

CHAPTER FOUR

Growth and Crisis in Colonial Society 1720–1765

Freehold Society in New England

After 1720 the population and economies of the mainland British colonies grew dramatically, and those colonies developed distinctively American characteristics. In New England that distinctiveness was characterized by the existence of communities of independent property owners. In Great Britain, 75 percent of the land was owned by the gentry and nobility; in New England, 70 percent was owned by freeholding families. Strategies for maintaining this system varied (Document 4-1).

Although the pattern of land ownership was distinctive, the place of women in rural New England was similar to that in Britain. Women were socialized to accept a subordinate role; their marriage portions were smaller than those of their brothers and they received no land. Women also had few property rights. Although a woman had the right to use a third of the family estate after her husband died, legally it belonged to her children. A woman was expected to be deferential toward her father and then her husband and to work hard to help them. Her work usually included a broad spectrum of household tasks, as well as the bearing and raising of children (Document 4-2).

The stability of the system depended on parents' ability to provide land for their children, but its very success created a crisis. A population of 100,000 in 1700 had grown to 400,000 by 1750, and even though the average birthrate of five to seven children declined to four after 1750, many parents could no longer provide land for their children. Farm communities responded to this crisis in ways that preserved a freehold society: many towns created new communities in frontier areas, and the people who remained increased productivity by introducing new crops and helping one another.

4-1 A New Hampshire Will (1763)

Nicholas Dudley

This document is illustrative of the New England system of inheritance (see text pp. 105–106). The colonial woman's most important legal right was her dower right: under common law a man had to leave his wife at least a life interest in one-third of his

real estate, which after her death or remarriage would go to his heirs. At the same time the husband's will was intended to perpetuate the pattern of independent property holding.

Source: "The Will of Nicholas Dudley, 1763," in Dean Dudley, *The History of the Dudley Family* (Monrosey, MA, 1894), 1:242–247.

I Nicholas Dudley give and bequeath to my well-beloved wife Elizabeth Dudley the use and improvement of all my lands in Brentwood called my home place, with the buildings thereon, and also the use and improvement of all my stock of cattle, sheep, swine, and horses, and my quarter part of Deer Hill saw mill, so long as she remains my widow. . . .

I give and bequeath to my son Nicholas Dudley all my right in Deer Hill mill pond during his natural life, and also the improvements of the same to Abigail Dudley, his wife, if she should survive him, so long as she remains his widow. And then the said right in the said mill pond I give, devise, and bequeath to my grandson Nicholas Dudley, son of Trueworthy Dudley, deceased, to be at his disposal forever.

I give to my son John Dudley twenty shillings . . . he having received his portion of my estate.

I give to my son Byley Dudley twenty shillings . . . he having received his portion of my estate.

I give to my son Joseph Dudley and to his four sons . . . all my land in the parish of Epping, called my common right, excepting the fifty acres I sold to Nicholas Gilman.

I give, devise, and bequeath to my daughters Sarah Robinson and Betty Hill, and to my grandson John Dudley, son of Trueworthy Dudley, deceased, their heirs and assigns, forever, after the decease or second marriage of my wife aforesaid all my lands in Brentwood, called my home place, except the mill pond aforesaid, with the buildings thereon, my stock of cattle, sheep, swine, and horses, excepting one cow and also all my out-door moveables after the decease or second marriage of my wife aforesaid.

Questions

1. What actions did Nicholas Dudley take to protect the livelihood of his widow? Why do you think he took those actions?
2. Does Dudley treat his male heirs equally? If your answer is no, why do you think he treats them differently?
3. Does he treat his daughters as beneficiaries? Explain.

4-2 The Obligations of a Wife (1712)

Benjamin Wadsworth

This selection comes from a Puritan marriage manual in which the author is attempting to define the duties and obligations of each member of the family, particularly the husband and the wife. It is a good example of what was expected of a deferential wife (see text pp. 104–106).

Source: Benjamin Wadsworth, *The Well-Ordered Family, or Relative Duties* (Boston, 1712), 22–47.

Wives are part of the House and Family, and ought to be under the Husband's Government: they should Obey their own Husbands. Though the Husband is to rule his Family and his Wife yet his Government of his Wife should not be with rigour, haughtiness, harshness, severity; but with the greatest love, gentleness, kindness, tenderness that may be. Though he governs her, he must not treat her as a

Servant, but as his own flesh: he must love her as himself. He should make his government of her, as easie and gentle as possible; and strive more to be lov'd than fear'd; though neither is to be excluded. On the other hand, Wives ought readily and cheerfully to obey their Husbands. Wives submit your selves to your own Husbands, be in subjection to them.

Those Husbands are much to blame, who dont carry it [behave] lovingly and kindly to their Wives. O man, if thy Wife be not so young, beautiful, healthy, well temper'd and qualify'd as thou couldst wish; if she brought not so much Estate to thee, or cannot do so much for thee, as some other women brought to or have done for their Husbands; nay, if she does not carry it so well to thee as she should yet she is thy Wife, and the Great God Commands thee to love her, not to be bitter, but kind to her. What can be more plain and express than that? Let every one of you in particular, so love his Wife even as himself. . . . Those Wives are much to blame who dont carry it lovingly and obediently to their own Hus-

bands. O Woman, if thy Husband be not so young, beautiful, healthy, so well temper'd and qualified as thee couldst wish; if he has not such abilities, riches, honours, as some others have; if he does not carry it so well as he should; yet he's thy Husband, and the Great God Commands thee to love, honour and obey him. Yea, though possibly thou hast greater abilities of mind than he has, wast of some high birth, and he of a more mean Extract, or didst bring more Estate at Marriage than he did; yet since he is thy Husband, God has made him thy Head, and set him above thee, and made it thy duty to love and reverence him.

Questions

1. How is a husband expected to behave toward his wife?
2. How is a wife expected to behave toward her husband?
3. Does higher birth, intelligence, or estate alter a wife's obligation to her husband? Why or why not?

Questions for Further Thought

1. What do Nicholas Dudley's will (Document 4-1) and the selection from the Puritan marriage manual (Document 4-2) tell us about the structure of the colonial New England family?
2. What obligations and responsibilities do the different family members have to each other (be sure to consider gender and age)? How does the colonial New England family compare with the American family of today?
3. Based on the readings and your general knowledge of the period, how and in what circumstances was property transferred from father to son? At what point in his life did a father usually pass his property on to his son? How might a son force his father's hand and obtain his inheritance early?

The Middle Atlantic: Toward a New Society, 1720–1765

Unlike New England, the middle colonies of New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania had a mixture of peoples with diverse religious and ethnic backgrounds (Document 4-6). Quakers were the dominant group in Pennsylvania and also were highly influential in New Jersey. In the eighteenth century they were followed by three waves of Germans and large numbers of Scots-Irish (Document 4-5).

The middle colonies prospered because of a growing demand for wheat in Western Europe; however, by midcentury this prosperity had turned a system offering early equality into one with increasing social divisions. Tensions continued and could sometimes be traumatic, but many ethnic and religious groups developed self-governing churches and created an increasingly open and competitive political system. This religious, ethnic, and political pluralism was a distinctively American phenomenon (Document 4-3).

4-3 What Is an American? (1782)

J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur

Michel-Guillaume Jean de Crèvecoeur was born on January 31, 1735, in Caen, Normandy, and migrated to Canada around 1755. As an officer in the French colonial militia, he was wounded at Quebec. Hoping for a fresh start, he resigned his commission and moved to New York in 1759. There he fashioned a new identity for himself by adopting a new name, J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur; a new national allegiance, naturalized subject of New York; a new occupation, farming; and a new language, English. During the imperial crisis leading to American independence, this new “American farmer” found it impossible to “say this side is right, that side is wrong.” In 1779, toting a manuscript he had been working on for the past decade, Crèvecoeur began his trek back to Normandy. His *Letters from an American Farmer*, published in 1782, became an international best seller. The book established Crèvecoeur’s reputation as an authority on America, and in 1783 Louis XVI appointed him as the French consul in New York. Shortly after the outbreak of the French Revolution, Crèvecoeur returned to France but remained as inconspicuous as possible during the Reign of Terror. Although he continued to write, he never approached the success of the *Letters*.

Source: Excerpts from Letter III, “What Is an American,” in *Letters from an American Farmer*, by J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1957), 35–40.

I wish I could be acquainted with the feelings and thoughts which must agitate the heart and present themselves to the mind of an enlightened Englishman, when he first lands on this continent. . . . He is arrived on a new continent; a modern society offers itself to his contemplation, different from what he had hitherto seen. It is not composed, as in Europe, of great lords who possess everything, and of a herd of people who have nothing. Here are no aristocratical families, no courts, no kings, no bishops, no ecclesiastical domination, no invisible power giving to a few a very visible one; no great manufacturers employing thousands, no great refinements of luxury. The rich and the poor are not so far removed from each other as they are in Europe. Some few towns excepted, we are all tillers of the earth, from Nova Scotia to West Florida. We are a people of cultivators, scattered over an immense territory, communicating with each other by means of good roads and navigable rivers, united by the silken bands of mild government, all respecting the laws, without dreading their power, because they are equitable. We are all animated with the spirit of an industry which is unfettered and unrestrained, because each person works for himself. If he travels through our rural districts he views not the hostile castle, and the haughty mansion, contrasted with the clay-built hut and miserable cabin, where cattle and men help to keep each other warm, and dwell in meanness, smoke, and indigence. A pleasing uniformity of decent competence appears throughout our habitations. . . .

In this great American asylum, the poor of Europe have by some means met together, and in consequence of various causes; to what purpose should they ask one another what countrymen they are? Alas, two thirds of them had no country. Can a wretch who wanders about, who works and

starves, whose life is a continual scene of sore affliction or pinching penury; can that man call England or any other kingdom his country? A country that had no bread for him, whose fields procured him no harvest, who met with nothing but the frowns of the rich, the severity of the laws, with jails and punishments; who owned not a single foot of the extensive surface of this planet? No! urged by a variety of motives, here they came. Every thing has tended to regenerate them; new laws, and new mode of living, a new social system; here they are become men: in Europe they were as so many useless plants, wanting vegetative mould, and refreshing showers; they withered, and were mowed down by want, hunger, and war; but now by the power of transplantation, like all other plants they have taken root and flourished! Formerly they were not numbered in any civil lists of their country, except in those of the poor; here they rank as citizens. . . . What then is the American, this new man? He is either an European, or the descendant of an European, hence that strange mixture of blood, which you will find in no other country. I could point out to you a family whose grandfather was an Englishman, whose wife was Dutch, whose son married a French woman, and whose present four sons have now four wives of different nations. *He* is an American, who, leaving behind him all his ancient prejudices and manners, receives new ones from the new mode of life he has embraced, the new government he obeys, and the new rank he holds. He becomes an American by being received in the broad lap of our great *Alma Mater*. Here individuals of all nations are melted into a new race of men, whose labours and posterity will one day cause great changes in the world. Americans are the western pilgrims, who are carrying along with them that great mass of arts,

sciences, vigour, and industry which began long since in the east; they will finish the great circle. The Americans were once scattered all over Europe; here they are incorporated into one of the finest systems of population which has ever appeared, and which will hereafter become distinct by the power of the different climates they inhabit. The American ought therefore to love this country much better than that wherein either he or his forefathers were born. Here the rewards of his industry follow with equal steps the progress of his labour; his labour is founded on the basis of nature, *self-interest*; can it want a stronger allurements? Wives and children, who before in vain demanded of him a morsel of

bread, now, fat and frolicsome, gladly help their father to clear those fields whence exuberant crops are to arise to feed and to clothe them all; without any part being claimed, either by a despotic prince, a rich abbot, or a mighty lord. Here religion demands but little of him; a small voluntary salary to the minister, and gratitude to God; can he refuse these? The American is a new man, who acts upon new principles; he must therefore entertain new ideas, and form new opinions. From involuntary idleness, servile dependence, penury, and useless labour, he has passed to toils of a very different nature, rewarded by ample subsistence.— This is an American.

Questions

1. What are the major characteristics of Crèvecoeur's "American"? Are his observations in the main accurate or inaccurate? Explain.
2. Was Crèvecoeur's own life experience reflected in his description of an American? What is the significance of his assuming the title "American Farmer"? What myths about America and Americans was he repeating?
3. Was Crèvecoeur's American a product of a distinctive American environment? Does he place more importance on the physical environment or the cultural? Explain.

4-4 A Description of Philadelphia (1748)

Peter Kalm

Probably the most striking features of the British middle colonies of North America were their prosperity, diverse ethnic makeup, and multiplicity of religious forms. The following selection consists of the observations of Peter Kalm, a Swedish naturalist who toured the colonies from 1748 to 1751. During his visit to Philadelphia in 1748, Kalm noted the town's prosperity and its religious and ethnic diversity.

Source: Peter Kalm, *Travels in North America*, trans. John Reinhold Forester (London, 1770), 1:36-43, 58-60.

The town is now quite filled with inhabitants, which in regard to their country, religion, and trade, are very different from each other. You meet with excellent masters in all trades, and many things are made here full as well as in England. Yet no manufactures, especially for making fine cloth, are established. Perhaps the reason is, that it can be got with so little difficulty from England, and that the breed of sheep which is brought over, degenerates in process of time, and affords but a coarse wool.

Here is great plenty of provisions, and their prices are very moderate. There are no examples of an extraordinary dearth. Every one who acknowledges God to be the Creator, preserver, and ruler of all things, and teaches or undertakes nothing against the state, or against the common peace, is at liberty to settle, stay, and carry on his trade here,

be his religious principles ever so strange. No one is here molested on account of the erroneous principles of the doctrine which he follows, if he does not exceed the above-mentioned bounds. And he is so well secured by the laws in his person and property, and enjoys such liberties, that a citizen of Philadelphia may in a manner be said to live in his house like a king.

On a careful consideration of what I have already said, it will be easy to conceive how this city should rise so suddenly from nothing, into such grandeur and perfection, without supposing any powerful monarch's contributing to it, either by punishing the wicked, or by giving great supplies in money. And yet its fine appearance, good regulations, agreeable situation, natural advantages, trade, riches and power, are by no means inferior to those of any, even of the most

ancient towns in Europe. It has not been necessary to force people to come and settle here; on the contrary, foreigners of different languages have left their country, houses, property, and relations, and ventured over wide and stormy seas, in order to come hither. Other countries, which have been peopled for a long space of time, complain of the small

number of their inhabitants. But Pennsylvania, which was no better than a desert in the year 1681, and hardly contained five hundred people, now vies with several kingdoms in Europe in number of inhabitants. It has received numbers of people, which other countries, to their infinite loss, have either neglected or expelled.

Questions

1. What factors does Kalm believe were the most significant in accounting for Philadelphia's rapid rise to prominence?
 2. What is Kalm's perception of the religious environment in Philadelphia?
 3. In Kalm's view, has the immigration to Philadelphia of people neglected in or expelled from other colonies and countries had a positive effect? Why or why not?
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4-5 Letter from a Scots-Irish Immigrant (1767)

Job Johnson

In the eighteenth century the character of colonial immigration shifted. As New England became increasingly crowded, and as slave plantations came to dominate the southern colonies, the relatively open middle colonies became the destination of choice for European newcomers to America. Furthermore, a large proportion of the new migrants were non-English. Germans fled from increased crowding and religious persecution, but the greatest immigrant stream now came from the "Celtic fringe" of the British Isles, especially the Presbyterian inhabitants of Scotland and Ulster (Northern Ireland). The latter group, the Scots-Irish, had been recruited to colonize Ulster in the seventeenth century. By the eighteenth century, however, that land was overpopulated, English landlords were raising rents, taxes were rising, and Ulster manufactures were being shut out of English markets. Accordingly, the Scots-Irish began a massive exodus to the New World. Settling at first in Pennsylvania, they soon came to dominate that colony's western frontier and from there spread southward into the backcountry of the southern colonies.

The letter excerpted below was written by Job Johnson, an Ulster immigrant, who arrived in the 1760s and settled near the Susquehanna River to the west of Philadelphia.

Source: From "As Good a Country as Any Man Needs to Dwell In: Letters from a Scotch-Irish Immigrant in Pennsylvania, 1766–1767, and 1785," in *Pennsylvania History* 50 (October 1983), 318–321. Reprinted with the permission of the Pennsylvania Historical Society.

Oxford Township, November 27th 1767.

My Very dear Brethern,

Not being willing to neglect any opportunity that I have in my power to writ unto you, I have thought proper to address myself to you all in a few lines hoping that they may find you all in good Health, as thanks be to God they Leave Me. . . . I wrote seven letters home last year . . . but I do not know whether or not you have Got them, and I have Got No answer therefore I have nothing further to writ; only knowing that it is common [] at home to expect something Concerning this Country its property and Quality, there-

fore this is Really my Judgement of it, that it is as Good as Country as any Man needs to Dwell in; and it is Much better than I expected it to be in every way I assure you, and I really likes it so well and it is so pleasant to me that it would be a good Estate in Ireland that would Make Me Stay there, and indeed many times when I have been by myself and think of the Lord's Good Dealings unto Me, I cannot but admire him for his Mercies that ever he turned My face hitherward; and Give Me strength and Confidence in himself and boldness by faith, to oppose all Gainsayers, though never so strong, although I cannot say that then, it seemed

so Clear for Me to leave the land of My Nativity. Yet Now to Me it is a Certainty that My Removal was right and in what I Did I had peace, and in all My exercises by sea and Land, I never felt the Least in Me, as to Desire I had not come forward, but rather rejoiced (Turn over) in the Midst of them all. My Brother was not so clear in these things untill he had Been a year in the Country, Which indeed is Mostly the Case, with all the first year after they Come here: but Blessed be God all is well to our content. And if one heard every objection that lay in the way of Coming here, it would be work enough. But My resolutions were, and my sayings to several opposers, that I would come, if God hindered me not no Man should. And I do not know one that has come here that Desires to be in Ireland again, for to Live there and I have often wondered at our Countryfolk that was hard of belief in regard of what was said of their Country, and would rather live in Slavery, and work all the year round, and not be threepence the better at the years end than stir out of the Chimney Corner and transport themselves to a place where with the like pains, in two or three years, they might know better things. The only encouragement that I had to Come away was because Many Go to America worth nothing yet some of them servants and to hear or see them Come back again, in two or three years worth more than they would have been by staying at home while they lived and yet they would Not Content themselves at home, but went back again which was sufficient to Convince any one that the Country was Good. But there are Many in Ireland that Desire to hear ill of this place, because they would keep

their friends there with them, in Bondage and Slavery, rather than let them come here, and they think we never writ enough of the Bad properties of this Country and the Vermin in it. Now this I must say in report that there are Bears, Wolves & Foxes, Rattles snakes, and several other such creatures, but Not in this part as ever I seen, as I have Travelled Many Miles to & fro. But I suppose the fear of those Creatures in Ireland is far worse to Some there, than the hurt of them is here. But I believe that this Province of Pennsylvania by all I have see and heard of it, is a Good one as any in America. I have seen in all places I have travelled, Orchards Laden with fruit to admiration, their very Limbs torn to pieces with the weight, and Most Delicious to the Taste I have seen a Barrel of Curious Cyder from an apple tree; and peaches in Great plenty. I could Not but at first smile at the Conceit of them, they are a very Delicate fruit, and hang almost like our onions that are tied on a rope. . . . And indeed this is a Brave Country, although no place will please all. And some may be ready to say I writ of Conveniences; but not of Inconveniences; My answer to those I honestly Declare there is some barren Land; as, I suppose there is in Most places of the World; and Land in this part is very high, selling Commonly at six and seven pounds per acre. Neither will such land Produce Corn without something to buy them. Not Bread will not be got with Idleness else it would be a Brave Country indeed, and I Question not, but all them would give it a Good word. For my part I never would had the Least thought of returning home only through regard of seeing you all again.

Questions

1. According to Job Johnson, what are the attractions of Pennsylvania? What did Pennsylvania have to offer the Scots-Irish immigrant that was worth his breaking his ties to the land of his birth?
2. What special concerns does Johnson feel the need to address? What rumors about America does he attempt to dispel?
3. How do you think Johnson's letter was received back home in Ulster?

4-6 An Abolitionist in Pennsylvania in the 1730s

Almost from its inception Pennsylvania acquired a reputation, not undeserved, for being the "best poor man's country in the world." Thousands of Western European immigrants were drawn to the colony on the promise of toleration and an unimpeded pursuit of prosperity. What is less well known is that Pennsylvania was also a slave-owning colony. Even some Quakers, despite their egalitarian principles, owned slaves and condoned the practice of slave owning until the 1750s. A few dissenters, among them the uncompromising Benjamin Lay, challenged slavery in Pennsylvania in the 1730s. Lay, an immigrant from England who arrived in Philadelphia in 1731, believed that slavery contradicted the principles of Christianity and condemned it as a "notorious sin." He took to living in a

cave and making his own clothes in order to avoid materials grown by slaves. He even once kidnapped a Quaker child to make a point about the suffering African parents had to endure. Such extreme measures alienated the Society of Friends, and they disowned Lay in 1738.

Source: Courtesy of the Pennsylvania Historical Society.



Anonymous, "Benjamin Lay"

Questions

1. In the 1730s his fellow Quakers viewed Lay as an eccentric whose sanity was questionable. How is this conveyed in this depiction of him? Why might it have been important to depict Lay as slightly insane?
2. Given Lay's fate among the Quakers, what can be said about slavery in Pennsylvania before the American Revolution?

The Enlightenment and the Great Awakening, 1740–1765

As the societies of British North America were transformed from relatively simple frontier communities to complex but distinctive extensions of Europe, they began to participate in the religious and intellectual movements of the larger European world. Two powerful continental movements in particular transformed the cultural and intellectual life of the colonies. The Enlightenment emphasized the power of human reason and had its roots in the scientific revolution of the seventeenth century. If any single individual epitomized the American Enlightenment, it was Benjamin Franklin (Document 4-7); if any single place was its center, it was Franklin's Philadelphia.

The second movement was more spiritual. As some Americans were abandoning, or at least revising, an older religious worldview, many more were embracing a new one. Pietism, which came to America from Europe with German immigrants in the 1720s, led to religious revivals throughout the colonies. Little concerned with formal theology, it emphasized moral behavior and a mystical union with God. Charismatic preachers such as Theodore Jacob Freylinghuysen, William and Gilbert Tennant, and Jonathan Edwards played key roles in the revivals. From 1739 to 1741, the powerful British evangelist George Whitefield preached to huge audiences throughout the colonies, knitting local revivals together into a single movement subsequently known as the Great Awakening.

The Great Awakening was a social upheaval that created controversy and divided churches, leading to the creation of new congregations. It also inspired its adherents to question the need for religious taxes, the idea of an established church, the authority of ministers, and the morality of economic competition (Documents 4-8 and 4-9).

4-7 On Education During the American Enlightenment (1749)

Benjamin Franklin

Benjamin Franklin was one of colonial America's outstanding examples of the influence of Enlightenment ideas (see text pp. 116–117). In the document that follows, Franklin proposes methods for the education of colonial youth that departed dramatically from the founding generations' more modest attention to training in the "domestic arts" or a trade. Franklin's proposal resulted in the creation of an academy in Philadelphia in 1751.

Source: Benjamin Franklin, *Proposals Relating to the Education of Youth in Pensilvania, Philadelphia* (1749; facsimile reprint, edited by William Pepper, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1931).

"Proposals Relating to the Education of Youth in Pensilvania, Philadelphia," 1749.

It has long been regretted as a Misfortune to the Youth of this Province, that we have no Academy, in which they might receive the Accomplishments of a regular Education . . . the Sentiments and Advice of Men of Learning, Understanding, and Experience. . . .

The good Education of Youth has been esteemed by wise Men in all Ages, as the surest Foundation of the Happiness both of private Families and of Commonwealths. Almost all Governments have therefore made it a principal Object of their Attention, to establish and endow with proper Revenues, such Seminaries of Learning, as might supply the succeeding Age with Men qualified to serve the Publick with Honour to themselves, and to their Country. . . .

It is propos'd

That some Persons of Leisure and publick Spirit apply for a Charter, by which they may be incorporated, with Power to erect an Academy for the Education of Youth, to govern the same, provide Masters, make Rules, receive Donations, purchase Lands, etc., and to add to their Number, from Time to Time such other Persons as they shall judge suitable.

That the Members of the Corporation make it their Pleasure and in some Degree their Business, to visit the Academy often, . . . advance the Usefulness and Reputation of the Design; that they look on the Students as in some Sort their Children, treat them with Familiarity and Affection. . . .

That a House be provided for the Academy, if not in the Town, not many Miles from it . . . having a Garden, Orchard, Meadow, and a Field or two.

That the House be furnished with a Library . . . with Maps of all Countries, Globes, some mathematical Instruments, an Apparatus for experiments in Natural Philosophy, and for Mechanics; Prints, of all Kinds, Prospects, Buildings, Machines, etc.

That the Rector be a Man of good Understanding, good Morals, diligent and patient, learn'd in the Languages and Sciences, and a correct Speaker and Writer of the English Tongue; to have such Tutors under him as shall be necessary. . . .

As to their Studies, it would be well if they could be taught every Thing that is useful, and every Thing that is ornamental: But Art is long, and their Time is short. It is therefore propos'd that they learn those Things that are likely to be most useful and most ornamental. . . . All should be taught to write a fair Hand, and swift . . . Drawing . . . Arithmetick, Accounts . . . Geometry and Astronomy.

The English Language might be taught by Grammar; in which some of our best Writers, as Tillotson, Addison, Pope, Algernon Sidney, Cato's Letters, etc. should be Classicks. . . .

Antient Customs, religious and civil . . . Morality, be desecanting and making continual Observations on the Causes of the Rise or Fall of any Man's Character, Fortune, Power etc. . . . the Advantages of Temperance, Order, Frugality, Industry, Perseverance etc. . . .

While they are reading Natural History, might not a little Gardening, Planting, Grafting, inoculating, etc., be taught and practised; and now and then Excursions made to the neighbouring Plantations of the best Farmers. . . . The History of Commerce, of the Invention of Arts, Rise of Manufactures, Progress of Trade, Change of its Seats . . . will be useful to all. And this, with the Accounts in other History of . . . Engines and Machines used in War, will naturally introduce a Desire to be instructed in Mechanicks, and to be inform'd of the Principles of that Art by which weak Men perform such Wonders, Labour is sav'd, Manufactures expedited, etc. . . .

With the whole should be constantly inculcated and cultivated, that Benignity of Mind, which shows itself in . . . Good Breeding; highly useful to the Possessor, and most agreeable to all.

Questions

1. According to Franklin, why should young colonial men attend school when there are many practical reasons not to?
 2. What are the things young Pennsylvanians should be learning?
 3. How does Franklin reconcile public service, the benefits of classical learning, and the necessity of practical training for young people in the colony?
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4-8 An Evangelical Preacher's Trials (1760s)

The Reverend James Ireland

Of all the preachers who introduced the evangelical gospel into the southern colonies, James Ireland (1748–1806) has left perhaps the fullest account of his conversion, labors, and trials. Born in Edinburgh, he was raised as a Presbyterian and educated as a lawyer, but he came to Virginia as a young man to serve as a schoolmaster. At first Ireland cut a fine figure in local gentry society, joining the Masonic order and becoming well known for his dancing skill. However, on encountering the Baptists and their message, he underwent an emotional conversion and abandoned his former way of life. The sharpness of the break is shown in the confrontation that opens this document.

After becoming a Baptist minister, Ireland preached extensively throughout the Virginia Piedmont, stirring opposition from both the clergy of the established Church of England and the local gentry. In 1769 the latter briefly jailed him at Culpeper Court House, a place where he had engaged in an earlier controversy with the local parson. The persecution he suffered from “the politest part of the people,” though, he contrasted with the piety, tolerance, and religious diversity of the newer settlements of the Shenandoah Valley. Predominantly composed of Scots-Irish and Germans moving southwestward from Pennsylvania, these backcountry settlers were introducing a new sensibility into the southern colonies, and a new source of social division as well.

It comes now into my way to make some remarks about a man whom I referred to some pages back, and from whom I expected to receive some information relative to my parents and relations. Although a friendship existed between his father's family and my father's family, yet he never was an associate and companion of mine, by reason of the disparity of years between us; yet upon the remembrance of past family acquaintance from the instant of seeing each other, we conceived and preserved a singular affection for each other. He was a member of that fraternity [Freemasonry] to which I hinted before, I had joined; and was very instrumental in persuading me thereunto; he at the same time possessing the highest place in that society. The news of my awakening impressions, had diffused itself through every part of the settlement and its vicinity. It became the topic in all companies that "James Ireland was going to be mighty good now, for he is going to get converted." My acquaintance had not seen me for some short period, previous to my soul's distresses. There was a dance appointed to be held the Monday following, at a wealthy neighbour's house. My countryman in company with others, hearing the remarks they were making about me, and being tolerably dissipated in language at times, swore they need not believe any thing about it, for there could not be a dance in the settlement without my being there, and if they would leave it to him, he would convert me, and that to the dance, on Monday; and they would see me lead the ball that day. The deep impressions upon my soul had a very considerable influence upon my exterior appearance of body; that wild vivacity that flashed in my eyes, and natural cheerfulness that appeared in my countenance, was entirely gone; my eyes appeared solemn and heavy, my flesh began to pine away, my ruddy cheeks and countenance had vanished, and all that remained was a solemn gloomy paleness, whilst my head was often hanging down like a bulrush, under the internal pressure of my guilty state. This my friend, who had bound himself under an oath that he would convert me to the ball, had never yet seen. Determined however to prosecute his purpose, which I had also been informed of, disposed me to expect a visit from him, in which he did not deceive me. He came to my school house; being there myself, I heard the noise of a creature's feet some little distance from me, which disposed me to look about, and soon I descried the rider to be my friend, coming to see me. Being fully persuaded he would use all the influence he was master of, to persuade me to his wishes, I was seized with a momentary panic, which disposed me to lift up my heart to the Lord, and implore him not to suffer any reasonings he could use to have the least influence upon my mind, as also that the Lord would direct some word or other, that might be for his benefit. When I viewed him riding up, I never beheld such a display of pride in any man, before or since, as I beheld in him at that juncture, arising from his deportment, attitude and jesture, he rode a lofty elegant horse, and exhibited all the affectation possible, whilst his countenance appeared to me as bold and daring as satan himself, and with a commanding authority called upon me, if I were there to come out, which I accordingly did, with a fearful and timo-

rous heart. But O! how quickly can God level pride to the ground, if he does but once touch the heart, as was soon manifested in him. In a few minutes did the person, who, no doubt, made sure, as he came to visit me, of making an easy conquest of me, find, that the race is not to the swift nor the battle to the strong. For no sooner did he behold my disconsolate looks, emaciated countenance and solemn aspect, than he instantly appeared, as if he was riveted to the beast he rode on; his passions were so powerfully impressed, that I conceived he would have fainted and dropped from his horse.

For some short space of time, he was past utterance, and did nothing but stare at me with wild amazement. As soon as he could articulate a little his eyes fixed upon me, and his first address was this; "In the name of the Lord, what is the matter with you?" To which I replied if he would light, from his horse, and come into the house, I would tell him. I stepped into the house before him, begging of the Lord to direct my speech unto him; his surprise and consternation still attending him, he repeated his former expression; "In the name of the Lord what is the matter with you?" I instantly took him by the hand, and with a tender heart, and tears streaming from my eyes, spoke to him as follows. "My dear friend I possess a soul that will be either happy or miserable in the world to come; and God has been pleased to give me a view of the worth of my soul, as also of the guilty and condemned state it lies in by reason of sin; and I plainly see that if my soul is not converted, regenerated and born again, I will be damned." Holding my hand fast in his, and looking at me, with all the eagerness of desire, he burst out into the following words—"O! you will not leave me nor forsake me now." To which I answered that "I would not, upon condition he would renounce his former wicked ways, as I had done, and seek God through Jesus Christ, for pardon and salvation to our poor souls." To which he replied, with streaming eyes, "from that moment forward, through the strength of the Lord Jesus Christ, he would." His convictions were formed that very instant; and from my knowledge of him, meeting often by appointment to pray together to God for the salvation of our souls, I am satisfied that his impressions never subsided until he came to a well grounded hope of an interest in the salvation of God, through the merits of the precious Redeemer. . . .

. . . At that time the Church of England Parsons were exalted in domination over all dissenters in the colony, as it was then called, of Virginia. The dissenters had to pay their proportion for the building of Churches, and sixteen thousand weight of tobacco annually for the support of those Clergymen, exclusive of building their own houses for worship, supporting their own Ministers, and being precluded the benefit of marrying the members of their own society, except they procured and paid to the Church Parson of their Parish a full marriage fee for each couple. And this galling yoke continued on the necks of the dissenters until some time after our glorious revolution took place.

The Church Parson in Culpepper County had made it a practice, where any of those Baptist Preachers would have an

appointment for preaching, to go in person to those meetings, taking some aids with him, who were as much prejudiced against that sect as he was. Being a man of rapid flow of misrepresentation and persecution, upon religious subjects, would by his dogmatical manner, appear frequently to an audience he would address, to gain his point and acquire the mastery over his opponents.

This personage attended at Capt. McClanagan's in order to detect the falsity of Mr. Pickett's doctrines before his parishioners. Being acquainted with Mr. Pickett's disposition and turn of mind, I felt very uneasy that day, when I saw the position the Parson took. The place Mr. Pickett was to preach in, was pretty capacious for the congregation; the parson had a chair brought for himself, which he placed three or four yards in front of Mr. Pickett, on which he seated himself, taking out his pen, ink and paper, to take down notes of what he conceived to be false doctrine. By the countenance of Parson Meldrum's Parishioners, they appeared to be highly elated, under an assured expectation of his baffling the new light, as they called him. I discovered it was some embarrassment to Mr. Pickett, and impeded his delivery, but I possessed a confidence that he preached the truth, and nothing but the truth, which could be supported and defended against its enemies.

As soon as Mr. Pickett had finished his discourse, the Parson called him a schismatick, a broacher of false doctrines, and that he held up damnable errors that day. Mr. Pickett answered him with a great deal of candour, and supported the doctrines he had advanced, to the satisfaction of all those who were impartial judges of doctrine. He was a man slow in argument, and when contradicted it would in a measure confuse him, which I soon observed, by some points he advanced, in which, in my judgment, he was perfectly right. The Parson at the same time, I observed, was taking notes of what the other said, which made me careful to retain it on my memory, standing close by Mr. Pickett when he spoke. The notes the Parson took, were absolutely the reverse of what Mr. Pickett delivered, and the Parson asserting them with dogmatical precision, and his parishioners exulting in the same, I could not forbear immediately interfering. . . .

Understanding he had been raised a Presbyterian, before he commenced Episcopalian, I formed the plan of entering into a discourse with him. First, upon the doctrines of religion, and secondly, upon the practice of it. This was with a view to endeavour to gain his consent that what he called damnable errors were consistant with gospel principles and practices. . . .

However, I discovered that pursuing the argument was and would be at the risique of incurring the displeasure of both gentlemen and ladies of his society, and perhaps the greater bulk of them. They would look at me with the utmost contempt and disdain, supposing it no doubt, presumption in such a youth as I, to enter into an argument with the teacher of the county. In the course of our argument, they would repeatedly help him to scripture, in order to support his arguments, which made me observe to them that they did not treat me with common justice, that I had

none that helped me, whilst they were supplying their Pastor with every help they could afford. . . .

I immediately got up and addressed one of the gentlemen who had been so officious in helping his teacher; he was a magistrate at that time, and one of those who afterwards committed me to prison. I addressed him in this manner, "Sir, as the dispute between the Parson and myself is ended, if you are disposed to argue the subject over again, I am willing to enter upon it with you." He stretched out his arm straight before him, at that instant, and declared I should not come nigher than that length. I concluded what the consequence would be, therefore made a peaceable retreat.

Mr. Pickett's next meeting was to be contiguous to Col. Easom's, in an old field under some comfortable shades. It being on the Lord's day, the Parson had to attend his parish church, so that we met with no opposition from that quarter, but we it from another; as the congregation was very large, amongst them there were abundance of negroes the patrolers were let loose upon them, being urged thereto by the enemies and opposers of religion. Never having seen such a circumstance before, I was equally struck with astonishment and surprise, to see the poor negroes flying in every direction, the patrolers seizing and whipping them, whilst others were carrying them off prisoners, in order, perhaps, to subject them to a more severe punishment. Meeting being concluded, Mr. Pickett, with myself and a number of others from our parts, that had come over to this day's meeting, took our leave of each other that evening, and returned to our respective settlements. . . .

. . . I went on that evening to Capt. Thomas McClanahan's, a worthy gentleman at whose house I had the dispute with the church parson: there I was informed that if I preached next day at Mr. Manifa's, I should be taken by squire Strother and squire Slaughter. I sat down and counted the cost, freedom or confinement, liberty or a prison; it admitted of no dispute. Having ventured all upon Christ, I determined to suffer all for him. Next morning I set off for Mr. Manifa's, at whose house I was to preach, accompanied with the capt. and his whole family. When I arrived at the place of preaching, Mr. Manifa addressed me thus, "Sir, you may expect to be taken up to day, if you preach, a certain fine (I am told) will be imposed upon you, and so much upon each individual that will attend your preaching, as well as a fine of twenty pounds on me for granting you my house to preach in. This the justices have made me acquainted with, and have advised me for my own advantage, not to suffer the meeting."

Mr. Manifa being a man under awakening impressions, told me not to flinch from my duty, if I thought it a duty, to go on. I requested him to show me the line of his land, ordered a table to be taken out and placed with its feet on each side of the line; whether it might have answered any purpose or not, I cannot tell. However I told him, that when I stood on the table I would not preach on his land no more than on anothers.

Preaching being over, and I concluding with prayer, heard a rustling noise in the woods, and before I opened my eyes to see who it was, I was seized by the collar by two men whilst standing on the table. Stepping down off the table, and be-

holding a number of others walking up, it produced a momentary confusion in me. The magistrates instantaneously demanded of me, what I was doing there with such a conventicle of people? I replied that I was preaching the Gospel of Christ to them. They asked who gave me authority so to do? I answered, he that was the author of the Gospel, had a right to send forth whom he had qualified to dispense it. They retorted upon me with abusive epithets, and then enquired of me if I had any authority from man to preach? I produced my credentials, but these would avail nothing, not being sanctioned and commissioned by the Bishop. They told me that I must give security not to teach, preach or exhort, for twelve months and a day, or go to jail. I choose the last alternative. The magistrates then addressed their neighbours and informed them that they were open to law, but there the preacher stands on one side, and here we stand on the other; and as we believe you have been deceived by him, if you will confess it by coming over from the side where he is, to our side, we will take that act as your concession, and the law will not be put in force against you. The people were much incensed against the magistrates, and told them that they had heard nothing preached but the Gospel of Christ, and that if they had not money to pay their fines, they were willing to go to jail also. The magistrates were much mortified at seeing the ill will they had got from their neighbours, and their ignorance being by me, at the same time exposed before the congregation.

I gave security to attend court in a few days, which I accordingly did. By the complexion of the courts I saw there was no liberty for me. There were eleven magistrates sat as a quorum. They brow-beat me, mall treated me, and throwed out the most approbrious appellations against me—would admit of no defence I could make, but ordered me to hold my tongue, and let them hear no more of my vile, pernicious, abhorrible, detestable, abominable, diabolical doctrines, for they were naucious to the whole court. I found it of no consequence to defend myself any further, since imprisonment was inevitable, and they were determined to make an example of me.

I delivered up my riding horse to a friend to take care of him that night, and apply to me next day for further instructions. The sheriffs were ordered to attend me to my little limbo, with a considerable parade of people, with such vollies of oaths and abuse as if I were a being unfit to exist on the earth. A very uncomfortable night I passed, in consequence of the oaths &c. that continued through the same. Sticks and stones they were throwing during the whole night upon me. . . .

From what has been said, you cannot help taking notice of the awful darkness which overspread Virginia at that time; although in speaking of it more particularly I shall divide it into three districts of country, and touch upon the general character of the inhabitants of each, so far as I was then, and shortly afterwards, acquainted with them.

The first, from the blue ridge of mountains down towards the bay, they were considered as the politest part of the people, prior to any spread of the Gospel therein. Religion was a subject that did not concern their minds, unless it was in their opposition against those who felt the earliest impres-

sions of it; they resigned and gave up their spiritual concerns to the guidance and direction of their spiritual guides: like *priest like people*, they appeared all to be in the ditch, put their trust in men, and made flesh their arm. Scarcely a persecution took place, in that quarter, but had a Priest at the head of it, and received the hearty concurrence of their parishoners.

In early stages of my ministry, I made a visit almost down to the Bay; in that course of preaching, I travelled a considerable distance, and met with exceeding few that had any desire for the conversion of their souls.

From reasons heretofore assigned in my narration, I shall not discuss the circumstances attending my journey any further than mentioning a few particulars which I shall blend together.

Opposition attended me every where; in the time of preaching, one body of the congregation would be calling out to the other to whip the fellow off the ground; half a dozen of fists would be drawn at a time, when I expected to be knocked down every minute; sailors were brought on shore from their vessels, through the influence of the people, in order to take me out into the stream, hoist me up to the yards arm and so to give me a ducking. At other places public teachers would, after sermon, introduce controversies, principally on the ordinance of baptism, which I would undertake accordingly to the mortification of those who introduced them; by which their congregations were convinced of the propriety of believing baptism by immersion.

Without any more animadversion, there was always a party in favour of the cause I had espoused; often soliciting me to visit them again: and when ever the Lord was pleased to form any opening upon their minds, it was surprising to see how docile and tractable they were to receive instruction. They were a people possessing good parts naturally; all that they wanted for religious advancement, and divine improvement, was the quickening, awakening, convincing and divine teaching of the holy spirit, attended with the heart changing and efficacious grace of God upon their souls, which was opening upon them at that period, and many of them soon manifested divine progress, in the ways of Jesus.

The prisons, in divers places, were honoured with the poor despised preachers: however their situations were much more comfortable than mine; because none were precluded from visiting them; none of those punishments inflicted on me attended them; whilst several of them at a time would be in company together, by which means, they proved a mutual comfort and establishment to each other. By comparing their situation with mine already given, the reader may easily draw inferences from the premises.

Being two hundred miles from my residence, I longed to be back among those called my own people; that being the *second* division, which lays between the Blue Ridge and Alleghany mountains. The people inhabiting these valleys, were better informed, arising from the following considerations: they were a divided people as to religious persuasions, consisting of Baptists, Presbyterians, Methodists, Quakers, Menonists, Tunkers and Churchmen, with a variety of others. As persecution was not a

reigning principle among them, and they lived in a common state of sociability, it gave them an opportunity of being acquainted with each other's principles and practices, by which their *ideas* became more enlarged, and their *judgments* more generally informed than those of the first division.

With regard to the *third* division, who lived beyond the Alleghany mountains, in our western settlements, it would be hard for one to give a proper description of them, until time and opportunity of action, would enable such to form a correct opinion. But as kind providence had allotted, under

the Blue Ridge, through all the courses and windings of this valley, (between the Ridge and Alleghany) and from the other side of the Alleghany down upon the Ohio, to be the sphere of my ministerial labours, and public services put in my power, were it necessary, I could give a full detail respecting them. When I went among them, I found them to be an uncultivated people; the farther I went back the more rude and illiterate they were: I often thought they constituted a compound of the barbarian and the indian; although I found among them, a number of respectable and well behaved people. . . .

Questions

1. Why did the Baptists and other evangelical sects pose such a threat to the established religious order in colonial Virginia? How might the threat have been social as well as religious?
2. How are Ireland's attitudes toward slaves shaped by his religious beliefs?
3. To what does Ireland attribute what he describes as the greater tolerance of peoples living in the western valleys of Virginia? How might this illuminate for you the origins of the religion clause of the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution?

4-9 Fighting Revivalism in the Carolina Backcountry (1768)

Charles Woodmason

Religious revivalism in the southern colonies was often accompanied by social conflict (see text pp. 118–123), and nowhere is this better illustrated than in the accounts of Charles Woodmason. Born into the gentry class in England about 1720, Woodmason arrived in South Carolina in 1752 and established himself as a planter, merchant, and public official. In the early 1760s, however, he grew increasingly worried over the inroads that revivalists, especially New Light Baptists, had made into the Carolina backcountry, and he soon determined to “disperse these Wretches.” Woodmason traveled to England to be ordained as an Anglican minister—there were no Anglican bishops in the colonies to perform ordination—and returned to South Carolina in 1766. He spent the next six years in the backcountry, working for the “advancement of religion” and fighting against what he perceived to be the “idleness, beggary, prophaneness, lewdness, and villany” of the revivalists. The following excerpt is taken from an undated sermon, delivered around 1768, in which Woodmason attacks the New Lights.

Source: From Richard J. Hooker, ed., *The Carolina Backcountry on the Eve of the Revolution: The Journal and Other Writings of Charles Woodmason, Anglican Itinerant*. Copyright 1953 by the University of North Carolina Press, renewed 1981 by Richard J. Hooker. Published for the Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture. Used by permission of the publisher.

In Singing of Hymns and Spiritual Songs—whereby their Hearts are greatly inflam'd with Divine Love and Heav'nly Joy, and makes the H[oly] G[host] be shed abroad in their Hearts. This is very fine *Talking*: I could wish that all the *Doings* too, were equally Innocent. . . .

But let us go on, and examine if in the General Corruption of Manners these New Lights have made any Reform in the Vice of Drunkenness? . . . There is not one Hogshead of Liquor less consum'd since their visiting us, or any Tavern shut up—So far from it, that there has been

Questions

1. What evidence is there in this account to suggest that social conflict was at the root of Woodmason's complaints about the inhabitants of the backcountry? Why might Woodmason, a member of the social elite, feel particularly threatened by the New Lights?
2. What was the primary difference "between them and Us," according to Woodmason? What does this reveal about the nature of the contest between the established churches and the revivalists?
3. What vices did Woodmason single out? What is the significance of his catalogue of sins? Did he suggest any remedies for the ills of the backcountry?

Questions for Further Thought

1. In what ways did the ideas of the Enlightenment and the Great Awakening challenge the authority of the established social and cultural order of colonial American society?
2. Was the conflict between the revivalists and the established clergy rooted in cultural differences? Explain.
3. Why did Americans in the eighteenth century embrace both religion and science with equal fervor? What was it about pietistic religion and Enlightenment rationalism that Americans found so attractive, and why?

The Midcentury Challenge: War, Trade, and Social Conflict, 1750–1765

In the years 1740–1765, the British empire in North America was redefined by three sets of events: the French and Indian War, an expansion of transatlantic trade that increased prosperity but raised colonial debt, and a great westward movement.

In the late 1740s, a shortage of land and the influx of immigrants into the middle and southern colonies brought pressure for expansion, leading to a clash between Britain and France for the interior of North America (Document 4-10). When William Pitt the Elder became first minister in 1757, he devised a strategy that turned the conflict into a great war for empire. The turning point in North America was the British capture of Quebec in 1759; the war ended with the reduction of the French empire in North America to a handful of islands.

As the colonial population continued to expand, serious land shortages led to conflicts over land rights, Indian policy, law and order, and political representation. For example, Connecticut fought with Pennsylvania over settlement in the Wyoming Valley. In Pennsylvania, conflicts between Scots-Irish immigrants along the frontier and the Quaker political establishment stirred violence and nearly led to civil war (Document 4-11).

4-10 Negotiating Peace with the Ohio Indians (1758)

Christian Frederick Post

The French and Indian War began in the Ohio Valley in 1754. As France and Great Britain battled for control of North America, Indian tribes made a series of shifting alliances with both sides to protect their interests and resist European encroachment.

By the summer of 1758, after waging four years of war on the Pennsylvania frontier, both Indians and colonists had grown weary of the fighting. British general John Forbes, charged with taking Fort Duquesne (near present-day Pittsburgh), was eager to negotiate with the Ohio tribes, hoping to persuade them to abandon their alliance with the French. When Forbes learned that the Ohio Indians would reconsider their alliance if Pennsylvania authorities promised to end further encroachments on native lands, Forbes asked Governor William Denny to make the necessary overtures toward peace. Denny obliged by appointing Christian Frederick Post (1710–1785) to meet with the Ohio sachems and to convey the governor's goodwill. A Moravian missionary who had lived among the Delaware tribes for about a decade, learned their language, and had twice been married to Delaware women, Post was uniquely qualified to serve as the colony's negotiator. In late August, after traversing three hundred difficult miles from Philadelphia, Post arrived at the Indian town of Kuskuskies on Beaver Creek, a tributary of the Ohio River. The following excerpt is from Post's account of his meeting with Indians on September 1, 1758.

Source: Reuben Gold Thwaites, ed., *Early Western Travels, 1748–1846* (Cleveland, OH: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1904), 1:213–216.

Shingas, King Beaver, Delaware George, and Pisquetumen, with several other captains said to me,

“Brother, We have thought a great deal since God has brought you to us; and this is a matter of great consequence, which we cannot readily answer; we think on it, and will answer you as soon as we can. Our feast hinders us; all our young men, women and children are glad to see you; before you came, they all agreed together to go and join the *French*; but since they have seen you, they all draw back; though we have great reason to believe you intend to drive us away, and settle the country; or else, why do you come to fight in the land that God has given us?”

I said, we did not intend to take the land from them; but only to drive the *French* away. They said, they knew better; for that they were informed so by our greatest traders; and some Justices of the Peace had told them the same, and the *French*, said they, tell us much the same thing,—“that the *English* intend to destroy us, and take our lands;” but the land is ours, and not theirs; therefore, we say, if you will be at peace with us, we will send the *French* home. It is you that have begun the war, and it is necessary that you hold fast, and be not discouraged, in the work of peace. We love you more than you love us; for when we take any prisoners from you, we treat them as our own children. We are poor, and yet we clothe them as well as we can, though you see our children are as naked as at the first. By this you may see that our hearts are better than yours. It is plain that you white people are the cause of this war; why do not you and the *French* fight in the old country, and on the sea? Why do you come to fight on our land? This makes every body believe, you want to take the land from us by force, and settle it.

I told them, “Brothers, as for my part, I have not one foot of land, nor do I desire to have any; and if I had any land, I had rather give it to you, than take any from you. Yes, brothers, if I die, you will get a little more land from me; for I shall then no longer walk on that ground, which God has

made. We told you that you should keep nothing in your heart, but bring it before the council fire, and before the Governor, and his council; they will readily hear you; and I promise you, what they answer they will stand to. I further read to you what agreements they made about *Wioming*, and they stand to them.”

They said, “Brother, your heart is good, you speak always sincerely; but we know there are always a great number of people that want to get rich; they never have enough; look, we do not want to be rich, and take away that which others have. God has given you the tame creatures; we do not want to take them from you. God has given to us the deer, and other wild creatures, which we must feed on; and we rejoice in that which springs out of the ground, and thank God for it. Look now, my brother, the white people think we have no brains in our heads; but that they are great and big, and that makes them make war with us: we are but a little handful to what you are; but remember, when you look for a wild turkey you cannot always find it, it is so little it hides itself under the bushes: and when you hunt for a rattlesnake, you cannot find it; and perhaps it will bite you before you see it. However, since you are so great and big, and we so little, do you use your greatness and strength in compleating this work of peace. This is the first time that we saw or heard of you, since the war begun, and we have great reason to think about it, since such a great body of you comes into our lands. It is told us, that you and the *French* contrived the war, to waste the *Indians* between you; and that you and the *French* intended to divide the land between you: this was told us by the chief of the *Indian* traders; and they said further, brothers, this is the last time we shall come among you; for the *French* and the *English* intend to kill all the *Indians*, and then divide the land among themselves.

Then they addressed themselves to me, and said, “Brother, I suppose you know something about it; or has the Governor stopped your mouth, that you cannot tell us?”

Then I said, “Brothers, I am very sorry to see you so jealous. I am your own flesh and blood, and sooner than I would tell you any story that would be of hurt to you, or your children, I would suffer death: and if I did not know that it was the desire of the Governor, that we should renew our old brotherly love and friendship, that subsisted between our grandfathers, I would not have undertaken this

journey. I do assure you of mine and the people’s honesty. If the *French* had not been here, the *English* would not have come; and consider, brothers, whether, in such a case, we can always sit still.”

Then they said, “It is a thousand pities we did not know this sooner; if we had, it would have been peace long before now.”

Questions

1. According to the Ohio Indians, who or what caused the war between France and England in the 1750s? To what degree were the Indians correct in their views?
2. Given what you know of events in colonial America since the arrival of the first Europeans, did the Indians have good cause to fear the motives of the English? Why might they have accepted the disclaimers of Post with regard to designs upon their land?
3. What might Post have meant when he told the Ohio Indians, “I am your own flesh and blood”?

4-11 Protests on the Frontier: The Paxton Riots (1764)

Thomas Barton

In December 1763 a group of frontiersmen from Paxton Township, Pennsylvania, fell upon a small, peaceful group of Conestoga Indians, killing six. When the magistrates of nearby Lancaster sheltered the Native American survivors in the workhouse, a mob invaded the town, broke into the workhouse, and murdered fourteen more Indians. Soon after, two hundred of the “Paxton Boys” marched on Philadelphia in pursuit of Indian refugees there; civil war was averted only by the diplomacy of Benjamin Franklin and others, who promised a hearing for the Paxton grievances if the men would return home.

The Paxton incident brought to a focus numerous tensions resulting from frontier expansion, the increasingly multiethnic character of Pennsylvania, and continued tight control of the colony by the Penn family and the Quaker elite of Philadelphia. All of these tensions are displayed vividly in this early manifesto, circulated along the frontier and reproduced in a pamphlet written by one of their defenders.

Source: Excerpt from Thomas Barton, “The Conduct of the Paxton-Men, Impartially Represented . . .,” in *The Paxton Papers*, ed. John R. Dunbar (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1957), 269–275. (Footnotes are from the original document.) Reprinted with kind permission from Springer Science and Business Media.

For my Part, I am no Adept in Politicks, and have but seldom troubled my Head about that Science, beyond the reading of a common News-Paper. — It has long been my unhappy Lot to be a Spectator of the Distresses and Sufferings of my Fellow Subjects; my Heart has often bled for them;—and I should still have continued a secret Mourner for what I had not Power to redress, had not the unaccountable [*sic*] Conduct of your City Quakers provoked me to speak my Sentiments, and unburthen myself to my Friend.—By my Principles as well as Situation in Life, you know, my dear Sir, that I have no political Ends to serve; that I have nothing to hope or fear from Party Connections; and that I can have no other View in troubling you with this Letter than to rescue the miserable Frontier People, who lately rose in Arms, from

the Infamy and Odium thrown upon them, by *those* whose unfeeling Hearts have never suffered them to look beyond their own private Interest and Party.¹

The INSURGENTS themselves hand about a Kind of *Manifesto*, which contains the following Declaration, Grievances, Complaints, &c. — viz.

¹The Author of this Letter, hopes he will not be understood as approving of these People’s having taken up Arms. Such violent Steps can never possibly be productive of anything, but WILD UPROAR and CONFUSION. What-ever therefore can have a Tendency to promote this; or that offers the *least Insult* to the LAWS and GOVERNMENT of this Country, he will ever think it his Duty to bear his Testimony against, and to discountenance by every Means in his Power. [*Barton’s note.*]

Questions

1. What do we learn about mid-eighteenth-century Pennsylvania politics from the Paxton manifesto? What sorts of social, economic, political, and religious issues divided the colony?
 2. What grievances does the author of the manifesto articulate? Where does he lay the blame for the conflict, and why?
 3. Why do you think the author of the manifesto feels the need to state explicitly the loyalty of the Paxton Boys to King George?
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4-12 Middle Passage (c. 1754)

Olaudah Equiano

Olaudah Equiano's life story is nothing if not extraordinary. According to his autobiographical *Interesting Narrative*, he was born in Isseke, Nigeria, in 1745, and kidnapped and sold to English slave traders at age eleven. Transported first to Barbados and then to a Virginia plantation in 1756, he was subsequently sold to a captain in the Royal Navy and saw action at sea during the Seven Years' War. Expecting to be freed at the end of the war, he was sold instead to a Quaker merchant and slave trader on the West Indian island of Montserrat in 1762. Fortunately for Equiano, his new master included him in the shipping business, and by 1766 he had accumulated enough money to purchase his freedom. Ironically, Equiano worked briefly in the slave trade himself before joining the fledgling antislavery movement in the 1780s. The publication of his *Narrative* in 1789 gained him fame and some wealth before his death in London in 1797. Equiano's description of his tortuous journey from Africa to the New World is the most famous account extant of the Middle Passage.

Source: Excerpts from *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano*, ed. Robert J. Allison, 2nd ed. (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2007), 1: 64–68.

The first object which saluted my eyes when I arrived on the coast was the sea, and a slave ship, which was then riding at anchor, and waiting for its cargo. These filled me with astonishment, which was soon converted into terror when I was carried on board. I was immediately handled and tossed up to see if I were sound by some of the crew; and I was now persuaded that I had gotten into a world of bad spirits, and that they were going to kill me. Their complexions too differing so much from ours, their long hair, and the language they spoke, (which was very different from any I had ever heard) united to confirm me in this belief. Indeed such were the horrors of my views and fears at the moment, that, if ten thousand worlds had been my own, I would have freely parted with them all to have exchanged my condition with that of the meanest slave in my own country. When I looked round the ship too and saw a large furnace or copper boiling, and a multitude of black people of every description chained together, every one of their countenances expressing dejection and sorrow, I no longer doubted of my fate; and, quite overpowered with horror and anguish, I fell motionless on the deck and fainted. When I recovered a little I found some black people about me,

who I believed were some of those who brought me on board, and had been receiving their pay; they talked to me in order to cheer me, but all in vain. I asked them if we were not to be eaten by those white men with horrible looks, red faces, and loose hair. They told me I was not; and one of the crew brought me a small portion of spirituous liquor in a wine glass; but, being afraid of him, I would not take it out of his hand. One of the blacks therefore took it from him and gave it to me, and I took a little down my palate, which, instead of reviving me, as they thought it would, threw me into the greatest consternation at the strange feeling it produced, having never tasted any such liquor before. Soon after this the blacks who brought me on board went off, and left me abandoned to despair. I now saw myself deprived of all chance of returning to my native country, or even the least glimpse of hope of gaining the shore, which I now considered as friendly; and I even wished for my former slavery in preference to my present situation, which was filled with horrors of every kind, still heightened by my ignorance of what I was to undergo. I was not long suffered to indulge my grief; I was soon put down under the decks, and there I received such a salutation in my

nostrils as I had never experienced in my life; so that, with the loathsomeness of the stench, and crying together, I became so sick and low that I was not able to eat, nor had I the least desire to taste any thing. I now wished for the last friend, death, to relieve me; but soon, to my grief, two of the white men offered me eatables; and, on my refusing to eat, one of them held me fast by the hands, and laid me across I think the windlass, and tied my feet, while the other flogged me severely. I had never experienced any thing of this kind before; and although, not being used to the water, I naturally feared that element the first time I saw it, yet nevertheless could I have got over the nettings, I would have jumped over the side but I could not, and, besides, the crew used to watch us very closely who were not chained down to the decks, lest we should leap into the water: and I have seen some of these poor African prisoners most severely cut for attempting to do so, and hourly whipped for not eating. This indeed was often the case with myself. In a little time after amongst the poor chained men, I found some of my own nation, which in a small degree gave ease to my mind. I inquired of these what was to be done with us; they gave me to understand we were to be carried to these white people's country to work for them. I then was a little revived, and thought, if it were no worse than working, my situation was not so desperate: but still I feared I should be put to death, the white people looked and acted, as I thought, in so savage a manner; for I had never seen among any people such instances of brutal cruelty; and this not only shewn towards us blacks, but also to some of the whites themselves. One white man in particular I saw, when we were permitted to be on deck, flogged so unmercifully with a large rope near the foremast, that he died in consequence of it; and they tossed him over the side as they would have done a brute. This made me fear these people the more; and I expected nothing less than to be treated in the same manner. . . . The stench of the hold while we were on the coast was so intolerably loathsome, that it was dangerous to remain there for any time, and some of us had been permitted to stay on the deck for the fresh air; but now that the whole ship's cargo were confined together, it became absolutely pestilential. The closeness of the place, and the heat of the climate, added to the number in the ship, which was so crowded that each had scarcely room to turn himself, almost suffocated us. This produced copious perspirations, so that the air soon became unfit for respiration, from a variety of loathsome smells, and brought on a sickness among the slaves, of which many died,

thus falling victims to the improvident avarice, as I may call it, of their purchasers. This wretched situation was again aggravated by the galling of the chains, now become insupportable; and the filth of the necessary tubs, into which the children often fell, and were almost suffocated. The shrieks of the women, and the groans of the dying, rendered the whole a scene of horror almost inconceivable. Happily perhaps for myself I was soon reduced so low here that it was thought necessary to keep me almost always on deck; and from my extreme youth I was not put in fetters. In this situation I expected every hour to share the fate of my companions, some of whom were almost daily brought upon deck at the point of death, which I began to hope would soon put an end to my miseries. Often did I think many of the inhabitants of the deep much more happy than myself. I envied them the freedom they enjoyed, and as often wished I could change my condition for theirs. Every circumstance I met with served only to render my state more painful, and heighten my apprehensions, and my opinion of the cruelty of the whites. . . . One day, when we had a smooth sea and moderate wind, two of my wearied countrymen who were chained together (I was near them at the time), preferring death to such a life of misery, somehow made through the nettings and jumped into the sea: immediately another quite dejected fellow, who, on one account of his illness, was suffered to be out of irons, also followed their example; and I believe many more would very soon have done the same if they had not been prevented by the ship's crew, who were instantly alarmed. Those of us that were the most active were in a moment put down under the deck, and here was such a noise and confusion amongst the people of the ship as I never heard before, to stop her, and get the boat out to go after the slaves. However two of the wretches were drowned, but they got the other, and afterwards flogged him unmercifully for thus attempting to prefer death to slavery. In this manner we continued to undergo more hardships than I can now relate, hardships which are inseparable from this accursed trade. Many a time we were near suffocation from the want of fresh air, which we were often without for whole days together. This, and the stench of the necessary tubs, carried off many. . . . At last we came in sight of the island of Barbadoes, at which the whites on board gave a great shout, and made many signs of joy to us. We did not know what to think of this; but as the vessel drew nearer we plainly saw the harbour, and other ships of different kinds and sizes; and we soon anchored amongst them off Bridge Town.

Questions

1. What are the major themes of Equiano's narrative? How might they be incorporated into a general antislavery appeal? Who was Equiano's intended audience?
2. Equiano was an adult when he wrote this account, remembering his experiences as a child some thirty-five years earlier. Is this important? Why or why not?
3. Some recently discovered evidence suggests that Equiano may have been born in South Carolina and not in Africa. If this proves to be true, would his account of the Middle Passage be rendered useless?