert. Calvert was a notorious radical in London. His print shop at the west end of St. Paul's Cathedral was a well-known stomping ground of radicals and a distribution center of their printed matter. During the Civil Wars and the Commonwealth period, Calvert was responsible for publishing tracts by Hugh Peter, Henry Burton, William Walwyn, Gerrard Winstanley, and Abiezer Coppe. Beginning in 1653, Calvert began to publish a great deal of Quaker literature, and became a well known supporter of their group. He was even one of the signatories to the petition to lessen James Nayler's punishment in 1656.⁷²⁰ It therefore comes as no surprise that Williams' rebuttal would have found a home in Calvert's shop.

Coming in at around 350 pages, *The Bloody Tenent Yet More Bloody* was hardly a departure from its predecessor. Readers of the second treatise would have found another discourse between Truth and Peace, in much the same manner and style of *The Bloudy Tenent*. In fact, it largely repeated Williams' arguments with no new additions, and, as such, does not require another close examination. What does bear further investigation are the opening epistles to the treatise. Williams included three: one to Parliament, another to the Magistrates of New England, and finally one to the Reader. Williams had nothing but praise for the Rump Parliament, which has been specially blessed by God. For evidence of such, he urged them to "review the multitude of your *Actings* and

⁷²⁰ ODNB.

Sufferings, your *Battells* and *Victories*, *Dangers*, and *deliverances*, you cannot (no man can) but observe and see (a naked) Arm from Heaven fighting for you”. God’s pleasure with the Rump Parliament was most evident in their “*Mercy and Moderation* to the poor oppressed Consciences of the *English Nation*”.⁷²¹ Parliament learned “that when men think to get to Heaven by using violence to the *Consciences* of men, they oftentimes lose that which they might peaceably have kept on *Earth*”.⁷²² But if the government of England should falter, if Parliament should change course and establish a national church in which men’s consciences are not free, Williams used the example of the commercial success of Holland, particularly Amsterdam, to convince them otherwise. Amsterdam, as Williams narrated, was a haven for the religiously persecuted throughout Europe. Having all settled in Amsterdam,

This confluence of the persecuted, by *Gods* most gracious coming with them, drew *Boats*, drew *trade*, drew *Shipping*, and that so mightily in such a short time, that *Shipping*, *Trading*, *wealth*, *Greatnesse*, *Honour* (almost too the astonishment in the Eyes of all *Europe*, and the *World*) have appeared to fall as out of Heaven in a Crown or Garland upon the head of that poor Fisher-Town.⁷²³

England should follow the example of Holland, and in doing so “the piety and policie of such *Statesmen* [should] out-shoot and teach their Neighbors”. For care for tender consciences “cannot in all probability prove so dangerous and prejudiciall as many do

⁷²¹ Roger Williams, *The Bloody Tenent Yet More Bloody: By Mr Cottons endeavour to wash it white in the Blood of the Lambe; Of whose precious Blood, spilt in the Blood of his Servants; and Of the blood of Millions spilt in former and later wars for Conscience sake; That Most Bloody Tenent of Persecution for cause of Conscience, upon a second Tryal, is now found more apparently and more notoriously guilty* (1652), p. A2^v.

⁷²² *Ibid.*, p. A4^r.

⁷²³ *Ibid.*, p. A4^v.

imagine and discourse, but contrarily many wayes prove beneficiall, and marvellously advantageous”.⁷²⁴

Williams’ second epistle was to the courts in Massachusetts, and his address towards them was markedly less fulsome in its praise than the one before it. His grounds for abuse lay in the fact that

so many of yours of chief note (beside Mr. *Cotton*) are engaged in it [the bloody doctrine]; partly as *N. England* (in respect of *Spiritual* and *Civil State*) professeth to draw near to *Christ Jesus* then other *States* and *Churches*, and partly as *N. England* is beloved to hold and practice such a *Bloudy Doctrine*, notwithstanding Mr. *Cottons Vails* and *Pretences* of not *persecuting men for conscience*, but punishing them only for sinning against *conscience*! and of but so and so, not *persecuting*, but *punishing Hereticks, and Blasphemers, Idolators, Seducers, &c.*⁷²⁵

As supporters of New England have done previously, as we explored in the first two chapters, Williams too proposed that Old England has much to learn from New England. However, it was by running contrary to their example, not by following it. New England had “taught most of our *Old English spirits*, how to put due prices upon the most *common* and ordinary *undervalued mercies*”.⁷²⁶ After witnessing the needless bloodshed that New England brought upon itself through its unchristian persecution, Old England was taught the lesson that the “one *commoditie*” most dear “is a *Libertie* of searching after Gods most holy *mind* and *pleasure*”.⁷²⁷ Williams’ anger at New England was almost palpable in the text. He was angry at them for not only their continued persecution of others for the sake of their consciences, but, in particular, how they wasted a most blessed gift from God. In leaving England and venturing to the New World, the settlers had the

⁷²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. B^v.

⁷²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. C3^v.

⁷²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. E^v.

⁷²⁷ *Ibid.*.

opportunity to erect a truly Christian settlement, to be Winthrop's "City on a Hill".

Instead, they chose not to, and now suffered as other nations have suffered before them:

O remember that your *Gifts* are rare, your Professions of *Religion* (in such way) rare, you Persecutions and hidings from the storms abroad, rare and wonderfull: So in proportion your Transgressions, estate and publick sine cannot but be of a rare and extraordinary *Guilt*: Nor will *New England's* sorrowes (when sins are *ripe* and *full*) be other then the *Dregs* of *Germanie's*, of *Ireland's*, of *England's*, and of *Scotlands's* tears and Calamities.⁷²⁸

The privilege they once had, the potential they once possessed, they wasted with persecution.

Unlike his previous trip back to England in the 1640s, Williams did not come alone when he returned to England in the 1650s. He brought with him John Clark, a Baptist physician from Rhode Island. Clark left England in 1637, settling in Rhode Island. Like so many other returnees before him, Clark published his own account of the government in New England: *Ill Newes From New-England: Or A Narrative of New-Englands Persecution. Wherein Is Declared That while old England is becoming new, New-England is become Old*. Published in 1652 and printed by Henry Hills, it is dated by Thomason to May 13. This tract is composed of two major parts. The first part recounted his dealings with the neighboring colony of Massachusetts, detailing their persecution of him and several of his friends, because they were Baptists. While Clark differentiated between the colonies of New England, he classified them all under the heading "New England." Accordingly, his judgment of Massachusetts as a persecuting and tyrannical government extended to all the other colonies. The second part of his treatise was a full and detailed explanation of his Baptist confession of faith, wherein he proved the truth of Baptist doctrine, and also supplied biblical exegesis in support of

⁷²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. E2^v.

liberty of conscience. Thus, in this one tract, we find examples of the familiar tropes of anti-New England polemics: a tale of persecution at the hands of the New England authorities, buttressed with manuscript sources, and also a declaration of faith based on Scripture, which also are found in justifications for liberty of conscience. All in all, then, this was a very typical tract, possessing many of the characteristics to be found in all tracts on New England, written both in support of it and against it.

Clark opened his tract with an epistle to the Parliament, with a several page exposition on the limits of the duties of a magistrate, and how they were not bound by Christ to persecute for the sake of conscience. Rather, it violated the spiritual law of Christ to do so.⁷²⁹ Echoing Williams' arguments that the civil sword should not be brought to bear upon spiritual concerns, but rather that the latter is managed by "the sword that proceeds out of the mouth of his servants, the word of truth, and especially as to the efficacy, and to the inward man, by the two edged sword of the Spirit, that spirituall law and light".⁷³⁰ Furthermore, these servants of Christ could rely on physical tactics to persuade others of the righteousness of their way, for God "express[ly] command[s] not to strive, but to be *patient, apt to teach*, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves, & to wait if God at any time will give them repentance to the acknowledgement of the truth".⁷³¹ Clark's epistle to Parliament was followed by an epistle to the Presbyterians, in which he argued, using scriptures, that Presbyterian church-government was not the form of church-government proscribed by example in the

⁷²⁹ John Clark *Ill Newes From New-England: Or A Narrative of New-Englands Persecution* (1652), p. A2^v-A3^r.

⁷³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. A3^r.

⁷³¹ *Ibid.*, p. A4^r.

New Testament.⁷³² Using the example of the parable of the tares and the wheat, Clark, like Williams again, maintained that it was not the duty of the magistrate to uphold and enforce one religion. For Jesus “expressly commands his Servants to let the tares alone with the wheat, and suffers no small inconveniences thereby to avoid a greater, and further declares that the servant of the lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach (not to strike) patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves”.⁷³³ While Williams saved his most relentless attacks for John Cotton, and even then he was not so harsh upon him as other polemicists could have been, Clark was almost brutal against the Presbyterians. Unlike Williams, he did not refrain from using harsh language. To them he said, “As touch the wrong and injury done to us, you having thereby much more wronged your own souls in transgressing the very law, and light of Nations, doing as you would not be done unto, it is in my heart to pittie you rather, and to petition my Lord in heaven not to lay this sin to your charge”.⁷³⁴

Like others before him, Clark was persecuted by the authorities of Massachusetts because of his religious beliefs. His tale of persecution comprised the first part of his text. Clark was careful to relate how he and his party came to be settled in Aquidneck in the Narranganset Bay, making sure it was not an area claimed under the patent of the Massachusetts Bay Colony or the Plymouth Plantation. Implied in this is not a wish to avoid treading on any ones toes, but rather a desire to ensure that they would not be bound to Massachusetts’ law or religion. When he and two other, Obediah Holmes and John Crandall, came to Boston on business in May 1651, they were arrested by the

⁷³² *Ibid.*, p. B^v.

⁷³³ *Ibid.*, p. B2^v.

⁷³⁴ *Ibid.*

authorities for holding an illegal private meeting, a conventicle. Clark was fined 20 pounds for this act, and for being an admitted Baptist, which was illegal in Massachusetts. He requested three times to be allowed to dispute with the ministers of the colony, which was denied to him. He ultimately composed his “Conclusions” and set them to paper, which became the statement of faith published in the second half of the treatise.

Clark also discussed the fate of his fellow Baptist, Obediah Holmes. Holmes was whipped for his part in this incident. Inserted in the text is the copy of a letter Holmes sent to the Baptists in London, detailing his persecution at the hands of the Massachusetts Bay Authorities.⁷³⁵ Clark implored of the readers of this letter that they “must needs awaken and rouse up the minds, and spirits of many, cause sad thoughts to arise in their hearts, and to flow forth at their mouthes as men offended, to see strangers professing Godliness, so discourteously used, for no Civill Transgression, but merely for Conscience”.⁷³⁶ The injustice of the Court’s actions was further enforced by the inclusion of another letter, this time from John Spur, a witness to Holmes’ whipping. Spur was so moved and affected by the godly carriage of Holmes during his whipping, and told him as much, that the Court of Massachuettis persecuted him as well, fining him 40 shillings or to be whipped. The Court also tried John Hazell, a man between sixty and seventy years old, and an old friend of Holmes for visiting Holmes when he was incarcerated after his whipping. While it did not execute any punishment against him, the stress of the accusation and the trial, Spur claimed, brought about Hazell’s death

⁷³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 17-23.

⁷³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

prematurely due to his old age. Spur's letter also included Hazell's account of his dealings with the Massachusetts magistrates.⁷³⁷

In order to buttress his point that Massachusetts, while claiming not to persecute for conscience's sake did in fact do so, Clark included transcripts of Massachusetts' laws to prove it. They included laws for the suppressing of Anabaptists, making blasphemy a capital offense, and ordering all colonists to pay tithes for the maintenance of ministers whether they be admitted members of the church or not. All these instances of persecution revealed the Massachusetts magistrates as ungodly tyrants, with no respect for the law. Their iniquity knew no bounds.

Such injustice could be prevented, however, by denying the civil magistrates the authority to wield their sword in spiritual matters. In the second part of Clark's text, a detailed exposition of Clark's conclusions from his statement of faith, the author justified, through Scripture, the evidence for the truth Baptism and the care for liberty of conscience. Clark argued that conformity of worship "doth presuppose one man to have dominion or Lordship over another mans conscience". However, who knows which form of worship is most pleasing to God? And forcing men and women to worship does not bring them closer to God, but rather "I say at the best, for it is more likely to force worshippers from him....This outward forcing men in the worship of God, is the ready way to make men dissemblers and hypocrites before God".⁷³⁸ Furthermore, Christianity was a religion of peace, not of violence and persecution. For Christ "hath given express

⁷³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 26-32.

⁷³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 69-70.

command unto all his Servants, who are the Children of Peace (in whose hearts his word stands, with power, as the word of a King) to be at peace among themselves”.⁷³⁹

The ultimate result of this forced conformity and persecution was not a more godly and stable state as some would maintain, but rather the complete opposite. Clark detailed what befell a state when religious conformity was enforced, painting a picture of a violent and anarchic polity. Rather than encouraging harmony among its citizens, such a state produced unspeakable horrors:

What jealousies, suspicions and fears in others? What revengfull desires in most? Yea, what plottings and contrivings in all? And as a fruit and effect hereof, what riding? Running? Troublesome, and tumultuous assemblings together, and fiddlings? Yea, and outrageous, murderings and bloodshedings are hereby produced in a Nation, to gain that power and sword to their party, either to crush, suppress, or cause the other to conform or at the least and best to save themselves from being crushed, suppressed, or forced to conformity?⁷⁴⁰

The best course to pursue was one in which political power was shared by all, not just one party or sect. The government should not grant “any part of the power to any party or sect to oppress or inforce others to their way for their carnal and private respects”.

Rather, it should “afford its protection equall to all without respect unto any,” where “one man may be as well assured that he shall not be forced to another man’s understanding and conscience, as that another shall not be forced unto his”.⁷⁴¹ Such a nation would be peaceful and prosperous, not beset by internal division, jealousy, and strife. Clark’s advocacy of religious toleration reflected not only the state of England in the 1640s and 1650s, but brought with it the trials of his own experiences in the New World. Both readily demonstrated the damage to a country that religious intolerance bore. However, it

⁷³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 72.

⁷⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 73-4.

⁷⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 76.

is the narratives from New England that most fully realized the injury both to individuals and to society that intolerance inflicts. Old England must recognize the lessons to be learned from New England's history.

VIII.

Owen and his associates' work ended in 1653. Tensions between the Army and Parliament steadily mounted in the early months of 1653, culminating in a coup d'état in April 1653. Cromwell and a detachment of the Army marched into the House on the morning of April 20th and announced,

It is high time for me to put an end to your sitting in this place, which you have dishonoured by your contempt of all virtue, and defiled by your practice of every vice; ye are a factious crew, and enemies to all good government; ye are a pack of mercenary wretches, and would like Esau sell your country for a mess of pottage, and like Judas betray your God for a few pieces of money.⁷⁴²

The time of the Rump Parliament was over. It was replaced by the Barebone's Parliament, whose members were selected by the Army, who also considered the recommendations of Congregational Churches sent in from all over the country. The Barebone's Parliament's star was ascendent for even less time than the body it had

⁷⁴² Bulstrode Whitelock recorded a slightly different series of events: "Entering the House [Cromwell {sic}] in a furious manner bid the Speaker leave his Chair, told the House, that they had sat long enough, unless they had done more good: that some of them were Whore-masters, looking then towards Henry Martin and Sir Peter Wentworth. That others of them were Drunkards, and some corrupt and unjust Men and scandalous to the Profession of the Gospel, and that it was not fit they should sit as a Parliament any longer, and desired them to go away... {ellips sic} Some of the members rose up to answer Cromwell's speech, but he would suffer none to speak but himself. Which he did with so much Arrogance in himself and Reproach to his Fellow members that some of his Privadoes were ashamed of it," Bulstrode Whitelocke, *Memorials of the English affairs from the beginning of the reign of Charles the First to the happy restoration of King Charles the Second* (Oxford, University press, 1853), p. 554. I am grateful to Amy Tims for helping me with these quotations.

expelled. Less than six months after its first meeting in July 1653, it formally abdicated in December all its authority to Cromwell.

Cromwell's powers were circumscribed by the Instrument of Government, the constitutional settlement drafted by the Army. It was England's first written constitution. According to the terms of the Instrument, the religious settlement of England granted that all those who "profess faith in God by Jesus Christ...shall not be restrained from, but shall be protected in, the profession of faith and the exercise of their religion".⁷⁴³ The looseness of this phrase inevitably posed problems, with its ambiguity becoming clear in the cases of the Anti-Trinitarian John Biddle and the Quaker John Naylor.⁷⁴⁴ When the Instrument of Government was replaced in 1657 by the Humble Petition and Advice, in place of the Instruments' term, there was a long clause, progressively expanded in debate and designed to define and forbid heresy, particularly Anti-Trinitarianism. The 1657 document gave protection to the people of God and at the same time would have trapped Biddle and Naylor.

Full toleration to everyone in England, for Jews and Catholics as well as every denomination of Protestantism, took centuries. Cromwell readmitted the Jews to England in 1656, but they were not granted full inclusion in civil life until the 1850s. The 1689 Act of Toleration granted liberty of conscience to all Protestant denominations, but the Act of Catholic Emancipation did not pass until 1829. Accordingly, the American colonies and colonists stand as striking examples of religious toleration. Their experiments in religious toleration anticipated England's own not merely by a few years,

⁷⁴³ <http://www.constitution.org/eng/conpur097.htm>.

⁷⁴⁴ Blair Worden "Toleration and the Cromwellian Protectorate", *Studies in Church History*, vol. 21.

but by centuries. Recognition of this fact fundamentally alters the narrative of toleration within England, redefining the impact of England's colonies in England.

CONCLUSION

In 1990, Conrad Russell revolutionized the historiography of the English Revolution when he argued that central to the causes of the English Civil Wars was the problem of multiple kingdoms. Both the English and the Scottish, each with their own exceptionally nationalistic church, were convinced that the other's church smacked of popery. The Scots were resistant to any proposal for a union of laws, and equated the survival of a separate system of Scottish law with that of a separate Scottish church. The crown also attempted, unsuccessfully, to maximize income in Ireland. It was the structural problems of how to manage these three kingdoms that James somehow managed to negotiate, but Charles was unable to, that is crucial to understanding the causes and outbreak of the English Revolution.⁷⁴⁵ Recognizing the multinational scope of the English Revolution transformed the way in which scholars of seventeenth century England understood and analyzed politics, religion, and society. The challenges of incorporating the inextricably interconnected histories of England, Scotland, and Ireland are already readily apparent decades before the political unification of the three kingdoms into Great Britain.

Extending the scope of the English Revolution into the nascent English Atlantic world has the potential to be as equally transformative of seventeenth century English historiography. Atlantic colonies are no less part of England's story than Scotland or Ireland are central. In fact, considering the majority of migrants to the colonies were English, not Scottish or Irish, one could plausibly argue that they are even more so. As we have seen, migration to the New World by the colonists to New England was not

⁷⁴⁵ Conrad Russell *The Causes of the English Civil War* (1990).

understood, nor even desired to be understood as, separation from Old England.

Migration throughout the English Atlantic was characterized by repeat and return migration. In addition, as historians have demonstrated, migration to the colonies in the New World was merely one aspect of much broader migratory patterns within early modern England. Migrants brought with them traditional attitudes about social relations and the institutions of the church and state, making England's Atlantic colonies more "English" than Scotland and Ireland.⁷⁴⁶ Furthermore, as we have seen, settlers to the colonies brought with them not only English attitudes, but also English problems. Many of the troubles England wrestled with during the seventeenth century were mirrored in its colonies in the New World.

Recognition of the inherent Englishness of England's Atlantic colonies necessarily revises our understanding of the scope of the English Revolution. The colonies must be understood not as passive responders to events in Old England, but rather as active and engaged participants themselves, with their own interests, motivations, and goals in the tumultuous decades of the middle of the seventeenth century. They did not react to events in England, but attempted to mold and shape them in their turn. Even for those who did not return to England, by utilizing trans-Atlantic networks of friends and family, printers and publishers, ministers and laymen, colonists throughout the Atlantic became dynamic and lively actors on the revolutionary stage. My project has already begun the work of uncovering the Atlantic dimension of the English Revolution and restoring it to its rightful place in its history. Clearly this project is far from complete. Further work needs to be done to strengthen several key themes of my

⁷⁴⁶ Alison Games *Migration and the Origins of the English Atlantic World* (1999); James Horn *Adapting to a New World: English Society in the 17th Century Chesapeake* (1994)

dissertation. As many of the pamphlets printed during the 1640s and 1650s circulated in manuscript publication during the 1630s, tracing the networks through which they traveled will further illuminate the impact of colonial churches in England. More biographical research also needs to be done on the printers who figure so prominently in my work, uncovering more about the history of the book in the process. Beyond the world of print, return migrants from the colonies that found positions in English parishes had the unique opportunity of implementing the practices of New England churches in Old England. Following their paths is vital to understanding how the example of colonial churches spread beyond the capital into the localities.

Whatever remains to be done in my own project does not detract from the wider importance of the paradigm shift the Atlantic dimension brings to other fields in English history. The incorporation of the Atlantic into the field of vision is transformative not simply for the history of England. From my work, recognition of the toleration experiments granted by Parliament in the 1640s to the Atlantic colonies recasts debates over the evolution of toleration in England. Eric Williams' *Capitalism and Slavery* revealed the extent to which the profits of slavery and the slave trade were central in the transition to capitalism in England. The Atlantic context has the potential to reshape history of other fields, beyond England, spatially and thematically. The history of science has demonstrated how central the Atlantic colonies were to the development of science. Doubtless more waits to be uncovered and explored.

Atlantic history has the power to transform our understanding of the past. While not to negate the substantial and vital contributions that national histories have made to the discipline, historians themselves can no longer be contained within them. Local, regional

studies, while useful in their own right, inevitably localize peoples when it has become increasingly clear that distance did not separate the peoples of one town from another, the inhabitants of one city from another, the citizens of one country from another. Through religion and affection, trade and war, Europe was more united than national divisions would suggest. National histories have for too long contained the stories of peoples within artificial boundaries that fail to do justice to the complexities of life. The interaction and circulation of peoples into the Atlantic world in the sixteenth century is in many ways an extension of the pre-existing networks within Europe proper. Atlantic history needs to be understood as such: not as a separate sphere from the history of Europe, but rather as one inextricably interconnected. Crucial questions about the history of Europe are transformed by the Atlantic context. Atlantic history offers the promise of an Atlantic world, but historians have had difficulty in overcoming the local. This failed promise has led many to believe that Atlantic history as a category of analysis has lost any kind of useful meaning to scholars. Perhaps the answer lays not so much in creating a unified Atlantic world, but rather a more subtle understanding of the networks and connections that bound the continents and peoples of the Western Hemisphere together is required. It is to these modes of circulation, of ideas and peoples and commodities, to which we should direct our further efforts.

APPENDIX A

New England Pamphlets (in chronological order)

William Hooke, *New Englands Teares for Old Englands Feares* (1640)

Charles Chauncy, *Retraction of Mr. Charles Chauncy* (1641)

John Cotton, *Abstract of the lawes of New England* (1641)

Copy of a Letter of Mr. Cotton of Boston, sent in an answer of certaine Objections made against their Discipline and Orders there, directed to a FRIEND (1641)

Way of Life (1641)

God's Mercie Mixed With His Justice, Or, His Peoples Deliverance in times of danger (1641)

Thomas Edwards, *Reasons Against the Independent Government of Particular Congregations: As Also against the Toleration of such Churches to be erected in this KINGDOME* (1641)

Nathaniel Homes, *New World, or, the New Reformed Church* (1641)

Thomas Hooker, *Danger of Desertion: Or, A Farwell Sermon...Preached immediately before his Departure out of Old England* (1641)

Poor Doubting Christian (1641)

John Cotton, *Brief Exposition of...Canticles* (1642)

Churches Resurrection (1642)

Modest and cleare answer to Mr. Balls discourse (1642)

Powring Out of the Seven Vials (1642)

True Constitution of a particular visible Church (1642)

John Davenport, *Profession of the Faith That Reverend and worthy Divine* (1642)

Thomas Lechford, *Plain Dealing* (1642)

Ezekiel Rogers, *Chiefe Grounds of Christian Religion* (1642)

Newes from New-England, of a prodigious birth brought to Boston in New England
(1642)

New Englands First Fruits (1643)

The Capitall Lawes of New-England (1643)

*The Copy of the Petition presented to Parliament by the Archbishop of Canterbury, that
he may not be transported beyond the Seas into new England* (1643)

Simeon Ash and William Rathband, *Letter of Many Ministers in Old England* (1643)

John Cotton, *Letter of Mr. John Cottons* (1643)

Doctrine of the Church (1643)

Thomas Hooker, *Soules Preparation* (6th ed.) (1643)

Ephrain Huit, *Whole Prophecie of Daniel* (1643)

Thomas Lambe, *Confutation of Infants Baptisme* (1643)

Richard Mather, *Apologie of the Churches in New England* (1643)

Church-Government and Church-Covenant Discussed (1643)

Thomas Parker, *A True Copy of a Letter* (1643)

Nathaniel Rogers, *A Letter Discovering the cause of Gods continuing wrath against the
Nation* (1643)

Roger Williams, *Key into the Language of America* (1643)

C.C. The Covenanter Vindicated (1644)

Antinomians and Familists (1644)

Coole Conference (1644)

John Ball, *Tryall of the New-Church Way in New England and In Old* (1644)

John Cotton, *Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven* (1644)

Sixteene Questions (1644)

Thomas Edwards, *Antapologia* (1644)

Alexander Forbes, *Anatomy of Independency* (1644)

John Goodwin, *Short Answer to A.S.* (1644)

and Thomas Goodwin, *MS to A.S. With a Plea* (1644)

et.al., *Apologettical Narration*

Thomas Hooker, *Faithful Covenanter* (1644)

Thomas Lechford, *New England Advice to Old-England* (1644)

Richard Mather and William Tompson, *Modest and Brotherly Answer* (1644)

Thomas Parker, *True Copy of a Letter* (1644)

William Prynne, *Full Reply* (1644)

William Rathband, *Briefe Narration* (1644)

Henry Robinson, *Certain briefe Observations* (1644)

Nathaniel Rogers, *Letter Discovering the Cause* (1644)

Samuel Rutherford, *Due Right of Presbyteries* (1644)

Church of Scotland, *Reformation of Church Government* (1644)

Adam Steuart, *Some Observations...Upon the Apologettical Narration* (1644)

Answer to a libell (1644)

Second Part of the Duply (1644)

Thomas Welde, *Answer to W.R. His Narration* (1644)

Short Story of the Rise, reign and ruine (1644)

Roger Wiliams, *Bloudy Tenent of Persecution* (1644)

Mr. Cottons Letter Lately Printed (1644)

Mr. Cottons Letter examined and answered (1644)

Queries of the Highest Consideration (1644)

Robert Baillie, *Dissuasive From the Errours of the Time* (1645)

John Bastwick, *Second part of that Book call's Independency Not Gods Ordinance*
(1645)

Daniel Cawdrey, *Vindiciae Clavium* (1645)

John Cotton, *Covenant of Gods Free Grace Unfolded* (1645)

Way of the Churches of Christ (1645)

Richard Hollingworth, *A defence of sundry Positions and Scriptures alledged to justifie
the Congregational Way* (1645)

George Gillespie, *Wholesome Severity reconciled with Christian Liberty* (1645)

John Goodwin, *Innocency and Truth Triumphing Together* (1645)

William Hooke, *New Englands Sence* (1645)

Thomas Hooker, *Briefe Exposition of the Lords Prayer* (1645)

Exposition of the Principles of Religion (1645)

Heavens Treasury Opened (1645)

Immortality of Mans Soule (1645)

Saints Guide, In Three Treatises (1645)

Samuel Hudson, *Essence and Unitie of the Church* (1645)

Hanserd Knollys, *Christ exalted in a Sermon* (1645)

A Moderate Answer unto Dr. Bastwicks book (1645)

George Phillips, *Reply to a Confutation* (1645)

William Prynne, *Fresh Discovery* (1645)

Henry Robinson, *Moderate Answer* (1645)

Thomas Shepard, *New England Lamentation* (1645)

Sound Beleever (1645)

Thomas Welde, *Brief Narration of the Practices of the Churches in New-England* (1645)

John Wheelwright, *Mercurius Americanus* (1645)

Roger Williams, *Christenings makes not Christians* (1645)

Richard Baxter, *Plea for Congregationall Government* (1646)

Peter Bulkeley, *Gospel-Covenant* (1646)

Jeremiah Burroughs, *Irenicum* (1646)

John Clarke, *Leaven corrupting the Childrens Bread* (1646)

Francis Cornwell, *Conference Mr. Cotton Held* (1646)

John Cotton, *Controversie concerning Liberty of Conscience* (1646)

Grounds and Ends of the Baptisme of the Children (1646)

Milk for Babes (1646)

Samuel Eaton and Timothy Taylor, *A Defence of sundry Scriptures for the Congregational Way Justified. An Answer to an Epistle by Richard Hollingworth* (1646)

Thomas Edwards, *Gangraena* (1646)

The Second Part of Gangraena (1646)

John Goodwin, *Anapologesiates Antapologias* (1646)

Samuel Gorton, *Simplicites Defence against Seven-Headed Policy* (1646)

Richard Hollingworth, *Certain Queres modestly propounded to such as affect the Congregational Way and spnecially to master Samuel Eaton and Mr. Timothy Taylor* (1646)

Thomas Hooker, *Heautonaparnumenos* (1646)

Hanserd Knollys, *The Shining of a Flaming-fire in Zion, or a clear Answer unto 13 Exceptions against the grounds of New Baptism in Mr. Saltmarsh his Book* (1646)

Christ Exalted: a lost Sinner sought and saved (1646)

John Lilburn, *Innocency and Truth Justified against the Aspersions of W. Prinn in his Fresh discovery of Prodigious Stars* (1646)

Thomas Parker, *Visions and Prophecies of Daniel* (1646)

Hugh Peter, *Mr. Peters Last Report* (1646)

William Twisse, *Treatise of Mr. Cottons, Clearing Certain Doubts* (1646)

Edward Winslow, *Hypocrisie Unmasked* (1646)

Giles Workman, *Private-men no Pulpit-men* (1646)

John Child, *New-England's Jonas Cast up at London* (1647)

John Cotton, *Bloudy Tenent, Washed* (1647)

Reply to Mr. Williams his Examination (1647)

Severall Questions of Serious and Necessary Consequence (1647)

Severall Questions propounded by the Teaching Elders (1647)

Singing of Psalmes (1647)

Samuel Gorton, *Incorruptible Key* (1647)

Richard Hollingworth, *A rejoynder to Master Samuel Eaton* (1647)

Ricahrd Mather, *Reply to Mr. Rutherford* (1647)

James Noyes, *Temple Measured* (1647)

Hugh Peter, *Mr. Peters Last report* (1647)

Thomas Shepard, *Day-Breaking if Not the Sun Rising* (1647)

Nathaniel Ward, *Simple Cobler of Aggawamm* (1647)

Word to Mr. Peters (1647)

A Sermon Preached before the House of Commons at the monethly Fast
(1647)

Edward Winslow, *New-Englands Salamander* (1647)

Good news from New-England (1648)

John Allin and Thomas Shepard, *Defence of the Answer* (1648)

Christopher Blackwood, *A Treatise concerning Deniall of Christ* (1648)

Thomas Cobbet, *Just Vindication of the Covenant and Church-Estate* (1648)

John Cotton, *Way of Congregational Churches Cleared* (1648)

Thomas Hooker, *Survey of the Summe of Church-Discipline* (1648)

Hanserd Knollys, *The Rudiments of Hebrew Grammar in English* (1648)

John Norton, *Responsio as totam quaestionum* (1648)

Brief and Excellent Treatise Containing the Doctrine of Godliness (1648)

Thomas Shepard, *Certain Select Cases Resolved* (1648)

Cleare Sun-shine of the Gospel (1648)

First Principles of the oracles of God (1648)

Nathaniel Ward, *To the Parliament of England* (1648)

Mercurius Anti-mechanicus (1648)

A Discourse between John Lilburn and Hugh Peter (1649)

The Copy of a Letter written by Mr. Thomas Parker, pastor of the church of Newbury in New England, to his sister Mrs. Elizabeth Avery, touching sundry opinions by her professed and maintained (1649)

John Cotton, *The Controversie Concerning Liberty of Conscience in matters of Religion, truly state, by Mr. John Cotton* (1649)

Richard Mather, *Platform of Church Discipline* (1649)

Thomas Hooker, *Covenant of Grace Opened* (1649)

Hugh Peter, *Most Pithy Exhortation* (1649)

Thomas Shepard, *These Sabbaticae* (1649)

Edward Winslow, *Danger of Tolerating Levellers* (1649)

Glorious Progress of the Gospel (1649)

A Friendly debate on a weighty Subject: or a conference by writing betwixt Mr. Samuel Eaton and Mr John Knowles, concerning the divinity of Jesus Christ (1650)

Christ the Fountain of Life: or sundry choyce sermons preached by Mr. John Cotton
(1651)

Daniel Cawdrey, *The Inconsistencie of the Independent Way with Scripture and itself*
(1651)

John Cotton, *Of the Holinesse of Church-Members* (1650)

Hugh Peters, *Good Work for a Good Magistrate* (1651)

A Plea for the Common-Laws of England (1651)

An epitaph on Henry Ireton (1651)

Nathaniel Ward, *Discolliminium* (1650)

Henry Whitfield, *The Light Appearing more and more towards the perfect day; or, a farther discovery of the present state of the Indians in New England* (1651)

John Clarke, *Ill Newes from New-England* (1652)

Giles Firmin, *Separation Examined* (1652)

Edward Johnson, *A History of new England* (1652)

Roger Wiliams, *The Bloody Tenant yet more Bloody* (1652)

A Platform of Church-Discipline, agreed upon by the Elders of the Church [E 692 (7)]
(1653)

William Apsinwall, *A Brief Description of the Fifth Monarchy* [E 708 (8)] (1653)

Thomas Cobbet, *The Civil Magistrates Power in matters of Religion Modestly Debated, together with a Brief Answer to a certain Slandorous Pamphlet called Ill Newes from New-England* (1653)

John Eliot, *Tears of Repentance* (1653)

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William Prynne, *A Fresh Discovery* (1645)

R. Norwood, *Considerations tending to Remove the present Differences and to settle Unity, peace, and Piety. Written from the Summer Islands* (1646)

Nathaniel White, *Truth Gloriously Appearing* (1646)

William Goulding, *Servants on horse-back* (1648)

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An Act For the promoting and propagating the Gospel of Jesus Christ in New England (London, 1649)

A Copy of the Petition of the Divines of the Assembly, Delivered to both Houses of Parliament, July 19, 1643 (London, 1643)

A declaration of the army of England, upon their march into Scotland. Signed in the name, and by the appointment of his excellency the Lord General Cromwel, and his council of officers (London, 1650)

A Letter of the Ministers of the City of London

A Letter from Mercurius Civicus to Mercurius Rusticus (London, 1643)

A Remonstrance of Londons Occurences (London, 1642)

A true copy of a Letter from divers Ministers about Colchester in the County of Essex, To the Assembly of Divines, against a TOLERATION (London, 1645)

An Alarum: To the last warning peece to London By way of ANSWER: Discovering the danger of Sectaries suffered: and the necessity of Order, and Uniformity to bee Established (London, 1646)

An Apologeticall Narration, Humbly Submitted to the Honourable Houses of Parliament (London, 1644)

Certain briefe Observations and Antiquaeres: On Master Prin's Twelve Questions About Church-Government (London, 1644)

Coole Conference (1644)

The Copy of the Petition presented to the Honourable Houses of Parliament by the Lord Arch-Bishop of Canterbury, & c. Wherein the said Arch-Bishop desires that he may not be transported beyond the Seas into New England with Master Peters, in regard of his extraordinary age and weaknesse (London, 1642)

The Covenanter Vindicated From Perjurie, Herein is fully cleared, that its no Perjury, for, him to yet doubt, whether the Classical Coercive Presbyterian Government of Churches be Jure Divino; Albeith hee hath taken the late Nationall Covenant (London, 1644)

Newes From New-England (London, 1642)

Reformation of Church-Government in Scotland, Cleered from some mistakes and Prejudices, By The Commissioners of the Generall Assembly of the Church of Scotland, now at London (London, 1644)

The reasons presented by the Dissenting Brethren against certain propositions concerning presbyteriall government. And the proofs of them voted by the Assembly of Divines, sitting by authority of Parliament, at Westminster. Together with the Answer of the Assembly of Divines to those reasons of dissent (London, 1648)

Two Ordinances of the Lords and Commons Assembled in Parliament, The one dated November 2. 1643. the other March 21. 1645. Whereby Robert Earle of Warwick is made Governor in church, and L. high Admirall of those Islands and other Plantations, inhabited planted or belonging to any His Majesties the King of Englands Subjects, within the bounds, and upon the Coasts of America (London, 1645)

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Ball; entituled, A tryall of the new church-way in New-England and in old. Wherin, beside a more full opening o sundry particulars concerning liturgies, power of the keys, matter of the visible church, &c. is more largely handled, that controversie concerning the Catholick, visible church; tending to cleare up the old-way of Christ in New-England churches (London, 1645)

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BRADSHAW, William. *The Unreasonableness of the Separation* (London, 1640)

BURGES, Cornelius. *Sion College what it is, and doeth* (London, 1648)

CALAMY, Edmund. *Englands Looking-Glasse, Presented in A Sermon, Preached before the Honourable House of Common, At their late solemne Fast, December 22, 1641* (London, 1642)

Gods free Mercy to England. Presented as a Pretious, and Powerfull motive to Humiliation: In A Sermon Preached before the Honourable House of Commons, at their late solemne Fast, Feb. 23. 1641 (London, 1642)

CAWDREY, Daniel. *Vindiciae Clavium* (London, 1645)

CHILD, John. *New-Englands Jonas Cast up at London: Or, A Relation of the Proceedings of the Court at Boston in New-England against divers honest and godly persons, for Petitioning the Government in the Common-wealth, according to the Lawes of England, and for admittance of themselves and children to the Sacraments in their Churches; and in case that should not be granted, for leave to have Ministers and Church-government according to the best Reformation of England and Scotland* (London, 1647)

CLARK, John. *Ill Newes From New-England: Or A Narrative of New-Englands Persecution* (London, 1652)

CLARKE, John. *Leaven corrupting the Childrens Bread* (London, 1646)

CORNWELL, Francis. *A Conference Mr John Cotton Held at Boston With the Elders of New-England* (London, 1646)

COTTON, John. *Gods Promise to His Plantations* (London, 1630)

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Way of Life (London, 1641)

God's Mercie Mixed With His Justice, Or, His Peoples Deliverance in times of danger (London, 1641)

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A Brief Exposition Of the whole Booke of Canticles, or, Song of Solomon (London, 1642)

Modest and cleare answer to Mr. Balls discourse (London, 1642)

Powring Out of the Seven Vials (London, 1642)

True Constitution of a particular visible Church (London, 1642)

Doctrine of the Church, to which is committed the Keyes of the Kingdome of Heaven (London, 1642)

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The Covenant of Gods free Grace (London, 1645)

The Way of the Churches of Christ in New England. Or The Way of Churches walking in Brotherly equalitie, or co-ordination, without Subjection of one Church to another. (London, 1645)

The Controversie concerning Liberty of Conscience in Matters of Religion, Truly stated, and distinctly and plainly handled, By Mr. John Cotton of Boston in New-England (London, 1646)

Milk for Babes. Drawn Out of the Breasts of both Testaments. Chiefly for the spiritual nourishment of Boston Babes in either England: But may be of like use for any Children (London, 1646)

The Controversie concerning Liberty of Conscience in Matters of Religion, Truly stated, and distinctly and plainly handled, By Mr. John Cotton of Boston in New-England. By way of answer to some Arguments to the contrary sent unto him. Wherein you have against all cavils of turbulent spirits, clearly manifested, wherein liberty of conscience in matters of Religion out to be permitted, and in what cases it ought not, by the said Mr. Cotton (London, 1646)

The Bloody Tenent, Washed. And made white in the bloud of the Lambe: being discussed and discharged of bloud-guiltinesse by just Defence. Where The great Questions of this present time are handled, viz. How farre Liberty of Conscience out to be given to those that truly feare God? And how farre restrained to turbulent and pestilent persons, that not onely raze the foundation of Godlinesse, but disturb the Civill Peace where they live? Also how farre the Magistrate may proceed in the duties of the first Table? And that all Magistrates ought to study the word and will of God, that they may frame their Government according to it. Discussed, As they are alledged from divers Scriptures, out of the Old and New Testament. Wherein also the practice of Princes is debated, together with the Judgement of Ancient and late Writers of most precious esteeme. Whereunto is added a Reply to Mr. Williams Answer, to Mr. Cottons Letter (London, 1647)

A Reply to Mr. Williams his Examination; And Answer of the Letters sent to him by John Cotton (London, 1647)

Severall Questions of Serious and Necessary Consequence (London., 1647)

The Way of Congregational Churches Cleared: In two Treatises (London, 1648)

DAVENPORT, John. *Profession of the Faith That Reverend and worthy Divine Mr. J.D. sometimes Preacher of Stevens Coleman-street. London.* (London, 1642)

EATON, Samuel and TAYLOR, Timothy. *A Defence of Sundry Positions, And Scriptures alledged to justifie the Congregationall-way; charged at first to be weak therein, impertinent, and unsufficient* (London, 1645)

EDWARDS, Thomas. *Reasons Against the Independent Government of Particular Congregations: As Also against the Toleration of such Churches to be erected in this KINGDOME* (London, 1641)

Antapologia: Or, A Full Answer to the Apologeticall Narration (London, 1644)

Gangræna: or a catalogue and discovery of many of the errours, heresies, blasphemies and pernicious practices of the sectaries of this time, vented and acted in England in these four last years: as also, a particular narration of divers stories, remarkable passages, letters; an extract of many letters, all concerning the present sects; together with some observations upon, and corollaries from all the fore-named premisses (London, 1646)

The second part of Gangræna: or a fresh and further discovery of the errors, heresies, blasphemies, and dangerous proceedings of the sectaries of this time. As also a particular narration of divers stories, speciall passages, letters, an extract of some

letters, all concerning the present sects: together with some corollaries from all the fore-named premisses. A reply to the most materiall exceptions made by Mr, Saltmarsh, Mr Walwyn, and Cretensis, against Mr. Edwards late book entituled Gangræna. As also brief animadversions upon some late pamphlets; one of Mr. Bacons, another of Thomas Webs, a third of a picture made in disgrace of the Presbyterians. A relation of a monster lately born at Colchester, of parents who are sectaries. The copie of an hymne sung by some sectaries in stead of Davids psalms. By Thomas Edvards minister of the Gospel. (London, 1646)

The third part of Gangræna. Or, A new and higher discovery of the errors, heresies, blasphemies, and insolent proceedings of the sectaries of these times; with some animadversions by way of confutation upon many of the errors and heresies named. As also a particular relation of many remarkable stories, speciall passages, copies of letters written by sectaries to sectaries, ... Briefe animadversions on many of the sectaries late pamphlets, as Lilburnes and Overtons books against the House of Peeres, M. Peters his last report of the English warres, the Lord Mayors farewell from his office of maioralty, M. Goodwins thirty eight queres upon the ordinance against heresies and blasphemies, M. Burtons Conformities deformity, M. Dells sermon before the House of Commons; ... As also some few hints and briefe observations on divers pamphlets written lately against me and some of my books, as M. Goodwins pretended reply to the Antapologie, M. Burroughs Vindication, Lanseters Lance, Gangræna playes rex, Gangræae-Chrestum, M. Saltmarshes answer to the second part of Gangræna. A iustification of the manner and way of writing these books called Gangræna, wherein not onely the lawfulnessse, but the necessity of writing after this manner is proved by Scripture, fathers, the most eminent reformed divines, casuits, the practice and cnstome [sic] of all ages. By Thomas Edvards Minister of the Gospel. (London, 1646).

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FORBES, Alexander. *Anatomy of Independency, or, A Briefe Commentary, and Moderate Discourse upon The Apologeticall Narration* (London, 1644)

GILLESPIE, George. *Wholsome Severity reconciled with Christian Liberty. Or, the true Resolution of a present Controversie concerning Liberty of Conscience* (London, 1645)

An usefull case of conscience, discussed, and resolved. Concerning associations and confederacies with idolaters, infidels, hereticks, or any other known enemies of truth and godlinesse. (London, 1649)

GOODWIN, John. *M.S. to A.S. with a Plea for Libertie of Conscience in a Church way, Against the Cavils of A.S. and Observations on his Considerations and Annotations Upon the Apologeticall Narration, Humbly submitted to the judgements of all rationall, and moderate men in the world; With some modest and innocent touches on the Letter from Zealand, and Mr. Parker's from New-England* (London, 1644)

A Short Answer to A.S. Alias Adam Steuarts Second part of his overgrown Duply to the two Brethren. Together with Certain difficult questions easily answered; All which

A. Stewart is desired to consider of, without replying, unlesse it to be purpose (London, 1645)

Innocency and Truth Triumphing together; Or, The latter part of an Answer to the back-part of a Discourse, lately published by William Prynne, Esquire, called, A Full Reply, & c. Beginning at the foot of p. 17 of the said Discourse, with this title or superscription, Certain brief Animadversions on Mr. John Goodwins Theomachia (London, 1645)

Anapologesiates Antapologias. Or, The inexcusableness of that Grand Accusation of the Brethren, called Antapologia (1646)

GORTON, Samuel. *Simplicities Defence Against Seven-Headed Piety. Or, Innocency Vindicated, being unjustly Accused and sorely Censured by that Seven-Headed Church-Government United in New-England* (London, 1646)

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HAMMOND, Henry. *Considerations of present use concerning the danger resulting from the change of our church-government* (London, 1643)

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New Englands Sence and Irelands Sorrowes. A Sermon Preached upon a day of generall Humiliation in the Churches of New-England. In the behalfe of Old-England and Irelands Sad Condition (London, 1645)

HOOKE, Thomas. *The Danger of Desertion: Or, A Farwell Sermon...Preached immediately before his Departure out of Old England* (London, 1641)

Poor Doubting Christian (London, 1641)

Faithful Covenanter (London, 1644)

Survey of the Summe of Church-Discipline (London, 1648)

Covenant of Grace Opened (London, 1649)

HUDSON, Samuel. *The Essence and Unitie of the Church Catholike Visible, And the Prioritie in regard of Particular Churches Discussed* (London, 1645)

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LECHFORD, Thomas. *Plain Dealing: Or, Newes from New-England* (London, 1642)

MATHER, Increase. *The Life and Death of that reverend man of god Richard Mather* (Cambridge, Mass., 1670)

MATHER, Richard. *Church-Government and Church-Covenant Discussed, In an Answer to the Elders of the Severall Churches in New-England To two and thirty Questions, sent over to them by divers Ministers in England, to declare their judgments therein* (London, 1643)

An Apologie of the Churches in New-England for Church-Covenant. Or, a Discourse touching the Covenant between God and men, and especially concerning Church-Covenant, that is to say, The Covenant which a Company doe enter into when they become a Church; and which a particular person enters into when he becomes a member of a Church (London, 1643)

Reply to Mr. Rutherford (London, 1647)

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MATHER, Richard and THOMPSON, William. *A Modest and Brotherly Answer to Mr. Charles Herle his Book, against the Independency of Churches* (London, 1644)

MAYER, John. *Christian Liberty Vindicated from grosse Mistakes, occasioning so great Divisions in England* (London, 1646)

MILTON, John. *Areopagitica; a speech of Mr. John Milton for the liberty of unlicenc'd printing, to the Parlament of England* (London, 1644)

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A word for the Armie (London, 1647)

PETER, Hugh and WELD, Thomas. *New Englands First Fruits* (London, 1643)

PRYNNE, William. *Twelve considerable serious questions touching church government: sadly propounded (out of a reall desire of vnitie, and tranquillity in church and state) to all sober-minded Christians, cordially affecting a speedy settled reformation, and brotherly Christian vnion in all our churches and dominions, now miserably wasted with civill vnnaturall wars, and deplorably lacerated with ecclesiasticall dissensions* (London, 1643)

A Full Reply to certaine briefe Observations and Anti-Queries on Master Prynnes twelve Questions about Church-Government (1644)

A Fresh Discovery of some Prodigious New Wandring-Blasing-Stars, & Firebrands, Stiling themselves New-Lights, Firing our Church and State into New Combustions.... Whereunto some Letters and Papers lately sent from the Sommer-Islands, are subjoynd, relating the Schismaticall, illegal, Tyrannical proceedings of some Independents there, in gathering their New-Churches, to the great Distraction and prejudice of that Plantation (London, 1645)

RATHBAND, William. *A Briefe Narration of Some Church Courses Held in Opinion and Practice in the Churches lately erected in New England* (London, 1644)

ROBINSON, John. *A Justification of Separation from the Church of England* (Amsterdam, 1610)

ROGERS, Nathaniel. *A Letter Discovering the Cause of Gods continuing Wrath against the Nation, notwithstanding the present endeavours of Reformation* (London, 1644)

RUTHERFORD, Samuel. *Due Right of Presbyteries* (London, 1644)
The tryal & triumph of faith: or, An exposition of the history of Christs dispossessing of the daughter of the woman of Canaan (London, 1645)

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SHEPARD, Thomas. *New England Lamentation for Old Englands present errours, and divisions, and their feared future desolation if not timely prevented. Occasioned by the increase of Anabaptists, Rigid Separatists, Antinomians, and Familists. Together With Some seasonable remedies, against the infection of those errours, prescribed.* (London, 1645)

Sound Beleever (London, 1645)

The Day-Breaking if not The Sun-Rising of the Gospel With the Indians in New England (London, 1647)

Certain Select Cases Resolved (London, 1648)

The Clear Sun Shine of the Gospel Breaking Forth Upon the Indians in New England (London, 1648)

STEUART, Adam. *Some Observations...Upon the Apologettical Narration* (London, 1644)

An Answer to a Libell Intituled A Coole Conference Betweene the cleared Reformation and the Apologeticall Narration (London, 1644)

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Dagon demolished: or, Twenty admirable examples of Gods severe justice and displeasure against the subscribers of the late engagement, against our lawfull sovereign King Charls the second; and the whole house of peeres, in these words (1660)

WARD, Nathaniel. *A Sermon Preached Before the Honourable House of Commons* (London, 1647)

Simple Cobler of Aggawamm (London, 1647)

Word to Mr. Peters (London, 1647)

WELD, Thomas. *A Short Story of the Rise, reign and ruine, of the Antinomians, Familists and Libertines that infected the Churches of New England: And how they were confuted by the Assembly of Ministers there: As also of the Magistrates proceedings in Court against them. Together with Gods strange and remarkable judgement from Heaven upon some of the chief fomenters of these Opinions; and the lamentable death of Mr. Hutchinson. Very fit for these times; here being the same errours amongst us, acted by the same spirit* (London, 1644)

An Answer to W.R. His Narration of the Opinion and Practices of the Churches lately erected in New-England (London, 1644)

A Brief Narration of the Practices of the Churches in New-England. Written in private to one that desired information therein; by an Inhabitant there, a Friend to Truth and Peace (London, 1645)

WHEELWRIGHT, John. *Mercurius Americanus, Mr. Welds his antitype, or, Massachusetts great apologie examined, being observations upon a paper styled, A short story of the rise, reign, & ruine of the Familists, libertines, & c. which infected the churches of New England, &c. wherein some parties therein concerned are vindicated, & the truth generally cleared* (London, 1645)

WHITE, Nathaniel. *Truth Gloriously Appearing, From Under The sad and sable Cloud of Obloquie. Or, A Vindication of the Practice of the Church of Christ in the Summer-Islands* (London, 1645)

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Strength Out Of Weaknesse; Or a Glorious Manifestation Of the further Progresse of the Gospel among the Indians in New-England. Held forth in Sundry Letters from divers Ministers and others to the Corporation established by Parliament for promoting the Gospel among the Heathen in New-England (London, 1652)

WILLIAMS, Roger. *Key into the Language of America* (London, 1643)

A Paraenetick or Humble Adresse to the Parliament and Assembly for (not Loose, But) Christian Libertie (London, 1644)

Mr. Cottons Letter Lately Printed, Examined and Answered (London, 1644)

Queries of the Highest Consideration, Proposed to the five Holland Ministers and the Scotch Commissioners (So Called) (London, 1644)

The Bloody Tenent, of Persecution, for the cause of Conscience, discussed in A Conference between Truth and Peace. Who, In all tender Affection, present to the High Court of Parliament, (as the Result of their Discourse) there, (amongst other Passages) of highest consideration. (London, 1644)

The Bloody Tenent Yet More Bloody: By Mr Cottons endeavour to wash it white in the Blood of the Lambe; Of whose precious Blood, spilt in the Blood of his Servants; and Of the blood of Millions spilt in former and later wars for Conscience sake; That Most Bloody Tenent of Persecution for cause of Conscience, upon a second Tryal, is now found more apparently and more notoriously guilty (London, 1652)

WINSLOW, Edward. *Hypocrisie Unmasked: By A true Relation of the Proceedings of the Governour and Company of the Massachusetts against Samuel Gorton (and his Accomplices) a notorious disturber of the Peace and quiet of the severall Governments wherein he lived: With the grounds and reasons thereof, examined and allowed by their Generall Court holden at Bostin in New-England in November last (London, 1646)*

New Englands Salamander, Discovered By an irreligious and scornfull Pamphlet, Called New-Englands Jonas cast up at London, &c. Owned by Major John Childe, but not probably to be written by him (London, 1647)

The Glorious Progress of the Gospel Amongst the Indians in New England (London, 1649)

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WINTHROP, John. *Antinomians and Familists Condemned By the Synod of Elders in New England: With The Proceedings of the Magistrates against them, And their Apology for the same. Together with A Memorable example of Gods Judgements upon some of those Persons so proceeded against (London, 1644)*

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