

THE CONTROVERSY CONCERNING THE ESTABLISHMENT  
OF AN ANGLICAN BISHOPRIC IN THE COLONY  
OF VIRGINIA AS A CAUSE OF THE  
AMERICAN REVOLUTION

By

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## PREFACE

The political dispute brought about by the attempt to institute episcopacy in the predominantly Anglican colony of Virginia played a significant part in molding the Patriot mind. My interest in this dispute of the American Revolutionary period was first aroused by discussions with Dr. George J. Ruppel, while a student at the University of Dayton. At that time I was of the opinion that the role of the southern colonies in bringing about the Revolution had been vastly underrated by most American historians. As a result of this belief I was encouraged to explore further the episcopal problem in relation to the southern colonies.

The colony of Virginia was chosen for examination by virtue of its more prominent role, in bringing about the Revolution, than that of any other southern colony. Furthermore, in Virginia the Church of England was established by law, and the government of the colony was in the hands of members of the established Church.

To understand fully the reasons for the controversy, it is first necessary to examine the dissenting groups in the colony, as well as the activities of the Anglican Church and the well known "Parson's Cause." In order to acquaint

ourselves with the attitudes and ideas of those citizens of Virginia who would be directly affected by the institution of episcopacy, it is necessary to examine newspapers, pamphlets, institutional documents, and private correspondence of the period. These sources show the development of both the pro-episcopal and the anti-episcopal viewpoints in their discussion of the dispute. Thus, to me, these sources illustrate the development of an issue which was essentially political.

The political motives for action, however predominant, were strengthened on the other hand by social and economic motives. It would be possible to examine the problem by emphasizing the social or economic motives, yet concentrating upon the political motives provides a more stimulating and perhaps a more accurate resolution of the problem, for the Virginians viewed it in this manner.

The writer wishes to express his most sincere appreciation to Dr. George E. Lewis of Modesto College, California, for his early guidance of this study, and to Dr. Theodore L. Agnew for his many hours of supervision and direction. I also desire to extend my gratitude to Dr. Sidney D. Brown and Mr. H. James Henderson for their critical readings and comments, and to Dr. Homer L. Knight for his assistance with technical details relating to the Church of England. Finally, I wish to tender my grateful appreciation for the helpfulness and courtesy of the staffs of the following libraries: Oklahoma State University, University of Day-

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George William Pilcher

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## CHAPTER I

### THE GENERAL RELIGIOUS SITUATION IN VIRGINIA

Looking back to the beginning of colonization in America, we can see that one of the more important reasons for the mass migration of peoples from the Old World to the New during the seventeenth century, was the European attitude of religious intolerance and persecution. Thus, when the colonists came to this continent, many of them established a form of religious liberty for themselves but often denied it to others.

At the beginning of this colonizing movement the Old World Anglicans had been glad enough to be rid of the dissenters, but as the American colonies prospered and grew in importance, the Church of England began to revive the idea of religious expansion and sought the support of King and Parliament. It was not unusual for many Americans to be aroused by the speeches and actions of the Anglican churchmen. As time progressed they became aware of the growing influence of the Bishop of London, especially the fact that he was able to secure the royal disallowance of colonial laws acting to the detriment of the Anglican Church (e.g. the Virginia Two Penny Act).

The first serious attempts to establish the Anglican hierarchy throughout the colonies came in the 1630's when Archbishop William Laud let it be known that he favored the use of military force, if necessary, to carry out the program. However, this threat soon came to an end when the troops of Parliament led him to the gallows in 1645. As an official policy this idea did not again become popular until after the Revolution of 1688. Since most of the early attempts had either the direct or indirect approbation of the Crown they were viewed by the Americans as a part of England's official colonial policy. The agitation for establishment, coupled with the activity of the Venerable Society<sup>1</sup> (i.e. The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts), only served to increase the colonial dread of the hierarchy.

Following the Restoration, the Stuarts developed the practice of consulting the Bishop of London on all matters pertaining to the Church in the colonies. However, prior to 1675, the Bishop's opinion had no force in law even though his advice was generally followed. When his authority later received legal sanction he required that all colonial ministers of the Anglican faith be certified at

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<sup>1</sup> The Venerable Society was chartered in 1701 by King William III on petition of the lower house of the Convocation of Canterbury, with the purpose of increasing the power of the Bishop of London. William W. Manross, A History of the American Episcopal Church (New York, Morehouse-Gorham Company, 1950), 48-49. Henceforth cited as Manross, Episcopal Church.



his office in London.<sup>2</sup>

Later, in 1685, the Bishop of London required that all Virginia schoolmasters be certified by him, and he began the practice of appointing commissaries to exercise his political and religious powers in the colonies.<sup>3</sup> The Bishop was later granted a royal commission which enabled him, and his commissaries, to hold spiritual courts in the colonies, in an attempt to halt moral irregularities of the clergy.<sup>4</sup>

From its inception the Venerable Society called for the establishment of the Anglican Church and hierarchy in the American colonies.<sup>5</sup> This proposal found support among many Anglicans of the northern colonies, but those of Virginia felt that the introduction of the hierarchy was wholly unnecessary and would tend to eliminate lay control of the Church.

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<sup>2</sup>"Report of the Right Reverend Dr. Sherlock on the Church in the Colonies," 1759, London Document XXXV, E. B. O'Callaghan, editor, Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New-York; Procured in Holland, England and France, by John Romeyn Brodhead, Esq., Agent, Under and by Virtue of an Act of the Legislature, Entitled "An Act to Appoint an Agent to Procure and Transcribe Documents in Europe Relative to the Colonial History of the State," Passed May 2, 1839 (Albany, Weed, Parsons and Company, 1853-1858), VII, 360-369. Henceforth cited as NYCD.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 363.

<sup>4</sup>"Commission to the Bishop of London for exercising Jurisdiction in the American Colonies," undated [1728], ibid., V, 849-853.

<sup>5</sup>See the Anniversary Sermon, delivered in London, between 1702 and 1772.

Upon the death of Queen Anne (1714), one of the most stalwart supporters of the Venerable Society, much of the agitation for a colonial hierarchy came to an end since her successor, George I, lacked interest in the project. During his reign there was little agitation for an American episcopate but upon his death (1727), and the opening of the reign of George II (1727-1760), the controversy was revived. During the reigns of George II and George III (1760-1776) the political overtones came to the fore and colonial opposition began to crystallize.

Prior to a discussion of the Anglican Church in Virginia we should examine the growth, disabilities, activities, and influence of the dissenting groups, in an attempt to determine their effect upon the situation. In Virginia, the Church of England was established by law and supported by taxes levied upon the entire population; however, dissenting groups were allowed to practice their beliefs providing they adhered to certain governmental restrictions. The most numerous of the dissenting groups were the Presbyterians and the Baptists, who had migrated from Pennsylvania into the trans-Allegheny area of the colony.

## THE PRESBYTERIANS

The Presbyterians began to appear in large numbers just prior to 1750, in spite of a law which could be construed to require their attendance at all Anglican services.<sup>6</sup> Due to the fact that the Presbyterians were widely scattered along the Virginia frontier it was not unusual to find one clergyman ministering to several counties and being forced to travel as much as forty miles from one congregation to another.<sup>7</sup>

In order to preach it was necessary for a dissenting clergyman to be licensed into a specific meeting-house by the General Court. Concerning the hardships resulting from unfair administration of this law Samuel Davies, a well known Presbyterian divine of the time, made the following comment:

The General Court. . . have licensed seven Meeting-Houses for me to officiate in; & I Should not desire to have their Number & my Fatigues encreased [sic] were not the Circumstances of the Dissenters in Virginia extraordinary & peculiar. There are a few of them. . . who are too weak [financially] to maintain a Minister of their own. . .<sup>8</sup>

Davies had been forced to refuse an invitation to minis-

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<sup>6</sup>Samuel Davies, The State of Religion Among the Protestant Dissenters in Virginia; In a Letter to the Rev. Mr. Joseph Bellamy, of Bethlem, in New-England: From the Reverend Mr. Samuel Davies, D. V. M. in Hanover County, Virginia (Boston, S. Kneeland, 1751), 7-17.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., 21-22, 29-30.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., 41-42.

ter to one group of dissenters when he discovered that there was no church licensed for their use. When this group, among others, had petitioned their county court for a license, they had been denied. Even dissenting congregations which had been able to obtain licenses often had them revoked on the basis "that it does not belong to a County Court to proceed in such Affairs," or "that a dissenting Minister has no legal Right to more Meeting-Houses than one."<sup>9</sup> As a result of this action by the Council, Davies assumed that many groups of dissenters made no attempt to secure a license, even though the Virginia Toleration Act placed no limitation upon the number of meeting-houses which could be supervised by one clergyman. A further disability was the fact that it was often necessary to carry small children a great distance for baptism -- a distance which was often prohibitive.<sup>10</sup>

In an interesting bit of abstract reasoning, Davies came to the conclusion that religious toleration was not present in Virginia. He observed that, by English law, everyone was required to be present in church each Sunday. This being the case, a Presbyterian would be required to attend an Anglican service if there was no Presbyterian meeting-house in the vicinity; thus, if Presbyterian meeting-houses were not permitted, there could be no such thing as toleration

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid., 42.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., 42-43.

of their beliefs.<sup>11</sup>

We have noted that Davies was licensed to hold services in seven meeting-houses; a commentary upon his effective use of these churches can be found in a statement by the Anglican Commissary William Dawson that:

The Dissenters were but an inconsiderable number before the late arrival of certain Teachers from the Northern Colonies, . . . having no Meeting houses they quietly conformed to the Doctrine and discipline of our Church, constantly frequented the public worship of God, and the Christian Sacrifice. But since Mr. Davies has been allowed to officiate in so many places (an allowance I humbly conceive, inconsistent with our duty to favor and protect the Church of England), there has been a great defection from our Religious Assemblies. The generality of his followers, I believe, were born and bred in our Communion.<sup>12</sup>

It was later claimed that the Presbyterian sermons had been:

calculated to raise and inflame the passions, they were delivered in great earnestness, in a more authoritative and yet affectionate and familiar manner, than the people had ever heard before, and they were proportionably more affected. The doctrines too, were such as had a tendency to persuade them that their parish ministers were deficient in their duty, and had not taught and instructed them properly.

Accordingly, the writer held that throughout the entire period the Presbyterians had exerted a disruptive influence.<sup>13</sup>

The number of Presbyterians grew rapidly, and by 1769 there were fifty-seven meeting-houses licensed for the use of that denomination. However, the number of clergymen was

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<sup>11</sup>Ibid., 44.

<sup>12</sup>William Dawson to the Bishop of London, undated [1752], William Stevens Perry, compiler, Historical Collections Relating to the American Colonial Church (Hartford, The Church Press Company, 1870-1878), I, 384-385. Henceforth cited as Perry, Collections.

<sup>13</sup>New York Journal; or, The General Advertiser, August 22, 1771, p. 2. Henceforth cited as NY Journal.

far less than the number of churches, for there were but eleven ministers, or about one minister for every five churches.<sup>14</sup>

As a portent of future events an anonymous author expressed the following opinion of the Presbyterians in 1764:

If we are to form any Judgment of the present Members of that Society, by either their own Conduct, or that of their Forefathers, we shall find that in the Annuals /sic/ both of ancient and modern History, Presbyterianism and Rebellion, were twin-Sisters, sprung from Faction, and their Affection for each other, has ever been so strong, that a separation of them never could be effected. . . what King has ever reign'd in Great-Britain, whose Government has not been disturb'd with Presbyterian Rebellions, since ever they were a people?<sup>15</sup>

#### THE BAPTISTS

During the period of Presbyterian growth the Virginia Baptists were also in their developmental stage. Even though the Baptists were subject to the same disabilities as the Presbyterians they were often treated much more harshly than their dissenting brethren.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup>Ibid., 1.

<sup>15</sup>"Philo-Libertatis," A Looking Glass for Presbyterians. Or a Brief Examination of Their Loyalty, Merits, and Other Qualifications for Government. With Some Animadversions on the Quaker Unmask'd. Humbly Address'd to the Consideration of the Loyal Freemen of Pennsylvania (Philadelphia, n.p., 1764), 4.

<sup>16</sup>Robert B. Semple, A History of the Rise and Progress of the Baptists in Virginia (Richmond, John O'Lynch, 1810), 14. Henceforth cited as Semple, Baptists in Virginia. In some areas of Virginia the Baptists were officially persecuted, whereas in others they were considered too low to notice, ibid.

The story of the Baptists during this period is best told in Robert B. Semple's A History of the Rise and Progress of the Baptists in Virginia, in which we find a discussion of the problems faced by the Baptist clergymen. The most prominent Baptist minister of the pre-Revolutionary period was the Reverend John Waller who, if not the most important, was at least the most persecuted.<sup>17</sup>

Waller was first imprisoned by the Virginia authorities in 1768 when he, James Childs, and Lewis Craig were arrested and placed under a bond of £1,000 each. When they were brought to trial they were described as "great disturbers of the peace" who "cannot meet a man upon the road, but they must ram a text of scripture down his throat." Upon their conviction, the three dissenters were offered their freedom if they would promise not to preach in Virginia for a year and a day; all three refused.<sup>18</sup>

After four weeks of imprisonment, during which time they were treated as common felons,<sup>19</sup> Craig was released and immediately traveled to Williamsburg where he procured from President John Blair an order for the release of his two

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<sup>17</sup>Ibid., 7-8. As early as 1765 Samuel Harriss had been driven out of Culpeper by an armed mob, but he does not seem to have played an important part in the history of the colony.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., 15. Semple claimed that the charge was "disturbing the peace," whereas William Cathcart, The Baptists and the American Revolution (Philadelphia, S.A. George and Company, 1876), 12, claimed that the charge was "preaching the gospel contrary to law."

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., 13.

friends on the grounds that they had been improperly arrested. Blair was also influenced by the fact that, by preaching through the bars of their cell windows to the people in the street, the prisoners were causing more trouble than they had previously.<sup>20</sup>

This, however, was not to be Waller's last encounter with the Virginia civil authorities. In 1770 he had to resist the efforts of a sheriff to force him off a speaker's platform, and he was next arrested in 1771. On this occasion he was jailed for preaching without a license and remained in confinement for a month before his through-the-bars preaching technique forced the Middlesex County Court to release him. In an attempt to limit his effectiveness by drowning him out, a drum was placed outside his cell window and continually beaten. In 1774 Waller, along with several other ministers, was arrested at the ceremony opening the Piscataway Baptist Church.<sup>21</sup> Semple leads one to believe, however, that Waller had probably spent much more time in English jails for crimes of a more violent nature.<sup>22</sup>

Apparently the Anglican laity of Virginia were in the habit of entering into debates with the Baptists in an attempt to provoke them into committing some offense for which they could be arrested. This can best be observed in the

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<sup>20</sup>Semple, Baptists in Virginia, 15-16.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., 16-17.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., 403-411.



case of James Greenwood and William Loyal, who were confined for sixteen days, in August, 1772, in the jail of King and Queen County before they were released without trial.<sup>23</sup>

From their first appearance in the colony the Baptists were relentless in their attempt to secure complete religious toleration by the use of all peaceful means. In trying to secure licenses for their meeting houses they were aided successfully by Patrick Henry, who had also aided in the 1768 trial of John Waller.<sup>24</sup> Here, as in other situations, the Baptists seemed to gain strength and prestige by their sufferings, and by the outbreak of the Revolution there were over thirteen hundred adherents of that faith in Virginia.<sup>25</sup>

#### THE ANGLICANS

The most numerous of the religious groups in the colony were the Anglicans who enjoyed a legal establishment and, as noted above, the benefit of favorable laws. The history of the Church of England in Virginia was characterized by the attempts of the Anglicans to bring their ministers more fully under lay control. During the same period of time that the dissenting groups were gaining a foothold in Virginia, we find that a dispute was developing between the Anglican clergy and the laity. This dispute was

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<sup>23</sup>Ibid., 22.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., 24. Cathcart, The Baptists and the American Revolution, 12.

<sup>25</sup>Seiple, Baptists in Virginia, 49.

precipitated by the actions of several parish priests who were definitely not of the best caliber and thus left their entire group open to criticism. As a result of the actions of a few, the entire body of Anglican ministers came to be treated "with indifference or disrespect, as a useless order of men, unprofitably burdensome to civil society."<sup>26</sup> The situation had reached the point where the irregular activity of one clergyman received more publicity than the exemplary activity of many.

Some members of the clergy, aware of the difficulty in bringing charges against them or in removing them from office, consciously took advantage of the situation. These few would occasionally relax in their observance of the strict rules of discipline which necessarily applied to their order as teachers by example as well as by words. However, extreme criticisms were probably exaggerated:

We have among our gentlemen (vulgarly so called) a set of gay libertines, who consider laws and religion as necessary for the vulgar, but as having no relation to themselves, who have no law but their own inclinations.

Yet the same anonymous writer demanded assent to his view that "the people behold with disaffection, a man independent of them, whom they are nevertheless obliged to support, and cannot remove however ill he behaves."<sup>27</sup>

A second disputed issue was over the power to fill vacant ministerial positions in the colony. In Virginia a

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<sup>26</sup>NY Journal, August 22, 1771, p. 1.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid.

clergyman of the Church of England was "presented" to his benefice upon the recommendation of the Governor and Commissary to the churchwardens and vestrymen of a vacant parish. In many cases the recommendation was followed, but in a number of instances the applicants were rejected by the vestries. We also find that occasions arose in which ministers were selected without the recommendation of the above parties and, in which they would move from one parish to another without permission. The question of final authority was undetermined, with both the vestries and the governor claiming to have the final word in the matter: the governor claimed that he, as agent of the King, along with the commissary, as the agent of the Bishop of London,<sup>28</sup> should exercise the power; whereas the vestries felt that the power should be theirs to exercise by virtue of the fact that they undertook most of the expenses of the parish.<sup>29</sup>

Furthermore the vestrymen not uncommonly took as long as twelve months to reach a decision as to whether or not a clergyman was suitable for their parish. This situation provoked the Reverend John Camm (a future Commissary of Virginia) to observe that the vestries were engaged in a strug-

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<sup>28</sup>We have noted that prior to the American Revolution the colonies were included within the diocese of the Bishop of London. In 1685 Bishop Compton adopted the policy of delegating his authority in the colonies to resident clergymen, termed commissaries. Cf., NYCD, V, 849-853; VII, 363.

<sup>29</sup>William Dawson to the Bishop of London, July 15, 1751, Perry, Collections, I, 378. Robert Dinwiddie to the Bishop of London, June 5, 1752, ibid., 393.

gle to increase their power -- which they exercised "with too high an hand already."<sup>30</sup>

In other segments of the British Empire at this time the power of patronage was reserved to the Crown, therefore giving to the colonial governors the sole right of appointing a clergyman -- providing, of course, that he had been properly ordained and licensed by the Bishop of London.<sup>31</sup> However, Virginia law required that the clergyman be "preferred" directly to his benefice by the vestry. This situation prompted Governor Robert Dinwiddie to complain that

lately this Commissary joined me in recommending a worthy Clergyman with your Lordship's Letter of Licence [sic] to two different Vestries and was rejected by both of them and they constantly continue to appoint their own Ministers without any regard to me or the Commissary.<sup>32</sup>

Dinwiddie believed that both the commissary and the governor would necessarily rise in prestige if all the clergymen were required to report directly to them before securing positions. He felt that the governor should have the power to recommend any qualified minister to any vacant parish and, if his recommendation was ignored by the vestry, to appoint whomsoever he pleased to fill the vacancy. Thus, the gover-

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<sup>30</sup>John Camm to the Bishop of London, June 4, 1752, ibid., 338.

<sup>31</sup>Robert Dinwiddie to the Bishop of London, June 5, 1752, ibid., 393.

<sup>32</sup>ibid., 394-395. For a further discussion of this aspect of the problem the reader is referred to Robert Dinwiddie to Dr. Bearcroft, Secretary of the Venerable Society, June 10, 1752, ibid., 397, and the Bishop of London to John Thorpe, November 25, 1752, ibid., 399.

nor appeared to be seeking complete control of the appointive power, perhaps even to the exclusion of the commissary.<sup>33</sup>

In 1757, after the question concerning the appointive power had subsided, a new aspect of the controversy developed concerning the power to remove an unsatisfactory clergyman. As a result of reports sent to his office, Governor Dinwiddie ordered the Vestry of Hamilton Parish to suspend the Reverend John Brunskill from all his duties.<sup>34</sup> This decision was the result of two reports which he had received from the Vestry, the first of which charged Brunskill with "divers immoralities such as profane Swearing, Drunkenness & immodest Actions."<sup>35</sup> The second report stated that it was the unanimous opinion of the Board that every fact he was charged with had been fully proved; that he was a scandal to his profession & ought to be disqualified from ever exercising the offices of a Clergyman.<sup>36</sup>

Thus the governor was forced to make the final decision, for the vestry did not have the actual power of removal.

The governor chose this occasion to inform the vestry that "if any Person already preffer'd to any Benefice shall appear to you to give Scandal, either by his doctrines or manners, you are to use the best means for the removal of him." Thus the governor confirmed the right of the vestries

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<sup>33</sup>Robert Dinwiddie to the Bishop of London, December 10, 1752, ibid., 401.

<sup>34</sup>Robert Dinwiddie to the Vestry of Hamilton Parish, May 20, 1757, ibid., 453.

<sup>35</sup>"Minutes of a Council," April 21, 1757, ibid., 449.

<sup>36</sup>"Minutes of a Council," May 19, 1757, ibid., 450.

to request the removal of their clergymen.<sup>37</sup>

As a result of this case, Dinwiddie complained to the Bishop of London that many of the clergy were in the habit of abusing their office, both by their personal lives and by their meddling in civil affairs.<sup>38</sup> Furthermore, Commissary Thomas Dawson asked the Bishop for the power to remove ministers of Brunskill's type, in order to provide a more efficient means of handling similar matters.<sup>39</sup>

In 1760, we find that Commissary Dawson began to lose the respect of his fellow churchmen. One of his colleagues referred to him as "a very immoral man. . . a drunkard. . . much addicted to playing cards, and that in public Houses." He was also reported as being "so intoxicated by 9 o'clock in the morning as to be incapable of doing business." Dawson was further accused of seldom attending college prayers and of falling into a drunken sleep while sitting in the Council.<sup>40</sup> Whereas the other cases of misconduct had received little attention, this occurred on so high a level that it could not be ignored, and it eventually led to official opposition

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<sup>37</sup>"Minutes of a Council," May 20, 1757, *ibid.* A further discussion of the Brunskill Case is to be found in Robert Dinwiddie to the Bishop of London, September 12, 1757, *ibid.*, 454-456, and Thomas Dawson to the Bishop of London, July 9, 1757, *ibid.*, 451-453.

<sup>38</sup>Robert Dinwiddie to the Bishop of London, September 12, 1757, *ibid.*, 456-458.

<sup>39</sup>Thomas Dawson to the Bishop of London, July 9, 1757, *ibid.*, 451-453.

<sup>40</sup>William Robinson to the Bishop of London, November 20, 1760, *ibid.*, 469. The Commissary of Virginia was President of the College of William and Mary and a member of the Council.

to the clergy.

This official opposition soon developed when Commissary William Robinson, who succeeded Dawson in 1761, was refused his customary seat in the Virginia Council. Robinson felt that only by sitting in the Council could he prevent "any secret steps which may otherwise be taken to distress the Clergy." He believed also that Governor Fauquier was definitely anti-clerical and was therefore the opposite of Dinwiddie. As a result of his anti-clerical actions, Fauquier had, according to Robinson, become much more popular than Dinwiddie; this fact was evident in his salary of £1,000, which was double that of his predecessor.<sup>41</sup>

Eventually the governor, considering the commissary a mere cipher, began to demand commissarial approval for his own ministerial candidates. Robinson again protested:

If this method was to be pursued, I plainly perceive, that I must either be in perpetual danger of giving offence to the Governor by objecting to Persons whose recommendation he had already signed; or else suffer my recommendation to become an insignificant matter of form.<sup>42</sup>

He stated that he had devised a means of avoiding the danger of offending the governor by the following method:

I would recommend whom I judge proper for the office they proposed to undertake, on a distinct paper, & would sign my own, not another person's recommendation, leaving to the Governor the like liberty.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>41</sup>William Robinson to the Bishop of London, undated [1763], *ibid.*, 473, 483-484.

<sup>42</sup>William Robinson to the Bishop of London, August 17, 1767, *ibid.*, 492.

<sup>43</sup>*Ibid.*, 493.

The most controversial dispute between the clergy and the laity of Virginia, however, related not to appointment or removal, but to that dispute commonly referred to as the "Parson's Cause."

Prior to November, 1756, the Anglican clergymen of Virginia had been paid in produce at the rate of 16,000 pounds of tobacco per year. This plan had proved quite suitable to the colonists when the price of tobacco had been in the vicinity of 16s. 8d. per hundredweight but in 1755 due to speculation<sup>44</sup> the price suddenly rose to 50 s. per hundredweight; the colonists therefore sought a means of limiting the profits of the clergy. This was accomplished by the passage of a law providing for payment of ministers in money at the rate of two pence per pound of tobacco. To worsen the situation eyes of the clergy, the law was made applicable to any tobacco payments that had fallen due during the previous six months.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>44</sup>One anonymous writer claimed that the price rose due to the effects of a "terrible gust" which destroyed much of the tobacco. NY Journal, August 29, 1771, p. 1.

<sup>45</sup>John Camm, William Preston, Thomas Robinson, Richard Graham, William Robinson, Alexander White, Chichley Thacker, Thomas Warrington to the Bishop of London, November 29, 1755, Perry, Collections, I, 434-435. John Brunskill, Henry Dunbar, Patrick Henry, Alexander White, John Robertson, Alexander Finnie, Thomas Wilkinson, Peter David, John Barclay, William Willie to the Bishop of London, February 25, 1756, ibid., 440-441. John Burk, The History of Virginia From its First Settlement to the Present Day (Petersburg, Dickson and Pescud, 1804-1816), III, 302. "A Lover of Truth and Decency," A Vindication of the Bishop of Landaff's Sermon From the Gross Misrepresentations, and Abusive Reflections, Contained in Mr. William Livingston's Letter to His Lordship: With Some Additional Observations on Certain Passages in Dr. Chauncey's Remarks, &c. (New York, J. Holt, 1768), 66.



As can be seen, the minister's salaries under the Two Pence Act, though slightly higher than the previous average, were considerably below the amount they would have received from the unrestricted sale of their tobacco.<sup>46</sup> Thus it was felt that many of the clergy would refuse to accept their salaries in money in order not to imply their acceptance of the law.<sup>47</sup>

The Two Pence Act was renewed in 1758, as a result of which the Bishop of London filed a protest with the Lords Commissioners of Trade and Plantations in which he referred to the law as "Treason."<sup>48</sup> Upon consideration of the matter the Lords of Trade concluded that the law was illegal and oppressive and recommended that it be officially disallowed by the King.<sup>49</sup> George II acted in accordance with the advice of his Lords of Trade even though the law and its subsequent renewals had expired in 1758.<sup>50</sup> However, this action on the part of the clergy, the Bishop of London, and the King brought about an increased Virginian resentment directed at the cler-

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<sup>46</sup>Since there were twelve pence to a shilling, the ministers were formerly paid at the rate of 192d. per hundredweight, whereas their later salary was at the rate of 200d. per hundredweight.

<sup>47</sup>Thomas Dawson to the Bishop of London, February 25, 1756, Perry, Collections, I, 448.

<sup>48</sup>Bishop of London to the Lords Commissioners of Trade and Plantations, June 14, 1759, ibid., 461.

<sup>49</sup>"Report of the Lords Commissioners for his Majesty's disallowance of several acts passed in Virginia in 1753, 1755, and 1758, relating to the Clergy," July 4, 1757 [i.e. 1759], ibid., 460.

<sup>50</sup>Manross, Episcopal Church, 73.

gy -- a resentment which was still evident several years later.<sup>51</sup>

Thus the Virginia Two Pence Acts were passed both for the economic benefit of the tax-payers<sup>52</sup> and as an attempt to bring about greater control of their pastors. As an economic measure the laws received the support of the majority of the population, thus causing a greater dissatisfaction with the clergy. The action of the Anglican ministry was to be long remembered, and these memories were to affect later events. As a result of other issues which were just coming to the fore, the clergy were to lose all support.

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<sup>51</sup>NY Journal, September 5, 1771, p. 1. In 1763 the clergy asked for the royal disallowance of all laws providing for their payment in tobacco in an attempt to stabilize their salaries. "The Humble Petition of the Convention of the Clergy of the Church of England settled in his Majesty's Colony and Dominion of Virginia," Perry, Collections, I, 487-488. For a further discussion of the "Parson's Cause" see William Robinson to the Bishop of London, August 12, 1765; June 6, 1766; October 16, 1767; and James Horrocks to the Bishop of London, July 16, 1769; all in ibid., 506-532.

<sup>52</sup>According to the various Two Pence Acts, all debts formerly payable in tobacco were made payable in money. Richard Bland, A Letter to the Clergy of Virginia in Which the Conduct of the General-Assembly is Vindicated Against the Reflexions Contained in a Letter to the Lords of Trade and Plantations, from the Lord-Bishop of London (Williamsburg, William Hunter, 1760), 15-16.

## CHAPTER II

### THE CONTROVERSY: PHASE ONE

After the "Parson's Cause" had ceased to be of great importance to the people of Virginia a new controversy, that concerning the often-proposed colonial episcopate, drew the attention of the colony. Many prominent English Churchmen had previously called for the creation of an American bishopric,<sup>1</sup> but prior to 1767 the question had never come to the fore in the minds of the Virginians.

One of the more interesting of these early comments was made by Thomas Sherlock, the Bishop of London, who observed that "somehow" he had been given control over the Anglican Church in the colony of Virginia. He believed the power to have been improperly lodged, for he felt that he was useless so far as the colonists were concerned. The Bishop also held that the situation was hindering ordination,

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<sup>1</sup>See especially the Anniversary Sermons of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel for 1767 and 1771, and Thomas Secker, A Letter to the Right Honourable Horatio Walpole, Esq; Written Jan 9, 1750-51, by the Right Reverend Thomas Secker, LL.D. Lord Bishop of Oxford: Concerning Bishops in America (London, J. and F. Rivington, 1769). Henceforth cited as Secker, Letter to Walpole.

for the colonials were unwilling to train their children for Church careers because of the danger and expense of the voyage to England for orders. Bishop Sherlock stated that he had applied for the creation of "two or three Bishops. . . for the plantations. . . ," adding that they were to have jurisdiction over no one but the clergy of the Church of England.<sup>2</sup>

Philip Doddridge, minister and schoolmaster of Northampton, England, replied that the Church in the colonies had prospered as a result of being in the diocese of "so equitable, candid and excellent a person" as the Bishop of London. However, he recognized that the colonials desiring to enter the service of the Church of England were forced to undertake "a considerable hardship" by the necessity of being ordained by a bishop resident in Great Britain.<sup>3</sup>

1767

In the early part of 1767 the Pennsylvania Journal observed that the well-being of both the Anglican Church and the Virginia laity would be improved "upon the settlement of episcopacy" in the colonies. The author, who styled himself "one of the society's Missionaries in Virginia," believed that the currently popular republican principles in religion would lead to the demand for similar principles in civil

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<sup>2</sup>The Bishop of London to the Reverend Dr. P. Doddridge, May 11, 1751, Perry, Collections, I, 373.

<sup>3</sup>Dr. P. Doddridge to the Bishop of London, May 14, 1751, ibid., 375.

government, a result of which he greatly disapproved. He felt that only by the institution of episcopacy could this dangerous republican trend be halted.<sup>4</sup>

The writers of the time did not think it unusual that a new dispute had developed and had come to occupy a prominent place in the minds of the Virginians. The argument arising out of the Two Pence Acts had indeed but recently ended, though it had not yet been forgotten.<sup>5</sup> However, Purdie and Dixon's Gazette had announced that the episcopal system would never be brought to America, due to lack of official support.<sup>6</sup>

Also in 1767 the Reverend Thomas Bradbury Chandler, a missionary of the Venerable Society at Elizabethtown, New Jersey, published the first of several pamphlets in which he called upon the people of Virginia to lend their support to the proposed colonial episcopal system. In this pamphlet Chandler brought forth seven arguments which became the basis for many future demands of the pro-episcopal party.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Pennsylvania Journal; and the Weekly Advertiser, March 4, 1767 (henceforth cited as Pa. Journal), A Collection of Tracts From the Late News Papers, &c. Containing Particularly the American Whig, A Whip for the American Whig, With Some Other Pieces on the Subject of the Residence of Protestant Bishops in the American Colonies, and in Answer to the Writer Who Opposed It, &c. (New York, John Holt, 1768), 335. Henceforth cited as Tracts.

<sup>5</sup> The New York Journal; or, The General Advertiser, September 5, 1771, p. 1.

<sup>6</sup> Purdie and Dixon's Virginia Gazette, August 6, 1767, p. 1. Henceforth cited as PD Gazette.

<sup>7</sup> Thomas Bradbury Chandler, An Appeal to the Public in Behalf of the Church of England in America: Wherein the Ori-

He noted that an episcopate was needed, first to preserve the direct apostolic succession which had been uninterrupted since the time of Christ,<sup>8</sup> and secondly, to continue the practice of laying on of hands during the ceremony of ordination.<sup>9</sup> Thirdly, Chandler believed that without bishops there could be no satisfactory government of the Church of England in the colonies,<sup>10</sup> even though the northern colonies had adopted the practice of holding voluntary conventions of the clergy.<sup>11</sup> He also pointed out that, due to the absence of the episcopal system in America, a candidate for ordination could partake of that sacrament only by expending the sum of £100;<sup>12</sup> as a result, the colonies were able to obtain only wealthy clergymen -- or those who were unsuccessful in England;<sup>13</sup> consequently the suc-

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ginal and Nature of the Episcopal Office are Briefly considered, Reasons for sending Bishops to America are Assigned, the Plan on Which it is Proposed to Send Them is Stated, and the Objections Against Sending Them are Obviated and Confuted: With an Appendix, Wherein is Given Some Account of an Anonymous Pamphlet (New York, James Parker, 1767). Henceforth cited as Chandler, Appeal.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., 4.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., 18.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., 28.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., 28 note.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., 34. Although Chandler makes no mention of what this sum was needed for, it was presumably for transportation and subsistence.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., 37.

cess of the Anglican cause was greatly hindered.<sup>14</sup>

Chandler believed that the Church of England, with almost a million members in America,<sup>15</sup> could easily be increased by more work among the Indians,<sup>16</sup> provided that such attempts were effectively controlled.<sup>17</sup> His final argument noted that in many American colonies the Church of England had been relegated to a lower status than the dissenting groups who hypocritically demanded religious freedom for themselves yet were zealous in denying it to the Anglicans.<sup>18</sup>

Following the exposition of his seven most specific arguments, Chandler entered into a discussion of the powers to be vested in the proposed bishops. He believed that any American episcopacy should consist of bishops who possessed no civil authority whatsoever, but only that "Spiritual and Ecclesiastical" power which could be granted by the Church in an attempt to supervise its own clergy.<sup>19</sup> Thus, he felt,

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<sup>14</sup>Ibid., 38. The colony of Virginia had provided that all those properly qualified individuals who desired ordination were to be granted £50 to defray their expenses. Thomas Gwatkin, A Letter to the Clergy of New York and New Jersey, Occasioned by an Address to the Episcopalians in Virginia (Williamsburg, Alex. Purdie, and John Dixon, 1772), 27 note. Henceforth cited as Gwatkin, Letter.

<sup>15</sup>Chandler, Appeal, 55.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., 61. This function had never been properly carried out, even though the colonies had been enjoined by their charters to do so. Ibid., 63.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., 72.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., 82-85.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., 79.

the larger number of non-Anglicans in the colonies should have no fears of spiritual courts, for the bishops were to have authority over no one but their own ministers.<sup>20</sup> Furthermore, the author could find no reason why the Americans should fear that the bishops would demand tithes, for tithes could only be granted by the owners of the land as King Ethelwulph had done in 854.<sup>21</sup> He concluded by predicting "the ruin of the Church" in the colonies unless the episcopal system was established with all possible haste.<sup>22</sup>

1768

The publication of Chandler's Appeal immediately brought forth a series of critical articles which were later compiled and published in pamphlet form.<sup>23</sup> Some writers complained that the true motives of the pro-episcopal party had not been stated<sup>24</sup> and that Chandler desired a bishop who would be developed into a "down right pontifical sovereign" as soon as the supporters of episcopacy attained the strength to do so.<sup>25</sup> This same author believed that the majority of the Virginia

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<sup>20</sup>Ibid., 95.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., 97. He did, however, admit the possibility of a tax of 4d. per £100 for the support of the bishops. Ibid., 97 note.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., 113.

<sup>23</sup>Cf., Tracts.

<sup>24</sup>Parker's New York Gazette (henceforth cited as NY Gazette), June 20, 1768, ibid., 240-245.

<sup>25</sup>NY Gazette, August 1, 1768, ibid., 352.



Anglicans had absolutely no desire to undertake the support of a bishop, since they had not yet made adequate provision for the care of their parish priests.<sup>26</sup> The attitude of the Anglicans toward religious toleration was questioned. In Virginia, predominately Anglican, many complaints alleged persecution of dissenting groups which had merely asked for privileges which the Church of England claimed for herself.<sup>27</sup> It was further maintained that the Anglican Church had no intention of preserving the liberty of the dissenters, for this Church still contained "the mournful relicks [sic] of her ancient persecuting spirit"<sup>28</sup> which had developed an insatiable "fondness for power," and that they were in no way "scrupulous about the means of procuring" this desired authority.<sup>29</sup>

One of the authors of this group of articles held that previous attempts to destroy the liberty of the Americans had usually been "accompanied with endeavours to settle bishops" in the colonies,<sup>30</sup> whereas another believed that if there were any further attempts to do so, the pro-episcopal party would find the deeply rooted American "prejudices and objections" would not permit them to submit peacefully.

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<sup>26</sup>NY Gazette, August 1, 1768, ibid., 355-356.

<sup>27</sup>NY Gazette, August 22, 1768, ibid., 397.

<sup>28</sup>Pa. Journal, April 21, 1768, ibid., 83.

<sup>29</sup>Pa. Journal, April 28, 1768, ibid., 99.

<sup>30</sup>Pa. Journal, July 7, 1768, ibid., 291.

Even if bishops were to be created by an act of Parliament, the charters, laws, and "constitutions" would be destroyed, and those who favored such a measure would be "considered as abettors of Mr. Greenville [sic]" and other "Enemies of America" who were attempting to reduce the Americans to "the state of slaves."<sup>31</sup> One writer, who claimed to be a clergyman of the "American episcopal Church" and an "American Episcopalian," believed that the authority of the Church of England had facets which no friend of liberty would wish to see introduced into the colonies; these facets were composed of the thousands of "powers and peculiarities occasioned by the liberality of popes and princes, and the superstitions of the vulgar."<sup>32</sup> Another author noted that the Anglican clergy hoped to obtain "a mitered generalissimo" to serve as their leader while they stripped the colonies of their religious liberties.<sup>33</sup>

This series of newspaper articles closed with the observation that Chandler had raised the possibility of a new tax for the support of an episcopate.<sup>34</sup> The author believed that the maintenance of a bishop would require much more revenue than could be raised by private donations. Since the Church in England would not be expected to undertake subsidizing

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<sup>31</sup>Pa. Journal, March 24, 1768, ibid., 15.

<sup>32</sup>NY Gazette, April 4, 1768, ibid., 37.

<sup>33</sup>NY Gazette, May 30, 1768, ibid., 176.

<sup>34</sup>Cf., Chandler, Appeal, 97 note.

the Church in America, it was only reasonable to assume the necessity of taxing for the support of the hierarchy; and if for the hierarchy, "why not for the parish ministers?"<sup>35</sup>

1768 also brought the first important reply to Chandler's Appeal, a pamphlet written anonymously by one who referred to himself as "An Antiepiscopean." After referring to Chandler as "an impudent liar" who was wont to make use of "illiberal language,"<sup>36</sup> this author brought forth three important arguments against the opinions expressed in the Appeal. After denying that there was any difference between bishops and presbyters, he held that they were in fact "the same person, office & authority," and that episcopacy had been proved to be founded upon documents which were fourth century "forgeries."<sup>37</sup> Secondly, "An Antiepiscopean" noted that a Presbyterian ordination was no less valid than one performed by bishops, implying that clergymen of the Church of England could have been ordained in that manner.<sup>38</sup>

The anonymous author, after listing many powers which in the past had been exercised by the English bishops, noted the possibility of an American bishop's laying claim to this

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<sup>35</sup>Pa. Journal, May 9, 1768, Tracts, 210.

<sup>36</sup>"An Antiepiscopean," A Letter Concerning an American Bishop, &c. to Dr. Bradbury Chandler, Ruler of St. John's Church, in Elizabeth-Town. In Answer to the Appendix of his Appeal to the Public, &c. (W. and T. Bradford, 1768), 4. Henceforth cited as "Antiepiscopean," Letter to Chandler.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid., 7.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid., 11.

authority and developing into "a Petty Sovereign."<sup>39</sup> He looked into the history of England and observed that the English bishops had been continually encroaching upon the civil and religious liberties of the British people and had proved to be a constant "Public Grievance" by their espousal of "Popery."<sup>40</sup> If this encroachment were to continue and eventually spread to the colonies, it would result in "many loyal Americans" shedding their blood in an effort to preserve their liberties.<sup>41</sup> He concluded by noting that Anglican bishops were not worthy of the confidence of Americans, for when the majority of Englishmen had come to realize that the Stamp Act was working to the detriment of England as well as her colonies, and had called for its repeal, the hierarchy almost unanimously demanded its continuation.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>39</sup>Ibid., 13.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., 15.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., 18.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid. "An Antiepiscopalian" stated that he had "hundreds" of arguments left in reserve and would gladly bring them out if Chandler so desired. Ibid., 19.

1769

The following year witnessed the spread of the controversy when two expositions of the pro-episcopal cause appeared. Moreover, the argument reached the public press of Virginia in the form of predictions that appointment of bishops for the American colonies was imminent. The first of these announcements appeared in early July, with the proposed bishopric at Albany, New York,<sup>43</sup> whereas the report early in the next month located the bishop at Philadelphia, which would be more in the center of the colonies.<sup>44</sup> Later in August it was claimed that six bishoprics were to be established in the American colonies with an archbishop settled at Boston and subsidiary bishops for Nova Scotia, Virginia, the Carolinas, Pennsylvania, and New York.<sup>45</sup> These announcements were always inserted in the columns which were titled "News from London" and were thus assigned a certain amount of credence by the Virginians, who began to consider

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<sup>43</sup>PD Gazette, July 6, 1769, p. 1. Rind's Virginia Gazette, July 6, 1769, p. 1. Henceforth cited as R Gazette.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid., August 10, 1769, p. 2. PD Gazette, August 10, 1769, p. 2.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid., August 24, 1769, p. 2: "Rev. Mr. G[eorge]. Whitefield, Archbishop of Boston. Rev. Mr. Romaine [probably William Romaine, clergyman and historian of Blackfriars, London], Bishop of New York. Rev. Mr. Wesley [probably John Wesley], Bishop of Pennsylvania. Rev. Mr. Madan [probably Spencer Madan, lawyer, clergyman, and hymnwriter of Northampton], Bishop of the Carolinas. Rev. Mr. Shirley [probably Walter Shirley, revivalist preacher of Galway], Bishop of Virginia. Rev. Charles Wesley, Bishop of Nova Scotia, &c." It is interesting to note that all six were closely associated in the Methodist movement.

an American episcopacy less of a rumor and more of a fact.

Thomas Bradbury Chandler reentered the growing debate with his Appeal Defended, which was intended to be chiefly a reply to the Letter of "An Antiepiscopalian." Chandler stated that the trip to England for ordination was too hazardous for many of the possible candidates; he claimed that while fifty-two prospective clergymen had left the northern and middle colonies since their founding for ordination by the Bishop of London, only forty-two had returned to serve in America, the remainder having perished either by drowning or by sickness brought about by the voyage.<sup>46</sup> As a result of the combined hazards of the voyage and of the expenses involved, the best qualified men in the colonies were unwilling to undertake the journey;<sup>47</sup> therefore many undesirable applicants were able to obtain ordination, due to an insufficient knowledge of their characters on the part of the bishop.<sup>48</sup>

Furthermore, said Chandler, the Americans were deluded in their belief that all the colonial Anglican clergymen were of a poor character and that all the English bishops were spiritual tyrants, oppressors of freedom, and friends

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<sup>46</sup>Thomas Bradbury Chandler, The Appeal Defended: or, the Proposed American Episcopate Vindicated, in Answer to the Objections and Misrepresentations of Dr. Chauncey and Others (New York, Hugh Gaine, 1769), 120-121. Henceforth cited as Chandler, Appeal Defended.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid., 126.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid., 131.

of persecution.<sup>49</sup> Chandler believed also that the Church of England lacked many of the rights which were exercised by other religious groups in the colonies. In fact, most dissenting bodies were able to enjoy fully their religious systems, whereas the Anglicans were forced to do without "several of the Institutions" of their Church which were held "in great Esteem and Veneration."<sup>50</sup>

Chandler continued with a discussion of the powers to be given to the proposed bishops. He noted that there was no intention of seeking a general establishment of the Church of England throughout the colonies,<sup>51</sup> and that there were no plans to locate a bishop in any colony where the government was in the control of a non-Anglican group.<sup>52</sup> The author anticipated serious objections to the settlement of Anglican bishops unless they were to be placed under strict regulation in an attempt to make them as inoffensive as possible. In addition, it was basic to Chandler's new plan that the holders of the episcopal office were to receive no support whatsoever from the colonial governments, but only from those private individuals who should choose to make voluntary contributions.<sup>53</sup> Furthermore, according to his plan the

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<sup>49</sup>Ibid., 133.

<sup>50</sup>Ibid., 153.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid., 213.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid., 222.

<sup>53</sup>This was a departure from what he had previously stated. Cf., Appeal, 97 note.

bishops were to have jurisdiction only over the clergy of the Church of England, thus removing fears of the possibility of ecclesiastical courts.<sup>54</sup> In concluding the Appeal Defended, Chandler reiterated the fact that he did not desire to create a state established episcopate, but merely desired to elevate the Anglican Church to a position whereby it would be able to function as completely as the churches of the dissenters.<sup>55</sup>

In this same year the English proponents of an American episcopate published in pamphlet form a letter which had been written in either 1750 or 1751 by Thomas Secker, then Bishop of Oxford. The letter, addressed to Horatio Walpole, was not to be published until the writer's death. Secker had proposed that the American colonies have two or three bishops, who would be permitted only those powers exercised by the commissaries of the Bishop of London. He believed that only by this means could the Church in America be made truly episcopal in nature, and an end be put to a situation that had never before existed in the annals of Christian history: whereby the diocesan was more than three thousand miles away from his diocese.<sup>56</sup> He also noted that many men of "low Qualifications, and bad or doubtful Characters" had been ordained by the Bishop of London because he had not had the

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<sup>54</sup>Chandler, Appeal Defended, 264.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid., 266.

<sup>56</sup>Secker, Letter to Walpole, 2-3.



opportunity to become sufficiently acquainted with them.<sup>57</sup> Secker further observed that an official superior to the clergy would be in a much better position to demand their obedience than someone who was drawn from their midst, as the commissary often was. As a result many clerical offenses would be prevented, thus eliminating the need for punishment.<sup>58</sup>

Secker continued by noting that any authority granted to the American bishops would have to be carefully specified so that they would in no way be able to effect an illegal increase in their power.<sup>59</sup> The proposed American episcopate was to be different from that of England, and the power of the American bishops was to be much less than that wielded by their English counterparts.<sup>60</sup> He concluded his Letter by stating that it could be presumed that every person desired the liberty to engage in the full exercise of his religious beliefs, but that of all the religious groups in the American colonies, only Anglicans were denied the right to do so.<sup>61</sup>

Bishop Secker suggested that there was but one possible hindrance to the introduction of an episcopate in America, which was the danger that would arise if the pro-episcopal

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<sup>57</sup>Ibid., 4.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid., 5.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid., 6.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid., 7-8.

<sup>61</sup>Ibid., 16.

party should provoke "the Body of the Dissenters;" however, he observed that "a few busy warm Men" were not "the Body of the Dissenters."<sup>62</sup> He had also noted that, should bishops be established in the colonies, the Anglicans would feel themselves much more closely connected with England and would thus be better subjects than those dissenters who did acknowledge the supremacy of the King,<sup>63</sup> a situation which had, he claimed, been noted by every bishop of the Church of England since the Revolution of 1688.<sup>64</sup>

Although Bishop Secker's Letter to Walpole was not published until more than a decade after it was written, the pro-episcopal party found it a useful weapon in their battle to procure bishops for the American colonies. It became a valuable addition to their arsenal by virtue of its presentation of the arguments and because it carried the weight of a well-known name. Furthermore, the Letter brought forth some earlier views on the problem and caused the demands of the pro-episcopal party to appear less a reaction to the previous difficulties engendered by the Two Pence Acts.

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<sup>62</sup>Ibid., 22.

<sup>63</sup>Ibid., 5-6.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid., 9.

1770

The year 1770 found no activity in the pamphlet dispute and but one series of letters bearing upon the issue. The first of these letters was written by William Nelson, President of the Council of Virginia and acting Lieutenant Governor, to Lord Hillsborough, Secretary of State for the Colonies, and was primarily concerned with the theoretical extent of the authority of the Bishop of London. Acknowledging that there were "very few" unsatisfactory clergymen in Virginia, Nelson doubted that, should any be discovered, he had the authority to remove them from their positions, because the Bishop of London no longer had any jurisdiction over the colonial clergy. If the King had visted such authority in the Bishop of London, it could then have been delegated to the commissaries and the clergy would have been properly regulated.<sup>65</sup>

Nelson next pointed out that the King had formerly granted special commissions to the Bishops of London to enable them to exercise "Episcopal Jurisdiction in his American dominions"<sup>66</sup> and to delegate such jurisdiction to his commissaries, who could then investigate any clerical misbehavior. However, this power was not lodged with the present Bishop (Richard Terrick), and thus there was not control over the Virginia clergy.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>65</sup>President Nelson to Lord Hillsborough, November 15, 1770, Perry, Collections, I, 532.

<sup>66</sup>Ibid., 532-533.

<sup>67</sup>Ibid., 533.

Nelson's next letter to Hillsborough was written a year later and claimed that, as a result of the lack of definite controls over the clergy, prestige was lost not only by the Church of England but by the British government as well. Furthermore, the commissaries would be unable to act effectively in matters "beneficial to the cause of Religion" until such time as they were vested with the proper authority.<sup>68</sup>

1771

The final statement in the first phase of the controversy over episcopacy came in a pamphlet attributed to Francis Blackburne which was a rebuttal to those arguments brought forth in Secker's Letter to Walpole. This pamphleteer opened with the tale of a Virginia Anglican who had visited with the Bishop of London during a journey to England. In the course of their conversation about the condition of the Church of England in the colonies, the Bishop raised the question of an American episcopate and inquired whether the people of the colonies would be opposed to the institution of that office. According to the author the following exchange ensued:

"Pray, my Lord," asked the visitor from America, "can one Bishop make another?" "Undoubtedly," the Bishop replied. "Why then, my Lord," the Virginian answered in turn, "you may send your Bishop as soon as you please, it will be one

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<sup>68</sup>President Nelson to Lord Hillsborough, April 17, 1771, ibid., 534.

considerable step towards our living without you!"<sup>69</sup>

This apparently ended the conversation.

The author believed that bishops were a breed of men who would never be satisfied with any amount of power until that power had become complete in both civil and ecclesiastical affairs. Thus, if such men were settled in the colonies with restricted powers, they would disavow the restriction and attempt to exercise authority which they did not really possess.<sup>70</sup> He further believed that by desiring bishops with the power to do "political good,"<sup>71</sup> Secker had wished to see them vested with extensive political as well as religious powers,<sup>72</sup> powers which the King, as head of both the civil and religious government, could bestow at any time he saw fit.<sup>73</sup> Without a great deal of civil and religious authority, the author concluded, the proposed American bishops would be

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<sup>69</sup>Francis Blackburne, A Critical Commentary on Archbishop Secker's Letter to the Right Honourable Horatio Walpole Concerning Bishops in America (Philadelphia, John Dunlap, 1771), 11 note. Italics as in original. Henceforth cited as Blackburne, Critical Commentary. This pamphlet is attributed to Blackburne by the Historical Society of Pennsylvania; it is probably the Francis Blackburne who was Archdeacon of Cleveland and a supporter of the Socinian movement; see Leslie Stephen and Sidney Lee, The Dictionary of National Biography (London, Oxford University Press, 1949-1950), II, 583-584.

<sup>70</sup>Blackburne, Critical Commentary, 16, 28.

<sup>71</sup>Secker, Letter to Walpole, 12.

<sup>72</sup>Blackburne, Critical Commentary, 27.

<sup>73</sup>Ibid., 17.

even less effective than their counterparts in England.<sup>74</sup>

He next pointed out the already well-known fact that the Bishops of London had, to a very great extent, ignored and neglected the Church of England in the colonies, with the result that the American Anglicans had become so indolent that there was "not the least probability that a whole bunch of Bishops would recal [sic] them to a due attention" to proper religious life."<sup>75</sup> As evidence of this indolence, the writer observed that as early as 1749 Secker had written to Virginia in an attempt to secure letters petitioning for a colonial episcopate, but none had been forthcoming.<sup>76</sup>

The remainder of the pamphlet was an attack upon the tyrannical tendencies which the author felt had been evinced by the English bishops. If these gentlemen were to come to America, this pamphleteer believed that they would soon develop into a serious threat to the liberty of both the Anglicans and the non-Anglicans.<sup>77</sup> The author stated that only those who had actively opposed the introduction of episcopacy into the colonies had proved themselves "to be the friends of Liberty," but he also noted that even the non-Anglicans would advocate episcopacy if its powers were effectively limited by

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<sup>74</sup>Ibid., 27.

<sup>75</sup>Ibid., 36.

<sup>76</sup>Ibid., 39 note.

<sup>77</sup>Ibid., 48.

Parliament.<sup>78</sup>

The author attacked the Bishops of London for their alleged instructions to missionaries in America to instigate petitions for an episcopacy. In fact, he continued, the whole movement had been caused by Secker.<sup>79</sup> He even claimed that Chandler had written his Appeal at Secker's command and that the Appeal Defended had been an attempt to defend the Bishop's honor which had been seriously attacked by "An Antiepiscopalian" in his Letter to Chandler.<sup>80</sup>

The Critical Commentary represented a dangerous attack upon the cause of episcopacy, because it attempted to create doubts as to the real reasons for support by Chandler and the others of the pro-episcopal party, for bishops in America. Bishops, furthermore, were identified as the spokesmen of monarchy, and all who opposed them were held up to be the true supporters of both religious and civil liberty. He also caused ridicule for the English bishops by portraying a colonial's humiliation of one of their number.

For a short while after this anonymous effort, the pamphlet warfare was overshadowed by the discussion engendered by the activities of two conventions of clergymen. These conventions aroused much immediate comment in the public press and had a great influence on many pamphlets which were to appear in the third phase of the controversy.

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<sup>78</sup>Ibid., 70.

<sup>79</sup>Ibid., 65.

<sup>80</sup>Ibid., 71 note.

## CHAPTER III

### THE CONTROVERSY: PHASE TWO

Dominating the second phase of the controversy was a debate in the public press concerning a convention of the Virginia Anglican clergy and the anti-episcopal feeling which their activity aroused. In May, 1771, President Thomas Nelson of the Virginia Council stated that "the Virginians, tho' almost all of the Episcopal Church. . . do not want Bishops; yet from our principles I hardly think we should oppose such an establishment; nor will the laity apply for them." He also noted that the vast majority of the dissenting groups in Great Britain were opposed to any extension of episcopacy to the American colonies, due to a fear that their colonial brethren would be subjected to episcopal rule.<sup>1</sup>

The first and only concerted effort made by the Virginia Anglican clergy in their attempt to secure a bishop for the colony occurred in the same year. The primary cause

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<sup>1</sup>Thomas Nelson to Edward Hunt, May 11, 1771, William and Mary College Quarterly, V (1896-1897), 149. Henceforth cited as WMQ.



for this effort was an action taken by the United Convention of the Clergy of New York and New Jersey. By sending the Reverend Myles Cooper, President of King's College in New York, and the Reverend Robert McKean, a missionary of the Venerable Society in Amboy, New Jersey, to the southern colonies, the Convention hoped to secure the support of the southern clergy in the attempt to secure a colonial episcopate.<sup>2</sup>

1771

The action taken by McKean and Cooper probably impelled Virginia's Commissary, James Horrocks, to insert in the Williamsburg newspapers in April, 1771, an open letter to the Anglican ministry calling them to meet on May 4 at the College of William and Mary. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss the feasibility of petitioning the King and the Bishop of London for the creation of an American episcopate. However, so few of the clergy attended on this date that another meeting was scheduled for the fourth of June, and a new advertisement was placed in the newspapers.<sup>3</sup> As a result of Horrocks' second letter, twelve of the more than one hundred clergymen of the colony appeared on the appointed

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<sup>2</sup>Samuel Seabury, "Journals of the United Convention of 1767," Francis Lister Hawks, editor, Contributions to American Church History (New York, n. p., 1836), I, 126.

<sup>3</sup>PD Gazette, May 9, 1771, p. 3. R Gazette, May 9, 1771, p. 3.

date.<sup>4</sup>

Immediately prior to the convention of the Virginia Anglican ministry a letter appeared in Purdie and Dixon's Gazette calling for an Anglican episcopate. Addressed to the Anglican clergymen of the colony, the letter attempted to influence their actions at the June meeting. The author stated that it was only proper that any request for episcopacy originate with those men who would come under the proposed bishops' jurisdiction. The writer was of the opinion that a person "of competent Authority" was needed to aid and guide the clergy and, if need be, to punish and suspend them from their offices. He also felt that the authority to be vested in any American bishops should be purely ecclesiastical in nature and should in no way encroach upon the powers of the civil government.<sup>5</sup>

The first question to be placed before the convention was whether or not the dozen present were sufficient to act for the entire body of the colony's clergymen; it was decided in the affirmative. Turning next to the business for which they had been assembled, the clergy unanimously decided that they lacked sufficient reason for sending a petition directly to the King, but that there was no reason why they should not seek the "Opinion and Advice" of their

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<sup>4</sup>Thomas Gwatkin, A Letter to the Clergy of New York and New Jersey, Occasioned by an Address to the Episcopalians in Virginia (Williamsburg, Alex. Purdie and John Dixon, 1772), 4. Henceforth cited as Gwatkin, Letter.

<sup>5</sup>PD Gazette, May 30, 1771, p. 2.

diocesan, Richard Terrick, Bishop of London.<sup>6</sup>

The question of a petition to George III was then reconsidered by the convention and their former decision reversed.<sup>7</sup> In commenting upon this reversal of opinion, the Reverend Thomas Gwatkin, a member of the convention and Professor of Mathematics at the College of William and Mary, stated that it had been passed by a group of men who merely desired the promotion of their own "private Schemes" and cared very little for the preservation of the "publick Tranquillity." These few men had "prevailed upon the rest," who were unaware of their materialistic motives.<sup>8</sup>

Prior to its adjournment the convention appointed a committee to prepare a petition that would be suitable for presentation to the King. The completed petition was next to be circulated among the Anglican clergymen of Virginia so that they could express their approval or disapproval of its content and form. If a majority of the entire body of the ministry approved, the petition was to be presented to the Bishop of London for his concurrence and then to the King, as supreme governor of the realm, for his consideration.<sup>9</sup> The convention then adjourned, having made no mention of what

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<sup>6</sup>Gwatkin, Letter, 4.

<sup>7</sup>Of the twelve members present, eight voted to petition the King. Richard Bland to Thomas Adams, August 1, 1771, WMQ, V (1896-1897), 153.

<sup>8</sup>Gwatkin, Letter.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., 6.

course of action was to be taken should their diocesan be unreceptive to the plan.

Moreover, the convention may not have anticipated opposition at home. Two of the most prominent Virginia clergymen, the Reverend Thomas Gwatkin and the Reverend Samuel Henley, Professor of Moral Philosophy at William and Mary and a member of the convention, both of whom had opposed the passage of the resolution, composed a formal protest to the action of the majority and inserted it in Purdie and Dixon's Gazette.<sup>10</sup>

In this protest Gwatkin and Henley listed seven reasons for their opposition. The first objection was based on the fact that but twelve Anglican ministers had been present at the meeting, and it was inconceivable that they represented the entire body of the clergy. In fact, a larger number had been present at the May meeting than were at the second, yet the former had considered themselves an insufficient number to do business.<sup>11</sup> Secondly, the objectors felt that the resolution to petition the King was contrary to a previous resolution passed by the same assembly and that the procedure had been "contrary to all Order and Decorum."<sup>12</sup>

Objection number three dealt with the use of the term "American Episcopate" in the final resolution of the con-

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<sup>10</sup>PD Gazette, June 6, 1771, p. 2. These protests were later expanded in Gwatkin, Letter, 6-9. For a discussion see below pp. 73-75.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., 9.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., 6.

vention. If, as seemed likely, this implied an episcopacy with jurisdiction over all American colonies, then the Anglican clergy of Virginia could not "with any Propriety" petition for the establishment of an institution which would, in all likelihood, "affect the natural Rights and fundamental Laws" of others.<sup>13</sup>

Their fourth objection was based upon the belief that the creation of an American episcopate would tend to make the colonies further independent of the Mother Country. It would also increase the "Jealousies and Fears" of the Protestant dissenters and give the argumentative people of the colonies "Occasion to raise such Disturbances as may endanger the very Existence of the British Empire in America." In objection number five the protestors stated that they considered it quite "indecent" and a "Usurpation directly repugnant to the Rights of Mankind," for the Anglican ministry to petition for the institution of episcopacy without the approval of President Nelson and the House of Burgesses.<sup>14</sup>

The authors of the protest next stated that the Bishop of London had always exercised an extremely satisfactory jurisdiction over the colony of Virginia and that their present diocesan was of the highest quality. Thus the protestors believed that any attempt to "strip" the Bishop of any portion

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<sup>13</sup>Ibid., 6-7.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., 7.

of his diocese was not only an example of severe ingratitude but also contrary to the oath of canonical obedience, if it should be done without first ascertaining his opinion.<sup>15</sup>

The final argument was based on their opinion that the method to be used in determining the attitude of the majority of the clergy was "unworthy the Decorum and Dignity" of the ministry.<sup>16</sup>

Of the seven objections which provided Henley and Gwatkin the basis for their opposition, the fourth, that concerning the innappropriateness of the occasion chosen to present the petition was the only one of validity. The rest appear to have been founded upon technicalities or misunderstandings which had probably arisen due to the authors' partisan feelings.

The complaints of Gwatkin and Henley were immediately answered by the Reverend John Camm, a member of the convention who was soon to become Commissary of Virginia and thereby the leader of the pro-episcopal cause. Camm attacked what he believed to be the falsity of these arguments. He stated that the churchmen present at the convention were well aware of their minority status and for that reason had provided that the petition be referred to all the parish priests in the colony. Camm presented arguments to counter each of those brought forth by the two protestors and concluded by

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<sup>15</sup>Ibid..

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., 8.

stating that it was unimportant whether or not the clergy had departed from their ordinary means of doing things, for their ultimate purpose was worthwhile, and their departure had not been great. Furthermore, he asked how the clergy could be expected to act with "Decorum and Dignity" if they were denied the proper supervisory officers.<sup>17</sup>

Not wanting to be outdone by their clerics, the laity of the Church of England in Virginia soon entered into the dispute, both for and against the proposed episcopate. The author of an anonymous letter to Purdie and Dixon's Gazette of Williamsburg believed that the laity would neither remain silent nor ignore the extraordinary attempts being made to place them under a new jurisdiction which would seriously affect their liberties. He believed that the citizens of the colony should have been consulted prior to the convention and that, by neglecting to do so, the petitioners had acted quite imprudently. Bishops he viewed as a definite threat to the religious liberty of all groups within the colony as well as an increased tax burden.

The author commented on the possibility of bishop's courts in Virginia, stating that this institution was completely unknown to the laws of the colony and that thus none had ever been held. He did observe, however, that "some years" previously a "Farce" had been "acted in a Corner by a Commissary and two Reverend Assessors" in an attempt to

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<sup>17</sup>PD Gazette, June 13, 1771, p. 3.

punish an irregular clergyman; "Their Reverences discovered that they had acted without Authority, and sneaked from their Corner, to the great Diversion of the Auditory."

The anonymous author, who termed himself "A Real Layman," concluded his attack upon episcopacy and the action of the convention by stating that the desire to bring bishops to America was only the latest of a series of schemes to "enslave the Colonies," the only difference being that this was a call for "spiritual Tyranny" rather than civil oppression. He then put forth the following prayer which he felt "every Friend of American Liberty" should repeat daily:

"From such Powers, and from such Councils, good Lord, of thy infinite Mercy, save and protect the American Colonies."<sup>18</sup>

The same Gazette included another letter which accused the supporters of the episcopal cause of being befuddled about the issues.<sup>19</sup> This author, who called himself "The Country Gentleman," stated that there was no reason to have separate bishops for the American colonies, since the Church in America would always be a part of the Church of England.<sup>20</sup>

Also on this date an article by Samuel Henley appeared charging the clergy of Virginia with having no real desire for an American episcopate. In Henley's opinion they were merely "trailing in the footsteps" of the groups which had

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<sup>18</sup>PD Gazette, June 20, 1771, p. 1. Italics as in original.

<sup>19</sup>PD Gazette, June 20, 1771, p. 2.

<sup>20</sup>PD Gazette, June 27, 1771, p. 2.



previously petitioned so as not to incur their wrath.<sup>21</sup> John Camm immediately retorted that Henley could not possibly have any idea of what he was opposing, due to the fact that the petition had not yet been composed and presented to the clergy.<sup>22</sup>

The actions of the various disputants prompted one anonymous author, referring to himself as "Martin Luther," to state that the arguments in the public press were having an adverse effect upon the colony's morals and religion. Those clergymen who had entered into the dispute were "treating one another, by Name and Surname, in the publick Gazettes, more like the Fishwomen in Billingsgate Market, than the Ministers of a Reformed Christian Church."<sup>23</sup> (This sentiment echoed one expressed some weeks previously in a private letter by Thomas Bradbury Chandler, who believed that the dispute had "degenerated into a good Deal of personal Alliteration.")<sup>24</sup> "Martin Luther" continued by stating that there was nothing unusual about the situation as it existed in Virginia, for "the Clergy, in all Ages" had treated each other "with less Decorum and Decency than they ever have been treated by any

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<sup>21</sup>PD Gazette, June 20, 1771, p. 2.

<sup>22</sup>PD Gazette, July 11, 1771, p. 3.

<sup>23</sup>PD Gazette, July 4, 1771, p. 2.

<sup>24</sup>Thomas Bradbury Chandler to Sir W. Johnson, May 30, 1771 (unpublished manuscript in the Simon Gratz Autograph Collection of the American Colonial Clergy in the Library of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania).

other Sect or Society of Men in the World."<sup>25</sup>

Another letter in the Williamsburg press claimed that Anglican bishops residing in the colony would provide security for the religious liberties of the dissenters and might even promote the foundation of these liberties in the laws of the colony. This writer, who termed himself "The Country Gentleman," also pointed out that the people of Virginia would not be more heavily taxed, for any American bishops were to be supported from a fund which was accumulating from the voluntary bequests of private English citizens. Furthermore, the author believed that Anglicans should be permitted to have bishops to ordain their ministers, since the Presbyterians were permitted to have presbyteries for the very same purpose.<sup>26</sup>

"The Country Gentleman" was promptly answered by "The Country Clergyman," who denied the principle of apostolic succession and encouraged the people of Virginia to avoid the civil and religious disruptions which the bishops had caused in Great Britain. This anonymous author believed the Virginia General Court to be supreme in both temporal and spiritual cases, and he therefore considered a bishop unnecessary. Furthermore, if the laymen of the colony had needed a bishop for their way of life, they would have petitioned for one long ago.<sup>27</sup> As a result of this reply to "The Coun-

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<sup>25</sup>PD Gazette, July 4, 1771, p. 2.

<sup>26</sup>PD Gazette, July 4, 1771, p. 2.

<sup>27</sup>R Gazette, July 18, 1771, p. 1.

try Gentleman," "The Country Clergyman" was accused by one John Dixon of being totally unaware of the realities of the situation and ignorant of the inherent needs of an episcopal Church for bishops.<sup>28</sup>

In the midst of the controversy in the Williamsburg newspapers, the House of Burgesses inserted the following resolution in Rind's Gazette of July 18, 1771:

Resolved, Nemine Contradicente, That the Thanks of this House be given to the Reverend Mr. Henley, the Reverend Mr. Gwatkin, the Reverend Mr. Hewett, and the Reverend Mr. Bland, For the wise and well-timed Opposition they have made to the pernicious Project of a few mistaken Clergymen, for introducing an American Bishop: A Measure, by which much Disturbance, great Anxiety, and Apprehension, would certainly take Place among his Majesty's faithful American Subjects: And that Mr. Richard Henry Lee, and Mr. Bland, do acquaint them therewith.<sup>29</sup>

This resolution of the House of Burgesses aroused a certain amount of unfavorable comment from the supporters of the episcopal plan. An anonymous author commented that those who had protested in the convention had become anti-episcopalian in their outlook, whereas the Burgesses had now become dissenters. He said that the body "fell into the Panick" and made a "hasty Resolve" of which they could quickly repent as soon as cooler heads prevailed.<sup>30</sup> Another unknown Virginian also believed that the resolution would be rescinded as soon as it was realized "that no injury will arise from the intro-

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<sup>28</sup>R Gazette, August 1, 1771, p. 2.

<sup>29</sup>R Gazette, July 18, 1771, p. 2. PD Gazette, July 18, 1771, p. 1. Italics as in original.

<sup>30</sup>PD Gazette, October 10, 1771, p. 1.

duction of Bishops;" especially since "more than nine-tenths" of the supporters of the resolution were in reality "sincere and hearty friends to episcopacy, and were not aware that they did it an injury, or gave its enemies an advantage over it."<sup>31</sup> Myles Cooper noted that the action of the Virginia Burgesses was not in keeping "with the Wisdom, and the Dignity, of that very respectable Body," and that even those assemblies which were composed of dissenters had not, with the exception of Massachusetts, felt it necessary formally to oppose episcopacy.<sup>32</sup>

In his next attack on the pro-episcopal party, Henley asked how they proposed to do away with the English law which made it necessary for Virginia's clergymen to be ordained "by a Bishop in England" before they could be given charge of a parish. He also noted that the Stamp Act had caused the people of New England to take violent action in order to protect their civil liberty, and that the "Scheme" to establish episcopacy in the colonies was no less an attack upon religious liberties, of which the Americans were "still more attentive."<sup>33</sup> Henley was answered by one who referred to himself as "The Country Man" and became the first to cast

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<sup>31</sup>NY Journal, September 5, 1771, p. 1.

<sup>32</sup>Myles Cooper, An Address From the Clergy of New-York and New-Jersey to the Episcopalians in Virginia; Occasioned by Some Late Transactions in that Colony Relative to an American Episcopate (New York, Hugh Gaine, 1771), 6. Henceforth cited as Cooper, Address.

<sup>33</sup>PD Gazette, July 18, 1771, p. 1.

doubt upon the loyalty of the two leading protestors. "The Country Man," with mild cynicism, also believed that the actions of the members of the pro-episcopal party were "somewhat extraordinary" for men of their position.<sup>34</sup>

At the same time Richard Bland, a member of the House of Burgesses, stated that there was no inconsistency in supporting the resolution thanking the protestors while at the same time remaining a loyal member of the Church of England. He felt it possible to embrace the doctrines without embracing the hierarchy, which he knew "to be a Relick of the Papal Incroachments upone the Common Law."<sup>35</sup>

Meanwhile the dispute in the newspapers continued with a new exchange of letters between Henley and "The Country Man." Henley first noted that the laity of the colony had not petitioned for a bishopric, although the call should have emanated from them.<sup>36</sup> In reply "The Country Man" accused Henley of possessing too vivid an imagination, which he used to create controversy in hope of securing the support of the dissenting groups. He thought Henley greatly grieved when the dissenters realized that bishops would do them no harm. The anonymous Virginian further observed that the Americans were gradually drifting away from the control

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<sup>34</sup>R Gazette, August 1, 1771, p. 2.

<sup>35</sup>Richard Bland to Thomas Adams, August 1, 1771, WMQ, V (1896-1897), 154.

<sup>36</sup>R Gazette, August 8, 1771, p. 1.

of Great Britain, and that perhaps this dangerous trend could be halted if episcopacy were established in the colonies.<sup>37</sup>

In August, 1771, the Reverend John Camm reentered the dispute by means of an article addressed to Gwatkin. Extending through two issues of Purdie and Dixon's Gazette, this article pointed out that the proposed bishops were to have no jurisdiction over the civil crimes of the clergy, which were to be tried in the regular Virginia courts. He claimed that the clergy had no desire to be removed from the jurisdiction of the civil courts, but that they merely wished to have a proper ecclesiastical body exercising jurisdiction over their clerical life.<sup>38</sup> Camm accused those who opposed the episcopal establishment of desiring to make the clergy subservient to the General Court, which would eventually replace bishops completely.<sup>39</sup>

The proposed episcopate was next attacked by "A Churchman, But an Enemy to Ecclesiastical Tyranny" who believed that bishops would never be satisfied with the power they might receive and would constantly seek its increase.

"Judging from the world's experience of such characters," stated the author, it may be safely concluded that bishops would never be content with abridged powers, but they would not hesitate to use "every expedient which cunning could

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<sup>37</sup>R Gazette, September 5, 1771, p. 2.

<sup>38</sup>PD Gazette, August 15, 1771, p. 2.

<sup>39</sup>PD Gazette, August 22, 1771, p. 1.

direct, or ambition practice" in an attempt to remove such a limitation. "A Churchman" referred to episcopacy as a "dangerous novelty" which was "absolutely unnecessary" to the well-being of the Church in the colonies, since the General Court had the power to exercise complete civil and ecclesiastical control over the clergy.<sup>40</sup>

"A Church of England Man" next entered the dispute by noting that the Church in the colonies could not possibly thrive so long as the clergy lacked order and discipline. He believed that the Anglican ministry had been unjustly censured as "bad men," yet those who made the most severe condemnations were loudest in their opposition to the proper "Means of Reformation."<sup>41</sup> Henley replied that the Church of England was composed of both the clergy and the laity, and that one segment had no right to petition for a bishop if their desire did not have the concurrence of the other segment.<sup>42</sup> He further pointed out that the protesters were not opposed to the episcopal form of church government but merely objected to the direct extension of that form of government to the American Church.<sup>43</sup>

One of the more objective articles on the topic of an

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<sup>40</sup>R Gazette, September 26, 1771, p. 1.

<sup>41</sup>PD Gazette, October 1, 1771, p. 1.

<sup>42</sup>PD Gazette, October 17, 1771, p. 2.

<sup>43</sup>PD Gazette, October 31, 1771, p. 2. That part of the article bearing the signature has been destroyed; however, all factors seem to indicate that it was written by Samuel Henley.

American episcopate was addressed to Henley by a person who referred to himself as "An American." This anonymous author believed that those arguing on each side of the question had already determined their final stand on the issue (as he had), and that further argument would prove useless. He did admit that the members of the convention had acted "imprudently" when they decided to petition the King without first consulting the laity. However, he also believed that the lay members of the Church of England would have granted their assent had they been provided with the opportunity to make known their wishes. "An American" further noted that no one was as well qualified as a bishop to comprehend the problems with which the clergy were faced. Likewise, a "Bishop's Court" was best suited to exercise jurisdiction over their "Ecclesiastical Crimes," for only that body could fully understand spiritual law.<sup>44</sup>

The final argumant of 1771 was made by "The Country Farmer," who was primarily concerned with the absence of qualified Anglican ministers in the American colonies. He believed that this situation could be effectively remedied if the episcopal office were extended to America, for then the problems of the voyage to England for ordination would be eliminated.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>44</sup>PD Gazette, November 21, 1771, p. 1.

<sup>45</sup>PD Gazette, December 19, 1771, p. 2.



1772

The year 1772 opened with an article by "A Person of Eminence in London," which was addressed to the pro-episcopal party in the colonies. The writer, believing that the Church of England in America lacked one of its most essential elements, held that any person opposing the institution of episcopacy was not "a Friend to Religious Liberty." He also noted that bishops having temporal powers would be unsuitable for the American Church.<sup>46</sup> With such a limitation upon their authority they would be unable to make "Innovations in Civil Matters," nor would they be able to "interfere with, or endanger, the religious Rights or Privileges of others." In conclusion "A Person of Eminence" observed that it would be "very difficult" for the anti-episcopal group "to assign any good Reason why the national Church should not have that full toleration" which was accorded to all of the dissenting bodies in the colonies. Only by the institution of episcopacy would the American Anglicans be raised "to an Equality" with the dissenters. Since the dissenting groups were permitted the complete exercise of their church government, the author felt the Anglican Church to be in a position of inequality by being unable to make use of bishops.<sup>47</sup>

This was promptly followed by an article which bore

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<sup>46</sup>PD Gazette, January 2, 1772, pp. 2-3.

<sup>47</sup>PD Gazette, January 2, 1772, p. 3.

the title "A New Year's Gift for the Reverend Mr. S. Henley" in which "J. H." observed that civil and ecclesiastical government were both of divine origin; for as a state could not prosper in the absence of civil government, neither could a church prosper without the proper ecclesiastical government.<sup>48</sup> "J. H." believed that the Americans were possessed of "all the Rights and Privileges of British Subjects," religious as well as political, and that included among these "Rights and Privileges" was "the free Enjoyment" of the desired form of church government. Those who opposed episcopacy in America were attempting to deprive the Church of England of "a natural Right" when they imagined that the Bishop of London could function as effectively as one in America.<sup>49</sup>

As if to add a new element to the controversy, the "News from London" now reported that the primary reason for permitting the Roman Catholic Bishop of Quebec to retain his diocese was to furnish "a Pretence" for the establishment of episcopacy "throughout the British Colonies."<sup>50</sup>

Two steps were next taken in an attempt to bring the dispute under control. The first came when the Reverend William Willie called for a new convention of the Virginia Anglican clergy to assemble at the College of William and

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<sup>48</sup>PD Gazette, January 9, 1772, p. 1.

<sup>49</sup>PD Gazette, January 9, 1772, p. 2.

<sup>50</sup>PD Gazette, January 30, 1772, p. 1.

Mary on February 20 to discuss the problems involved in the absence of episcopacy.<sup>51</sup> The second measure was taken by the editors of Purdie and Dixon's Virginia Gazette of Williamsburg, which carried the following announcement on the twelfth of March:

Many of our Readers, for some Time, have complained of their being tired with the Dispute about an American Episcopate; and we must acknowledge that we begin to be sick of it likewise, seeing that there is no Prospect of its Termination (we having by us, at this Time, no less than three Pieces; which if inserted together would fill the Paper completely) and the Want of the Rem /reimbursement/; which is always necessary to ensure a Place in this, and every other Newspaper for Works that are not Amusing, instructive, or of publick Utility.<sup>52</sup>

Thus, by one announcement, the dispute in the public press brought about by the actions of the two conventions came to a close.

Other than comments made in later pamphlets, the dispute involving the two clerical conventions had closed, leaving several unanswered questions. For example we can find no evidence that the Reverend William Willie's convention ever took place; likewise there seems to be no evidence that the petitioned authorized by the first convention was ever prepared. Phase two of the controversy had come to an abrupt end, and we again must turn our attention to the pamphlet warfare.

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<sup>51</sup>PD Gazette, January 16, 1772, p. 3.

<sup>52</sup>PD Gazette, March 12, 1772, p. 3.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE CONTROVERSY: FINAL PHASE

Even though the public press was dominated by the controversy concerning the Virginia convention and its activities, the pamphlet dispute embodying the third phase of the episcopal question was never allowed to disappear completely from the Virginia scene. Both pamphlets and public letters were used with abandon by the two parties to the argument, and scarcely a week passed without some mention of the dispute in one of the Williamsburg newspapers.

1771

The first publication to appear during this phase of the controversy was a pamphlet by the Reverend Myles Cooper, President of King's College, in behalf of the United Convention of the clergy of New York and New Jersey. Resuming the argument where Chandler's Appeal Defended had left off, Cooper stated that many American Anglicans considered confirmation to be a "highly beneficial Institution" which could only be brought within their reach by the settlement

of a bishop in the colonies.<sup>1</sup> He noted that confirmation was of such great importance in the Church of England that no one was permitted to participate in Holy Communion "until such time as he be confirmed or be ready and desirous to be confirmed."<sup>2</sup> The author also believed that the true reason for the opposition from many of the Virginia clergy was their reluctance to have their activities observed by one with authority to remove them from office.<sup>3</sup>

In commenting upon the resolution of the House of Burgesses and the unanimity of their vote upon the matter of the minority party in the Virginia convention, the spokesman of the United Convention noted that their action appeared to be based on "such Partiality and Precipitancy" that it was impossible to reconcile the resolution "with the Wisdom, the Dignity, of that very respectable Body." Such a step as the passing of the resolution had been taken by but one other colony: Massachusetts, where the government was controlled by the dissenters. Cooper believed the situation to be even stranger when he observed that the entire membership of the House of Burgesses were "pro-fessed Episcopalians; that is, in the lowest Sense of the Word, Friends to Bishops."<sup>4</sup> However, the "professed Friends

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<sup>1</sup>Cooper, Address, 1.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 3 note.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 5.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 6. Italics as in original.

to bishops" would only be happy "at the Distance of 3000 miles."<sup>5</sup>

Cooper continued his condemnation of the Burgesses by noting that their ill-advised action in the matter had been "left open to the most unfriendly Construction."<sup>6</sup> He believed the "Degeneracy" of both the Virginia Church and the House of Burgesses had been brought about by "the influence of a few Leaders, which too often happens in such Assemblies," and thus was not the true condition of those bodies.<sup>7</sup>

Returning to the proposed plan under which bishops were to be settled in the colonies, Cooper stated that there had been no requests sent to the Bishop of London to supply the American colonies with anything but a bishop with purely suffragan powers.<sup>8</sup> He noted that the Anglican Church in the colonies possessed more clergymen than many of the British dioceses; therefore, he reasoned, it was both more natural and more necessary that these ministers be under the supervision of their own bishops rather than that of the Bishop of London. In fact, claimed the author, a bishop in the colonies would become far more important than many of the holders of English sees.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid., 6-7.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., 7.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., 8-9. Italics as in original.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., 10.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., 14-15.

Cooper's discussion of the episcopal controversy turned next to the Bishop of London, who at this time made no claim to jurisdiction over the clergy of the colonial Church. The ecclesiastical government of the Church of England in America had previously been exercised by the holders of the See of London, noted the author, but since 1748 these bishops had not obtained a royal commission for the exercise of such jurisdiction because they believed themselves too distant to maintain effective control.<sup>10</sup> Furthermore the American Church, "consisting of more Members than belong to it [the Church of England] in all the Diocesses in the Province of York," was spread throughout a territory "ten times larger than the Kingdom of Great-Britain." Even though the Bishops of London claimed no special authority over the Church in the colonies, American candidates for ordination continued to make application to their office as a matter of custom. Also, "according to former Usage" the Bishop of London was "generally allowed to have a more immediate Connection with the Colonies than any other Bishop." Thus, claimed Cooper, the authority exercised by the Bishop of London over the Virginia Church was no longer founded on English law but was merely a matter of form.<sup>11</sup>

Cooper continued by comparing the Anglican Church in America to "a Body without a Head" and stated that the colo-

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<sup>10</sup>Cf., President Nelson to Lord Hillsborough, November 15, 1770, Perry, Collections, I, 532.

<sup>11</sup>Cooper, Address, 27 note.

nial branch of the Church could not claim to be episcopal if bishops were not desired. However, if the Anglicans desired bishops but were prevented from obtaining them, then their plight was worse than all of the dissenting bodies in the colonies, for these groups were permitted to enjoy "all the Privileges" to which they were able to make "any reasonable Pretensions." Furthermore, without bishops the Church in the colonies could not truthfully claim any connection with the Church in England.<sup>12</sup>

The Address closed with an appeal which Cooper believed all loyal Anglicans should make for those whom he referred to as the "most avowed Enemies of American Bishops," who, though brought up "in the Bosom of this Church," should continue to oppose that which would be beneficial to its "Welfare and Honor." The appeal read: "Hear, O Heavens, and give Ear, O Earth -- I have nourished and brought up Children, and they have rebelled against me!"<sup>13</sup>

Cooper was joined in this phase of the controversy by the Reverend Thomas Bradbury Chandler, who deemed it necessary to publish an expanded defense of his Appeal. In his Appeal Farther Defended, he claimed that the Anglican clergy were not alone in their application for episcopacy; in fact, "several of the most considerable Lay-Gentlemen in the Colonies have recommended and petitioned for it,

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<sup>12</sup>Ibid., 55.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., 58. Italics as in original.



although not jointly with the Clergy." Furthermore, the ministry did not claim to have originated the idea of an episcopate for America, but had adopted a plan previously formed by others.<sup>14</sup> Chandler also believed that a suffragan status would prove to be more desirable for an American bishop, since the current status of English bishops could not easily "be adapted to the peculiar needs of the colonies."<sup>15</sup>

The author observed that those men desiring an episcopate had from the beginning of the dispute considered the Anglicans in America to be merely a religious society and had therefore petitioned for a bishop who would exercise powers of a purely religious nature. He felt that the petitioners viewed the government-granted extensions of power as mere burdens which were not an official part of the Church's "real Substance" or "essential to its internal Constitution," and they thus had no desire to transfer these appendages to the colonies.<sup>16</sup>

In this contribution to the pro-episcopal viewpoint Chandler set forth three reasons for the institution of episcopacy in America, (ordination, confirmation, and church government) -- reasons which he felt could not be denied by

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<sup>14</sup>Thomas Bradbury Chandler, The Appeal Farther Defended; in Answer to the Farther Misrepresentations of Dr. Chauncey (New York, Hugh Gaine, 1771), 143.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., 160.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., 225.

those opposed to bishops.<sup>17</sup> He further noted that even if tithes were established they would not come into the possession of the bishops, for according to custom only the lesser clergy had the authority to collect tithes.<sup>18</sup> Chandler concluded by stating that the petitioners had merely requested the necessary means to bring an end to their problems, that in no way did they wish to interfere with the "Rights and Safety" of any of the dissenting groups. The non-Anglicans had been permitted to have any form of church government they desired without "ill Consequences." The supporters of episcopacy only wished to have their Church raised to a level of equality: "Whether there be any Thing presumptuous or unreasonable in these Expectations, let Heaven and Earth judge!"<sup>19</sup>

1772

On the twelfth of March, 1772, a notice appeared in Rind's Gazette to the effect that the Reverend Myles Cooper of New York had arrived in Virginia in an attempt to further the cause of an American episcopate.<sup>20</sup> Soon thereafter the Pennsylvania Journal published a letter by one who preferred to be known as "Amicus Ecclesiae" of Williamsburg. This contribution strongly opposed episcopacy, especially that plan

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<sup>17</sup>Ibid., 231.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., 235.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., 240.

<sup>20</sup>R Gazette, March 12, 1772, p. 1.

set forth in Cooper's Address.

"Amicus Ecclesiae" argued that the Anglican Church and clergy in America were already under "a regular subordination and government" which, though not based upon the ecclesiastical law of the Church of England, was based upon the English common law. This situation was not only advantageous to religion but was also conducive to the growth of "the liberty of the subject." The author believed that, if the American Anglicans should ask for bishops with authority only over their own clergy, there was no security that America would not have bishops "imposed" upon it "with the same authority they exercise in England."<sup>21</sup>

The anonymous writer further admitted that it would not be impossible for American bishops, "with power only to ordain, govern the Clergy, and administer confirmation," to be "bad men" who would find a way to "exercise even this limited power illegally." He inquired; "May they not commit simony, and other offences against the duty of their office? May they not, by an arbitrary sentence, from party resentment, deprive a Clergyman of his living, or his orders?" Furthermore, he asked, could not these men, "from simonical considerations," permit "improper persons" to be ordained into the ministry, "to the prejudice of religion and scandal of the Clergy?" The author noted that similar offenses had

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<sup>21</sup>Pa. Journal, March 19, 1772, p. 1.

previously been committed by the English bishops and could easily be repeated by bishops in America. He continued by observing that, if such crimes as these should be committed in the colonies, they would be punishable not in America but "in a country, at the distance of 3000 miles" where it would be impossible to determine the exact circumstances, and where the expenses involved in the prosecution of the crime could "ruin the person concerned."<sup>22</sup>

Finally, the author wished to know what action could be taken by a clergyman who had been subjected to "an arbitrary or illegal sentence of his bishop." He had some doubt as to whether the sentence of the bishop would be final, or whether some appeal to a "superior jurisdiction" was to be permitted. If this "superior jurisdiction," in the form of an archbishop, was to be located only in Great Britain "it may be a remedy. . . of that sort which is worse than the disease."<sup>23</sup> The article concluded with the observation that the plan for the proposed episcopate was far from perfect and would demand a great deal of modification if it were to be brought into accordance with English common law; such a modification would be necessary before the majority of Americans would accept it or any similar plan.<sup>24</sup>

In this same year, 1772, the Reverend Thomas Gwatkin

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<sup>22</sup>Ibid., Italics as in original.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., 1-2.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., 2.

published a pamphlet titled A Letter to the Clergy of New York and New Jersey in which he expanded his previous thoughts on the resolutions of the Virginia convention<sup>25</sup> and replied to Cooper's Address. "When I heard the Clergy of New York and New Jersey had condescended to take Notice of our Protest," he wrote, "I was filled with Expectations of meeting them clad with celestial Armour, not with the Cloak of Defamation and Falsehood. Tantaene Animis caelestibus Irae,<sup>26</sup> was the first Sentiment the Address excited in my Mind."<sup>27</sup>

After expanding his seven objections to the action of the Virginia convention,<sup>28</sup> Gwatkin stated that he and Henley had been accused by the United Convention of violating their "Ordination Engagements." He also claimed that Cooper's Address had been a deliberate attempt to force the English bishops into a position favorable to an American episcopate.<sup>29</sup> Gwatkin again mentioned the fact that those clergymen ordained by an American bishop would be unable to hold a parish in Virginia, due to "an Act of Assembly, which received the Royal Assent, wherein it is positively declared that no

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<sup>25</sup>Cf., PD Gazette, July 6, 1771, p. 2.

<sup>26</sup>"Can heavenly natures nourish hate  
So fierce, so blindly passionate?" Virgil, Aeneid, I, 11. Thomas B. Harbottle, comp., Dictionary of Quotations (Classical) (New York, Frederick Ungar, 1958), 283.

<sup>27</sup>Gwatkin, Letter, 3.

<sup>28</sup>Cf., ibid., 6-9.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., 9.

Person is capable of holding a Parish in Virginia unless he receives his Ordination from a Bishop in England."<sup>30</sup> The author next observed that his opponents had found Heaven unwilling to support their cause, and that they had turned to the Devil for aid: "Flectere se nequeo superos, Acheronta movebo."<sup>31</sup>

Gwatkin next entered into a discussion of the power which would accompany bishops to America. He observed that the "Constitution" of the Virginia colony was a copy of the British constitution, and that episcopacy in Virginia could be expected to hold the same position as it held in England. A bishop would sit in the Council (as the Bishop of London sat in the House of Lords), would establish ecclesiastical courts exercising "Jurisdiction over the Clergy and the Laity," and would supervise the vestries "in their choice of ministers."<sup>32</sup> He next commented that many "good Men, have amused themselves with forming Plans for an American Episcopate," but these "Plans" had no value other than providing "an Hours Parlour Conversation or Chat at a Visitation in

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<sup>30</sup>Ibid., 10. He even maintained that clergymen ordained by an Irish bishop were incapable of holding parishes in Virginia. Such ordinations were considered not invalid but merely insufficient for a clergyman desiring to serve in Virginia. Ibid., 17 note.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., 12.

"To serve our cause, if Heaven should prove uncivil,  
We'll humbly crave assistance of the Devil." Virgil, Aeneid, VII, 312.

Gwatkin's translation.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., 12.

England." All such "Plans" were "impracticable on this side of the Water" and appeared to bear "no small Resemblance to some Proposals" Gwatkin had seen "for converting the Pope and the Grand Turk."<sup>33</sup>

The author concluded by noting that he was opposed not to bishops in America but to those aspects of any "Civil Establishment" which would lead to "the Destruction of the Rights and Liberties of other Christian Communities." Even if American bishops were to have the sole purpose of reforming "immoral clergymen," this could not be done effectively, for England with its twenty-four bishops had a greater percentage of this type of men than Virginia.<sup>34</sup>

Gwatkin was joined in this new attack by the Reverend Samuel Henley, an Anglican who noted that the doctrines of episcopacy could "produce no good effect unless they were actually believed."<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>33</sup>Ibid., 20.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., 27.

<sup>35</sup>Samuel Henley, The Distinct Claims of Government and Religion, Considered in a Sermon Preached Before the Honourable House of Burgesses, at Williamsburg, in Virginia (Cambridge, J. Woodyer, Davies, and Elmsly, 1772), 13. This sermon, dated March 1, 1772, was titled "Render to Caesar, the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's."

1773-1774

The year 1773 proved to be devoid of controversial material concerning the proposed episcopacy, as the colonists began to occupy themselves with the developing Revolutionary situation. The dispute reappeared in 1774, when Thomas Bradbury Chandler brought forth two additional pamphlets on the eve of Revolution.

The first of the Chandler pamphlets proved to be a defense of Archbishop Secker's Letter to Walpole and by the same reasoning an attack upon Blackburne's Critical Commentary. Chandler believed that it was much to the detriment of the colonial Church that it had never been "supplied with Clergymen from the native Americans," having been forced to depend upon "Strangers" of "doubtful character, low fortunes and poorly qualified."<sup>36</sup> The author felt it only natural that British "Clergymen of good standing" were reluctant to leave their homeland for a new country "where there was no chance to improve one's reputation." However, those English ministers whose "bad Circumstances" were brought about by "their own Misconduct," those who were "meanly qualified for the Office," and those of "indifferent Characters" were deterred by no such reluctance.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>36</sup>Thomas Bradbury Chandler, A Free Examination of the Critical Commentary on Archbishop Secker's Letter to Mr. Walpole: to which is Added, by way of Appendix, a Copy of Bishop Sherlock's Memorial (New York, H. Gaine, 1774), 19.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid., 20.



Chandler concluded his Free Examination by observing that those American Anglicans who opposed episcopacy for the colonies, did so due to a "Want of understanding the true Design." The only ones with any reason to be against the institution were those "few Clergymen, who dread ed their Inspection."<sup>38</sup>

Chandler's second pamphlet of 1774 was published anonymously and proved to be essentially an attack upon those Anglicans who chose to support the anti-British faction in the colonies. He believed that such members of the Church of England were "apostates from common sense" and "blind" to their own interests if they were willing to "countenance and co-operate with a plan of proceedings," which would "distress and disgrace" them.<sup>39</sup> The author accused the Patriot Anglicans of "setting up a sort of people" for their "masters" who were "always fond of subduing by the iron rod of oppression" all those whose "principles or sentiments" differed from their own.<sup>40</sup>

Chandler felt that the leaders of the Patriot cause possessed an "inveterate enmity to the Church of England"

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<sup>38</sup>Ibid., 85. The Reverend Thomas Gwatkin had previously protested against what he felt to be unwarranted attacks upon the characters of those clergymen who had taken a stand against episcopacy. Gwatkin, Letter, 27.

<sup>39</sup>Thomas Bradbury Chandler, A Friendly Address to all Reasonable Americans, on the Subjects of our Political Confusions: in which the Necessary Consequences of Violently Opposing the King's Troops, and of a General Non-Importation are Fairly Stated (New York, James Rivington, 1774), 49.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., 49-50.

which had "polluted the annals of the British history." The Revolutionary leaders were of the same group that "usurped" the "sovereign power" of England, and "recorded in characters of Blood. . . their intolerance. . . towards the members of the Church [of England]." They were of the group which had been "dreadfully triumphant in New-England," declaring to Anglicans "that New England was No Place For Such As They." He felt that, should "the projected revolution. . . take place," these men would be the rulers of the colonies and would resume "the old work of persecuting the Church of England, by every method in their power." The author believed that these men had already come to power in New England, where the Anglicans were "daily misrepresented, insulted and abused by them."<sup>41</sup>

A reply to Chandler was soon forthcoming in the form of an anonymous pamphlet by Charles Lee, a future general in the Patriot army. Lee claimed that the author of the Friendly Address had "the want of candour and truth, the apparent spirit of persecution, the unforgivingness, the deadly hatred to Dissenters, and the zeal for arbitrary power" which had been characteristic of "Churchmen" throughout all of history, "and more particularly the high part of the Church of England."<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>41</sup>Ibid., 50.

<sup>42</sup>[Charles Lee], Strictures on a Pamphlet Entitled a "Friendly Address to all Reasonable Americans, on the Subject of our Political Confusions." Addressed to the People of America (Philadelphia, William and Thomas Bradford, 1774), 2.

It appears that, with the publication of Lee's reply to Chandler, the pamphlet controversy had come to an end. The military phase of the Revolution opened in April, 1775, and Thomas Bradbury Chandler, the leading spokesman of the pro-episcopal party, embarked for England the following month.<sup>43</sup> Chandler had apparently published the last important pamphlet in the episcopal dispute, but his words were to have little influence upon the Church in Virginia when it chose to be independent of the English Church -- as the people of Virginia chose to be independent of the English government.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>43</sup>Dictionary of American Biography (New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1929), III, 616. Henceforth cited as DAB.

<sup>44</sup>James Madison, the first Protestant Episcopal Bishop of Virginia, was consecrated on September 19, 1790, by the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishops of London and Rochester. Ibid. (1933), XII, 183.

## CHAPTER V

### THE CONTROVERSY: REVIEWED

Throughout this brief study an attempt has been made to present the reasons for opposition to episcopacy, especially the opposition by the members of an episcopal Church -- the Church of England in Virginia. The adherents of the pro-episcopal party desired the introduction of bishops because of their belief that without them the Anglican Church could not fully meet the needs of its communicants. They did not wish an American hierarchy vested with the political powers of the British hierarchy, neither did they desire that the people of America be taxed for the support of episcopacy. The proposed colonial bishops were to have powers of a religious nature only, and their support was to come from private donations -- not from taxation. Thus, the writings of the pro-episcopal group called for a non-political, non-tax-supported, suffragan episcopacy.

Conversely, the opponents of episcopacy believed that a colonial bishopric would be endowed with all the attributes of the English bishoprics; thus, bishops would come as tax-supported political agents of the British government. The members of this group felt that the proponents of episcopacy were masking their true desires, which included

bishops similar to those in England, hidden behind moderate phrases and promises which could easily be discarded once the hierarchy had been established in the colonies. Most of these men were opposed not to bishops as such, but to the positions which bishops held in England as political officers of the British government. In fact, these same Americans, after securing their independence from the Mother Country, severed their ties to the English Church and established a new episcopate with no political power whatsoever.

The protagonists of both groups are not easily associated with any distinct economic or social group because of their extensive use of pseudonyms which effectively masked their identities. Probably the people of Revolutionary Virginia were able to see beneath the mask of pseudonymity, but today we are able to determine their religious affiliation only, and that merely as to Anglican and dissenter. However, of the recognizable authors we can see that many were clergymen or members of the House of Burgesses, and we can thus determine both their economic and social standing.

Undoubtedly the controversy over the proposed American episcopate had some effect upon those Virginians who supported the Patriot faction. However, the historian is faced with the task of determining the extent of this influence in relation to the various other "causes" assigned to the American Revolution. Most former studies of the Revolution have concentrated upon the situation in the northern colonies and thus,

though occasionally drawing a comparison between the opposition of the New England Calvinists and that of the Virginia Anglicans, they have little more than touched upon the controversy in the colonies south of New Jersey. Even so, the Patriot aristocracy of Virginia opposed episcopacy on essentially the same basis as the aristocratic Whigs of New England.

John C. Miller in his Origins of the American Revolution has pointed out that George III had no desire to settle English bishops in the American colonies, in the belief that if he did so the colonists would tend to become more independent. Instead, according to Miller, the King attempted to preserve the religious centralization of the British Empire by forcing candidates for ordination to appear before the Bishop of London.<sup>1</sup> In the light of later events the wisdom of this policy and the means, or lack of means, by which it was carried into effect must be questioned. Was it wise for the British government to permit rumors of the imminency of episcopal settlement to circulate unrefuted throughout the colonies, where they would naturally arouse the hostility of many Americans and provide a fertile field for revolutionary propaganda? Would it perhaps not have been better, for the continuity of the Empire, to establish a new episcopate and by so doing strengthen the bonds between the

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<sup>1</sup>John C. Miller, Origins of the American Revolution (Boston, Little, Brown and Co., 1949), 192. Henceforth cited as Miller, Origins.

Mother Country and the American Anglicans? The latter inquiry has become one of the many hypothetical "ifs" of history, whereas to the former we may unqualifiedly reply in the negative.

By and large, however, the question of episcopacy has been ignored by historians of the American Revolution, except when they have attempted to explain its effect upon the dissenting clergy -- and then usually the New England clergy. Why has this been the case? Chiefly, it is because the issue does not blend well with the prevalent economic and political doctrines which have dominated the interpreters of this period. Admittedly it is difficult to interpret this issue (other than perhaps that segment known as "the Parson's Cause") in line with the economic principles of Charles and Mary Beard,<sup>2</sup> Evarts B. Greene,<sup>3</sup> and Louis M. Hacker,<sup>4</sup> for the members of the anti-episcopal party made little mention of any economic disadvantage they might suffer by the institution of bishops. Furthermore, Arthur M. Schlesinger's study of the American merchants makes no mention of

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<sup>2</sup>Charles A. and Mary R. Beard, The Rise of American Civilization (New York, The Macmillan Company, 1927), I, cc. v-vi.

<sup>3</sup>Evarts B. Greene, The Revolutionary Generation, 1763-1790 (New York, The Macmillan Company, 1943), cc. viii-ix.

<sup>4</sup>Louis M. Hacker, The Triumph of American Capitalism, the Development of Forces in American History to the End of the Nineteenth Century (New York, Simon and Schuster, 1940), cc. xi-xii. Louis M. Hacker, "The First American Revolution," The Causes of the American Revolution, John C. Wahlke, ed., (Boston, D. C. Heath and Company, 1950), 1-24.

the controversy;<sup>5</sup> whereas, Gipson's interpretation of the Revolution as an outgrowth of the French and Indian War<sup>6</sup> must, by its very nature, exclude the episcopal question. Furthermore, William Warren Sweet provides but a cursory view of the problem.<sup>7</sup> This leaves only the standard political viewpoint as expressed by Claude H. Van Tyne<sup>8</sup> and John C. Miller,<sup>9</sup> and to a limited extent by J. Franklin Jameson.<sup>10</sup>

The episcopal question, when viewed as an attempted extension of British political control, fits quite well into the category of political causes; in other words, bishops were viewed by the opponents of episcopacy as political agents of the King and Parliament. But Miller, and especially Van Tyne, have neglected to put the controversy in its proper

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<sup>5</sup>Arthur Meier Schlesinger, The Colonial Merchants and the American Revolution: 1763-1776 (New York, Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1957).

<sup>6</sup>Lawrence Henry Gipson, The Coming of the Revolution: 1763-1775 (New York, Harper and Brothers, 1954), p. xi. Lawrence Henry Gipson, "The American Revolution as an Aftermath of the Great War for the Empire, 1754-1763," Political Science Quarterly, LXV (1950), 86-104.

<sup>7</sup>William Warren Sweet, Religion in Colonial America (New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1947), 71-72. William Warren Sweet, Religion in the Development of American Culture, 1765-1840 (New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1952), 24-26.

<sup>8</sup>Claude H. Van Tyne, The Causes of the War of Independence (Boston, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1922), c. ix. Henceforth cited as Van Tyne, Causes.

<sup>9</sup>Miller, Origins, cc. i-ii.

<sup>10</sup>J. Franklin Jameson, The American Revolution Considered as a Social Movement (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1926), 150.



place. Miller does view the "Parson's Cause" as basically a political issue,<sup>11</sup> yet when discussing the episcopal dispute, he too stresses its effect upon the New England clergy.<sup>12</sup>

Van Tyne, however, held that the episcopal controversy was but one of a number of denominational disputes leading to the Revolution.<sup>13</sup> Therefore, should not the question concerning the proposed Anglican episcopate be viewed as essentially a political dispute, as is the Stamp Act? The colonists, in my opinion, viewed both as political.

Insofar as much primary material relating to the episcopal controversy remains unexplored by the author he can advance no claim that this study has been completed or even that it has fully penetrated the depth of the problem; the final word has yet to be written. However, the greater part of the causes of the American Revolution were political in nature, engendering in the colonists a fear that Great Britain was attempting to institute greater political control over the American colonies. We have observed that the vocal minority among the citizenry of Virginia gave credence to the rumors of episcopacy and opposed the institution as part of this extension of political control. Therefore, in my opinion, the threat of an Anglican episcopate for the colonies played an important part in molding the Patriot mind in Virginia.

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<sup>11</sup>Miller, Origins, 41-42.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., 186-197.

<sup>13</sup>Van Tyne, Causes, 352-354.

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- Newcome, Richard, Lord Bishop of Landaff. A Sermon. . . February 20, 1761. London: E. Owen and T. Harrison, 1761.
- Shipley, Jonathan, Lord Bishop of St. Asaph. A Sermon. . . February 19, 1773. London: T. Harrison and S. Brooke, 1773.
- Terrick, Richard, Lord Bishop of Peterborough. A Sermon. . . February 17, 1764. London: E. Owen and T. Harrison, 1764.
- Warburton, William, Lord Bishop of Gloucester. A Sermon. . . February 21, 1766. London: E. Owen and T. Harrison, 1766.
- Young, Philip, Lord Bishop of Norwich. A Sermon. . . February 15, 1765. London: E. Owen and T. Harrison, 1765.

## OTHERS

Henley, Samuel. The Distinct Claims of Government and Religion, Considered in a Sermon Preached Before the Honourable House of Burgesses, at Williamsburg, in Virginia. Cambridge: J. Woodyer, Davies and Elmsly, 1772.

This Sermon, drawn from the text "Render to Caesar, the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's," was preached as a reaction to Myles Cooper's visit to Virginia. The immediate occasion was the debate on toleration for dissenting groups within the colony.

## NEWSPAPERS

New York Journal; or, the General Advertiser. New York.

The issues from August 22, 1771, to September 5, 1771, contain the serialized "Extract of a Letter From a Gentleman of Virginia" by "J. T." This letter contains interesting contemporary comment on the state of the Anglican Church and the various dissenting groups in Virginia from 1768 to 1771. It deals with both the "Parson's Cause" and the episcopal controversy.

Pennsylvania Journal; and the Weekly Advertiser. Philadelphia.

The issue of March 19, 1772, contains "A Letter from a gentleman in the country to his friend in the city, occasioned by an Address from the Clergy of New-York and New Jersey, to the Episcopalians of Virginia," dated February 23, 1772, and signed "Amicus Ecclesiae," of Williamsburg. This letter was a refutation of Myles Cooper's Address and was published immediately after Cooper had arrived in Virginia as the agent of the United Convention.

Virginia Gazette (Purdie and Dixon's). Williamsburg.

The issues of this newspaper appeared weekly during the Revolutionary period. Its articles deal with the full extent of both the "Parson's Cause" and the episcopal controversy. Those issues covering the years from 1768 to 1775 proved to be the most valuable source of information on the dispute, even though they had a slight tendency to favor the pro-episcopal party.

Virginia Gazette (Rind's). Williamsburg.

A weekly newspaper which appeared throughout the Revolutionary period. The issues between the years 1765 and 1775 cover both the "Parson's Cause" and the dispute over the proposed colonial bishopric but to a lesser degree than does Purdie and Dixon's Gazette; however, there seems to be a more objective presentation of material.

## MANUSCRIPTS

Simon Gratz Autograph Collection of the American Colonial Clergy. Library of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.

Contains some one thousand letters written by clergymen of the various colonies. But three letters were germane to the subject: Thomas Bradbury Chandler

to Sir W. Johnson, May 30, 1771, discussing personal invective in the dispute; and Daniel Batwell to John Hancock, October 1, 1777, and Batwell to Henry "Lawrence" (probably Henry Laurens, President of the Continental Congress), November 7, 1777, protesting his imprisonment for being a Loyalist Anglican clergyman.

Squires, W. H. T. "Chronology of the Presbyterian Church in the Colony of Virginia: 1662-1788." Typewritten manuscript in the Library of the Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

A compilation of important dates respecting the Presbyterians of Virginia up to the time of the Constitutional Convention.

#### PAMPHLETS

"A Lover of Truth and Decency." A Vindication of the Bishop of Landaff's Sermon From the Gross Misrepresentations, and Abusive Reflections, Contained in Mr. William Livingston's Letter to His Lordship: With Some Additional Observations on Certain Passages in Dr. Chauncey's Remarks, &c. New York: J. Holt, 1768.

This defense of Bishop Ewer's sermon (the S. P. G. Anniversary Sermon of 1767) contains a series of brief comments on the need for the settlement of episcopacy in the colonies, especially in Virginia.

"An Antiepiscolian." A Letter Concerning an American Bishop, &c. to Dr. Bradbury Chandler, Ruler of St. John's Church, in Elizabeth-Town. In Answer to the Appendix of His Appeal to the Public, &c. N. p.: [W. and T. Bradford], 1768.

The first strong attack on Chandler's Appeal. Only eighteen copies of this attack were printed; the publishers name is inscribed in ink on the fly-leaf of the copy in the Library of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.

Ben Jesse, David Marin. A Letter to the Independent Reflector. New York: Hugh Gaine, 1753.

An early work on the plight of the Anglican clergy in the American colonies. A sermon in letter form, it was of use chiefly as background material.

[Blackburne, Francis]. A Critical Commentary on Archbishop Secker's Letter to the Right Honourable Horatio Walpole Concerning Bishops in America. Philadelphia: John Dunlap, 1771.

Contemporary English comments on the situation of the Anglicans in the American colonies. The

author was highly critical of the attempts of the pro-episcopal party to establish a hierarchy in America. Attributed to Blackburne by the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

Bland, Richard. A Letter to the Clergy of Virginia in Which the Conduct of the General-Assembly is Vindicated Against the Reflections Contained in a Letter to the Lords of Trade and Plantations, From the Lord-Bishop of London. Williamsburg: William Hunter, 1760.

A defense of the Two Pence Acts against the protest of the clergy and the Bishop of London by a member of the Virginia Assembly from Prince George County.

Bland, Richard. An Inquiry Into the Rights of the British Colonies, Intended as an Answer to the Regulations Lately Made Concerning the Colonies, and the Taxes Imposed Upon Them Considered. In a Letter Addressed to the Author of That Pamphlet, Earl Gregg Swem, ed. Richmond: The Appeals Press, Inc., for the William Parks Club, 1922.

Originally published in 1766, this is number I of the William Parks Club Publications. It presents a contemporary opinion of the Intolerable Acts and the British tax laws imposed between 1763 and 1766.

Chandler, Thomas Bradbury. A Free Examination of the Critical Commentary on Archbishop Secker's Letter to Mr. Walpole: to Which is Added, by way of Appendix, a Copy of Bishop Sherlock's Memorial. New York: H. Gaine, 1774.

A defense of his three Appeals and Secker's Letter to Walpole against the attack by Blackburne in his Critical Commentary. It is largely a repetition of his previous comments.

[Chandler, Thomas Bradbury]. A Friendly Address to All Reasonable Americans, On the Subjects of Our Political Confusions: In Which the Necessary Consequences of Violently Opposing the King's Troops, and of a General Non-Importation are Fairly Stated. New York: [James Rivington], 1774.

A prediction of the evils which he believed would befall the American Anglicans should the Revolution be successful and the "Presbyterian" element come to control the colonies. The last important pamphlet in the dispute. Attributed to Chandler by the Library of Congress with the note that it is occasionally attributed to Myles Cooper.

Chandler, Thomas Bradbury. An Appeal to the Public In Behalf of the Church of England In America: Wherein

the Original and Nature of the Episcopal Office are Briefly Considered, Reasons for Sending Bishops to America are Assigned, the Plan on Which it is Proposed to Send Them is Stated, and the Objections Against Sending Them are Obviated and Confuted: With an Appendix, Wherein is Given Some Account of an Anonymous Pamphlet. New York: James Parker, 1767.

Dedicated to the Archbishop of Canterbury this pamphlet set forth seven arguments for the institution of episcopacy in the colonies, the powers of the proposed bishops, and the reasons why the Americans had no reason to fear such an institution.

[Chandler, Thomas Bradbury]. The American Querist: Or, Some Questions Proposed Relative to the Present Disputes Between Great Britain, and Her Colonies. London: T. Caddel, 1775.

A series of one hundred unanswered questions concerning the political and religious differences between the Patriots and the Loyalists. Attributed to Chandler by the Library of Congress.

Chandler, Thomas Bradbury. The Appeal Defended: Or, the Proposed American Episcopate Vindicated, in Answer to the Objections and Misrepresentations of Dr. Chauncey and Others. New York: Hugh Gainé, 1769.

A reply to the attacks which had appeared in the public press as a result of his Appeal. He quotes extensively from the Commentaries of Blackstone to uphold his arguments.

Chandler, Thomas Bradbury. The Appeal Farther Defended; in Answer to the Farther Misrepresentations of Dr. Chauncey. New York: Hugh Gainé, 1771.

A reply to attacks in the public press upon the Appeal and the Appeal Defended. His attack on the anti-episcopal party is most severe in this pamphlet.

[Chandler, Thomas Bradbury]. What Think Ye of the Congress Now? Or, An Enquiry, How Far the Americans Are Bound to Abide by, and Execute the Decisions of, the Late Congress. New York: James Rivington, 1775.

Chandler's last American pamphlet, published just before he fled to England in 1775. He called upon the Americans to ignore the decisions of the Second Continental Congress and support the British view. Attributed to Chandler by the Library of Congress and the Dictionary of American Biography; sometimes attributed to Myles Cooper.



Chauncy, Charles. A Reply, to Dr. Chandler's "Appeal Defended:" Wherein His Mistakes are Rectified, His False Arguing Refuted, and the Objections Against the Planned American Episcopate Shewn to Remain in Full Force, Notwithstanding All He Has Offered To Render Them Invalid. Boston: Daniel Kneeland, Thomas Leverett, 1770.

The most prominent expounder of the anti-episcopal point of view in New England attacked the ideas brought forth in the Appeal and the Appeal Defended.

Cooper, Myles. An Address From the Clergy of New-York and New-Jersey to the Episcopalians in Virginia; Occasioned By Some Late Transactions in That Colony Relative to an American Episcopate. New York: Hugh Gaine, 1771.

Signed by Samuel Auchmuty, Thomas Bradbury Chandler, Myles Cooper, John Ogilvie, Richard Charlton, Samuel Seabury, Charles Ingliss, and Abraham Beach. Sometimes attributed to Chandler. Written in response to the activity of the Virginia Convention and the resolution of the House of Burgesses. One of two copies known to exist in the United States, The Library Company of Philadelphia.

Cresswell, Nicholas. The Journal of Nicholas Cresswell: 1774-1777. London: Jonathan Cape, Ltd., 1925.

The journal of a young officer in the British Army during the Revolution. He describes the hardships imposed upon the Loyalists in both Massachusetts and Virginia.

Davies, Samuel. Letters From the Rev. Samuel Davies &c. Shewing the State of Religion in Virginia, Particularly Among the Negroes. Likewise an Extract of a Letter From a Gentleman in London to His Friend in the Country, Containing Some Observations on the Same. London: R. Pardon, 1757.

Comments upon the situation of the Presbyterians in Virginia in the 1750's.

Davies, Samuel. The State of Religion Among the Protestant Dissenters in Virginia; In a Letter to the Rev. Mr. Joseph Bellamy, of Bethlem, in New-England: From the Reverend Mr. Samuel Davies, D. V. M. in Hanover County, Virginia. Boston: S. Kneeland, 1751.

A history of the Presbyterians in Virginia prior to 1750 in which the author sets forth the hardships imposed upon them.

Gwatkin, Thomas. A Letter to the Clergy of New York and New Jersey, Occasioned by An Address to the Episcopalians in Virginia. Williamsburg: Alex. Purdie and John Dixon, 1772.

A defense of his actions in the Virginia Convention with a list of the reasons for his opposition to the decisions of that body. Also an attack upon the activities of Myles Cooper and Thomas Bradbury Chandler.

Jefferson, Thomas. A Summary View of the Rights of British North America. Set Forth in Some Resolutions Intended For the Inspection of the Present Delegates of the People of Virginia. Now in Convention. New York: Scholar's Facsimiles and Reprints, 1943.

First published in 1774 under the pseudonym "Clementinarind," this pamphlet sets forth the basic political and economic reasons for the Revolution. Jefferson makes no mention of the episcopal question.

[Lee, Charles]. Strictures on a Pamphlet Entitled A "Friendly Address To All Reasonable Americans, On the Subject Of Our Political Confusions." Addressed to the People of America. Philadelphia: William and Thomas Bradford, 1774.

A reply to Chandler's last American pamphlet which upheld the Patriot and anti-episcopal point of view. Attributed to Charles Lee by the Dictionary of American Biography.

Leaming, Jeremiah. A Defence of the Episcopal Government of the Church of England: Containing Remarks on Two Late Noted Sermons on Presbyterian Ordination. New York: John Holt, 1766.

A general discussion of the question of Presbyterian and Anglican ordination and the validity of each.

[Livingston, Philip]. The Other Side of the Question: Or a Defence of the Liberties of North-America. In Answer to a Late Friendly Address to All Reasonable Americans, on the Subject of Our Political Confusions. New York: James Rivington, 1774.

An attack on Chandler's Friendly Address by a Patriot Anglican. He made no mention of the episcopal question and took a prudent attitude in his comments. Attributed to Livingston by the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

"Philo-Libertatis." A Looking Glass For Presbyterians. Or a Brief Examination of Their Loyalty, Merits, and Other Qualifications For Government. With Some Animadversions on the Quaker Unmask'd. Humbly Address'd to the Consideration of the Loyal Freemen of Pennsylvania. Philadelphia: n. p., 1764.

An anti-Presbyterian pamphlet referring to them as the "forces of Rebellion" and pointing out their supposed disruptive influence on the Anglican Church in Virginia.

Sachse, Julius F., ed. A Form of Prayer Issued by Special Command of His Majesty George III, London 1776, Imploring Divine Assistance Against the King's Unhappy Deluded Subjects in America Now in Open Rebellion Against the Crown. Philadelphia: Julius F. Sachse, 1848.

An example of the type of prayer for the King which was repeated in the Loyalist Anglican churches.

Secker, Thomas. A Letter to the Right Honourable Horatio Walpole, Esq; Written Jan 9, 1750-1751, By the Right Reverend Thomas Secker, LL. D. Lord Bishop of Oxford: Concerning Bishops in America. London: J. and F. Rivington, 1769.

A pamphlet published after Secker's death for the purposes of the pro-episcopal party. It is illustrative of early concern, among Church leaders, for the future security of the Church of England in America.

#### PERSONAL PAPERS

Jefferson, Thomas. The Papers of Thomas Jefferson, Julian P. Boyd, ed. 15 vols. to date, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1950-1958.

Volumes I and II of this collection of Jefferson's Papers cover the period up to 1799; however, he made few comments on the episcopal question and they proved of little value.

Madison, James. Letters and Other Writings of James Madison, Fourth President of the United States. 4 vols., Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott and Co., 1865.

Volume I covers the period of the episcopal controversy but the author had little to say on the subject, being less than twenty years of age in 1770.

Washington, George. The Writings of George Washington From the Original Sources: 1745-1799, John C. Fitzpatrick, ed. 39 vols., Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1931.

Volumes II and III of this collection cover the period of the debate over the institution of episcopacy in the American colonies, but Washington also paid little heed to the dispute.

## MONOGRAPHS

Anderson, John S. M. The History of the Church of England in the Colonies and Foreign Dependencies of the British Empire. 3 vols., London: Rivington's, 1856.

An interesting discussion of the spread of episcopacy throughout the British Empire to the middle of the nineteenth century. Volume I covers the hardships of the Anglican clergy in Virginia and volume III discusses the early activity of the Venerable Society in the American colonies. The author is definitely pro-Anglican.

Beard, Charles A., and Mary R. Beard. The Rise of American Civilization. 2 vols., New York: The Macmillan Company, 1927.

Volume I, The Agricultural Era, presents their intensive study of the American Revolution as the result of economic forces. Incomplete by admission of the authors since they deal primarily with the economic factors.

Breed, W. P. Presbyterians and the Revolution. Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1976.

A study of the Presbyterian clergy throughout the colonies and their activities during the period of the Revolution. It also discusses the effect of the Revolution on the Presbyterian Church.

Brydon, George MacLaren. Virginia's Mother Church and the Political Conditions Under Which It Grew. Richmond: Virginia Historical Society, 1947.

A history of the Episcopal Church in Virginia during the colonial and early national periods. The author has provided lists of the Bishops of London and the Royal executives of Virginia, and the conditions under which they ruled, that proved of great value.

Burk, John. The History of Virginia From its First Settlement to the Present Day. 4 vols., Petersburg: Dickson and Pescud ( vols. I-III); M. W. Dunnavant (vol. IV), 1804-1816.

A useful source of information about the Anglicans and the dissenting groups prior to the Revolution. Discussions of Davies, Waller, and the "Parson's Cause."

Cathcart, William. The Baptists and the American Revolution. Philadelphia: S. A. George and Co., 1876.

A highly emotional discussion of the trial of John Waller, and the interest taken by Patrick Henry, is found in this pro-Baptist volume.

Cross, Arthur Lyon. The Anglican Episcopate and the American Colonies. New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1902.

Volume IX of the Harvard Historical Studies. A discussions of the relations between the English hierarchy and the American Church prior to the Revolution. Cross states that "strained relations. . . strengthened the opposition to episcopacy" (p. 271) rather than opposition to episcopacy straining relations with the Mother Country.

Gipson, Lawrence Henry. The Coming of the Revolution: 1763-1775. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1954.

A volume of The New American Nation Series under the editorship of Henry Steele Commager and Richard B. Morris. An expansion of his theory that the American Revolution was a result of the "Great War for the Empire."

Greene, Evarts Boutell. The Revolutionary Generation: 1763-1790. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1943.

Volume IV of A History of American Life under the general editorship of Arthur Meier Schlesinger and Dixon Ryan Fox. The author presents a social-economic view of the causes of the American Revolution, assigning little importance to the episcopal question.

Hacker, Louis M. The Triumph of American Capitalism: the Development of Forces in American History to the End of the Nineteenth Century. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1940.

Chapter twelve of this volume sets forth the author's views of the Revolution as a war for American mercantile capitalism, which emerged victorious.

Jameson, John Franklin. The American Revolution Considered as a Social Movement. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1926.

A series of four lectures, delivered in 1925 under the auspices of the Louis Clark Vanuxem Foundation, in which the episcopal controversy is mentioned, in passing, as a political factor.

Manross, William Wilson. A History of the American Episcopal Church. New York: Morehouse-Gorham Co., 1950.

A general history of the Episcopal Church from colonial times to the present which provided background information and numerous minor facts.

Miller, John Chester. Origins of the American Revolution. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1949.

A work presenting the standard political viewpoint of the Revolution as set forth earlier by Van Tyne. The author draws some interesting parallels between the actions of the anti-episcopal Anglicans of Virginia and the anti-episcopal New England Calvinists.

Schlesinger, Arthur Meier. The Colonial Merchants and the American Revolution 1763-1776. New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1957.

A discussion of the mercantile interests of America during the Revolution. There is no mention of the episcopal controversy.

Semple, Robert B. A History of the Rise and Progress of the Baptists in Virginia. Richmond: John O'Lynch, 1810.

A subjective approach to the history of the Virginia Baptists in the colonial period. Chapter three, "From the Commencement of Legal Persecution Until the Abolition of the Established Church," covers the difficulties of the various early Baptist ministers.

Sweet, William Warren. Religion in Colonial America. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1947.

A work adhering to the view set forth by Cross that "strained relations. . . strengthened the opposition to episcopacy." It proved useful for a partial list of the Commissaries of Virginia.

Sweet, William Warren. Religion in the Development of American Culture. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1952.

An extension of Religion in Colonial America into the early national period. It mentions the episcopal question merely in passing.

Van Tyne, Claude Halstead. The Causes of the War of Independence. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1922.

Volume I of The Founding of the American Republic. A thorough study of the causes of the American Revolution in which they are viewed as political in nature. Little space is devoted to the episcopal question in Virginia; however, its effect upon the New England clergy, both Anglican and dissenting, is covered in detail.

Wahlke, John C., ed. The Causes of the American Revolution. Boston: D. C. Heath and Company, 1950.

A collection of essays by prominent American historians appearing in Problems in American Civil-

zation (the Amherst Series). It contains "The First American Revolution" by Louis M. Hacker (pp. 1-24), which expands his thesis that the Revolution was brought about by economic factors and that it was a triumph for capitalism.

#### ARTICLES

Gipson, Lawrence Henry. "The American Revolution as an Aftermath of the Great War for the Empire, 1754-1763." Political Science Quarterly: A Review Devoted to the Historical, Statistical, and Comparative Study of Politics, Economics, and Public Law, LXV (1950), 86-104.

This article sets forth the view that the Revolution was the result of British policies put into effect during the French and Indian War.

"Notes and Suggestions." William and Mary Quarterly (first series), V (January, 1897), 149-155.

This article contains two letters relating to the episcopal controversy: Richard Bland to Thomas Adams, August 1, 1771, attacks episcopacy as contrary to the English common law (p. 154); Thomas Nelson to Edward Hunt, May 11, 1771, noted the fear of episcopal rule prevalent among the dissenters of England (p. 149).

#### REFERENCE AIDS

Bruce, Philip Alexander. The Virginia Plutarch. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1929.

Biographical sketches of Virginia leaders during the Revolution and Confederation periods.

Harbottle, Thomas Benfield, comp. Dictionary of Quotations (Classical). New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1958.

A collection of Latin and Greek quotations which proved useful in translating the passages from the Aeneid.

Johnson, Allen, and Dumas Malone, et al., eds. Dictionary of American Biography. 23 vols., New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1928-1958.

Biographical sketches of prominent Americans of all periods which proved useful in obtaining background information.

Stephen, Leslie, and Sidney Lee, et al., eds. The Dictionary of National Biography. 22 vols. and 5 supplements, London: Oxford University Press, 1937.

Biographical sketches of prominent Englishmen of all periods. It was especially valuable for background information on the various bishops and commissaries.

White's Conspectus of American Biography: a Tabulated Record of American History and Biography. New York: James T. White and Company, 1937.

This work is a collection of chronological tables of men holding important offices in the United States since the beginning of the colonial period. Compiled by the editorial staff of the National Cyclopaedia of American Biography.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHICAL AIDS

Brigham, Clarence Saunders, ed. History and Bibliography of American Newspapers: 1690-1820. 2 vols., Worcester: American Antiquarian Society, 1947.

These two volumes provide a guide to all newspapers published during the Revolutionary period and the various names under which they appeared.

Cappon, Lester J., and Stella Duff, eds. Virginia Gazette Index: 1763-1780. 2 vols., Williamsburg: The Institute of Early American History and Culture, 1950.

These volumes provide a topical index to all material in the various Virginia Gazettes between the dates indicated. They proved to be a valuable guide to the articles cited in this work.

Nelson, William, comp. The Controversy Over the Proposition for an American Episcopate, 1767-1774: a Bibliography of the Subject. Paterson: The Paterson History Club, 1909.

An incomplete but nevertheless valuable guide to thirty titles on the episcopal dispute. It provides a list of the more important comments on the subject.

Sherwood, Elizabeth J., and Ida T. Hopper, comps. The Papers of Thomas Jefferson: Index to Volumes 1-6. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1954.

This index provides a guide to the statements of Jefferson on a multitude of subjects during the period of the American Revolution.



Swem, Earl Gregg, comp. Virginia Historical Index. 2 vols.,  
Roanoke; Stone Printing and Manufacturing Co.,  
1934-1936.

An index to all articles appearing in the various  
historical journals of Virginia.

## APPENDIX A

### THE GOVERNORS OF VIRGINIA

1698-1775<sup>1</sup>

Francis Nicholson, Governor, December, 1698  
George Hamilton, Earl of Orkney, Absentee Governor, 1704-1737  
Edward Nott, Lieutenant Governor, 1705-1706  
Edmund Jennings, President of the Council; Acting Lieutenant Governor, August, 1706  
Robert Hunter, Appointed Lieutenant Governor in August, 1707, but captured by the French and never reached Virginia  
Alexander Spotswood, Lieutenant Governor, June, 1710  
Hugh Drysdale, Lieutenant Governor, September, 1722  
Robert Carter, President of the Council; Acting Lieutenant Governor, July, 1726  
William Gooch, Lieutenant Governor, September, 1727  
William Anne Keppell, Earl of Albemarle, Absentee Governor, 1737-1754  
William Gooch, Lieutenant Governor to 1749; Knighted, 1746  
Rev. James Blair, President of the Council; Acting Lieutenant Governor, 1740-1741  
John Robinson, President of the Council; Acting Lieutenant Governor, 1749  
Thomas Lee, President of the Council; Acting Lieutenant Governor, September, 1749  
Lewis Burwell, President of the Council; Acting Lieutenant Governor, November, 1750  
Robert Dinwiddie, Lieutenant Governor, 1751  
John Campbell, Earl of Loudoun, Governor of all the American Colonies, 1756-1763 (Never came to Virginia)  
John Blair, President of the Council; Acting Lieutenant Governor, January, 1758  
Francis Fauquier, Lieutenant Governor, June, 1758  
Sir Jeffrey Amherst, Absentee Governor, 1763-1768

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<sup>1</sup>George Maclaren Brydon, Virginia's Mother Church and the Political Conditions Under Which it Grew (Richmond, Virginia Historical Society, 1947), xx-xxi.

John Blair, President of the Council; Acting Lieutenant  
Governor, March, 1768  
Norborne Berkeley, Baron de Botetourt, Governor, October,  
1768  
William Nelson, President of the Council; Acting Lieutenant  
Governor, October, 1770  
John Murray, Earl of Dunmore, Governor from August, 1771,  
until he fled from Virginia in June, 1775

APPENDIX B

THE BISHOPS OF LONDON

1607-1787<sup>1</sup>

Richard Vaughan, 1604  
Thomas Ravis, 1607  
George Abbot, 1610  
John King, 1611  
George Montaigne, 1621  
William Laud, 1628  
William Juxon, 1633  
Bishopric abolished by Commonwealth, 1644  
Gilbert Sheldon, 1660  
Humphrey Henchman, 1663  
Henry Compton, 1675  
John Robinson, 1714  
Edmund Gibson, 1723  
Thomas Sherlock, 1748  
Thomas Hayter, 1761  
Richard Osbaldeston, 1762  
Richard Terrick, 1764  
Robert Lowth, 1777  
Beilby Porteus, 1787

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<sup>1</sup>George Maclaren Brydon, Virginia's Mother Church and the Political Conditions Under Which it Grew (Richmond, Virginia Historical Society, 1947), xxii.

APPENDIX C

THE COMMISSARIES OF VIRGINIA

1689-1777<sup>1</sup>

James Blair, 1689-1743  
William Dawson, 1743-1755  
Thomas Dawson, 1755-1761  
William Robinson, 1761-1771  
James Horrocks, 1771-1772  
John Camm, 1772-1777

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<sup>1</sup>Compiled by the author.

VITA

George William Pilcher

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Arts

Thesis: THE CONTROVERSY CONCERNING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF  
AN ANGLICAN BISHOPRIC IN THE COLONY OF VIRGINIA  
AS A CAUSE OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

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Biographical:

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Professional and honorary organizations: American  
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Gamma Mu; Omicron Delta Kappa; Phi Kappa Phi.