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THE REVEREND SAMUEL PETERS (1735-
1826): CONNECTICUT ANGLICAN,
LOYALIST, PRIEST

By

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PREFACE

The Reverend Samuel Peters was an Anglican clergyman in pre-revolutionary Connecticut. An ardent loyalist driven from his homeland to England, he eventually returned to the United States with a land claim to a vast area in the Old Northwest. Unsuccessful in that endeavor, Peters spent his last years in obscurity and poverty in New York City. Although he was not a major figure, his life touched many of the major events in Anglo-America during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

Several articles have been published concerning his activities as Churchman and missionary for the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, as refugee, as friend and advisor to many New England loyalists in England and Canada, as candidate for the Episcopate in Nova Scotia, Canada, and Vermont, as propagandist and historian, as land agent and speculator. No one has attempted a book length study of Peters's life, thought, and influence on society and literature. An eminent American church historian has called Peters "a major, secondary figure in the Episcopal Church."

Considerable manuscript material is available for every aspect of his life. His daughter accused him of writing

letters as a hobby and many of his epistles are scattered along the north Atlantic from Halifax to Philadelphia. The major collection, formerly at the New York Historical Society, is now located at the National Archives of the Episcopal Church, Austin, Texas. Other important collections are held by the Diocese of Connecticut, the Connecticut Historical Society, and the Public Archives of Canada. Peters's letters and official reports to the S.P.G. are available on microfilm at major depositories in the United States. I used those at the University of Texas, Austin.

I have followed the expanded method from the Harvard Guide to American History as the model for transcribing manuscripts, using sic only when meaning would otherwise be unclear.

I could not have completed this study without the James Mills Fellowship granted annually by an anonymous donor to a priest in the Diocese of Oklahoma. Especially am I grateful for the aid of the Right Reverend W. R. Chilton Powell, D.D., LL.D., S.T.D., Bishop of Oklahoma, and Mr. Archibald Edwards, Chairman of the Selection Committee.

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Dr. Keith Cameron (Trinity, Connecticut), priest, Archivist, and Historiographer for that Diocese; to the staff of the Connecticut Historical Society Library and Archives, particularly Miss Doris Cook, who spent much time searching for letters; to Mrs. Louise R. Turo, Secretary to the Bishop of Vermont; to Dr. Richard Weiss, Chairman of the Language Department, Kentucky Wesleyan College, who gave invaluable assistance with the foreign language editions of Peters's Connecticut history; to the staff of the library at Kentucky Wesleyan, the administration, who gave encouragement and the time to complete the manuscript, and particularly, Dr. Lee Dew, Chairman of the History Department; to Dr. James Mooney, American Antiquarian Society; and Dr. Paul Sifton, Library of Congress. All of these people and many other curators, archivists, and librarians, devoted servants to history, from whom I sought and received help, I gratefully remember.

To my close friends, Stanley, Nita, and James C., I can only acknowledge that their support and encouragement enabled me to get through some very difficult times. My colleague and friend, Dr. John Combs (Kentucky Wesleyan) saved me from many errors, stylistic and otherwise. Thank you seems inadequate for the many hours he spent editing the manuscript. He is not to be held responsible for those errors that remain.

I can find no adequate way to acknowledge the help and support from the members of my dissertation committee. Dr.

Theodore L. Agnew, Dr. H. James Henderson, and Dr. Homer L. Knight provided help, friendship, and strength when I most needed it to complete this dissertation.

To my wife Jane, to our sons and their families, I extend my deepest gratitude for their unstinting love and affection that made this biography a joy to do.

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ABBREVIATIONS USED

- A.O. 13/42 - Commission of Enquiry into the losses and services of the American Loyalists. Public Record Office 13, American Loyalists Claims, Bundle 42. Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Photostat copies.
- BTCHS - Benjamin Trumbull Papers, Connecticut Historical Society.
- DCT - Diocese of Connecticut Archives Transcripts.
- DVA - Diocese of Vermont Archives
- GHC - Samuel Peters. A General History of Connecticut.
- HHP - _____. History of Hugh Peters.
- HJ - Hannah Peters Jarvis.
- "Hebron" - Samuel Peters. "History of Hebron."
- HMPEC - Historical Magazine of the Protestant Episcopal Church.
- JBCNS - Jacob Bailey Collection. Public Archives of Nova Scotia.
- JPAC - Jarvis Family Papers. Public Archives of Canada.
- JPNB - Jarvis Papers. New Brunswick Museum.
- "Memoirs" - "Memoirs of Bishop Inglis." Public Archives of Canada - M. G. 23 c. 6, Reel C2227.
- PAC 42 - Colonial Office Records - Canada. Q Series, MG11. C.O. 42. Public Archives of Canada.
- Political Magazine - The Political Magazine and Parliamentary, Naval, Military, and Literary Journal (London).

- PP - Peters Papers. Archives of the Protestant Episcopal Church.
- PPMD - Samuel Parker Papers. Massachusetts Diocesan Library.
- RCAL - Royal Commission on the Losses and Services of American Loyalists, 1783-1785.
- SP - Samuel Peters
- SPCHS - Samuel Peters Papers. Connecticut Historical Society.
- SPG - Society for the Propagation of the Gospel.
- SPG Micro-film 664 - British Empire Church Records. SPG Collection.
- VHS - Peters Papers. Vermont Historical Society Archives.
- WBPW - William H. Bell Papers. Wisconsin Historical Association.

CHAPTER I

EARLY YEARS AND MINISTRY

Introduction

From the letters, sermons and other writings of the Reverend Samuel Peters (1735-1826), Connecticut Anglican Loyalist Priest, and from those of his contemporaries, we gain a picture of a complicated eighteenth century man, an ardent Churchman and royalist, a devoted loyal friend, willing to support and aid the helpless, an irascible, opinionated, violent and iron-willed opponent to his enemies. In his writing we see a bitter, vindictive, partisan loyalist who believed himself betrayed by his country (Connecticut) and by his fellow Churchmen, and finally by King George and his adopted country (England). Historians since the eighteenth century have not dealt kindly with him. A contemporary, Ezra Stiles, called him an "infamous parricide," Samuel Middlebrook labeled him "a Yankee Munchausen and "the Don Quixote of a land office business." "Connecticut's eccentric historian" by Sheldon Cohen, "a bizarre character" by Milo Quaife, "a celebrated liar" by Clifford Shipton, "a nut" by Edmund Morgan, have been some of the epithets used to describe the subject of this dissertation.

A product of his times, Peters was a provincial American who backed the wrong causes in 1759, in 1776, in 1792, in 1805, and again in 1817. Like many men of this period, he desperately wanted position and wealth. He sought to gain them through the church but lacked powerful enough backing in England and then in the United States. From his beginnings he sought land, the way to wealth in America, on the frontier in Connecticut, Vermont, and New Hampshire, then in Canada, and late in his life in the Northwest Territory. Always choosing the wrong side, he gained nothing he most desired, which explains some of his bitterness and passion. I have quoted Peters as much as is reasonable to reveal the man. The accompanying portrait shows him in his prime (Fig. 1). Peters had a commanding personal appearance. With a remarkably erect and large muscular body, he was over six feet tall. His eyes were blue and his face marked by the scars of smallpox. As a speaker at the Hebron Bicentennial described him, "his iron frame encompassed an iron will."

Beginnings

We can divide the life of the Reverend Samuel Peters into three parts: (1) his birth and early life in Hebron, Connecticut, where he grew up and remained as a missionary priest for the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts until 1774, when patriotic mobs drove him to England; (2) his life in England as a loyalist refugee, a



Figure 1. The Reverend Samuel Peters
Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto. (71 Mis. Can. 16).
(Additional Portraits, Appendix A).

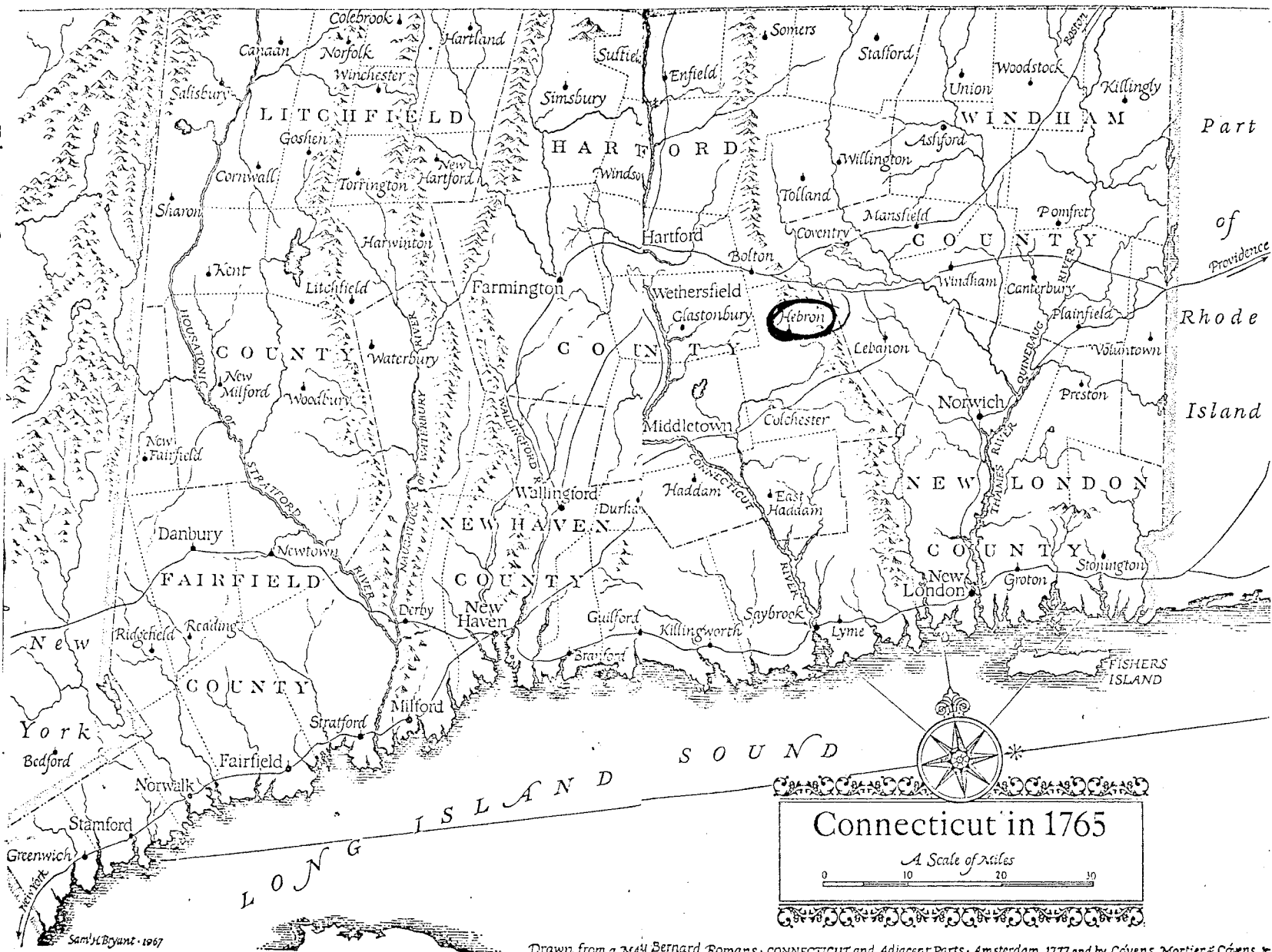
writer, and a seeker of official preferment including an Episcopal mitre, until 1805; (3) his return to America as a land speculator with a claim to the Carver Grant in Wisconsin and Minnesota, until his death in New York City in 1826.

The earliest recorded progenitor of the Peters family in America, Andrew Peeters (1634-1713) came to Massachusetts Bay Colony by way of Holland in 1659.¹ In that same year on 18 November he was licensed as a distiller in Boston. Within four years he moved to Andover, where he became a prominent member of the community, a selectman, and Treasurer of First Church. Three of his four sons were killed in forays by Indians, who burned his distillery to the ground. One son, William (1672-1696),² was slain just ten months after the birth of his son, John (1695-1754),³ the father of Samuel Peters. In 1717 John and his new bride moved to Hebron, Connecticut, where he prospered as a farmer.

Hebron, the first town in Connecticut to be named from the Bible, was settled in 1704, incorporated and named by the General Assembly in 1705 (Fig. 2). The village lies near the center of the state, about twenty miles southeast of Hartford, fifty miles northeast of New Haven. Samuel Peters described Hebron as he remembered it about 1750:

Eight miles from North to South and six miles from East to West and since divided into four parishes. It is situated eight miles East of the great river Connecticut in the county of Toland - Its soil is a dark loam. It has hills and vallies but no mountains. It has four Roads from North to South eight rods wide and many cross roads. The Post Road from New Haven to Providence and Boston passes through it; and another from New London to

Figure 2. Connecticut in 1765 Showing Hebron
Richard L. Bushman, From Puritan to Yankee, frontispiece.



Drawn from a MAY Bernard Romans · CONNECTICUT and Adjacent Parts · Amsterdam, 1777 and by Cövens, Mortier & Cövens, Jr.

Hartford, Northampton and Dartmouth College.

The streets are lined with Farmers houses and barns, not inelegant [In Figure 3 I have circled the Peters brothers's residences].... Four small rivers run through the Township; one empties Eastward into the River Thames and three Westward into Connecticut River and supply water sufficient for many saw and grist mills....When the Township was incorporated it contained 30,720 acres....At the S.E. corner of Hebron is a pond said to be three miles long and two miles wide....Near Hebron meeting house is a waterfall very noisy in the time of floods and hastening down some hundred feet.⁴

Into this small rural New England community, Samuel Peters was born 20 November 1735 (o.s.),⁵ the tenth child of twelve.⁶ All but one of his eight older siblings were living at his birth, so he grew up in a large family. Adequately prepared and educated in the Hebron Academy under Peter Sweatland, A.M., headmaster, "whose greatest Excellency consisted in the perfect knowledge of the Oriental Languages."⁷ Peters entered Yale College at the age of seventeen in September, 1753. Although living in a Puritan community, he had been raised in the Anglican church.

As it had to most New England towns, Anglicanism came to Hebron through the work of missionaries sent out and supported by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts.⁸ The Congregational Church in Hebron, formed shortly after its settlement, had been authorized in 1716 to have a settled minister. The following year the Reverend John Bliss (1690-1742) came to the community, was ordained on the 19th of November and began his pastoral duties.⁹ They must have been arduous, for on 16 November 1731, the South

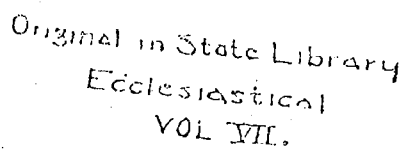


Figure 3. Hebron Showing Peterses Residences.
Connecticut Historical Society

Consociation of Hartford "found him not guilty of excessive drinking at a funeral, taking into account his previous sobriety and 'considering the weather.'"¹⁰ In spite of this lapse, the church grew so that the congregation deemed it necessary in 1734 to build a new meeting house, the majority choosing a site near the middle of the village. Residents in the northern section wanted it kept on the same site. Bliss, unable to mediate, asked for his dismissal, which was granted. At the urging of the North Party, he began holding schismatic meetings at his home, for which he and five of his most prominent supporters were presented before Hartford County Court, 17 June 1735. They were charged with having "carried on divine worship contrary to the statutes of this Colony." Although they were found not guilty, Court costs were assessed amounting to about £5 each.¹¹ Shortly thereafter, a half-witted fanatic, Moses Hutchinson, Jr., burned down the old meeting house to put an end to the dispute.

Following a refusal to pay taxes for a new building or for support of another minister, about twenty families declared for the Church of England and invited the Reverend Samuel Seabury (1706-1764), S.P.G. missionary in New London, to take charge of the newly-formed parish, named for St. Peter. One of these families was that of John Peters, who gave land for the support of a resident minister.¹² Thus, 1735, the year of Samuel Peters's birth, saw an Anglican parish established, with Bliss as lay reader in charge until

he could go to London and receive Holy Orders.¹³ The search for a resident priest became a long and difficult task, for Bliss died on the eve of his departure for London as did four others, each chosen as rector of the parish and sent abroad for ordination. St. Peters Parish acquired its first full-time minister when Samuel Peters survived the voyage in 1758.

Life at Yale

By the time young Peters arrived at Yale, the Church of England was well established in New Haven. On Friday, 4 September 1722, the Board of Trustees at Commencement received a declaration by the Rector, two tutors, and four other Congregational ministers, all graduates of the institution, that affirmed their belief in episcopacy and announced their intention to seek episcopal ordination in England.¹⁴ Their influence continued so that at the commencement in 1748 nine Anglican clergymen were present, and among the graduates five later became priests in the Church of England.¹⁵

As with the rest of Peters's childhood and youth, little of his life at Yale is known. One punishment, a ten pence fine for participating in an unauthorized lottery, was recorded in faculty punishment accounts.¹⁶ A Latin declamation with an English translation in verse remains to illustrate academic accomplishment:

Fluunt omnia et in assidua Diminutione sunt Corpora nostra, rapiuntur Fluminum More; Quicquid vides currit cum Tempore.

Still caling [sic] Time, and thou, O envious Age
 All ruinate, diminisht by the rage
 Of your devouring Teeth, all that have breath,
 Consume and languish, by a lingring Death.¹⁷

In his later correspondence with friends, we see Peters's bitter reaction toward the narrowness and bigotry of Puritanism and toward the parochialism of the college. Twenty-five years later, he described college life:

Each class has its proper tutor. Once a week the president examines them all in the public hall, superintends their disputations and scientific demonstrations, and if any student appears to be negligent, orders him under the care of a special tutor.

Undoubtedly reflecting his own experiences, Peters pointed out that this punishment "seldom fails of producing its intended effect." His own problems in learning proper manners after he fled to London, Peters blamed on Yale's neglect of "Oratory, music and politeness," as well as the lack of amusements such as "cards, dancing or music." Instead, the boys were "allowed two hours play with the foot-ball every day," with evenings spent in "reading and composition." Peters, still smarting from his own reception by London society, believed that

Were the corporation less rigid and more inclined to tolerate some reasonable amusements and polite accomplishments among the youth, they would add greatly to the fame and increase of the college; and the students would not be known by every stranger to have been educated in Connecticut. The disadvantage under which they at present appear, from the want of address, is much to be regretted.¹⁸

In his correspondence we find only one instance that favorably recalls his college experience. Writing to a classmate,

the Reverend Abraham Beach (1740-1828), after the Revolution, he mentions the "Halcyon days which we passed among the beans and mundungus smoak of Yale the magna mater."¹⁹

During his second year at Yale, Peters's father died, leaving the seventeen-year-old £1,000, the means by which he finished his education.²⁰ Shortly after his graduation in 1757, Samuel Peters decided to enter the Anglican ministry, in order to help "the poor and unfortunate of Hebron."²¹

Ordination and Ministry

The congregation of St. Peters rejoiced on learning that a native son was willing to make the dangerous and expensive voyage for ordination, a voyage made necessary by the lack of an Anglican bishop in North America.²² Five times the Hebronite Anglicans had failed to secure a resident priest,²³ all the while suffering their neighbors' taunts that these misfortunes resulted from divine interposition to prevent the growth of prelacy in the "New Israel."²⁴ Immediately the vestry petitioned the Venerable Society in Peters's behalf. Pointing out that they had "heretofore been at very great expense in sending over three Candidates for Holy Orders," they had also,

purchased a Glebe of very good Land, part arable, part Meadow, and the rest covered with wood...and they have a Church, which has been erected these twenty years.

The Wardens and vestrymen gave bond that the parish would pay £30 regularly for Peters's support which was "as well as

their poor circumstances will permit them." The petition concluded with a plea for the Society's assistance.²⁵

Late in 1758 the young provincial candidate for orders left on the perilous journey. Peters stopped in New York, where he received a warm letter of recommendation from Mathew Graves and a restrained one from Samuel Johnson.²⁶ Surviving the hazards of the ocean crossing, the Connecticut Yankee arrived in London to begin the process that changed the Village boy from New England to a man of the world, and, although he remained a rural priest and squire for fifteen years, his life style was that of an "English nobleman" who "built his house in a forest, kept his coach and looked with some degree of scorn upon republicans."²⁷ A revealing episode describing this change, occurred soon after his arrival when he met Archbishop Thomas Secker (1693-1768):

On seeing him enter the Room with 2 servants bearing his Train, etc., Peters was overwhelmed with such an Awe that he was unable to speak, so much as to answer any common Question. The Archbishop observing his Confusion, seated him in a chair by his side and spoke to him words to this Effect, 'Mr. P. you have come from New England and I suppose you look upon an Archbishop to be something more than human; but I am as much a mortal Creature as yourself and you have no reasons to be awed at my Presence' - putting his Hand on Peters' knee at the same time in the most familiar Manner, and even patting his cheek. This kindness and condescension had the intended effect; Mr. P. soon recovered the Use of his Tongue and Senses; and ever afterwards conversed with his Grace with great Ease and Freedom.²⁸

The Society found acceptable the petition and letters of recommendation at its February meeting and agreed that following ordination, Peters would be appointed to Hebron

with a £20 subsidy.²⁹ On 11 March 1759, the Bishop of Chester, acting for the Bishop of London, made Samuel Peters a deacon.³⁰ Shortly afterwards, the young ordinand fell ill with the dreaded smallpox which had tragically defeated the previous hopes of the Hebronites. Peters recovered but was heavily pock-marked the rest of his life. Archbishop Secker had his personal physician attend him and paid the 75 guinea fee. The Venerable Society further assisted by voting to give Peters £20 for "expenses in the smallpox."³¹

By 25 August, Peters had recovered enough to be ordained priest by the Bishop of London, who honoured him by ordering his first sermon preached in the Church of St. Sepulchre, London, where his reputed great-uncle Hugh Peters had preached.³² Declining an offer of a London living, he accepted the £19.7.6 royal bounty granted to all American ordinands appointed missionaries of the S.P.G., and returned to Hebron to begin his ministry.

Landing at Boston 23 November 1759, the Reverend Samuel Peters began the typical life of an S.P.G. missionary in rural New England, ministering first to the thirty-one families in his parish but soon travelling to neighboring communities which were without an Anglican priest. His closest neighbor, the Reverend Mr. Graves, reported to the Society that "I hear Mr. Peters behaves very well, is very laborious, and gains the approbation of all religious Societies."³³ Responding to his efforts outside of St. Peters, the Society increased his stipend and voted two gratuities of £10.³⁴

Shortly after his return to Connecticut, Peters married Hannah Owen, descendent of the Puritan Divine, Dr. John Owen (1616-1683), Vice Chancellor of Oxford. She bore him three daughters before her premature death.* Peters wrote the Society,

My once agreeable consort was taken sick soon after Christmas 1764 with a consumption and so continued until 25 of October last and then changed this contending world for one far better, of which same diseases /sic/ died one of my children - kind Providence has left me one little child to help me bear my tryals.³⁶

Tragedy continued to stalk the minister's matrimonial ventures. His next bride, Abigail Gilbert, only 17, died three weeks after the wedding. According to the newspaper report

Her remains were interred in St. Peters Church in Hebron....Her Curtains that were made of the Gold and Silver Thread, to adorn her Lodgings, are furled up being changed for a Napkin and a Winding Sheet, spun by the Spider and the Worm.³⁷

The mourning groom wrote the epitaph,

Here is interred ye Corpse of Mrs. Abigail Peters, a second Consort of ye Revd Mr. Samuel Peters, a Daughter of Samuel Gilbert Esq. by Mrs. Abigail his wife, born January 31st, 1752, and married June 24th, 1769 and died July 14th, 1769, a Wedding Changed to Lamentation, ye Greatest Greif /sic/ in all Creation, a Mourning Groom in Desperation.³⁸

Samuel Peters waited four years before marrying for the third and last time. On 21 April 1773 he wed Mary Birds-eye.³⁹ She, too, followed his previous wives to the grave;

*The first daughter, also named Hannah for her mother, died four years earlier.

dying 16 June 1774, eleven days after the birth of Peters's only surviving son, named after the maternal grandparents, William Birdseye (Figs. 4 and 5).

One of the problems the Anglican priest faced as he began his ministry in Hebron was the hostility of the Congregational establishment, whom he persisted in calling "dissenters." In one of the first full reports to the Venerable Society, he voiced a theme that would recur again and again. After praising his congregation as "religiously attentive to my instructions" and noting that their hearts were filled with gratitude for "sending them their desire, in a worthy Missionary," he wrote,

the Dissenters (tho' very spightfull at my coming home, doing all they could to destroy my Character, taking my Groveling ways to prevent my Service, and the growth of the Chh. throned by modesty and truth, railing against the Society and Bishops by many bitter words, worthy of American Puritans.)

The Hebronites had changed after a while and now

are become more mannerly, and sensible of their ignorance and folly, so that on holy days they will almost any of them come to hear me - their teachers seem to be very fond of me at present. Good friendship now seems to subsist. I hope I've seen the worst, and in a short time confirm it.⁴⁰

Apparently he correctly assessed the dissenters in Hebron itself, for the attacks on him after this were from outside the village.

During the period the Reverend Mr. Seabury had visited St. Peters, the congregation had built a "small but decent church" on land donated by Bliss.⁴¹ By now it had fallen



Figure 4. Headstones of Samuel Peters's Three Wives.
(Photograph by Author, August, 1971.)



Figure 5. Old Cemetery of St. Peters.
(Photograph by Author, August, 1971.)

into disrepair, and Peters inherited the responsibility for restoring it. In 1761 he reported the repair of the church, although "the charge is great for so few, being difficult times upon the account of the War."⁴² Three years later, Peters announced that in the past summer the parish "subscribed about £90...in order to finish the inside of the Chh. It only wants Plaistering now, which is to be done in the Spring."⁴³ It was duly completed "in a decent manner by the help of Mrs. Mary Cursette's Legacy of £300 old tenor, which should have been paid 20 years ago."⁴⁴ The same year the parish received a handsome bequest from Dr. Samuel Shipman's estate, "the interest of it yearly to pay the Minister's Rates for the poor People that Come to Chh. who are unable to pay anything." Peters mentioned this

remarkable instance of Charity in a Connecticut Man,...hoping it may be of peculiar advantage to Encourage others to follow the Blessed Example - and its novelty attone for my frequent troubling you and that most venerable Society.⁴⁵

The willing Peters continued to assist many neighboring parishes and scattered Anglicans in central Connecticut. In one year he travelled

2,000 miles, and willingly for the prospect before me, and am willing to persevere and will, as long as my health and purse will permit, the former being very high, the latter very low.⁴⁶

Nevertheless he continually tried to find more clergy for the mission fields in Connecticut. In 1760 he recommended Samuel Andrews (c.1736-1818), "A likely Young man," with "a possibility of doing much Good in Wallingford and Places

adjacent."⁴⁷ In 1762, he proposed Roger Viets (1737-1811), "for holy Orders for Cymbsury as an assistant to the poor distracted Mr. Gibbs."⁴⁸ The next year he asked the Society to ordain Ebenezer Kneeland (d. 1772), who was a catechist at Flushing, Long Island, and a native of Hebron. In his letter of commendation Peters described the qualities of the candidate reflecting his own ideas for the Anglican Priesthood:

Mr. Kneeland has been and is of a meek and Peaceable temper and a worthy member of the Chh., obtained to a good degree in Learning, which will enable him to be of much service as a missionary from the venerable Society.⁴⁹

The same year he proposed "one John Peters, my Brother's son educated at Yale College."⁵⁰ Although the Society had no vacancies then, the next year they informed Peters "that if his Nephew is willing to go to North Carolina; he may have leave to come over for holy Orders."⁵¹ By then John Peters was no longer interested and never did receive ordination.

In 1770 Samuel Peters made his last recommendations to the Society from Connecticut when he proposed Ephraim Lewis and Asa Bebee, "both educated at Yale College in Hewhaven, both married Men and both of my Parish."⁵² As early as 1766, he had mentioned

Millington and Middle Haddam, about 16 or 20 miles distant from me have hired Mr. Asa Beebee, who was educated at Yale College, an Exemplary good Man to read Prayers and Sermons, which excuses me almost from any Duty there.⁵³

By then the S.P.G. was in financial difficulty and informed Peters, "that the Society have no opportunity to provide for

Mr. Ephraim Lewis and Mr. Asa Bebee."⁵⁴ Their earlier appointments of Andrews, Viets, and Kneeland had eased Peters's duties in the surrounding Connecticut missions.

Connecticut, by this time, was too limited in scope for the hard-working, ambitious minister. The New Hampshire Grants, present day Vermont, "whose Frontiers are settling with great Expedition and many of the Planters piously inclined to the worship of our Church," held great attraction for him. In addition, he was

even harrassed by their Importunities to Sollicit /sic/ the venerable Board...in their behalf.... The late Governor of New Hampshire made generous incouragements for a Clergyman in each of those Towns, which will be of no service to this Generation unless seasonably Noticed - These People have requested me to make them one visit, but they being so remote, as 150 miles, I have declined it, untill I know the mind of my Benefactors in the Affair.⁵⁵

Although he failed to mention it in any of his reports to the S.P.G., Peters made a short trip to the Grants in October, 1768, after being assured of financial support by his benefactors. On that trip as,

Priest Peters stood on the pinnacle of the rock, he received a bottle of spirits from Colonel Taplin; then harranguing the company with a short history of the infant settlement....and to give it a new name worthy of the Athenians and ancient Spartans, which new name is Verd-Mont, in token that her mountains and hills shall be ever green, and shall never die...poured the spirits around him, and cast the bottle on the rock Etam.

Thereafter in all his references to the state, he called it Verdmont, saying that the bastardization of the French to Vermont made it a "mountain of maggots."⁵⁶

A year later Peters mentioned to the Society a desire to make the missionary journey to the Grants because

I have had several families of the Church in Hebron since my last report removed up into those New Towns (150 miles distant) - Whose Spiritual Wants are many.⁵⁷

Moreover, he wrote later,

By this time I apprehend my Church in Hebron would have been full and Crowded...had not Many Members died and others Gone from us into the new Settlements....Many Churchmen from all Parts of New England have transplanted themselves and families hither.

Hearing nothing from the Society as to any plans for mission activity in "the new Settlements on Connecticutt River - which are the Frontiers of New York and Hampshire Governments,"⁵⁸ Peters appealed to the convention of the Connecticut clergy which met at Litchfield, 13 June 1770. They approved the idea and "thought it truely interesting to the pious designs of the venerable Society."⁵⁹

Accordingly, on 10 September of that year, Samuel Peters and his clerk undertook an arduous missionary journey through western Connecticut, Vermont, and upstate New York, arriving back in Hebron 6 November. In those three months they had gone 200 miles northeast up the Connecticut River, spending four weeks in Central Vermont, then crossed the Green Mountains to Ft. Miller on the Hudson River, where they spent three days. They then travelled southwest to Sharon on the Mohawk River, Peters preaching at Schenectady and Albany before returning home. He had "Baptized 35 infants and buried one - Preached as often as every other Day, travelled 700 or

800 miles in a way so uneven that I was in perils often." Understandably he believed that God should "be praised for my preservation, and that I am alive to pity and pray for those in the Wilderness."⁶⁰

Frustrated perhaps by boredom after the glamorous journey and by the feeling that he had accomplished all he could at Hebron, in his Spring report to the S.P.G., Samuel Peters asked, for the first time, if he might be moved "from my Native Town to Some better Living when a vacancy shall Happen."⁶¹ The Society ignored his request and Peters made no further request until in 1773 when he heard of the death of the rector at Portsmouth, New Hampshire. "If my past Services may be judged anything in my Favour," he wrote, "I feel a willingness to plead that merit on this Occasion that I may have that Appointment in that Mission." He began his petition by pointing out his long service and that,

Hebron where the Church of England has attained to a very Considerable Growth amidst all Denominations of Christians and many private infidels - and though the prospect is Still inviting of a further Increase, and the interest of Religion and Civil Government require a resident Clergyman in Hebron, I wish not to be the man any Longer.

Another reason for his moving at this time was that while he did not need "the Sallery from the People," they needed to

Exeart [sic] themselves when they find that their inattention to their Obligations both to the Society and to me is the cause of my asking for and obtaining a Removal from Hebron to Portsmouth.

Peters closed,

I promise myself Some happiness both by a Comfortable Support and faithful Compliance to the Duties

of my Sacred Office that thereby I may Stand recommended in the Sight of God and in the Annals of that venerable Society whose Servant I am with great Sincerity.⁶²

In spite of his plea of poverty, Peters now enjoyed an excellent financial position. He had received extensive dowry lands from his marriages and stood in prospect of receiving more through the Birdseye family. While there is no exact account of his holdings at this time, he claimed losses of over £40,000 at the conclusion of the Revolution.⁶³ And while this undoubtedly was exaggerated, according to others he "was owner of a large landed Estate," and

no man in Connecticut had a greater property than he had in the year 1774 and that no man had a better name of more influence till the rebellion took place.⁶⁴

Another measure of his wealth was the £1,287 Sterling owed him in notes and bonds when his papers were destroyed in the mobbings of 1775.⁶⁵

A further factor in his desire to move to Portsmouth may have been his growing ambition. The governors of New Hampshire, Benning and John Wentworth, belonged to that parish, and Peters desired to get closer to a source of royal patronage and power. Thus the contacts he had established led him to flee there when pursued from Boston.

The Society informed Mr. Peters that he could not move to Portsmouth, and, at the same time, because Peters had complained of the Parish's failure to live up to its commitments, the Secretary asked him "to send an Account of the State of the Glebe and how far the people fall short of their

Engagements."⁶⁶ Grieving from the recent death of his wife, Peters fired back an angry reply in which he wrote that the refusal to allow him to move so imbibtered his days, that he wished "to remove from a people, who have never given him yearly more than £15, in 14 years he has been with them." He reiterated that "he would prefer Portsmouth."⁶⁷ Again the Society took no action on the request, and, as the Reverend Samuel Peters was now involved with the Coercive Acts crisis, the matter was closed.

As noted earlier (p. 15), Peters had established a good live-and-let-live relationship with the Congregationalists in Hebron. This did not hold true in the Surrounding communities or in the rest of New England. He reported to the Society that,

Mr. Viets is obliged to take care of Barrington - where the Dissenters Give him very ungenteel treatment. Mr. Palmer /The Reverend Solomon Palmer/ and myself Escaped their Wroth - for doing the like thing in them Parts - however these things seem modest for that set of People. Would their malice Proceed no further, for my Part I would open not my mouth. But I must look to God for deliverance from Envy, deciets /sic/ of this world, privy Conspiracy, rebellion, scism, and sudden death.⁶⁸

Most Anglican priests in the northern provinces faced this kind of treatment continuously, and they in turn struck back just as contentiously. They needled the Puritans not only for their theology and political "independency and mobocracy" but also for their manners and customs. In retaliation the General Assembly particularly delighted to plague the Anglicans by setting public fast days during the French

and Indian wars on the Church Holy Days, Easter and Christmas. In 1765 Easter was so designated, but the Anglicans in Hebron stubbornly refused to observe it. Eight members of St. Peters congregation were subsequently arrested and fined. In his indictment, John Mann, Peters's brother-in-law, was accused of

a breach of one Law of this Colony, in that he work'd at his Ordinary Calling, viz. at Plowing etc. on the 17th of April last past, it being a day Legally appointed to be observed as a day of publick fasting and Prayer.

He pleaded not guilty, but the court found otherwise and ordered

that the sd. John Mann Pay a fine of ten shillings Lawful money to be disposed of as the Law Directs and Cost of this prosecution, and that Execution Go forth thereon accordingly. Cost allowed at £0:15:10.¹⁶

Rather plaintively Samuel Peters replied to the charges against Anglicanism in a public letter.

We are stigmatized if we observe not our own Days and punished if we do....The Rubrick of the Church of England confirmed by act of Parliament enjoins me to rejoice and be exceedingly glad upon Sundays, Christmas and Holy Days. But the Governor's Proclamation enjoins all to fast upon Easter holy days. I cannot serve two masters, of the twain whom shall I serve?⁷⁰

Another reason for the harassment, the Anglican clergyman believed, was the growing popularity of the Church of England among Congregationalists, "notwithstanding the Dissenting Shepherds Endeavour to suppress it."⁷¹

The Congregationalists were also alarmed by the relationship between Anglicans and the Masonic Order, which

Peters had joined sometime during this period. Ezra Stiles (1727-1795) wrote in his Diary,

We see this spirit of Episcopal Intrigue already working with great Cunning. It has set up and recommended the Fraternity of free Masons and is pressing them apace into a Subserviency and Subordination to the great End of increasing the Church....The Free Masons have already within about a dozen years increased from three to 13 or 14 Lodges.⁷²

However, the major point of contention between the Anglicans and Puritan churches involved the consecration of a bishop for the American colonies. As early as 1763 Peters had written the Society,

The Rumour of a Bishop Coming to America, opens men's eyes most strangely, tho some are filled with Rancour at the News. I hope it will soon advance to make us happy in a Guide.⁷³

The lack of an Episcopal leader greatly handicapped the Anglican Church's work. Dependent on a bishop not only for administration, clergy ordination and discipline, the Church also needed him for confirmation and discipline of the laity. Given the hierarchical structure of Anglicanism and the vital need for disciplinary authority in a crude, frontier society, the failure of the Church of England to provide for an American Bishop is difficult to understand. The Roman Catholic Church had quickly established an entire hierarchy in the Spanish and Portuguese colonies, further accenting the Anglicans' blunder.⁷⁴

In New England the Puritans saw every effort to obtain an American Bishop as "an act of aggression" which "touched off a series of long and bitter ecclesiastical wars in the

Northern Colonies."⁷⁵ While the Puritans at first welcomed the formation of the Venerable Society and accepted its aims for conversion of the natives and infidel Negroes as compatible with their own missionary work among the Indian tribes,⁷⁶ the arrival of S.P.G. missionaries who established rival parishes, alarmed them. The proselytizing of the Reverend George Pigot, culminating in the "Black Day" at Yale, and the establishment of a parish in Boston, brought together Puritan and Presbyterian to prevent the creation of an American episcopate. By successfully allying themselves with English Whig Puritans, they hindered the founding of a colonial hierarchy.

As their numbers increased in New England, the Anglican clergy began in 1725 to hold annual conventions.⁷⁷ As well as stressing in their reports to the Bishop of London and in petitions to the King the need for bishops in America "to protect us from the insults of our adversaries," they complained of "Laws to bind us to the Support of Dissenting Teachers," of imprisonment and punishment for non-attendance at meetings.⁷⁸ In 1738 the Connecticut clergy sought to share in the funds raised by the sale of lands in the western part of the province, which had been appropriated to schools and to the support of Presbyterian and Congregationalist ministers. The Connecticut General Assembly refused to grant the petition.⁷⁹ At the Convention of just the Connecticut clergy held in Hebron, 5 June 1765, Samuel Peters was one of the addressers to the Bishop of London and to the King,

urging the appointment of one or more bishops for the Colonies.⁸⁰ Strangely enough for all his activity in support of the crown and episcopacy, Peters's signature was not present on later petitions, nor was he listed as attending ensuing conventions.

With the passage of the Stamp Act in 1765, Samuel Peters, with the rest of the Anglican clergy in New England, became more politicized. He had been raised an Anglican in an environment inimical to his religious beliefs. After his education at Yale, Peters was convinced he could advance the cause of Anglicanism in Connecticut. His experience in London, where he sought ordination to the priesthood, confirmed his love of the Church and its ceremonies, as well as furthered his bent for the gentile life he witnessed there. After a successful ministry in Hebron and in central Connecticut, after successful missionary work in New Hampshire and Vermont, Peters's next step in advancing to a larger and more influential parish was hampered by the growing political crisis in New England. Alienated religiously and politically from almost everyone but his own congregation, Peters, like other New England Anglican clergy, was forced into active participation in the crisis and into keeping his parish loyal to the crown. The successful efforts of the Reverend Samuel Peters in Hebron and in Hartford in persuading his people to avoid rebellion led to his being driven from his parish and from Connecticut.

FOOTNOTES

¹Edmond F. and Eleanor B. Peters, eds., Peters of New England (New York, 1903), xiii-xiv. Andrew Peeters married the widow Mercy Beamsly Wilbourn, 16 Apr. 1686, at Ipswich. They had seven children.

²Ibid., 153, for a letter recounting how William met his death. William Peeters married Margaret Russ in 1694. They had only the one son.

³John Peters married Mary Marks at North Brookfield, Mass., 3 Apr. 1717. For their 13 children see below, n. 6.

⁴"Hebron," 5-6, 32, 39-40. Contemporary pictures of Hebron, Appendix B.

⁵The present calendar date is 1 Dec. 1735, as in Peters, Peters of New England, 257, and Charles Mampoteng, "The Reverend Samuel Peters," HMPEC, V (1936), 73. Some older sources mistakenly give the birth date as 12 December, E. A. and G. L. Duyckink, Cyclopedia of American Literature (New York, 1855), I, 137, and Samuel Curwen, Journal and Letters, ed. George A. Ward (New York, 1842), 504. Archibald H. Young, errs in giving the year of his birth as 1731 in, "'Bishop Peters,'" Proceedings of the Ontario Historical Society, XXVII (1931), 584.

Samuel Peters occasionally used the middle name Andrew, which some biographical sources also used. He had two older brothers named Andrew; one died at birth in 1732 and the other died "in ye 21st year of his age, Nov. 5, 1754," according to the inscription on his gravestone in the old Hebron church cemetery.

⁶John (1717-1804); Mary (b. 1720); William (b. 1722); Margaret (1724-1769); Joseph (b. 1726); Phebe (b. 1728); Mercy (b. 1730); Andrew (1732); Andrew (1733-1754); Samuel (1735-1826); Jonathan (1737-1778); Bemslee (1734-1798). Peters, Peters of New England, 154-155.

⁷"Hebron," 33.

⁸The SPG (also called the Venerable Society) was founded by royal charter, 16 June 1701, at the urging of the Reverend Thomas Bray (1656-1730), first Commissary for Maryland.

The goal of the Society as given in its charter, was to provide for the "better support and Maintenance of an Orthodox Clergy in Forreigne Parts," since so "many of the King's Loveing Subjects doe want the Administration of God's Word and Sacraments, and seem to be abandoned to Atheism and Infidelity." Blacks and Indians were to be converted. The first of the Society's missionaries in the middle colonies were the Reverend George Keith (c.1638-1716) and the Reverend George Talbot, who visited New London at least once. During this period Connecticut Anglicans were served primarily from Rye, New York. The Reverend George Pigot was sent out in 1722 as the first resident in Connecticut. It was his influence that persuaded Cutler and the others at Yale for Episcopacy.

⁹ Mampoteng, "The Rev. Samuel Peters," 73.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Half of the costs were remitted after they appealed to the General Court. Lucy Jarvis, Church Life in Colonial Connecticut (New Haven, 1902), 57.

¹² SPG Microfilm 664:33, 87. Deed of John Peters and the pledge of £30 of colony old Tenor, 25 Sep. 1746; 92, under a list of donors also lists the pledge.

¹³ Others who supplied St. Peters were the Reverend Messrs. Ebenezer Punderson (1705-1762), Rector, New Haven 1753-1762, after that until his death at Rye; Matthew Graves (d. 1780), Rector, New London 1743-1778 when he was driven out for his loyalism.

¹⁴ Those involved were the Reverend Messrs. Timothy Cutler (1684-1765), Rector, Samuel Johnson (1696-1772) and Daniel Brown (d. 1723), tutors. The other ministers were Jared Eliot (1685-1763), John Hart, Samuel Whittelsey (1686-1752) and James Wetmore. Cutler, Johnson, Brown and Wetmore were ordained in England, and all but Brown, who died there of smallpox, returned to minister to Anglican congregations in this country. Johnson became the first president of King's College. E. Edwards Beardsley, History of the Episcopal Church in Connecticut (Boston, 1883), I, 28-30, 32-48; James T. Addison, The Episcopal Church in the United States (New York, 1951), 44-45; William W. Manross, History of the American Episcopal Church (New York, 1950); Herbert and Carol Schneider, eds., Samuel Johnson (New York, 1929), IV, 48-49, 248-249.

¹⁵ The graduates included Thomas Bradbury Chandler (1726-1790), the leading advocate of episcopacy in the colonies, and Samuel Seabury (1729-1796), first Bishop of Connecticut and the first bishop in America, and Samuel Provoost (1742-

1815), the first bishop of New York. Beardsley, Episcopal Church in Connecticut, I, 159-160.

¹⁶Yale University, Sterling Library, Yale Historical Mss., Yale College Book of Faculty Judgments, 1751-1758, 73-74.

¹⁷Yale University, Beinecke Library Archives, Declamatio Samuelis Peters., n.d., Mss Vault, Sec. 15, Drawer 2.

¹⁸GHC, 201-202, 209.

¹⁹SP to Beach, 16 Jan. 1788, PP, III, 63.

²⁰John Peters died 20 October 1754. In addition to his bequest to Samuel, he left £5 to each daughter. The real estate was divided among the other brothers.

²¹Mampoteng, "The Reverend Samuel Peters," 76. Lucy Jarvis, Church Life, 57, noted that Peters was "then a tutor in a New York College," and others have identified this with Kings College while he was studying under Dr. Johnson, but we can find no record of this.

²²It has been estimated that such a voyage cost about £100. F. C. Pasco, ed., Classified Digest of the Records of the S.P.G. (London, 1893), 480.

²³(1) Bliss; (2) Barzillai Deane (1714-1746), uncle of Silas Deane (1737-1789), ordained in London 1745, ship lost on return voyage; (3) Jonathan Colton (1726-1752), died of smallpox on return voyage; (4) James Usher (1733-1757), nephew of the Archbishop of Armagh, ship on which he sailed for England was captured by the French, and he died in prison with smallpox; (5) John Feveryear (as in Lambeth Palace Records, Mss. No. 99, and 668:104, 15 Jan. 1756, n.p. "Fair-weather" in Lucy Jarvis, 571, and "Hebron," 13.) ordained 1755, went to Bermuda rather than Hebron. William L. Sachse, The Colonial American in Britain (Madison, 1956), 71; Nelson R. Burr, Story of the Diocese of Connecticut (Hartford, 1962), 58-59; and Mampoteng, "The Reverend Samuel Peters," 74-76.

²⁴Glenn Weaver, "Anglican-Congregationalist Tensions in Pre-Revolutionary Connecticut," HMPEC, XXVI (1957), 280.

²⁵SPG Microfilm 664:56, 137.

²⁶Ibid., 137-138, including a testimonial from Wetmore. Further testimonials from Americans at Guildhall Library, London, London Ordination Papers for 1759, mss. 10,326 E, Box 2, Bundle 4.

²⁷William B. Sprague, Annals of the American Episcopal Pulpit (New York, 1859), V, 194.

²⁸Thomas B. Chandler unpublished Diary, 11 Apr. 1777. General Theological Seminary Library, New York, New York.

²⁹SPG Microfilm 664:56, 138.

³⁰Guildhall Library, London, Ordination register, Ms. 9535/3, 326; and Ms. 9540A/1, 47.

³¹SPG Microfilm 664:56, 182.

³²Guildhall Library, London, London Diocese Book for 1747, 25 Aug. 1759, Mss. 9556, unfol.

³³Graves to SPG, 13 Dec. 1760, SPG Microfilm 664:40, 5.

³⁴Meeting, 1 Oct. 1761, SPG Microfilm 664:57, 319; General Meeting, 15 Apr. 1763, *ibid.*, 159, 354-355.

³⁵Hannah Owen was the only child of Elizabeth and Silas Owen. She was born in Hebron 29 Dec. 1740, died there 25 Oct. 1765. They were married 14 Feb. 1760.

³⁶SP to SPG, 12 May 1766, SOG Microfilm 664:41, 849-850. The two girls who died were Hannah, born in Hebron 19 Dec. 1760, died 2 Mar. 1761, and Elizabeth, born 19 Jan. 1764, died 27 Aug. 1765. The surviving daughter was Hannah Delvena, born 2 Jan. 1762.

³⁷Hartford Courant (24 July 1769), 1.

³⁸The tombstones of his three wives still stand in the old cemetery of St. Peters Church on Godfrey Hill on land that had been deeded to the Society by the Rev. John Bliss in 1734. Time has weathered the inscriptions. Figure 4.

³⁹Mary Birdseye was born in Stratford, Conn., 26 July 1750, daughter of William and Eunice Birdseye. Their son was born 5 June 1774.

⁴⁰SP to SPG, 13 Apr. 1761, SPG Microfilm 664:41, 827-830.

⁴¹Seabury to SPG, 12 Sep. 1738, SPG Microfilm 664:52, 313.

⁴²SP to SPG, 13 Apr. 1761, SPG Microfilm 664:41, 828. He described the church as "38' by 30'."

⁴³SP to SPG, 27 Dec. 1764, *ibid.*, 844.

⁴⁴SP to SPG, 12 May 1766, *ibid.*, 850. The full account of the chicanery involved in the tardy legacy is found in Peters's attack on "Connecticut Virtue and Honesty," and on "the true character of Davenport and Eaton the Leaders of the first settlers of Newhaven," in "A curious Discovery," Political Magazine, II (1781), 595-596.

⁴⁵SP to SPG, 15 Mar. 1765, SPG Microfilm 664:41, 847-848. There were two Dr. Samuel Shipmans, father and son, who died within the same year, leaving bequests to St. Peters. The latter was categorized by Peters as, "Especially the more noble one."

⁴⁶SP to SPG, 24 Dec. 1762, *ibid.*, 833.

⁴⁷SP to SPG, 13 Apr. 1761, *ibid.*, 830.

⁴⁸SP to SPG, 24 Dec. 1762, *ibid.*, 833.

⁴⁹SP to SPG, 1 Aug. 1763, *ibid.*, 839-840.

⁵⁰SP to SPG, *ibid.*, 840. Colonel John Peters (1740-1788), the third in the family of that name, became a loyalist like his uncle Samuel. As we shall see below he served in the Queen's Rangers. His father and another uncle were patriots.

⁵¹Committee Meeting, Minutes, 16 Nov. 1764, SPG Microfilm 664:57, 209.

⁵²SP to SPG, 1 Jan. 1770, SPG Microfilm 664:41, 860.

⁵³SP to SPG, 26 Dec. 1766, *ibid.*, 853.

⁵⁴General Meeting, Minutes, 19 Oct. 1770, SPG Microfilm 664:59, 409. The agitation at this time in New England also discouraged the Society from sending more missionaries.

⁵⁵SP to SPG, 27 Dec. 1767, SPG Microfilm 664:41, 856.

⁵⁶HHP, 94-95. The complete account of this fantastic "sacrament of baptism" is found in Notes and Queries, Ser. 11, I (1910), 174-175. See also, Justin Winsor, ed., Narrative and Critical History of America (Boston, 1888), V, 178.

⁵⁷SP to SPG, 24 June 1768, SPG Microfilm 664:41, 889.

⁵⁸SP to SPG, 1 Jan. 1770, *ibid.*, 860-863. He again begged "leave to continue my former applications concerning the New Settlements up Connecticut River - where I purpose to take a Tour this Coming Autumn (if God permits) - The Clergy have advised it." SP to SPG, 26 June 1770, *ibid.*, 866.

⁵⁹SP to SPG, 26 Dec. 1770, *ibid.*, 867.

⁶⁰*Ibid.*, 868. The complete account of the journey can be found in Appendix C.

⁶¹SP to SPG, 26 June 1771, *ibid.*, 870-872. He pointed out that he could expect no assistance from the parish in Hartford, "by reason of their poverty and a Lawsuit they are maintaining against one Talcott and Associates who sacrilegiously [*sic*] have drawn away the foundation Stones laid for a Church at the Expense of an £100." He concluded the account with a "hope for the Dawning Day when Conformity may have Equal Privileges with Dissenters and Royalists meet with as much Encouragements as non-jurors and Base Regulators."

⁶²SP to SPB, 10 Sep. 1773, *ibid.*, 873-874.

⁶³A.O. 13/42. See also, Peters, "History of Jonathan Trumbull," Political Magazine, II (1781), 8, where he claimed that he came from "an ancient and opulent family in the Colony." In 1794 when Peters was pressing his right to consecration as Bishop of Vermont, he asserted that he had not taken a cent from the Hebronites for his ministry at St. Peters. See below, p. 208 and note 111, pp. 228.

⁶⁴Affidavit of Dr. Thomas Moffatt, PP, II, 43. A.O. 13/42, C. Jedediah Parker Statement, 27 Apr. 1786.

⁶⁵*Ibid.*, Testimony of John Peters, 29 July 1786.

⁶⁶General Meeting, Minutes, 17 June 1774, SPG Microfilm 664:59, 147.

⁶⁷SP to SPG, 26 June 1774. There is no copy of the letter itself in the SPG file, only the above summary read at the General Meeting, 19 Jan. 1775. SPG Microfilm 664:60, 26.

⁶⁸SP to SPG, 31 May 1764, SPG Microfilm 664:41, 842-843.

⁶⁹The court record was enclosed in SP to SPG, 27 Dec. 1764, and entered into the SPG General Meeting, 19 July 1765, SPG Microfilm 664:57, 369. The "true Coppey of Record" is attested to by "John Phelps, Justice Peace."

⁷⁰Hartford Courant (26 May 1769), 2. For the attacks that led to Peters's response, Connecticut Courant (Hartford) (15 and 29 May), 2.

⁷¹SP to SPG, 12 May 1766, SPG Microfilm 664:41, 849-850.

⁷²Ezra Stiles, Literary Diary, ed. F. B. Dexter (New

York, 1901), I, 56. Entry of 24 Dec. 1759. No date of "travelling rugged ways" has been discovered for Peters. See Joseph Peters to SP, 16 May 1792, PP, V, 62.

⁷³SP to SPG, 1 Aug. 1763, *ibid.*, 838.

⁷⁴William Warren Sweet, Religion in Colonial America (New York, 1953), 65-66. "By the end of the eighteenth century there were seven archbishops and forty-one bishops in Spanish and Portuguese America."

⁷⁵Carl Bridenbaugh, Mitre and Sceptre (New York, c. 1962), 57.

⁷⁶The allocation by the Society in 1710 of more than half of its income for work among the Mohawk tribe in New York was considered particularly praiseworthy.

⁷⁷The first informal meeting of the New England clergy was held at Newport, Rhode Island, 21 July 1725. The second and third convened in Boston, 2 May 1726 and 20 July 1727. Edgar Penington, "Colonial Clergy Conventions," HMPEC, VIII (1939), 209-212.

⁷⁸*Ibid.*, 212. The account of an old man, "Mr. Pitt, a Churchman," who "was whipped, for not attending meeting," in 1750, is given by Peters in GHC, 296-297.

⁷⁹Beardsley, Episcopal Church in Connecticut, I, 106-111; Penington, "Clergy Conventions," 213-214.

⁸⁰The first recorded separate meeting of the Connecticut clergy was held 24 August 1742 at Fairfield. In addition to asking for a bishop, they asked that the Reverend Samuel Johnson be appointed Commissary for the Province as the Reverend Roger Price at Boston was too far away. Beardsley, Episcopal Church in Connecticut, I, 134-135; and Penington, "Clergy Conventions," 214.

CHAPTER II

POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT

The Stamp Act

The Seven Years War left Great Britain with a cumbersome national debt borne largely by the landed gentry with an onerous property tax. To ease the financial burdens of this important support group by imposing some of the cost on their American colonies, the Grenville ministry passed a series of revenue measures culminating in the Stamp Act of 1765. Since this Act affected every segment of American society, the resulting riots were the most wide spread until the bloodshed at Lexington-Concord ten years later.

Although some of the Anglican clergy in New England disliked the Act, all assured the Venerable Society that they and their parishes remained loyal, and, "Their people esteemed it nothing short of rebellion to speak evil of dignities, and to avow opposition to this last act of Parliament!"¹ The Reverend Samuel Peters was conspicuously successful in preventing his parishioners from taking action. He and the congregation later received approbation from their neighbors. He reported,

In the late Convulsions here about the Stamp Act
the Church People shun'd any Connections and

openly condemned them - declaring they feared God and the King more than all the threats of this rebellious Gang, whose furious fanatick Notions gave us grounds to say, we were in Perils among false Brethren. It however has this good Consequence, the Storm being over, those Changelings have Room to reflect, and as boldly now applaud us for our bold stand, as they Condemn'd us heretofore.²

One of the consequences for the rector of St. Peters, however, was facing his first angry mob. He described the Stamp Act riots in Lebanon in The General History of Connecticut almost twenty years later. After burning an effigy of Jared Ingersoll, who had accepted the office of Stamp Distributor for Connecticut, the mob placed the remains in a coffin and resolved to bury his "bones" in Hebron, his home village.

Accordingly thither they repaired; and having made a coffin, dug a grave in a cross street, and made every other preparation for the interment, they sent for the episcopal clergyman there to attend the funeral of the bones of Ingersoll the traitor. The clergyman told the messengers that neither his office nor person were to be sported with, nor was it his business to bury Sober Dissenters, who abuse the church while living. The mob, enraged at this answer, ordered a party to bring the clergyman by force, or send him to hell after Ingersoll. This alarmed the people of the town, who instantly loaded their muskets in defence of the clergyman.

He dryly remarked that "a Connecticut mob of Sober Dissenters, is not inferior to a London mob of drunken conformists, either in point of ingenuity, low humour, or religious mockery."³ This was not the last time that Hebronites had to arm to defend their priest. Peters viewed the actions of the mob as a resurrection of Cromwellian militancy, reporting

to the Society, "Oliver is risen from the Dead, or was a convict and so transported over here." In the same letter he described "my Native Land" as in

the Bowels of Contention - where faction is State Policy, and Envy. Religion - where little Conventicles are plodding and as Captious as a little Kirk - Each guided by their different Gods....Unfortunate America!⁴

While he had faced the mob fearlessly and resolutely, according to his own assessment, Peters understood the real dangers he faced. A year later, after the violence had subsided, he wrote prophetically,

Considering my Duty to my King, my Benefactors and Country...which if known in these Parts, I make no doubt but that the Fanatic Mob will Judge my life too cheap a Victim to pacify their belching Stomachs.⁵

Constantly after the mobbing incident, Samuel Peters denounced the patriots as kin to Cromwellians. Again and again he asserted that the Puritan clergy by their preaching doctrines of political liberty derived from the seventeenth century revolution so infected the "Peasantry" with "the Glorious Idea of an Oliverian Revolution, or something nigh as bad," that they would rather

(notwithstanding their religious Tenets are bent upon John Calvin's Wheel) be under the Government of the Pretender, the French, Dutch or Spanish Monarchies than to Submit to Acts of a British Parliament, or an American Episcopate.⁶

While the quick repeal of the Stamp Act quieted the Provinces, it was odious to Peters. Calling it "the fatal news of the repeal of the Stamp Act," he asserted that the

"King's friends" were convinced that the "stamp-act ought, both in policy and justice, to be enforced, and therefore had risked their lives, fortunes, characters, and colonial honours in its support."⁷ At least he had. Thus, as most Anglicans had approved the repeal, Peters increasingly became the spokesman for the most conservative wing of New England Anglicans.

Invited to preach the convention sermon at the annual meeting of the Anglican clergy of Connecticut, held in Litchfield, 13 June 1770, Peters used the occasion to pillory Puritan pretensions, to fulminate against their illegal restrictions on "protestant episcopals," and to complain bitterly against his own church's failure to provide Bishops.⁸ Before a "large congregation, and universal acceptance,"⁹ Peters preached from the text "Take heed and beware of the Leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees" (Matthew 16:6). He first pointed out that "The Religion of Jesus Christ is friendly to civil Government...it enjoins Obedience to the King as Supreme" (3). After quickly defining the three sects of Judaism (including the Essenes), Peters carefully showed the parallels between the Congregationalists, Pharisees, and Sadducees:

One Sect had too much Faith, the other had none: one had no Religion, no Charity; the other despised Morality, and depended on Faith....A People thus disposed ought not to be trusted, seeing that they condemn [sic] the Law of Liberty wherewith Christ has made us free: yet, to the Astonishment of Historians, they have too often secured to themselves the Admiration, if not the Government of the World, by their insincere and sanctimonious

Pretensions.....[This leaven] is no less infection now than it was two thousand years ago; nor is it less baneful in America, than it has been in Africa, Europe, and Asia. (6-7)

The effect of these events in America has been that

Christianity, after struggling many years, seems to have lost its Reputation, and is giving Way to human Policy, and is likely to be banished from America, now half-ready to act a Part which will disgrace the dead, intail War on ourselves, and Misery on our Children. Alas, my native Country! Thy best Days are expiring---thy glorious Sun of Liberty is setting---thy Virtue is dying! (8)

Peters, after baldly stating that "I am no Politician," went on to devote the bulk of the sermon to the Stamp Act crisis, the repeal, and the passage of the Declaratory Act, which he derisively called the "late obnoxious Clause which asserts the Supremacy of the British Parliament over the Colonies, in all Cases whatever." Continuing the same, Peters attacked "the multiformed Sects of Protestant-protesting Associators, who have assumed a self-constituted Power of nullifying Acts of Parliament and the Statutes of this Colony," these last being from "our Fathers, who expelled the Natives from the fertile Banks of Connecticut into a dreary Wilderness, a forlorn Home" (8-12).¹⁰

After pointing out the inconsistencies in "People who claim the greatest Liberties for themselves," and at the same time "deprive others of their civil, natural and Religious Liberties," Peters charged that the

Millenarians in this howling Wilderness...are using Liberty for a Cloak of Maliciousness.... Was natural or religious Liberty the Object of the Committees of Inspection....we should before

this day have seen the Slave, stolen from his native Country, discharged from his unpitied Loads and agonizing Groans, to taste the Sweets of Nature's Laq; an Indulgence which Humanity and Christianity have given to all, while Defenders of Liberty take the Liberty of denying it to all (12-13).¹¹

Concluding the sermon to his "Beloved Brethren" with the assertion that

Should our Faith equal our Profession, we shall not faint in the Day of Trial, because we are Soldiers of the Cross, and have Promises of a better Life. (14)

Peters called on his fellow Anglicans to "propagate the Doctrines of the Cross, and be of good Cheer, seeing that Faith and Perseverance have overcome the World" (15).

The Coercive Acts

Very soon Priest Peters was to need all the assurances of "good Cheer" and "Promises of a better Life" that he gave his listeners. The increasing tensions between England and the provinces caused by another attempt of the mother country to increase her revenues and to protect the East India Company, embroiled Peters in violence, causing him to flee for his life.

The precipitating event was the Boston Tea Party, which led to the punitive Coercive or Intolerable Acts as Great Britain tried to curb the rebellious Bostonians and to make them pay for the destroyed tea. These acts gave the radical patriots the cause they needed to unite New England and to arouse all the provinces. The Quebec Act which followed soon

after further alarmed the Yankees, who saw in it the affirmation of all their fears of papacy and Anglican establishment.¹²

In Connecticut, Governor Jonathan Trumbull (1710-1785), responded to the closing of Boston's port, the quartering of troops in that city, and the moving of Massachusetts's provincial capital to Salem, by calling for town meetings to establish a general fund for the support of the "poor and distressed" people of Boston.

Hebron held its town meeting, 4 July 1774, and, at the urging of Colonel Alexander Phelps and Samuel Peters, refused the request. Peters argued

the good people of Boston had destroyed the tea, the private property of the East India Company, they ought to pay for it; and then if their port was not opened, he would give them 1000 sheep and 10 fat oxen, but until they had paid for the tea, he should not willingly bestow any thing on them. The Meeting voted unanimously, 'we resolve to give nothing to the people of Boston, until they have paid for the tea, which they have wantonly destroyed.'¹³

He further argued that Governor Trumbull was premature in his request for aid, as the Boston townspeople were still free to move in and out of the city to get supplies. The town meeting at Hartford, under Peters's influence, also refused the governor's request. As agitation still existed in Hebron, and because the measures' opponents expected another meeting to be called, Peters and several others of like mind drew up a set of Thirteen Resolves based on the arguments employed at the first meeting. Peters claimed that the next

meeting passed these Resolves, but was forced to retract this claim when he was first mobbed.¹⁴

Responding immediately, Trumbull issued a proclamation to be read in every meeting house on Sunday, 14 August 1774, saying he had received letters from England warning that there was a plot by the

Episcopal Clergy as they were enemies to America, to Religion and Liberty - that they were spies to Lord North and their Bishops - that the whole plot might be discovered by Suddenly seizing their papers.¹⁵

He specifically declared Peters an enemy to the Colonies.

That same Sunday afternoon, inflamed by the proclamation,

A numerous Mobb assembled from a dozen Meetings headed by their Ministers, Deacons and Justices and the same Evening beset my House, entered and took away my papers - the next Day their Committee reported to the Mobb that they had found no cause or Complaint and returned part of my papers.¹⁶

After many damaging reports of the affair had circulated, the Committee published the "mobbs" version, emphasizing a mannerly and dignified approach. Adding further evidence of Peters's duplicity, the Committee cleared the governor of any wrong doing in the incident. The Committee also declared that Peters gave up the Resolves which he had been "fitting for the Printer...signed with his own hand, before us, with his liberty for the press."¹⁷

Undeterred by the threat of further violence hanging over his head, the indomitable loyalist preached a sermon the following Sunday denouncing Trumbull and supporting the

Port Act.

The last act of "mobb violence" against Peters took place in the autumn of 1774, a good six months before the fighting broke out at Lexington and Concord. On Sunday, 4 September, a rumor was spread throughout New England

by a letter from Colonel Putnam, declaring that 'Admiral Graves had burnt Boston, and that General Gage was murdering old and Young.' The Governor of Connecticut took the liberty to add to Mr. Putnam's letter, 'except churchmen and the addressers of Governor Hutchinson.'¹⁸

As men from the aroused country side on their way to avert a second "Boston Massacre" passed St. Peters that Sunday morning, the vicar admonished his congregation to stay calm as the report was not true. He stressed, "you must not take up arms...it is high Treason....therefore if you die - die like Subjects at home, and not go to Boston to be Hanged for Rebels."¹⁹ He calmed them, keeping them in their pews. As he reported later, "The same day 40,000 men began their march from Connecticut to Boston, and returned the next, having heard that there was no truth in Putnam's reports."²⁰

Evidently, Peters's stopping the participation of men from Hebron in the Boston march was the last straw for Connecticut's patriot governor. On Tuesday, 6 September, a committee led by Major Wright and the governor's son David Trumbull, on orders from Governor Trumbull, confronted Samuel Peters to persuade him to desist from opposing the will of the people and to sign the Solemn League and Covenant. The committee, according to Peters, had

Special orders to subdue me, but to spare my life, for by so doing (said he /Trumbull/) we shall subdue all the tories in the Colony, preserve Liberty and the American Vine.²¹

Grossly differing accounts exist describing what took place when the official party of troops assembled before Peters's imposing residence. According to the Reverend Mr. Peters, he had

his gown and cloaths torn off /and/ was treated in the most insulting manner, his mother, daughter, two brothers, and servants were wounded; one of his brothers so badly, that he died soon after.²²

As the news of the incident spread throughout New England, details of the mobbing became more exaggerated, requiring an official statement from the Windham men who participated. In the sworn document released by the Governor of Connecticut, they averred,

The number of people was about three hundred. The sash of one window of his house was broken, his gown and shirt somewhat torn, and it was said by some that a table was turned over, and a punch bowl and glass broken, which was all the damage that was done that we ever heard of.²³

The true course of events lay somewhere between these two accounts. The following reconstruction is based on contemporary narratives.

On the arrival of the company sent by Trumbull to intimidate Samuel Peters into cooperating, or failing that, at least to silence him, they found his home protected by armed men, including his brothers, Jonathan and Bemslee.²⁴ After being warned that any attempt to seize him by force would

meet resistance, the group chose a committee to enter the house and reason with the clergyman. After the Committee and Peters argued for some time over the Resolves, with nothing being accomplished and the crowd growing increasingly restless, Peters was asked to go out and speak directly with them. The committee promised him a safe conduct back to the house. While he futilely attempted to defend his previous actions, someone fired a shot, either in the house or from outside. The house was rushed, and in the ensuing melee some of the defenders, including Jonathan, were wounded.²⁵ Peters was seized and stripped of the vestments he had worn to grant him authority and protection.²⁶ He was then borne to the Liberty Pole erected at the meeting house, some three-quarters of a mile away. Threatened with tar, feathers, and probably the gallows, he read a prepared statement, in which he renounced all his previous inflammatory statements and actions. He asked:

the forgiveness of all whom I have offended, promising for the future as far as in me lies, to circumspect my conduct, that it shall be agreeable to the rules of christianity.²⁷

He still refused to sign the Solemn League and Covenant because he claimed it denied royal and parliamentary supremacy and violated his ordination vows. Peters's refusal further aroused the mob, which threatened once again to hang him from the Liberty Pole. Only the intervention of the Congregational minister of Hebron, Dr. Benjamin Pomeroy (1704-1784),²⁸ the arrival of forty armed men from the

community, and Major Wright's statement that Peters must be insane for refusing to sign the Covenant when threatened with death, allowed the Anglican loyalist safe passage back to his home. Peters was then carried by his slaves back to his distraught family. Undoubtedly, Governor Trumbull's orders not to kill him and the fear of a pitched battle at that point brought Wright's intervention.²⁹

The day following the incident, Peters applied locally for protection against future riots. But the local officer, Samuel Gilbert, considered his resources inadequate in case the neighboring townsmen involved themselves again. The next day, 8 September, the now thoroughly frightened and persecuted parson went to Lebanon to confront the Governor and to ask him for armed protection. Trumbull issued an order to John Phelps, Justice of the Peace for Hartford County, to employ his "Authority and Influence to preserve peace and good order and put Laws in Execution" because "I am informed that there is Danger that the Person and Property of the Revd Samuel Peters may be hurt and Injured by such notorious Disorders." He also urged the Justice in a personal note to:

use your Prudence to quiet the Minds of the People by lenient Means to lead them to observe their Mistake, that while they contend for Liberty they do not destroy it, and by causing Divisions to hurt their own Designs.... 'Tis best to calm Peoples Minds in the best Manner you can.

He further assured Phelps that Peters would do nothing to affect "our Liberties" and "detriment the Cause thereof."³²

According to Peters, Trumbull warned him that unless he

signed the Covenant, the governor could do little to protect him. Peters received the same advice from the judges of the Superior Court in Hartford.³¹

Realizing he could not receive adequate protection for himself or for his family, Peters kept an armed guard at Hebron until the middle of September, when he went to New Haven for a conference of Anglican clergy. Many of the Connecticut and Massachusetts clergy who attended lived under the same threat that Peters faced. Warned of mob violence during the conference, many of the ministers left. A few, including Peters and several local Anglican laymen, took refuge in the home of the Reverend Bela Hubbard (1739-1812) who had already sent his wife and children away. When one of the two mobs which threatened them that afternoon, led by the local druggist Benedict Arnold, came to the gate of Hubbard's residence, Peters

informed him through the door, that he had already been in the power of two mobs, but he would never be in the power of a third while he had life, and forbid him to enter on pain of death.

Even though the mob "urged him to lead the way, and promised to follow him," Arnold denied cowardice by saying, "I know Peters to be a man of his word, and you may lead that please!"³² Another account has him reply, "'I am no coward, but I know Dr. Peters' disposition and temper. I do not want to die at present.'"³³

Knowing that his presence represented an additional threat to Hubbard and the others, Peters sneaked out that

night from New Haven. Following a circuitous route of some eighty miles via Saybrook, he worked his way back to Hebron. At midnight, Saturday, 18 September, he slipped into his ravaged house, even though he knew sentries had been posted by the Sons of Liberty. The next day he conducted Sunday services as usual. At the afternoon service, being warned that another mob was gathering, he preached a farewell sermon. He chose as his text the first verse of the ninth chapter of the Book of the Prophet Jeremiah:

Oh that my head were waters,
and mine eyes a fountain of tears,
that I might weep day and night
for the transgressions of my people.

Flight to England

The preacher wept quite genuine tears as he left the community of his birth, growth, and professional life. He must also have experienced real sadness in leaving his family and friends to face an unknown future, even though he believed his absence would be brief. Certainly it was inconceivable to him that the British army could not control the rebellious mobs. Nor could he conceive that the divided and quarrelsome colonies were capable of subverting royal and parliamentary power. Still, he knew that his flight represented a real turning point in his life. Most of the Hebron community, more particularly the churchmen of St. Peters, had not participated in the violence to his person or property. Initiative had come, primarily, from the patriot groups

outside the community, plus a few local disgruntled farmers and debtors - rural people alienated by his life style, who had taken advantage of his discomfort.

Sometime that evening, avoiding the patriot lookouts and patrols, he decamped from Hebron, to which he would not return for more than thirty years. Leaving his daughter and infant son in the care of his mother and brothers, Peters fled on a horse, hidden by one of his slaves in a nearby field, to Boston, some 110 miles away. Because the countryside had been warned of his flight, patriot patrols stopped him three times, at Woodstock, Oxford, and Sutton. He deceived them by representing himself as a messenger from Governor Trumbull to John Hancock. He arrived in Boston on Tuesday, 21 September, and went directly to General Gage with information about militia movements and a secret plan to attack Boston. He later claimed credit for saving the British troops, as his reports led Gage to mount batteries on Boston Neck to protect the harbor.³⁴

Once within the protection of British lines, Peters tried to pick up the pieces of his family life. His brother Jonathan made two hazardous trips to Boston, bringing to him his daughter Hannah, letters, and other papers he needed. Hannah stayed with the Reverend John Troutbeck (d. 1779) until she joined her father in England. His son went first with Grandmother Peters and his black nurse to New York because of further mob threats, but later returned to Connecticut. He spent the next fourteen years with his maternal

grandparents, William and Eunice Birdseye at Stratford.

Being associated with Peters could be hazardous. After delivering Hannah to Boston, Jonathan and his friend Newcomb were captured by patriot patrols, and made to

run the gantlope [sic] through the whole mob, who beat and kicked us without Mercy; they knocked Newcomb down and stampd on him, and bruised and wounded me very much.³⁵

A member of the Connecticut Assembly wrote the Speaker of that body that "At Woodbury, the Rev. John Rutgers Marshall was waylaid, beaten and harrassed for his friendship with P.[eters]."³⁶ Peters's friend at Norwich, the Reverend John Tyler (1742-1823), worried,

Should Matters become desparate [sic]: As several individuals here have threatened, that at the first onset at Boston of Blood the Tories here will be all put to death.... Do not expose a Brother and helpless Family to Distress, by being careless of this Letter, I have said enough if not too much in it already as the temper of Mankind are.³⁷

While Brother Tyler's letter was not discovered by the patriots, Peters did cause further trouble for his friends and fellow churchmen by an ill-considered and careless action. While in Boston he had written letters to his mother and friends for Jonathan and Newcomb to deliver. They were not searched the first time they were stopped, but a man working nearby overheard them saying they must hide the letters. He saw them spend some time near a stone wall, and after they had gone he reported the conversation to the local committee. When the committee searched the wall, they found the letters and published them.³⁸

In the letters Peters had urged that "all facts touching mobs and insults offered the clergy of our churches or her members" be gathered and sent to him in Boston or, if he has sailed, to London. He reported

Six regiments are now coming from England and sundry men of war; so soon as they come hanging work will go on; and destruction will attend first the sea-port towns; and lintel sprinkled on the sideposts will preserve the faithful.

He concluded by warning his mother to burn his papers and "this letter if it appears to be opened before it is opened by you."³⁹

Another letter published by the committee was directed to the acknowledged leader of the Anglican Church in the colonies, Dr. Samuel Auchmuty (1722-1777), Rector of Trinity Church, New York. Peters contended that he had fled from Hebron because of the mobbing that Trumbull had encouraged. He went on to say that "rebellion is obvious; treason is common; and robbery is their daily diversion....spiritual iniquity rides in high places." He implied that he would urge that Connecticut's Charter be revoked so that:

the Bounds of New-York may directly extend to Connecticut river, Boston meet them and New-Hampshire take the Province of Main /sic, Rhode-Island be swallowed up in Dothan.⁴⁰

As soon as Auchmuty discovered that the letters had been published, he reacted angrily, informing Peters that he objected to having "my name bandied about by a parcel of rascals....Our Enemies before were many, but your letters will increase their number." He relented a little and advised

Peters to "be more careful for the future to whom you trust your letters," warning him to "advance nothing but what can be thoroughly proved."⁴¹

The press was not so gentle with him. The editor of the Boston Evening Post wrote

No Proposition in Euclid admits of a more facile Solution than that Samuel Peters of Hebron, who is daubed with the Title of Reverend, is the most unnatural Monster, diabolical Incendiary and detestable Parricide to his Country that ever appeared in America or disgraced Humanity; his name, like the Lake of Sodom, will emit a disagreeable Effluvia to all succeeding generations. It is happy for his Contemporaries that his invincible Stupidity is a sufficient Anti-dote to his more than infernal Malignity.⁴²

The publication of the letters also caused serious problems for his fellow clergymen in Connecticut, already suspected of conspiring with him to destroy the Congregational Church if not the colony. Warned by sympathetic members of the Assembly, the Reverend Bela Hubbard called a meeting to discuss the problem. Thinking it particularly necessary to disclaim any knowledge of Peters's plans for dismembering the colony, the clergymen issued a statement. The six Anglicans called themselves "entire strangers to his [Peters] having any intentions to take the route that he has, and of any scheme that he has in design, suggested in them."⁴³ Accompanying the letter was an affidavit from members of the Connecticut Assembly who had examined them "upon the subject to which their publication above written refers; and have received all satisfaction from them: that they were innocent of involvement in Peters's plans."⁴⁴ While Anglicanism

suffered much damage from the publicity, this action quieted the Sons of Liberty for the time being.⁴⁵ Two years later the Church was again embarrassed when some of Peters's letters were published after the Julius Caesar was "taken on her Passage from London to Halifax and carried into Boston."⁴⁶

Peters, much upset by the furor in the first incident, subsequently sent from England an abject apology to Auchmuty:

'I blame myself more for my foolishness than the whole world can blame me. I need not have mentioned names, nor sent as I did, but so it has happened, and my repentance is like Eassau's a bitter repentance and too late. I am killed with the Tho'ts of my foolishness. I have not slept 2 hours in 24 since I have heard of the robbery; I mourn all my time with fervent prayer to God to protect my injured friends from violence of evil men and from the danger I unwillingly exposed them to....Still I hope and wish for the pity and forgiveness of you.

After explaining that Auchmuty's reputation had not suffered in London from being falsely accused of publishing the letters himself, Peters avowed, "If your dangers and characters are secured against in the colonies, I may be able to live."⁴⁷

Satirizing the episode, one of the foremost poets of the period, John Trumbull (1750-1831), lampooned the stupidity and cowardice of the American loyalists, in M'fingal, a mock epic burlesque of the events during 1775:

What warning had ye of your duty
From our old Rev'rend Sam Auchmuty?
From Priests of all degrees and Mitres,
T'our fag-end man poor Parson Peters?
Have not our Cooper and Seabury

Sung hymns, like Barak and old Deborah;
 Prov'd all intrigues to set you free
 Rebellion'gainst the power that be.⁴⁸

At the suggestion of General Gage, who had declined Peters's offer to accept a commission and enlist Connecticut loyalists to lead an attack on rebellious neighbors, the clergyman decided to go to London as dignified "sufferer for his loyalty."⁴⁹ As "General Gage concluded not to send a ship to England, untill further News," he advised Peters "to take a passage in a Mast Ship lying at Portsmouth (70 Miles East of Boston) where Mr. Peters Arrived in the Stage Coach the 12th October in disguise." On the eighteenth he received a warning from Hebron, which the Boston clergy had forwarded, that John Hancock had offered a reward of £200 for his capture, and the Committee of Safety was circulating a letter asking that he be taken and returned to Hebron.⁵⁰

After narrowly escaping from a man in a tavern who sought the reward for taking the "wicked old priest" that "bitter enemy to the rights and liberties of America," and from the Sons of Liberty who had twice searched the home of Robert Trail (d. 1786), Comptroller of Customs, where he had "secreted himself in an apartment," Peters hid in a large cave by the seashore until he could safely reach the protection of Governor Wentworth.⁵¹ He remained there until information reached the governor's wife that

insult was intended agt poor parson Peters. She very wisely sent him off, conducted by Thomas Coach to the Castle Castle William at Newcastle, where he has since remained quiet and this day sails London. He is

highly pleased with N Hampshire and probably will report kindly thereof. The story of his calamities is most astonishing and in a Xtian country equally deplorable.

The governor wisely advised him to no avail, that he should "be most moderate on his arrival in England even toward those who have most cruelly treated him."⁵²

On 27 October, Admiral Graves, who had heard of the plight of the loyalist clergyman, sent a sixteen-gun ship, the Fox, to pick him up. This was done at night, and the ship's captain, Zachariah Norman, before he could rescue Peters, had to order the local Committee of Safety, who had come aboard suspecting something, to leave within five minutes as "your company is not wanted here." As the Fox sailed for Newburyport, the discomfited Patriots on shore sent scattered musket fire after it, while the warship obligingly replied by firing its cannon.⁵³

Sailing directly from Newburyport, Peters landed at Portsmouth, England, 21 December 1774, with his letters of introduction and little else - a few clothes and thirty guineas he had borrowed from Troutbeck in Boston.⁵⁴ Shortly after his arrival he had the honor of kissing the hand of King George as the first of a host of suffering loyalist clergy from the American provinces.⁵⁵

Samuel Peters's Loyalism

Loyalism in the American Revolution was a complex phenomenon,⁵⁶ as were the reasons behind the Reverend Samuel Peters's flight from his homeland. Was he a typical Colonial

American loyalist? He was an ultra-conservative, high church, New England Anglican, whose religious and political views, inextricably entwined, allowed him no room to question British policy. In this respect he follows Trevelyan's generalization about the clergymen who emigrated from Boston with Lord Howe in 1776 as

Episcopalians, as true to what they believed to be their political obligations as any English Nonjuror who went out from his parsonage or his palace in the summer of 1689.⁵⁷

At least part of the problem in relating Peters to other American loyalists, lies in the lack of consensus among scholars as to why a large number of Americans stood willing to abandon their homes, livelihood, families, and native land for Canada or England; to stay and fight fellow colonials and kinsmen; or even to suffer persecution, obloquy, and death.⁵⁸ The ultra-patriotic view, no longer widely held, saw the Colonial loyalists as:

an insignificant band of narrow-minded, stubborn and imperious advocates of prerogative, who preferred submitting with craven subserviency to the tyrannical measures of the Imperial Parliament rather than take any risk in asserting their manhood, their self-respect, and their rights as freemen.⁵⁹

The more recent explanations for loyalism would emphasize radicalism versus conservatism, status as a threatened minority (particularly a religious minority), matters of conscience and integrity, or economic factors, i.e., fear of losing crown offices.⁶⁰

Leonard W. Labaree has looked at the problem of motivation as one of conservatism versus radicalism. He points

out the loyalists

lacked...a sufficient faith in mankind...to believe that out of disorder and violence, out of an inexperienced leadership and an undisciplined following, could come a stable and intelligent body politic.⁶¹

On the other hand, William H. Nelson acknowledges a more varied background of loyalism, but he would stress the commonly held belief of loyalists that

they represented conscious minorities, people who felt weak and threatened. The sense of weakness, which is so marked a characteristic of the Tory leaders, is equally evident among the rank and file. Almost all the Loyalists were, in one way or another, more afraid of America than they were of Britain. Almost all of them had interests that they felt needed protection from an American majority.⁶²

This was particularly true in the field of religion, and among the Anglicans in New England.⁶³

Carrying this thesis farther, Sydney Ahlstrom has recently pointed out the uniqueness of

the Anglican constituency in Connecticut, laity and clergy alike....More than any other in America it stood without official or government support, gained no...favor due to its religious affiliation, and suffered considerable harassment by the authorities of church and state despite the colony's toleration law of 1708.⁶⁴

Peters believed he had to have the protection of the crown to survive. Denied the stability, order, and security of a Bishop in New England, the Yankee Anglican feared independence. Also Peters recalled the sacred promise of loyalty to his king sworn at the time of ordination. Again and again the loyalist clergy of New England based their refusal to sign the League and Covenant and give up prayers for the king

because to do so constituted a denial of that sacred vow. The Reverend Messrs. Peters, Tyler, Mather Byles, Jr., Jacob Bailey (1731-1817), William Clark (1740-1815), Jeremiah Leaming (1717-1804), all associates of Peters, suffered jail, physical maltreatment, some of them exile, rather than break their ordination obligation.

By proposing to look at the nature of loyalism from the British Empire viewpoint, the Canadian historian W. G. Shelton provides the most realistic solution to the problem. Only from this less parochial position, he writes, can we understand the loyalists and get "an insight into their motivation and a fair evaluation of their role."⁶⁵ He rejects Labaree's thesis as

a waste of time to attempt to differentiate the loyalists from the patriots on the basis of conservatism, regardless of how one defines it, since the American Revolution is widely recognized as an essentially conservative movement.⁶⁶

He considers Nelson's argument useful but not completely adequate as it fails to encompass minority families who often split their allegiance. For many, "the decision was made on the basis of conscience, self-respect, integrity, call it what you will."⁶⁷

After a thorough examination of the many issues involved, Shelton's comprehensive explanation constitutes the best understanding of the loyalists' motivation in that

the Loyalist was no more reactionary than the Whig, that he believed the dispute with Britain could be settled peacefully, that he felt he had more to lose than to gain by giving up the protection of British laws for the unlimited

sovereignty of public opinion, that the actions of the revolutionaries very often put him in a position where there was no alternative to taking the British side if he wanted to preserve his self-respect, that he fought not to defend tyranny but to free his country from what he regarded as tyranny, and that he was aware of some flaws in the over-optimistic and sometimes hypocritical slogans of the Whigs.⁶⁸

Samuel Peters may have been no more reactionary than some Whig patriots, but his political views, as we have seen, were more conservative than those of many loyalists. Certainly he feared the tyranny of "unlimited sovereignty of public opinion," particularly as expressed by the mobs and press.

In addition to his religious loyalties, Peters's lifestyle typified the New England landed gentry loyalist; in fact, after his return from ordination in London, he consciously aped the British squire, dressing "ceremoniously and expensively" with "manners, and those not merely skin-deep, in harmony with their external appearance."⁶⁹ In his mind he could see little hope of continuing such a way of life in a 'mobocracy' where "The Factious Demagogue" believed that

In mobs was seated all dominion:
 All po'r might be understood
 Rose from the sov'reign multitude:
 That right and wrong, that good and ill,
 Were nothing but the rabble's will:
 Tho' they renounce the truth for fiction,
 In nonsense trust, and contradiction;
 And tho' they change ten times a day
 As fear or interest leads the way;
 And what this hour is law and reason,
 Declare, the next, revolt and treason;
 Yet we each doctrine must receive,
 And with a pious grin believe,

In ev'rything the people's choice
As true as God Almighty's voice.⁷⁰

Unlike some Americans who became loyalists after the proclamation of the Declaration of Independence, Peters was remarkably consistent in his opposition to Colonial resistance to British authority after the Stamp Act crisis.⁷¹ He feared 'mobocracy' and its irrational power. Further, experiencing from his youth Puritan intransigency against Anglicans, Peters saw that same elite encouraging the masses against his whole way of life. Fearing anarchy would continue unless curbed by the king's army, he opposed the Connecticut elite whenever and wherever possible. Primarily for religious reasons and secondarily for social reasons, the Reverend Samuel Peters turned his face from his native land and sailed for England, his Mecca.

FOOTNOTES

¹Report from the Connecticut clergy to the SPG, "accidentally convened," 5 Sep. 1766, Pennington, "Colonial Clergy Conventions," 214.

²SP to SPG, 26 Dec. 1766, SPG Microfilm 664:41, 852.

³GHC, 345-347 and 81-82. See also Philip G. Davidson, Propaganda and the American Revolution (Chapel Hill, 1941), 175-176n.

⁴SP to SPG, 25 Mar. 1767, SPG Microfilm 664:41, 854-855.

⁵SP to SPG, 24 June 1768, *ibid.*, 889.

⁶*Ibid.*, 888-889. See also Burr, Story of the Diocese of Connecticut, 118.

⁷GHC, 352-353. This was in retrospect, and not one of his letters to the Society at the time mentioned any anger at Parliament's action.

⁸SP, A Sermon Preached at Litchfield (n.p., 1770). Hereafter, in subsequent citations to frequently quoted works of Peters, I shall provide pagination in parenthesis within my text.

⁹Dibblee to SPG, 8 Oct. 1770, SPG Microfilm 664:59, 296-297.

¹⁰See below, p. 145, for a discussion of Peters's attitude toward the Indians, particularly as shown in GHC.

¹¹Peters writes in a note in the published sermon, "America has the Honour of dealing human Flesh; of plundering and extirpating the Aborigines of the Country; of stealing and receiving stolen Blacks from the Coasts of Africa; of using them with more than savage Barbarity, not under the same pretence that Nimrod hunted Men, but under a pious Pretence of Christianizing and bestowing on them natural and civil Liberty;---glorious Pretence, but most infamously executed!" 13n.

¹²John Adams said, "Have not the ministry shown, by the

Quebec Bill, that we have no security against them for our religion," quoted in John Braeman, The Road to Independence (New York, 1963), 200. See also Herbert Aptheker, The American Revolution (New York, 1960), 44-45, and Pauline Maier, From Resistance to Revolution (New York, 1972), 225-238. Lawrence Leder, The Meaning of the American Revolution (Chicago, c.1969), 8-9, writes, "What began as a palliative measure to satisfy the French Canadian population,....became proof to Americans of English perfidy....More than anything else, England's intention with and America's reaction to the Quebec Act suggest the wide divergence between the societal goals of the two parts of the empire."

¹³SP, "Jonathan Trumbull," 9.

¹⁴The resolutions defended the right of the King to tax tea, vowed that Bostonians could and should take care of their own people, and attacked the neighboring communities of Windham and Farmington as "Committing treason against the King." As part of the testimony regarding Peters's "treasonous correspondence" with the S.P.G. in the next mobbing, they were printed by the Bolton Committee. The full text of the Resolves are in, Peter Force, ed., American Archives (Washington, 1839), 4 Ser., II, 712-714.

¹⁵SP, "Jonathan Trumbull," 9. Trumbull wrote, "that the good people of Hebron, could not do their duty, by reason of the undue influence of Mr. Peters, and his band of tories." The Governor then sent letters, said to be signed by Dr. Franklin, J. Temple, and a certain female writer, etc., etc. dated in London, to every independent Parson in the Colony, with orders to read them on Sunday, August 14th, 1774."

¹⁶SP to Coke and Wilmot, 25 Nov. 1782, PP, I, 72. On 15 August 1974 the Reverend Dr. Norman Vencent Peale recalled the incident on the CBS-TV series "Bicentennial Minutes" sponsored by the Shell Oil Company. I thank Mr. J. W. Pittman, Jr., Consumer Relations, for a copy of the script.

¹⁷Force, American Archives, 712-713. Peters's statement swearing he had not sent any letter to the "Bishop of London, or the Venerable Society....to England to any other gentleman or designed Company nor will I do it," relative to the "Boston Port Bill, or the tea affair, or the controversy between Great Britain and the Colonies," printed in Connecticut Gazette (2 Sep. 1774), 2, Col. 2, and in Force, American Archives, 714.

¹⁸GHC, 416.

¹⁹Narrative, PP, I, 3.

²⁰GHC, 416. He added, "the Puritans (alias) Sons of Liberty took up Arms, Set off for Boston - cursing General Gage, King George 3rd - Lord North, Lord Bishops and their damnable Curates who teach nonresistance and many more such words."

²¹SP to Coke and Wilmot, 25 Nov. 1782, PP, I, 72. In GHC Peters emphasized his own importance in the loyalist cause as well as the "atrocities" elements of the mobs. "The Governor seized this opportunity to set the mobs again with redoubled fury, upon the Rev. Mr. Peters, and the loyalists, whom they then called Peterites; and the intoxicated ruffians spared neither their houses, goods, nor persons. Some had their bowels crouded [sic] out of their bodies; others were covered with filth, and marked with the sign of the cross by a mop filled with excrements, in token of their loyalty to a king who designed to crucify all the good people of America. Even women were hung by the heels, tarred, and feathered." SP, GHC, 417.

²²GHC, 417-418. Peters's own accounts, PP, I, 3; VIII, 22 and 39; GHC, ed. McCormick, 262-267. Pro-Peters accounts Force, American Archives, 711-712; Walter Bates, Kingston and the Loyalists, ed. W. O. Raymond (New Brunswick, 1889), 5-6.

²³Official statement, 6 Dec. 1774, Force, American Archives, 716-718. For contemporary references see Ezra Stiles, Diary, I, 466-467, entry for 27 Oct. 1774; his nephew, a patriot, in I. N. Tarbox, "A Chapter of Connecticut Reminiscences," New Englander, CLXXVII (1883), 715-716; Simon Deane to Silas Deane, 15 Oct. 1774, "Correspondence of Silas Deane," Connecticut Historical Society Collections, II (1870), 191.

²⁴The only other brother living, the eldest, John (occasionally Solomon John) remained a patriot and became a general during the Revolution.

²⁵Peters always claimed that Jonathan died in 1778, four years later, from wounds received in the struggle. In the interim, however, he was well enough to sire a son, John Hugh, in 1776.

²⁶Thomas Hutchinson in his diary reported the mob as "tearing his gown in pieces; calling them rags of the W___." Thomas Hutchinson, Diary and Letters, ed. Peter O. Hutchinson (London, 1883), I, 332. Sylvester Gilbert, a relative and after the Revolution Peters's lawyer, wrote that he had found and kept the torn surplice. He sent it then as a "monument to mob madness." Gilbert to SP, 26 Oct. 1796, PP, VII, 46.

²⁷Connecticut Gazette (16 Sep. 1774), 1, Col. 1. The statement, 7 Sep. 1774, confessed that "I have justly offend-
ed the people of this colony," and renounced and revoked the
resolves, "as being most of them contrary to the principles
of our compact with the King, expressed in our Royal Charter,
an indignity to several worthy towns in this colony, and an
insult upon the chief and subordinate authority therein."
He promised to adopt, maintain and support "the present
measures now taking [sic] in the American Colonies to obtain
redress of our grievances, founded upon the true principles
of natural and constitutional liberty." He averred, "that
the Quebec bill (as it is called) establishing Popery by
authority, in an American province, is an infringement on the
constitutional principles of our kingdom and government, and
against the principles of our holy religion."

²⁸Pomeroy became the Congregationalist minister in Heb-
ron in 1734. Peters called him "an excellent scholar, an
exemplary gentleman, and a most thundering preacher of the
new light order." GHC, 171.

²⁹For Governor Trumbull's full report of the mobbing
prepared at the direction of the General Assembly to be sent
to Connecticut's agent in London, see Isaac W. Stuart, Life
of Jonathan Trumbull (Hartford, 1859), 158-160.

³⁰Order of Trumbull, 8 Sep. 1774, T. Wolcott Papers,
Massachusetts Historical Society. Also printed in Connecti-
cut Gazette (11 Nov. 1774), 3, col. 1; Evening Post (Boston,
7 Nov. 1774), 3, col. 1.

³¹SP, "History of Jonathan Trumbull," 9-10.

³²SP, "Genuine History of Gen. Arnold," Political Maga-
zine, I (1780), 746.

³³Oscar Sherwin, Benedict Arnold (New York, c.1931),
15. See also, Isaac Arnold, Life of Benedict Arnold (4th
ed., Chicago, 1905), 35; Malcolm Decker, Benedict Arnold
(Tarrytown, New York, 1932), 42-43; Charles Sellers, Bene-
dict Arnold (New York, 1930), 19-20; Willard Wallace,
Traitorous Hero (New York, c.1954), 32-34. For Peters's re-
lationship with Arnold in London see PP, I, 76 and 77, and
Frederick J. Stimson, My Story (New York, 1917), 22-23.

³⁴GHC, 398, 402-403.

³⁵Jonathan Peters to SP, 26 Dec. 1774, PP, I, 10. He
recounts being drummed out of Tolland, Stafford, that he had
his money and watch taken by force in Brookfield, and in
Hartford, "as I was undressing to go to bed a large mob rush-
ed upon me, dragged me down stairs, took me into the street,
and mounted me on a rail, two having hold of my arms and two

hanging to my legs, in this position they carried me about the streets for about half an hour, treating me at the same time with abusive language crying a Tory a Tory A cursed Damned Churchman."

³⁶Increase Mosely to Assembly Speaker, 6 Oct. 1775, Connecticut State Library, Revolutionary War Mss. 1. For a list of the persecuted ministers in Connecticut see Burr, Story of the Diocese of Connecticut, 124-125. For "the way the church was devastated during the war," see Samuel McConnell, History of the American Episcopal Church (4th ed., New York, c.1890), 210-211.

³⁷Tyler to SP, 5 Oct. 1774, PP, I, 4. The letter was addressed to the care of Doctor Caner.

³⁸Force, American Archives, 715.

³⁹SP to Mary Peters, 28 Sep. 1774, Connecticut Gazette (14 Oct. 1774), 3, cols. 2-3; Boston Gazette and Country Journal (17 Oct. 1774), 2, col. 3; Force, American Archives, 715-716. On 4 October 1974, Dr. Joyce Brothers mentioned the letter on the CBS-TV series "Bicentennial Minutes" sponsored by the Shell Oil Company. I thank Mr. Dan Roe, Consumer Relations, for a copy of the script.

⁴⁰Connecticut Gazette (14 Oct. 1774), 3, cols. 2-3; Connecticut Courant (17 Oct. 1774), 1, col. 2; Massachusetts Spy (20 Oct. 1774), 3, cols. 3-4; Force, American Archives, 716; Massachusetts (Colony Provincial Congress, Journals of Each Provincial Congress (Boston, 1838), 21-22.

⁴¹Auchmuty to SP, 21 Oct. 1774, PP, I, 5. For the "propaganda damage that could not be repaired," Bridenbaugh, Mitre and Sceptre, 325.

⁴²Evening Post (Boston, 24 Oct. 1774), 2, col. 3.

⁴³Connecticut Gazette (11 Nov. 1774), 1, col. 2; Connecticut Journal (21 Oct. 1774), 4, and (28 Oct. 1774), 1. The letter was signed by the Reverend Messrs. Richard Mansfield (1724-1820), James Scovil (d. 1808), Samuel Andrews, Bela Hubbard, Abraham Jarvis (1739-1813, later Bishop of Connecticut), Ebenezer Kneeland. They swore that they were "able to assert for many of the clergy that are not present, and have no kind of doubts as to all, that they assent to the whole in fact and sentiment." After the war Peters's friends Tyler and Hubbard explained their part in the affair. "I shall god willing," Hubbard wrote, "soon convince you by original papers that your brethren have in no instance acted an unfriendly part with you." Hubbard to SP, 21 Jan. 1784, PP, II, 3. Tyler wrote, "The false Papers, you say we signed versus you, I believe you must be under a Mistake

concerning them, if my Memory serves me. I never saw them but once, and that was about five Months after they were signed. Either you must have been imposed on by a Forgery, or have drawn very remote Consequences." After carefully going over the exact sequence of events, Tyler concluded, "But if those Papers really did contain any thing more than I have said, It is my Mistake." Tyler to SP, 9 Jan. 1784, PP, II, 2. In any case Peters remained in close touch with them for many years as friends.

⁴⁴Connecticut Gazette (11 Nov. 1774), 1, col. 2. Dated 22 Oct. 1774, the assemblymen who signed included Daniel Sherman, Erastus and Wm. Wolcott, and Jona. Trumbull, Jr.

⁴⁵The Reverend Henry Caner (1700-1792, Rector, Kings Chapel, Boston [1747-1776/]), and an S.P.G. missionary, wrote the Secretary of the Society, 18 Apr. 1775, "Our clergy in the midst of these confusions behaved I think with remarkable prudence. None of them have been hindered from exercising the duties of their office since Mr. Peters, tho' many of them have been threat'ned." William Stevens Perry, ed., Historical Collections (reprint, New York, 1969), III, 579.

⁴⁶Connecticut Gazette (6 Dec. 1776), 1, cols. 1-2. The letters were from Peters to Thomas Brown (c.1723-1806), merchant in Boston until fleeing to Halifax in 1776, and the Reverend Mather Byles, Jr. (1735-1814). The incident is also mentioned in the entry for 14 Feb. 1777, Ezra Stiles, Diary, II, 128. He describes Peters, "a Parricide Refugee now in London, and how unnatural his enmity."

⁴⁷SP to Auchmuty, 25 Feb. 1775, New Jersey Archives, I, Ser. X, 616-619.

⁴⁸John Trumbull, ed. Edgar T. Bowden, The Satiric Poems (Austin, c.1962), 117. M'fingal, an epic poem was first published in 1782. Trumbull, one of the Connecticut wits, portrayed M'fingal as a burly monarchist New England squire. Oxford Companion to American Literature, ed. James D. Hart (3rd ed., New York, 1956), 445-446, 776-777.

⁴⁹Thomas Gage, Correspondence, ed., C. E. Carter (New Haven, 1931) 381. Gage to Dartmouth, 30 Oct. 1774. A postscript read, "A clergyman by the name of Peters was driven here from Connecticut, and gave horrible Accts of his treatment. He is gone home and Your Lordship will see him."

⁵⁰"Rev'd Sam'l Peters Mobbing History," n.d., PP, I, 2.

⁵¹Ibid. and see GHC, ed., McCormick, for the complete account, 271-272.

⁵²Wentworth to T. W. Waldron, 25 Oct. 1774, John Wentworth, "Letters," Massachusetts Historical Society Collections, LIV (1891), 6th Ser. IV, 56-57.

⁵³GHC, ed., McCormick, *ibid*.

⁵⁴SP to SPG, 13 Jan. 1775, Francis L. Hawks and William S. Perry, eds., Documentary History (New York, 1863-1864), II, 238.

⁵⁵Connecticut Gazette (4 May 1775), 1, col. 3. The editor wrote, "His Majesty's right arm is lame, occasioned by a sprain from flourishing his sword over the heads of his new made knights. The Rev. Mr. Peters from Lebanon [sic] in Connecticut has obtained his Majesty's leave to pick hops at 9d per day, a penny more than the usual price, as a reward for his past faithful services; and by this lucrative business it is supposed he will soon acquire a fortune equal to that he left behind him."

⁵⁶Despite the fact that in the 18th century most people employed the terms Loyalist and Tory synonymously (as do many modern historians), for clarity I shall use the term loyalist exclusively to designate those who remained loyal to the crown and opposed the Revolution (or Civil War as it should more appropriately be called).

⁵⁷George Otto Trevelyan, The American Revolution, Part I (New York, 1899), 394.

⁵⁸There is still no consensus on the number who actually were "enemies to freedom." The once widely held view of John Adams that one-third of the Colonials were patriots, one-third loyalists, and one-third indifferent, is no longer valid. Probably between 10 and 13% of the Colonial population actively opposed separation from the mother country. Morton and Penn Borden, eds., The American Tory (Englewood Cliffs, c.1972), 13.

⁵⁹This summation, while not held by him, is found in G. W. Ross, "Some Characteristics of United Empire Loyalists," Annual Transactions (March, 1899), 33.

⁶⁰See Wallace Brown's address to the American Antiquarian Society, "The view at Two Hundred Years," Proceedings, LXXX (1970), 25-47, not only for an accurate survey of currently held views, but also a most complete bibliography.

⁶¹Leonard W. Labaree, Conservatism in Early American History (New York, 1948), and his earlier, "Nature of American Loyalism," Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society, LIV (1944), 57. He defined a conservative as one with "a strong sense of the values in the contemporary order

of society which are in danger of being lost, an imagination keen enough to see the possible harm as well as the good in the changes proposed, and a personal bravery in the face of suffering and persecution."

⁶²William H. Nelson, The American Tory (Oxford, 1961), 91.

⁶³Ibid., 90.

⁶⁴Sydney E. Ahlstrom, Religious History of the American People (New Haven, 1972), 225.

⁶⁵W. G. Shelton, "The United Empire Loyalists," Dalhousie Review, XLV (1965), 7.

⁶⁶Ibid., 10.

⁶⁷Emphasizing the point further, he writes, "It must be remembered that each person had to make a decision, often an agonising one, involving the loss of friends, as well as property." Ibid., 11. In the case of the divided loyalties in the Peters family, see, North Callahan, Royal Raiders (Indianapolis, c.1963), 152.

⁶⁸Shelton, "United Empire Loyalists," 14.

⁶⁹Trevelyan, American Revolution, 396-397.

⁷⁰Poem by Bailey, 13 May 1780, PP, I, 46. Also printed in Winthrop Sargent, ed., The Loyalist Poetry of the Revolution (Philadelphia, 1857), 129. The first three lines of the poem have been omitted.

⁷¹Labaree, Conservatism in Early American History, 157.

CHAPTER III

A LOYALIST REFUGEE IN ENGLAND

Early Years in London

The Reverend Samuel Peters, penniless and with little else than the shirt on his back, arrived in London as a loyal subject of His Majesty King George III. The rest of his life was spent unsuccessfully in trying to recoup his fortune and to attain a social and religious position to which he felt his accomplishments entitled him. Thirty years' residence in England changed him from a successful, self-assured, rustic colonial priest to an embittered, cosmopolitan land entrepreneur; from a royalist anglophile to an American republican; from a Laudian high churchman to a Latitudinarian if not an outright congregationalist. Denied the expected recognition and advancement earned by his loyalty and capabilities, Peters came to mistrust the British for their conduct of the war against the colonies, for their distrust and condescension showed American loyalist refugees, and after the Treaty of Paris for the favoritism tendered the young nation.

On his arrival in London Peters lodged at the Herald's office where he was to remain until June of 1776, when he

moved to Pimlico, a cheaper rent area where many of the impecunious loyalists were forced to take up residence.¹

Within a month of his landing, the Connecticut missionary wrote to the Venerable Society recounting the events leading to his flight, the continuing dangers to his distressed and scattered family,

with much difficulty I moved my daughter to Boston and my Infant Son (born July 16th 1774 at which time his mother died) with his nurse and a Negro woman are removed nigh to New York
'....my aged mother in distress without her children...may the Heavens support her in this sad winter of her life,

and his very impoverished state,

I now find by experience the truth of that divine Maxim 'It is more blessed to give than to receive' - until now I viewed the saying as proverbial or rather mystical but alas what shall I do 'to dig I cannot and to beg I am ashamed'....God knows that I took on me the Office of a Priest not for a maintenance to myself or family as I had acquired portion on which I could have lived much better as a Layman.

He further pointed out that the needs in New England precluded the Society from aiding him financially but that he

hoped to obtain their patronage and influence with the King and Parliament that a support might be afforded me at the Treasury or otherwise, at the expense of the Colony of Connecticut who refused me protection.

Realizing that he could not return to the colonies "until the rebellion in New England is suppressed," he asked that

If I can or cannot have a living in England I am willing to be one of 10,000 men to cross the Seas and spend my life to curb the New England Rebels and defend the Church of England and her loyal Children by the British Laws, the Church and King I hope to live and die for them.²

The letter served its purpose, and the Secretary summoned him to appear at the next General Meeting, 19 January 1775, to review the history of his mobbings. The occasion also allowed him the opportunity to rail against the rebellious New England Puritans. At the same meeting the Society received letters from the Reverend Samuel Auchmuty, Henry Caner, and the joint clergy of Boston who assured the committee that Mr. Peters, "their Missionary at Hebron, driven from the parish by the outrage of the people, who call themselves the Sons of Liberty," was worthy of their aid, and that a "narration to be laid before the Society, [was] a very just and modest one," which could have been supported by "several persons upon Oath, had it been consistent with the safety of their lives."³

The Society responded with a "Gratuity of twenty Guineas...in consideration of his distressed case," and continued his stipend of £30.⁴ Peters continued to receive this salary until Michelmass Day, 1785, when the Society discontinued all aid to clergy residing in the United States and to former colonial clergy in England.⁵

A few months later, Peters again appeared before a General Meeting. This time they requested the Archbishop of Canterbury to intercede with Lord North that Peters "may be thought deserving of the favor of Government."⁶ The Archbishop and the Bishop of Winchester introduced the Reverend Samuel Peters to Lord North, who granted him an annual pension of £100. Through the intervention and influence of

General Gage, Peters had hoped to secure the patronage of Lord Dartmouth and a permanent sinecure. Worried about any influence the cleric might have to damage the colony, the Connecticut Assembly warned its agent Thomas Life to circumvent Peters's machinations. Life reported to his clients that at a levee on 20 March, Lord Dartmouth treated the loyalist expatriate with coolness. Evidently Puritan influence had its effect, at least for the moment, as Peters failed to receive an appointment from Lord Dartmouth "in England or among the Indians in America."⁷ Peters's immediate financial problems were eased temporarily by a grant of £50 from the fund raised in England for "Needy American Clergy," a fund which later he assisted in dispensing.⁸

His financial burdens were soon increased by the arrival of his daughter, Hannah Delvena, sent aboard the warship Somerset on the orders of Admiral Graves.⁹ Even though Peters could

boast of my Frugality, having learned the art of not dying upon so small a pittance for near three years in this expensive country, after leaving a cheap one where I spent double that sum every year,¹⁰

he was still forced to search diligently for further aid from governmental sources. At last, a friend, Samuel Whitbread (1758-1815), an influential Member of Parliament, secretly prevailed on Lord North to increase his pension to £150. In addition Whitbread loaned him his villa in France.

For almost a year, from October, 1774, to late spring, 1775, the two Peters resided at "Chez Baclen" in Arras.

Shortly after their arrival Peters received a letter from his friend, John Lyon, historian of Dover, that aptly described their life in France:

I hope by this time you are agreeably settled and perfectly reconciled with the french Diet. I will not doubt but that the ladies comply with the custom of the country, and rise at 5 O'Clock in the morning to Matines. A weeks constant practice, and some times a sprinkle with Holy Water, will lead them into the mysteries of the Service....I wish I was within a days journey of you, I would come and examine the ladies in the French and if they are better schollars /sic/ than myself, I would learn of them.¹²

While in France Peters made a tour of Central Europe including Hungary. There he first encountered the Moslem religion, gaining a knowledge of Islam for which he had true Christian charity the rest of his life, and to which he referred often in his letters and writings.¹³ Peters also formed a close friendship with the Jesuits who conducted a seminary nearby, to which he sent his son for an education during the French Revolution. Peters later asked the help of the Abbe when seeking consecration as Bishop of Vermont.

With his financial position improved and with the Grand Tour adding luster to his qualifications for preferment, the Reverend Samuel Peters returned to London, resuming the struggle to take his proper place in the church and loyalist society. One of the unresolved mysteries in Peters's life was his failure to obtain a cure in London. He undoubtedly considered a rural curacy unsuitable to his station and by cutting off his S.P.G. stipend and pension from the crown, his financial condition would again be precarious. There is

some evidence that he was an assistant at All Hallows, Lombard Street, under Dr. Robert Markham.¹⁴ Judge Samuel Curwen (1715-1802) mentions in his Journal that he

Worshipped at Allhallows, Lombard-Street; the officiating priest was Mr. Peters, the refugee from Hebron, Connecticut; his text 2 Peter chap. iii verses 1 and 2, 'But grow in grace,' etc.¹⁵

Four years later, Curwen

Attended worship at Lincoln's Inn Chapel. Samuel Peters preached - he is an indifferent speaker and composer - how he got there is as hard to conceive as straws in amber.¹⁶

The failure to receive an appointment or, if he was offered one, to accept it and thus be under the jurisdiction of a bishop was one of the reasons offered by the Archbishop of Canterbury when he refused Peters consecration as Bishop of Vermont. There is no evidence that his theology was behind his failure to receive a sinecure, for as late as 1788, he was honored by being asked to preach a sermon at Newgate prison.

Much of Peters's time after his arrival in England was spent in assisting fellow New England loyalists who had fled to Canada or Great Britain. After the war ended, he acted as an English agent for those still in America. As early as January, 1776, the Reverend Richard Mansfield, missionary at Derby, Connecticut, asked Peters for help with the S.P.G. so that his stipend from the Society would be continued. He had been driven to Hempstead on Long Island after a letter which he had written to Governor William Tryon (1729-1788), suggesting ways by which the sufferings and persecution of

the loyalists might be curbed, was captured and published.¹⁷ After the Treaty of Paris, Mansfield again sought help to recover an inheritance held by the Society.¹⁸ Again Peters was able to help him, for which he received a fulsome note of thanks.¹⁹

Although Mansfield's plea for help is the earliest still on record, Peters must have been of assistance to Asa Spalding sometime in 1775. In a letter to Samuel Peters in June, 1776, Spalding apologizes, "too oft' already have I troubled you perhaps, and I fear occasioned you some Ex-
pence," but points out that "this opportunity cannot be attended with that disagreeable circumstance." After describing his flight from Boston to Halifax and his separation from his family and business interest, Spalding begs that "I could once hear from you."²⁰ The lot of the loyalist in Nova Scotia was hard, as Bailey informed him, "The poverty of the loyalists, in these provinces is very alarming, most of them have expended all their substance in building a clearing - a little spot of ground."²¹

Samuel Peters tried to help many of his clergy friends find cures in Nova Scotia and other areas of Canada, even though some occasionally found fault with the particular mission. The Reverend Samuel Andrews complained about

an appointment at Gusborough on Chedabucto Bay. That mission I find, has only 70 Pounds from government, and lacks several other advantages given to the two missions in New Brunswick.²²

A different kind of a plea for help came from a former parishioner, Benjamin Bailey, who was a British prisoner,

having been taken from a rebel privateer. Bailey wrote in October 1777, from the Horton Prison near Gosport, asking Peters to "send a Certificat [sic] of my Loyalty" because:

At present I am confin'd with about one hundred and thirty Rebels (and am looked upon as one myself) who are cursing the King, Ministry and above all the torys among whom I dont fail of my full proportion of curses from a set of such infatuated beings as ever existed.²³

Among the many loyalist clergy he assisted in England was the Reverend James Nichols (1748-1829). Peters asked the Archbishop of Canterbury that Nichols "may be granted some relief...out of the Collection made for the suffering American Clergy."²⁴ He pleaded for compensation for the relict of the Reverend Ebenezer Kneeland, S.P.G. missionary at Stratford, Connecticut, who died a prisoner to the patriots in his own house, 17 April 1777. The widow had been denied help because Kneeland was accused of being a patriot and an "Enemy to the British Constitution....a very false report."²⁵

Peters acted as agent, as well as pleader of the cause, of the Reverend William Clark of Dedham, Massachusetts. Clark had been a convert to Anglicanism and had served that parish since 1769 as missionary for the Society. By the time he reached London in 1779, he was both deaf and dumb from the severe treatment received from patriot mobs. Through the efforts of Peters and others, Clark obtained a pension from the Loyalist Commission. In 1786 Clark moved to Halifax and, his hearing and speech restored, he assisted Bailey at Annapolis Royal. Then with Peters's help he was given a

mission of his own at Digby. Numerous letters to Peters testify to his thankfulness for the help he received.²⁶

Another convert to Anglicanism whom Peters assisted was the Reverend Bernard M. Houseal (d. 1799), who had been a Lutheran minister in New York City until his flight to Halifax with Howe's fleet. After Houseal received Anglican orders in England, Peters helped him become the Society's missionary to the German congregation, Lunenburg, Nova Scotia. Houseal appreciated the help Peters had given him so much that he sent his son,

to your countenance and doubt not you will be pleased to impart to him your kind advice and salutary admonitions at his waiting on you.... and give him your effectual advice in circumstances suitable to your conveniency.²⁷

Asked by his former associate, the Reverend Abraham Beach, to use "your influence with Dr. Morice and the Society" to get leave of absence for the Reverend Mr. Rowland who "has just received intelligence of his appointment to the Mission of Shelbourn,"²⁸ Peters "the same day" saw the Secretary "in behalf of your Friend, a stranger to me and I believe every indulgence will be granted...that is mentioned in your and his letters."²⁹

The only recorded case in which Peters showed any ambiguity in assisting a fellow S.P.G. priest was that of the Reverend Edward Bass (1726-1803), missionary at Newburyport, Massachusetts, since 1752.³⁰ Bass was dismissed from the Society's service in January, 1779, for "improper and disloyal behaviour which originally gave offence to his

Brethern," because "Mr. Bass has complied too far with the orders of the Rebels."³¹ Following his release, Bass continued through friends in England and America to press without success the matter of his reinstatement by the Society.

The first official notice of Peters's involvement in the controversy was at the Society's Board meeting, September, 1781, when the Secretary reported that "Col. Gardiner and Peters had given me verbal proof of Bass's disloyalty."³² As Bass's supporters continued to press his case, Peters, in a written statement to back his earlier oral one, based his belief in the Massachusetts clergyman's guilt on an interview he had with two American ship captains captured by the British and brought to London. Unsolicited by Peters, Captain Salter, who claimed membership in Bass's parish, declared,

I was at Church and heard him read the proclamations for the Fasts and thanksgiving Days, the Declaration of Independence. He has always kept his Church open, never prayed for the King after Congress forbid him, and prayed for the Congress instead of the King - he and his wife have shares in two or three Privateers and they have had good Luck.³³

Peters investigated as much as he could about the affair and about Salter's character before he reported the incident to the Society. He pointed out that "truth is not easily to be uncovered about natives of that province from the mouth of natives," and further,

If Salter is a dissenter his evidence is bad, if a Churchman it may be good, altho, he is a Rebel - for an instance of a Churchman abusing a Clergyman of the Church is hardly to be mett /sic/ with in the four Colonies of New England.³⁴

The last time the Society considered the dismissal of Bass, "2 authenticated charges of disloyalty, signed by persons of respectable character, were read to the Board," with the result that the Society refused to take any further action.³⁵ Samuel Peters, as "one of the respectable characters" had much to do with Bass's failure to have his name restored to the rolls, even though Peters claimed he had not "meant to hurt Mr. Bass who was to my knowledge in 1774 a loyal and good man."³⁶

After the Loyalist Claims Commission was established in 1783, Peters appeared before it many times in behalf of his friends and his family, as well as for himself. He pled for his brother Bemslee and for his nephew, Colonel John Peters. He gave affidavits in support of David Ingersoll, Samuel Stearns (d. 1809), Frederick Phillips, Francis Green (1742-1809), Benjamin Hallowell, Edward Thorp, and the Reverend Messrs. Byles and William Clark.³⁷

He served as father figure, host, and confidante to many of his friends' children who came to England. Besides the sons of Houseal, he advised Ebenezer Dibblee's son, Frederick, who became rector at Woodstock, New Brunswick;³⁸ Richard Rosewall Saltonstall; Peleg Wiswall (1762-1836), judge of the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia; and Timothy Wetmore who became Attorney General of New Brunswick.

At the request of the Reverend John Vardill (1749-1811), Peters came to the aid of Mr. Morrell who had "liberally expended on Long Island his Property in relieving and

chearing [sic] the friends of the British government." The treachery of an agent, a long illness, and a delayed inheritance had reduced Morrell "to extreme distress." Convinced of Peters's "Humanity of...disposition, and the frequent instances I have seen of your good offices, that you delight in doing service to the distress'd Loyalists," Vardill asked him to "facilitate [Morrell's] passage to the new government in Canada, or to obtain him some appointment there."³⁹

' As a good priest, Peters was called upon to aid widows and orphans. When the plight of Mrs. Benjamin (Sarah) Baker, imprisoned in Newgate by her landlady for debt, was brought to his attention, Peters with some friends obtained her release from gaol.⁴⁰ Through the Reverend Samuel Parker (1774-1804), Rector of Trinity Church, Boston, Peters located her father, Andrew Hawkins, an "old man who is nothing more than a common Labourer and exceeding poor." Hawkins was able to arrange for her passage home but was

utterly unable to make you any other returns thanhis humble and hearty thanks and to assure you and them that he esteems himself happy that a kind Providence directed your steps to the place where the poor sufferer was confined.⁴¹

The next time Peters sought Parker's help did not turn out such a happy ending. Seeking help for the abandoned wife and children of Theodore Barrell, Parker discovered that Barrell had supported her and the children, and that he was trying to get the children from her because she had betrayed him. "I really believe he has some reason for being offended at her conduct," Parker wrote, "but as I always

make it a point not to interfere between a man and his Wife
I shd rather drop the subject."⁴²

At the conclusion of the incident, Parker wrote about
the ever present problem confronting every clergyman,

I am fully persuaded of your humanity and doubt
not this principle alone has prevailed upon you
to interest yourself in behalf of certain persons,
who as well as you are welcome to all the trouble
I have been at on their account. But I have long
since found by experience and dare say that you
having moved in a much larger sphere, have found
the same, that great caution ought to be used and
much prudence exercised in the choice of objects
upon whom to shew our charity. I do not insinuate
that you have hitherto been mistaken or imposed
upon with respect to those whose cause you have
espoused.⁴³

Peters acted as agent and adviser to Penelope Bissett
(1746-1816), widow of George Bissett (d. 1788), missionary at
Newport, Rhode Island, until forced to flee to St. John, New
Brunswick. He was able to get Mrs. Bissett a £30 pension
and a grant of £38 for the loss of her income.⁴⁴ He contin-
ued to advise her for many years afterward, recommending
that she "send her son to Yale College or the Seminary at
Providence for his education."⁴⁵

Aiding his friends in more mundane matters occupied the
Connecticut expatriate's time. It took more than two years
and much correspondence across the Atlantic, before Peters
was able to find and purchase the organ that Hubbard wanted
for Trinity Church in New Haven. Peters was unable to fill
part of Hubbard's request,

if you should stumble on some poor but honest
English lad that would come out and bring with
him a small venture in Books of Psalmody, and
that could play skilfully /sic/ the organ and

back an English School of Musick altho I dare not promise or engage any thing yet I think he might procure a decent support here.

While the Trinity people did "find some faults, but on the whole we are Ignorant about the Instrument," it was the "opinion of most that its Tone is good."⁴⁶

While continuously sending books, journals, newspapers, sermons, and pamphlets for his friends' libraries, Peters found time to buy vestments for the clergy. A set of robes for Parker, which "were fit for an Archbishop of Canterbury and better than I ever knew sent to America," were lost when the Boston Packet, under Captain Davis, went down "on the Island Alderney."⁴⁷ He purchased a gown for the Reverend Richard Clarke (1738-1842);⁴⁸ shoes, dresses, and sundries for the clergy wives;⁴⁹ and two dozen portraits of Edmund Fanning (1739-1818), then Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia, with frames for one dozen of them, as well as medicines and 2,000 nails.⁵⁰

Peters's Property Claims

Loyalist refugees in England, objects of public sympathy and compassion during the war, after peace was declared came to be seen as living reminders of a lost war and a continuing drain to the taxpayer.⁵¹ Also, the grasping, self-seeking nature of a few loyalists and some grossly inflated claims before the Loyalist Claims Commission turned public sympathy within a year of the peace to begrudging cynicism and harsh criticism of the "exiles at home" in

Great Britain. Though Samuel Peters in his search for preferment may seem to fit the former category, his property claims were fair and reasonable. While quite successful in aiding many of his friends and relatives in getting just compensation, Peters failed to receive what he thought was adequate remuneration for his own losses.

In a memorial filed shortly after the Commission was formed, Peters furnished a list of his monetary and property losses, with a brief biography summing up his missionary efforts and recounting his sufferings from the violence of the mob.⁵³ He prepared it under the honest assumption that his property had been seized under the Connecticut Act of 1778, "confiscating the estates of persons inimical to the Independence and Liberties of the United States, within this State, and for payment of their Debts, and directing Proceedings therein."⁵⁴ His belief had been strengthened in April 1783 by a letter from his young friend, Colonel Rudolphus Ritzema, assuring him that no property would be restored to "Royalists" and urging him not to return to Connecticut as his father, there, had assured him that even if his life were spared, "contumelies and insults would incessantly be showered down" upon him.⁵⁵ Much later that year he indirectly received information about his property that obliquely suggested non-confiscation. While his nephew, David Sutton, emphasized that his estate had been taken by the State Attorney, his lands leased out, and that his stock was either dead, stolen, or sold, Sutton did write that the

confiscation had been "continued in court for about 4 or 5 years and is undetermined."⁵⁶ It is possible that Peters might have understood that the actual final disposal had not been completed. The next communication, written directly by Sutton to Peters, urged him to "impower an Agent to conduct Matters for you," as Sutton had refused to take the Oath of Fidelity and was disqualified to act as an attorney. He suggested Silvester Gilbert, Peters's brother-in-law, as his lawyer, for "he is an Attorney at Law, a Man of Character, possessed with a Catholick Temper, and Disposition."⁵⁷ The problem of confiscation was cleared up early in 1784 by a letter from Gilbert which indirectly offered his services, making clear that

your Estate is now leased out to the use of the State, no further Confiscations are to take place, but what will be done with the use of the Estates of Absentees in future I cannot determine, but conclude that all Estates under similar Circumstances with yours must be returned to their original owners.

Contrary to earlier advice, Gilbert, who had married Peters's widowed sister during the war, sincerely wished that he could "see you and Miss Hannah at home once more." He assured Peters that he "might visit your Native Country with safety and reclaim your Interest and I believe regain it."⁵⁸

Many of the expatriate's clerical friends also urged him to return and confirm the state of his property affairs. "You must send over a power of Attorney or come yourself immediately, or you will be in danger of losing your fortune in this state. A word to the wise is sufficient," was

Leaming's advice.⁵⁹ The town clerk of Hebron wrote a conciliatory note acknowledging that he "owes Mr. Peters nearly £200 - by Bond, which he with Trumbulls mob stole from Mr. Peters in 1774."⁶⁰

With this further information in hand, Peters submitted a final draft to the Commission on 9 February 1784 claiming much higher losses than he had earlier. He also pointed out some of the difficulties he had in getting actual deeds, bonds, and notes, so that it was necessary to furnish affidavits. There were even problems with this, as

Such rebels as have been in London from Connecticut since the peace in 1783 have plead their ignorance or their fears of being ill used on their return to America if they should give any affidavits concerning my property.⁶¹

A shortened version (Table I) of the two schedules provides a comparison of changes in his final claim of £41,449.19.4⁶²

Peters's appearance before the Commission took place almost three years later when he was examined personally on 16 and 18 October 1786. Much to his dismay, the Commissioners awarded him only £1,500 for his property losses and continued his pension at £120 per annum. Peters viewed the award as unjust in relation to what other loyalists were granted. Writing immediately on hearing the news, Peters pointed out to the Commissioners that "I cannot rejoice, although I rejoice in the ample provision made for others." He complained

As God is my judge, I wish not to hurt any Loyalist by this application, and I find myself willing to share loss and gain in equal proportion

TABLE I

SAMUEL PETERS'S PROPERTY CLAIMS

	1782 (Currency)	1784 (Sterling)
50-60,000 acres, Wilderness land in Vermont	£1,000	£ 750
180 acres, Pownalborough, Me.	180	135
186 " Gilsom, N. H.	-	37.10
65 " Colchester	175.15	133.10
300 " Chatham	750	562.10
1,100 " Hebron, fenced, gardens, fruit trees, etc.	6,800 (for 800 acres)	8,000
Buildings of Hebron estate	3,210	2,960
Notes and Bonds	2,140	1,287
Farm Utensils	234	378.16
Negroes and Live Stock	1,000	1,316
Provisions	-	1,141.13.4*
Household Furniture	650	1,248
Watch taken by mob, 1774	20	-
Estate of Hanna, daughter	2,000	3,000
Estate of Wm. Birdseye, son	10,000	20,500**
	£28,162.15	£41,449.19.4
	or Sterling £21,122.13.9	

*Peters's summary of totals in his 1784 schedule listed provisions as £478.8.4 when his itemized account in the same schedule totaled £1,141.13.4.

**In the formal memorial, Peters valued his son's estate at £20,000, but the schedule accounts for £20,500.

with all yet for reasons unknown to me, I suffer more than others.

His principal complaint, however, was for the plight of his children who "were left by their respective mothers rich and happy, and my feeble state of Body will soon force me to leave them poor and miserable."⁶³ This last plea won pensions for both children during their lifetimes. There was no compensation for their property losses, although both eventually received extensive land grants in Canada.

The primary reason for the small amount of compensation was that Peters's property had not been confiscated by the state. He believed very strongly that the failure to seize his lands was a Puritan rebel plot, conceived as "an insult, and as an Act of Malice to hurt me in England; and to do me no good in America, where they knew I could never go and live."⁶⁴ His idea of this conspiracy to defraud him developed after learning that he still held title to his landed estate. In 1786, Peters wrote to his newly appointed agents, John and Nathaniel Mann, asking for information about his property to "convince my friends here what my Enimies [sic] were trying to accomplish by the pretended release of the Seizure of my property." Peters pointed out to his brother-in-law and nephew that

this Invention was formed to keep me from compensation here, and when I should look for it there, O then it will appear to have been confiscated ever since 1776 - and thus I am to fall to the ground, by my good friends - the children of Jonathan Trumbull - LL D - from Edinburgh.⁶⁵

In another bitter letter to Mann the next year, Peters railed

that his estate was restored after "abusing them and the Buildings twelve years," and, prophetically, the Commissioners would reduce his compensation because "they will think me well paid for my Lands."⁶⁶

Peters well knew that he was being unfair to his friends. As early as November 1783, he had been told that through the efforts of Judge Thomas Seymour, Mayor of Hartford and Peters's counsel during the first years of the Revolution, a suit instituted in April 1779 by the Hebron selectmen in the county court had been delayed until the Articles of Peace were final and the court thereby unauthorized to continue the suit.⁶⁷

However, on the destructiveness of "the children of Jonathan Trumbull," Peters had erred little. The state had sequestered his property and rented it out to its destruction. Mann reported to him that his livestock and household furniture were "chiefly plundered and carried away by the mobs....We know and could prove where many of them went but the first law of nature forbids our meddling [sic]." He reported that the fences, houses, gardens, orchards, and timber were "most horribly destroyed." His newest house "has been letted with the worst of people and is not so clean and neat as you used to keep your hog houses." Hannah's lands were in much better shape, showing that "malice" towards Peters, himself, "has done all this wanton mischief."⁶⁸

Furthermore, Peters discovered that he could not draw the rents from his farms or reclaim them without petitioning

the Assembly, stating his own "wickedness" and affirming the justice of the American cause. This the loyalist clergyman could not or would not do. He ordered his agents

not to prefer any petition to recover my estates for I had rather lose it than have such proof of weakness stand on record against me - were my children with their Mothers, I would most willingly leave my quondam property to Congress and the beasts of the Field, and view myself happy in poverty out of the United States.⁶⁹

Adding insult to his injury, Peters discovered that the lands which had yielded a net profit to him of 600 per annum had been so misused that the 1787 taxes exceeded the income by 40, and there were seven years back taxes due in 1789. Although problems of the estate continued to plague him for many years, there is no record of his ever getting any income from it after he fled in 1774. Nathan Mann wrote him that his agents had "gotten much ill will by asking for you - indeed we have not done much - for our personal safety forbids it."⁷⁰ Evidently few Hebronites felt as did Jedediah Buckingham who wrote him that the people in town were well disposed toward him and wished for his return:

They are perfectly sick of this cruel method of Banishing their best Citizens. Here I view the Antient /sic/ ruins of your Church. Your Houses. Your Farms etc--! All look desolate, dreary, gloomy and forsaken!

Repenting, they prayed for Peters's return "to restore them to that peace, that happy enjoyment they ever experienced under your smile and protection."⁷¹ It was to be many long years before their "best Citizen" trusted his fellow townsmen enough to return.

Peters was further troubled by unjust demands for unpaid debts. Shortly after his mother's death in 1785, the widows of his brothers, Joseph and Jonathan, made demands on her estate which Peters felt had already been paid. He wrote:

I hear of money dying in the Hands of Dr Sutton and my Debts as you call them remained unpaid - all this matter remains a Secret to me - rather a Mystery - you say £120 is due from Stewart which if collected it will go a good way towards paying your Debts. Pray tell what Debts now exist which did not exist when Dr Sutton held the money to die in his hands while my Debts were running on Interest?

Noting further how the Revolution as a civil war had added to financial chaos and how Peters had suffered because of divided family loyalties as well as from the usual squabbles over family estates, he wrote,

It seems by the mighty haste People are in on your Side of the water that it points not at the Prosperity of me or my two children, who can with some propriety join the Mode of your Methodistical parsons, 'thank god, we have no friends' - and Dr Young says, 'all people who lye at the mercy of their best worldly friends need no foes.'⁷²

The last recorded attempt to recover Peters's Connecticut property occurred in late 1796. Richard Rosewall Saltonstall, from New London, Connecticut, had been in England from 1792-1795, when he returned to America. He spent much of his time in England with Peters, with whom a close relationship developed. After returning to America, Saltonstall set out for Hebron in October 1796 to see what could be done to help Peters's desperate financial condition at that time.

Taking the power of attorney that he had been given, the young Saltonstall

went in pursuit of what personal property remained in Hebron - at different places I picked up sundry articles of furniture, list of which shall be forwarded in due time - I order'd them to be advertised and sold....your most valuable furniture, linnen etc. is totally lost.

He described the terrible tangle the property was in because Mann had gone bankrupt in the drug business, and he ordered Peters's financial affairs. After urging Peters and his daughter to sell what remained because "lands will fall on a declaration of peace, and because the lands will bring more if sold together," he wrote that "in five years your estate in Hebron will not bring half the money, it will now." Saltonstall concluded by describing some jewelry he had saved,

two rings, and silver sleeve bottons, two small broches, 1 gold ear ring, 1 broke illegible set with glass beads....one of the rings is of gold but the article is broke. They say you called it a seal ring - the other is a stone ring, red stone with two beads of paste on each side of it.⁷³

Sylvester Gilbert also had a poignant comment on all that remained of the once sizable Hebron estate. He wrote that

a valuable trunk of linens I hear was in the care of your sister Mrs. Mann now deceased, but we have not yet discovered it. - nor a single farming tool, pot, kettle or hand Iron - all these last articles they say Ceaser carried off.⁷⁴

One other friend mentioned that he had once made a vain attempt "to collect your scattered library in Hebron."⁷⁵

Samuel Peters's Slaves

Another item of Peters's estate figured in a bizarre incident. As noted above (Table I, p. 86), the estate included ~~£~~1,316 for "Negroes and Live Stock." At the time of his flight, Peters possessed six Negroes: Cesar, Louis, Jamey, Theodorus, Pomp, and Pomp's wife.⁷⁶ Showing concern for them in his first letter after the close of the war, Peters wrote to his brother and sister:

After a separation of nine long years and a cessation of Hostilities which ought never to have commenced between England and America, I venture to write to you for the first time to let you know that I live to pray for and bless you.

He then asked for the health of his blacks by name.⁷⁷

Later he asked his nephew,

Where and how lives honest Pomp? - it seems to me that he and Ceser might be better Tenants than Mrs F. Brown....as to Ceser, Lois and the Negroes, their case will be perfect freedom by your Laws very Soon, and if they are hereafter permitted by your State to be my Property again, Ceser and Lois shall be free - by my Law.⁷⁸

Mann informed Peters that his Negroes had been turned out in the streets when he fled to England, and had not been seized as part of the estate. "The state would have taken your blacks too," he wrote, "had it not been incompatible to the idea of liberty, that all mankind were born free was the cry." He reported that the blacks had added "fourteen to their number since you left them." Cesar and his family of five children worked part of Peters's land, finding refuge in Jonathan Peters's shop run by his widow. Pomp had hired the Bemslee farm from the States Attorney for ~~£~~30 and was

hard put to work out the rent. Mann wrote, "They want their old master again, they say 'never was so good time as when Master lived to home.'"⁷⁹

Apparently Peters's feelings of kindness towards his blacks dissipated when he was angered by unjust demands for unpaid debts and family squabbles over his mother's estate. He wrote petulantly to the Manns, "I have no power over Cesar since Congress freed all Negroes....I told you that I would not act the lest [least] thing touching my former Property."⁸⁰

As a result of these ambiguous instructions and pressure from Peters's debtors, the Manns advertised certain of the slaves for sale. Later Peters denied that this was ever his intention. "As to the negroes," he wrote, "my mind, was not to have them slaves, provided my creditors did not multiply with the wants of your neighbors."⁸¹ Manns's advertisement aroused a group of Hebron's townspeople who, "moved by the feelings of humanity...on a Subject that Excites Pity and Compassion," wrote their exiled neighbor begging him not to sell Cesar and his family.⁸² Peters responded to their plea by writing Mann,

I hope you will not have sold Cesar before this time....I wish Cesar might not be sold but he must obey you if he intends to secure my friendship.⁸³

His instructions arrived too late. The Manns had sold Cesar, Lois, and their eight children, one a babe in arms, to David Prior, a slave trader from South Carolina, who came up the Thames River in a sailing vessel to a point a few miles

below Norwich, where he anchored. Taking seven or eight men with him, the slave trader went overland to Peters's farm, where the blacks were working. Mann had arranged for the rounding up of the blacks in the afternoon of 26 September 1787, while the men of the town were away at East Haddam for militia drill. Amid mass confusion, with the women and children of Hebron cutting reins and interfering in every way possible, the "ruffians armed with clubs and staves" put Lois' and the children in a "waggon with some of our household furniture," and tied Cesar and the older boys to the back. Ignoring the "shrieks and cries of my Self and Poor Children [which] reached the very heavens and Drew Pity from thence," the pathetic procession "Drove off with great hurry and Precipitation [sic] the whole of the Ensuing Night."⁸⁴ The Hebron women who tried to delay the capture swore that Mann, in the words of one participant,

held a drawn sword in his hand and as I attempted to go into the house from whence the negroes were taken he shook the sword over my head and charged me with great anger in his countenance not to go in upon my peril.⁸⁶

Cesar and the boys did everything they could to hinder progress that night. As he walked behind the wagon, Cesar slyly managed to pick up a stone from the roadside whenever he could, and put it in the wagon to add to the weight. Before going far, James, the eldest boy, managed to escape into the surrounding fields.

Back in Hebron, the men, hastily summoned by a boy riding to the training field, initiated plans for the rescue.

Elijah Graves, a tailor, had been making clothes for Cesar, who had taken them in the tailor's absence and with his permission. Before Elihu Marvin, Justice of the Peace, Graves solemnly swore out a warrant, charging that Cesar, his wife, and eight children did

feloniously steal and carry off, the following articles, one blue broadcloth coat, with white mettle buttons worth six shillings lawful money, one pr. of corduroy britches partly worn, worth three shillings lawful money, one pr. flowered silver knee buckles worth three shillings.

After midnight Constable John Gilbert with a posse of six of the town's foremost citizens started in pursuit. "Over twenty-five miles of stony and hilly road, the sparks flying from their horses heels and lighting the darkness of the night," they sped, arriving in Norwich, "just as the people were getting up." When the constable read the warrant to Cesar, Prior said, "What Cesar, you been stealing?" "That's none of your business," was the reply. Taking the blacks from the ship and then having breakfast, the posse returned to Hebron where Cesar was tried, found guilty as charged, fined £6, plus £2 damages and £7.2.11 costs or a five-lash whipping. On 10 November the family was assigned to the tailor for two years to work out the fines, with the provision of his

taking said negro woman under the incumberance of her youngest child, and of clothing the whole of them so as they may be comfortable in all seasons of the year during said term of time and delivering them so at the end of the same.⁸⁶

This court action effectively removed them from Mann's

control. In the meantime a friend ingeniously informed Peters of the events, giving him a chance to extricate himself from an awkward situation.⁸⁷ Acting as if nothing untoward had happened, Peters told Mann that "my son is to leave that happy country in the Spring," and to "send one of the negro boys with him. Let Cesar and Lois name the one and consent - or let them stay." At the same time he directed that the Negroes be freed.⁸⁸ The blacks accordingly petitioned the General Assembly and were freed.⁸⁹ At the same time they were petitioning, Peters wrote Mann:

I cannot say anything about what is proper to be done with the Negroes - but if they behave amiss - correct them - my mother and I never desired to leave them slaves - but new Lords - new Laws.... I sincerely wish them all in Heaven where the Power of Kings and Congress is not known - do with them according to what is right - and keep them at work till farther orders.⁹⁰

After their manumission he was informed that Cesar was going to sue Mann for selling him. Peters told Mann that

it seems a visionary scheme, but all things but justice succeed in your country, especially when against me....If Cesar, since his emancipation, cuts timber, sue him and let him pay for his folly in slavery again.⁹¹

Mann, still smarting over the whole affair, wrote back that "The Devil has not the negroes yet - and will not until they have devoured your property here." He reported that "Cesar is old. Lois a Drunken whorish woman and bad enough." However, if the children were properly raised they "would make likely negroes."⁹²

In 1793, Hannah Peters Jarvis tried to get them to come

to Canada as servants, but with no luck. The blacks felt more secure where they were, and when Birdseye went to Hebron to talk to them, local people kept "the Negroes all out of the way - so that Bird cd not get sight of one of them."⁹³ Cesar felt no ill will, however, for after Peters returned to America, Cesar wrote him, expressing a wish to see him. He explained that his family was as well as usual, and concluded by wishing Peters "health and serenity of Mind."⁹⁴ Peters also heard about Pomp, who had become a servant of an old friend in Vermont. Buckingham wrote:

We have two or 3 domestics among whom is one formerly yours. You made him an episcopalian and all the world cant make him a dissenter - he often speaks of you with tears in his eyes and prays night and morning for a sight of you - his name is Pomp Mindo.....Pomp desires to be remembered and wishes you every thing.⁹⁵

The rest of this family of emancipated slaves continued residing in Hebron, taking the family name of their former master. Governor John S. Peters, nephew to Samuel, referred to them as his "coloured cousins."⁹⁶

Compared to his other financial and property losses, the not unexpected deprivation of his blacks was of slight importance to Peters. Although receiving an adequate pension from crown and church after arriving as a penniless loyalist refugee in London, Peters considered himself unfairly compensated for his sacrifices by the Loyalist Awards Commission. Because of his rough treatment by New Englanders and their destruction of his property, because he disliked the "mobocracy" that prevailed in the United States, and

because he preferred urban life and believed advancement would occur there more readily than it would in a rural parish, Peters refused to return to Connecticut. He refused to return to his birthplace a lesser man than he was when he left. Remaining near the center of power for the growing British Empire, the expatriate priest aided his fellow "sufferers for the crown." Showing compassion to the less fortunate, providing a cultural haven for young men from America, acting as agent and running errands for clerical and lay friends alike, Peters attempted to make his influence felt, and to gain a proper place in eighteenth century London.

FOOTNOTES

¹Curwen, Journal, 40. Wallace Brown, The Good Americans (New York, 1969), 149. For a complete list of Peters's residences in England and after his return to America see Appendix D.

²SP to SPG, 13 Jan. 1775 [misdated 1774], Hawks and Perry, Documentary History, II, 228-230. Peters pointed out also, "The American Sons of Liberty can bear to see the Moravians and Roman Catholics have their Bishops, but cannot endure that the Church of England shall have her Bishops and this is the foundation Stone of all their Rebellion as appears from their fastings, prayers and preaching against Bishops, Tithes and cursed Curates."

³SPG Microfilm 664:60, 270-271.

⁴Ibid., 292.

⁵The discussion regarding the discontinuance of salaries began in 1783, SPG Microfilm 664:66, 10 and 76, 174. The final action was taken at the General Meeting, 14 Apr. 1785, SPG Microfilm 664:64, 82.

⁶General Meeting, 20 Apr. 1775, SPG Microfilm 664:60, 355-356.

⁷An earlier message written from Connecticut to Josiah Quincy, Jr., then in London, indicated uneasiness over the situation. "A Priest Peters - has wrote such threats of mighty things he would do against their charters that they are determined to be perfectly ready." Letter dated 27 Feb. 1775, quoted in Mampoteng, unpublished mss., Archives of P.E. Church. I have been unable to locate the original. See also SP to SPG, 13 Apr. 1775, PP, I, 15, when he wrote, "I heard of some insinuations thrown out against my character, which I am utterly unable to understand." Peters asked the Secretary if it was influencing the Society against him and what he should do regarding the libel. Also SP to Inglis, 20 Mar. 1778, PP, I, 31, to whom he wrote, "however....the Secretary and governor affixed their seals and sent them to their agent in London who used them against me, at first with success, but after, they proved his disgrace - I was for some time between truth and falsehood - and things wore a dubious aspect, when I was able to give

further Endorsements all things returned to their true light - since then the Seals of that villainous Colony would not prove the bite of a Serpent to be poison."

⁸See below, p. 76.

⁹"Memorial to Commissioners," 6 Dec. 1783, PP, I, 96. Hannah arrived 14 Feb. 1776.

¹⁰SP to Coke and Wilmot, 25 Nov. 1782, PP, I, 72.

¹¹Ibid., see also A.O. 13/42, 25 Nov. 1782.

¹²Lyon to SP, 16 Oct. 1777, PP, I, 29.

¹³There is no reference to Islam in any of his writings before 1774, ruling out an European trip when he was in England in 1758. The only reference to the trip to Hungary is in, SP to Brother and Sister, 20 July 1783, SPCHS. For typical references to Islam see SP to Trumbull, 6 Oct. 1789, BTCHS., HHP, 137; SP to Parker, n.d., PPMD; "Charges as a Bishop of Vermont," n.d., PP, VIII, 2.

¹⁴Markham to SP, 20 June 1778, PP, I, 34; SP to Marquise of Buckingham, 2 Mar. 1795, PP, VI, 55; SP to King George III, 2 Mar. 1795, PP, VI, 59. Peters claimed to be "minister at All-hallows Church, Lombard-Street, London" in 1776 when he "invited Mr. John Wesley to preach a Charity sermon for Him." HHP, 10n. Even if this claim were accurate, and the whole reference to his relationship with Wesley is dubious, it does not mean he was officially appointed.

¹⁵Curwen, Journal entry, 14 July 1776, 63.

¹⁶Ibid., entry, 17 Sep. 1780, 277. His more critical attitude may be due to his having become a dissenter. He pointed out that he "Called on Mr. Peters, he was absent being officially engaged at church, this being St. Andrew's Day /actually, St. John's Day/." Entry, 26 Dec. 1780, 297. In spite of his disenchantment with Peters's preaching, they remained good friends, and there are numerous references to taking tea, enjoying company and conversation with Peters through 1782.

¹⁷Mansfield to SP, 12 Jan. 1776, PP, I, 21.

¹⁸Mansfield to SP, 30 June 1784, PP, II, 15, and 25.

¹⁹Mansfield to SP, 3 June 1788, PP, III, 90.

²⁰Spalding to SP, 18 June 1776, PP, I, 23.

²¹J. Bailey to SP, 20 June 1785, PP, II, 44.

²²Andrews to SP, 6 Mar. 1786, PP, II, 72.

²³B. Bailey to SP, 6 Oct. 1777, PP, I, 28; and later, "from aboard [sic] the ship Charon." 2 Apr. 1778, PP, I, 43.

²⁴SP to Archbishop of Canterbury, 7 Dec. 1779, PP, I, 42.

²⁵Leaming to SP, 2 Nov. 1784, PP, II, 18. Also Johnson to SP, 20 June 1786, PP, II, 84.

²⁶Clark to SP, 27 June 1786; PP, II, 87; 6 Dec. 1786, PP, II, 124; 17 Apr. 1787, PP, III, 20; 24 May 1787, PP, III, 25; 6 June 1789, PP, IV, 19; 14 July 1791, PP, V, 29; 7 Mar. 1796, PP, VII, 4.

²⁷Houseal to SP, 28 Apr. 1792, PP, V, 60.

²⁸Beach to SP, 7 Nov. 1787, PP, III, 57. Rowland did not want to "venture on the dangerous coast of Nova Scotia this season of the year."

²⁹SP to Beach, 16 Jan. 1788, PP, III, 63. Peters added, "I hope he may succeed in recovering his property in the Jersies for the sake of justice himself, wife and six children who have but a few friends in your Region of Liberty."

³⁰Bass was elected the first Episcopal bishop of Massachusetts in 1797.

³¹Perry, Historical Collections, III, 602, General Board Meeting, September 1781, SPG Microfilm 664:62, 417. The complete record of the Bass affair can be found in Perry, III, 602-640; Daniel Addison, Life and Times of Edward Bass (Boston, 1897), 175-214.

³²Perry, Historical Collections, III, 602n.

³³There are several different extant accounts by Peters of the events leading to his statement to the Secretary. The earliest and most accurate is the copy he prepared for the letter he sent, n.d., PP, I, 73. The letter itself is in Perry, Historical Collections, III, 18 Nov. 1782, 662-664. The last version of his action in the Bass affair was a letter to Parker, 14 Aug. 1788, PPMD. In the letter to Parker, Peters changes Salter's last statement to "Mrs. Bass owned an Eighth Part of a Privateer - which having taken several English ships bound to Boston." The statement ends abruptly with that incomplete statement.

³⁴PP, I, 73.

³⁵Perry, Historical Collections, III, 604.

³⁶SP to Parker, 14 Aug. 1788, PPMD.

³⁷E. Alfred Jones, The Loyalists of Massachusetts (London, 1930), 158, 176, 268; Daniel Coke, Royal Commission (Oxford, 1915), 95, 111, 122, 191-192, 242.

³⁸Dibblee to SP, 25 Sep. 1790, PP, IV, 93.

³⁹Vardill to SP, 15 July 1791, PP, V, 30.

⁴⁰At the evacuation of Boston, Mrs. Baker had accompanied her husband to Nova Scotia and then to New York where they remained until 1783. Baker left New York on a privateering expedition and was believed lost at sea. The only other man assisting her and mentioned in the accounts was Thomas Coffin. A.O. 13/42, SP, 20 Nov. 1784, and Jones, Loyalists of Massachusetts, 19.

⁴¹Parker to SP, 7 May 1785, PP, II, 39.

⁴²Parker to SP, 23 Oct. 1785, PP, II, 113, and 15 Jan. 1787, PP, III, 4.

⁴³Parker to SP, 19 May 1787, PP, III, 24.

⁴⁴SP to Lord Commissioners, 18 Aug. 1788, PP, III, 102. See also Penelope Bissett to SP, 20 Aug. 1788, PP, III, 103, and 12 Oct. 1788, PP, III, 111. She was the daughter of James Honeyman, judge of the Court of Vice-Admiralty.

⁴⁵Bissett to SP, 16 Oct. 1790, PP, IV, 96; 15 Jan. 1791, PP, V, 3; 21 May 1791, PP, V, 18; and "Memoirs" entry 29 June 1790.

⁴⁶Hubbard to SP, 21 Jan. 1784, PP, II, 3; 19 Mar. 1784, PP, II, 8; 1 June 1784, PP, II, 13; 25 Nov. 1784, PP, II, 60; 29 Nov. 1785, PP, II, 61. Peters notes on the back of the last letter the criticisms of the instrument and corrections he sent to Hubbard. The series of letters regarding the purchase of the instrument closes with the last payment to Peters of £45, total cost £157.10. Isaac Beers to SP, 5 Dec. 1785, PP, II, 63.

⁴⁷SP to Parker, 25 June 1791, PPMD.

⁴⁸Clarke to SP, 2 Nov. 1792, PP, V, 82.

⁴⁹Hubbard to SP, 9 Feb. 1789, PP, IV, 7.

⁵⁰Fanning to SP, 23 June 1789, PP, IV, 24; 26 Nov. 1789, PP, IV, 52.

⁵¹By 1789 a conservative estimate of loyalist assistance

was ~~£~~7,500,000, about twice the national debt in 1763. Charles R. Ritcheson, Aftermath of Revolution (New York, 1969), 55-57.

⁵²The act of Parliament creating the Commission was passed the Summer of 1783 with no debate on the motion made by Lord John Cavendish, Chancellor of the Exchequer. Parl. Hist., 23: 1041, quoted in Ritcheson, 56.

⁵³The draft of Peters's claim can be found in PP, I, 96. "Memorial to Commissioners," 6 Dec. 1783, and in A.O. 13/42, 25 Nov. 1782.

⁵⁴The full text of the law can be found in A.O. 13/42, May 1778, Acts and Laws, Estates of Inimical Persons Confiscated.

⁵⁵Ritzema to SP, 15 Apr. 1783, A.O. 13/42.

⁵⁶Sutton to Rolf Pomeroy, 7 Aug. 1783, PP, I, 79, endorsed "give to Dr. S.P."

⁵⁷Sutton to SP, 18 Nov. 1783, PP, I, 93.

⁵⁸Gilbert to SP, 7 Jan. 1784, PP, II, 1.

⁵⁹Leaming to SP, 2 Nov. 1784, PP, II, 18. See also Hubbard to SP, 21 Jan. 1784, PP, II, 3; Tyler to SP, 9 Jan. 1784, PP, II, 2; and Johnson to SP, 10 Oct. 1786, PP, II, 111.

⁶⁰Noziah Bliss to SP, 18 Jan. 1784, A.O. 13/42. Bliss acknowledged the differences in political opinions but urges Peters to return. Bliss was also J.P., Representative to the General Court, and Deacon of the Independent Meeting, so his opinions must have carried some weight with Peters.

⁶¹SP to RCAL, 17 June 1786, A.O. 13/42.

⁶²SP to RCAL, 9 Feb. 1784, A.O. 13/42.

⁶³SP to RCAL, 1 June 1789, A.O. 13/42. With his penchant for Biblical language, Peters in the same letter moaned that "Jacob's curse on Levi hangs heavy on me, although he did wrong - and I have done right."

⁶⁴Ibid.

⁶⁵SP to Nathan Mann, 5 Apr. 1786, DCT. John Mann had married Peters's sister Margaret, and Nathaniel was their son. Peters was particularly angry that Trumbull, his bitter enemy and foe of England, had received the degree while he, a friend and sufferer for England, had not and never would.

⁶⁶SP to Mann, 12 Feb. 1787, DCT.

⁶⁷Sutton to SP, 18 Nov. 1783, PP, I, 93; Gilbert to SP, 18 Nov. 1784, PP, II, 19.

⁶⁸Mann to SP, 17 Feb. 1787, A.O. 13/42. See also Johnson to SP, 18 Oct. 1786, PP, II, 111.

⁶⁹SP to John and Nathan Mann, 24 Oct. 1786, A.O. 13/42.

⁷⁰Mann to SP, Hebron, 26 Mar. 1787, A.O. 13/42. Manns were an old Hebron family, and there is no evidence of ulterior motives as Nathan had spent much time with Peters in London. He was engaged in the druggist business with Peters's help.

⁷¹Buckingham to SP, 24 Mar. 1787, PP, II, 17.

⁷²SP to Mann, 14 Feb. 1785, DCT.

⁷³Saltonstall to SP, 27 Oct. 1796, PP, VII, 47 and 49.

⁷⁴Gilbert to SP, 26 Oct. 1796, PP, VII, 46.

⁷⁵The Rev. Ambrose Todd, 18 June 1803, SPCHS.

⁷⁶SP to Robert Markham, 7 Mar. 1775, PP, I, 11; see also David Sutton to Robert Pomeroy, 7 Aug. 1783, PP, I, 79 and SP to RCAL, 6 Dec. 1783, PP, I, 96.

⁷⁷SP to Brother and Sister (name not given but John and Margaret Mann), 20 July 1783, DCT.

⁷⁸SP to Mann, 14 Feb. 1785, DCT. Later he hoped "Cesar and Pomp and their families are well." Spelling of the slaves' names varied and Pomp was also Pompey. SP to Mann, 24 Dec. 1785, DCT. Pomp soon left the area and Peters wrote, "Sorry poor Pomp has departed from your country, for I wished to have seen him again in the Body, and obtain information that none now can give me." SP to Mann, 16 Apr. 1787, DCT.

⁷⁹Mann to SP, 6 Dec. 1785, A.O. 13/42. Cesar later worked the Shipman farm. Gilbert to SP, 21 Mar. 1787, A.O. 13/42.

⁸⁰SP to Mann, 5 Apr. 1786, DCT. Another factor in Peters's action was Mann's derogatory attitude toward the blacks. See Cesar to SP, 5 Nov. 1787, PP, III, 56.

⁸¹SP to Mann, 22 Mar. 1788, DCT. These orders are ambiguous.

⁸²Joseph Man [sic], Ezekiel Brown, Saml. Gilbert, John H. Wells, David Sutton to SP, 5 Sep. 1787, PP, III, 41.

⁸³SP to Mann, 13 Nov. 1787, DCT.

⁸⁴Cesar and Lois to SP, 5 Nov. 1787, PP, III, 56.

⁸⁵Hebron Town Clerk's Records, 26 Sep. to 10 Nov. 1787, Public Records of Connecticut III, as quoted in Mampoteng, unpublished mss. Archives of P. E. Church. Ensuing quotations are from the Records.

⁸⁶Ibid. The court costs included the constable's charges, "£4.10. For 7 breakfasts 7 sh., 8 negroes breakfasts 5 sh., 7 horses bait 2 sh. 4, bitters 1s. 10, refreshments on the road 4 sh." The Hebron inn-keeper Roger Fuller's costs were, "for 1 bowl tody, 10d, 1 gill of brandy 6d., 8½ pints of cherry rum 11s fd., 3 pints of cherry rum 43., 7 horse baits 1s 9d, one quart rum, 1s fd. Total 19s 9d." [Sic., total is 19s 6d] The costs lead to the conclusion that the inner man of the rescue posse was adequately provided for. Undoubtedly they enjoyed the successful rescue.

⁸⁷J. V. Buckingham to SP, 15 Oct. 1787, PP, III, 50.

⁸⁸SP to Mann, 12 Mar. 1788, DCT.

⁸⁹William Birdseye to SP, 3 Nov. 1789, PP, IV, 45. He reported to his son-in-law that "Your negroes have obtained their freedom from the Assembly by your letter."

⁹⁰SP to Mann, 24 Apr. 1788, DCT.

⁹¹SP to Mann, 5 June 1789, DCT. Mann's prediction was correct, for he wrote the next spring, "Cesar has sued us for selling him and family - will certainly obtain judgment against us." Mann to SP, 19 Feb. 1790, PP, IV, 73.

⁹²Mann to SP, 21 Oct. 1789, PP, IV, 43.

⁹³Gilbert to Mann, 25 Nov. 1793, PP, V, 119. HJ to SP, 29 Mar. 1794, JPAC.

⁹⁴Cesar to SP, 24 Apr. 1807, PP, VII, 87.

⁹⁵J. P. Buckingham to SP, 20 Apr. 1796, PP, VII, 17.

⁹⁶F. C. Bissell, "Samuel Peters," Typescript of an address, CHS. Also reproduced in Kenneth Cameron, ed., Connecticut Churchmanship (Hartford, c.1969).

CHAPTER IV

LATER YEARS IN LONDON

A Disillusioned Royalist

The Reverend Samuel Peters became increasingly disillusioned with the English government as the war drew to its disastrous close for the loyalists. After Burgoyne surrendered at Saratoga, Peters accused the General and Lord Howe of conspiring to aid the rebellious colonies. He charged Burgoyne with first encouraging "Indians...to join him under their own officers and Kings, and to fight their own Savage way, otherwise they would not have joined him - this he well knew." Then about 60 miles from the battlefield, Gentleman Johnny caused them to desert by telling them that,

if they carried on War in their own way he would hang them up like Dogs - at which they cried out Maumauh, which signified Death in the pot and serves for a Watch word....put up their Howl, fled and left him.

The General further ensured his defeat by patronizingly informing the "Provincial Refugees" that "they knew not the Art of War," and that his own "Sarjeants and Corporals" would command them. He thus denied and kept back all the commissions which had been promised to them.

Following Burgoyne's surrender, he had the temerity to

blame it on "the ill conduct of the Indians, Canadians and Provincials on whom he found he could not depend." This excuse, Peters believed, gave the traitor a "patriotic reason for betraying his King and country."

Peters continued the conspiracy theory by joining Lord Howe to Burgoyne's treachery by declaring that

General Howe would not have set out on a journey by sea from N. York...when Burgoyne was within 180 miles if he had not been a confederate in Patriotism. If God forgives them before the Indians and American Loyalists forgive them, they will be damned to endless ages.¹

Two years later, Peters lamented on learning of Cornwallis's capitulation at Yorktown,

the Devil has just begun his work - Lord Cornwallis in his 10th article at Yorktown has kicked hope out at the window....We have no News but a constant Course of Errors adopted by our Ministry....Germaine attempted to act right and so was instantly removed.²

The loyalist clergyman's pessimism carried over into his congratulations to a friend on the birth of a daughter, for whom he could not "forbear shedding a Tear for the Baby who is born in an Evil Time."³

The embittered expatriate continued his bitter attacks on the ministry of the Marquis of Rockingham, who had succeeded the weary Lord North. In a letter which merits reproduction almost in full, as it illustrates this cynicism as well as his life in England at this time, Peters wrote to a compatriot, Christopher Sower, III (1754-1799), who returned to America in 1782,

Since your Departure from this mercantile city our new ministers have been shovelling out with the

Fork of Hercules, the Dung of our augean stable but as yet have not half done the work, and many suppose that all the vinegar in the Kingdom is insufficient to purify it - for by the time it is purged of the old Filth it will again be filled with new - however this may be, our political sharks have not adopted the Laws of the Medes and Persians, but glory in new things and daily alterations - all this, is said, to be owing to the climate which changes every Hour - My shoe-black, who understands astronomy, the gin bottle, and city politics, informs me that we always have plentiful crops when April produces snow, rain, hail, fog, smook and sunshine -

I rest easy with this Information until Noon, when Frightwell /The Reverend Daniel Batwell, d. 1802/ comes in and says all is lost - Dr. Tattle /Thomas Moffatt, M.D., c.1700-1787/ replies, all goes well, our changes are for the best - Joseph /Joseph Clark, M.D., c.1755-1834/ says with a shaking head - alas all is wrapped up in Darkness - Wise things turn my shallow head - and I become a shuttle cock - sometimes I am hot as a whig, and sometimes sleepy as a fat Tory - then I laugh, and like an Infidel cry out Balaams ass never spake - thus ends any sense after which I make my court dressed like a Comelian at St. Jameses - At Seven return to my Tea, play at whist, go to bed and rise at Eleven prepared for similar Duties.

Our Statesmen act no better - one Day my Court Paper affirms a separate Peace between England and Holland will soon take Place, conditioned that England pays £10,000,000 - for it - hereby the Stocks rise five per cent - two Days after the same paper says no peace can be expected - whereupon down goes our stock, three per cent - again I become a shuttle cock and my old Friends come in again and turn me into an infidel - thus I spend my time with the wisest Politicians we have as a tale that is told - were our talk as small as our Actions nothing would be done - as usual -

If our new Cabinet has any secrets they are like those of a lewd woman in the armpits - the well is deep and we have nothing to draw with - this you may depend on, that next year we shall kill the Bears, while this is to be spent in catching them....

I hope you will meet with no disappointments under your new and brave General /Guy Carleton/ - As to News and deep plans I leave to Domine Wisdom /Dr. James Murray/, Dr. Tattle, Mr. Fightwell, and

Joseph who deal in Fictions, conjectures and wishes 'thereby misleading distant Travellers' - you know more about what is to be done this year than we do here - Sundry Persons, whom you know, have less influence, as yet, under our new Ministers than under the old - Renard /Charles J. Fox/ is yet among the geese, and the bears of the Wilderness have stopped all Pensions to the Refugees until further orders - many People tremble as in the Agonies of Death - and I believe not without Reason - especially those sharks from Long, Staten, and New York Islands whose Lands and Houses rent for treble profits to what they ever did before the rebellion - to this Number we may add several congress agents, and Boston Factors, governors, generals, commissaries and high pensioned ladies - these are the Parasites who ingrossed most of the national bounty and thereby inabled the old Ministers to starve loyal sufferers and compleat the views of Congress - who but a plunger can mourn at the change of Ministers - I wish they might be changed every three months, and their conduct to be examined into by the Common Council 'of this great city which has sixteen thousand souls in it who know not their right hand from their left, and also much Cattle' -

I have no answer yet from Lord Coquillebone /George Nugent-Temple Grenville, 1st Marquise of Buckingham, 1753-1813/, tho' I have obeyed the orders of your patron - but as great wheels move slow and we catch Larks when the sky falls, I have drawn on my Boots of Patience, and wait in Hope to hear from you and to meet you in a Climate where Integrity shall have its due reward.⁴

One other bizarre sidelight of Peters's life in London is too edifying to be consigned to a footnote. In order to attract notice by the court and church in his search for preferment, Peters asked Simon Baxter (d. 1804) to send him two moose from New Brunswick for his carriage. Baxter replied in his usual rustic English that he had

Reseived the Letter so Late as I could not porvide them Last Summer but I have Laid in with all our Hunters for this Season - For they must be earley Lernt to stand like a horse when they are young or they cannot be taught - which will be nescary to be sent to England.⁵

Even though Baxter, out of gratitude to Peters for his aid in "laying in my Clame to the Commisheners in so kind a Maner," had captured "a cuppel of fine young moos a mail and female," and had "Learnt them to leed as well as aney hors," the project fell through. Baxter explained:

I have bin trying to git them on Bord of Capt. Macpharlin's mast Ship - but he says His Ship is stored so full there can be no room for them under coviring - and he say the money must be paid when they come on Bord for this passage and I think by his Hintes that it will be a Hundred dollars which is imposebel for me to make out att present.⁶

Unfortunately the "moos" never got to London, and that city was denied the fantastic sight of a moose-driven carriage.

With the cessation of hostilities in January 1783, the Reverend Samuel Peters was

required and commanded to give attendance as Representative of Conn. at Mary-le-bone Coffee House, Stratford Place, Oxford Road at 12 next Monday to consult with others on proper measures to be taken concerning some alarming discoveries 'relative to a pacification with the Colonies.'⁷

He worked with the Associated Loyalists, drawing up lists of loyalists, including those from New Haven, for them.⁸ He consulted with Benedict Arnold on measures to be pursued.⁹

At the same time Peters was actively intriguing for his own advantage. Aware of the economic chaos and quarrels occurring between the "disunited Colonies," he wrote a former friend, Samuel Huntington (1731-1796), now the Lieutenant Governor of Connecticut, suggesting that "a Reunion between New and Old England" might be effected with Hartford as the "Seat of a New England Parliament, composed of a Lord Lieutenant, a

House of Lords and Barronets [sic], (for Representatives)." Connecticut could then "rise up and shine after an Eclipse of 150 years by the cruel Devices of New York and her motley children," and should receive Long Island and the "land of Hudson's River," as they were "swallowed up by you and Vermont." Peters mentioned that

the Susquehannah controversy is here the great subject of Conversation - the New Yorkers and the Southern People are fiercely hot on the side of Pennsylvania and declare they would sooner become Subjects of France or Spain, in order to keep the New Englanders East of Hudson's River than remain Subjects of England and suffer the New Englanders to cross that River....A war seems to be begun between Pennsylvania and Connecticut which I trust my countrymen will maintain with that bold and generous spirit they manifested in the late war.

Peters thought the basic controversy between the Northern and Southern states was caused by the latter who "are totally enamoured with the Religion and Politicks of France," and as they were composed of "Renegades, Africans, Convicts and the Refuse of all nations," whereas New England was "composed of Protestant-British Families, whose Tempers, Laws, Trade, manners and Language are congenial with those of England," the reunion was practicable.¹⁰

Three years later, still pursuing this illusive and romantic grandiose dream, Peters wrote Admiral Rodney offering himself as an undercover agent to "divide the Northern from the Southern States," an enterprise which earlier had "cost this Nation, General Burgoyne and an Army of ten thousand Men." He was sure it could be done now "by an individual at a trifling expense to this Nation and with a Prospect of

saving much money in compensating the Loyalists." He suggested to his Lordship that his cover should be an appointment by his Majesty of Peters as "Deputy Consul in Connecticut, etc., etc., with a decent Salary as some Feather fixed in my cap," which feather would "inspire my Friends in America and Cow the other Party, who now boast his Majesty has not yet taken notice of any one of his Loyal Subjects from America." No record exists of any reply to the proposal of the "Loyal Subject," who claimed that

in Connecticut and Vermont States whose inhabitants exceed four hundred thousand and more than half are my relations and their interest has been so extensive as to obtain a Release of my Estates Sequestered by the State of Connecticut after they had suffered great damage and dispossessed my personal property to Support their Rebellion.¹¹

Peters's Family

The conclusion of the Revolution wrought changes in the immediate family of Samuel Peters. On 12 December 1785, in St. George's Church, Hanover Square, his daughter, Hannah Delvena (See Figure 6), with him since 1776, married William Jarvis (1756-1817) whose family had lived in Connecticut almost as long as the Peters had.¹² Jarvis, a native of Stamford, had served as an officer in the Queen's Loyal Rangers under Colonel John Graves Simcoe (1752-1806), coming to London after the cessation of hostilities. William and Hannah remained in the city, where Jarvis was a merchant, until 1792 when they went to Canada. With the patronage of his former commanding officer, newly appointed Lieutenant



Figure 6. Hannah Delvena Peters Jarvis
Painted Shortly After Her Marriage

(Courtesy of Connecticut Historical Society)

Another portrait of her and William Jarvis with three of the children can be found in *Country Life* (12 July 1962, Page 72). The portraits are attributed to a cousin, the Reverend Mathew William Peters, R.A.

Governor of Canada, Jarvis served as Secretary and Registrar of Upper Canada and Clerk of the State Council.¹³

Like any father close to an only daughter, Peters was not happy about losing Hannah and had "a fit of the grim pouts concerning it."¹⁴ After hearing of the event, another friend wrote him from Halifax to ask,

What in nature possesses you, to be so intolerably discontented, peevish, fretful, and misanthropical? Will you never leave off railing at the conduct of the inhabitants of this best of all possible worlds? Have you no taste for their wisdom? no relish for their virtue?...Miss Peters was an excellent Daughter....may you long live to see them mutually happy in each other, notwithstanding all your gloomy predictions and prognostications.¹⁵

After the happy event Peters received many congratulations from his friends, including Vardill, who wrote from Dublin that "if she has married the Capt. Jervis [sic] who was usually at your house, I think I may safely predict it will be a happy marriage."¹⁶

Peters left William Birdseye (See Figure 7), his only other surviving child, with maternal grandparents in Stratford when he fled. He made an abortive attempt in 1783 to bring the boy to England, begging that the ten-year-old lad be sent to New York with his nurse (or alone), to take passage with the evacuating British forces.¹⁷ The Reverend Bela Hubbard and Dr. Johnson advised against sending him at this time, and the Rector of Trinity Church, New Haven, wrote

Your Son I saw lately at Mr. Birdseyes, he with Dr. Johnson and myself concluded on the whole that your Son had better tarry for a Season here, good care will be taken of him.



Figure 7. William Birdseye Peters.
Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto, (71 Mis. Can. 17).

In addition to the Boy's reluctance to leave his grandparents, Hubbard suggested that "Dr. Johnson thinks it would be better for you with respect to your estate in Hebron for him to reside here at least for the present." Hubbard went on to describe Birdseye as

truly a very fine child, he look's much like a cherry cheek'd lad by the name of S P-trs I knew in Y College some 20 years Since...as does the worthy Mr Leaming our good brother who happens to be here.¹⁸

Leaming, Rector of the church at Stratford, had offered a sly, digging comment earlier when he reported that the Reverend John R. Marshall

saw your Son about one month Since, at Stratford, with his Grandfather and Grandmother; all well. He says your Son is a fine promising Child and loves the Clergy; and is like to make a much better man than his Father.¹⁹

The exiled father gave up further attempts at this time to bring the lad to England. Leaming continued to report on Birdseye's progress. Formal education proved tedious to the boy, as Leaming reported after he had attempted "to help him in the Latin Tongue," as there was no Latin School in Stratford. The tutor was disappointed because

he does not love his Book, and having no one to Stimulate his ambition; from a disrelish to Learning, he soon contracted an absolute hatred to it. There is no such thing, you know, as forcing a Child to learn. He is an active Sprightly Boy; and if he was placed among a Number of other Lads, his pride would lead him to be one of the foremost of them; and his abilities would support him in the attempt.²⁰

The boy's grandfather was not able financially at this time to send him to such a Latin School. Due to the

grandfather's loyalism and that of his son, their property was confiscated by Connecticut. The son, Leaming wrote, fled and "Your poor Br[other] Birdseye and his wife, both died on Long Island and have left only one Child, which is well and lives with the Grandfather."²¹ Although the old man, William Birdseye, regained his property for a pittance when neighbors refused to bid on it, his son's property, intermixed with his, cost much more. That cost, along with his age and having no one to help him but the two lads, made grandfather Birdseye's financial situation difficult.²² When Peters discovered the problem, he ordered Mann to send money so his son could go to Derby for education under the Reverend Richard Mansfield. He did it in such a way, however, that "hurt the old gentlemans feelings very much," as Leaming informed him.

If he had been able, he would have sent your son where he might have the best advantage. It is not want of good will to the Lad, but for want of money....You must see and know that all Mr. Birdseyes hopes are centered in those two grandchildren that are with him.²³

Young Birdseye was happy with Mansfield for a few months until a combination of circumstances and homesickness caused him to return to Stratford, where he continued his studies with the local Congregational teacher. Mansfield pointed out to Peters the "great fondness for being with his grandparents and connection at Stratford" as the cause of the lad's returning.²⁴ Johnson also pointed out that the grandparents had "rather too much Indulgence and tenderness for him."²⁵ It is not too surprising that a ten-year-old boy,

raised on a farm with his own colt and lambs, found it difficult to leave this love and contentment.

Sometime in the fall of 1787, Bird (as he was affectionately called) left rural Connecticut for Kings College, where he lived with Dr. Johnson. Preparations were finally completed, and in September 1788, the young man left to join his father in London. Johnson reported to Peters,

He go's off chearfully, but while he has resided with me here at the College he seems to have contracted some affection for the place and to wish that it may be agreeable to you that he may return again e'er long and receive part of his Education at least in this country.

Johnson assured Peters that he had not encouraged this at all, but, after being "repeatedly press'd for my opinion," told him that if he was "to spend his Days here, that it is best he sho'd be chiefly Educated here."²⁶ The fourteen-year-old may have been eager for a trip to Europe, but he wanted to be sure he could return to America. And the last time Bird had seen his father he was less than six months old.

Bird arrived in England, 16 November 1788, and in the spring of the next year he attended the Jesuit college at Arras where Peters had stayed while in straitened financial circumstances.²⁷ He remained a year in revolutionary France

where Heads fly off like Buttons and the life of a man is of no more value than the Life of a Gnat in Nova Scotia - Archbishops, Dukes and Loyal Adherents die hourly at the Block or on a gibbet - and the King Catholic has run out of his supreme subjects and cast himself on their mercy.

According to Peters, the boy "looked down on men-killing as

sheepkilling." Peters wanted Bird to learn war so that he could "in ten years hence fight for Liberty in New England, where he is to fly up to Heaven, that universal darkness and bondage may triumph."²⁸ The grandfather, more horrified at the scholar's exposure to Romanism than he was at his exposure to bloody revolution, wrote that it was "enough to draw tears from the Eyes of him or them that has always held him Dear to think that he is placed...among the Roman Catholics."²⁹ His concern was a little late, because in August 1790, William Jarvis brought Bird back to London because of ill health.³⁰ This "ill health" could have been a dislike of the violence or perhaps homesickness again brought on by a letter from his grandfather about the harvest "off your lot" of wheat, Indian corn, "4 or 5 loads of Pumkins [sic], besides beans without number, and good plenty of cyder." He reported that, "Your colt and lambs grow findly [sic]."³¹ Not until October 1792, did Bird recover enough to be "matri-culated a Commoner of Trinity College" and "to keep a term at Lincoln's Inn."³² After completing the required time at the Inner Temple, William Birdseye Peters became a barrister and special pleader.

All was not study during this period, however. On 7 August 1792, Peters and Bird attended a Grand General Review of troops at the invitation of a loyalist friend from Boston, Dr. Joseph Skinner, now a surgeon in the British Army. Skinner wrote that he would

endeavor to make it as comfortable as soldiers fair will allow in the sleeping way - and can

give you a good bottle of old port that his Majesty, god bless him, allow's us.

The Royal family was to attend and dine in camp and

Experiments are to be tryed with hot shot and shells - the same as at Gibralter the last war and a Fort to be blown up with various other manuviers superior to anything for years past in England - and of course being a novelty to most people will be worth seeing - it will prove an expensive thing to government as well as individuals.³³

Bird's health continued to be a problem, and Peters wrote the next year that

My son Birdseye has a dry cough and will go from Oxford the 13th July to Bath and Bristol for a season - to recover his strength - he grows fast, is nearly six feet tall, and is very manful - he was 19 years old on June 5th 1793 - and I hope he will have more wisdom and virtuous perfection than his father.³⁴

Dr. Skinner was also concerned about the boy's health. He invited Bird and his father to visit at Pevensy Castle as,

the change of air is often better than large draughts of Physick. This air is thought to be very pure and sea Bathing to a relaxed habit often is very beneficial which your son can enjoy. We are in a retired situation but a very beautiful part of the Island....the views are very extensive and rich and the walks are exceeding good.³⁵

None of the measures seemed to help, and so, as Peters wrote, "My son Birdseye being in a decline sailed for Newyork the 18 of July present to see his sister, or to die, or to return here next Christmas."³⁶ Evidently five years was long enough to remain in Europe. The voyage and his visits to his grandparents in Stratford and his sister in Niagara aided in his recovery, for there is no further reference to this ailment. After his return to London and his studies, Hannah urged

Bird to take good care of his father, to "nurse him, humor him and play cards with him."³⁷

After completing his studies, Birdseye returned to the New World, married his brother-in-law's niece, Mary Martha (Patty) Jarvis (1772-1842),³⁸ and settled in Canada as Deputy Secretary of Ontario and Justice of the Peace. Becoming persona non grata in York because he welcomed "the American invaders in 1813,"³⁹ Birdseye returned to Hebron. There he was stripped "of his Property by Sharpers with whom he was said to enter into company in Trade," and went bankrupt.⁴⁰ Bird then removed to Mobile, Alabama, dying there in 1822 of yellow fever.⁴¹

Shortly before his son's death, Peters tried unsuccessfully to obtain an honorary degree for Birdseye. He wrote the President of Yale,

You and your corporation may extend your Literary Fame into Canadas and Europe by conferring an Honorary Degree of LLD on William Birdseye Peters Esquire....That he is worthy of such an Honor is apparent from his Education in the College of Artois in France two years, in the University of Oxford four years and in the Temple College of London four years - then Examined and admitted to the Honors of Barrister and Counsellor of Law in Westminster Hall by Lord Mansfield and Lord Thirlow; and also a special Pleader....his Morality is correct and his Blood is pure from his Mother, being niece of the late Reverend, pious and learned Nathan Birdseye of Stratford.⁴²

Samuel Peters spent the last years of his life in New York City near Birdseye's widow and children.⁴³ He expressed considerable pride in the accomplishments of his grandchildren, one of whom became prominent in New Orleans's politics and was a founder of the Pontchartrain Railroad.

This grandson, Samuel Jarvis Peters (1801-1855), is also credited with establishing the public school system of New Orleans, with a school, a street, and an avenue named for him.⁴⁴

Other family members of the exiled loyalist lived with him from time to time. His youngest brother, Bemslee (or Bemslie, Bemsle, Bemseley), who had assisted in defending his house, and in his escape, was forced in 1777 to flee without his wife and children to London, where he lived with Peters on his half-pay as a loyalist captain.⁴⁵ Rather pathetically, their mother, Mary Peters, wrote seven years later, "O! my Son Bemsle, will you forsake your wife and children, can it be - I hope not; They are worthy your care."⁴⁶ No record exists that he ever saw them again or assisted them, although in 1792 he was a part of the great migration of loyalists from England to Canada, where he received a grant of land in Kingston.

Another relative residing in the Peters household was a nephew, Colonel John Peters (1740-1788), eldest son of Samuel's eldest brother, the patriot John Peters. In 1764, having been turned down by the S. P. G. for the ministry, John joined the migration west, settling first in New Hampshire and then in Vermont. After John established himself in Bradford, Governor Tryon, in 1771, appointed him Justice of the Peace, Judge of Probate and Court of Common Pleas, Registrar of the County, Clerk of the Court, and a Colonel in the militia. In 1774 Cumberland and Gloucester Counties

elected him as their delegate to the first Continental Congress. On the advice of his uncle, John Peters attended

to find out what their aim was. I did so, and being certainly convinced that nothing short of independence would satisfy them I refused to take the oath of secrecy and wrote to my uncle who had been forced to fly to England, telling him what to expect.⁴⁷

Colonel Peters's loyalism soon made his position untenable in Vermont, and he was forced to flee to Canada in March 1776. His family after many hardships reached St. John, New Brunswick, fifteen months later. The reunion was cut short and he joined the Queen's Loyal Rangers as a Lieutenant Colonel, with his son John, an ensign, both under the command of General Burgoyne. Losing half of his command at the disastrous Battle of Bennington, Colonel Peters (with 35 other American loyalists) was allowed by Burgoyne to escape the night before he surrendered. In the ensuing year Peters further incurred the distrust of General Haldiman through Burgoyne's machinations, and was unable to draw any back pay or to receive a pension. Forced to go to London and press his claim before the government, Colonel Peters stayed with his uncle. He was finally vindicated and on 13 October 1787 received his allowance and a year's leave. But they came too late. He had become too ill to attempt the difficult trip back to his family in Canada. Colonel Peters died 11 January 1788 to the great sorrow of his uncle, who wrote hastily to the Claims Commission that "he died with a broken heart on their his family account more than with a real sickness, as believed by his physician," who reported that

death resulted from "Gout and rheumatism in breast and head for 1 month."⁴⁸ Samuel Peters continued his mournful duties, and the Colonel was buried in St. George's graveyard, Hanover Square. The tombstone bore the inscription:

Success is right weakness is wrong
Put not your trust in Kings
Nor in Cromwell's Mob
O ye posterity of Peters
But put your trust in God.

After paying the Colonel's debts, Peters packed his remaining possessions in two trunks and sent them to Halifax in care of their cousin, Postmaster Joseph Peters (b. 1729). He wrote the widow,

I am now the informer of his glorious situation; and you, that have known that death is and will be swallowed up of life, will not complain that the great Eternal has seen fit to bestow one Beatitude on your husband, which he has yet withheld from you....for what he first enjoys you shall enjoy, in god's good time....To that bright world set off Col. John Peters, your fond and tender husband, on January 11, 1788 at seven o'clock in the morning, prepared for his journey and arrived before the throne of god in the twinkling of an eye.

In addition he sent John's picture,

a good likeness of him in life, and in his coffin, taken before his illness. I cut off a lock of his hair which I intend to have put into a ring, or locket for you and your daughter.⁴⁹

John Peters left a widow and eight children at Cape Breton in severe financial straits. Samuel acted immediately to obtain them aid through the Loyalist Claims Commission, which awarded them a Treasury allowance of £60 a year, beginning in April 1789. Samuel supplemented this with income from private resources from time to time.⁵⁰ Besides

financial advice, he provided Anna all the help he could with bringing up the children. A year after the Colonel's death he urged her to leave "that double cursed Island," else the children, "ever so bright...will be nothing above ignorant fishermen and slaves to the Cape Vilains, humours of Jews, Rogues and Governors and poverty." He pointed out that she must dress herself and daughter well, and that she must be clean, appearing as a lady, or she would hurt the children.⁵¹ Anna did not follow his advice to leave Cape Breton, and, after a difficult life with much illness, she died there. Most of the children moved away to become prosperous farmers and merchants in other parts of Canada, Vermont, and Maine. Several of John's sons continued to seek Samuel Peters's help through the years.⁵²

Samuel Peters's Finances

During the war, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel had continued its stipends to all colonial priests. After the Treaty of Paris, because of Charter restrictions, clergymen who remained in the United States were removed from the rolls, causing an exodus to Canada, to other colonies, or to the mother country.⁵³ In addition at the General Meeting, 15 April 1785, the Society "agreed in opinion that the Salaries now paid to Dr. Caner, Mr. Peters, Dr. Murray, and Mr. Batwell, should be discontinued after Michaelmas next." The men were all "Missionaries now residing in England."⁵⁴ A "Plan of Reduction" included

Peters's annual pension of £30 because "Mr. Peters has a pension from government of £150."⁵⁵ The loss seems not to have damaged his finances too severely, for Bishop Petrie wrote from Scotland that he regretted hearing of Peters's changed circumstances, but was glad he was cheerfully resigned to enjoying "his present bounty, and blessing."⁵⁶

Peters supplemented his income by acting as agent for friends and relatives who were merchants in the United States or Canada. Hampered by British mercantile policies, distrust of the unstable, debt-ridden American economy, and the lack of specie, the period following the Revolution proved difficult for New England businessmen. The fate of Peters's protege, Nathaniel Mann, who merchandised books, soft goods, but primarily drugs and medicines, serves as a good example. Despite his uncle's constant advice to write his orders out clearly and carefully, to pay his debts promptly, and to send certain kinds of goods from America at the time of the year proper for the best prices, Mann went bankrupt in 1790 and emigrated to Georgia where he practiced medicine.⁵⁷

Peters, who had co-signed with Mann for drugs from the firm of Chamberlin and Moore in London, and for books from Pridden and Hughes, was placed in a difficult financial situation until Mann's father was able to pay over £600 on his son's debts in 1794. Peters had been called before the Lord Mayor of London to provide information as to responsibility for the Chamberlin and Moore debt. At that time he declared that if full and honest payment was not made,

I shall view myself in honor bound to pay them - and I will do it - to keep up my character here; and to have it serve as a Memento to me, not in future to promise anything for friends or Strangers.⁵⁸

Citing poor health and tragic accidents as an excuse, Mann wrote Peters from Charleston in 1795 that he could not pay the debt to John Pridden, bookseller.⁵⁹

Another relative whom the clerical entrepreneur assisted in the drug business was Dr. Alexander A. Peters, son of the postmaster at Halifax. As had Nathan Mann, he stayed with Peters while studying medicine in London and Scotland, and arranged with Samuel for drugs and medicine from Chamberlin and Moore. Originally planning to go to the West Indies from Halifax, Dr. Peters asked the clergyman, "as I know you deal with Moore and Chamberlin for Dr. Pomeroy," to give the firm an invoice for drugs "I want to carry to the West Indies." He urged his cousin to "spurr them on a little... and ship them immediately."⁶⁰ Dr. Peters, after marrying a Connecticut girl, settled in Boston, where he too experienced financial difficulties from which his father, Joseph, as well as Samuel, had to extricate him eventually. Economic conditions in New England after the Revolution made it difficult for the small merchant, as well as for the great London wholesalers.

A Fourth Wife?

The Reverend Samuel Peters did not spend all his time on business, politics, or seeking preferment. As would be

expected, the thrice-married cleric on occasion considered the disadvantages of being a widower. On one such occasion an old friend in Nova Scotia teased him, "My dear Sir the old Maids, I am afraid, have quite turned your Brain." The Reverend John Wiswall (1731-1821) then went on to propose for his consideration,

an old dutch-built widow, who never had and never will have a child, who has £200 per Annum in the publick Funds, and Inhabits a very neat home and gardens within one mile of my vicarage house.

However, he felt it would be "imprudent to venture your self in this country, for the richest old maid or widow in the Island."⁶¹

While this proposal was made in jest, a few years later Peters entered into a serious courtship of Vardill's aunt, whose name is never mentioned in their correspondence. Vardill, a good friend and fellow loyalist, wrote from Ireland,

So you are smitten! I wish it may be true, and still more, that you may succeed according to your wish. For nothing would be more agreeable to me, than to have a Family Connection with you; tho in Friendship I cannot be more united to you than I am.

He pointed out that Hannah might "not like your adventuring on a third Marriage. Two wives are I think enough even for a Peter himself." Evidently he had forgotten or did not know of a previous third wife. Vardill concluded, "and believe me your dutiful Nephew - to be, or not to be!"⁶²

Nothing came of the romance although later that same year, Vardill asked, "How do you proceed in your Courtship, and

how is my good Aunt?"⁶³ The affair is never again broached in their letters.

A year later Peters involved himself in a romance with the widow of the Reverend John Troutbeck, Sarah, the heiress of John Gould, a wealthy Boston distiller.⁶⁴ The Troutbecks had loaned the fleeing loyalist 30 guineas for his flight to England and the next year had taken care of Hannah for him. A mutual friend wrote from Halifax,

'Pray how goes your Courtship on with Mrs. Troutbeck? I was lately told by one who is knowing to her finances, that she has five thousand good after all her losses, which is worth your attention, as it will help to make up for what you left at Hebron.⁶⁵

The affair proved troublesome. After Peters had broken off the courtship, Sarah, a woman scorned, threatened to sue him for the interest due on the borrowed 30 guineas.⁶⁶ Peters's reply the next day failed to satisfy her, and she turned the suit over to an attorney. Peters convinced Thomas Holloway, solicitor, that it was a tempest in a teapot and that he had paid the note as well as board and room for Hannah while she was in Boston. He offered to give her a larger amount if she were really in need of money. The attorney dropped the matter after Peters became so enraged he threatened to go to court, in turn, to stop the harassment.⁶⁷

His friends on the other side of the Atlantic continued urging him to marry. Joseph Peters wrote,

I am now inclined to believe that you are looking out for a Fourth wife: I hope the Old Maid has Money tho', and, if that is the case, I wish she may now be in your arms, that you may be the

better able to see, that you have done right -
Never mind, make them up half a dozen.⁶⁸

And Hubbard, after telling Peters of a mutual friend's re-marriage, asked,

Pray why does not my friend in Grosvenor place
get one too, I hope the Romish church hath not
got hold on him, as it once did Kneeland on this
head? doubtless a good wife, is a good thing,
and with all your getting I advise you to get a
wife.⁶⁹

Despite such encouragement, Peters never married again. Perhaps his experience with Mrs. Troutbeck soured his desire.

Even though Peters did not essay a fourth matrimonial venture, the second decade of his exile in London brought many changes. The arrival of his son "Bird" from America was only one of several modifications in Peters's life as he directed the teen-ager's education. The advent of grandchildren compensated for his vexation and sadness at the marriage and loss of his daughter Hannah. Peters continued to be concerned with family affairs, including those of Bemslee, his youngest brother. Grieved at the death of Colonel Peters, the Reverend Samuel Peters did all that he could for his nephew's widow and children. As a result of general economic instability, his financial ventures to rebuild his fortune did not fare well. The defeat at Yorktown, a crushing blow to loyalist hopes for a British victory in America, thwarted his longings for a triumphal return to Connecticut as an influential figure. While he enjoyed the round of teas, whist, and gossip with his friends, the main thrust of Peters's life was to attain a high position in the

Church. Trying to make the right "friends in high places," Peters, as we shall see, wrote, preached, and intrigued to gain eminence and patrons.

FOOTNOTES

¹SP to Houseal, 11 Nov. 1779, PP, I, 41. See also SP to Inglis, 20 Mar. 1778, PP, I, 31. where he ironically reported "G. Burgoine /the usual way he spelled the General's name/ was gallant and worthy. He will have proper rewards by and by."

²SP to Bailey, 15 Feb. 1782, JBCNS.

³SP to Bailey, 1 Aug. 1781. JBCNS.

⁴SP to Sower, 23 Apr. 1782, PP, I, 61. The letter was signed Alia Contros.

⁵Baxter to SP, 22 Feb. 1787, PP, III, 11.

⁶Baxter to SP, 28 Oct. 1787, PP, III, 54. Baxter also explained that if the "moos are older they will endure the vige better - I will have them to draw the Shay this winter - and as Soon as I can pay their pasege and find a swift one - I will send them."

⁷Chandler to SP, 15 June 1783, JPAC.

⁸Lawrence H. Gibson, American Loyalist: Jared Ingersoll (New Haven, 1971), 373n.

⁹SP to Arnold, 3 Feb. 1783, PP, I, 76.

¹⁰SP to Huntington, 3 Dec. 1784, PP, II, 24. The letter was marked CONFIDENTIAL.

¹¹SP to Rodney, 15 Feb. 1788, PP, III, 71.

¹²E. F. Peters, Peters of New England, errs in giving the date as 1786. See Wm. Jarvis to SP, 7 June 1786, DCT, in which he addressed Peters as "Honored Father." Also SP to Mann, 5 Apr. 1786, DCT; he wrote, "My Daughter was married to Mr William Jarvis on December 12th 1785 - they are very happy and join me in love and respects and esteem for you, your good father and mother and family - and friends." Hannah's husband was the third William Jarvis, after his grandfather and uncle.

¹³There was controversy over the Council office as

Jarvis was not immediately appointed when he reached Canada. SP to Pollack, 10 Jan. 1791, PP, V, 2.

¹⁴Leaming to SP, 7 July 1786, Jeremiah Leaming, "Letters," HMPEC, I (1932), 132.

¹⁵Byles to SP, 11 July 1786, PP, II, 93.

¹⁶Vardill to SP, 31 Mar. 1786, PP, II, 75. See also, Andrews to SP, 20 July, 1786, PP, II, 99; Brown to SP, 30 Oct. 1786, PP, II, 117; Baxter to SP, 22 Feb. 1787, PP, III, 11; Doty to SP, 30 Oct. 1786, PP, II, 110.

¹⁷SP to Carleton, 3 Apr. 1783, Microfilm reel M-361, Doc. 7305, Public Archives of Canada.

¹⁸Hubbard to SP, 21 Jan. 1784, PP, II, 3.

¹⁹Leaming to SP, 6 May 1782, Leaming, "Letters," HMPEC, I (1932), 124. See also, Hubbard to SP, 9 Feb. 1789, PP, IV, 7; he writes, "I hope long before this you have embraced your own Image in Birdseye Peters, as much like that Rogue Petters /sic/ a dear Rogue as Mathew used to say as one pea is like another."

²⁰Leaming to SP, 15 Feb. 1785, PP, II, 33.

²¹Leaming to SP, 6 May 1782, Leaming, "Letters," HMPEC, I (1932), 125. The other grandchild's name was Everett.

²²Leaming to SP, 15 Feb. 1785, PP, II, 33.

²³*Ibid.* See also, Mann to SP, 20 Apr. 1788, PP, III, 81, for money advanced to Bird when he was preparing for the trip to Europe.

²⁴Mansfield to SP, 2 June 1788, PP, III, 90.

²⁵Johnson to SP, 3 Dec. 1785, PP, II, 61. See also, Johnson to SP, 27 June, PP, III, 35.

²⁶Johnson to SP, 22 Sep. 1788, PP, III, 108. Plans had been made for Bird to sail in April, but the boy refused to leave. Mann to SP, 20 Apr. 1788, PP, III, 81.

²⁷SP to Mann, 20 Feb. 1789, DCT. Peters also reported that "my daughter was delivered of a Daughter /Augusta/ on Decr 31, 1788 and we are all very Well." See also, L'Abbe Peron to SP, 2 Apr. 1789, JPAC, who wrote, "You are, at last, about to execute your promise of conveying your son into France, - you will do well - It is in France that children receive a good education - bring therefore here your son as soon as possible - at his age there is no time to be lost."

- ²⁸SP to Parker, 22 July 1789, DCT.
- ²⁹William Birdseye to SP, 3 Nov. 1790, PP, IV, 100.
- ³⁰SP to Munson Jarvis, 30 Aug. 1790, JPNB. Munson Jarvis (1742-1825), was the eldest brother of William, and a merchant at St. John, New Brunswick, where he had fled in 1783.
- ³¹Birdseye to Birdseye Peters, 3 Nov. 1789, PP, IV, 45.
- ³²SP to C. S. Clarke, 12 Oct. 1792, PP, V, 78. See also, Johnson to SP, 5 May 1791, PP, V, 16.
- ³³Skinner to SP, 30 July 1792, PP, V, 67. Skinner had been disinherited by his family in Stowe, Massachusetts for his loyalism. He was taken prisoner with Burgoyne at Saratoga and at Yorktown. E. Alfred Jones, Loyalists of Massachusetts, 262-263.
- ³⁴SP to Munson Jarvis, 8 June 1793, Box 24, JPNB.
- ³⁵Skinner to SP, 20 Sep. 1792, PP, V, 72.
- ³⁶SP to Munson Jarvis, 21 July 1793, Box 24, JPNB.
- ³⁷Hannah Jarvis to Birdseye Peters, quoted in Mampoteng, unpublished mss., no date or source given.
- ³⁸They were married 4 May 1796 and had 9 children.
- ³⁹Edith G. Firth, ed., The Town of York (Toronto, 1962), xciii.
- ⁴⁰Tyler to SP, 26 Feb. 1814, PP, VII, 93. See also, John T. Peters to SP, 25 Jan. 1807, SPCHS. He writes, "The failure of your son tho' lamented is not unexpected."
- ⁴¹Birdseye died on the 48th anniversary of his birth, 4 June 1774. SP to John S. Peters, 18 July 1823, SPCHS. Sheldon Cohen in a letter to me points out that both the sons of Benjamin Trumbull and Peters "were neer-do-wells, but their grandsons were quite notable....Such is the way of history I suppose." Letter, 13 June 1973.
- ⁴²SP to Day, 20 Aug. 1819, Stokes Mss., Yale University, Historical Manuscripts.
- ⁴³SP to Mary Martha Peters, 12 Dec. 1825, SPCHS.
- ⁴⁴George Kernion, "Samuel Jarvis Peters," Louisiana Historical Society Publications, VII (1913-1914), 62-96.

See also, SP to Mary Martha Peters, 12 Dec. 1825, SPCHS and SP to John S. Peters, 18 July 1823, SPCHS.

⁴⁵Bemslee Peters to SP, 18 Mar. 1777, PP, I, 27. He wrote, "I long to see you vary much. I cant express my self by rating to you but wish to god I woud see you fase to fase. Then I cou'd let you now what my heart would rest and what trobels I have under goon sinse you went away." Spelling and grammar indicated the youngest sibling did not receive the education Samuel did.

⁴⁶Mary Peters to SP, 2 Apr. 1784, PP, II, 9. In the letter she asked Samuel to intervene for Bemslee's family also, and "help support her and her children." The wife's name was Annis Shipman Peters (1739-1812). One son, John Samuel Peters (1772-1858), who became an M.D. and Governor of Connecticut, was forced when seven years old to hire out to a neighboring farmer to help support the family. Frederick Norton, The Governors of Connecticut (Hartford, 1905), 167-170. For the later part of Bemslee's life see Firth, Town of York, 14.

⁴⁷This material comes from two principal sources. Col. Peters and Samuel Peters, "Memorial to the Lords of the Treasury," reprinted in Thomas Jones, History of New York (New York, 1879), I. 689-692, and in a newspaper article published in the late 1880's from John Peters's manuscript then held by Mr. S. P. Bell. I possess a xeroxed copy but the original in the Connecticut Historical Society Collections has no name or date given for the newspaper. See also, Silas McKeen, A History of Bradford, Vermont (Montpelier, 1875), 129-132; Harold W. Haskings, A History of Bradford Vermont (Littleton, N. H., 1968), 46-48; and Hoffman Nickerson, The Turning Point of the Revolution (Boston, 1928), 118-119, 149.

⁴⁸SP to Loyalist Commission, 19 Jan. 1788, A. O. 13/42.

⁴⁹SP to Anna Peters, 16 Feb. 1788, McKeen, History of Bradford, 129-130.

⁵⁰SP to Loyalist Commission, 19 Jan. 1788, A.O. 13/42. Peters listed the family as "Anna the widow - a delicate prudent and valuable woman brought up in a tender manner, John, an ensign on half pay in the Queen's Loyal Rangers, Andrew, Samuel, served as midshipmen on the Lakes against the rebels till Peace 1783, Henry Barnard, William Tryon, Edmund Fannin, Joseph Brant, Anna, born during the Rebellion as believers."

⁵¹SP to Anna Peters, 25 Mar. 1789, quoted in unpublished Mamporteng notes as from "Misc. Papers, E. B. Peters."

There are continuous references to the family in Samuel's correspondence with Joseph Peters at PP, IV, V, VI, and VII. See also, Montague to SP, 7 Apr. 1791, PP, V, 13, 40, 117 and VI, 43; and SP to Andrew Peters, 20 Apr. 1797, McKeen, History of Bradford, 135-136.

⁵²SP to Andrew Barnett Peters, 20 Apr. 1797, *ibid.*, 135-136. Peters wrote, "I tried to have you made a lieutenant in the navy, but did not succeed, because you were born in America. The Admiralty treated all American born midshipmen in like manner after the independence of America."

⁵³Manross, History of the Episcopal Church, 182.

⁵⁴SPG Microfilm 664:64, 62.

⁵⁵SPG Microfilm 664:76, 7. These papers are not dated and are out of chronological order. Page 23 shows that Dr. Samuel Peters received £200, "as an annual allowance from government as an American sufferer."

⁵⁶Petrie to SP, 4 Jan. 1787, DCT. Petrie was one of the three Scotch bishops who consecrated Seabury bishop. As Peters reported later, "Three of the Scotch Bishops who consecrated Bp. Seabury dined with me last week - They are grave, pious, and learned men." SP to Mann, 5 June 1789, DCT.

⁵⁷The correspondence between Peters and Mann during the years 1784-1789 is replete with details of their business transactions, along with instructions and suggestions from Peters. See A.O. 13/42 and DCT for those years and particularly PP, III, 67 and 81. One way Peters suggested to Mann for avoiding the trading restrictions on Americans was to send the goods through Munson Jarvis in New Brunswick. This business correspondence is found in JPNB, Box 24. See particularly the years 1790-1791.

⁵⁸SP to Dr. Nathaniel Mann & Co., 17 Nov. 1791, DCT. The first reference to a break with him over their business transactions is found in SP to Mann, 28 Aug. 1789, DCT. Peters wrote, "You wish to be rid of any further care of my Business - you have power - to substitute Silvester Gilbert or any other Person - and I hope you will not fail to accommodate yourselves."

⁵⁹Mann to SP, 19 Feb. 1795, PP, VI, 61.

⁶⁰Alexander Peters to SP, 8 Mar. 1788, PP, III, 75.

⁶¹Wiswall to SP, 15 Feb. 1782, PP, I, 59.

⁶²Vardill to SP, 12 Mar. 1785, PP, II, 34.

⁶³Vardill to SP, 8 Dec. 1785, PP, II, 65. See also, 25 May 1785, PP, II, 42, when Vardill hoped that "you have by this time seen my Aunt and made some progress in her good graces. Pray let me know every step relative to it, as well as all the American intelligence and whatever is doing respecting the Loyalists."

⁶⁴E. Alfred Jones, Loyalists of Massachusetts, 280. Troutbeck, assistant chaplain of King's Chapel, was bitterly lampooned by enemies of Anglicanism in 1774 because of his marriage into the liquor business. Even though under threat of harm, Sarah returned to Boston in 1785 in an attempt to recover her property. She was allowed £769 and a pension of £80 by the Commission. She died in 1816.

⁶⁵Thomas Brown to SP, 30 Oct. 1786, PP, II, 117.

⁶⁶Sarah Troutbeck to SP, 22 May 1788, PP, III, 83.

⁶⁷SP to Troutbeck, 23 May 1788, PP, III, 83; Holloway to SP, 24 May 1788, PP, III, 84, and 29 May 1788, PP, III, 88; SP to Holloway, 27 May 1788, PP, III, 85, and 30 May 1788, PP, III, 89.

⁶⁸J. Peters to SP, 31 Jan. 1788, PP, II, 72.

⁶⁹Hubbard to SP, 13 June 1789, PP, IV, 20.

CHAPTER V

HISTORIAN AND THEOLOGIAN

Peters as Author

Prior to his arrival in England, the Reverend Samuel Peters had published just two works, a pamphlet in 1768, Reasons Why Mr. Byles Left New-London, and a sermon he had preached to a convention of Anglican clergy in 1770.¹ The principal theme of the two works was the defense of the Anglican Church, including an attack on New England Puritanism, its theology, government, society, and "independency." His obsession with these elements of his native land Peters continued to express in his writing while in England. There he expanded his thesis to reveal that Puritan tenets formed the principal cause for Colonial revolt. In addition to propagandizing the British public for the loyalist cause, he desired to demonstrate his fitness for preferment and to improve his financial position.

The exiled loyalist's first literary effort was an "Account of Major General Benedict Arnold," published in The Political Magazine, 1780.² After describing Arnold's background, Peters accused the one-time druggist and West Indies trader of becoming a patriot leader to forestall his

creditors. Earlier, Arnold was released from debtor's prison when the city fathers passed a special bankrupt act because "several congregationalist parsons" faced the same predicament. Arnold's marriage quickly followed his release because "he got with child the daughter of Mr. Mansfield, the high sheriff" (690). Peters recorded a ludicrous account of Arnold's leadership in the New Havenites' attack on the "Sandemanians" and the subsequent attempts to tar and feather "the Reverend Mr. Peters, a very worthy and loyal subject."³ For these "exploits at the head of a drunken mob," the Assembly of the colony appointed Arnold a Colonel (746). Becoming complimentary, Peters praised Arnold for his courage and abilities as a commander of American forces. He condoned the general's traitorous conduct toward the patriots as caused by "the hatred of Congress, who trumped up against him a charge of embezzlement," and by the enmity of Washington, who "wished his disgrace, being envious of the honour he had acquired in the northern campaign" (748). Peters described Arnold as:

A middle sized man, very active, exceedingly fond of dress; among the rebels, he had the appearance of a military macaroni....As an officer he is much superior to Washington or any other in the rebel service. (748)

Undoubtedly this favorable mini-biography helped solidify the relationship established between them later in London, a relationship much more cordial than that in New Haven in 1774.⁴

In the next issue of the Political Magazine Peters

directed his virulent invective against his archenemy, Jonathan Trumbull, "the present rebel governor of Connecticut," whom he blamed - with some justice and reason - for most of his present troubles.⁵ The expatriate clergyman believed that Trumbull ruined his priestly career and was responsible for driving him from Connecticut to England.

In this article Peters asserted that the governor's real father was not Captain Joseph Trumbull, who had been absent from the town for four months, but rather was

a holy man, since well known at Boston, by the name of old Parson Welles, who was then minister of Lebanon; he lodged and boarded in Captain Trumbull's house when Jonathan was begot, and also when he was born.

Beset by clacking tongues of "the gossips of the town" and "no little public clamour," Welles and Trumbull,

thought proper to wait upon a Convocation of these Ladies, and after exhorting them to be silent, the Captain humourously said, 'the boy is well got; it is no matter who got him; for he will be Governor of this Colony.' Though the public clamour in some measure ceased, yet the neighborhood persisted in calling the boy Welles, instead of Trumbull. (6)

After challenging Trumbull's legitimacy, Peters questioned his financial integrity by pointing out numerous instances when Trumbull refused to pay just debts, particularly one held by the Anglican Churchman, Joel Harvey of Sharon.⁶ As did Arnold, according to Peters, Trumbull became a patriot from financial necessity:

Being in necessitous circumstances, and of an artful and flexible disposition, the Consociation, and the Associations, judged him a proper person for their designs of Independence

and ordered by their votes, that the Freeman should elect him to be their governor. He was accordingly elected; and ever since has been an obedient and faithful Governor of the independence. (7)

Peters accused his enemy of denigrating the clergy, both Old Lights and Anglicans, whenever he possibly could. In particular, Peters's mobbing resulted from Trumbull's instigation because he considered Peters "a traitor to his country, and an infamous forsaker of his renowned ancestors" (8).

Peters characterized Trumbull as,

morose in his natural temper, reserved in his speech, vain and covetous; envious and spiteful to a great degree, never forgiving or forgetting an affront....He is selfish and mercenary without bounds, always complaining, being of opinion that neither himself, or family, ever can receive preferment equal to their merits. (10)

In concluding the article, the exiled Hebron priest described Trumbull's family, including the eldest daughter Faith, who

married Jedediah Huntington...now a Brigadier General in the rebel service.⁷ He was one of the rebel Court Martial that tried and sentenced to an ignominious death, the brave and truly amiable Major Andre. Mrs. Huntington differed widely from father and husband in political principles, and not being able to prevent their rebellious proceedings, in despair, hanged herself in 1775. (10)

Peters did not vent all his spleen in his biography of Trumbull. For when he heard from his nephew that the governor died and was buried "beside the road where every dog that passes pisses on his grave,"⁸ Peters jubilantly wrote a friend, "Trumbull is dead - and may god bless Connecticut

and New England."⁹

In a modern biography of Trumbull, Glenn Weaver testified to the effectiveness of Peters's attacks, pointing out that,

of all the studied insults later to be hurled at him by his political enemies, probably none had more foundation than the one made by the Reverend Samuel Peters.¹⁰

A General History of Connecticut

The two basic themes of Samuel Peters's thrust against New England patriots, which I have demonstrated by quoting extensively from his magazine articles, were patriotism for financial advantage; Puritan bigotry and harassment of outsiders, particularly Anglicans. He developed and exploited these themes in his major work, A General History of Connecticut...by a Gentleman of the Province published anonymously in London early in 1781.¹¹ The History consisted of 436 pages (with a preface and appendix), divided into three parts: (1) The history of the Colony to the Stamp Act controversy (pages 1-124) included a description and listing of the notorious Blue Laws. (2) The geographic description of Connecticut (pages 124-335) included each of the settlements, their economic resources, flora and fauna, religious beliefs, manners, customs, and an hilarious account of bundling. This section contained many tall tales, causing literary critics to label Peters the Knickerbocker of Connecticut and a forerunner of Mark Twain.¹² (3) The history of

Connecticut from the Stamp Act controversy to 1781 (pages 335-366) concluded the work. The Appendix (pages 367-424) related "a summary account of the proceedings of the people of Connecticut immediately leading to their open commencement of hostilities against the Mother-Country" (367). Primarily it was an apologia for Peters's action prior to his flight.

Peters published the History not only to continue his attack on the Puritans and to defend Anglican loyalism, but also to improve his financial position and gain attention as he fought for preferment in a country that looked down on Americans as provincials and in a Church more apt to advance a Whig than a Tory, English or American.¹³

Peters claimed in the preface "that I have followed the line of truth freely, and unbiassed [sic] by partiality or prejudice" (v), and that "my sole aim has been to represent the country, the people, and their transactions, in proper colours" (vii). He hoped to avoid "the danger of being accounted a deceiver" (ix), a hope that remained unfulfilled. Even in the act of disclaiming bias, he wrote

the reason for the obscurity in which the Connecticutensians have hitherto been involved is to be found among their own sinister views and purposes. Prudence dictated, that their deficiency in point of right to the soil they occupied, their wanton and barbarous persecutions, illegal practices, daring usurpations, etc., etc., had better be concealed than exposed to public view. (iv-v)

A History listed no bibliography; however, a few notes indicated Peters relied primarily on his own memory. He

mentioned Neal, Hutchinson, and Mather as historians with whom he disagreed.¹⁴ Peters acknowledged that the re-searches of George Chalmers (1742-1825)¹⁵

have been of use to me; but, as to the New England writers, error, disguise and misrepresentation, too much abound in them to be serviceable in this undertaking. (viii)

Peters excused "the want of a regular and connected detail of facts and events," due to being "deprived of papers of my ancestors" (viii). These would have proven valuable, "for three generations my forefathers were careful observers of the proceedings of the Connecticut colonists" (ix).

While the Blue Laws have generated most of the controversy over Samuel Peters as an historian, a multiplicity of errors in the account of the Colony's founding have made critics skeptical of the entire work.¹⁶ Peters claimed that George Fenwick and the Reverend Thomas Peters on their arrival in 1634 from England formed the first settlement, Saybrook, at the mouth of the Connecticut River on land granted by the crown to the Marquis of Hamilton. Peters averred that

writers of New-England history, have uniformly deviated from the truth in representing Connecticut as having been first settled by emigrants from their darling Massachusetts-Bay.
(8)

According to Peters, John Haynes and the Reverend Thomas Hooker settled Hartford in 1636, "to avoid being persecuted and to acquire the power to persecute" (19). In 1639 Theophilus Eaton and the Reverend John Davenport, ignoring

advice from the people of Massachusetts Bay to settle in that colony, built the town of New Haven (9). The Saybrookians, following the death of Hooker and fearing Cromwell's displeasure at their support of King Charles, joined with Hartford and "flourished greatly" (47). At this time Thomas Peters established a school which "his children had the satisfaction to see become a College, denominated Yale" (47-48). It was so named in "compliment to a gentleman of that name, governor of one of the West-India islands, and its greatest benefactor" (200).

Peters's partisanship, zeal, and trust in his memory played him false. The first permanent English settlement was made at Wethersfield in 1634. With Colonel Fenwick as an aide, John Winthrop, Jr., constructed Saybrook Fort the next year.¹⁷ The Privy Council had already dismissed the claims of Lord Say and Sele and Lord Brooke. By including this bit of lore, Peters hoped to gain an ally in his search for preferment with the peer's descendants.¹⁷ No historical records exist to substantiate the claim of any relationship between Thomas Peters's Saybrook school and Yale University. Furthermore, Elihu Yale gained his fortune in India, nor was he ever governor in the West Indies.¹⁹

A General History of Connecticut anticipates a mid-twentieth century concern for the plight of the Indian, even if Peters was inaccurate in his historic presentation of New England's tribal culture. In his desire to illustrate the illegal and bloodthirsty actions of the Colony's early

settlers, he portrayed the Indians as noble savages, despite the fact that the local tribes were barely out of the Stone Age.²⁰ Peters created a fictitious triumvirate of sachems or kings, "Connecticote, Quinnipiog, and Sassacus," (28) who were victimized through exploitation and deliberate genocide.²¹ He accused missionaries of germ warfare because Hooker spread small pox germs "upon the leaves of his Bible, and struck Connecticote mad with disease" (134). Peters eulogized the chief as a martyr to Puritan injustice and called him "the greatest king in North-America." The Puritans considered this event

as the work of the Lord; and the savage nations were told that the like calamities would befall /sic/ them, unless they embraced the Gospel of Jesus Christ. (56)

The section on Connecticut's geography allowed Peters opportunity to display his genius for tall-tale Americana as well as for many delightful descriptions of flora and fauna. Among numerous others he describes the woodchuck, the skunk, (which he differentiates from the European pole cat), the "whipperwill," the "humble-bee," and the glow-bug, with quite accurate detail. He has fun, though, with the "brown-red whappernocker, covered with an exceeding fine fur whose skins made muffs at the price of 30 or 40 guineas" (249-250), and with the Cuba, which "I suppose to be peculiar to New-England" and whose mate, "if she thinks the danger is too great...runs to him and clings about his neck." If he becomes too frightened she will then "kiss him and in half

a minute restore him to calmness" (250-251). He depicts the bull-fly as

armed with a coat of mail, which it can move from one place to another, as sliders to a window are moved. Its body is about an inch long, and its horns half an inch, very sharp and strong. It has six feet, with claws sharp as needles, and runs fast. It also flies with some speed. In sucking the blood or juice of its prey, this creature holds the same in its claws, otherwise the prey is carried between its horns. (259)

While he accurately describes most reptiles and amphibians, Peters's exaggerated tale of the large army of bullfrogs that invaded the village of Windham one night in July 1758, is hilarious (151-154).²² Thinking the "unusually clamorous" and "Hideous noise" was an invading army of French and Indians, the inhabitants, "old and young, male and female, fled naked from their beds with worse shriekings than those of the frogs. The event was fatal to several women" (152). He mitigated his bitterness against the Windhamites by pointing out that "such an incursion was never known before nor since," and that "I verily believe an army under the Duke of Marlborough would, under like circumstances, have acted no better than they did" (153-154). The tale immediately caught public fancy, and a ballad was "published in the Providence Gazette entitled 'The Frogs of Windham' - an Old Colony Tale founded on fact - by Arion."²³ Several American literature textbooks have reprinted this tall-tale.²⁴

Two of Peters's anecdotes about Connecticut natives

and customs have recently appeared as children's books, titled The Onion Maidens and The Pumpkin Heads.²⁵ Peters described Weatherfield as raising "more onions than are consumed in all New-England." In return for a silk gown purchased each year by her parents, each daughter over seven is "obliged in return, to weed a patch of onions with her own hands; which she performs in the cool of the morning." While ladies in other towns ridicule the Weatherfield lasses, the Onion Maidens "catch the gentlemen far and near" (167-168).

Peters wrote that "Newhaven is celebrated for having given the name of pumpkin-heads to all the New-Englanders." The Blue Laws of New Haven required "every male to have his hair cut round by a cap." When these were not available, "they substituted the hardshell of a pumpkin, which being put on the head every Saturday, the hair is cut by the shell all around the head." Peters could see no "religious virtue in the custom," but at least

there is much prudence in it: first, it prevents the hair from snarling; - secondly, it saves the use of combs, bags, and ribbons; - thirdly, the hair cannot incommode the eyes by falling over them; - and, fourthly, such persons as have lost their ears for heresy, and other wickedness, cannot conceal their misfortune and disgrace. (195-196)

The History spared Hebron Peters's satire, with the exception of recalling that:

In 1740, Mr. George Whitefield gave them this laconic character. 'Hebron,' says he, 'is the stronghold of Satan; for its people mightily

oppose the work of the Lord, being more fond of earth than of heaven.' (171)

Further along in the account of his home town Peters engaged in some special pleading when he described himself as

an episcopal clergyman, who, by his generosity and zeal for the Church of England, and loyalty to the House of Hanover, has rendered himself famous both in New and Old England, and in some degree made an atonement for the fanaticism and treasons of his uncle Hugh, and of his ancestor on his mother's side, Major-General Thomas Harrison, both hanged at Charing-Cross in the last century. (172)

Another Connecticutiana tall-tale described a "narrow of five yards" on the Connecticut river "formed by two shelving mountains of solid rock, whose tops intercept the clouds." In this channel the water is

consolidated, without frost, by pressure, by swiftness...to such a degree of induration, that no iron crow can be forced into it.... here, steady as time, and harder than marble, the stream passes irresistible, if not swift, as lightning.

The only person to navigate the channel successfully was

an Indian woman, who was, in a canoe, attempting to cross the river above it, but carelessly suffered herself to fall within the power of the current.

After some Englishmen pulled her from the river some miles farther down, and someone asked the squaw why she had imprudently drunk a whole bottle of rum when faced with the

prospect of instant death before her, the squaw, as well as her condition would let her, replied, 'Yes it was too much rum for once to be sure; but I was not willing to lose a drop of it: so I drank it, and you see I have saved all.' (127-130)

Subsequent travellers found the narrows "an interesting

natural curiosity, although we did not find the water beneath so hard as to be impervious to an iron crow."²⁶

Peters, in recounting some of the absurd manners and customs practiced in Connecticut, venomously ridiculed the narrowmindedness, authoritarianism, and bigotry of New England Puritanism. Maliciously he satirized Sabbath observances (304-306), the penchant for lawsuits (298-302), and the approbation of smuggling, which he alleged was

rivetted in the constitutions and practice of the inhabitants of Connecticut, as much as superstition and religion....They conscientiously study to cheat the King of those duties, which, they say, God and nature never intended should be paid. From the governor down to the tithingman, who are sworn to support the laws, they will aid smugglers, resist collectors, and mob informers. (320-321)

Wanting to increase sales of his History by including a bit of eighteenth century pornography, Peters described some courting customs. For instance, he depicted the New England practice of bundling, bringing it into print for the first time.²⁷ After portraying Connecticut women as "strictly virtuous, and to be compared to the prude rather than the European polite lady," he affirmed,

the modesty of the females is such, that it would be accounted the greatest rudeness for a gentleman to speak before a lady of a garter, knee, or leg, yet it is thought but a piece of civility to ask her to BUNDLE; a custom as old as the first settlement in 1634. It is certainly innocent, virtuous, and prudent;....I am no advocate for temptation, yet must say, that bundling has prevailed 160 years in New-Englandwith ten times more chastity than the sitting on a sofa /sic/. I had daughters and speak from near forty years experience.²⁸ (325-327)

Peters also recounted the tale of an English gentleman who encountered much difficulty when he innocently sent a gift of some "pine-apples" and sweetmeats to a Deacon's daughter. He was sued for courting without her parents' consent, and only with considerable effort was he able to extricate himself (306-311).

Other aspects of Connecticut life and manners that received approbation included several adopted from the Indians:

The men in general, throughout the province, are tall, stout, and robust. The greatest care is taken of the limbs and bodies of infants, which are kept strait by means of a board; a practice learnt of the Indian women, who abhor all crooked people: so that deformity is here a rarity. Another custom derived from the Indians is, to welcome a new-born infant into the world with urine and honey, the effects of which are wonderful; and hence it is that at groanings there are always a little boy and a rattle-snake's skin, the latter of which prevents numbness and the cramp. (323-324)

Undoubtedly, these bits of primitive American lore intrigued his English readers. Europeans avidly received information about the wilderness of North America. Peters's History did little, however, to dispel the sense of superiority the Englishman held towards his backward and provincial American cousins.

The first review of the History, written by the editor of the Political Magazine, described it as the "only faithful history of any part of the British dominions in America that is written by a native." The critic wrote that people

from the various provinces reading the History reported that everything was true about areas other than their own, but that the tales were exaggerated about their own community. The work "merits a perusal from all who wish to be informed of the opinions that have prevailed in the Northern part of America, since its first settlement."²⁹

Although the General History was published anonymously "by a gentleman of that Province," little doubt existed as to its true authorship.³⁰ Peters sent copies to many of his loyalist friends in America and Canada, who were not deceived as to its real author, even though Peters wrote Bailey that,

Some assassin last summer, published the History of Connecticut in a lively and sarcastic style. It is said to be the only true and impartial history ever published about New England. We cannot find out the author, but Harrison Gray, and the Saints of Salem and Boston like it not. They call it a 'cursed book.'³¹

His friends wrote back their approval of the book.

What I have read pleases me much...however, my curiosity does not prompt me to travel so far as Pater Noster Row to search out the author, having by my deep penetration into occult matters discovered a much nigher track.³²

From an expatriate priest in Halifax came word that he "read the History with much entertainment," but had he been present when it was written, he "should have endeavored to convince the Doctor that it was the highest Act of Sacrilege to rob St. Peter of his due." Byles also enclosed "an account of a Religion which is not mentioned in the History and which I desire may have proper Respect paid it in the

next edition."³³

For many years Peters received other anecdotes to be included in later editions. A nephew urged him to recount "the discipline that a former Priest of Preston used to one of his domesticks, viz. Whiping [sic] his Cat, for Catching a Mouse, on Sunday."³⁴

The desire for knowledge about North America was not confined to England; a German translation (as well as a French) appeared within a few years.³⁵ To his later regret, a German scholar, Christoph D. Ebeling, accepted the History as source material for his own study of America.³⁶ Although Ebeling had spent twenty years studying the continent, he never visited it. Relying on Peters's work, Ebeling studied his account of Connecticut with references to Peters. Already aware of Peters's "enraged partiality" and "many of his falsities," Ebeling was eventually persuaded through correspondence with the noted New England scholar and divine, Jeremy Belknap (1744-1798), to insert in the epilogue a warning that questioned Peters's credibility.³⁷ Ebeling justified his original use of the History by pointing out it "had been translated into German by one of our best political and geographical authors, Prof. Sprengel and got undeserved reputation."³⁸

A General History of Connecticut met a mixed reception in America. McCormick in the second preface to his 1877 edition wrote that its "truthfulness was unpalatable to the Connecticut colony," so it, "I believe [italics supplied],

was publicly burnt, and the court prohibited the republishing of the work in the state."³⁹ No court records or newspapers from this time verify this belief. In 1784 Isaac Beers, bookseller, advertised in the New Haven Gazette that he had copies of the History for sale.⁴⁰ No records exist to indicate his sales, but Nathan Mann did poorly with copies he tried to sell. Peters wrote in October 1784 that "Mr. Bew [the publisher] sends you 100 vols. of the History of Connecticut - to be paid for next October."⁴¹ Eighteen months later Peters was forced to bail his nephew out.

You said the History of Connecticut would sell well, and yet you find yourself wrong - send your charge for that History - and what you was to give - I will adopt the word Cave.⁴²

On the more favorable reception of the History, Hubbard wrote in 1791 that

Dr. Stiles begins to think now favorably of you, yet cannot forgive you for writing (as he says you did) the history of Connecticut - but Old Secretary Wyllys [State Secretary] who quarters in the sessions of the Assembly two doors from me will not be a moment without it, he reads it the last thing when he goes to bed and the first thing when he arises.⁴³

Another Connecticut friend encouraged him earlier by pointing out that, "You are not uneasy I hope, that you was drove off this land; Since it has procured a History which will perpetuate Your Name."⁴⁴

Surprisingly, the first review of the History in America did not appear until 1810.⁴⁵ In order to counter "the credit which has been acquired, and which is in some degree still maintained by the 'General History of Connecticut,'"

James Kingsley declared that in his exaggerations Peters "is not surpassed by Diedrick Knickerbocker himself" (272-273). Besides deriding the History because it "exhibits the most notorious disregard to facts and authorities," the reviewer disparaged Peters's motivation as a "desire to elevate himself and family...and to blacken the character of the people of Connecticut" (274).

"Blue Law" Controversy

Not until 1829 did an American edition of Peters's work appear, reviving the acrimonious controversy.⁴⁶ The reason for its publication at this time was an increasing interest in early New England legal codes occasioned by the issuance in 1822 of a small volume printed on blue paper, bound in a blue cover, titled The Code of 1650.⁴⁷ Prior to this publication, Peters had been attacked primarily for his inaccuracy and intemperate charges against the "Fathers of the Holy City on a Hill." After the American edition appeared, the most spleen was vented on the Blue Laws, a term introduced, at least for the first time in writing, by Peters in the History:⁴⁸

They were very properly termed Blue Laws, i.e. bloody Laws; for they were all sanctified with excommunication, confiscation, fines, banishments, whippings, cutting off the ears, burning the tongue, and death. (69-70)

With particular rancor aimed at the New Haven colony's Puritan forefathers, Peters cited only forty-five from a "vast

multitude" (68) which "were never suffered to be printed" (63).

Vituperative assaults on the bloody laws and their alleged originator have proven as bitter as Peters's initial assertions. "The absurd Code" by the "Tory Renegade,"⁴⁹ "grotesque enactments" by a "mendacious refugee,"⁵⁰ "baseless invention of an embittered tory,"⁵¹ and "extravagant stories" by a "man utterly incapable of telling the truth on any subject,"⁵² were some of the epithets hurled following the publication of the American editions of A General History. After each denigration a series of articles affirming Peters's basic adherence to the facts has ensued. In 1898 Walter F. Prince published what should have concluded the controversy.⁵³ After surveying the literature that Peters read and quoted and the articles written after the History's publication, and after carefully examining Peters's laws, Prince concluded that:

1. Over one-half of Peters's 'Blue Laws' did exist in New Haven, expressly or in the form of judicial customs under the common law.
2. More than four-fifths of them existed in the same fashion, in one or more of the colonies of New England.
3. Where the 'Blue Laws' show to be forgeries, Peters could not be made to shoulder the whole burden of guilt, since he derived nearly two-thirds of them directly from other writers on New England history. (99)

Prince, furthermore, was convinced that

If Samuel Peters had had access to the records and had been a more painstaking investigator

than he was, he could have made out a stronger case without perpetrating a single blunder.
(131)⁵⁴

Prince claimed that

Peters, in spite of his blunders, does not seriously misrepresent the spirit of the sterner side of New England legislation, and that patriotic souls should have no real cause to complain. (136)

While Prince's scholarship and thorough investigation of sources ostensibly settled the problem once and for all, historians and biographers of the New England scene still seem hesitant to give Peters's blue laws unqualified approbation. Samuel Middlebrook, in an otherwise unbiased article, would only say, "there will always be readers who feel that the root of much truth is in him."⁵⁵ In 1936, a pamphlet issued for Connecticut's tercentenary celebration, titled The Literature of Connecticut, refused to mention the History or Peters.⁵⁶ Had he known, the Reverend Samuel Peters would have been amused and gratified at the contention he engendered. His spirit of partisanship and disputation was adequately avenged. An epic poem written for the bi-centennial celebration of Windham summed up Peters's status in the State:

We tell it gladly, smiling with the rest
To think how far its fun the world has blessed,
And rail at Parson Peters in our pride
No more - but O, how Parson Peters lied!⁵⁷

Modern scholars have exhibited attitudes more varied towards Peters's major work. Parrington, while referring to the author as "the Mendacious Peters," called the History

"an amazingly provocative book," and credited Peters for a shrewd analysis of the Revolution's causes.⁵⁸ Allan Heimert, without epithets, employs the History extensively to demonstrate the "special contribution of Joseph Bellamy to the formation of the American mind," and quotes Peters repeatedly in discussing "the struggle against an Anglican episcopate in America."⁵⁹ Bruce Steiner utilized statistics and other data to prove,

New England Anglicanism in its area of greatest numerical strength - the farm community and the rural village - was in good part a lower class movement.⁶⁰

Although A General History of Connecticut was the only provincial history that Peters published, he began a history of Nova Scotia.⁶¹ His cousin John in Halifax sent him information, writing that he supposed Peters was "laboring hard at your history of No. Sco. and hope for the pleasure of seeing it soon."⁶² Another contributor to the work in progress was the Reverend Jacob Bailey, who compiled a manuscript sketch of the province for Peters and Brook Watson, M.P.⁶³ We do not know what became of the proposed work, and we find no record of its publication. An anonymous pamphlet on Nova Scotia was published in 1786, but its style is too dull for a product of Peters's pen.⁶⁴

Peters's last polemic work on the Revolution to be published in England was a discourse supposedly delivered by Simeon Baxter to loyalist prisoners in the notorious Symsbury mines.⁶⁵

The supposed preacher first urged General Washington and the Congress to "adopt the act of Suicide," so that "when you are dead, your grateful countrymen will not let your Honours lie in dust." Peters then consigned "Protestant Rebel Ministers of the Gospel," to Hell "in the words spoken to your predecessors by the Saviour of all penitent sinners, - 'Go your way, for I know you not!'" (v-vi). The text for the rest of the discourse he took from the Book of Judges 15:11. The diatribe continued at this level as Peters pointed out the necessity to "repel force by force, and do justice for ourselves, when no legal justice can be had" (10). He cites as precedents for assassination, "Judith and a Jael, Holofernes and a Sisera" (11), and "Brutus for conspiring against Julius Caesar" (22). For the coup de grace, he designates the Puritan's own prophet, Milton: "If, says he, God commanded tyrants to be killed, it is a sign that tyrants ought to die" (24-25). In addition to the Bible's authority for his thesis, Peters mentioned Cicero, Tacitus, Plato, Aristotle, Tertullian, Xenophon, Machiavel [sic], Plutarch, and Polybius. After asking, "are we not slaves and living instruments of Congress, Washington, the Protestant ministers, and their Romish Allies?" (26), Peters queries, "how can it be...unlawful to kill such villains in the dark?" (27). Peters used the pamphlet for another attack on British military leadership that treated the loyalists "much worse than they have the rebels," and that have "killed and plundered more Loyalists than Rebels" (26-27n).

In an impassioned plea for action, the preacher urged his "virtuous countrymen, who are free of the chains with which I am loaded" to give "the fatal blow" (30). Judiciously, he used the plea to help sell the History of Connecticut, "where is a just description of the infernal prison at Symsbury" (30n).

Peters sent a copy of the tract to the Reverend Ranna Cossit (d. 1815), expatriate loyalist from New Hampshire, which led to the following anti-rebel doggerel:

Simeon Baxter proves Tyrannicide,
Lawfully by Jews Heathens and more beside,
He speaks the real Sentiment and Valour,
of an American of Brittish Feature;
For Subduing Hand cock's /sic/ Rebellion,
'Till Peace, when just a Fruit of Religion:
But had not this Principle of Nature
With it's Inforcements from Sacred Letter
Fled the Heart of a gen'ral Commander,
As a Lord know How, being Peace Maker;
The British Sceptre had not departed
Nor 13 stripes made us broken hearted;
Viator perchance might not have raved
and Dr Inglis his Character Saved.⁶⁶

Theology

Prior to his flight to England, the Reverend Samuel Peters's strongest theological concern had been church policy, that is, the rationale for establishing an Anglican Bishopric in the American Colonies. As did most New England Anglicans, Peters saw a Bishopric strengthening frayed ties to England, as well as securing more powerful societal positions for the Anglicans in Connecticut. Only after failure to obtain consecration as Bishop of Vermont did Peters

develop an antipathy for bishops.

This ordained priest of God emphasized other theological concerns. While not a profound or original theologian, Peters lived in a time of "undue simplification of theology," and in an "age which preferred certainty and assurance to probability and moderation."⁶⁷ His theological concerns were those of the late eighteenth century: morality or practical Christianity, and a morbid or "sombre fear of death."⁶⁸

We can best study Samuel Peters's theology in two published sermons delivered under melancholy circumstances,⁶⁹ in the Letter to John Tyler,⁷⁰ and in his lengthy correspondence with the Reverend Benjamin Trumbull (1735-1820), an Hebronite contemporary and patriot Congregational pastor.⁷¹ In a letter to Trumbull, Peters summed up his theological position:

I would preach what I believed, that Jesus Christ is the Lord, and that his system of Morality delivered in his Sermons is Christian perfection and the whole duty of man.⁷²

Although expecting every one of his numerous illnesses to be fatal, Peters outlived most of his contemporaries. On 14 March 1787, Dr. Thomas Moffatt died. He had known Peters "as soon as born," and had been a friend "nearly forty Years."⁷³ Peters preached the funeral service for his old friend, taking as his text, "For the Law of the Spirit of Life, which is in Christ Jesus, hath made me free from the Law of Sin and Death." (Rom. 8:2) After discoursing freely on sin and evangelical righteousness, Peters praised

Moffatt's belief in the saving grace of God and concluded by addressing some "few Observations" to the many American loyalists who attended:

You like Dr. Moffatt, left your Property to enjoy yourselves, and the Peace of Conscience, knowing Virtue to be preferable to Iniquity, and Fidelity to Perjury and Rebellion. - You quitted Plenty to endure Poverty, Distress, and the Desertion of Friends, rather than desert your Duty to your sovereign, the Cause of Right and the Mother Country, under whose nurturing Wing America (now independent, poor, and miserable) was rich and happy above People, for near two Centuries past. Your Choice (on Comparison) was founded in Wisdom, as you are under the Protection of a gracious King, and the Liberality of a brave and generous Nation....Yourselves are Candidates of an eternal World, and must pay your debt to Nature, as Moffatt has done before you. There is one Duty yet remaining for each Loyalist to perform, and that is to shew the like Zeal, Fidelity, and Sincerity to God, as they have done to the King and the British Empire. (25-26)

On publication the Sermon received mixed criticism. One reviewer approved Peters's theology as "no advocate for faith without works, but insists on the necessity of religious obedience." He commented that the discourse "sometimes discovers good sense and reason," but that some ideas were "rather confused and incomprehensible."⁷⁴

A less rewarding, more onerous task for Peters resulted from his friendship with the loyalist Moffatt. Appointed an executor of his estate, Peters was involved in a long, tedious, and costly suit filed by George Erving of Boston for recovery of a joint bond of Moffatt's in the loyalist John Erving's estate.⁷⁵ The suit required much correspondence with Samuel Parker and Sylvester Gilbert. With their help,

the suit was finally brought to a successful conclusion in 1793, when the King's bench ruled in favor of Peters.⁷⁶

On Sunday, the 31st of August, 1788, Peters preached a sermon in the chapel at Newgate Prison before three malefactors sentenced to hang publicly. For this macabre occasion, the text chosen was, "I am in a Strait betwixt two, having a Desire to depart, and be with Christ, which is far better" (Phil. 1:23). After explaining the reason for Paul's statement,⁷⁷ Peters, "to instruct and benefit those whose Departure is at Hand," developed five points to show "the Substance of the Text:

First, I will show, when and how far Christians may, consistent with Revelation, desire Death.

Secondly, The Reasons why 'To Depart, and be with Christ, is far better,' than to live in the flesh.

Thirdly, The Principles which excite Christians to look for a State of Blessedness with Christ after their Departure from Prison and Mortality.

Fourthly, Why such Christians, as believe it 'Far better to be with Christ,' than to live in the Flesh, are not willing to depart from Time to the World of Glory.

Fifthly, Point out suitable Remedies to cure such sick and mortal Creatures. (6)

Beyond assuring the condemned of the need for repentance, Peters offered them the comfort of heaven as

A glorious Exchange for you; because there - 'you shall hunger and thirst no more, but shall bask in the Sunshine of Everlasting Peace'....where every Toil shall cease - where the Luxurious shall no more tread us to the Earth - where we shall think with Pleasure on our Sufferings here below - where we shall be surrounded with such Friends as deserve our Friendship; and where Felicity unutterable shall be found durable as

Eternity. Charm'd with the Prospect, I burn to
join the blest immortal Throng, and leave behind
all earthly Care! (22-23)

Peters closed the dismal episode with appropriate prayers
for the dying, for the "sick, the heavy-laden, and Prison-
ers," and asked God to "Support us in the Time of Fear;
comfort us now in dying with the Cordials of thy Love" (25).
The printed sermon was appropriately illustrated between
the prayers with three coffins, reminding the readers of
their own mortality. (24)

The Sermon proved popular enough to require two edi-
tions. The eminent loyalist, Harrison Gray (1711-1794),
wrote Peters that he had read the sermon

with great attention and pleasure and I think
without flattery that it is a most excellent
composition, and which would have done honor
to any of the dignified clergy who should have
composed such a discourse.⁷⁸

Gray hoped that,

As I doubt not it came from those in God, it
reached the hearts of the poor unhappy culprits
for whose benefit it was particularly designed.
Happy would it be for all those who were moved
by the Holy Ghost as they swore to take orders
in the Church if they delivered such evangelical
doctrines and lived answerable to them.⁷⁹

Opposed to such public executions even though he had
graced this one with his presence and a sermon, Peters wrote
Trumbull, when he sent a copy of the exhortation, that the
event was a "Melancholly [sic] occasion which returns every
month to the shame of the police of Great Britain, where
are more public Executions than in Europe besides."⁸⁰

By the time copies of the discourse had reached Canada,

rumours had spread that Peters was the Ordinary at Newgate and Chaplain to the Queen. While the loyalist priest sought such advancement, he never received it.⁸¹

The Newgate Sermon had the distinction of carrying the degree of LL.D. after the Reverend Samuel Peters's name. For the first time, at least in print, he called himself "doctor." All of Peters's earlier publications designated him A.M. When and if Peters ever received a doctorate is impossible to determine. It is readily apparent that he desired one. His friend in Ireland, the Reverend John Vardill, wrote that for the favors he had done the Archbishop of Canterbury "I shall do my endeavor to get you a Degree and any other favors in my power."⁸² The next year he proposed to Peters that, "it would be more honorable to us...to go to Oxford together, where I am confident we can be both easily dubb'd."⁸³ Peters refused as "he would not be D.D. at Oxford - because Inglis was," and at the same time, he reported "S.P. is created L L D at Cortona University in Tuskany, near Rome, the most famous in old Italy."⁸⁴ This claim by Peters was a full year before the publication of the Moffatt Sermon, which still bore the A.M. Investigation has revealed that Cortona was never a University but simply a cultural association with no authority to issue degrees, only membership diplomas. Furthermore, "the incomplete rolls of the academy do not list Peters as a member."⁸⁵ Later that year, Peters's Canadian brethren further confused the issue by congratulating him on having "the Honors of Cologn [sic]"

conferred.⁸⁶ Evidently, "Cortona" had been confused with "Cologne," for Peters had no known connections with that German university, and the information had been circulated by word of mouth.

Yale University Catalogue lists Peters as "LL. D. alibi" with no indication of the institution granting the honour. Dr. Stiles inserted the degree in the catalogue on the representation of Trumbull. Hubbard had tried to have

your D. D. tagged to the end of your name in Yale College Catalogue etc. etc. if I can affect it, but you must know that Ezra and myself do not get our horses together at all. I have not been in the inside of Yale College for near two years.⁸⁷

By the next year Trumbull could report that after a meeting with Dr. Stiles in which the matter was treated "with the utmost candor and friendship," he explained the only reason for it not having been done was "for want of authentic information on the subject," and "He has now done it according to the best information we could obtain."⁸⁸ Peters's reply thanked Trumbull and wrote, "Samuel Peters LL. D. at Cortona, Tuskany - but I am sorry to find any Envy should occur on the account."⁸⁹ The Yale catalogue still lists "alibi." Although Peters was ever after addressed as Doctor and his published material bears the designation LL. D., no evidence supports such a degree. Peters lied or at least stretched his fertile imagination in styling himself "Doctor."

The only technical work of Dogmatics that Peters published was an argument against the doctrine of Universal

Salvation.⁹⁰ The Universalist sect was begun by an English Methodist preacher, John Murray, who emigrated to the Colonies in 1770, ultimately settling in Gloucester. Their doctrine, somewhat based on Arminianism, had its roots in Origen's teaching that the punishments of the wicked and evil would not be eternal, but that all men would finally be saved through Jesus Christ. Eighteenth century Universalism was a reaction to the harsh tenets of Calvinistic predestinarianism, and as did Arminianism, it attracted some Anglican clergymen.⁹¹ John Tyler, S. P. G. missionary at Norwich, Connecticut, until his retirement, co-worker and close friend of Peters, was one of these. He was a loyalist of mild and gentle disposition who, in spite of his fears, suffered very little during the Revolution. After the war the two old comrades resumed their correspondence. Tyler, who had been converted by Murray's visit to Norwich in 1778 to the belief that the Gospel was not a law of wrath and that all mankind would be saved, defended his position by quotations from Holy Scripture and from the Church fathers, in one of his earliest postwar letters to Peters. Tyler averred

that the Gospel was the Gospel of Peace, the gospel of good news of the grace of God, but I know not that we any where read of the Gospel of final Misery.

Mentioning that he was careful not to upset the faith of his parishioners, Tyler begged Peters to defend him before the Society, adding, "if the Society should deny me their Favor

I cannot well express how much alterations it must make."⁹²

Horrified by Tyler's heresy, Peters replied:

In great weakness I have drawn up by objections against the most powerful arguments used by Origen and his disciples to support universal salvation. I think 'the traditions which we have been taught by the word,' and the universal church, better guides than the opinions of all novelists and sectaries whatever. (2)

While disputing the use to which Tyler had put certain texts, Peters also argued that "those texts commonly cited to support absolute election and reprobation have been used in no better sense" (2). In the remainder of the pamphlet he quoted each of Tyler's arguments and demolished them, claiming in part that we

see the love, goodness, and mercy of God displayed by threatening eternal punishment to wilful sinners, to support government, to suppress the desire if violating the law of liberty, and to prevent the threatened punishment's taking place. (14-15)

Peters reminded Tyler:

If eternal punishments are not true, the sin of Adam was of a temporary nature, and by it he never lost his title to heaven and eternal glory. Christ came to redeem what was lost by sin; but as Adam by sin did not lose his right to eternal happiness, Christ did not die to procure what man lost - it follows, that as Christ has not redeemed men from temporal and eternal punishments, he has not redeemed them in any sense whatever. (17-18)

He concluded by assuring his friend and brother

that I am persuaded of the truth of Christianity, and of its important doctrines, constantly inculcated by the bishops, priests and deacons, in the catholic church, for almost eighteen hundred years Old truths will do, and sincerity will make us perfect. Men desire love, and hope for happiness, yet their fear of pain and misery is a quicker sense and a stronger motive. (22-23)

Further, Peters entreated Tyler to

shun 'fables,' and to preach such doctrines as promote habitual charity, and not such as have a tendency to break down those fences which keep out the overflowings of ungodliness. (23)

In the Letter to Tyler, Peters demonstrated that he had come to terms with his Presbyterian heritage and background, not by turning to Arminianism and giving up Calvinism per se, but by adopting episcopacy and sacramentalism as the answer to the New England divines' concept of predestination.

Peters asserted that he had published the Letter, "having heard that several of the Episcopal Clergy in Connecticut, his much-esteemed friends and fellow-labourers in the Lord, had joined in opinion with Mr. Tyler," so that "each of his Brethren might have a copy at the cheapest rate, and a further evidence of his wishes for their spiritual and temporal good" (i). He received several commendations for his defense of orthodoxy, one priest praising him, "Enpassent, you have handled him ✓Tyler✓, pretty well, and in a very brotherly and Christian manner."⁹³

The controversy and intimations of heresy charges against Tyler forced Bishop Seabury to take action. He was quickly satisfied after an investigation that Tyler was not damaging his congregation.⁹⁴ Tyler remained at his post, "a quiet and cheerful sentinel, whom his flock had learned to love and honor for the virtues of a meek, benevolent, and gentle nature."⁹⁵ When Bishop Seabury died it was Tyler who was honored by being the officiating priest at the

burial. The rift that ensued between Peters and Tyler was not healed until 1813, when the two old men again began their friendly correspondence.

On Peters's side of the Atlantic, the pamphlet failed to gain much attention. Vardill explained it by pointing out, "In this age of Frivolity and Dissipation [sic] Novels and romances will be sought after while solid argument is considered as mere lumber." Then in an accurate, and a little testy commentary on the clergy, Vardill described them as

more engrossed in the Present than future and would rather be taught the best method of increasing their tythes and improving their glebes than settling disputed points of Divinity. They are entirely unacquainted with those profound questions with which you are so familiar their reading confined to the Classicks and their Learning to the Latin and Greek grammer.⁹⁶

Peters own evaluation of The Letter to John Tyler is recorded in a letter to his nephew, where he wrote:

Dr. Styles and others in your country say I wrote the History of Connecticut, and those characters in the Magazine, without any kind of proof, and yet will not allow me capable of writing the letter to Mr. Tyler, which is not so well done as the History.⁹⁷

Though A General History of Connecticut brought Peters some notoriety, added some colorful words to the English language, and enhanced early Americana with a bit of tall-tale humour, Peters's literary efforts did little to advance him in the Anglican hierarchy. Nor can his theology explain the failure to attain a bishopric, for it was orthodox and adequate, though not brilliant, creative, or profound.

FOOTNOTES

¹A complete chronology of Peters's published works is found in Appendix E. Samuel Peters, Reasons Why Mr. Byles Left New-London (New-London, 1768); A Sermon, Preached at Litchfield (n.p., 1770). The Byles referred to in the first publication is Mather Byles, Jr. Although the senior Byles was also a loyalist, he remained a Congregational minister for the remainder of his life. He was forced to resign from his church during the period following the evacuation of Boston.

²Samuel Peters, "Genuine History of Gen. Arnold," Political Magazine, I (1780), 690, 746-748.

³For the full account, sup. 47.

⁴SP to Arnold, 3 Feb. 1783, PP, I, 76, and 22 July 1783, PP, I, 77. The account is mentioned in most of the standard biographies of Arnold. Stimson, in a puerile fictional autobiography of little historical value or accuracy, puts into the mouth of Arnold about the New Haven episode: "My now friend, the Reverend Sam Peters (with whom I have often laughed about it)." 22.

⁵Samuel Peters, "History of Jonathan Trumbull," Political Magazine, II (1781), 6-10. The only other articles Peters published in the Magazine were excerpts from GHC.

⁶The case involved the loan of "1800~~x~~ currency, that is, 1350~~x~~ Sterling" to Trumbull by Mr. Livingstone, "of the Manor in York government," which Harvey cosigned and which Livingstone refused to pay. Peters mentioned that "Welles was the only creditor that Jonathan never cheated." (7).

⁷General Jedediah Huntington, writing on 26 Dec. 1775 from Roxbury Camp, noted that he had, "A note and book debt against Mr. Peters of Hebron, what is best to do with them? They are of long standing and it is not likely he will come into this country again soon." Brother Jonathan Peters did send an expensive horse to the general as a "token payment" but otherwise ignored the debt. Mampoteng unpub. mss.

⁸Mann to SP, 6 Dec. 1785, A.O. 13/42.

⁹SP to Johnson, 12 Feb. 1786, SPCHS.

¹⁰Glenn Weaver, Jonathan Trumbull (Hartford, 1956), 27.

¹¹Samuel Peters, A General History of Connecticut from Its First Settlement Under George Fenwick, Esq. to Its latest Period of Amity with Great Britain; Including a Description of the Country, and Many Curious and Interesting Anecdotes, To Which is Added, an Appendix, Wherein New and the True Sources of the Present Rebellion in America are Pointed out; Together with the Particular Part Taken by the People of Connecticut in Its Promotion, by a Gentleman of the Province (London, 1781). Unless noted, all quotations are from this edition. There was a second edition published in London that differed only in the title page, and possibly a third. Two editions were published in America, 1829 and 1877, and are listed with pertinent information in the Chronology of Peters's works, Appendix E.

¹²Walter Blair et al., eds., Literature of the United States (3rd ed., Chicago, 1966), I, 110. See also, Duyckink, Cyclopedia I, 191, and James L. Kingsley, "Retrospective Review of Peters's History of Connecticut," Monthly Anthology and Boston Review, VIII (1810), 272.

¹³V. H. Green, The Hanoverians (London, c.1948), 270-275.

¹⁴Daniel Neal, The History of New-England (London, 1747), and The History of the Puritans (London, 1754); Thomas Hutchinson, The History of the Colony of Massachusetts Bay (London, 1768); Cotton Mather, Magnalia Christi Americana (London, 1702), were available to him.

¹⁵Chalmers had published the first volume of Political Annals of the Present United Colonies (London, 1780); the second was never published. Peters may have seen and used the manuscript of his Introduction to the History of the Revolt of the Colonies (London, 1782).

¹⁶Unfortunately the best summary of the errors in GHC has not been published. Sheldon S. Cohen, "Samuel Peters - Connecticut's Eccentric Historian," a paper delivered before the Connecticut Historical Society, 7 May 1968, in their archives.

¹⁷Charles M. Andrews, The Colonial Period of American History (New Haven, c.1936), II, 68-71, 75-78, 120, 225; Charles Hammond, "Peters's History of Connecticut," Connecticut Valley Historical Society Papers and Proceedings (1881), 196-197.

¹⁸Peters's great-grandson and defender, Samuel Jarvis McCormick, tried unsuccessfully in the American edition of the History (1877) to defend him on this point. (17-23n)

¹⁹Edwin Oviatt, The Beginnings of Yale (New Haven, 1916), 344-347.

²⁰Richard L. Bushman, From Puritan to Yankee (New York, c.1967), 84-86; Clarence L. Ver Steeg, The Formative Years (New York, c.1964), 34.

²¹Uncas, though not of royal blood, became king by declaration of the English. Quinnipiog was murdered by Sunk-squaw at the instigation of the settlers (22-23). Peters's claim that the New Englanders slaughtered 180,000 Indians is exaggerated (112-113).

²²There is also a satirical tale of an attack by caterpillars in 1768 (154-155).

²³Ellen Larned, History of Windham County (Worcester, Massachusetts, 1874-1880), II, 592, pointed out that the tale was "first noticed in a private letter from Dr. Stiles, June, 1754."

²⁴Blair, Literature of the U.S., 111-112.

²⁵A. K. Roche, adaptor and illustrator, both published Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, c.1968. The American edition of GHC (1829), the first to use illustrations, has two charming woodcuts of these episodes. See also, Paul Alcorn, ed., Tales from Parson Peters (Storrs, Conn., 1935).

²⁶Timothy Dwight, Travels in New England and New York, Barbara Miller Solomon, ed. (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1969), II, 59-60. The original edition was published in 1822. See also, John Warner Barber, History and Antiquities of New Haven (New Haven, 1831-1832), 83n, and John Palfrey, History of New England (Boston, 1882), II, 32n.

²⁷Eric Partridge, Dictionary of Slang (New York, 1956), 108; James A. H. Murray, et al., Oxford English Dictionary (Oxford, 1933), II, 1178; William A. Craigie and James R. Hulbert, eds., Dictionary of American English (Chicago, c.1938), I, 356. For a defense of the practice of bundling in New England and an historical account of it in Britain, tracing its origin back to the Celts, see Henry Reed Stiles, Bundling (Albany, 1871). There are several amusing poems from the 18th century denouncing and condoning its practice included. Andrew Burnaby, Travels Through North America (New York, 1904, original edition 1775), also describes the custom, 141-142.

Peters is also quoted as the authority in the Oxford English Dictionary (Oxford, 1933) VIII, for "Pope, a name given in New England to the Whip-poor-will," (1118) and "Pow-wow, a ceremony of American Indians" (1216). Peters uses the variant spelling paw-waw. (GHC, 217)

²⁸In the 1887 edition, GHC, McCormick omitted the last sentence, perhaps in deference to Victorian morals and his grandmother's sensibilities.

²⁹Political Magazine, II (1781), 680. Excerpts from GHC appeared earlier, *ibid.*, 591-656.

³⁰The reasons for anonymity are discussed by the publishers of GHC (1829 ed.), in the preface, 9-15.

³¹SP to Bailey, 15 Feb. 1782, Bartlett, Frontier Missionary, 179-180.

³²Thomas Brown to SP, 25 Oct. 1782, PP, I, 70.

³³Byles, Jr. to SP, 22 Oct. 1782, PP, I, 71.

³⁴Moses Peters to SP, 15 Sep. 1791, PP, V, 34.

³⁵J. R. Forster and M. C. Sprengel, eds., Beiträge zur Erweiterung den Länder-und Völkerkunde (Leipzig, 1781-1790), Zweiter Teil, from 144 is translation of GHC; M. C. Sprengel and J. R. Forster, eds., Neue Beiträge zur Länder-und Völkerkunde (Leipzig, 1790-1794). The French translation is mentioned in Palfrey, 32n., "Malte-Brun (Geographie Universelle, Liv. XIII) expresses the judicious opinion that this /the iron narrows incident/ must be 'grossly exaggerated.'" The work cited is Conrad Malte-Brun, Précis de la Géographie Universelle (Paris, 1810-1829). Four editions, the 1st, 1841, 1854, and the 1855-1860, have been searched and the citation cannot be found. Professor Richard Weiss of Kentucky Wesleyan College gave invaluable assistance in researching the foreign editions of GHC.

³⁶C. D. Ebeling, Erdbeschreibung und Geschichte von America (Hamburg, 1793-1816), II, "Die vereinten Staaten von Nordamerika," (1794), 182, lists sources including GHC, with a short biography of Peters. Ebeling wrote, "His book is extremely party-oriented, full of mistakes, yes, frequently characterized by lies. It can therefore only rarely, and in the absence of other information, be used. It is never a pure source. A good extract, in German, which is in Forster and Sprengel's Beiträge...has earned for him undeserved praise in Germany" (Weiss transl.). See also, 271-366.

³⁷At the time of the Ebeling-Belknap correspondence, Peters also wrote Belknap. After reading his "first vol.

of American geography," Peters offered advice on the location of the St. Croix River, a boundary that had been in dispute in the 1783 negotiation. He congratulated Dr. Belknap on his "candour, ingenuity and industry [which] promise much in favour of your future labours." SP to Belknap, 15 Sep. 1795, Massachusetts Historical Society, Pickering Collections, 20:299. Jeremy Belknap, The History of New Hampshire (Philadelphia, 1784), I. Three volumes were eventually published.

³⁸Ebeling to Belknap, 20 Sep. 1794, 28 June 1795, Massachusetts Historical Society, Belknap Papers, 6 Ser. 411.

³⁹Samuel J. McCormick, ed., The Rev. Samuel Peters' LL. D. (New York, 1877), 8. Brown, "View at Two Hundred Years," 32-33, used this quotation to develop his thesis regarding the prejudice displayed by American historians toward the loyalists.

⁴⁰New Haven Gazette (30 Sep. 1784), 2; (14 Oct. 1784), 2; (28 Oct. 1784), 3. These are full page advertisements for English publications that include GHC.

⁴¹SP to Mann, 12 Oct. 1784, DCT.

⁴²SP to Mann, 4 Apr. 1786, DCT.

⁴³Hubbard to SP, 5 Jan. 1791, PP, V, 1. Peters often railed at Dr. Ezra Stiles. "The little Rabbit has cited Peters History of Connecticut to complete his impudence and prove his want of common civility....how came he to know that an anonymous meant Peters. - did he find it out while he was comparing every text in the Bible with the Hebrew, Greek and Syriac." SP to Parker, 26 June 1787, PPMD. In theological disputation over his Letter to John Tyler (London, 1785), Peters wrote, "I would remind him that Dr. Styles [sic] imputed the History of Connecticut to me, which is deemed here to be the best English extant. The reason of this contrariety of opinions is, Styles thought he could do me hurt by imputing the History to me, and Lockwood thinks he can lessen me by denying me the honor of a good thing, in his opinion. Envy is the rottenness of the bones." SP to Mann, 24 Oct. 1786, DCT.

⁴⁴Leaming to SP, 6 May 1782, Leaming, 126.

⁴⁵James L. Kingsley, "Retrospective Review," 272-279.

⁴⁶Samuel Andrew Peters, A General History of Connecticut...to Which is Added a Supplement, Verifying Many Important Statements Made by the Author (New-Haven, 1829). For a review of the edition with information regarding its publication and publishers see Winsor, Narrative and Critical

History, III, 372n.

⁴⁷The Code of 1650 (Hartford, 1822). Andrus, the publisher, added, Some Extracts from the Laws...of New Haven Colony, Commonly Called the Blue Laws.

⁴⁸Mitford M. Mathews, ed., Dictionary of Americanisms (Chicago, c.1951), 145, stated that "the term was first used by the Rev. Samuel A. Peters." Isaac Taylor, Words and Places (London, 1888), 11, specifically quotes from Peters's listing but attributes them otherwise, "If the 'Blue Laws' of the neighboring town of Newhaven, given by Hutchinson..." /italics furnished/. See also Maximillian Schele DeVere, Americanisms (New York, 1872), 272-273.

⁴⁹William Croffut and John M. Morris, Military and Civil History of Connecticut (New York, 1869), 24. The original quotation, which is not acknowledged by the authors, is in Horace Bushnell, Speech for Connecticut (Hartford, 1851), 13-14, which reads, "the tory renegade, Peters, who, while better men were fighting the battles of their country, was skulking in London, and getting his bread there, by the lies he could produce against Connecticut.... The two greatest dishonors that ever befel Connecticut, are the giving birth to Benedict Arnold and the Reverend Samuel Peters - unless it be a third that she has given birth to so many who, denouncing one, are yet ready to believe and follow the other."

⁵⁰George P. Fisher, Colonial Era (New York, 1910), 130.

⁵¹Dwight Loomis and J. G. Calhoun, eds., Judicial and Civil History of Connecticut (Boston, 1895), 70.

⁵²William L. Kingsley, "The Blue Law Forgeries of Rev. Samuel Peters," Methodist Quarterly Review, LX (1878), 82, 84. See also, Leonard Bacon, Thirteen Historical Discourses (New Haven, 1839), 34. He wrote, "There are those, still more unfortunate, who form their opinion of the character of the Puritans from what they read in such works as that most unscrupulous and malicious of lying narratives, Peters' History of Connecticut. With persons whose historical knowledge is of this description, it would be a waste of time to argue."

⁵³Walter F. Prince, "An Examination of Peters's 'Blue Laws,'" Annual Report of the American Historical Association for 1898 (1899), 97-138. For further concurrence in Prince's viewpoint see, Forrest Morgan, et al., eds., Connecticut as a Colony and as a State (Hartford, 1904), I, 397-421.

⁵⁴Prince's evaluation agrees with the opinions of two other writers, the editor of The Churchman, in McCormick,

"Dr. Samuel Peters," The Churchman, XXXV (1877), 590-591, and Rollin G. Osterweis, Three Centuries of New Haven (New Haven, 1953), 44.

⁵⁵Italics supplied. Samuel Middlebrook, "Samuel Peters, a Yankee Munchausen," New England Quarterly, XX (1947), 81.

⁵⁶Stanley Williams, Literature of Connecticut (New Haven, 1936). Gideon Hollister, History of Connecticut (Hartford, 1855), a two volume work, also failed to mention Peters or GHC.

⁵⁷A Memorial Volume (Hartford, 1893), poem by Theron Brown, "Epic of Windham," 100.

⁵⁸Vernon Parrington, Main Currents in American Thought (New York, 1927), I, 264-268.

⁵⁹Allen Heimert, Religion and the American Mind (Cambridge, Mass., 1966), 339, 347-348, 357-397.

⁶⁰Bruce E. Steiner, "New England Anglicanism," William and Mary Quarterly, XXVII (1970), 135.

⁶¹The History of Hugh Peters (New York, 1807), and the unpublished "History of Hebron," mss. CHS, 1822, are discussed below.

⁶²Joseph Peters to SP, 27 Aug. 1784, PP, II, 16. Several earlier letters had also given him information for the history. See also, 3 May 1785, PP, II, 37, when later Joseph suggested that "Colonel John...is able to give more assistance to the History, by far than I am."

⁶³Bailey to SP, 6 May 1784, PP, II, 12. Bailey asked him to conceal his name and said that he had been "advised to publish it by subscription but as I knew you were engaged in forming an History of Nova Scotia, I could not consent without being guilty of unpardonable business." See also Bailey to Bass, 28 July 1784, Acadiensie 2/46, when he wrote the future Bishop of Massachusetts that Peters "has written and published a queer and extraordinary History of Connecticut and is now engaged with a certain Member of Parliament in completing a description of Nova Scotia and they have employed your humble servant to collect materials."

⁶⁴The Present State of Nova Scotia (Edinburgh, 1786).

⁶⁵Samuel Peters, Tyrannicide Proved Lawful....By Simeon Baxter (London, 1782). In an otherwise admirable work, Price of Loyalty (New York, c.1973), the editor, Catherine S. Crary, wrongly attributes the pamphlet to Baxter. Not only is the style that of Peters, the work has been accepted

as his since the "new edition" printed by Halkett and Laing the same year as that of S. Bladon, cited him as the author. As shown above (109-110) Baxter would seem incapable of authorship. Although pamphlets under the pseudonym "Viator" are polemic in nature, they are part of Peters's contention for a Canadian Bishopric and are discussed below.

⁶⁶Cossit to SP, 18 Aug. 1787, PP, III, 39.

⁶⁷Norman Sykes, Church and State in England in the XVIIIth Century (Cambridge, 1934), 19, 21.

⁶⁸Ibid., 419. Sykes also pointed out, "Like the epoch of which it was born, it was prosaic and calculating, conceived as a prudent investment promising assured blessings both temporal and celestial."

⁶⁹A Sermon Preached at Charlotte Chapel (London, 1788); The Will of Man Regulated (London, 1788).

⁷⁰Letter to the Rev. John Tyler (London, 1785).

⁷¹The theological aspects of the correspondence, as well as other matters, are discussed by Sheldon S. Cohen in "The Correspondence of Samuel Peters and Benjamin Trumbull," Connecticut Historical Society Bulletin, 32 (1967), 83-93.

⁷²SP to Benjamin Trumbull, 25 May 1793, SPCHS.

⁷³Sermon Preached at Charlotte Chapel, 7.

⁷⁴The reference to the review as given in Mampoteng, Unpublished manuscript and notes is "London Monthly Review v. 78." There is no Volume 78 and there is no reference to the Sermon in Volume 5, page 78 of that magazine. I have been unable to locate the original source.

⁷⁵Thomas and John Moffatt, with William Seibert, gave a joint bond of £984.13.4 to John Erving. It was supposed that Thomas Moffatt paid £300 on the bond in January 1779, while the executor of John Moffatt's estate claimed he had paid £495.8.11 in two payments to the Erving estate. The legatee of John Moffatt, a Mrs. Wait, had offered to pay Erving the original sum, but he had refused in hope of breaking John Moffatt's will. E. Alfred Jones, Loyalists of Massachusetts, 131-135.

⁷⁶The King's Bench ruled that Peters was not liable for the debt because "the State of Massachusetts confiscated his Estate and sold it and put its produce into its Treasury for the purpose of paying Dr. Moffatt's debts to any Subjects of the United States....secondly, because John Irving

dec'd and three out of his five Executors were subjects of the States." SP to Parker, 11 Apr. 1793, DCT. See also, letters dated 12 Apr. and 21 July 1793, DCT.

⁷⁷Peters used a very free translation in the explanation. The King James version of the two preceding verses reads, "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labour: yet what I shall choose I wot not." (Phil. 1:21-22)

⁷⁸Gray had written Peters earlier denouncing the preacher, Dr. Barry, on a similar occasion for his Universalism. Gray to SP, 7 Nov. 1788, PP, III, 16.

⁷⁹Gray to SP, 5 Dec. 1788, PP, III, 126. He mentions having "a dish of tea" with him earlier.

⁸⁰SP to Trumbull, 20 May 1781, SPCHS.

⁸¹William Clark to SP, 7 Dec. 1789, PP, IV, 61.

⁸²Vardill to SP, 18 July 1785, PP, II, 47.

⁸³Vardill to SP, 31 Mar. 1786, PP, II, 75.

⁸⁴SP to Mann, 8 May 1786, DCT.

⁸⁵This material is in Mampoteng's unpublished manuscript, in which he quotes material from a letter dated 21 Dec. 1933 from Dr. P. P. Spinelli of the Royal Italian Consulate from information supplied by the Prefect of Arezzo. The cultural association was the Accademia Etrusca of Cortona, founded in 1727 and still in existence.

⁸⁶William Walter to SP, 4 Aug. 1786, PP, II, 103. He wrote, "permit me to congratulate you, only reminding you of an expression of your own, 'that my Doctorate being foreign is considered as null.'" They were later to become bitter enemies over Peters's attempt to obtain the bishopric of Canada. See also, Byles to SP, 2 Feb. 1787, PP, III, 7.

⁸⁷Hubbard to SP, 21 Dec. 1786, PP, II, 128. See also 8 June 1789, PP, IV, 20 wherein Hubbard notes Trumbull's efforts. He apologizes for having "personally mislaid the information previously given," and asks "if you would once more give me directions how you would have it inserted, whether Dr. of Law or Divinity, the university that conferred it."

⁸⁸Trumbull to SP, 29 Dec. 1790, SPCHS.

⁸⁹SP to Trumbull, 2 May 1791, SPCHS.

⁹⁰A Letter to the Rev. John Tyler (London, 1785).

⁹¹John H. Blunt, ed., Dictionary of Sects, Heresies, Ecclesiastical Parties and Schools of Religious Thought (London, 1903), "Arminians," 51-52; "Origenists," 396-398; "Universalists," 609-610; Vergilius Ferm, ed., Encyclopedia of Religion (New York, c.1945), "Universalism," 805-806; "Arminian Theology," 38-39.

⁹²Tyler to SP, 2 Apr. 1785, PP, II, 35.

⁹³Doty to SP, 3 Oct. 1786, PP, II, 110. See also, Parker to SP, 19 May 1787, PP, III, 24; Dibblee to SP, 16 Nov. 1787, PP, III, 61; Hubbard to SP, 5 Jan. 1791, PP, V, 1. Leaming, somewhat suspect himself, wrote, "you are mistaken concerning the Clergy; that Several of them had embraced Tylers principles. How came you by that Intelligence? I am sorry you gave such a Character of us to the world. Who told you that we were thus unstable in our Principles? Was it Tyler? he is a liar from the beginning." Leaming to SP, 7 July 1786, CHPEC, I (1932) 132.

⁹⁴Beardsley, History of the Episcopal Church, II, 188.

⁹⁵CHPEC, I (1932), 133n.

⁹⁶Vardill to SP, 21 Jan. 1786, PP, II, 69.

⁹⁷SP to Mann, 13 Aug. 1787, DCT.

CHAPTER VI

THE SEARCH FOR A BISHOPRIC

A Bishop for North America

"Ever a bridesmaid never a bride." At least three times in the Reverend Samuel Peters's life, the shepherd's crook came almost into his hand and the mitre onto his head. Three times the bishop's throne seemed so near that it was announced to his friends and published in the press. Twice in Canada and once in the Diocese of Vermont, the title of Right Reverend Father in God came within the reach of the former S. P. G. missionary of St. Peters, Hebron, Connecticut.¹ Why did he fail to attain preferment? Was the failure due to Peters's being a loyalist, or a small-town backwoodsman from the provinces? Was he too honest, cantankerous, opinionated, and indiscreet, too obviously ambitious? Or was it because he was just not capable? Samuel Seabury, first Bishop of Connecticut, was as strong a loyalist; Charles Inglis (1734-1816) first Bishop of Nova Scotia, although born in Ireland, was considered a colonial; Thomas Chandler, first choice for Nova Scotia (who declined the office because of a disfiguring facial cancer), was a Connecticut Yankee. Peters was ambitious and indiscreet,

but these qualities characterized a period of personal feuds marked by bitter invective in press and pamphlet. Every ambitious man fought hard to make his way at court, in the market place, at Lambeth Palace. Ultimately Peters failed because he could not command powerful influence. He was caught by a shortage of high offices necessary for the political as well as religious patronage in the Hanovarian court. In the final analysis Peters was a "born loser."

The Reverend Samuel Peters knew the value and the need for a bishop in North America. As noted above (p. 26), he was involved before the Revolution in the controversy over obtaining a resident New England bishop. A malicious news item, which appeared in Philadelphia shortly after his flight to England in 1774, indicated his continuing interest:

A most furious quarrel happened last Thursday night, at the club in St. Paul's Churchyard, between two of the fugitive clergymen from North America' the cause it is said, was about who should be the Bishop in that country, the idea of a suffragan being revived. Cooper was too much for Peters, and would, if Tucker and Vardil had not interposed, not only have won the mitre, but have rendered his competitor totally unfit for any episcopal position. Alas, alas, these men in black are not all of them under the operation of Grace!²

Undoubtedly, the London correspondent intended his vindictive gossip for local consumption and for further reducing any influence the prominent Anglican refugees had in America. If any factual basis for the malicious report existed, no lasting results from the battle ensued. A few years later the principal antagonists were good friends,

cooperating to obtain Seabury's consecration in Scotland by the Jacobite or nonjuring bishops.³

The Reverend Samuel Seabury was elected secretly by ten Connecticut priests as their first bishop early in March, 1783. Their first choice, Jeremiah Leaming, had refused the election due to physical disabilities from imprisonment during the Revolution. Later he rued the decision, writing to Peters:

Had I known that Dr. S. had so many personal enemies I should not have given the answer I did. This is under the Rose; and you force me to say that which I wish not to be repeated.⁴

Accepting his election, Seabury sailed for England to seek consecration from the Archbishop of Canterbury and the English Church. He arrived in London, 7 July 1783, to meet with failure. Due to opposition from a few Connecticut patriots⁵ and the unwillingness of the English government to interfere in the internal affairs of the United States, Seabury was forced to turn to Scotland for consecration.⁶

When Seabury arrived in London he sought Peters's influential support for his cause, a support willingly given. Peters wrote him "an exact account of the Episcopal Church of Connecticut in 1774 - when I left the Province."⁷ Furthermore, Peters aided Seabury and Cooper in the successful plan for Scottish consecration by Kilgour, Petrie, and Skinner, on 14 November 1784.⁸

Before returning to London, Bishop Seabury wrote Peters, as he had promised "as soon as my business, at Aberdeen, was

completed," asking him to "carefully measure up all that is said or done, that I may (have) the pleasure of your narrative and observations when I have the happiness of seeing you."⁹

Peters's support and approval turned to bitterness after his own failure to secure the Nova Scotia bishopric, and after the Venerable Society ceased its support of the loyalist clergy remaining in London. In May 1786, Peters wrote that "Bishop Seabury I hope will create new Hearts in you all since blindness has happened to Israel,"¹⁰ but two years later he wrote of the bishop, "he is great - fat and lazy - and I care as little about him as he does about me."¹¹ What caused this change? Peters blamed Dr. Seabury, for

He suffered as a Loyalist and as a Member of the Church of England during the Rebellion, and then like Queen Ann turned his back to the Church and upon the King - which proves the conduct of that gentleman was not founded in Conscience but Interest and grandeur - Duche, Inglis, Combes, Arnold and Galloway have acted on like Principles only turning the Tables - they set the House on fire and ran away by the Light of it - not because they were conscience smitten, but to gain by a false conversion.¹²

In blaming the stopping of support for the clergy on the bishop, Peters wrote:

therefore when Dr. Seabury perceived he must fail in South Britain, fled to the North, the alarm was given to the Georgians by the Jacobites and the Society protected itself by dismissing all their Missionaries in the States and such as were not in service in some British Colony. I told Seabury what would be the consequence of his voige [*sic*] to Scotland which he pretended not to believe, acting like Samson after he had lost his eyes 'if I die let the Philistines die with me'.

Peters gave Seabury some credit:

Seabury however has done right in acting wrong, as our Bishops, Ministers, and Dissenters never designed to afford to America a Bishop, an officer absolutely necessary in England....Bishop Seabury's Charge to the Clergy is excellent, and his stroke concerning confirmation is mortal to our State Bishops and is the invincible Proof of the necessity of a Bishop in Nova Scotia.¹³

While the New England Clergy welcomed Seabury on his return, a few politicians showed alarm. Rufus King wrote to Elbridge Gerry that he was

Very much dissatisfied with the appointment of this bishop. I never wished to see the lawn sleeves in America. This Bishop may be the channel of improper information to his spiritual head the King of England - I never liked the heirarchy of the Church - an equality in the teacher of Religion, and a dependence on the people are Republican sentiments, but if the clergy combine they will have their influence on the government.¹⁴

We may judge the popular reaction of non-Anglicans by an extract of a letter from Boston appearing in the New York Packet:

I dont recollect anything else that is new to tell you - O yes Miss! We have a Bishop in town named Seabury - he dresses in a black shirt with the fore-flap hanging out, that's one suit; at other times he appears in a black satin gown, white satin sleeves, white belly-band with a scarlet knapsack at his back, and something resembling a pyramid on his head - Fine times now - We can have our sins pardoned without going to Rome - if you have any to repent of, let me know, for I guess you may obtain absolution by proxy. Bishop Seabury has lately invested seventy Episcopalian teachers with orders, at Christ Church in Boston.¹⁵

Among Episcopalians to the South, the reaction was mixed; most supported Seabury, but some, like the Reverend

Samuel Provoost of New York, were determined in their opposition. Not only questioning the "validity of the Non-Juring consecrations in general and stronger still against Dr. Cebra's in particular," Provoost railed against the new bishop's loyalism in the war.¹⁶ Provoost's consecration, with that of William White (1748-1836) for Pennsylvania and James Madison (1749-1812) for Virginia under the special act of Parliament, was opposed most vehemently by Peters, who wrote the Secretary of the S. P. G.:

Should the Archbishops consecrate those two rebellious Clergymen,¹⁷ it may teach other Clergymen in British Colonies the only road to episcopal Dignity, and cause the world to believe, that policy is of greater Moment in the Light of English Bishops than Episcopacy and Christianity in British Colonies are and that to be noticed at Lambeth and rewarded in England, it is not necessary to be loyal and faithful to the Church and King; but to be rebellious, factious, seditious, heretical and cruel.¹⁸

The Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America then faced the problem of uniting New England's non-juring bishop and the newly created Hanoverian bishops. Not only were there two lines of consecration; not only did the Southerners distrust Seabury's loyalism and "high-church" manners; but also the Connecticut churchmen felt that by allowing lay participation in Church government and by dropping the Athanasian Creed from the new American Prayer Book, the Church had allowed Presbyterianism to creep in. For a time it appeared that Peters's prophecy might come true. He wrote,

We have sent you two bishops, White and Provoost, on the same principle that God gave Saul to be King over a gainsaying people, to divide and ruin your church with different systems in an Episcopal line, as are in the States - half presbyterian and half Episcopal, half nothing and half infidels.¹⁹

Only the diplomacy and tact of the gentle Bishop of Pennsylvania, the "Father of the Episcopal Church," brought the divided dioceses together at the General Convention of 1789 to vote "that the Consecration of the Right Rev. Dr. Seabury to the Episcopal office is valid," and to seat the Bishop and two Connecticut priests as members of the Convention.²⁰ Peters's actions and writings at this time were to bear bitter fruit when he sought consecration in America as Bishop of Vermont.

The Bishopric of Nova Scotia

By the end of the Revolution the need for a bishopric in British North America was apparent to the government as well as the church. Both saw it as a necessity if those loyalists now dominant in Canada were to remain part of the British Empire. Nova Scotia, the center for loyalist immigration, found acceptance as the logical location and Halifax as the see city. The issue over the selection of a bishop was soon joined. As noted above, several prominent American clergymen were considered as candidates. The field soon narrowed to Samuel Peters and Charles Inglis, who had served as Rector of Trinity Church, New York, until his flight to Long Island and then to England.²¹

As we have noted, the basic theological position of the Anglican church in the late eighteenth century was strongly Calvinistic, rational, and practical:

Like the epoch of which it was born, it was prosaic and calculating, conceived as a prudent investment promising assured blessings both temporal and celestial.²²

In its policy the Church of England was an arm of the state, i.e., it served the faction in power. At the time of the contest for the Nova Scotia episcopate, Whigs controlled the government. The hierarchy, from Archbishop to Dean and Prebendary, was chosen from those who would support Whig policy and Whig candidates for Parliament, from those who would work in parish and diocese to influence their flock to support the Whig faction in power. In other words,

the Bench of Bishops was so attached to the principles of politics that, whether consciously or not, their purpose was shaped by the secondary objects of the Protestant Succession and the Church Establishment rather than to 'know Christ and to be known of Him.'²³

Regarding the particular problems facing Peters, Dr. Samuel Johnson, in his discourse on the state of the nation, Good Friday, 1775, declared, "No man can now be made a bishop for his learning and piety. His only chance for promotion is his being connected with somebody who has parliamentary interest."²⁴ Two years earlier in making almost the same statement, he added, "to be a bishop, a man must be learned in a learned age, factious in a factious age, but always of eminence."²⁵

Without doubt, the Reverend Samuel Peters, in seeking

the episcopate, was, "factious in a factious age." While in America, he and Inglis were friends. When Inglis, forced to flee America, arrived in London, he received a warm letter of welcome from Peters. After acknowledging the receipt of a "polite and charming letter" from Inglis, Peters discussed the American war and the problems he had faced on arrival in England four years earlier. He closed the friendly letter by wishing "Health to you and your family" and prayed that "happiness will soon follow."²⁶ The ensuing struggle for preferment resulted in a coldness and enmity between them that lasted the rest of their lives. In 1784 a bitter pamphlet war broke out between the two, ostensibly over the actions of the Governor of Nova Scotia, John Parr (1725-1791). Peters, under the pseudonym of J. Viator, while denouncing Parr, gratuitously charged Inglis with being the son of a tailor and a "redemptionist" to pay his passage to America. He also accused the Trinity Church rector of overcharging the widow of Daniel Chamier, Esqr., Commissary General of the British troops in 1779, for the burial service at Trinity.²⁷ Replying, Inglis defended himself and charged Peters with lying and malice.²⁸ Samuel Peters's Answer to Dr. Inglis's Defense closed the pamphlet exchange, but he continued to attack Inglis in many letters to friends.²⁹ A letter from one of those friends reflected the pamphlets's bitterness:

I cannot but admire the dexterity with which you have knocked down all your Rivals for the Mitre and I contemplate you standing like Saul in the

midst of his Thousand slain, or like David with his Ten Thousand.³⁰

Peters himself thought that "Dr Inglis will most likely after a tremendous whipping here by John Viator, retire among the wild Irish from whence he came." With Inglis out of his way,

The Field is open - to candidates of all complexion - and I have many strong friends in this country because I have not been dependent on them in money matters - and hope not to be - as that always tends toward Souring the mind of a true born Briton.³¹

Hoping to gain the support of Archbishop John Moore (1729-1805) through the Secretary of the S. P. G., Peters in a letter wrote:

I have no quarrel or personnal dislike to Charles Inglis D.D. of Oxford and late Rector of Newyork, but his character will not bear the light of America - If Sir Guy Carleton and William Smith, Esqr - the talked of Chief Justice for Canada in place of a Churchman and a loyal subject wish Dr. Inglis to be a Bishop, I beg they may appoint him Bishop of the United States, or in Ireland, where his Reverend Ancistors /sic/ are said to have died - and perhaps lived.

The Archbishop of Canterbury seems to have some regard to the Church of England in his Majesty's colonies, as well as to Christianity in foreign states and Kingdoms but he will prove himself the greatest enemy to the church in his majesty's Colonies by sending Dr. Inglis to be their Bishop....the loyal professors of the Church of England in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Canada will sooner turn Arians, or heathen than be under the spiritual direction of Dr. Charles Inglis, either as deacon Priest or Bishop.....I hope such a man will never be again in America as Priest, curate, rector, or Bishop - and should Dr. Inglis be appointed Bishop of Nova Scotia, he will do as much good as John Temple the British Consul in America, or Wm Smith Chief Justice of Quebec, a confirmed enemy to Episcopacy.³²

Depending not alone on his "strong friends" in England, Peters wrote directly to the clergy in Nova Scotia and asked them and their vestries to endorse him for the position. At the same time he wrote his cousin, Joseph Peters, at Halifax, to follow up in case the letters did not get through or the clergy were slow and hesitant in their responses.³³ Most of the clergy responded affirmatively, although it would cause problems later with Inglis.³⁴ Others hesitated "for fear a quite differ [sic] person should be appointed."³⁵ Some, completely confused by the printed form Joseph Peters had sent them as a sample, merely filled out the form or wrote him asking for more information.³⁶ The delay mattered little. Slowness of communication between the continents brought this effort to nought.³⁷ The influence of the colonials on the patronage system at this time was minimal.³⁸ Before the petitions were returned to England, the appointment had been made. Although Inglis was not consecrated until 12 August 1787, Archbishop Moore informed him in an interview on the 7th of June that he was to have the bishop's chair.³⁹

On hearing the news of Inglis's successful rise, Peters responded as angrily and vindictively as we might expect. His correspondence with Mann indicated that Peters did not get the final news until late August or early September.⁴⁰ To Parker he ranted:

You hinted that some uneasiness would take place unless St. Peter was Bishop of N. Scotia - that uneasiness, is now to commence, for Charles Inglis

D.D. the wise the good and learned is appointed Bishop of Nova Scotia and consecrated to that useless office except to himself....It is singular that an Irish Right boy should be deemed it to be Bp over Nova Scotia, when there is an act of Parliament in full force ever since 1641 - that no Irish man shall be a Bishop in Irelandthis transportation of an Irish Taylor promises more felicity than his transportation from Belfast to Pensilvania, as His Servitude will be less fatiguing and he is not to be his own Redemptioner.⁴¹

He wrote Jacob Bailey, criticizing him for their dalliance in returning the petitions, pointing out that if Peters had been consecrated, "your Church and Rights would have been saved from destruction and insults." He warned him that,

I know who is on my side - I esteem them and will seek their good always. - You must permit me to caution you not to expose to any person my private hints in my Letters - for everything that I write over to you, if known to your overseer /Inglis/ and his Spies will come back to me via Lambeth.⁴²

He was still spewing the same spiteful venom five years later. In a letter which presumed to give a geography lesson on the relationship between Nova Scotia and Australia to John McNamera, a schoolteacher protege of Bailey, he wrote:

I have arisen above /Governor John/ par, who is going fast down to the regions of the dead, with endless curses on hi's head by help of Priestly arts and painful labours....but your maxim of doubt, whether a cap, mitre, or band, would not fall perpendicular down from Nova Scotia to Botany Bay should it tumble off the head of him that wears provided no winds should seize the ornamental feathers and drive them to the /Lord/ North is not so well founded - since the head that commonly wears these Baubles is generally so fat, fleshey, and stupid, that the cap, etc. are too greasy, heavy and dirty for any wind to touch or cleave unto - for the same reason as squaunks Piss repels the air before it and borrows only its perpendicular from Annapolis and chuck plum on the fat head of Barrington, now high constable

of Botany Bay, and who was lately expelled from Newgate for various crimes sufficient to recommend him to a mitre in America....you had lost the Light of Righteousness is true under the Mitre of Redemption first at Philadelphia, and then at N. Scotia, accompanied with satellites from N. England and the backsides of Hibernia.⁴³

For some time after Bishop Inglis's arrival in the Province, Peters meddled in Nova Scotian ecclesiastical affairs without success. By 1790, when the bishop held his first clergy conference, Inglis wrote Archbishop Moore:

the attendance of so many was the more remarkable, as endeavors had been used to obstruct it, particularly by the Rev. Mr. Peters....I pity and forgive the unhappy tempered man, whom I never injured and who cannot injure me in this place.⁴⁴

Another Bishop for Canada

The year after his defeat for Nova Scotia, Peters pushed hard for the creation of another bishopric for New Brunswick. Writing to George Chalmers, chief clerk of the committee of the Privy Council for trade, Peters first proposed the building of a canal from the St. Lawrence to Lake Champlain, not only to defend Canada and secure Vermont commerce, but also to entice Vermonters into rejoining the British empire. To further this project he suggested that

a Bishop according to the Church of England ought to be appointed to reside at Fort St. John - who might from that center visit and govern the wholeThe Loyalists settled at Catteraqui, and on the Lakes and most of the Vermonters are and were Episcopalians of the Church of England....They are waiting to see what will be done for them by the English Bishops and government, having rejected all connections with Jacobite Bishops or those under Congress....the people in Canada view themselves of more consequence and benefit to

Great Britain than Nova Scotia is, and yet Nova Scotia has a Bp and Protestant Canada none.⁴⁵

He included a map showing the country and a proposed route for the canal. Again his hopes came to naught. New Brunswick was separated from Nova Scotia politically but not until the middle of the nineteenth century was there to be an Anglican bishop for the province.

The British government, well aware of the problems mentioned by Peters, decided on Upper Canada as the base for operations, and in 1791 the crown appointed Colonel John Graves Simcoe Lieutenant Governor of Upper Canada. He sailed in September of that year with the understanding that a bishop for the province would soon follow. In making plans for personnel, Simcoe recommended "Mr. Peters late of Connecticut,"⁴⁶ and thought the appointment so important that when finances became a problem he agreed to "readily and cheerfully give up five hundred Pounds annuallly" of his own salary.⁴⁷ The announcement in American papers as early as 2 February, that, "The Reverend Dr. Peters, formerly of Hebron in Connecticut, is expected shortly to take charge of the Province of Quebec, as Bishop,"⁴⁸ elicited many notes of congratulations from American and Canadian friends.⁴⁹ Another factor in his assurance of appointment to the bishopric was the appointment by Simcoe of Peters's son-in-law, William Jarvis, as Secretary General of Upper Canada, Clerk of the Council and Registrar. Premature leaking of this news led to opposition from some Canadian clergy and from

Inglis, who wrote Archbishop Moore:

Your Grace is so well acquainted with Peters, that you are sufficiently on your guard - he would ruin the Church of Canada were he sent there as a bishop, or indeed in any station, where respectability of character was necessary.⁵⁰

Peters's extravagances in opposing Inglis thus gave his enemies an effective weapon, and Moore, while correct, acted coolly now as well as later over the bishopric of Vermont. In addition, while Peters had such important patronage and support as that of the Marquis of Buckingham and the two Lieutenant Governors of the Maritimes, J. J. W. Des Barres (1722-1804) and Edmund Fanning, he was opposed by Lord Dorchester, who had his own candidate, the Reverend Mr.

Toosey.⁵¹ As late as August 1792, Simcoe was still trying to secure the appointment for Peters, as Grenville had promised.⁵² In the information Peters sent Buckingham to use in furthering his candidacy, he wrote:

My Lord, permit me to add, that it appears to me, that his Majesty's Ministers have been misinformed about this important Business, the object of Col. Simcoe's wishes, by some persons aiming the defeat of Col. Simcoe and the failure of the Settlement of upper Canada....Lord Grenville seems to have forgot his promise to Col. Simcoe when conversing on my appointment to the Episcopal See of Canada two years ago.

After reminding the Marquis about Mr. Pitt's agreement not to take Simcoe's £500, "in order to have Mr. Peters appointed Bishop, without whom the Colony will not be Settled,"

Peters vowed

Lord Grenville answered, 'no, no, Col. Simcoe we will not accept your generous offer, but will accommodate your wish and allow the Bishop £1000 per

Annum' - Thus Col. Simcoe left England, and my appointment was considered as final from that day, and has been so reported in England and America, - though God be praised, not by me, till now.⁵³

Buckingham seems to have done everything within his power to get the appointment. He wrote Peters:

I returned to town two days ago and did not see Mr. Pitt til this morning. I urged to him the very strong matter in which Col. Simcoe had repeatedly expressed his wishes (amongst the important objects which he had in view at the time of his embarkation for Canada) for your appointment to the Episcopal See of that Province, but I was sorry to find that this arrangement is not likely to take place, and that another gentleman is to be immediately nominated to that situation.⁵⁴

The delicate position of the Marquis became even more difficult as Peters continued to importune him.⁵⁵ Buckingham finally wrote that he had done all he could and,

you must be sensible that I am utterly incompetent to enter into the nature of your claims upon his Majestys' servants, or of your objects, further as they were connected with Col. Simcoe, whose wishes command my warmest exertions....I do not state this with a view to dissuade you from recommending your claims and opinions in whatever mode you think most advantageous, but simply to answer the questions which you proposed to me.⁵⁶

While Peters failed to get the bishopric, he did delay the appointment of anyone else until, finally, in 1794, the Reverend Jacob Mountain (1749-1825) was consecrated Bishop of Upper Canada. Samuel Peters, rightly, blamed his loss on several factors: the patronage over livings, the influence of Presbyterianism through William Smith and Lord Dorchester, and the latter's jealousy of Simcoe's power. Referring to the rumor, wide-spread and believed in England,

that the Earl of Oxford enjoyed the favors of his butler's wife,⁵⁷ Peters wrote,

Dr. Mountain is appointed Bishop of lower Canada - because his father was in his lifetime butler to the Earl of Oxford - who had given the butler's son £800 per Ann' in our church, and Mr. Pitt wanted those two livings to pay for voters - 2dly Lord Dorchester said, it was a shame to send a Bishop to upper-Canada while lower Canada had no Bishop....this maneuver was played off to disgust Govr. Simcoe, and to induce him to give up the government, for Sir Jn Johnson or Col. Dundas who went out a Commissioner on the Claims of the loyal Americans.⁵⁸

The ambitious cleric's mild resignation over the loss of the Canadian See resulted from intimations that he would be elected Bishop of Vermont. During the period while Peters awaited his consecration as Bishop for Canada, attempts were made to have him also named Bishop for Vermont. Levi Allen, in England to get a treaty of alliance recognizing the independence of Vermont (albeit a client British state), wrote his brother, urging Ira to

spare no pains in Preparing the minds of the members of the Genl. Assembly to vote for said Peters to be Bishop of Vermont, as he is a Gentleman that will suit the people amazingly, and is highly deserving of the Honor....touch the Church clergy on the subject of the Bishop, in particular Chittenden /the governor's brother/, Nichols and Garlick.⁵⁹

Simcoe, morbidly fearful of American military intervention in the northwest, worked closely with Allen to convince the Imperial government to seize this unique opportunity to create a buffer zone between Canada and the rapid westward movement of the American. He declared that "Vermont, inhabited by a 'brave, virtuous and English race of people,' could

become 'another Switzerland' between Canada and the United States," adding, "without Vermont, Canada is untenable."⁶⁰ Peters furnished many of Simcoe's arguments.⁶¹ Although Vermont independence did not materialize, the possibility of the Vermont bishopric, dangled before him by Allen, assuaged his loss of the Canadian bishopric. As he wrote Hannah's brother-in-law,

I shall have but one grief of mind, and that will be for consenting to have my daughter and family move from England to upper-Canada....they are near the setting Sun, while I reside near its rising.... the vanities and tumults surrounding me, have weaned my mind from all Sublunary things except my Children and my friends.⁶²

Hannah, her husband, and their three children, sailed from England in April, 1792.⁶³ After a rough passage in which their son, Samuel, "lost his hair and front tooth in the voyage of danger - full of storms, Ice and contrary winds, the lofty waves - which almost made them shipwrecked,"⁶⁴ the Jarvis family faced the tragedy of his death less than six months after arrival in Halifax. The suddenness of Sam's death called for a postmortem by his mother,

as she says to satisfy me and be a guard for my other babes. His complaint was found to be in the wind-pipe and no where else, where neither art or medicine could avail. The doctor called it a thick muscilage or thick skin which surrounded the inside of the windpipe.⁶⁵

The grief-stricken Peters wrote the boy's uncle, that

my cherub Samuel Peters Jarvis was taken ill and died the 19th - to live with the Saraphims - because he was innocent he died in the Lord.... Happy Cherub early born on wings of Saraphims from earth to god; while his dust in a lonely grave is embalmed with the Tears of his parents

....My charming Boy was ripe for heaven before me,
and I rejoice in his glory.⁶⁶

Soon after the tragedy, the family's mourning was assuaged somewhat by the birth of another son whom they named Samuel for his grandfather.⁶⁷

While Jarvis moved in the highest circles of Canadian provincial society and was a member of the "family compact" that ruled for many years, he never advanced beyond First Secretary, "due to his own regrettable temperament and inefficiency."⁶⁸ Surviving her husband's death in 1817, Hannah Peters Jarvis resided in Queenstown with her daughter, Mrs. Alexander Hamilton, until her own death in 1845.⁶⁹

The Bishopric of Vermont

The Reverend Samuel Peters's final try for the mitre and shepherd's crook began with the disadvantages of being the Vermont churchmen's second choice and of being elected under confused circumstances. Furthermore, ecclesiastical policy was entwined inextricably with land speculation and the international situation among Vermont, Canada, Great Britain, and the United States. The attempt, initiated inauspiciously, concluded in failure and tragedy for Peters as he frantically and ludicrously scrambled to be consecrated.

For a considerable time Peters had been involved in the New Hampshire Grants, as missionary and as land speculator. His claimed losses before the Loyalist Commission had included 60,000 acres in Vermont, confiscated at the time of

the Revolution.⁷⁰ In addition, many former parishioners, relatives, and loyalist friends had settled the state, so that when the Diocese of Vermont was organized in September, 1790 at Arlington, it was to be expected that Peters was a principal candidate for the bishopric.⁷¹

A primary reason for forming the Diocese was to gain control of the Glebe lands, the part of each of the land grants made by Governor Benning Wentworth (1696-1770), reserved for the support of a minister and a bishop. George III had granted the land rights to the S. P. G. in 1764-1766,⁷² and as early as 1785, the Reverend Samuel Parker of Boston had written the Society of their value and had urged them to insure their preservation for the church.⁷³ The Society responded by deeding the grants in New Hampshire to that Diocese, but it believed that circumstances in Vermont precluded similar action. Once organized, the Vermont Diocese applied for an act of incorporation but was denied it by Vermont's legislature, which had other ideas for the use of the land. At the same time the Diocese, through the Bishop of New York, requested from the Society deeds to the Glebes. This request, too, failed.⁷⁴ The Diocesan Convention in 1793 proposed to elect a bishop, hoping this would forward both projects, as the struggle in the state to gain control of the valuable lands reached a critical stage. On 19 September a Convention at Pawlet, specially called for that purpose, elected the Reverend Edward Bass, Rector of Newburyport, Massachusetts.⁷⁵

Well aware of the financial problems Seabury faced after his election,⁷⁶ Bass cautiously accepted the election, but imposed certain vital conditions: adequate Diocesan financing after the Glebe land titles were received; his continuing to serve Newburyport with occasional visitations to Vermont; Vermont clergy to supply for him in Massachusetts during his absence; and the Reverend John Ogden (1740-1800), to be his superintendent in Vermont.⁷⁷

When word of Bass's election reached Canada, William Jarvis immediately began machinations to replace Bass with his father-in-law. Well aware of the political situation between Vermont and Canada, Jarvis left Niagara, 20 December 1793, on a flying trip to Vermont and Connecticut to persuade Bass to withdraw his name or, failing that, to mollify him and his supporters in Vermont, thus insuring Peters's election.⁷⁸ Securing the assistance of an old friend in New York, the Reverend Davenport Phelps, the two men succeeded in having another convention called which rejected Bass's conditional acceptance and proceeded to elect Peters in his place.⁷⁹ The special convention to consider Bass's reply met at Manchester, 27 February 1794, with Eleazer Baldwin, an old friend still possessed of "a clear, strong mind, and a heart replete with affection and veneration for you,"⁸⁰ as chairman and the Reverend Daniel Barber, Secretary. While the records of this convention are not complete, at least nine parishes were represented, and there were five priests in attendance.⁸¹ Colonel John A. Graham (1764-1841) of

Rutland nominated Peters. After the Reverend Bethuel Chittenden raised questions about the treatment of Bass and the effect of Peters's loyalism, the men elected Peters without a dissenting vote.⁸² Ogden, who had nominated and supported Bass, accepted the election of Peters and actively worked to get him consecrated. Undoubtedly, convention members suffered pressure by those who sought Peters as bishop for family reasons (Jarvis), for personal reasons of friendship (Baldwin and Phelps), and for gain or political power (Graham and Governor Chittenden), but the election and convention were valid. Any denomination experiences just as much politicking in modern elections of bishops.

As has been noted, Vermont, following the outbreak of the Revolution, presented the internal and external complexity of a border region. Particularly after 1780, Vermonters considered the very real possibility of remaining part of the British empire, a condition that continued for a decade after Vermont attained statehood in 1791. Heroes and villains operated during the period, but no one knows for sure which was which.⁸³ Statehood was delayed by efforts of the neighboring states to seize parts of her territory. Internal factions in support of these claims or for independence, plus a strong native loyalist sentiment, made the situation more complex. Few Vermonters had served in colonial assemblies or on a court bench. Consequently there existed no body of trained government personnel. In addition, the usual frontier problems existed; a distrust of those who assumed

leadership, too little specie, a shortage of food. Finally, Vermont had no wealthy, educated, leisure class - no Adams, Jefferson, Washington, or Hamilton - with extensive libraries as in Monticello or Beacon Hill homes. Therefore, Vermont faced continued turbulence, poorly drawn or defined statutes and laws, and conflicting land grants and titles that plague the state to this day.⁸⁴

The complex political situation, exacerbated by the question of the church lands, eventually proved to be an insuperable barrier as the duly and legally elected Samuel Peters sought consecration as bishop of Vermont. On hearing of his election from Phelps, Peters immediately sought consecration from the Archbishop of Canterbury.⁸⁵ By the time official word from the Diocese reached London, 5 July,⁸⁶ Moore had already informed Peters "that in my opinion there is no probability of your receiving consecration in England."⁸⁷ Moore pointed out to Peters that the act of Parliament provided for consecrating only three American bishops, and this had been accomplished in 1790 when Madison was consecrated for Virginia.

Following Seabury's example, Peters then asked Bishop Skinner of the Scottish Church to consecrate him, after requesting permission from Vermont to take this step.⁸⁸ In a warm and friendly letter Skinner urged him to apply to the American Bishops because,

Bishop Seabury has now sufficient Influence with the American College of Bishops, to procure their Consent to any Measure so apparently conducive to

the General Interest and Support of the Church,
in that part of the World.

After stressing his interest in the welfare of the American church, Skinner wrote, "nothing will give me greater pleasure than to hear of your welfare and success, as one of her well-principled and most respected Prelates."⁸⁹ Unfortunately the Bishop-elect of Vermont failed to heed his advice until too late.

Word of Peters's dilemma had reached Vermont, and the Committee decided to send Colonel Graham with proper credentials to assist Peters and with instructions to get a deed from the S. P. G. to the Church lands.⁹⁰ In a series of unproductive meetings with the Archbishop, Graham proved no more successful than Peters. In addition to his primary argument, the Archbishop pointed out: (1) that he would be invading the rights of the American bishops and (2) that a canon of the American Church forbade his acting. After a long and fruitless argument, Graham asked if there were personal reasons as to Peters's character. "His grace readily answered, No, by no means; his character is unexceptionable."⁹¹ Graham, with a letter from the Archbishop setting forth his reasons for refusal by the English bishops to consecrate Peters, returned to America and was discharged by the Vermont Convention for his efforts with thanks "for his generosity and zeal in the cause of religion, and for his wise and judicious conduct as the agent of this convention."⁹²

In spite of Moore's firm refusal to himself and to

Graham, Peters continued through that fall with pleas to Sir George Yonge, the Duke of Portland, his patron, the Marquis of Buckingham, and finally King George.⁹³ He submitted an affidavit from Thomas Pinckney, Minister Plenipotentiary, certifying

that the government of the United States of America is not invested by the Constitution thereof with Spiritual Jurisdiction over any religious sect or denomination whatever; neither does it exercise control over, or in any Manner, interfere with, the appointment of the Pastors or Teachers to whom any religious Sect think proper to confide their spiritual concerns.⁹⁴

All this was to no avail. With the doors closed to consecration in England and Scotland, the Diocese of Vermont, at last, turned to the church in America. On Friday, 18 September 1795, the delegation from Vermont attending the Third Triennial Convention of the Episcopal Church in Philadelphia, presented a request to the House of Deputies that Samuel Peters be consecrated Bishop of that Diocese. At nine a.m. the testimonials were referred to the House of Bishops, "with a request that they will answer it in whatever manner they shall think best."⁹⁵ The House of Bishops directed its President,

particularly to mention in the said answer, that the Bishops cannot with propriety consecrate a Bishop for the church in any state, until such church shall have acceded to the general ecclesiastical constitution of the Church in the United States.⁹⁶

The then presiding Bishop, William White, believing it necessary in his Memoirs to explain further, added the cryptic remark, "There were besides some personal circumstances,

which prevented the paying of much respect to the solicitation."⁹⁷ Those personal circumstances have never been discovered. The obvious possibilities are Peters's loyalism, particularly offensive to Provoost; his involvement in land speculation and separatism; or personal enmities created by his sharp tongue.⁹⁸ The decisive factor, however, may well have been an accidental one, in that the New England dioceses were not represented. Peters had been assured by Samuel Parker and Abraham Jarvis, both later to become Bishops, by William Montague (1757-1833) and Bela Hubbard, as well as by Bishop Seabury, who wrote, "I see not any impediment to your being consecrated at our next Genl Convn at Philadelphia in Sept. next."⁹⁹

Peters, who had been at first indifferent to consecration by the "Georgite Bishops" whose jurisdiction he believed would not be recognized outside the United States,¹⁰⁰ reacted so bitterly to this rejection he alienated many former friends and supporters.¹⁰¹ After threatening to obtain consecration only from Seabury,¹⁰² or, by ignoring Apostolic succession and asking Governor Chittenden of Vermont to do it in his civil capacity,¹⁰³ Peters in a last desperate, fantastic attempt, tried to obtain consecration in Europe. During his stay in France he had become friends with the Abbe Spitalier, archivist at St. Omer after the Revolution. Peters appealed to him to arrange for consecration by Gallican bishops, who were "neither under the power of the Pope nor the French government," as he was willing to accept all

of the Romish doctrines except that of papal supremacy.¹⁰⁴ The Abbe, chiding him for using the title as it "is become an injury some years ago" and not to add "Artois if you wish your letters not to go to Paris, to be read over," replied that no French bishop could or would consecrate a bishop for a foreign country.¹⁰⁵ In spite of this direct refusal, Graham at Peters's insistence, wrote the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, Citizen de Lacroix, asking him to "nominate one or more French Bishops, chosen by the Departments" to consecrate "Dr. S. Peters, (who confesses in the truth of Divine Revelation)." He also asked de Lacroix to keep the transaction secret "until the Revd Dr. S. Peters shall be in America."¹⁰⁶ Perhaps during that period of upheaval the proposal was not as irrational as it seems now. Peters also wrote to Germany and Denmark, following Seabury's original attempts, but all these avenues were closed to him.

Pervading the controversy surrounding Peters's election and consecration was the disposition of the Glebe lands. The Bishop-elect, his own financial position insecure, knew that support for the office must come from the lands. Colonel Graham had assured Peters that the office carried "not less than twelve hundred Pounds Pr Annum--; and will rise every year according to the improvement of the Church Lands."¹⁰⁷ However, the official invitation regretted "that the income of our church in this state will not admitt of our making...such compensation for your services as the

dignity of the station and your personal merits might justly claim." They relied on his "pious affection for the prosperity of the...Protestant Episcopal Church," and concluded that, "we trust that gratitude and affection will combine to induce us to make you the best compensation in our power."¹⁰⁸ A final warning that convinced Peters of the necessity of the lands for financial security came from his friend in Boston. Prophetically Parker cautioned,

If Dr. Bass preferred the small living he holds at Newburyport to the Bishoprick of Vermont, I shd imagine that you wd prefer at this period of life the ease plenty and agreeable Society you are now in possession of, to trouble, penury and vexations that probably will be annexed to that office. But perhaps a Mitre and title of Right Revd have more charms in your Eyes than in mine.¹⁰⁹

The spring of 1796 he received word that forced the former Connecticut priest to give up all hope for the Vermont See. Saltonstall wrote him, "The assembly of Vermont has sold the gospel lands in that State." It was from these lands that the income of a bishop was to arise, as well as churches to be built.¹¹⁰ A Vermont friend, advising him of the sequestered lands, admonished, "you must have money of your own," and pointed out to the non-egalitarian Peters, "you must consider every man your equal and put up with insults from every puppy."¹¹¹

Peters's response was an angry letter to the Secretary of the S. P. G., reciting the action of the Vermont legislature, and reporting its causes. He blamed the Society for not improving the lands "in thirty years" and the refusal

to "relinquish them to the Episcopal Church as they had in the State of New Hampshire under similar circumstances." The other reason he gave was the refusal "respecting the Consecration of a Bishop of Verdmont under a pretence that the Church was under the Jurisdiction of Dr. Provost, Dr White and Dr. Maddison." Stating that "these lands are worth more than £200,000 Sterling, Peters concluded, "These events Sir will affect Posterity not me, and stigmatize your former Charity as a mere Act of Policy. I will trouble you no more on this distressing subject,"¹¹² and he did not.

Peters's Last Years in England

The last decade of the aging exile's sojourn in England was marked by loneliness, a severe illness, and finally, financial failure. Until November 1796, Peters had suffered the usual illnesses afflicting eighteenth century professional men. He contracted measles when he was in England for ordination. In 1785 he had taken the waters for what he described later as "violent fever and strongum," from which he was

now much recovered and while my spirits are as high as ever in my feeble Body - which cannot hold steady my hand and Eyes - I am to be perfectly well in a few weeks, as my Physician and Surgeon tell me.¹¹³

His severe illness in 1796, probably psychosomatic due to his failure to be consecrated and his growing financial crisis, he described as "paralysis on the Vesica bladder and

urinary organs/ attended with a lumbar Weakness...and Paroxisms."¹¹⁴ Peters recovered completely but was forced to spend much time at various English spas.

Samuel Peters's financial problems at this time stemmed from an inadequate income to support the life style to which he was accustomed, from his involvement with Colonel Graham and General Ira Allen (1751-1814) in the Olive Branch affair, and from general financial instability in England because of the Napoleonic wars. The initial relationship between Peters and Graham was cordial as Graham did all that was asked to obtain consecration for the bishop-elect. Not everyone accepted Graham, however. Hannah warned her father that Graham was "a bad man." He was not to be trusted, as "he is not divorced, he sold everything he could lay his hands upon, Left his wife, who he employed people to speak ill of, so as to have an excuse to leave her."¹¹⁵ Richard Saltonstall, Peters's devoted young friend, also warned him against Graham because Graham placed his own interest ahead of the church as "he intended to purchase those lands and call Vermont to acct. before the federal court."¹¹⁶ On the other side, Truman Squires, Peters's supporter in the Vermont contention, supported Graham's character, drawing a differing picture of the divorce action.¹¹⁷ Graham wrote a long, angry and barely legible letter, defending himself against the attacks, apparently convincing Peters of his good intentions.¹¹⁸ Only after Graham's betrayal of General Allen did Peters write,

I am most amazed at the confidence that you, Genl. Allen, and the Episcopalians in Vermont placed in a character that you all new merited no credit on Earth or in Heaven, ignorance, Malignancy, Impudence, Vanity, Deceit, falsehood, ingratitude, pride, jealousy, hatred of self and Prudence, with every other evil spirit that came out of Pandora's Box and have been manufactured since, compose all the virtues of that wretched Biped destitute of human Nature and every principle of Integrity.¹¹⁹

The cleric's involvement with Ira Allen was twofold, literary and financial. With Stephen Thorn, Peters assisted Allen in writing his History of Vermont, which one biographer calls "the best political history of Vermont that has been published."¹²⁰ Peters at first had refused to meet with Allen because he had pushed for the seizure of the church lands while Governor of Vermont and because Levi had diddled Peters out of "~~£~~378.16.5 cash advanced by him in the years 1790 and '91."¹²¹ However, they shortly became friends, and Peters helped him revise his draft of the history in 1797. Allen was as difficult and stubborn a personality as Peters, for the clerical critic wrote Thorn:

The Genl. thinks Ver- is to be preferred to Verd- and sevel government to civil regulation under a convention - The Genl. has bones enough but he wants sinews, arteries, veins, flesh and skin.... half of his sentences are imperfect, and as he chuses his own way, why in the name of common sense does he torment you and me, with four pages about nothing?....This last volumn is duplicate upon duplicate, half of it is not legible by me - why did you not purify it and enable me to know the Gens meaning - I wish you to burn all I have done after you have gutted it - for if the Genl. will print according to his own plan - I wish never to see it.¹²²

Allen had come to England on a mission to secure arms

for Vermont state militia as well as to purchase merchandise to assist his family in America, Finch in Boston, and Roger Enos in New York. Peters was involved in these complicated financial affairs that included a letter of credit with General Hull. Graham's failure to honor a note of Allen's and secret action as an agent for the British led to the seizure of the munitions ship, Olive Branch. This in turn led to the collapse of Allen's credit in England and the destruction of his position in Vermont, as his enemies in that state had planned. Allen, who had bought the arms in France, fled to that country before his trial, to obtain proof that the arms were for Vermont and not to fight England.¹²³ Peters, who had written a letter of introduction to the Abbe Spitalier, did all he could to protect Allen's interests in England during the long imprisonment in 1798 and 1799:

Your absence for almost a year and your silence for five months have been very distressing to your friends here and detrimental to your interest respecting your arms all of which have arrived safe at New York but not disposed of when the last news about them left that country.¹²⁴

Perhaps he was not being completely selfless. Did he still dream of a bishopric in Verdmont? As he wrote Allen,

I want an asylum in Verdmont - not in Vermont - you can afford me one, I expect it, give it - and explain it. Your canal /connecting Lake Champlain and the St. Lawrence River, which Peters had promoted earlier/ lives with me and the Doctor....If you sleep well your creditors and expectants do not....If we did not know your difficulties and perplexities, we should be apt to believe you to be without feeling.¹²⁵

Dreams are hard to abandon.

The involvement in Allen's and Graham's financial schemes precipitated the crash of Peters's already insecure monetary affairs and led to his imprisonment for debt. As early as November 1796, he had transferred all his personal possessions to Isaac Scott, merchant,

for the purpose of selling and disposing thereof for the best price he can get for the same and to apply the same or the monies produced thereby for the purpose of paying the said two hundred pounds together with the Lawful Interest of it and all costs that may arise in selling said goods, pictures, books furniture and things mentioned in the announced inventory.¹²⁶

This may have been a legitimate debt or a device to prevent his goods from being lost to someone else. In any case, Scott, whose address Peters used after this for receiving mail, was responsible for handling his debts and affairs until Peters left England. Hannah continued to pay her father's debts through Scott for many years afterwards. William Jarvis in writing Scott in 1800 made the only reference to the reason for the debtor's imprisonment: "'til he is free of Curgenvins unjust embarrassment of him - try my dear friend if you cannot accomodate matters with Curgenvin by installments."¹²⁷

To no avail the harassed prelate had tried to keep his daughter from learning of his embarrassment. She wrote,

How could you have fallen on so unkind a project to conceal your situation as to forbid us writing to you, because you were about to take passage to America....You must have known that were it possible for the reports that prevail here about your being confined, to be true, we must have heard it

sooner or later, and the later period it came to our eyes, the deeper it would wound.¹²⁸

When his being in Fleet Debtor's prison was confirmed beyond doubt, Hannah wrote him,

What my mind has suffered since I heard of your imprisonment is impossible for me to write.... the news spread over America among strangers by strangers...has I can assure you caused me more uneasiness than you were aware of in endeavoring to keep it secret from me.¹²⁹

At this time Jarvis, himself, was in financial trouble as his fees for recording deeds were reduced.¹³⁰ It took the Jarvises until 1803 or 1804 to finish paying Peters's debts to Scott.¹³¹ In the meantime the family continued importuning the old man to come to Canada and live with them. The growing children added their pleas. Their grandfather responded lovingly, but it was to be ten years before he visited them in Canada.¹³²

While the actual time of imprisonment, sometime between November 1797 and February 1798, was quite short, it had far-reaching consequences.¹³³ While it may have been just his illness that forced him to stay out of London after his release from the debtor's prison, there are indications that debts played a part, as he wrote from Yarmouth, Torena, and Surry. The heaviest blow came in 1804 when, after a quarrel with Pitt, his loyalist pension was cancelled. Bishop Porteus of London tried to get it restored without success. Dr. Morice thought it due to "some unfortunate Trial in the King's Bench (perhaps 15 years ago) Mr. P. retired from London and his pension was withdrawn by Gov't."¹³⁴ No other

reasons for the cancellation are to be found. We can presume that Peters's Tory attitudes and writings against the established hierarchy won him no favors in the Whig government.

The Connecticut exile had long resisted his friends' pleas to return to his homeland. These pressures had been particularly importunate in 1784, after the signing of the Treaty of Paris. While there was strong opposition to the return of loyalists in the South, where many atrocities occurred, Connecticut was spared most internecine bitterness. After assuring Peters that his estate was not confiscated, one old friend wrote of the needs of St. Peters, Hebron:

the vindictive Spirit of the country is almost totally altered in the Space of one year past: and though, if you had returned last Spring, some few curs might have growled a little.... Those heretofore called Tories, and who were treated with the greatest Bitterness, are now in as good reputation as any.¹³⁵

However, the rural delights of New England could not compete with the bright lights of London. Peters could see no possibility for advancement or preferment in the States. He was frustrated in Connecticut on Seabury's death and over Vermont. The frustrated bishop-elect made one further attempt for preferment in England. He wrote the S. P. G. Secretary,

A few Weeks since I received Letters from York the seat of Government in Upper Canada, inviting me to become their Clergyman; and as my daughter and son are residents in that Town and many of my former friends from the States have settled in that Province....I find myself inclined to meet their wishes by going to spend my remaining days

with my Children and Coevals in that new country
Should you think the appointment eligible, I
 beg your interest to have me appointed to that
 Mission.¹³⁶

Just as he failed earlier in his more ambitious attempts, he was now unsuccessful with the Establishment. Bishop Mountain undoubtedly offered a prayer of thanksgiving on learning he was not to be appointed. The next year he indicated some interest in the parish of Stamford, Connecticut, on learning of the Reverend Ebenezer Diblee's (1715-1797) death, but before anyone knew of his desire, it had been filled.¹³⁷

The loss of his pension represented the final blow to the loyalist clergyman's love for the British. Thwarted in his attempts to obtain the bishoprics of Nova Scotia and Upper Canada, Peters was further embittered by his failure to gain consecration for the Diocese of Vermont. By 1804, fully aware that he had no further chance for advancement in England, the old man became actively involved in the Carver Grant chimera. With his financial position in England untenable and with the lure of a great land empire drawing him, the seventy-year-old Anglican priest sailed for New York City and put his thirty-one year exile behind him.

FOOTNOTES

¹Peters was considered for the Dioceses of Nova Scotia, Upper Canada, Quebec or Lower Canada, and possibly for New Brunswick. He claimed also to have been the choice for the Diocese of Connecticut, but there is no corroborative evidence for his statement. SP to Archbishop Moore, 16 June 1794, PP, VI, 19 and 20.

²"Report from London, May 10," Pennsylvania Evening Post, 24 Aug. 1776, 1, col. 1.

³"Letters from the Reverend Dr. Myles Cooper," CHPEC, II (1933), 44-47. After a candid and cruel assessment of the principal candidates for Nova Scotia, Peters sincerely and honestly assured Cooper that "I will never contend with you nor Mr. Vardil about the Bps office in Nova Scotia," SP to Cooper, 25 Nov. 1783, PP, I, 94.

⁴Leaming to SP, 1 June 1786, JPNB. See also, Leaming to SP, 9 Nov. 1787, CHPEC, I (1932), 184, for further criticism of Seabury.

⁵Dr. Ezra Stiles opposed Seabury's consecration and, according to Leaming, "wanted to put an end to the Church here and who wrote to Dr. Price and desired him to engage Billy Whig [Pitt] to oppose every movement for our having our petition granted." Leaming to SP, 22 Jan. 1787, CHPEC, I (1932), 138.

⁶Peters reported a conversation with Moore, whom he quoted as saying, "'What is the Episcopal Chh in America to us? Billy Whig said, all we want of America is their trade - to gain it we may and shall follow the rule of Charles 2d, i.e. to buy our enemies and neglect our former Friends now become weak - our old Friends may move into our colonies or be governed by their and our Enemies - as to what Religion may reign in the 13 States it concerns not Great Britain.'" SP comment appended to Leaming to SP, 7 July 1786, CHPEC, I (1932), 135. For Seabury's views see Seabury to Jarvis, 7 Sep. 1784, CHPEC, III (1934), 176.

⁷SP to Seabury, 30 Oct. 1783, PP, I, 75.

⁸Peters had written to support Seabury's request to the Connecticut clergy for permission to go to Scotland. This

correspondence is lost, but see Hubbard to SP, 19 Mar. 1784, PP, II, 8. The Cooper-Peters correspondence showing Cooper's trust in him is found in CHPEC, II (1933), 44-47. See also, E. Clowes Chorley, "The Election and Consecration," CHPEC, III (1934), 146-191 and Burr, Story of the Diocese of Connecticut, 144.

⁹Seabury to SP, 24 Nov. 1784, CHPEC, II (1933), 35.

¹⁰SP to Mann, 27 May 1786, DCT.

¹¹SP to Mann, 24 Apr. 1788, DCT.

¹²SP to Parker, 26 June 1787, PPMD.

¹³SP to Johnson, 12 Feb. and 3 Mar. 1786, SPCHS.

¹⁴King to Gerry, 8 May 1785, King Correspondence I.

¹⁵New York Packet, 17 Apr. 1786, 3. col. 2.

¹⁶Provoost to White, 10 June 1788, Archives of the Episcopal Church.

¹⁷White and Provoost were consecrated in 1787, Madison not until 1790.

¹⁸SP to Morice, 9 Dec. 1786, PP, II, 126.

¹⁹SP to Mann, 16 Apr. 1787, DCT. See also Burr, Story of the Diocese of Connecticut, 150-151.

²⁰James Addison, Episcopal Church, 66-68.

²¹Only colonial loyalist priests were considered for the office. Others mentioned at the time in correspondence were Cooper, Smith, Combe, Duche, Vardill, Byles and Breynton, in addition to Chandler, the first choice. Cooper to SP, 2 Feb. 1784, PP, II, 4; Vardill to SP, 17 July 1786, PP, II, 97; Walter to SP, 15 Sep. 1785, PP, II, 52.

²²Sykes, Church and State, 419.

²³Green, The Hanoverians, 269. Lord Grenville noted in a letter to the Bishop of Bristol that "he considered bishoprics as of two kinds; bishoprics of business for men of abilities and learning, and bishoprics of ease for men of family and fashion." 270.

²⁴James Boswell, The Life of Samuel Johnson (London, 1831), 14 Apr. 1775.

²⁵Ibid., 1 Aug. 1773.

²⁶SP to Inglis, 20 Mar. 1778, PP, I, 31. Peters was in France at the time and Inglis's letter dated 19 Aug. 1777 reached him the day before. He also asked Inglis to keep "the little trunk...untill an opportunity more favourable presents."

²⁷"Viator," Reply to Remarks on a Late Pamphlet (London, 1784). The late pamphlet was John Parr, Vindication of Governor Parr and His Council (London, 1784). See also, John W. Lydekker, The Life and Letters of Charles Inglis (London, 1936), 2, who points out, "and not withstanding the fact that Dr. Peters was something of a fire-brand, it is quite possible that the taunt contained more than a modicum of truth."

²⁸Charles Inglis, Dr. Inglis's Defence of His Character (London, 1784). Later when Bishop of Nova Scotia Inglis was accused of immoral conduct, unjustly, he wrote Archbishop Moore "for he /Sam Hake, the accuser/ and Mr. Peters were considered as the fabricators of the falsehoods published against me in London. For the honor of his function, I would suppose Peters incapable of making himself a party in this audacious slander; though he is still actuated by the keenest malice." Inglis to Moore, 28 Jan. 1789, "Memoirs," I, 136-137.

²⁹"Viator," An Answer to Dr. Inglis's Defense (London, 1785).

³⁰Walter to SP, 4 Aug. 1786, PP, II, 103.

³¹SP to Mann, 7 Aug. 1785, DCT.

³²SP to Morice, 23 June 1786, DCT. (The letter was dated 1776 in error by SP).

³³Joseph Peters to SP, 7 Sep. 1787, PP, III, 42.

³⁴All the clergy of New Brunswick except Cook, supported Peters. Andrews to SP, 27 Sep. 1786, PP, II, 108 and 15 Oct. 1787, PP, III, 49; Scovil to SP, 27 Sep. 1786, PP, II, 109; Richard Clarke to SP, 27 Oct. 1787, PP, III, 53. Of the Nova Scotia Clergy, Viets, William Clark, Cossit, and Bailey signed letters of support. Lovell refused and Ellis gave no answer, J. Peters to SP, 6 Oct. 1787, PP, III, 46 and 13 Oct. 1787, PP, III, 48. Wiswall did not send one as he already knew that Inglis was consecrated, Wiswall to SP, 11 Dec. 1787, PP, III, 64.

³⁵Richard Clark to SP, 22 June 1787, PP, II, 33. By October Joseph Peters had quieted his fear.

³⁶"I received a letter from our Friend Peters dtd 21st

June wherein he informs me that there are several candidates for N. Scotia Bp...he therefore advises that a letter should be sent to the Arch Bp of Canterbury signed by all the clergy signifying their desire that a certain person should be appointed whom they beg leave to recommend. A printed copy accompanied his letter to me with a blank to fill up - I would wish to know if you have received a letter of the like kind and who the clergyman is that would have the most votes in this Province." Wiswall to Bailey, 12 Oct. 1787, DVA, Book B, 212.

³⁷For a summary of Joseph Peters's problems see his letter to SP, 7 Sep. 1787, PP, III, 42. "I am sorry," he wrote, "that business had not been thrown upon the carpet nine months ago; but I am not sure there is a man in Halifax that could have composed the letter properly."

³⁸It is extremely doubtful that the petitions would have made any difference even if they had arrived earlier. The practice of electing bishops was an American innovation, and popularity was not a criterion that the court or Lambeth used in making appointments that were essentially political.

³⁹Lydekker, Life of Inglis, 245.

⁴⁰There is no mention in letters dated 12, 13, and 22 August. In the letter to Mann, 4 Sep. 1787, DCT, he rails at the appointment.

⁴¹SP to Parker, 5 Sep. 1787, DCT.

⁴²SP to Bailey, 10 Feb. 1788, JBCNS, Vol. III. Peters was as good as his word, and correspondence was discontinued with those priests who recognized Inglis's jurisdiction; e.g. the last letter to Bailey is dated 12 Sep. 1789, JBCNS, to which Bailey replied 6 Dec. 1789, PP, IV, 60, ending the relationship. Later Peters wrote a friend and protege of Bailey, "as to Mr. Bailey - he like Ephraim joined himself to Idols - let him alone! - I wish him happiness in time and hope he will be so in eternity." SP to McNamara, 1 Aug. 1792, JBCNS, III.

⁴³SP to McNamara, *ibid*.

⁴⁴Inglis to Moore, 7 July 1790, "Memoirs," I, 79. Moore had written earlier, "The Clergy here will no longer answer his /Peters's/ letters against me; and therefore he is constantly throwing out the bitterest invectives to the clergy in the revolted colonies." *Ibid.*, 28 Jan. 1789, 76.

⁴⁵SP to Chalmers, 12 Mar. 1789, VHS.

⁴⁶Simcoe to Dundas, 2 June 1791, PAC 42, Vol. 316, 175.

⁴⁷Simcoe to Grenville, 3 Aug. 1791, *ibid.*, 185.

⁴⁸Columbian Centinel, 9 Feb. 1791, 3, reported by Benjamin Russell, quoting a Portsmouth paper, 2 February. Montague also reported seeing the news in the Boston papers when writing congratulations to Peters, 27 Feb. 1791, PP, V, 5.

⁴⁹Joseph Peters to SP, 17 Mar. 1791, PP, V, 6; Hubbard to SP, 5 Apr. 1791, PP, V, 12; Breynton to SP, 9 July, 1791, PP, V, 25; Baxter to SP, 13 Nov. 1791, PP, V, 43; William Clark to SP, 24 Nov. 1791, PP, V, 46; Vardill to SP, 12 Dec. 1791, PP, V, 53. Richard Clarke wrote Peters that the clergy convention at Maugervill, N.B., had urged his appointment, 19 Jan. 1791, PP, V, 4, and then sent his congratulations, 28 Oct. 1791, PP, V, 41.

⁵⁰Inglis to Moore, 27 May 1791, "Memoirs," I, 212. See also, 20 Mar. 1791, II, 18; Stuart to Inglis, 5 July 1791, Richard A. Preston, ed., Kingston Before the War of 1812 (Toronto, 1959), 178, 285-287; Stuart to Bishop White, 17 July, 1792, E. A. Cruikshank, Correspondence of Lieut. Governor Simcoe (Toronto, 1923), I, 180.

⁵¹Inglis had his own candidate, another loyalist refugee, the Maryland clergyman, Jonathan Boucher, but offered to support Toosey if Boucher was not a viable candidate. Inglis to Moore, 20 Mar. 1792, "Memoirs," II, 18.

⁵²Simcoe to SP, 21 Aug. 1792, PP, V, 70. See also, SP to Simcoe, 30 Aug. 1791, PP, V, 33, where Peters wrote, "By what I have heard this Day, (as from you,) I suppose this to be my last letter to you touching Episcopacy in Canada or my going there as Bishop....did I know that the wisdom of Dorchester or the Piety of Lambeth weighed so much as the dust of the Balance at St. Jameses, I should not have known that you was trifled with in the Business of a Bishop in Canada....I am astonished to find you deceived at your period of life....hence my crime was only for being born in New England, where I would go and spend my days to revenge on Great Britain if I did not love her children, religion and constitution more than I hate and detest John Moore of Lambeth, the republican Enemy to Men of Loyalty and virtue and good Parentage." The last remark did not endear him to the Archbishop.

⁵³SP to Buckingham, 20 June 1793, PP, V, 107. Peters had such good reason to expect the consecration that he designed his seal as Bishop, 9 Mar. 1791, PP, VII, 10. A Canadian visitor to London, Peter Russel, wrote his sister,

"Mr. Samuel Peters, the intended Bishop is a sensible, chearful man, has an agreeable wife /sic/ and family and his Daughter and Son in law Mr. and Mrs. Jarvis are good natured and pleasing people....This however I have from report, but I shall know more of them tomorrow as I supped with them tonight." 15 Aug. 1791, Department of Public Records and Archives, Ontario, Russel Papers. It is unfortunate that his comments after supping with them are not available or that he did not wait to write the letter the next day.

⁵⁴Buckingham to SP, 17 June 1793, PP, V, 105.

⁵⁵SP to Buckingham, 20 June and 29 June 1793, PP, V, 105, 106, 107.

⁵⁶Buckingham to SP, 2 July 1793, PP, V, 10.

⁵⁷Thomas R. Millman, Jacob Mountain (Toronto, 1947), 3.

⁵⁸SP to Parker, 21 July 1793, DCT.

⁵⁹Levi Allen to Ira and Nancy Allen, 20 Aug. 1791, DVA, Book B, 166.

⁶⁰Ritcheson, Aftermath of Revolution, 155-156.

⁶¹PP, V, 17, 45, 70, 105, 107, and VIII, 37.

⁶²SP to Munson Jarvis, 10 May 1793, JPNB.

⁶³The Jarvis family left London very hurriedly with "two she goats to give Milk for the children, and two dogs to amuse them - I shall send in a few days, Samuel's Horse, and Maria's cart of wood after them, as they were hurried away at 30 hours notice." SP to Munson Jarvis, 4 May 1792, JPNB. Samuel Peters Jarvis was born 24 Jan. 1787, and the proud grandfather wrote, "My daughter was safely delivered of a son 24th Jan., 1787, and I am now made old at 50 and going on." SP to Viets, n.d., Gordon W. Russel, Contributions to the History of Christ Church (Hartford, 1896), II, 521. Augusta was born 31 Dec. 1788, and Maria Lavinia, 11 Oct. 1790. Lavinia married Alexander Hamilton, son of Sir Robert Hamilton, one of the first members of the Canadian Parliament.

⁶⁴SP to Munson Jarvis, 10 May 1793, JPNB. Jarvis described their arrival and pictured the grandson as, "like a young Mohawk, very tall - and straight and saucy; he compares his head to a hair brush which since his hair has been cut off is of the same length....Sam ran off into the meadows instantly, and had twenty tumbles in the grass, which was nearly up to his chin." The girls were more

sedate. Maria asked her father, "Now Papa, I would be glad if you would show my Grandfather and my Uncle as I want to see them very much." Wm Jarvis to SP, 19 June 1792, Mary FitzGibbon, "The Jarvis Letters," Family History (Niagara, 1901), 27.

⁶⁵Wm Jarvis to SP, n.d., *ibid.*, 29-30. J. Peters wrote, "I shuddered to read your Account of the horrid Passage.... behold the information from Montreal," which told of the death. He then wrote, "This loss of life, I presume was occasioned by the Suffering and hurt which you told me the child received in the Ship." J. Peters to SP, 30 Nov. 1792, PP, V, 85.

⁶⁶SP to Munson Jarvis, 4 Dec. 1792, JPNB.

⁶⁷SP to Munson Jarvis, 10 May 1793, JPNB. He wrote, "I heard from William Jarvis and family so late as the 19th of January 1793 - he was much more composed in his mind on account of the death of his son, than he had been - The new born infant was a Son, and they are all in good health." The Jarvises had seven children. There are many letters from them to their grandfather in the Jarvis Family Papers, National Archives of Canada.

⁶⁸Firth, The Town of York. The author explained that Jarvis's failure to reach the top was not due to the "Americanism" of his brother-in-law, William B. Peters. Peters was forced to leave York after he had welcomed the American invaders in 1813. Jarvis was involved in a brawl during the hotly contested parliamentary election of 1805. As Hannah reported to her father: "Mr. Jarvis is sick, having gone out to suppress a Mob, four men fell upon him and cut his head very bad - and bruised him so much that he is not able to lift his hand to his head or open his left eye - it happened at midnight - he took his Broad sword with him which saved his life." HJ to SP, 28 Sep. 1805, JPAC.

⁶⁹Hannah could be as acidulous in her remarks as her father could. She wrote him, "Mrs. Simcoe is in no want of a fashionable Pad." HJ to SP, 15 Jan. 1793, JPAC.

⁷⁰"Agreeable to a Resolution of the Court of Confiscation of this date you are hereby commanded to disposses the persons who are in possession of the farm formerly the property of the Reverend Peters who has joined the enemy and whose estate has been confiscated to the use of this State which farm lies in Pownal." DVA, No. 329.

⁷¹Eight parishes and two clergymen were present at the first convention. C. R. Batchelder, George B. Manser, Albert H. Bailey, eds., Documentary History of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Vermont (New York,

1870), 14. See also, Zadock Thompson, History of Vermont (Burlington, 1842), II, 194.

⁷²PP, VIII, 37, n.d., in which Peters listed as one of the measures of importance to Britain in detaching Vermont, "A number of Rights of land granted by order of his Majesty, Geo. 3d in 1764-5-6." He also asked the Society to "have the goodness to relinquish their Right to said granted Lands to the Revd Samuel Peters, the present Bishop of Vermont for his Support and the Support of religion according to the Episcopal Establishment in the State of Vermont."

⁷³Parker to SPG, 20 Oct. 1785, SPG Microfilm 664:64, 201.

⁷⁴Batchelder, Documentary History, 17-18.

⁷⁵The choice seems odd as Bass was the only S. P. G. missionary whose stipend was discontinued because of questionable action during the Revolution, which seemingly would have the least influence on the Society's willingness to give up the lands to the new Diocese.

⁷⁶Bishop Seabury's S. P. G. stipend had been cancelled on his election and consecration, but the same amount had been assumed by certain Englishmen who desired to support an American bishopric. In addition, Seabury continued to draw his pension from the British army. Bass would have neither as a source of income.

⁷⁷Bass to Ogden, 2 Jan. 1794, Batchelder, Documentary History, 18.

⁷⁸Wm. Jarvis to SP, 22 Nov. 1793, A. H. Young, ed., "Jarvis Letters," Women's Canadian Historical Society of Toronto Transactions, No. 23 (1922-1923), 32-33 and 28 Mar. 1794, 33-35. See also, J. Peters to SP, 24 Mar. 1794, PP, VI, 11, wherein he noted that he had received notice of the trip and its purpose from his son in Boston.

⁷⁹Phelps, originally a missionary in New Hampshire, was now in New York and Upper Canada. In the letter he recounted meeting Jarvis "near the head of the Mohawk." After telling of Jarvis's efforts with Governor Chittenden to get the special convention called and the events of that convention with descriptions of the men involved, Phelps concluded by explaining he is writing because Jarvis is too busy; and "if an appointment for Upper Canada which I still hope for, does not interfere with your acceptance, I can but think there is a good field opened for your usefulness in Vermont. Many are anxious for your return to America, but no one more so than I." Phelps to SP, 1 Mar. 1794, PP, VI, 9, the letter written from Albany.

⁸⁰Ibid.

⁸¹Batchelder, Documentary History, 20-21.

⁸²Chittenden to SP, 20 Jan. 1796, PP, VI, 6. After explaining his original opposition, he concluded, "Should you come here in the Character of Bishop of Vermont, I can assure you as an honest man, that I will pay you all that respect, submission, and obedience that is due to that high station, so far as I know my duty, and my abilities will admit; notwithstanding what has been said." See also, Committee to SP, 20 May 1796, PP, VII, 19. Peters's reply, "the Convention had pretty unanimously chosen me to be their Bishop," shows his awareness of some opposition. SP to Barber, 17 July 1794, PP, VI, 28. He wrote Parker that "I find that my election was unanimous, without one dissenting voice in Verdmont." SP to Parker, 20 Mar. 1795, DCT. See also, Samuel Jarvis to Munson Jarvis, 11 Apr. 1794, JPNB, Box 23.

⁸³Walter T. Bogart, Vermont Lease Lands (Montpelier, 1950), 48. He adds, "the position of Vermont and its leaders was in much the same ill-established status as that of the American colonies, on a larger scale during the Revolution." Burgoyne's surrender relieved some of the outside pressure on Vermont separatists so they could concentrate on the New York "landgrabbers," and, at the same time, safely, use a future invasion for further pressure. For this aspect and the Haldiman negotiations involved, see Jack M. Sosin, Revolutionary Frontier (New York, 1967), 98-99. Britain's attitude toward Vermont varied following the Revolution, encouraging separatist tendencies to put further pressure on the U.S. to settle the problems unsolved by the Paris Treaty of 1783, particularly before the Jay Treaty; but Britain ultimately drew back when she committed herself to a policy of peace with the United States. Ritcheson, Aftermath of Revolution, 144-163.

⁸⁴Many early documents, including a copy of the first State Constitution, have been lost or destroyed due to lack of proper care for state records in the early years.

⁸⁵Phelps to SP, 1 Mar. 1794, PP, VI, 9; Wm Jarvis to SP, 28 Mar. 1794, Young, "Jarvis Letters," 33-37.

⁸⁶The letter was dated 27 Feb. 1794, and was accompanied by personal letters of congratulations from John Ogden and Daniel Barber. PP, VI, 3, 4, 6, 7, and 8.

⁸⁷Moore to SP, 1 July 1794, PP, VI, 26.

⁸⁸SP to Barbour, 17 July 1794, PP, VI, 28.

⁸⁹Skinner to SP, 1 Aug. 1794, PP, VI, 31. Part of Skinner's reluctance lay in the delicate negotiations being conducted at that time to end the Jacobite controversy and separation.

⁹⁰Peters in his letter of acceptance pointed out that some of the testimonials and affidavits were not in proper form. SP to Barbour and the Convention, 17 July 1794, PP, VI, 28, and 86. Graham carried a letter from Parker to the S. P. G. urging that either Graham or Peters be given power of attorney for the Glebe lands. Graham to SP, 19 Jan. 1795, PP, VI, 554; Parker to SPG, 27 Nov. 1794, SPG Microfilm 664:77, 750-753. Aboard the same ship was a letter from Peters's enemy in Boston, the Reverend William Walter (1737-1800) to the S. P. G. warning of skullduggery involved with the Vermont lands and warning that Peters was not the man for the job. Ibid. He wrote again 3 December saying that he had heard more rumours about the lands and speculation in them, naively admonishing that "Bishops were not elected by maneuvering and money, but by fasting and prayer." Ibid., 767-770.

⁹¹John A. Graham, Correspondence of John A. Graham (New York, 1835), 21. The pamphlet contains an account of the entire controversy as an apologia for Graham's actions.

⁹²Ibid., 26. The letter from the Archbishop, 23-24, lists his reasons for refusal.

⁹³PP, VI, 42, 55, 62 through 65, 70, 73. Col. Graham's petition to the king, PP, V, 75.

⁹⁴PP, VI, 41. The draft proposal is SP to Pinckney, 16 Sep. 1794, PP, VI, 33.

⁹⁵Protestant Episcopal Church in the U. S. A., Journals (1795), 144; Batchelder, Documentary History, 57-58.

⁹⁶Journals, 151. The only other Bishop-elect refused consecration was the Reverend Uzal Ogden for New Jersey in 1799, 167-168.

⁹⁷William White, Memoirs of the Protestant Episcopal Church (New York, 1880), 203-204. White mentioned that Vermont had not acceded to the constitution and that "there was but one clergyman in that state." The Bishop was wrong as we have seen above. Daniel Barber pointed out to Peters: "in fact this Constitution was adopted by Vermont at her first convention, about six years ago; and the same published; but whether the Convention at Philadelphia had proper knowledge of this I cant say." He pointed out that Ogden was to have attended the Convention but was ill. Barber to SP, 20 Oct. 1796, PP, VII, 44. It is reasonable to assume

the bishops used these excuses to avoid publishing the personal circumstances. Furthermore, White pointed out, "It was this transaction which produced an addition to one of the canons; requiring, that to entitle the Church in any state to a resident bishop, there shall be at least six presbyters residing and officiating therein." White, Memoirs, 203-204.

⁹⁸Peters decided he was the victim of a conspiracy begun by John Jay when he was in England because of Peters's political connections with the Vermonsters. Jay, he felt, desired to preserve the upper state commerce for his merchant friends of New York City and was supported by Bishop Provoost and Beach, a clergyman of that diocese. Cavalier Jouet to Hunt, 9 Jan. 1795, PP, VI, 52, who reported this and asked Hunt to inform Peters of the plot. See also, Jouet to SP, 12 Feb. 1795, PP, VI, 60. Jouet felt he, personally, had also been badly used by the two clerics. See also, Chilton Williamson, Vermont in Quandary (Montpelier, 1949), 217.

⁹⁹Seabury to SP, 10 Oct. 1794, Jarvis Papers, Mass. Diocesan Library; Montague to SP, 29 Dec. 1794, PP, VI, 49; Abraham Jarvis to SP, 4 Apr. 1796, "Letter", CHPEC (1933), 41-44; Parker to SP, 30 Dec. 1794, PP, VI, 51; Hubbard to SP, 12 Apr. 1796, PP, VII, 12.

¹⁰⁰SP to Parker, 20 Mar. 1795, PPMD. This was in reply to Parker's letter informing him of the Convention's action. Parker to SP, 25 Nov. 1795, PP, VI, 112. See also, SP to Squier, 11 Feb. 1796, Batchelder, Documentary History, 39-40; SP to Parker, 30 June 1796, PPMD.

¹⁰¹Abraham Jarvis to SP, 4 Apr. 1796, "Letter," CHPEC (1933), 43, who wrote, "There are those among us who think you have not had the generous treatment they wish you to have met with, but you will allow me to say I am sorry to find that disappointment and your Ideas of maltreatment, should cloud your mind with so dark and violent a resentment as to cause a language to fall from your pen which may be grateful to dissenters and infidels, but to the real friends of episcopacy and the church, can give no pleasure." See also Ogden to SP, 25 May 1796, PP, VII, 18.

¹⁰²Even if this was a possibility, it was thwarted by Seabury's death, 25 February 1796.

¹⁰³SP to Squier, 11 Feb. 1796, Batchelder, Documentary History, 40. For Peters's attraction to royal or lay consecration, HHP, 99-100.

¹⁰⁴Spitalier to SP, 20 Jan. 1796, PP, VII, 7, and

Mampoteng, "Samuel Peters," American Church Monthly (1935), XXXVIII, 339.

¹⁰⁵Spitalier to SP, 20 Jan. 1796, PP, VII, 7. He directed Peters to address him as "Au Citoyen Ab Spitalier," and to remember him "to my ever-dear Birdseye."

¹⁰⁶Graham to de La Croix, 19 Aug. 1796, PP, VII, 31.

¹⁰⁷Graham to SP, 19 Jan. 1795, PP, VI, 54.

¹⁰⁸Committee to SP, 27 Feb. 1794, PP, VI, 6.

¹⁰⁹Parker to SP, 30 Dec. 1794, PP, VI, 51.

¹¹⁰Saltonstall to SP, 12 Mar. 1796, PP, VII, 11.

¹¹¹J. P. Buckingham to SP, 20 Apr. 1796, PP, VII, 17. Peters wrote the Committee through Truman Squires, "I have lived 15 years in Connecticut without being a burthen to my hearers, when I was young and rich; but now I am old and poor I cannot do the like in Verdmont....On my arrival in your State I have neither house, land or stipend to subsist me in America, and when I am there I expect to do the duties of a faithful Bishop....I expect to live according to your fashion and not according to the extravagant fashion of European Bishops." Batchelder, Documentary History, 41-42. Vermont was without a bishop of its own until John Henry Hopkins was elected and consecrated the first bishop of Vermont in 1832.

¹¹²SP to Morice, 15 June 1796, PP, VII, 20, 21. For the value of the lands, Peters quoted J. P. Buckingham, who was a member of the Assembly, as well as part of the Episcopal Convention. He also quoted Ira Allen. For the Diocese of Vermont, the issue of the state seizure of the S. P. G. lands for the University of Vermont and other schools, is still not resolved. Action in 1970 before the U. S. Supreme Court favored the Diocese but did not completely resolve the issue. Information from office of present Bishop of Vermont.

¹¹³SP to Wm. Samuel Johnson, 12 Feb. 1786, SPCHS. See also, SP to Mann, 7 Aug. 1785, DCT, Vardill to SP, 18 July 1785, PP, II, 47, and J. Peters to SP, 27 July 1785, PP, II, 49.

¹¹⁴SP to Morice, 25 July 1799, Ontario Historical Society, No. 27. See also, SP to Trumbull, 10 Mar. 1800, CHS. While it is difficult to diagnose the illness from such brief descriptions, Powell Fry, M.D., Stillwater, Okla., suggested that the symptoms reflect prostatitis, an urinary

obstruction due to hypertrophy of the prostate.

¹¹⁵HJ to SP, 27 July 1796, JPAC.

¹¹⁶Saltonstall to SP, 12 Mar. 1796, PP, VII, 11. He also mentions the divorce: "I saw the advertisements in a Virginia newspaper. In his advertisement he appears supremely ridiculous."

¹¹⁷Squires to SP, 18 Nov. 1795, PP, VI, 110. Squires may have done some special pleading as he was acting as attorney for Graham's divorce action.

¹¹⁸Graham to SP, 29 Feb. 1796, PP, VII, 9. He wrote, "If the Judges of the Circuit Court - if the Governors of Several States - if the first gentleman in five of the finest states - consider me as an immaculate Character - I've only to say - all back-biters and defamitory rascals and villains may go to Hell."

¹¹⁹SP to Finch, 14 Aug. 1797, DVA, 182. See also, SP to Sumner, 7 Aug. 1798, DVA, 331, and Buckingham to SP, 1 Oct. 1799, PP, VII, 74.

¹²⁰James B. Wilbur, Ira Allen (Boston, 1928), II, 130. Ira Allen, The Natural and Political History of Vermont (London, 1798). For the position of the Allen brothers in Vermont's history, see Tristram Coffin, Uncertain Glory (Detroit, 1971), 210-215; and Ritcheson, Aftermath of Revolution, 152, who wrote, "Brothers all, coarse and crude, they shared a vulpine quality repugnant to better men. 'Ethan Allen died this day and went to Hell,' wrote President Stiles of Yale on February 12, 1789. Few doubted the location of the eventual family reunion."

¹²¹SP to Ira Allen, 29 Aug. 1796, DVA, Book B, 175.

¹²²SP to Thorn, 9 June 1797, Wilbur, II, 355-356.

¹²³The ship was eventually released by an order of the British courts, but it was too late to save Allen's fortune or reputation.

¹²⁴SP to Allen, Wilbur, Ira Allen, II, 253. Allen's refusal to bribe Foucher had led to his imprisonment in Paris. For Allen's defense, see Ira Allen, Particulars of the Capture of the Ship Olive Branch (Philadelphia, 1805). See also Robert R. Palmer, Age of the Democratic Revolution (Princeton, 1969), 518-519.

¹²⁵SP to Allen, 10 Sep. 1799, Wilbur, Ira Allen, II, 355-356.

¹²⁶SP, 10 Nov. 1796, JPAC.

¹²⁷Jarvis to Scott, 18 Jan. 1800, Public Archives of Canada, Upper Canada Sundries, RG 5, A1, 1, Vol 1, 390-393. The court records searched in England for information were Chancery Proceedings, the commitment books for Fleet Prison, King's Bench Habeas Corpus, Kings Bench prisoners list. I know of no further reference to Curgenvin. Peters's other appearances in court found him on the other side of the chamber as the victim of a mugging. Vardill to SP, 25 July 1794, PP, VI, 30. One of the items lost was a lottery ticket for John McNamara, who, when Peters tried to repay him, wrote, "Now my Dear Sir, as this money was stolen from you, at a time when you was kindly transacting business for me, I cannot consent to receive it." After an exchange of letters over it, McNamara told him to give it to charity. McNamara to SP, 21 Dec. 1795, PP, VI, 118. Perhaps the affair should be called "The Case of the Stolen Lottery Ticket" or "Who Picked Prelate Peters's Pocket?"

¹²⁸HJ to SP, 23 Mar. 1798, Young, "Bishop Peters," 49-50.

¹²⁹HJ to SP, 10 July 1796, JPAC.

¹³⁰For both Jarvis's and Peters's appeals to Simcoe, John King and the Duke of Portland, see PAC 42, 380-381, 388-389, 392-393, 395, 397, 399.

¹³¹Jarvis to Scott, 18 Jan. 1800; HJ to SP, 6 Nov. 1801; and HJ to SP, 5 July 1803, JPAC.

¹³²Jarvis urged Peters to come because he needed office help that he could trust after Bird had left. Jarvis to SP, 31 Jan. 1799, JPAC. He also stressed the need and desire of the children to see their grandfather. For the children's letters see Maria and Augusta to SP, 26 Oct. 1792, 28 Dec. 1796, JPAC. For Hannah's pleas see HJ to SP, 12 Feb. 1793, 29 Mar. 1794, 14 Oct. 1796, 10 July 1798, JPAC.

¹³³Peters wrote to Sumner on 10 Jan. 1798, SPCHS, not mentioning it, but on 7 Aug. 1798, DVA, No. 331, he wrote him saying that illness had prevented writing before. For the news to have reached Hannah by 23 March, imprisonment probably occurred in late January or early February, allowing a month for mail to get to America from England.

¹³⁴Morice to Porteus, 2 Mar. 1804, Young, "Bishop Peters," 620-621. Porteus wrote Peters, "I am sorry to inform you that I have endeavored to obtain the restoration of your Pension but without success. The information you have received respecting the representation of the Secretary of State is undoubtedly true; and it is not in my

power to pursue the matter any further." Porteus to SP,
13 Mar. 1804, SPCHS.

¹³⁵Tyler to SP, 7 Jan. 1784, PP, II, 2.

¹³⁶SP to Morice, 25 July 1799, Young, "Bishop Peters,"
619-620.

¹³⁷Samuel Jarvis to SP, 26 July 1800, SPCHS.

CHAPTER VII

SPECULATOR IN WESTERN LANDS

The Carver Grant

The lure of a western wilderness empire twice the size of Connecticut brought the Reverend Samuel Peters back to his native land, now a federal republic taking its place among the family of nations. The cosmopolite and expatriate settled, not in rural Hebron or even in Connecticut, but in the cultural and financial center of the new country, New York City. In his extant letters Peters never commented on any literature that was not religious or political, never mentioned visiting an art gallery, concert, or opera. The existence of a printed program in the Peters Papers (Archives of the Episcopal Church) suggests that he may have heard a benefit concert at St. Paul's. Eventually the crusty, independent old man visited his family and friends in York, Upper Canada, and in Connecticut, but not for some time. Driven by the need for financial security, recognition, and position, Peters travelled to Washington, D.C., to Philadelphia, and to the wilds of the Upper Mississippi Valley, but he always came back to New York, where, twenty years later, as a fierce, lonely, and impoverished

nonagenarian, he died.

Lying behind Peters's attempt to create "Petersylvania," as he planned to call the new state in the Carver Grant, was a typical eighteenth century exploitation of the red man. The claim, itself, was based on genuine exploration of the Wisconsin-Minnesota area by Jonathan Carver (1710-1780), the great grandson of one of the founders of Plymouth Colony. Carver's father, a man of prominence and wealth in Canterbury, Connecticut, gave his son an education befitting that position. In the Great War for Empire, Carver served well, enlisting as a private soldier and rising to a captaincy. Returning from the war and finding life dull in Montague, Massachusetts, where he had settled with his family, he became involved in a project to explore the West that England won from France. Under the aegis of Robert Rogers (1731-1795), commander of the Mackinac post, he proposed to find a route across the continent to the Pacific, establish a post there for the China trade, and explore for a Northwest Passage, thus anticipating by forty years the Lewis and Clark expedition. In September 1766, Carver set out across Lake Michigan to Green Bay, making his way to Prairie du Chien. Turning northward, he reached the falls of St. Anthony, where he expected to receive fresh supplies and goods for trade with the Indians. Rogers failed to keep his promise, and the supplies never arrived, forcing Carver to forego any further westward exploration. While waiting he explored the upper Mississippi

and Lake Superior. He wintered there through 1767, returning to Boston in midsummer after a journey of seven thousand miles. The next February he sailed for England, hoping to confirm the Indian deed to the vast area he had received during an elaborate ceremony in a cave near Prairie de Chien, and hoping to obtain financing for further exploration westward. He met with indifference from an uninterested government, and only with great difficulty succeeded in having the Journal he had kept during his travels published.¹ In 1774 he contracted a bigamous marriage with a naval officer's widow, by whom he had one daughter. An eminent scientist and philanthropist, John Fothergill, M.D. (1712-1780), supported him financially, sponsored the Travels, and promoted his schemes in the scientific world. It was not enough. Carver died from privation because of reluctance to seek charity, and was buried in a pauper's grave, January 1780. A disciple and friend of Fothergill, John C. Lettsom, M.D. (1744-1815), was informed by his mentor of Carver's illness but arrived too late to save him. Tending him the last three days of his illness, Lettsom learned from Carver of the Indian deed, and on his death had access to the Carver papers. He brought out a third edition of the Travels the next year for the benefit of Carver's widow and daughter.²

The deed which recorded the gift by two Naudowissie (Sioux) Indian Chiefs, Otohtongoomlisheaw and Hawnopawjaten, was not mentioned in the Travels. Carver wrote only of the

meeting in the cave when the Chiefs presented the gift in gratitude for all that Carver had done for them in settling a dispute between the tribes. The land conveyed in the deed was bounded by a line running along the east bank of the Mississippi from the falls of St. Anthony to the mouth of the Chippewa River at Lake Pepin; thence due east one hundred miles, thence due north one hundred and twenty miles; and from this point southwest to the starting point. The area of more than seven million acres included the present Twin Cities, some of the choicest lands in Minnesota, as well as most of the northwestern quarter of Wisconsin.³

In his foreword to the third edition Dr. Lettsom mentioned the deed for the first time in print. Carver had not cited the instrument because he knew there was little chance of its being validated after the King's proclamation of 7 October 1763 which prohibited individuals from acquiring land grants from the Indians, whether singly or collectively. He may well have mentioned it to Richard Whitworth, Speaker of the House of Commons, his patron who supported him in his projects for the development of the northwest. In the midst of the American Revolution he saw no need to mention it in the Travels. Because of Dr. Lettsom's probity and reputation in scientific circles, there is little doubt that he saw such a deed and that he considered it authentic. His concern was for Carver's family and not for personal gain.⁴

The earliest documentation showing the Reverend Samuel Peters's knowledge of Carver's book came from Joseph Peters,

who wrote in 1785 that he was

reading the Travels of Capt. Carver, thro' the interior parts of North America - I suppose you have read it - I find some curious Stories in the Work - and it may be of use, but I shall not see it.⁵

The first observable interest in the actual deed followed a letter from Samuel Harrison of Vermont. The former Englishman had been approached by Rufus Carver, a son from the first marriage, asking for his help to present the case to Congress. Harrison was drawn to Peters by "a circular letter relative to the improvement of Sheep," which had been

published in a number of papers both in the State of N. Y. and Massachusetts as well as Vermont of which I had ocular demonstration and have heard that it was likewise published in New Hampshire and Conn., and in behalf of a Society.⁶

Peters's attempts to recover the original deed, which had been stolen earlier from Dr. Lettsom, proved unsuccessful (the original deed has never been found). However, the association which began at this time continued until Harrison's death in 1813, when, unfortunately, his widow sold all the papers regarding the claim to rival claimants before Peters and his company could lay hands on them.⁷

Returning to the United States in October 1805, Peters wasted no time in his attempt to secure the property for his proposed state, "Petersylvania."⁸ On his arrival in America the returned emigre first contacted the Carter heirs through Harrison and purchased their rights for \$30,000 to be paid when the land was sold, for which he received a

a quit-claim deed on the property.⁹ Early in 1806 Peters appeared before the Congressional Committee on Public Lands, asking them to approve the Carver grant. Prior to this appearance he wrote President Jefferson:

I have the honour to sollicit /sic/ your Patronage and Benevolence so far as to give me an appointment as Superintendant over the Indians near as may be to the Fall of St. Anthony.

Citing as the reason for the request, Peters wrote:

I have agreed with the Heirs of Captain Jonathan Carver to go and settle with them and others on the Territory given by two Indian Chiefs to Captain Jonathan Carver in A. D. 1776, immediately after Congress shall have ratified said Indian Deed to said Carver.

In an attempt to ingratiate himself with the Republican administration, Peters explained his reasons for not returning to his home state as

the Majority of the People in Connecticut appear now to favour Aristocracy and Monarchy, and not friendly to the System of Government established by Republicans in the United States, whose Pride and Permanency gloriously rest on your shoulders.¹⁰

Perhaps it is unkind to accuse Peters of trimming at this time, for henceforth he wrote against monarchy as well as aristocracy. His disillusionment over failure in England to gain preferment, his humiliation in the debtor's prison, and the final blow of having his pension discontinued, undoubtedly changed his loyalist feelings and his love for Great Britain's monarchy.

For almost twenty years Peters vainly tried to gain Congressional confirmation of his claim to Petersylvania, knowing that the British validation was not enough. Despite

the refusal by the Senate to recognize any Indian grants after the Revolution, Peters argued the validity of the prior English acceptance until 1825, when, just before his death, a dilatory Congress finally denied the claim.

The Reverend Samuel Peters's relationship with Jonathan Carver presents many problems. Some of Peters's statements sworn to before the Congressional Committee are demonstrably false and some demonstrably true. The lies cast doubt on those whose legitimacy cannot be determined. In his testimony Peters claims to have known Carver in Connecticut, which is possible but doubtful. His claim to have known Carver in England from 1775 until he died in 1780 may have more validity, but is, on the whole, improbable. The claim that Peters was present in the anteroom when the King and Privy Council granted the Deed in February, 1775, cannot be proved by any extant British records. In 1829 Lord Palmerston declared there existed no records of any kind revealing such action. Further, it is extremely unlikely that Peters had been in England long enough to have become involved to such an extent. The clergyman's claim to have been present with Dr. Lettsom at Carver's deathbed and to have again seen the deed is extremely dubious, and the doctor never mentioned it.¹¹

Nothing had come of his petition to Jefferson for a superintendency among the Indians; instead the President had advised Peters to enlist leading Democrats in Connecticut in his behalf, hoping thereby to be rid of the insistent

clergyman. Taking the President at his word, Peters went to Wallingford and called on his old friend, Dr. Jared Potter. The busy doctor denied being a friend of Jefferson, but Peters paid no attention.¹² For a short time the clergyman lived at Potter's home, romping with the children, giving instructions on European horticultural practices, and entertaining the family with anecdotes. A young lady of the family allegedly slipped a copy of A General History of Connecticut among papers at Peters's elbow, and when the volume was discovered, the old man, now 71, joined heartily in the laughs at the credence placed in his fables.

While in his native state, Peters visited Hebron in June, the first time since leaving it in 1774. He stayed about six weeks and preached once at St. Peters to the great delight of old friends. He failed to see two of his former associates, Trumbull, with whom he had revived correspondence in 1807, and Tyler, who was still vainly trying to see him nine years later.¹³

On returning to New York, Peters, to keep his name before the public, published another tall tale from the Nutmeg state, "The Frog in the Rock,"¹⁴ and the next year a biography of his ancestor, the regicide Hugh Peters (1599-1660).¹⁵ In this, his last published work, Peters, no longer apologetic for being a descendant of the Puritan divine, wrote in the appendix:

Should it be asked what have been my motives for publishing the character and life of Mr. Hugh Peters, who suffered martyrdom 147 years ago?

My answer is, to vindicate his character against the abusive words of his aristocratic enemies during 147 years, and to inform the present and future republicans of his puritanic piety and virtues, by sacrificing his whole life in the cause of his country; and preferring liberty, morality, and faith in God, to riches, titles and life. (126)

Through this defense of his great-uncle and by showing his own relationship to many eminent New Englanders, Peters hoped to raise money for his "promised land."¹⁶

While Peters always needed money, the problem grew critical at this point. The Senate Committee had assured him that to clear his title to the land he needed only confirmation by the descendants of the Indian sachems who had made the original grant. After his failure to secure an appointment as Indian Superintendent, Peters sent agents into the area to obtain the necessary signatures. Two of the agents Peters sent out, Andrews in 1807 and Norton in 1811, had been captured by Indians and failed to get through; a third, Cunningham, was stopped by war in 1812.¹⁷

Self-assured of the grant's legality and of the fact that the land belonged to him but for a technicality, Peters sold parcels of the land to finance his speculations and to prepare for the trip he believed necessary. The sales to other speculators in New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore created scandals, suits, and counter-suits by owners holding authenticated land titles from other heirs. Peters was so sure of his rights that he proposed to Bishop Hobart, the clergy, and vestry of Trinity Church, New York, through the

Reverend Mr. Willison, that "in the interests of Christianizing the gentiles in the Western Territory," Peters would deed one township six miles square (23,040 acres) for the use of a college to instruct Indians in the Chippeway Territory, a second township to Trinity Church for support of missionaries to the Indians, a third township for use of school masters, a fourth for the use of clergymen licensed to the territory by the Bishop of New York, and a final township to support a cathedral in the see city.¹⁸ His generosity depended upon the payment of \$5,000 for the expenses Peters would encounter on his trip to Wisconsin. The minutes of Trinity Church do not record that the proposal received consideration. War with England prevented any further action at this time. Two things stand out clearly. The Carver Grant was valuable property, and Peters was but one of many who hoped to profit from it.

Plans for the western trip reached fruition in 1817. Having raised adequate funds, the 81-year-old prelate and land speculator set out for St. Anthony Falls to authenticate his claims. Hannah had fought the idea for many years. In 1810 she wrote trying to dissuade him

because it /scares? a child of your family - but I should be sorry to hear that you ever attempted a visit to a place where the inhabitants are more fond of human flesh than that which we are commanded to eat - a mans fortune must be desparate when he is induced to associate with such a savage race.¹⁹

One of his oldest clerical friends in Connecticut also thought the idea "rather chimerical, since you are far

advanced towards 80 years of age; and I suppose not very robust." Tyler presumed the idea was "a favorite reverie, in which you often amuse yourself, with more than a little pleasure?"²⁰ It was no chimera, no reverie. On the 17th of June, Peters recounted in his diary that his party "sailed in the Steamboat for Albany" (80).²¹ After making their way upstate, across Lake Ontario, and viewing Niagara Falls, on 2 July they

Sailed in the Packet Boat for York in Upper Canada and reached that Capital and met my daughter, wife of William Jarvis Esqr. Secretary of that Province whom I had not seen in 24 years. Most of their children and grand children had convened there with Will B/irds-eye/ and Albertina my son and his daughter to meet me. They received me with joy and tears. With them I tarried till July 10th and my daughter fitted me out with Sundry articles useful on my way. (81)

The party reached the Mississippi on 30 August "at 4 oclock /sic/ and then turned North and sailed five miles to the Village called Prarie du Chien" (84). After a journey of over a thousand miles by horse, wagon, canoe, and schooner, Peters reported that he saw on the way

wild indians, to be an animal wild by Nature, not capable of being tamed and humanized.... naked, and painted with various coulours sitting on Bar Canoes and Batteaux with squaws decently covered with blanket and a multitude of papposes all naked and then coming on shore to dance and sing notso pleasant as the songs of hooting owls. (90-91)

Peters planned to continue his journey to St. Anthony Falls, 350 miles up the river, to visit with the Indians and gain confirmation of his deed. Colonel Talbot Chambers,

commander of Fort Crawford, prevented this and referred him to Governor Ninian Edwards at St. Louis. While waiting for permission from the governor, Peters spent the winter in the village of "100 poor houses and mixture of Indians and French Mulattoes and many Traders" (84). He visited with the settlers, performed several marriages and baptisms. Finally after a nine months' sojourn, he gave up hope of receiving the necessary permission. Beset by illness, he began the wearisome trip back to New York. He left Andrews and Keyes to get the desired confirmation from the Indians who were always expected to come to the village the next day. Red Wing, one of the supposed descendants of the sachems, came to Prairie du Chien shortly after Peters's departure. According to his agents, Red Wing acknowledged the grant and stated his willingness to confirm the deed.²²

Nothing came of this, and thus ended for all practical purposes the dream of Petersylvania, although the Congressional Committee did not finally deny Samuel Peters's claim to the Carver Grant until just before the old man's death. Like most of the land speculation in the Old Northwest, it had its sordid and fraudulent aspects, but much of our country's expansion and growth, as well as many early fortunes, resulted from just such adventures and adventurers. It has been pointed out that:

If Carver and Peters were speculators and promoters so also were George Washington and Benjamin Franklin and hundreds of other worthies in the galaxy of American history.²³

The Final Years

The Reverend Samuel Peters returned from his Wisconsin pilgrimage to New York City to spend the rest of his poverty-stricken days. Dependent on his relatives for financial support, gradually becoming more infirm of body, the venerable patriarch nevertheless remained strong in mind. Hannah continued to supply him with funds,²⁴ and continuously begged him to come and live with her in Canada:

Oh! my dear parent how much I regret having consented to your going to New York after your return from the Mississippi. Had you remained, you wd not have been so exposed to the inclemency of weather and other wants - What you now pay for house rent wd have been saved and added to your comfort. I wd have acted the faithful nurse.²⁵

Most of the time during these last years, Peters accepted her concern while refusing to leave the city. However, one day feeling the aches and pains and loneliness of the aged, he wrote complaining of the "grossest ingratitude and neglect" by his daughter and grandchildren, to "one from whom humanly Speaking you have all derived your existence." Describing himself

in the evening of his life when the snowy wintry locks are scattered over his hoary and venerable head - when the icy hand of time is about laying upon him his deadly grasp -

he pleads for them to make

a yearly contribution, say of ten dollars each would not lighten your purses and ought not to grieve your hearts, for his years of probation and trial cannot be many, as he is fast hastening to the tomb, which event I suppose will be a matter of rejoicing to many of you.

He concluded with a threat to make public his sufferings and their lack of charity.²⁶

Denied the company of his son, William Birdseye (died 1822), with whom he had planned to spend his last years, he still had the company of Birdseye's widow, Patty,²⁷ and numerous other relatives he enjoyed. Peters continued his voluminous correspondence with his Hebron relatives. He complained of "icy hands and feet" and that "the cramp in my hand makes bad writing."²⁸ He continued to offer advice, whether practical or not, to those in power. Writing to the governor of Connecticut, he suggested a canal to improve New Haven's trade. The governor replied, pointing out that the "towns depending on Connecticut river" would oppose it. He added

Your nephew Judge P. who has lately called on You, on his way to Washington is highly reputed in his office, and not less so is your other nephew the Senator. They often speak of you with great affection and respect, and with your other friends rejoice that your power of mind and body are remarkably retained.²⁹

In the summer of 1822 he wrote a "History of Hebron,"

in full confidence that it will tell you many useful things unknown to any person now living and be a stimulus to the present and future Generation to imitate the Wisdom, Virtues and Piety of their Parents, that their characters may be those of the Patres Conscript of Rome which will live as long as time, but yours shall live forever.

This was part of the dedication to his nephew, John Samuel Peters, M.D., Senator of Connecticut, "and to all the Inhabitants of Hebron," from "its Author, an old man and venerator

of you and of the virtues and Piety of your Ancestors and Settlers of Hebron." Peters pointed out in the preface:

It being the usual custom of England to write and publish a chorographical history of every considerable town and village in the Kingdom; which benefit the Town, Villages and the public; for the same reason I presume to follow the British Example; seeing no Reason why the same practice should not prevail in New England and in the United States.³⁰

Peters's old friends in Hebron discouraged him from publishing it, because "there is not ambition enough to induce a subscription for the work or the printing thereof." Gilbert assured Peters that "what I have been favored with in your letter, I shall preserve as a precious fragment."³¹

Ostensibly to pay back his friends and family for their generosity, Peters made one last attempt in 1822 to receive compensation from the state of Connecticut for his property destroyed during the Revolution. They advised him against it as "it would open an unpleasant and unpropitious [sic] scene to bring a Petition before the Legislature."³²

His nephew, John Samuel Peters, however, did plead with him to

remove to my house; and I actually urged it until his patience failed, and he turned from me in a rage, - 'I won't go - I'll perish first,' said he. I ventured one step farther - 'My dear uncle,' said I, 'will you consent that, at your decease, your body should be removed to Hebron, and laid by the side of your wives?' He instantly burst into tears, and walked off towards his lonely home.³³

Soon after this plea, worn out by the failures, misfortune, and vicissitudes of his life, the venerable Samuel Peters

died on the 29th of April, 1826. True to his promise, Dr. Peters had the body moved to the old cemetery in Hebron, where Peters was buried beside his three wives and two infant daughters. In 1840 his grandson, Samuel Jarvis Peters of New Orleans had the body moved to the cemetery behind the new church of St. Peters. A monument was erected bearing the inscription:

Here rests until the Resurrection the body of the Rev. Samuel Peters, LL.D.; who was born in Hebron, November 20, 1735, O.S., and died in New York, April 29, 1826, aged 91. He was ordained in England, Deacon and Priest, in the year 1759; and while residing in that country, after the Revolution, was elected, though on account of those troublous times, not consecrated, Bishop of Vermont. His life was full of adventures, adversities and trials, which he bore with fortitude, patience and serenity. This monument is erected to his memory by his grandson, Samuel Jarvis Peters, of New Orleans, 1841. (See figures 8 and 9.)

Epilogue

Time has not dealt gently with the Reverend Samuel Peters. Most criticism has proven harsh - from puritans and patriots who resented his attacks in the History of Connecticut to present day historians. John Tyler pointed out:

You write, my friend, like a man who has always been enterprising yet always unfortunate, - ever harrowed with disappointments. I have ever been your sincere Friend; and have felt a severe pang of sorrow at your Misfortunes.³⁴

There have been a few favorable voices crying in the wilderness. In 1910 at the Bicentennial celebration of the



Figure 8. Monument of Samuel Peters
St. Peters Cemetery, Hebron, Connecticut
(Photograph by Author, August, 1970.)



Figure 9. St. Peters Cemetery
with Church in Background
(Photograph by Author, August, 1970.)

founding of Hebron, the Reverend Samuel Hart, Secretary of the Episcopal House of Bishops, Dean of Berkeley Divinity School, and President of the Connecticut Historical Society, said in his address:

When the whole story of the life of Dr. Peters comes to be written, you of Hebron will, even more than now, be glad that his name is on the roll of her sons.³⁵

And Dr. Archibald Hope Young, writing in 1931, declared,

It is easy to laugh at the old man and to judge him harshly, as is commonly done (and, perhaps, naturally) in Connecticut. But, in the light of our own experience of war, we of this country [Canada], in which he was undoubtedly more than selfishly interested, ought to be able to do him justice in spite of his foibles, his obstinacy, and his self-seeking. Few of us have, like him, had our loyalty put to the test by persecution, exile, imprisonment, loss of all our property, and disappointment of our greatest ambitions.³⁶

The Reverend Samuel Peters lived a fascinating and full life. Perhaps now in this time of great unrest, with our deeper awareness of the period 1774-1820, we can offer a more profound appreciation of him as a person and of his life and influence in his own times. For his life spanned nine decades embracing more than four decades of tumultuous, perilous change. It encompassed the period when the American colonies changed into provinces, and then, breaking with Great Britain, became a nation. In England he experienced the rise of the party system, the change from factionalism to responsibility. He saw the Church turning from its role as an arm of the faction in power to a separate institution. Visiting France before the Revolution,

he witnessed those convulsion, the rise of the Republic, and the Napoleonic wars and empire. He became involved directly in British-American foreign relations in the western dispute over frontier posts and separatism in Vermont. Ecclesiastically he participated in founding the Church in Canada and through his family in the formation of that modern nation. He was part of the American frontier movement, first in Western New York, New Hampshire, and Vermont - then in the land grabbing, empire building in the old Northwest Territory and the Middle West. From Connecticut to Wisconsin he remained involved in the movement west as it destroyed the American Indian culture.

Peters's tragedy lay in the fact that though he touched the edges of these forces and movements, he could not assume the role of decision-making he so ardently desired. He chose the wrong side, and, leaning in the wrong direction, always failed to attain the brass ring. First as an Anglican prelate and squire in puritan New England, he never gained recognition as a "great divine." He failed to see the loyalist Anglican assume what he felt was a rightful place in an important province, New England, as a jewel in the British crown. He failed to receive recognition in England as a clerical leader of the loyalists, to gain preferment in the Church of England, or to attain wealth in the market place. He failed to receive the bishoprics of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Upper or Lower Canada, that he believed he deserved and had been promised because of his

faithfulness and loyalty to the crown. He failed to receive consecration as Bishop of Vermont and to become an influential figure in that state. Finally Peters failed to carve out an empire at the headwaters of the Mississippi with himself as the wealthy governor, beneficent missionary, and paternal "great white father" to the Indians. Though his daughter married well and pleased him with her position in the family compact, his son Birdseye never proved as successful as Peters so ardently wished.

In his prime, Samuel Peters was physically striking, tall, white-haired, quite handsome, a dominant figure. He remained popular all through his life with the ladies and with many of his male companions, secular and cleric, old and young. Quick-witted, sharp of tongue and pen to the point of aciduousness, he possessed a good sense of humour as his History and other writings reveal. He cannot be considered a deep or heavy thinker, nor an original theologian. He had a strong, at times violent, temper, and carried grudges or hostility a long time. He made many bitter, long-lasting enemies.

Concerned for the weak and down-trodden, he did all in his power to help those who suffered from deprivation or from being wronged by those in authority. Embracing a strong sense of family, Peters did all in his power to help family members succeed. He looked out for his own position, sensitive to any slights. Peters fought hard for what he wanted, usually with slight success. In spite of all his

disappointments, the Connecticut priest rarely allowed his frustration or bitterness to show. In every way he lived as a man of his times - sensitive to slights to his honor, anxious as an American provincial to prove his gentility of birth. Either deeply admired or hated, he was an absorbing person to study.

Samuel Peters touched the periphery of great events and knew many of the important figures in England and America, but apparently never directly influenced any of these events or persons. He grew from a small-village, backwoods rustic to an influential provincial squire, to a widely travelled cosmopolitan urbanite. After London he could never go back to rural life in central Connecticut. Like other men of the late eighteenth century he was an egoist, par excellence, who described himself in a sermon to be delivered at his funeral service, as a man

who proved the Truth of****honesty and Justice
 ****manifested his faith in God by his honesty
 and good will to Man.....Europe and America can
 testify of his exceeding worth in all the varieties
 of his Employments and his Capacity in
 the Pulpit and private life....Many have born
 witness of his Punctuality in all matters committed
 to his Trust....They have also born witness
 of the Empire he gained in the Affections
 of the People by his civility, Hospitality and
 Acts of Kindness....and may you all, who are my
 Hearers; maintain the same illustrious Vertues
 /sic/ know the Felicity and Glory of the De-
 ceased....They also know how inflexible he was
 in Honesty, truth and Peace.

For this sermon, Peters chose as his text Psalm 15:1 and 2.

Lord, who shall dwell in the tabernacle: or
 who shall rest upon thy holy hill?

Even he that leadeth an uncorrupt life, and doeth
the thing which is right, and speaketh the
truth from his heart.³⁷

FOOTNOTES

¹Jonathan Carver, Travels Through the Interior Parts of North America (London, 1778). A year later he published A Treatise on the Culture of the Tobacco Plant (London, 1779).

²The title page of the third edition carried the additional notation, "To which is added some account of the author, and a copious index." It is dated 1781. In all there have been more than thirty editions of the Travels, including a reprint in 1973. Foreign language editions were issued in Germany, the Netherlands, and France. Carver sold his name in 1779 to an historical compilation, The New Universal Traveller (London, 1779).

³A copy of the deed may be found in Daniel S. Durrie, "Jonathan Carver, and 'Carvers Grant,'" Report and Colls. State Historical Society of Wisconsin, VI (1872), 242-243. See also Milo M. Quaife, "Jonathan Carver and the Carver Grant," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, VII (1920), 11-12; William Folwell, History of Minnesota (St. Paul, 1921-1930), I, 55-64.

⁴While there has been much controversy over Carver's life and the Grant, the above summary represents the latest scholarship, and is given to provide some background for Peters's involvement.

⁵Joseph Peters to SP, 25 Nov. 1785, PP, II, 50.

⁶Harrison to SP, 9 Oct. 1804, WBPW. Peter's letter "Giving Advice to American Farmers on Destruction of Ticks in Sheep" was dated 18 Apr. 1803 and appeared in American newspapers in May.

⁷McClenachen to SP, 14 Dec. 1815, WBPW.

⁸The exact date of Peters's arrival is unknown. He planned to leave in the spring of 1804 when he wrote, "Gladly would I have sailed with the sensible and amiable Mrs. Bowering had Sylvester Gilbert, Thorn and Allen enabled me /financially/. Their neglects are surprisingly contrary to their Letters and Promises." He had already expressed his fears for "we are in great confusion and Alarm - daily expecting an invasion by Bonnaparte and his Legions...before

April ends millions will die, by sudden deaths - Should I be alive after the hurricane is gone and past I will let you know." SP to Harriot D. Jarvis, 31 Mar. 1804, Yale University Mss. See also HJ to Scott, 19 Sep. 1804, JPAC; she wrote, "I have understood from several that he was about leaving England - but from him I have no accounts at all....I should be much gratified in being informed how that unjust law suit has ended with my father and whether he has ever recovered his pension at the Treasury. I should hope that his silence on this score is not from an apprehension of my retaining the poor pittance - be assured while it can be of service to him and I have health that will procure me a penny-worth of Bread - I never will." Also HJ to SP, 28 Sep. 1805, JPAC. The October date is mentioned in SP to Jefferson, 27 Jan. 1806, Daniel Parker Papers, Box 6, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

⁹Maude O'Neil, "Samuel Andrew Peters: Connecticut Loyalist," unpublished dissertation, University of California at Los Angeles, 1947, 308. Her statement that Peters was met by his son and daughter in New York and "travelled with him as far as Vermont," is in error.

¹⁰SP to Jefferson, 27 Jan. 1806, *ibid.* He also asked that his son be made a governor in a "colony in some part of the Western Territory....The nearer he may be stationed to me the more happy shall I find myself." He concluded with a rambling discourse on aristocracy in New England based on Seabury's consecration.

¹¹The statements before Congress, with much additional information about the loss of the deed, are given in sworn statements by Peters. The first affidavit was from London, 19 Apr. 1805, given by Dr. Lettsom, the second, 25 Mar. 1806, in Washington, D.C. was given by Peters to the Chairman of the Senate investigating committee, Israel Smith. The last statement by Peters is dated 25 Sep. 1824. They are printed in American State Papers, Public Lands, IV (1859), 82-89. Also they are reprinted in their entirety in Durrie, "Jonathan Carver," 257-262.

¹²Henry Bronson, "Medical History and Biography," New Haven Colony Historical Society Papers, II (1877), 324-327.

¹³Tyler to SP, 11 Mar. 1815, PP, VII, 95.

¹⁴See Appendix G for the tale. Harrison to SP, 7 Oct. 1806 and 10 Mar. 1807, JPAC.

¹⁵Samuel Peters, A History of the Rev. Hugh Peters (New York, 1807).

¹⁶Peters's description of the "Baptism of Verdmont" occurs here, 94-95n. He rehearses again the familiar arguments on his failure to gain consecration as Bishop of Verdmont, 94-107.

¹⁷SP to Broome, 25 Jan. 1819, WBPW. Also, Quaife, "Jonathan Carver," 17-18.

¹⁸SP to Williston, 14 Feb. 1812, WBPW. Peters pointed out that the Reverend Davenport Phelps endorsed the proposal.

¹⁹HJ to SP, 6 May 1810, JPAC.

²⁰Tyler to SP, 21 Sep. 1813, PP, VII, 91.

²¹"Journal of Journey to Wisconsin 1817-18," State Historical Society of Wisconsin Archives. The pagination is from a typescript copy in the collection. Those who accompanied him on the journey were Constant Andrews, John Tuthill, Willard Keyes, and Thomas Taylor. Taylor abandoned the party at Mackinac.

²²Keyes to SP, 7 June 1818, American State Papers, 87. Keyes eventually gave up hope and removed to Illinois, where he was one of the founders of Quincy. Keyes's diary of the same trip is found in "Willard Keyes Diary," Wisconsin Magazine of History, III (1919), 349. See also Quaife, "Jonathan Carver," 20.

²³Op. cit., 24.

²⁴HJ to Hamilton, 30 Oct. 1818; and HJ to SP, 18 July 1807, JPAC. She wrote, "My certificate and one hundred and fifty dollars were forwarded by the last post." She had turned over her loyalist pension to him after his financial collapse.

²⁵HJ to SP, 6 June 1821, and 30 Sep. 1821, JPAC. She mentioned the nursing because he had been hiring nurses to help him and commented on their kindness.

²⁶"Humanitas" [SP] to the Daughter, grandchildren and other connexions of the Reverend Doctor Samuel A. Peters late of Hebron con. and now of the City of Jersey, State of N.J., 4 Nov. 1822, Jarvis-Powell Papers, Ontario Archives.

²⁷J. S. Peters to SP, 25 Jan. 1807, SPCHS; Tyler to SP, 26 Feb. 1814, PP, VII, 93.

²⁸SP to Mary Martha Peters, 12 Dec. 1825, SPCHS.

²⁹Bishop to SP, 29 Feb. 1820, SPCHS.

³⁰There are two copies of the work in Peters's handwriting extant in SPCHS. One version has been reproduced in Kenneth W. Cameron, ed., Works of Samuel Peters (Hartford, c.1967). The history consists primarily of lists of the early founders of the village, their descendants, descriptions of buildings and the countryside. The first preface is dated 1821, but the month and date are illegible.

³¹Gilbert to SP, 5 Oct. 1822, PP, VII, 94.

³²Gilbert to SP, 5 Oct. 1822, PP, VII, 94; J. S. Peters to SP, 10 Nov. 1822, SPCHS.

³³Sprague, Annals of the American Episcopal Pulpit, V, 25.

³⁴Tyler to SP, 21 Sep. 1813, PP, VII, 91.

³⁵F. C. Bissell, ed., Hebron (Hebron, 1910), 36.

³⁶Young, "Bishop Peters," 590.

³⁷PP, VIII, 2. The asterisks indicate a torn portion of the manuscript, which is undated. The writing indicates its composition sometime between 1796 and 1810, the earlier date being preferred. Perhaps he composed it during his imprisonment or during the severe illness that followed. The entire funeral sermon, unique as far as can be determined in that he wrote it himself, will be found in Appendix M. The sermon text is from the 1662 Prayer Book translation.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

PORTRAITS OF SAMUEL PETERS



Figure 10. Portrait of Samuel Peters, c.1778.
Attributed to Matthew William Peters.
(Royal Ontario Museum. 71 Can. 59.)



Figure 11. Portrait as Bishop-elect of Vermont.
(Diocese of Connecticut Archives).



Figure 12. Last portrait, c. 1795.
(Connecticut Historical Society).

APPENDIX B

SCENES OF HEBRON, CONNECTICUT



Figure 13. Field Where Samuel Peters's House Stood.



Figure 14. South End of Hebron Pond.



Figure 15. View from West of Hebron Pond.

APPENDIX C

MISSIONARY JOURNEY TO THE NEW HAMPSHIRE GRANTS*

I having received no Orders from the Society to visit the People in the New Settlements up Connecticut River about 200 Miles N. E. from Hebron, as mentioned in several Letters wrote to you - yet having frequent Sollicitations /sic/ from the Settlers and the Advice of the Convention last June at Litchfield who thought it truly interesting to the pious Designs of the venerable Society, I undertook the tour, hoping these things together with my Sincere Endeavours to promote the interest of pure Religion would be judged sufficient to Exculpate me for not waiting your particular Orders -

Therefore upon the tenth of September I left Hebron taking my Clerk with me, we arrived among the poor Emigrants upon the 16th Day of sd. month - the land on the West Side of the River is in the Government of New York, lately taken off from New Hampshire Government - a Territory now sufficient for two large Counties - (viz.) Cumberland and Gloucester, the latter having only one independent Teacher (poor Enough), the former without any kind of teacher, - yet in both Counties are several thousand Souls, who live without the means of Grace, destitute of Knowledge - covered with ignorance and Laden down with Poverty - On the East Side of the River are many Settlements begun, whose Inhabitants much resemble their Neighbors in every uncomfortable Property -

Among those People spent four Weeks travelling from Place to Place Preaching and Baptizing, the people Being carefull to attend Divine Services, many wishing for a Clergyman to reside among them - viz. The People in the Towns of Claremont, Strafford, Thetford, Moretown, Windsor, Orford, Haverhill, etc., etc. being so nigh one another that one Clergyman might accommodate the Whole - In October I travelled West from the River in a pathless Wilderness, by trees marked and by the Compass Crossed the Green Mountain 16een miles over, which begin at the Sea in Newhaven

*Samuel Peters to the Reverend Dr. Daniel Burton, Secretary of the SPG, 26 Dec. 1770, SPG Microfilm 664:41, 867-868.

Extending N. E. to the River St. Laurence and is the Hight of Land between the two Rivers viz. Hudson and Connecticut - on the west of the Mountain lie the towns of Sunderland, Erlington etc. here are a number of very serious Churchmen; with them I tarried three Days, Preached and Baptized etc. - much pleased with their rubrical Devotion and Zeal for Religion owing much to Capt. Hawley, a Worthy and good man. From hence I travelled west to Hudson's River and arrived at Fort Miller 50 miles north of Albany, here I spent Several Days visiting the People, Preaching and Baptising - here are wanted two clergymen very much - from hence I continued my Journey S.W. up Mohock River - Preached at Schenectady - from there to Albany - thence to America Precinct, Sharon etc. and tarried several Days, performed divine Service among them - This America Precinct stands in great need of a Clergyman - from hence I went to Woodbury and spent one Sunday - from thence to my own House upon November. 6th - in this Excursion I Baptized 35 infants and buried one - Preached as often as every other Day, travelled 700 or 800 miles in a way so uneven that I was in perils often - and God be praised for my preservation, and that I am alive to pitt [sic] and pray for those in the Wilderness.

The Spirit of Colonisation Seems worthy of all Encouragement from the Patron of Great Britain, as thereby, very soon, this Dominion will reach from Sea to Sea - his Majesty's Quit Rent, arising from the Land on which those Settlements are forming would Support a Clergyman very well - by joining two or three Towns together - Crown point is a Convenient Place for the Seat of a New Government - if this might take Place it would take in those 140 Townships Patented by the late Governor of New Hampshire, West of Connecticut River in each of Which the Society have a Special Grant of one Right, but they being now affixed to New York, many jars and great Confusion are visible among the first Patentees, by New Grants and new Taxations from the Government of New York - this is no small impediment to the Settlers - a new Government is not a little wanted in order to usher in Settlers, peace and Religion in the Parts. -

Considering my Duty to the venerable Society and to you who give the American Clergy so much Pleasure in being Secretary, I must conclude my Narrative by begging my Prolixity my be Considered not as impertinent, Since I could not give a Tollerable idea of my journey in a few words.

APPENDIX D

CHRONOLOGY OF RESIDENCES

1735 -	1 December	Hebron, Connecticut
1775 -	25 February	Herald's Office, London
1776 -	23 June	Pimlico
	- December	Cobham Row #7, Cold Bath Square
1777 -	16 October	Chez M. Baclens, Arras, France
1778 -	20 June	Fenchurch Street, London
1779 -	16 February	Bartlett's Building #2
	- December	Dyers Building #12, Holborn (Occasionally, Bartlett's Building #5)
1782 -	18 November	No. 1, Charlotte Street, Pimlico
1787 -	12 February	No. 1, Grosvenor Place, Pimlico
1792 -	4 May	No. 5, Queen's Row, Pimlico
1794 -	10 April	No. 22, York Street, Westminster
	- 10 December	No. 3, Kings Row, Pimlico
1798 -		Fleet Street Debtors Prison, mailing address c/o Isaac Scott, 53 West Smithfield Road
1799 -	25 July	Yarmouth, England
	- 18 August	Torena, England
	- 2 November	Yarmouth, England
1800 -	10 March	Waters, Surrey, England
1802 -	9 October	No. 53 West Smithfield Road, London (Last date here is 1 May 1805)

1806 - 5 February	New York City (No exact date for arrival, or specific address)
- 22 March	Washington, D. C.
- 10 October	New York City
1807 - 24 April	50 Essex Street, New York City
- 18 July	Grand St., Corner of 6th Street, New York City
1811 - 16 October	Elizabeth Street and Grand Street, and Broome, New York City
1813 - 26 January	368 Water Street, New York City
1815 - 25 April	Hester Street and Broadway, New York City
1819 - 20 August	#60 Warren Street, New York City
1821 - 6 June	Parole Hook, Jersey
- 15 July	Newjersey City
1824 - 25 September	Bergen, New Jersey
- 25 October	Newjersey City
1825 - 15 October	206 Cherry Street, New York City

APPENDIX E

CHRONOLOGY OF SAMUEL PETERS'S WRITINGS

- 1768, 24 May, Reasons why Mr. Byles Left New London and Returned into the Bosom of the Church of England; and the Volumes which were Mentioned by Mr. B., etc. In a Dialogue Between Minister and People. By T.S. a Present Evidence., New-London, Timothy Green. 12 pp.
- 1770, July, A Sermon, Preached at Litchfield, in Connecticut, Before a Voluntary Convention of the Clergy of the Church of England of Several Provinces in America, June 13, 1770: Published with Notes, to Gratify the very Respectable Assembly Before Whom it was Delivered, and a Copy Given. 15 pp.

The title page also bears the inscriptions,
Ut novissima conseram primis. Cic., Me
abs te immerito esse accusatum resciscis.
Ter., Athenae sub regibus esse desierunt.
Paterc., Aut aliquis latet error: equo ne
credite, Teucris; Quicquid id est, timeo
Danaos. Vir.

- 1780 "Genuine History of Gen. Arnold by an old acquaintance. Account of Major General Arnold, who has abandoned the Rebel service, and joined our Army at New York," The Political Magazine, and Parliamentary, Naval, Military and Literary Journal, London, November-December 1780, Volume I, pp. 690, 748-748.
- 1781 "History of Jonathan Trumbull, the present rebel governor of Connecticut, from his birth early in this century to the present day. His real father certified, Jonathan's progress in life; his various occupations, turns new light; his political vicissitudes; history of a Connecticut law suit; Jonathan's method of paying his creditors; a sketch of Republican principles that have prevailed in Connecticut since its first settlement; Jonathan's inveteracy against Churchmen and

Loyalists; Account of Jonathan's sons and daughters; Jonathan's person and character described," The Political Magazine, London, January 1781, Volume II, pp. 6-10.

A General History of Connecticut from its First Settlement Under George Fenwick, Esq. to its Latest Period of Amity with Great Britain; Including a Description of the Country, and Many Curious and Interesting Anecdotes. To Which is Added, an Appendix, Wherein New and the True Sources of the Present Rebellion in America are Pointed out; Together with the Particular Part Taken by the People of Connecticut in its Promotion, by a Gentleman of the Province, London, J. Bew, No. 28, Pater-Noster Row, x, 3-436 p.

The title page also bears the inscription,
Plus apud me ratio valebit, quam vulgi opinio, Cic. Parad. I.

(Joseph Sabin, A Dictionary of Books Relating to America (1884, xerox edition, Amsterdam, New York, 1962), p. 491, "The first edition is very rare. The so called second edition differs only in the substitution of a new title-page." This second printing was in 1782.)

A General History of Connecticut....London, 1781. To Which is Added a Supplement, Verifying Many Important Statements Made by the Author, New-Haven Republished by D. Clark and Company, Baldwin and Threadway, Printers, 1829. Illustrated with eight engravings, 405 p., front., plates.

The Rev. Samuel Peters' LL.D. General History of Connecticut....London: 1781. To Which are Added, Additions to Appendix, Notes, and Extracts from Letters, Verifying Many Important Statements Made By the Author, Samuel Jarvis McCormick, ed., New York, D. Appleton and Company, 1877. 285 p.

"A Curious discovery of Connecticut Virtue and honesty, by Mr. Harrison, late Collector of the Customs at Newhaven in that colony; together with a Death-bed discovery of Bostonian virtue and honesty." The Political Magazine, London, Volume II, October 1781, pp. 595-596.

"Account of the Dungeon of Symbury Mines in Connecticut, with an engraved sketch of that Rebel Prison for the Loyalists." The Political Magazine,

London, Volume 2, October 1781, pp. 596-597.

"Description of Connecticut River. Wonderful Account of the Narrows, with a figure of them," The Political Magazine, London, Volume II, October, 1781, p. 656.

- 1782 Tyrannicide Proved Lawful, From the Practice and Writings of Jew, Heathens, and Christians. A Discourse, Delivered in the Mines at Symsbury in the Colony of Connecticut, to the Loyalists Confined There by Order of the Congress. On September 19, 1781. By Simeon Baxter, A Licentiate in Divinity, and Voluntary Chaplain to Those Prisoners in the Apartment called Orcus, Printed in America, London; reprinted for S. Bladon, in Pater Noster-Row, 1782, vi, 7-31 p.

The title page also bears the inscriptions, "Having descended; he preached to the Spirits in Prison." I Peter, iii. 19, Regnabit Sanguine Multo - ad Regnum; quisquid venit ab Exilio. Sueton. in Vita Nero.

- 1784 Reply to Remarks on a Late Pamphlet, Entitled A Vindication of Governor Parr and His Council, etc., By J. Viator, Esq., London, Printed for John Stockdale, opposite Burlington-House, Piccadilly, 1784, pp. 48.

- 1785 An Answer to Dr. Inglis's Defense of His Character Against Certain False and Malicious Charges Contained in a Pamphlet, Entitled Reply to Remarks on a Vindication of Governor Parr and His Council, etc., etc., By John Viator, Esq., London, Printed for John Stockdale, opposite Burlington House, Piccadilly, 1785, 8 vo. pp. 40.

The title page also bears the inscriptions, Ecce autem alia pusilla epistola! - Cic. Att., Tu post carecta latebas. - Virg., Quid tu speras me ferocibus tuis verbis protelare? - Lud., Aliud maledicere, aliud accusare. - Cic. pro Cael., Narratis, quod nec ad coelum nec ad terram pertinet. Petron., Licet ad tubicines mittas. - Petron. Satyr.

A Letter to the Rev. John Tyler, A.M. Concerning the Possibility of Eternal Punishments, and the Improbability of Universal Salvation, London, Printed for the Author, 1785, i, 24 p.

also on the title page, "It had been good for that man, if he had not been born." St. Matt. xxvi. 24. "It would be good for that man to be born, who, after suffering the pains and miseries of hell ten tyriads of years, should be admitted to everlasting happiness in heaven, where an eternal happiness will exceed all finite torments." Hugh Peters.

- 1787 A Sermon Preached at Charlotte Chapel, Pimlico, on Sunday the 25th of March, 1787, on the Death of Thomas Moffatt, M.D., Late of New London, in Connecticut, Who Died at Grosvenor-Place in the Parish of St. George, Hanover-Square, March 14, 1787, in the Eighty-seventh Year of His Age, London, Printed by D. and D. Bond, 1787, iii, 28 pp.
- 1788 The Will of Man Regulated and Made Perfect by the Wisdom of God, A Sermon Preached in the Chapel of Newgate, on Sunday the 31st of August, 1788, Before the Sheriffs of London, Previous to the Execution of Sundry Malefactors Under Sentence of Death., The Second Edition., London, Printed by C. G. Purdon, 1788, 26 pp.
- 1807 A History of the Rev. Hugh Peters, A.M., Arch-Intendant of the Prerogative Court of Doctors Commons; Member of the Celebrated Assembly of Divines at the Savoy, Westminster; and Principal Chaplain to the Lord Protector and to the Lords and House of Commons, From the Year 1640 to 1660, with an Appendix, New-York, Printed for the Author, 1807. vi, 155p. front.
- Also on the title page, "Let us praise famous men, and our fathers who begat us; the Lord hath wrought great glory by them." Ecclus. xliv.
- 1822 "History of Hebron." March 21st 1822, New York, not paged (45 pp.)
- Two manuscript copies exist, one in the Connecticut Historical Society Archives and one in the Archives of the Diocese of Connecticut.

APPENDIX F

CHRONOLOGY OF THE "BLUE LAWS" CONTROVERSY

- 1781 Samuel Peters, A General History of Connecticut.
- 1810 James L. Kingsley, "Retrospective Review of Peters' History of Connecticut," Monthly Anthology and Boston Review.
- 1822 The Code of 1650.
- 1829 Samuel Peters, A General History of Connecticut, 1st American edition.
- 1831 John W. Barber, History and Antiquities of New Haven.
- 1838 [Royal Ralph Hinman], The Blue Laws of New Haven.
James L. Kingsley, A Historical Discourse.
- 1839 Leonard Bacon, Thirteen Historical Discourses.
- 1851 Horace Bushnell, Speech for Connecticut.
- 1855 Evert A. and George L. Duyckink, Cyclopedia of American Literature.
- 1856 "Yankee Munchausen," Yale Literary Magazine.
- 1859 William B. Sprague, Annals of the American Episcopal Pulpit.
- 1869 William A. Croffut and John M. Morris, The Military and Civil History of Connecticut.
Frank B. Dexter, Biographical Sketches of Graduates of Yale College, II.
- 1870 "Blue Laws," Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine.
- 1871 William L. Kingsley, "A Long Range Shot," New Englander.

- 1872 Maximillian Schele De Vere, Americanisms, the English of the New World.
- 1876 James H. Trumbull, ed., The True-Blue Laws of Connecticut and New Haven.
- "Was Peters's 'History of Connecticut' a Fabrication?," The Churchman.
- 1877 Thomas W. Coit, "Letters to the Editor, Virginia and Civil Liberty," The Churchman.
- Samuel J. McCormick, "Dr. Samuel Peters," The Churchman.
- Samuel J. McCormick, ed., The Rev. Samuel Peters' LL.D. General History of Connecticut.
- John G. Shea, "The Blue Laws of Connecticut," American Catholic Quarterly Review.
- "Book Review of Trumbull's the True Blue Laws of Connecticut and New Haven, and the False Blue Laws Forged by Peters," The Churchman.
- James H. Trumbull, The Rev. Samuel Peters, His Defenders and Apologists.
- 1878 William L. Kingsley, "The Blue Law Forgeries of Rev. Samuel Peters," Methodist Quarterly Review.
- Charles C. Smith, "The 'Blue Law' 'Forgeries of Peters'," Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society.
- 1881 Charles Hammond, "Peters's History of Connecticut," Connecticut Valley Historical Society Papers and Proceedings.
- 1882 John G. Palfrey, History of New England During the Stuart Dynasty.
- 1882 Samuel Orcutt, A History of the Old Town of Stratford.
- 1887 Elias B. Sanford, A History of Connecticut.
- 1888 Isaac Taylor, Words and Places.
- Charles Deane, "New England," Narrative and Critical History of America, ed. by Justin Winsor.
- 1891 Alexander Johnston, Connecticut, A Study of a Commonwealth-Democracy.

- 1895 Dwight Loomis and J. G. Calhoun, eds., The Judicial and Civil History of Connecticut.
- 1897 Moses Coit Tyler, The Literary History of the American Revolution, 1763-1783.
- 1898 Walter F. Prince, "An Examination of Peters's 'Blue Laws'," Annual Report of the American Historical Association for 1898.

APPENDIX G

THE HEBRON FROG*

I have been much entertained in reading your Considerations on the Substance of the Sun and viewing your Philosophic Capacity rising above the Summit of a Newton's Genius. I here submit a Phenomenon to your inquisitive mind which was manifested to me at Hebron in the State of Connecticut A.D. 1770, in hopes of receiving great Benefit from your enlightened Soul.

I state the case as follows -

A Rock, nearly 20 feet Square on the surfaces and about 10 feet thick lay in the high Road opposite to my House and, as Report said, had been growing higher for 150 years whereby it had become a nuisance to Carriages and Travelers.

To remove the Inconvenience I ordered my Negroes to dig a Ditch around said Rock three feet wide and to go down with it below the Bottom.

This being finished I engaged a Miner to perforate said Rock with an Auger near the Middle. His Auger was two inches wide and with it he made an Hole five feet Deep. He then charged the Rock with Half a pound of Powder and fired it off with a Match while the spectators stood at a proper distance to shun Danger and behold the Effect.

The Explosion was very great. The Rock was rent into Eight or Ten large Pieces besides many fractional ones. We soon hoisted up the Fragments. At last we came to the two Center and largest Pieces through which the Auger had passed. Having taken up the smallest, the largest Piece stood up edgeways. I went down and viewed the path of the Auger which had passed by a cavity as large as a Goose Egg in which lay a Frog who completely filled the Cavity. His thigh was

*The letter is addressed to the Honorable Augustus B. Woodward, Chief Judge of Detroit, State - Michigan, and dated Washington, March 22d 1806. The letter is endorsed Woodward from S Peters, Frog. SPCHS.

bleeding by reason of a wound. The orifice was too small to pull him out. The Miner soon enlarged the Hole and I took out the Frog, bound up the wound and placed him on some mud near a puddle of water which I enclosed with a Board Fence. The Frog was alive and struggling for deliverance when I first discovered him in his Bed which was as Smooth as the inside of a Glass Tumbler. He appeared in perfect Health and Spirits, tho' he had no other means of living in his hole four feet and an half Deep down from the top of the Rock to his bed. All around him was firm and hard as a flint stone except by what Water, Air and Heat reached him through a small crevice not so large as a Knitting Kneedle, and that Crevice was filled with fine Dust from top down to the Bed in which he lay in so close a manner that with difficulty I dug it out with a steel Pointer.

I kept the Frog imprisoned during many weeks for the inspection of the Curious, many of whom are yet living and residing in Hebron and its vicinity.

The Question how the Frog got into the center of that Rock has not been answered.

I ventured a conjecture - that the Frog whilst he was a Small Tadpole had fallen into the Crevice of the Rock which had since varried /sic/ by its growth in the space of many ages, and during said time the Frog by his motion and continued Friction was enabled to extend his Bed in Proportion to his own Growth.

How the Frog could live in that dark Recess has not been told us.

I ventured another Conjecture - from a Small to a greater Bulk. Besides, the Crevice through which the Air, Water and heat descended to the Frog appeared to be like a dark stroke of a Pencil and was less hard than the other Part of the Rock which was occasioned by the Breath of the Frog and rendered the Rock Sickly, and in process of time might have killed the Frog, and thereby it might have opened and let out its Prisoner.

I cannot suppose the Frog was in a torpid state when the Explosion took place as he was alive and in high spirits when I found him one hour after the Explosion.

No animal is capable of holding his existence without Air, heat and water. Of course no Animal ever existed in a Torpid state, destitute of Pulsation, Motion and Respiration.

The Frog was awake at and before the Explosion otherwise blood could not have flowed from his wound nor could he had struggled for his Freedom from his Confinement. Before

the Explosion the Frog had enjoyed sufficient Action and life to enlarge his Habitation during his growth from a Tadpole to a Frog in his dark abode.

To discover the Exact Quantrum of Air, heat and water necessary to prevent Death and support Animation and Motion in Animals requires the Philosophy of a Jefferson and the assending mind of a Woodward, whilst I must content myself by /posing?/ on one Article of natural Faith, viz -

That no Animal was ever alive in a torpid state, or state of Death, where Water, Air and Heat are wrapped up in Dark, destitute of motion and Elasticity.

I doubt not of your Power and Abilities to draw light out of these my dark hints, and thereby you will benefit me and the world.

Wishing you health and success during your being a Child of time, and substantial joys and pleasures when Death shall have killed time I remain with every consideration
Dear Sir, your obliged and very humble Servant /s/ Samuel Peters

APPENDIX H

FUNERAL SERMON*

Psalm XV..V.1 and 2

Lord: who shal abid****
who shall dwell in****

This important Question was **** of King David A Citizen of Sion, to be taught the terms on which God would admit him and others to the Priviledges of his Sanctuary on Earth, and reward with durable glory in Heaven. To this Question God graciously return'd an Answer in the following Words: "He that walketh uprightly; He that worketh Righteousness; and he that Speaketh the Truth in his Heart."

Thus by a voice from Heaven Mankind are inform'd of the Marks of a true Israelite; therefore we clearly See and know what are the Substantial Things which God requires of us and all Men to fit us for his Communion in the Militant Church, and render us capable of receiving the Blessings in the Chh Triumphant. Hence we know that by S **** prove the Truth and Sim **** that the Lo ***** requires of thee, to do Justly; to love Mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God." and St. Paul tells us, that the Kingdom of God consists in Righteousness; and Peace; and Joy in the holy Ghost." For, he that serveth Christ in these things is accepted by God, and approved of by Men."

I shall not dwell in this Discourse on any Point of Divinity; but Speak only on the Qualifications, which the Prophet David gives of a true Citizen of Sion. And then - Shew the Resemblance of the Life of the Reverend and

PP, VIII, 2. It is endorsed in pencil on the back of the last page, "Funeral Sermon Rev S Peters. The corners of pp. 1-4 are lost, hence the ****. The full text of Psalm 15: 1-2 from the 1662 Prayer Book reads,

O Lord, who shall sojourn in thy Tent?
Who shall dwell on thy Holy hill?

He who walks blamelessly, and does what is right,
and speaks truth from his heart;

Venerable Person, whose death and Funeral we now Commemorate; lead to the Character, in this Psalm.

Before I proceed to the character of the deceased it will be proper to mention what Esteem King David has given of the Virtues of Honesty, Justice, and Truth, Which **** Ingredients of a pious m **** Enemies of Peace and Truth **** opinions and Ceremonies **** will find, that no one is further re **** than he is honest and Just -

Men by practising the duties due from Man to Man; manifest the best Proof they can give of their perfect Attention and Worship of God; which Doctrine is demonstrated in the old and new Testaments, by the Lives of the Patriarchs, by the Books of Job, the Proverbs of Solomon, the Sermons of the Prophets; the Parables and Discourses of our Saviour; and the Precepts of the Apostles; therefore, such men as forsake these plain and divine Testimonies of the pure and sincere Religion of God and his Christ, and dress it up in new Fancies as may better suit their Worldly Interests will make men Worshipers of they know not what, but will never make Men truly humble and Substantially good in Reverence to the Eternal Godhead.

Now the aged, the Reverend and v **** of whom I am speaking, wa **** who proved the Truth of his **** honesty and Justice during a **** manifested his Faith in God by his honesty and good Will to Man. He took up no Reproach against his Neighbour, nor any Reward to injure the innocent. He was true to all his Contracts and faithfully kept his Oath to the Church and State in defiance of all temporal Allurements and Dangers. Europe and America can testify of his exceeding worth in all the varieties of his Employments and his Capacity in the Pulpit and in private Life. The noble and ignoble, his numerous and worthy Relatives in Normandy, the British Isles and America can witness the high Generosity of his Soul, the constancy of his Friendship; the Love, the Honour and Sincerity of his Correspondences - The old and new World have born Witness of his Punctuality in all Matters committed to his Trust; that he was highly Loyal to his King, and an Assiduous Defender of the Rights and Priviledges of his native country: they have also witnessed his fervent attachment to the Protestant Religion and yet A resolute Friend of the Rights of all denominations and Sects of Christians, who differed in Doctrines and Ceremonies from his: They also have born witness of the Empire he gained in the Affections of the People by his civility, Hospitality and acts of Kindness; and yet that extended Popularity in which he liv'd and would have made some men giddy, made him more Thoughtful and Steady in Justice and innocence. For: he considered what obligations he was under to be faithful and true; Since Such Multitudes of various Sorts had placed themselves under his Charge and owned him as their Oracle in

Civil and Spiritual Wisdom - therefore; he in Humility guided them; and inspired them with the Same Faith and Integrity on which he constantly lived. He led them with the same Sincerity, the Same Conscience of his Oath to God and Men, under all circumstances and Changes, for no Threatenings, no Sufferings could ever terrify him, nor Prosperity entice him from his Duty - behold! now he has concluded a Life of a true Israelite with untainted Honour; and May all his children, his numerous Relations and Friends imitate and inherit the Glory of his Character - more valuable than Golden Letters on a marble Tomb. And may you all, who are my Hearers; maintain the same illustrious Virtues, now /sic/ the Felicity and Glory of the deceased: and also as Christians remember the Gospel is upheld by Humility and Patience.

I am authorised to say, that the Clergy of all Denominations were gladly receiv'd at his House, and he never appeared more Satisfied than, when his Table was fill'd with their Company - that he was not afraid of their Learning, Prudence and observations, as he relished in a high degree their Wisest Discourses, and was able to match their refined Sayings - I am also inform'd that no reverend Divine who visited his House ever left it with diminish'd Esteem and Respects.: for, he lov'd to be a partaker of the wisdom, conversation, the Joy and Gladness of the Friends of Christ - and thus he answered that part of the Character of a Citizen of Sion in this Psalm. "He honored those that fear'd the Lord - and contemned only the Vile."

In verity; his civility embraced all Men, and though he reprov'd the Vile Sometimes according to his Duty, it was done with Kind and friendly Words; for, it was not in his Nature to be Severe to any Person - he contemn'd the Vile: but not the poor and destitute; because those he always reliev'd - He slighted not those of a mean Parentage, for such he elivated /sic/ oftentimes with his Invitation, and Courteous Notice; neither did he neglect those whose vices and Sins were private, or lived upon Common humour; but left them to God and their own Consciences, not knowing what Saints they might be in future by genuine Repentance.

Notwithstanding all his Losses in the Revolution there remain'd an ample Estate to content his Liberal Soul, without any Curse of the Needy upon it, for it was bless'd with the Providence of God, the Prayers of the pious, of the Poor, the Widows and orphans - Thus shall every Man be blessed, who makes much of those that fear the Lord:- they shall dwell in Plenty all their Days:- they shall descend with Honor to their Graves, and their Memories shall be sacred so long as Learning, Wisdom and Piety remain on the globe. The Community at Large are Witnesses of his Kindness, his Familiarity, his Favours, and the Uprightness of his Ministry;

all know him to have been born a Peace Maker, a Traveller over Europe and America to do good and benefit all. All know how he used his Ministerial Power in reconciling the minds of those that were offended one with the other. How he cool'd their Passions. How he recommend'd the Benefits of Peace and love, and how he open'd the Consequences of Enmity and Revenge by the possitive /sic/ law of Jesus Christ, viz, forgive your Brother his Tresspasses against you, or your Tresspasses against God, shall not be forgiven by God and his Christ on this Side of the Border of Time, nor in the Court of Heaven.

Oftentimes, fierce and contending Parties forgot their Malice by his Presence, and became asham'd of prosecuting his Brother in Suits at Law - because, they knew his Wisdom, Equity and Reputation were so Compleat, that but few could resist his Propositions and Arguments; They also knew how inflexible he was in Honesty, truth and Peace; and therefore they repaired to him as an Arbitrator, and he managed their Controversies like a Lover of Concord, and an Equal Guardian of Peace -: thus for many years he composed more differences by the good Humour of a Gentleman than could have been done by Ministerial Severity too commonly made use of. - His Parishioners gratefully remember his Chearful Looks, his hearty Language with which he received them at his Table, which was always loaded with such Provisions as having served the Parlour, afterwards feasted the Hall, and releaved the Poor at his Gates. - when visitors of different degrees and rank met at his House, he accommodated himself to them all, by Saluting the Gentry with compleat Address, - paid such Respects to the Clergy as would lead others to follow his Example, spoke facetiously and kindly to all and then gave Life and Countenance to the young and bashful by his Special Applications and Testimonies of their Welcome.

His Tenants bore Witness that he was not a hard Landlord - that, he required no more than the ground would produce; that he considered all Accidents; that he always allowed them an honest profit; that he took Pleasure in Seeing them prosper and Thrive; hence they proclaim'd in the Words of Job, "His Land will never cry against him, nor the Furrows thereof Complain."

His Servants boasted of a Gracious Master in whose Service they found no harsh words, nor any Indulgence in Vice - and his Slaves served him with Fidelity more from Love than from fear, and deemed their Situation not as Slavery but as a Preferment - He taught them to read, understand and practise /sic/ the Christians Duty; and like a tender Father shewed them his Compassion and Love by removing them out of an unjust Bondage into their natural State of Freedom.

And now, my beloved Hearers! You may think I have finish'd the Character of this venerable and extraordinary Christian Hero, by the few hints I have given of his multiply'd Worth; but I have greater things to lay before you which will prove him to have been a devout Worshipper of God. - His Integrity, Righteousness and Truth were good and perfect Evidences of the Reality of his Devotion:: for: without them, no Man is Qualified for the Solemn Worship of God, and whoever improves not on them, his Worship is but Mockery and a vain Show -

To be faithful, just and honest, is Nothing more nor less, than "to be without Guile" - which the Scriptures give as the highest Description of a good Christian as appears by the Words of our Saviour Spoken of Nathaniel, "Thou art an Israelite indeed" - and also from the Words of St Peter Spoken concerning the Character of Jesus Christ, "who did no Sin, neither was Guile found in his Mouth" - And St John in his Revelation affirmed also of the highest order of Saints in the Glorious Resurrection, "That in their Mouth was found no Guile" - without this Standing Evidence of the Simplicity and Purity of the Heart, we have no Rule to Judge and define what Constitutes true Religion and Virtue -; as Experience tells us, that Mankind may have such wrong conceptions of the Deity they addore, /sic/ as may verity root out all Remains of Moral Honesty from their Hearts and Practice - Hence we see too many men's Piety to be nothing; but an Ecstasy about God; and their Sacred Zeal, nothing but Self-Love -

Having thus far proved the Integrity, Righteousness and truth of the deceased Friend of Mankind, and found him duly Qualified, (according to the Method of the Psalmist) to be a Worshipper of God, I shall consider how he conducted himself in his Spiritual Priviledge and Station.

The Sincerity of his Temper and Purity of his Affections, admirably composed him for the Solemn Worship of God - He ever manifested a high Sense of the Majesty of the Eternal Spirit, the Author of all Things - A Deep and unaffected Humility govern'd his Thoughts, with Such Grateful Experience of the Mercies of God, that His Soul was always ready to overflow with Praises and thanksgivings -

The Reverential Habit of his Mind being a mixture of Fear, Love and Admiration of God; was owing next to the Grace of God, to a Strict and truly Christian Education which he received from (and was given him, by the care and Prudence of his Wise and Virtuous Parents; for it was in his youth, that he imbib'd those lasting Ideas and impressions of the beauty of religion, which he kept inviolate in the Universities, in the Cities, in his Journies over Land and Seas and carried with him from his Childhood to his Grave;

not withstanding the Temptations and Prophaness, which reigned in a Changing World.

He was born in Connecticut and educated in the Puritan System of Religion until he was of the age of twenty years, when he went to England and became well Acquainted with Dr Sherlock, Bishop of London, and Dr Secker, Archbishop of Canterbury; he in a few years saw the Purity, the Spirit, Holiness and Wisdom of the public Prayers of the Church of England, which he preferred to the System of Extemporary Prayers for Public Worship; and thereupon, received holy Orders in the Church of England, established by King Henry 8th A.D. 1535; to correct some Errors maintained by the Pope, the Head of the Church of Rome; and Successor of St Peter, the first of the twelve Apostles of Jesus Christ; upon whom, (as on a Rock) Christ built his Church." and will continue it during Time. He then (in 1760) returned to his Native Country, Rector of Hebron and Hartford; where he resided fourteen years a useful and predominant Clergyman: and by his Lead, Liberality and Whitfields Exertions, and Wesley Silence, did great Honor to the Church of England; by converting thousands of Puritans to the Church and to the Love of one another - that after all events; he was far from Entertaining any peevish Exceptions against Extemporary Prayers, and often used them because he loved and Cherished them being therewith prepared by the private devotions of his Closset -

He was not one of those who expected Politics and Curiosities from the Pulpit, or that those of a common understanding should be neglected to Supply Dainties for the ears of the Learned; though he was a good Judge of the Purity of Eloquence; the best of Expressions, the Soundness of Argument, the depth of divinity, the Height of real Piety -; yet he was a Favourer of the plainest Instructions.

He was a strict observer of Lent for three Days, in Remembrance of Christ's Fasting forty Days and forty Nights on the Mount - He paid great attention to Easter Day, as Christ rose from the Dead on that Day; and Christmas Day he never failed to Celebrate in a most Solemn Manner, in Remembrance of the Birth of Jesus Christ - who was born and died on the Cross to save the human race from Sin, to the Mercy of God -

He often exclaim'd from the Pulpit: "behold! The Ingratitude of many Christian Professors, who neglect on Christmas Day to Sing the Angelic Song, "Peace on Earth, to Men of Good Will! for I bring you glad Tydings of great Joy! on this Day is born Jesus the Saviour of the World.

Yet the World will not hear him, nor love one another as Christ has loved the World; but the World are fond of

keeping the Birth Day of some desolating Conqueror of his Fellow Mortals - Thus we see half of the Christian World setting more value on the Birth Day of a Murderer and Tyrant, than on the Birth Day of the Son of God, the benevolent Author of Life, Felicity and Glory in Time and Eternity" - "O! Christians; publish not such Ingratitude in Ascalon nor in Hamath, nor in Hobah; lest Admah, Laboim and Tanis mourn and Blush."

Thus far, I have gone to prove that the deceased was a true Son of the Christian Church, and that he rejoiced when she flourished and prayed fervently for her Prosperity - that he revered all members of it; that he has long been intimate with the Prelates and pastors of the protestant Church; and honored and beloved by those venerable Fathers; who have adorned and protected men by their Learning, Prudence and Piety -. Hence I conclude that no Arts, Terrors, or Losses could ever have moved him from his Profession and Practice towards God and his Christ - and his love to Mankind -

I might add many things respecting the high Character of the departed Father and Benefactor of the old and new Worlds: but, I will content myself by reporting how he died - He had a clear Prospect of his approaching End, and like Barzillai said to those about him, "I cannot taste what I Eat, or what I drink: - I wish not to cross Jordan any more: but to go and rest on the Spiritual Zion on the holy Mount of God - and be above all the Storms /sic/ and Confusions of a dying World - where truth and Holiness live; and where Religion consists only in praise and love - My daughter Hanna Delvena - My Son - William Birdseye, not present with me - farewell-! My Blessings attend you, your Families and your Children unto a thousand Generations - in due time you will come to me in yonder World and enjoy all you want with me, your Mothers and all our Blessed Dead in Christ -

Farewell to all my Friends now present and to all who are absent; accept my Gratitude for all your Loves and Favors - accept my commendatory Prayers, and Ejaculations for you, myself and all Mankind -!

O! Eternal Spirit, the Light, Spirit and Life of all Creation, give acceptance to our Faith and Repentance, and receive our Spirits into Everlasting Felicity through the infinite Mercy in Jesus Christ -

He then composed himself, for another Life, without any Convulsions, Rattles, or Pangs of Death, resigned his Breath and fell asleep in the Lord - What now remains for us all? Let us comfort one another, that through the mercies of a gracious God, who delights in the Salvation of Mankind, our noble and dear Brother is now in Possession

of that State of Felicity which the Souls of humble Believers receive after this Life: and that he is now joyning in the Hallilujahs of that Triumphant Church which is Seated above all Calamities reigning in the Militant Church. There let us leave his Soul at Rest, and in the Mean Time, let us endeavour like him to be eminent in Righteousness, Fidelity, integrity, in Speaking of the Truth and in doing Good; and also let us die in the Same Faith, Prayers and Ejaculations with which he died; then we also shall rest with him on the same holy Mount of God, and see no more Sorrows, feel no more Pangs of the Heart, hear no more the cry of what do you Want. - for in that Glorious House we shall be near and like our God; "Where flesh and Sin no more Control the Sacred Pleasures of the Soul" -

What Sinners value, may we resign and Say and Sing, "Lord, I have Enough; for thou are Mine" -

May those substantial and Sincere Joys be granted to us all by the infinite mercy of God through the Merits of Jesus Christ - Amen.

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VITA

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Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Thesis: THE REVEREND SAMUEL PETERS (1735-1826):
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