

Jeffrey Matthew Groszkowski. COD, CONTRACTS, AND CAPITAL: NEW ENGLAND'S MOTIVATIONS FOR ATTACKING LOUISBOURG IN 1745. (Under the direction of Dr. Carl E. Swanson, Dr. Michael A. Palmer, Dr. Larry Tise and Dr. Lauriston King) Department of Maritime Studies, June 2007.

The fairly extensive existing literature on Louisbourg has skirted the importance of the amalgamation of New England's merchant and political forces in conceiving, supporting, and engaging in the 1745 expedition against the French colonial seaport. This thesis will show how the War of Austrian Succession, and how Louisbourg in particular, cemented the governor's control and strengthened New England's faltering economy. This was accomplished by providing merchants with government contracts and an infusion of British currency after the siege. New England's reclaiming of Canso, subjugation of Louisbourg, and subsequent destruction of the French fishery allowed the British colonies to retain their supremacy within the international cod fishery. The political and economic incentives show that the siege was not such a radical or daring act on the New Englanders' part. To merchants, fishermen, and politicians it offered the chance for monetary gain, power, and in some cases, both.

Cod,
Contracts, and Capital
New England's Motivations for Attacking
Louisbourg in 1745

A Thesis
Presented to
the Faculty of the Department of History
East Carolina University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts in Maritime History

by
Jeffrey Matthew Groszkowski

June 2007

Acknowledgements

This thesis would not have been completed without the help and guidance of many individuals. I would first like to thank my undergraduate professors Dr. Neal Bushoven and Howard Reichner for teaching me to think outside the box and Dr. George Melton for helping to cultivate a love of history in me. I would also like to thank Rebecca Futrell, Karen Underwood, Karen Jarman and Barbara Utz for their warm smiles and making sure I was always registered for the right classes. I was lucky enough to have an encouraging thesis committee whose comments and suggestions made this work a much stronger and more cohesive final product. My committee members were Dr. Michael Palmer, Dr. Larry Tise and Dr. Lauriston King. A very special thank you is reserved for my thesis director, Dr. Carl E. Swanson who first suggested Louisbourg as a possible thesis topic. Dr. Swanson, I thoroughly enjoyed our conversations on colonial history, both in and out of class. To my friends who lovingly pushed me to finish, thanks for the support and needed prodding. My most heartfelt gratitude and appreciation goes out to Alexandra Williamson for the many late nights and countless hours you spent editing. Alexandra, you're the best! I would also like to acknowledge Jackson, Alexandra's lab-greyhound mix, for his silent wisdom. The ocean deserves a big thanks, for relaxing me when I needed it most. My final and most profuse thank you goes out to my parents Mary Jane and Joseph Groszkowski whose encouragement, love, generosity and patience have been as constant and dependable as the North Star. You have always led me in the right direction. Thank you so much!

Table of Contents

Chapter 1-Filling the Void: Linking Louisbourg and New England's Political, Economic, and Military Histories 1-15

Chapter 2-Merchant Desires 16-39

Chapter 3-Offensive Miscue: French Attempts at Recapturing Nova Scotia 40-62

Chapter 4-Buying Loyalty: William Shirley and the Politics of War in Colonial Massachusetts 63-90

Chapter 5-A Blanket, Ginger, and Twenty-Five Shillings: The Common Soldier's Reward 91-140

Chapter 6-Epilogue 141-146

Bibliography 147-153

Appendix A-Time-Line

Appendix B-Louisbourg Map¹

Appendix C-Map of New England and Nova Scotia²

¹ Douglas E. Leach, *Arms for Empire: A Military history of the British Colonies in North America, 1607-1763* (New York, 1973), 234.

² George A. Rawlyk, *Nova Scotia's Massachusetts: A Study of Massachusetts-Nova Scotia Relations, 1630 to 1784* (Montreal, 1978), viii.

Chapter 1

Filling the Void: Linking Louisbourg and New England's Political, Economic, and Military Histories

One of the few bright points for Britain during the War of Austrian Succession was the successful capture of the French fortress of Louisbourg in 1745. A raw New England colonial army supported by a British naval contingent accomplished this impressive feat. This thesis will focus on the capture of a seemingly impregnable French stronghold by New England farmers, fishermen, and merchants. It will also examine the economic and political reasons for the British colonial invasion of Cape Breton Island.

The push against Louisbourg succeeded only because of the mutual support of business and political factions within New England. The merchants and politicians were often one and the same, while the fishing and farming interests were completely separate from the wealthier and more influential merchants. Yet even with the divisions of wealth and class, New England's merchants, politicians, fishermen, and farmers joined hands for what they perceived to be their mutual benefit. To answer why these different groups came together in support of the expedition, it is necessary to examine why Ile Royale was so economically valuable; moreover, it is important to acknowledge what each faction hoped to gain from the territorial acquisition.

Louisbourg, the capital of the French colony of Ile Royale, was located on Cape Breton Island along the entrance to the Gulf of the St. Lawrence. Louisbourg bolstered France's ability to compete in the Atlantic cod fishery through its often ice-free harbor

and close proximity to fishing banks. Cod was both economically and strategically an important resource for Britain and France in the eighteenth century. Cod's economic value stemmed from its ability to be preserved through either salt, drying or a combination of the two.¹ This fish, with its protruding lower jaw and well developed chin barbell, was an important export to Europe and the West Indies. Cod fit well into the mercantilist framework of the eighteenth century, providing New France and New England with a natural resource that could be exchanged for finished goods from the mother country. Strategically, the fishery also served as a "nursery of seamen" that could be drawn upon during times of war.² New England and New France embraced the opportunity to finally secure a monopoly on the cod fisheries through military aggression at the beginning of King George's War.

New England's mercantile and fishing interests were the strongest proponents of the Louisbourg expedition. These two coastal groups were concerned over the hazy territorial fishing boundaries stipulated in the Treaty of Utrecht and New France's economic incursion into the formerly British-dominated Iberian fish trade during the War of Jenkins' Ear.³ Along with the desire for complete control of the valuable fisheries, merchants also supported the expedition because they would be able to profit from the large military contracts needed to supply New England's army and navy. Politicians such as William Shirley, the governor of Massachusetts, promoted the plan because it provided him with increased patronage that he subsequently used to solidify his control within the

¹ B. A. Balcom, *The Cod Fishery of Ile Royale: 1713-1758* (Ottawa, 1984), 11.

² Ibid.

³ Julian Gwyn, *Frigates and Foremasts: The North American Squadron in Nova Scotia Waters 1745-1815* (Vancouver, 2003), 6; James G. Lydon, "Fish for Gold: The Massachusetts Fish Trade with Iberia, 1700-1773," *New England Quarterly* 54 (1981), 548.

colonial government. Louisbourg's economic incentives were the primary draw for the farmers and fishermen who comprised the rank and file of the invading army and navy. Governor Shirley enticed these men to join the expedition by promising them the right to plunder Louisbourg once it capitulated.

Political support, organization, and military leadership by key governmental and economic figures within colonial New England and the more distant mother country highlight the advantages that Louisbourg could provide for those who captured the French colonial port. The expedition against Louisbourg is transformed from a reckless attempt against the French king's supposed "Gibraltar of the West"⁴ to a calculated plan for political and economic stability within Massachusetts, and to a lesser extent, New England as a whole once the interactions between government and business have been examined.

An analysis of the economic advantages of a Union Jack flying above Louisbourg is essential to clearly understanding the motives of those who promoted the expedition; many historians, however, have either taken a rather cursory look at the economic and political factors or completely ignored them in favor of discussing the purely military aspects of the 1745 siege. Even with more recent developments of the historiography relating to the capture of Louisbourg, there is still an obvious void left to fill. The absence of an in-depth study describing the economic and political motives of New Englanders is the "missing link" between more recent economic and earlier military histories of Cape Breton.

⁴ Louisbourg was described as the "Gibraltar of the West," because of its large defenses.

Francis Parkman's *A Half-Century of Conflict* is a prime example of the purely military histories that make up much of Louisbourg's early historiography. Parkman, the famous American historian, was hailed for his vivid and poetic descriptions of America's past, though his work is not without its flaws. This historical text is weak in explaining both the political and economic climate of New England.⁵ Although Parkman attempted to show Governor Shirley and other prominent politicians' roles in promoting the expedition, he did not discuss their motives. *A Half-Century of Conflict* surprisingly devoted three whole pages to religion's role in supporting the expedition, whereas the economic incentives were only implied. Equally frustrating, Parkman mentioned and then quickly digressed from the subject of unemployed fishermen.⁶ Similarly, the issue of illicit trade is almost completely ignored, with the author only saying: "there had been much intercourse between Boston and Louisbourg, which had largely depended on New England for provisions."⁷ The text's scant information on the bountiful fisheries is its most glaring deficiency. Parkman simply stated that the fisheries "were nearly as vital to New England as was the fur-trade to New France" and then ventured no further.⁸ One sentence on this subject is clearly insufficient, considering that fishing and mercantile interests formed the vanguard in promoting the expedition. Parkman's work concerning the actual siege went into significant detail and used several new sources. *A Half-Century of Conflict* became the standard text on the 1745 campaign and led to a string of Parkman

⁵ Francis Parkman, *A Half-Century of Conflict* (Boston, 1892) 2: 103.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid., 87.

⁸ Ibid., 83.

disciples such as George M. Wrong, who tended to ignore the political, economic, and social forces that were at play within New England and New France before the war.⁹

Wrong's extensive two volume effort entitled *The Rise and Fall of New France* suffered from an inability to look beyond the military aspects of the siege. The author's main argument was "that amateur officers and men, led tactfully, can compete with regulars in efficiency."¹⁰ Since Wrong's focus centered on the fighting capabilities of the New England militia, he tended to ignore the fishing and mercantile interests. Like his predecessor Parkman, Wrong stated the importance of the cod fishery to Louisbourg and Boston but failed to expand upon it.¹¹ Vague passages are abundant throughout this work and are compounded by a complete lack of citation. Wrong never clearly stated that economics were integral to the formation of the expedition. The closest the author came to covering the economic issue is when he stated "France was the eternal enemy and Louisbourg was reputed to be rich, and fear and greed were united in the appeal to England for aid."¹² Historian W. P. Morell reviewed Wrong's work and stated how Parkman and Wrong shared a single-minded analysis: "[H]e supplements Parkman in many places, but seldom, if ever, sets out to prove him wrong. His views are, in general, the received views, and his aim has obviously been rather to avoid controversy than to excite it."¹³ The traditional position Parkman sculpted in the late nineteenth century was bolstered by Wrong over thirty years later.

⁹ George M. Wrong, *The Rise and Fall of New France* (New York, 1928) 2: 639.

¹⁰ Ibid., 680.

¹¹ Ibid., 639.

¹² Ibid., 672.

¹³ W. P. Morell, "Review of *The Rise and Fall of New France*," *The English Historical Review* 45 (1930): 487-88.

The Colonial Wars: 1689-1762 by Howard H. Peckham strongly followed Parkman's standard, but was not as in-depth of a work as *A Half-Century of Conflict*, mainly because Peckham aimed for a general audience.¹⁴ Like the two previous authors, Peckham failed to present any detailed examination of Massachusetts' political and economic situation prior to the siege. Peckham did suggest that mercantile and fishing interests were "aroused by the near escape of Annapolis Royal from capture."¹⁵ Sadly, there was no supporting information to strengthen this insight. While Parkman, Wrong, and Peckham's purely military historical analysis yielded much in terms of understanding the battle and eighteenth-century siege warfare, they provided only slight insight about the underlying causes for the large scale operation against New France.

Not until the publication of J. S. McLennan's *Louisbourg from Its Foundation to Its Fall* did a historian go beyond rehashing Parkman.¹⁶ McLennan's work was unique because of its more than cursory inspection of the cod fisheries. Where previous histories simply acknowledged the importance of cod to Louisbourg and Boston, McLennan provided his readers with a careful description of both the shore and banks fisheries, along with distances from New France and New England ports to the primary fishing banks.¹⁷ Chapter twelve of *Louisbourg from Its Foundation to Its Fall* was entirely focused on Ile Royale's economic condition. This chapter's most informative facet concerns Louisbourg's swift metamorphous into "a trading centre, . . . where France,

¹⁴ Howard H. Peckham, *The Colonial Wars: 1689-1762* (Chicago, 1964).

¹⁵ Ibid., 99.

¹⁶ J. S. McLennan, *Louisbourg from Its Foundation to Its Fall, 1713-1758* (London, 1918).

¹⁷ Ibid., 218-222.

Canada, New England, and the West Indies mutually exchanged the[ir] commodities.”¹⁸ McLennan correctly expanded upon Louisbourg’s entrepôt status by examining New England’s economic relations with the French port. Some of McLennan’s most detailed information comes from chapters four and five, where the author tackled the dispute over Canso’s fishery and Ile Royale’s thriving illicit trade with New England. The text’s only glaring deficiency is its failure to explain the political motivations of the king’s chief executive in Massachusetts. Even though McLennan failed to state the substantial patronage Shirley wielded over his political friends and foes, the author did address Massachusetts’ fiscal tribulations. The true historiographic value of *Louisbourg from Its Foundation to Its Fall* is that it both acknowledged and examined the fisheries’ output as well as confrontations arising from European, French, and English colonial fishermen striving for an ever larger share in the depleted fishing banks of the early 1740s.

Just as historians such as George Wrong followed Parkman’s interpretation of the conflict, McLennan influenced future historians to look at the economic conditions of Ile Royale and the New England fisheries. G. A. Rawlyk’s *Yankees at Louisbourg* followed McLennan in emphasizing the importance of the fisheries to both colonies.¹⁹ Unlike McLennan or Parkman, Rawlyk addressed the economic instability of the French garrison town in detail. *Yankees at Louisbourg* stated that the town’s inability to feed itself was a major stimulus for the hostilities that erupted in the summer of 1744.²⁰ Rawlyk expanded upon this theory by arguing that Louisbourg’s offensive capabilities were doubtful

¹⁸ Ibid., 223.

¹⁹ G.A. Rawlyk, *Yankees at Louisbourg* (Orono, ME, 1967).

²⁰ Ibid., 4.

because of its agricultural infirmity, unreliable sea power, and inadequate communications.²¹ The author was also quick to draw the reader's attention to the successful economic penetration of the French communities on Ile Royale by influential New England merchants, suggesting that economic inroads helped to convince New Englanders of the benefits of acquiring Louisbourg for the king of England's purse and their own.

John Robert McNeill's *Atlantic Empires of France and Spain: Louisbourg and Havana, 1700-1763* scrutinized and expanded upon Rawlyk's assertion that Louisbourg could not be an offensive threat for the French to wield in the New World without strong naval support.²² *Atlantic Empires* was distinctive to the historiography of Louisbourg for several reasons. First, this work was a purely economic history of the French colony rather than a military one. Second, and more importantly, McNeill adequately defended the idea that while Louisbourg was a financial success in terms of the French fishery, it was impossible for the port to be a serious offensive menace to New England because it lacked reliable naval support.²³ Furthermore, the fortress was unable to guard and control the St. Lawrence and subsequently the interior of New France without an imperial navy equal to Britain's. *Atlantic Empires* assessed the relative strength of the French colony by examining its naval force and France's defensive strategy in the eighteenth century. By showing the relative weakness of Louisbourg without an imperial navy, McNeill not only presented the French Ministry of Marine's misguided understanding of

²¹ Ibid., 15.

²² John Robert McNeill, *Atlantic Empires of France and Spain: Louisbourg and Havana, 1700-1763* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1985).

²³ Ibid., 84.

Louisbourg, but also the grossly inaccurate proposition promoted by Parkman, Wrong, and other historians that the fortress was the key to North America.²⁴

While McNeill's work was groundbreaking in a number of areas, he was just one of several historians within the last thirty years who looked at Louisbourg not just as the backdrop of two colonial sieges, but also as a French colony with a unique and colorful social and economic history. Other authors who have written about the economic side of Louisbourg include B. A. Balcom's in-depth study of the cod fisheries and Christopher Moore's work on trade and the mercantile community that thrived within the walls of the French outpost.²⁵ Balcom's *The Cod Fishery of Ilse Royale: 1713-1758* provided a comprehensive assessment of Louisbourg's most valuable resource and suggested that the fishery's dominance retarded the development of other industries by concentrating the population in areas of the island that were not suited for agricultural development.²⁶ Moore's "Merchant Trade in Louisbourg, Isle Royale" correctly argued that mercantile interests encouraged "the fishery to develop from a craft to a business, in which merchants could participate and dominate."²⁷ While most of Moore's study was extremely detailed, the subject of illicit trade was absent. Although the author tried to combat the false notion that Louisbourg's trade was dominated by New England smugglers, his brevity on this small yet important facet of the economy is a glaring deficiency. Economic histories like Balcom's and Moore's are extremely beneficial for

²⁴ Ibid., 94.

²⁵ Christopher Moore, "Merchant Trade in Louisbourg, Isle Royale" (M.A. thesis, University of Ottawa, 1977).

²⁶ Balcom, *The Cod Fishery*, 18.

²⁷ Moore, "Merchant Trade in Louisbourg, Isle Royale," 134-135.

understanding Ile Royale's role as an entrepôt and its prominence within France's North American fishery.²⁸

Just as military histories of the 1745 siege grossly overshadowed economic issues, political motivations have also been obscured. Robert Zemsky's *Merchants, Farmers, and River Gods* certainly addressed many of the political reasons for the attack on Cape Breton, even if this work was not centered on the siege itself. Zemsky's was an excellent source for understanding Massachusetts' often confusing world of eighteenth-century colonial politics.²⁹ *Merchants, Farmers, and River Gods* was valuable for grasping who played key roles in the colony's governance and how the proximity of commercial and political buildings allowed merchants to socialize, conduct business, and ultimately influence politicians.³⁰ Zemsky strengthened this point by describing the practice of "go[ing] on 'change'" and that Boston's Court House contained "both the General Court and the town's merchant exchange."³¹ The only limitation of this work was its scope, which focused squarely on the machine of New England politics, and so Louisbourg was discussed only slightly.

Biographical studies of some of the key participants in the 1745 siege also shed light onto the political and economic benefits that Louisbourg could provide to those daring enough to attack it. Byron Fairchild's *Messrs. William Pepperrell: Merchants at Piscataqua* is an excellent study of a New England merchant who went from trading with

²⁸ Balcom, *The Cod Fishery*, 18.

²⁹ Robert Zemsky, *Merchants, Farmers, and River Gods: An Essay on Eighteenth-Century American Politics* (Boston, 1971).

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 186-187.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 11, 187.

Louisbourg to commanding the force that conquered it.³² While this work provided the reader with abundant information on how Pepperrell conducted most of his trade, illicit dealings with Ile Royale received only a few paragraphs.³³ John A. Schutz's *William Shirley: King's Governor of Massachusetts* showed the political advantages and control that the governor wielded over the province through an increased defense budget and military contracts.³⁴ The author superbly demonstrated how Shirley's handling of the land bank scheme garnered the newly-commissioned governor political friends who later supported the Louisbourg expedition.³⁵ While Schutz usually provided extensive details, the author's account of Shirley's visit to Louisbourg was meager. The author not only failed to effectively address the reasons for the soldiers' mutiny, he also ignored Shirley's raising of pay that ultimately calmed the tempest. *William Shirley: King's Governor of Massachusetts* was most effective in explaining how the governor dangled military contracts in front of the merchant community. Thomas Hancock was one such merchant, who desired the lucrative contracts that Governor Shirley offered. W. T. Baxter's study of this resourceful and sometimes unscrupulous merchant showed how Hancock and his cronies enriched themselves through support of the expedition, as other commerce contracted with the coming of war.³⁶

³² Byron Fairchild, *Messrs. William Pepperrell: Merchants at Piscataqua* (Ithaca, NY, 1954).

³³ *Ibid.*, 162-163.

³⁴ John A. Schutz, *William Shirley: King's Governor of Massachusetts* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1961).

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 62.

³⁶ W. Baxter, *The House of Hancock: Business in Boston 1724-1775* (Cambridge, MA, 1965).

Julian Gwyn's *The Enterprising Admiral: The Personal Fortune of Admiral Sir Peter Warren* was another essential work for studying the Louisbourg campaign.³⁷ Gwyn's detailed research of Warren, who served as naval commander during the operation, was mostly concerned with the officer's accumulation of wealth. The chapter entitled "The Origin of His Fortune" provided the reader with a detailed explanation of the amended prize law of 1708. By understanding the large gains that Warren and his naval forces accrued, it is easy to see why animosity swelled between the colonial army and the Royal Navy. Although *Enterprising Admiral* suffered from its narrow focus on Warren's finances, Gwyn's latest work, *An Admiral for America: Sir Peter Warren, Vice Admiral of the Red, 1703-1752*, provided more information on Warren's time at Louisbourg.³⁸ *An Admiral for America* documented Warren's cooperation with colonials during the St. Augustine campaign, his business dealings, marriage to an American, and how these events helped the naval officer successfully maintain relative harmony with his colonial counterparts. While most biographical studies are quite informative, their scope is often limited and can sometimes obscure the overall political and economic web that the Louisbourg expedition created.

Schutz's study of Shirley is typical of the works discussed because it acknowledges and covers the weaving of political and economic interest only as far as the main subject of the work is involved in that web. Because Schutz's study is a biography of the governor, it does not provide essential information on the New England –Ile

³⁷ Julian Gwyn, *The Enterprising Admiral: The Personal Fortune of Admiral Sir Peter Warren* (Montreal, 1974).

³⁸ Julian Gwyn, *An Admiral for America: Sir Peter Warren, Vice Admiral of the Red, 1703-1752* (Gainesville, FL, 2004).

Royale trade other than mentioning Shirley's heightened prosecution of smugglers during his early years in office.³⁹ While many of the works touch on political and economic factors within New England and New France, they are either too broad or too focused to answer why the governor, the merchants, and the average New England colonists engaged in what many regarded as a wild goose chase.⁴⁰

The fairly extensive existing literature on Louisbourg has skirted the importance of the amalgamation of New England's merchant and political forces in conceiving, supporting, and engaging in the 1745 expedition against the French colonial seaport. This thesis will show how the War of Austrian Succession, and how Louisbourg in particular, cemented the governor's control and strengthened New England's faltering economy. This was accomplished by providing merchants with government contracts and an infusion of British currency after the siege. New England's reclaiming of Canso, subjugation of Louisbourg, and subsequent destruction of the French fishery allowed the British colonies to retain their supremacy within the international cod fishery. The political and economic incentives show that the siege was not such a radical or daring act on the New Englanders' part. To merchants, fishermen, and politicians it offered the chance for monetary gain, power, and in some cases, both. Though Louisbourg was not a viable threat to New England while under French control, its capture would be strategically important to the British. With the British in control of Louisbourg, the port could be used as a staging area for a future invasion of Canada. The combination of

³⁹ Schutz, *William Shirley*, 68.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 90.

Louisbourg's location in tandem with Britain's superior naval force would have been a serious military threat to the French.

The first section of this work demonstrates the void between earlier military histories and the more recent economic and social histories, the chapters that follow stress the centrality of the economic factors during the 1745 Louisbourg siege. Each chapter highlights the economic or political motivations of the many groups that were involved in this vast undertaking. Chapter two, entitled "Merchant Desires," first analyzes what New Englanders' accrued from their commercial interactions with Ile Royale, and then demonstrates how the possible acquisition of Louisbourg could stimulate New England's sluggish economy. Whereas chapter two examines the British colonial merchants' view of Louisbourg, chapter three takes a French perspective of the fortresses' capabilities. "Offensive Miscue: French Attempts at Recapturing Nova Scotia" discusses Louisbourg's failure as an offensive threat. This chapter also shows the economic motivations that prompted the French leadership's attack on Canso and Annapolis Royal. Chapter four's "Buying Loyalty: William Shirley and the Politics of War in Colonial Massachusetts" explains how the governor of Massachusetts used the Louisbourg expedition's lucrative commissions and war contracts to end large scale mercantile opposition to his administration, while at the same time stimulating the economy. Chapter five's "A Blanket, Ginger, and Twenty-Five Shillings: The Common Soldier's Reward" covers the extensive siege of Louisbourg. This section examines how the majority of New England soldiers enlisted under the auspices of capturing French booty. The chapter also explains how lenient capitulation terms barred the average soldier from

collecting plunder. The final section of this thesis is an epilogue that briefly restates the economic and political motivations of the campaign and what the different segments of New England society reaped from battering down the walls of France's "Gibraltar of the West."

Chapter 2

Merchant Desires

The French vessel *Semslack* quietly sailed into the recently renamed Port St. Louis on Cape Breton's northeast coastline on September 2, 1713.¹ The port's former moniker, English Harbor, had at one time described the nationality of the fishermen who dried their catch on its shore.² By the time of *Semslack*'s arrival, however, English Harbor was one of several deserted European fishing communities that were now quickly returning to wilderness.³

Only a coastline of thickly wooded trees greeted the French colonists' arrival. As *Semslack*'s anchor speedily descended through the cool waters toward the harbor floor, the crew prepared to unload provisions and passengers to the seemingly uninhabited shore. The task of transporting the cargo of axes, food stuffs, fishing gear, fishing boats, livestock, and other essential tools to the island was quite laborious. Aiding the crew in its endeavor was a small band of 116 men, 10 women, and 23 children.⁴ Many of these men and women were former inhabitants of Placentia, Newfoundland, a French colony recently ceded to Great Britain after Queen Anne's War.⁵ These displaced French

¹ J. S. McLennan, *Louisbourg from Its Foundation to Its Fall, 1713-1758* (London, 1918), 11.

² *Ibid.*, 9.

³ George M. Wrong, ed., *Louisbourg in 1745: The Anonymous Lettre d'un Habitant de Louisbourg* (Toronto, 1897), 25.

⁴ McLennan, *Louisbourg from Its Foundation to Its Fall*, 12.

⁵ Wrong, ed., *Louisbourg in 1745*, 25.

refugees, along with a small detachment of soldiers, became the founders of Louisbourg: a community established to offset the loss of French fishing outposts in North America.⁶

Within a short time Louisbourg became the capital of the Bourbon King's colony of Ile Royale and the shining star of France's cod industry. While Louisbourg eventually flourished because of its proximity to bountiful fishing banks, the first year of its existence was less than stellar. Like its English neighbors to the south, Louisbourg almost failed during its infancy with the onset of winter. The harshness of Cape Breton's weather coupled with inadequate supplies and the inability of re-supply ships to reach the colonists only lengthened the first winter's savagery.⁷ France's failure to suitably provide for its colony haunted Louisbourg throughout its existence. If Ile Royale were to survive during times of dearth, it needed a more dependable source of foodstuffs.

The French colonists relied on their former enemy for their victuals. By 1714, opportunistic Boston merchants were sending vessels northward in hopes of obtaining French goods for their cargoes.⁸ Within a year of Louisbourg's founding, an economic tie between New England and Ile Royale was established and subsequently fostered. Though both governments frowned on trade between the French and English colonists, the economic exchange grew over time and was only successfully curtailed during war.⁹

Ile Royale and New England's burgeoning commerce subsequently cultivated significant connections among mercantile interests in both outposts. Numerous politicians, merchants, and military personnel engaged in trade between Boston and

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ McLennan, *Louisbourg from Its Foundation to Its Fall*, 13.

⁸ Donald F. Chard, "The Impact of Ile Royale on New England: 1713-1763" (Ph.D. diss., University of Ottawa, 1976), 12.

⁹ *Boston Evening-Post*, 28 May 1744.

Louisbourg. Some of the leading English colonists who traded with Louisbourg were also involved in the 1745 attack against its fortress. Therefore, it is both interesting and relevant to examine these connections.

This chapter considers what New England merchants, especially those from Massachusetts, acquired from their French connection. With a proper understanding of what New England merchants and fishermen lost with the commencement of hostilities, the siege on Louisbourg becomes more understandable. By examining the financial ties that key British military and governmental figures shared with Louisbourg, it becomes clear that the impetus for the 1745 expedition was largely economic in nature.

The French had to possess items that were scarce in Massachusetts and the surrounding colonies for New England trading vessels to have consistently anchored in Gabarus Bay. New England merchants found Louisbourg to be a relatively close port from which they could obtain French manufactured goods as well as rum and molasses from the West Indies.¹⁰ These commodities were either very expensive or illegal for New Englanders to acquire because of mercantile trade laws.¹¹ Conversely, these goods were readily available to English colonists at Louisbourg since Ile Royale often needed foodstuffs and building materials for its own consumption and that of the French West Indies. Poor soil, emphasis on fishing, and France's inability to sufficiently re-supply the colony only partially account for Louisbourg's high demand for imports. The marine bureaucracy was the other motivating factor for the elevated shipping. French authorities

¹⁰ Christopher Moore, "The Other Louisbourg: Trade and Merchant Enterprise in Ile Royale 1713-58," in Eric Krause, Carol Corbin, William O'Shea, eds., *Aspects of Louisbourg* (Sydney, NS, 1995), 230.

¹¹ The Lords Justices to William Shirley, 10 Sept. 1741, in Charles Henry Lincoln, ed., *Correspondence of William Shirley: Governor of Massachusetts and Military Commander in America, 1731-1760* (New York, 1912), 1: 73-76.

quickly molded the new French port into an entrepôt for facilitating the movement of goods among the mother country, Canada, and the West Indies. Therefore, Louisbourg merchants shipped some agricultural produce back to the West Indies and needed New England commodities to make up for supplies re-exported to the Caribbean and Canada.¹² Cape Breton essentially became the intermediary for English merchants to trade indirectly with the Caribbean avoiding the French edicts of 1717 and 1728, which banned foreign commerce in the French West Indies.¹³

Along with the rum, molasses, and French manufactured goods that New Englander's coveted, there was a more desirable advantage to trading with Ile Royale. This benefit took the form of specie, something that all English merchants desperately sought. British colonists could receive gold and silver when it was obtainable at Ile Royale and fish when it was not.¹⁴ While specie and colonial paper bills both allowed New England merchants to acquire English manufactures, hard money also helped reduce the trade deficit between New England and Great Britain.¹⁵ Unlike colonial currency, coined money was highly prized because its value was not affected by extreme inflation.¹⁶ Massachusetts Governor William Shirley went so far as to say that,

¹² Chard, "The Impact of Ile Royale on New England," 34.

¹³ Donald F. Chard, "The Price and Profits of Accommodation: Massachusetts-Louisbourg Trade, 1713-1744," in Krause, Corbin, and O'Shea, eds., *Aspects of Louisbourg*, 216.

¹⁴ Chard, "The Impact of Ile Royale on New England," 44.

¹⁵ Richard Partridge to Messrs. Sandys and Campbell, 2 May 1740, in Gertrude S. Kimball, ed., *The Correspondence of the Colonial Governors of Rhode Island, 1723-1775* (Freeport, NY, 1969), 1: 155-158.

¹⁶ William Shirley to the duke of Newcastle, 23 Jan. 1741/2, in Lincoln, ed., *Correspondence of William Shirley*, 1: 79-80.

"Depreciations of the Bills . . . has been the chief, if not only Ground and Occasion of all the Mischiefs of our paper Currency."¹⁷

While debtors enjoyed the quick depreciation of colonial bills, New England merchants often suffered from the currency's downward spiral. Massachusetts' economic instability caused many merchants (who were also legislators) to seek ways to improve the ailing financial system. The Silver Bank, trade with Cape Breton, and the Louisbourg expedition were all creative actions toward infusing Massachusetts with a more sound currency. The latter two endeavors were more successful than the bank schemes, but still only small bandages on the gaping wound that was New England's financial quagmire.

Massachusetts and its neighboring colonies were clever in their approach to the financial dilemma. In an economy where imports exceeded exports, commerce with Cape Breton was just one of several ways New England merchants sought to equalize the trade disparity with England.¹⁸ When exchange between the French and English colonies was finally severed with cannon fire, New England merchants realized that they could replace the specie they received from Cape Breton with hard currency from Great Britain in the form of government contracts. Thomas Hancock, a Boston merchant, illustrated how financially lucrative government contracts could be. Shortly before the War of Jenkins' Ear (1739-1744), Hancock's business faced hardships in the form of a trade

¹⁷ William Shirley to the duke of Newcastle, 23 Jan. 1741/2, in Lincoln, ed., *Correspondence of William Shirley*, 1: 80. The bills the governor referred to were Massachusetts paper money.

¹⁸ Richard Partridge to Messrs. Sandys and Campbell, 2 May 1740, in Kimball, ed., *The Correspondence of the Colonial Governors of Rhode Island*, 1: 155-158.

depression and more rigid customs regulations.¹⁹ Yet by the end of King George's War (1744-1748), Hancock had amassed a considerable fortune largely through his relentless pursuit of military contracts.²⁰ Supplying British soldiers garrisoned at Louisbourg allowed Hancock to increase his wealth in two ways. First, he could collect a small commission on goods he purchased for the military. Second, and most importantly, Hancock acquired merchandise with Massachusetts bills and received payment from Britain in sterling.²¹ To savvy New England merchants, Louisbourg afforded avenues for obtaining hard currency in both peace and war.

While Britain infused the northern colonies with sterling during King George's War, the home government was not usually so generous with its specie. Britain's staunch trade policies were intended to enrich the motherland, not the colonies. New England merchants were keenly aware of London's priorities by 1733. During that year, the Molasses Act became law.²² This legislation was a reactionary law geared to help the British West Indies by placing a duty of 6d. per gallon on molasses, 9d. per gallon on rum, and 5s. per hundredweight on sugar imported from foreign colonies.²³ Wealthy British sugar planters had increasingly lobbied for the act to counter diminishing sales brought on by soil exhaustion and large scale competition from the French and Dutch.²⁴ Three years prior to the Molasses Act's enactment, the Council of Trade and Plantations heard testimony from the surveyor general of the customs, who estimated the French

¹⁹ W.T. Baxter, *The House of Hancock: Business in Boston 1724-1775* (Cambridge, Mass, 1945), 75.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 102-103.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 106.

²² Albert B. Southwick, "The Molasses Act—Source of Precedents," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd Ser., 8 (1951): 389.

²³ *Ibid.*, 399.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 390.

trade cost Barbados and the Leeward Islands £50,000 annually.²⁵ New England agents in London greatly contested these duties which threatened the soaring volume of trade between the northern colonies and the French sugar islands.²⁶

Since New England suffered from an imbalance of trade with Britain, commerce between New England and the French colonies was vital. The French islands were in constant need of boards, horses, staves, and refuse fish, of which New England had an abundance. This commercial link allowed New England to procure rum and molasses from the French for 60 to 70 percent less than the British sugar islands offered.²⁷ The French prices were lower than their British competitors because France barred the importation of molasses to protect its brandy industry.²⁸ New England merchants used these profits from their trade with the French to buy British manufactured goods. Ultimately, Britain's sugar colonies prevailed in securing the act's passage because Parliament perceived Barbados and the Leeward Islands as more lucrative within the mercantile economy than New England. Although merchants had to contend with London's restrictions, trade between New England and Cape Breton still continued, and by 1737 the value of imports from English colonies to Ile Royale was three times larger than those from Canada.²⁹

²⁵ Ibid., 392.

²⁶ Richard Partridge to Governor John Wanton, 10 June 1739, in Kimball, ed., *The Correspondence of the Colonial Governors of Rhode Island*. 1: 116.

²⁷ Southwick, "The Molasses Act," *WMQ*, 3rd Ser., 8 (1951): 389.

²⁸ Lawrence Henry Gipson, *The British Empire Before the American Revolution: The Northern Plantations*, (Caldwell, ID, 1936), 3: 292.

²⁹ Moore, "The Other Louisbourg," in Krause, Corbin, and O'Shea, eds., *Aspects of Louisbourg*, 230.

Though lobbyists representing the British West Indies succeeded in having the Molasses Act passed, enforcement was difficult. Officials in both French and English ports often ignored the act. New England merchants frequently found support for their illegal activities from within the colonial government—sometimes blatantly, sometimes furtively. John Peagrum, who served as surveyor general of customs to the northern colonies in 1733, faced opposition to his enforcement of the Molasses Act.³⁰ Peagrum, perturbed over Rhode Island's refusal to make customs collectors swear an oath, threatened the colony's governor, declaring "if you will Not Suffer Officers to do their duty it Do's Not lye at my Door and forgive me in representing of it to the Comm [commissioners] and the Lords of the Treasury."³¹ While it is unclear if Peagrum's pressure induced the customs collectors to take an oath, it is apparent that the colony of Rhode Island remained in the vanguard of smuggling and bribery within New England. As a testament to the overwhelming subversion of the Molasses Act, no duties were collected in Newport from 1733-1750.³²

One bureaucrat who exemplified an unabashedly congenial attitude toward smuggling between New England and Louisbourg was Joseph Monbeton de Brouillon, the governor of Ile Royale from 1717 to 1739. Ile Royale's governor was hands-on in facilitating illegal trade between New France and New England. De Brouillon or Saint-Ovide (as he was commonly called) faced allegations from frustrated French merchants who charged that he allowed British colonists to sell prohibited goods such as tobacco,

³⁰ John Peagrum to Governor William Wanton, 7 Jan. 1733/4, in Kimball, ed., *The Correspondence of the Colonial Governors of Rhode Island*. 1: 44-45.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Gipson, *The British Empire Before the American Revolution: The Northern Plantations*, 3:

tar, and pitch in Louisbourg.³³ These French merchants continually found it difficult to compete with cheaper New England prices. The governor's critics also accused him of interfering with French officials who tried to impede the illicit trade. Such was the case of the brigantine *Travellor* whose captain admitted to French Admiralty officials that he falsified his declaration of goods to disguise £243 worth of contraband tobacco.³⁴ Even with the confession, Saint-Ovide interceded to get the impounded cargo back to the captain. Saint-Ovide's lenient stance on trade continued under Ile Royale's subsequent governors in spite of frustrated colonials who commented that it was "obvious that too many of them (French colonial governors) act from unworthy motives."³⁵

Jean Baptiste Louis le Prevost, Seigneur du Quesnel, who served as governor of Ile Royale at the beginning of King George's War, faced the same allegations as his predecessor. One French merchant residing in Louisbourg during du Quesnel's tenure complained of government officials whose primary concern was their own financial situation.³⁶ The exasperated merchant went on to say that "generals (du Quesnel), far from protecting commerce, are the first to injure it. They enrich themselves chiefly in the foreign trade which is so injurious to that of the subjects of the King."³⁷ Although the influx of illegal New England goods vexed some merchants at Louisbourg, those in charge of apprehending smugglers were often paid off to ignore trade restrictions. With

³³ Chard, "The Price and Profits of Accommodation," in Krause, Corbin, and O'Shea, eds., *Aspects of Louisbourg*, 217.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Wrong, ed., *Louisbourg in 1745*, 17.

³⁶ Ibid., 13.

³⁷ Ibid.

corrupt colonial officials profiting from the New England-Ile Royale trade, most British colonial merchants operated with impunity at Cape Breton.

Mercantile-minded authorities in France hoped to end the commercial exchange between the French and English colonies by issuing an edict in 1727 that restated the existing ban on all trade between French colonists and foreigners.³⁸ While the edict was issued in November 1727, it was not registered at Louisbourg until the fall of 1730.³⁹ Within months of the ban's enforcement, French fishing interests complained that they needed New England vessels to carry on the fishery. Consequently, Saint-Ovide and his successors used loopholes in French regulations, declaring Ile Royale was short of foodstuffs, building materials for fortifications, and New England built vessels for the cod industry.⁴⁰ Ultimately, the edict was a victim of colonial realities; neither France nor Canada adequately supplied the island settlement with all its necessities. Supplies from France were much more expensive than those from New England and Canada's reliability was questionable. When Louisbourg faced dire food shortages in 1737 and 1743 New England merchants provided the needed foodstuffs.⁴¹ Coupled with supply issues were logistical and economic practicality. New England and Ile Royale offered each other relatively close markets to exchange their surplus goods. Those in the French colony could receive livestock, ships, and building materials in exchange for molasses. This commercial symbiosis took precedence over mercantilist-inspired edicts. Though France

³⁸ Moore, "Merchant Trade in Louisbourg", 97.

³⁹ Chard, "The Price and Profits of Accommodation," in Krause, Corbin, and O'Shea, eds., *Aspects of Louisbourg*, 218.

⁴⁰ Chard, "The Impact of Ile Royale on New England," 46.

⁴¹ Chard, "The Price and Profits of Accommodation," in Krause, Corbin, and O'Shea, eds., *Aspects of Louisbourg*, 224-225.

and Great Britain endeavored to eradicate commerce between the colonies, records show their attempts were futile. From 1733 to 1743, about fifty vessels hailing from Nova Scotia and New England visited Ile Royale each year.⁴²

While characters such as Saint-Ovide and du Quesnel blatantly aided smugglers, other government officials tried to downplay illegal trade to their superiors in London and Paris. Scores of Massachusetts' elected representatives worked feverishly to give the appearance that there was no illicit trade off New England's coast. William Pepperrell, future general in the 1745 Louisbourg expedition and a member of the Massachusetts General Court, was one of many merchants whose trading endeavors sometimes violated Britain's mercantile laws.⁴³ Legislators such as Pepperrell and James Bowdoin, Sr., sometimes used their elected positions to protect their private interests or those of their colleagues and friends. Bowdoin, an extremely wealthy Huguenot merchant and active council member, conducted trade with Cape Breton as early as 1720.⁴⁴ David Lockhart, a business friend of Bowdoin, ordered his captain to seek out the latter for assistance in smuggling contraband canary wine.⁴⁵ Lockhart's faith in Bowdoin's ability to bypass colonial trade restrictions suggests that the Huguenot merchant often circumvented the Boston customs house. Illegal trade issues were habitually ignored by many of the most powerful assemblymen coming from Boston and other trading centers along Massachusetts' eastern shore.

⁴² Ibid., 218.

⁴³ Elias Pearse to William Pepperrell, 20 Feb. 1723, in New England Historic Genealogical Society, *Pepperrell Family Papers, 1689-1764* (Boston, 1968).

⁴⁴ Chard, "The Price and Profits of Accommodation," in Krause, Corbin, and O'Shea, eds., *Aspects of Louisbourg*, 215-216.

⁴⁵ David Lockhart to John Macarrick, 25 Apr. 1740, in Dorothy S. Towle, "Smuggling Canary Wine in 1740," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 6 (1933):144-154.

While Boston's leading merchants did not completely control the Massachusetts General Court, they heavily influenced it. Even though the mercantile centers of Massachusetts controlled less than one-fourth of the General Court's seats, they supplied more than half of the assembly's leaders and two of the four native governors.⁴⁶ Notwithstanding the plethora of merchant-politicians that included Jonathan Belcher, Thomas Cushing II, Edward Hutchinson, Thomas Hutchinson I, Thomas Hutchinson II, and James Allen, non-office holding merchants also influenced government affairs.⁴⁷ Boston merchants who were not elected officials benefited from the close proximity of commercial and governmental buildings, taverns, and social gatherings. The interweaving of Boston's mercantile community and the colony's government was so entrenched by the eighteenth century that the General Court and the merchant exchange were under the same roof.⁴⁸ Each afternoon between one and four, the business district was shut down so that merchants could "go on 'change.'"⁴⁹ These daily informal meetings on trade took place at the Court House, where Boston's political and commercial leaders mingled. Along with "going on 'change,'" non-politicians found other ways of gaining an influential ear. Thomas Hancock shunned political office until late in his life, yet he was able to push his agenda through lavish dinner parties for Boston's finest and more directly through favors. The somewhat unscrupulous Hancock was notorious for his bribery. On certain occasions the inducement took the form of

⁴⁶ Robert Zensky, *Merchants, Farmers, and River Gods: An Essay on Eighteenth-Century American Politics* (Boston, 1971), 31, 178.

⁴⁷ John A. Schutz, *Legislators of the Massachusetts General Court 1691-1780* (Boston, 1997), 148, 163, 199, 259.

⁴⁸ Zensky, *Merchants, Farmers, and River Gods*, 11.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 187.

pigeons, oysters, and of course, sterling.⁵⁰ Hancock's actions prove that one did not need to hold office to influence its officials. A good number of Massachusetts' most prominent merchants interacted with or were a part of the general court. Such familiarity in business, government, and social circles almost certainly influenced what transpired in the Court House. Those in the Massachusetts General Court simply denied the existence of trade infractions to protect their own business and that of their fellow assemblymen.

The zeal with which the Massachusetts General Court labored to suppress allegations of illicit commerce can be seen in the aftermath of Jeremiah Dunbar's testimony to the House of Commons in 1730.⁵¹ Dunbar, a deputy surveyor of the woods, gave evidence that was detrimental to New England's opposition of the molasses bill.⁵² The Massachusetts House of Representatives quickly set up a committee to investigate Dunbar's remarks that "most of the principal people in that country (New England) were involved (in smuggling)," and "some of the richest men in Boston got their estates by exporting timber and importing French sugar, rum and silks."⁵³ Dunbar also claimed that prominent New Englanders had ships built in their names and then transferred these ships to French captains, so the vessels could travel unimpeded throughout the French Empire.⁵⁴ A Massachusetts committee tried to discredit Dunbar's allegations of widespread smuggling, by stating that he had misrepresented "His Majesty's good subjects of New-England to the Honourable Commons of Great Britain, intending

⁵⁰ Baxter, *House of Hancock*, 102-103.

⁵¹ Governor Jonathan Belcher to Richard Partridge, 17 May 1733, in Massachusetts Historical Society, *Collections*, 2d ed., 6 Ser., 6 (Boston, 1907): 281-284.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ *New England Weekly Journal*, 8 Jan. 1733.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

thereby to obstruct and hinder them in their lawful Trade and Business.”⁵⁵ Elisha Cooke, Jr., a major political figure within the House of Representatives and a member of the committee investigating Dunbar’s testimony, was extremely critical of the deputy surveyor of woods. It is not surprising that Cooke’s report “bore strongly against Dunbar,” since the representative “was a popular champion who pleaded all cases against the crown in the admiralty court.”⁵⁶ The governor of Massachusetts, another one of Dunbar’s staunchest rivals, gleefully commented that “Poor Jerry is here in a sad pickle . . . being in hazard of life or limb” and “of being prosecuted . . . by particular persons whose characters, they imagine, he has been too free with.”⁵⁷ While Dunbar was denounced in Boston, he was supported in London by the House of Commons, who felt the censure was “an audacious Proceeding.”⁵⁸ The Board of Trade was equally frustrated with New England’s ill treatment of Dunbar. The board cited Dunbar’s predicament to explain why “it is with the greatest difficulty we are able to procure true informations of the trade and manufactures of New England.”⁵⁹ Certainly, fear of stricter regulations and increased duties such as the Molasses Act motivated colonial representatives to keep up the appearance of trade propriety, even if it was a farce.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ George A. Wood, *William Shirley: Governor of Massachusetts, 1741-1756* (London, 1920), 41.

⁵⁷ Governor Jonathan Belcher to Richard Waldron, 25 Dec. 1732, in Massachusetts Historical Society, *Collections*, 2d ed., 6 Ser., 6: 231-233.

⁵⁸ Parliament of Great Britain, *The Parliamentary or Constitutional History of England* (London, 1761), 24: 305-306.

⁵⁹ Victor S. Clark, *History of the Manufactures of the United States: 1607-1860* (Washington DC, 1916), 204.

While Dunbar faced hostility for serving the crown's interests over New England's, other representatives of the king tried to serve two masters.⁶⁰ Such was the case of Massachusetts Governor Jonathan Belcher, an affluent merchant and native son of the colony he served. Belcher's political life was paradoxical to say the least. The often fiery governor toiled throughout the 1730s to solidify his administrative strength by catering to Massachusetts merchants.⁶¹ At the same time, he attempted to masquerade as a foe of illegal trade to his superiors in London. While the governor hoped to portray himself as a staunch enemy of illicit trade, his private affairs were contradictory to his public persona. The governor's own correspondence relates how he participated in smuggling clay to improve his ore smelter. "Its Exportation is prohibited upon a great Penalty and yet my frds Contriv'd to send me 3 or 4 Hhds (hogsheads) about 30 years agoe for the Bottoms of my Copper Furnaces & wch bad(e) defiance to the Hottest fire but it was a very Chargeable thing to get."⁶² In that same letter, Belcher encouraged his friend to smuggle "a Quantity of Sturbridge Clay for your Bottoms if it can by any way or meanes be got aboard a Ship."⁶³ The governor's blind eye to trade infractions quickly garnered mercantile allies such as William Pepperrell, but also gave teeth to his political enemies' complaints of his lackadaisical stance on illicit goods. To discredit his political adversaries and appease his London superiors, Belcher issued several proclamations against foreign trade. The governor claimed that "divers French Vessels have entered the

⁶⁰ Governor Jonathan Belcher to Richard Waldron, 25 Dec. 1732, in Massachusetts Historical Society, *Collections*, 2d ed., 6 Ser., 6: 231-233.

⁶¹ John A. Schutz, *William Shirley: King's Governor of Massachusetts* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1961), 29.

⁶² Governor Belcher to Colonel Alford, 24 Aug. 1752, in William A. Whitehead, ed., *New Jersey Archives I, Colonial Documents, Governors: 1751-1757* (Newark, NJ, 1885), 8: 109.

⁶³ *Ibid.*

Ports of this Province under Pretence of being disabled and hindered from proceeding on their voyages."⁶⁴ Belcher proceeded to claim that these foreign vessels were in reality coming to trade.⁶⁵ The proclamations against illegal commodities and the disregard for enforcing such proclamations finally became untenable for Belcher and he was replaced. Belcher's fall was precipitated by several events including the land bank scheme and his patron Lord Townshend's death. Yet, his most ardent antagonists were brought about by his weak enforcement of timber and customs laws.⁶⁶ Men like Samuel Waldo, a timber merchant who retained a naval contract for masts, and David Dunbar, the surveyor general of the woods, were threatened by the illicit trade in mast timber. Ironically, Belcher's successor William Shirley had been chastised by the former for his zealous prosecution of smugglers.⁶⁷

Whether through denial of illicit trade by the Massachusetts General Court or impotent anti-smuggling proclamations by Governor Belcher, Massachusetts protected its channels for obtaining specie and French goods.⁶⁸ Deceptive tactics by officials in Louisbourg and Boston kept the commerce flowing. The *New England Weekly Journal*, a Boston newspaper, documented the arrivals and departures of ships from Boston and sometimes listed vessels that called at Ile Royale.⁶⁹ In 1733, the *New England Weekly Journal* recorded eleven voyages to or from Cape Breton.⁷⁰ In that same year, French authorities recorded thirty-two vessels of New England origin dropping anchor in

⁶⁴ *Boston Gazette*, 16 Aug. 1731.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Schutz, *William Shirley*, 29

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ *Boston Gazette*, 16 Aug. 1731.

⁶⁹ Chard, "The Impact of Ile Royale on New England," 43.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

Gabarus Bay.⁷¹ The discrepancy in numbers between the two shows that New England merchants tried to conceal their visits to Cape Breton because they were either carrying illegal goods or they were trying to avoid duties on their cargo. It must also be noted that the higher French numbers are suspect since Louisbourg's governors often aided illegal trade. While it is hard to get an exact number of New England vessels visiting Ile Royale, it is clear that commerce between the two was brisk until 1744 when war began.⁷²

With captains declaring false destinations on their way to Louisbourg, the trade between New England and Ile Royale was much larger than New England newspapers suggested.⁷³ Numerous New England vessels chose Newfoundland or Canso to mask their visits to Ile Royale. Canso proved to be a favorite haunt for smugglers because it was just south of the strait that separated Ile Royale from Nova Scotia. Even some of Canso's British garrison participated in the flow of goods to and from Louisbourg. John Bradstreet, an ensign in Philipps' 40th Regiment, garnered the dubious distinction as one of Canso's most prolific smugglers.⁷⁴ Bradstreet's involvement was significant enough that François Bigot, commissaire-ordonnateur of Ile Royale, solicited the ensign for provisions in 1742 and 1743.⁷⁵ When war commenced in 1744, Bradstreet was among the prisoners taken at Canso. Upon his release, the young officer informed Governor Shirley of the state of Louisbourg's defenses. Bradstreet was also involved in the

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Ibid., 43A.

⁷³ *New England Weekly Journal*, 23 July and 17 Sept. 1733.

⁷⁴ William G. Godfrey, *Pursuit of Profit and Preferment in Colonial North America: John Bradstreet's Quest* (Waterloo, ON, 1982), 18-19.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

subsequent Louisbourg expedition, where one of his superiors described his service as "very active and . . . deserving of his Majesty's favour."⁷⁶ While Bradstreet's conduct during the expedition was favorable, his and other British colonists' involvement in smuggling troubled London officials. The illegal flow of commerce between Canso and Cape Breton was of a sufficient quantity that British naval officers finally stationed a vessel to winter at Canso in 1743.⁷⁷ Though British officials became concerned over New England commodities strengthening French defenses and fisheries on the eve of war, for most of the 1720s and 30s New Englanders successfully used Canso's beneficial location to smuggle and disguise taxable and illegal merchandise.⁷⁸

Leading New England merchants such as Peter Faneuil and William Pepperrell maintained agents at Canso to facilitate commerce.⁷⁹ Both men actively engaged in trade with Canso's northern neighbor, though Faneuil encountered fewer difficulties. Pepperrell on the other hand, spent over ten tumultuous years trading with the French at Ile Royale. This merchant from Kittery, Massachusetts' Maine district, acquired fame and a knighthood through his military endeavors at Louisbourg, but found it more difficult to succeed with his mercantile adventures. Several setbacks in the form of a wrecked vessel off Port Toulouse in 1721 and the death of a captain at the hands of

⁷⁶ Warren to Newcastle, 18 June 1745, in Julian Gwyn, ed., *The Royal Navy and North America: The Warren Papers, 1736-1752* (London, 1973), 125-126.

⁷⁷ G.A. Rawlyk, *Yankees at Louisbourg* (Orono, ME, 1967), 3.

⁷⁸ *Boston Evening-Post*, 28 May 1744; Chard, "The Price and Profits of Accommodation," in Krause, Corbin, and O'Shea, eds., *Aspects of Louisbourg*, 213. The French Council of Marine forbid all commerce between Canso and Port Toulouse in 1717.

⁷⁹ Elias Pearse to William Pepperrell, 20 Feb. 1723, in New England Historic Genealogical Society, *Pepperrell Family Papers* (Boston, 1968). The *Pepperrell Family Papers* were on microfilm and have no page numbers. All subsequent notes will not have volume or page numbers.

Indians at Canso vexed the trader.⁸⁰ Yet William Pepperrell, Jr., and his father continued to deal with Cape Breton because of its valuable association with the French West Indies. In 1729, the Pepperrells utilized this connection by sending a vessel to Martinique via Louisbourg under the guise of a French flag.⁸¹ Such deceptive actions were common among Pepperrell's mercantile brethren. Joshua Peirce, a successful merchant and contemporary of Pepperrell, used similar tactics to trade with the French West Indies.⁸² Joshua and his brother Nathaniel were active participants in the Canso-Ile Royale trade, and represented Faneuil's interests there until the late 1730s when Thomas Kilby succeeded them.⁸³ Jeremiah Dunbar's allegation of pervasive smuggling among Boston's merchant community gains credibility when looking at the Pepperrells', Peirces', and Faneuil's activities with Cape Breton.⁸⁴ New Englanders simply valued specie and West Indian goods more than they feared possible repercussions.

Commodore Peter Warren, who led the British naval contingent against Louisbourg in 1745, also traded with Ile Royale. Like his colonial counterpart Pepperrell, Warren had no qualms about supplying the French with provisions during the shaky peace of the 1730s. While stationed at Boston in 1737, the young naval officer learned of a possible financial windfall through Faneuil.⁸⁵ The two men decided to send a cargo of biscuit to Louisbourg, as the town was desperately short of provisions. In

⁸⁰ Ibid.; Elias Pearse to William Pepperrell, 6 Dec. 1721, *ibid.*

⁸¹ Hughes Grangent to William Pepperrell and Benjamin Clark, 2 Oct. 1729, *ibid.*

⁸² Chard, "The Impact of Ile Royale on New England," 41.

⁸³ Chard, "The Price and Profits of Accommodation," in Krause, Corbin, and O'Shea, eds., *Aspects of Louisbourg*, 222-223.; Wood, *William Shirley*, 226-227. Thomas Kilby's business dealings provided the merchant with intimate knowledge of Louisbourg. Thomas relayed this information to his kinsmen Christopher Kilby, agent for Massachusetts in London. Christopher subsequently proposed action against Louisbourg shortly after war was declared.

⁸⁴ *New England Weekly Journal*, 8 Jan. 1733.

⁸⁵ Peter Faneuil to Peter Warren, 19 Sept. 1737, in Gwyn, ed., *The Warren Papers*, 8.

exchange for this shipment, Warren and Faneuil unsurprisingly received "28 hogsheads rum, 45 hogsheads of molasses, and 8 hogsheads of right good Bordeaux claret . . ."⁸⁶ Interestingly, Pierre Morpain, an infamous French privateer during Queen Anne's War, provided the rum.⁸⁷ Warren was just one of many merchants and government officials who traded with the French for their own financial reward. Writing to Warren, Faneuil described how lucrative trade between New England and Cape Breton could be: "I reckon upon the whole that we shall clear by this voyage between £400 and £500, which is no bad doing upon a six weeks voyage and upon a cargo that did not cost us £700 . . ."⁸⁸ Such profits were the impetus for continued trade between the two colonies. Only one year later, Faneuil purchased a cargo of molasses from Joseph Dupont du Vivier, a relatively young French officer.⁸⁹ Du Vivier would later make a name for himself by commanding the attacks against Canso and Annapolis Royal. New England's trade imbalance and lack of specie fostered a climate where colonists traded with whomever they could. Similarly, characters such as Warren, Pepperrell, and Bradstreet were successful because they could effortlessly go from supplying the French to besieging them.

With the commencement of King George's War, merchants quickly altered their strategy for attaining specie. Since commercial interaction with the inhabitants of Ile Royale was no longer viable, New Englanders outfitted privateers and sought lucrative

⁸⁶ Peter Faneuil to Peter Warren, 19 Sept. 1737, *ibid.*

⁸⁷ Chard, "The Impact of Ile Royale on New England," 60.

⁸⁸ Peter Faneuil to Peter Warren, 19 Sept. 1737, in Gwyn, ed., *The Warren Papers*, 8.

⁸⁹ McLennan, *Louisbourg from Its Foundation to Its Fall*, 78.

military supply contracts. In the same way, New England's cod fishery had to deviate from its usual course in 1744 with the changing winds of war.

Thirty-one years earlier, with the conclusion of Queen Anne's War, British colonial fishermen had hoped to exploit their country's territorial gains in Acadia and Newfoundland.⁹⁰ With these acquisitions, it appeared that British colonists would control the lion's share of the valuable cod fishery. Yet, arguments over fishing rights, Indian attacks, the establishment of Ile Royale, quality and curing methods, and little interest in a winter fishing season kept the English from dominating their French counterparts.⁹¹ Even with the loss of Newfoundland, France still maintained "almost half of the cod catch of the North Atlantic."⁹²

Governor Shirley sadly lamented to his superiors in London "that in particular the New England Fishery, which since the French have been in possession of Louisbourg has been half ruin'd by their carrying on the Cape Breton Fishery and Encroachments upon the English Fishery in time of peace, will be now in danger of being quite destroyed and lost to the Enemy"⁹³ Captain Warren had anticipated Shirley's sentiments on the decline of the New England fishery in a 1739 report to the Lords of Admiralty. In this report, Warren described Canso as "much decayed, in proportion to the improvement and increase of the French fishery."⁹⁴ He went on to blame Canso's deteriorating position on "their (French) fishing on those banks on our coast which are looked upon as the sole

⁹⁰ Balcom, *The Cod Fishery of Isle Royale*, 3.

⁹¹ Peter Warren to Josiah Burchett, 9 July 1739, in Gwyn, *The Warren Papers*, 10-13.

⁹² John Robert McNeill, *Atlantic Empires of France and Spain: Louisbourg and Havana, 1700-1763* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1985), 138.

⁹³ William Shirley to the duke of Newcastle, 14 Jan. 1744/5, in Lincoln, *Correspondence of William Shirley*, 1: 161-165.

⁹⁴ Peter Warren to Josiah Burchett, 9 July 1739, in Gwyn, *The Warren Papers*, 10-13.

property of the crown of England and its subjects, and even making and curing their fish on the coast of Nova Scotia."⁹⁵ Though the French made significant inroads concerning the cod fishery, their annual production figures never surpassed their southern competitors.⁹⁶ Even in 1745, with King George's War raging, New England's production of cod was over 80,000 quintals larger than Ile Royale's highest production year.⁹⁷ While the much larger colonies of New England retained a lead in quintals of cod, both groups were acutely aware of diminishing cod returns by the early 1740s. The value of Ile Royale's fishery took a precipitous drop from over 3,000,000 livres throughout the 1730s to 1,782,680 by 1742.⁹⁸ Despite the fact that French and English colonists often argued over fishing rights, the war brought one common viewpoint: the northern fishing banks could no longer be shared.

Fishing interests in Louisbourg and Boston saw King George's War as a means to gain sole possession of the declining yet still profitable cod industry. While the French attacked Canso, the English colonial fishermen responded by supporting Shirley's plan to surprise Louisbourg. William Vaughan, a wealthy fishing and lumber merchant from Maine, inspired over 100 Marblehead fishermen to petition the Massachusetts General Court, emphasizing their desire for an attack on Louisbourg, as well as promising "to furnish Vessels in 14 Days for 3500 men."⁹⁹ Stressing the vested interests between colonial merchants and fishermen, Boston merchant James Gibson worked with Vaughan

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ B.A. Balcom, "The Cod Fishery of Isle Royale, 1713-58," in Krause, Corbin, and O'Shea, eds., *Aspects of Louisbourg*, 192-193.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 193.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 191.

⁹⁹ William Vaughan to William Shirley, 14 Jan. 1744/5, in McLennan, *Louisbourg from Its Foundation to Its Fall*, 360.

to drum up cooperation. During the Louisbourg plan's infancy, the expedition's most ardent supporters were those who had the most to gain. Merchants and fishermen overwhelmingly backed Shirley's plan of attack to reap the financial rewards of plentiful government contracts and enlarged fishing grounds. Even if the Louisbourg expedition never reached the ultimate goal of capturing the town, merchants would have still received payment for supplying the endeavor, and the fishermen driven out of work by the war could collect payments for transporting men and material for the invasion.¹⁰⁰

By understanding the negative effects of King George's War on New England's economy, namely the end of trade between Ile Royale and Massachusetts, and closure of the cod industry, it is easier to grasp why New Englanders embarked on such a bold military design. The attack on Louisbourg provided merchants with greater levels of specie flowing into the northern colonies than were possible through the Ile Royale trade. Adaptation and creativity were in many ways the keys to keeping New England's economy from falling into ruin. Even with the war raging, merchants found avenues for specie to combat the trade deficit and a depreciating currency, while fishermen found lucrative employment by manning privateers and transport vessels. Though the plan of attacking Louisbourg was quite audacious in terms of New England's military capabilities, the economic incentives were both tangible and practical. Even those who believed the military endeavor to be ludicrous understood the economic rationale behind the venture. Rhode Island governor Gideon Wanton correctly pointed out the real stimulus of the Louisbourg expedition to his colony's agent in London when he wrote,

¹⁰⁰Rawlyk, *Yankees at Louisbourg*, 39.

"Besides we had not the same dependence upon, and expectation of advantages from the fishery as Massachusetts and New Hampshire had, which undoubtedly was a main inducement to their people to list so cheerfully as they did."¹⁰¹

¹⁰¹ Gideon Wanton to the Agent of Rhode Island in London, 20 Xber 1745, in John Bartlett, ed., *Records of the Colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations in New England* (Providence, RI, 1968), 5: 145-148.

Chapter 3

Offensive Miscue: French Attempts at Recapturing Nova Scotia

On April 22, 1744, the aging, one-legged governor of Cape Breton, Jean Baptiste Louis le Prevost, Seigneur du Quesnel, could be seen limping down the waterfront toward a recently arrived ship from St. Malo.¹ This vessel carried urgent letters from the compte de Pontchartrain et Maurepas, minister of marine, which confirmed what many had expected for years: the shaky peace with England had ended.²

Du Quesnel, a former captain, had been Cape Breton's governor since late 1740 and was described unfavorably by an anonymous resident as "whimsical, changeable, given to drink, and when in his cups knowing no restraint or decency."³ A much stronger condemnation of the governor was the accusation that his impertinence toward Louisbourg's officers weakened their control of the soldiers.⁴ While the governor officially controlled Louisbourg's military, he included François Bigot, commissaire-ordonnateur of the colony, in his councils; similarly, Bigot included the governor on purely economic issues. Bigot was a colorful character like du Quesnel, also with his share of deficiencies. While Bigot's name is forever linked to the gross corruption and fraudulent practices that aided the fall of Quebec and the end of French control of

¹ G.A. Rawlyk, *Yankees at Louisbourg* (Orono, ME, 1967), 1.

² Ibid.; J. S. McLennan, *Louisbourg from Its Foundation to Its Fall, 1713-1758* (London, 1918), 99; William Shirley to the duke of Newcastle, 7 July 1744, in Charles Henry Lincoln, ed., *Correspondence of William Shirley: Governor of Massachusetts and Military Commander in America, 1731-1760* (New York, 1912), 1:131-133.

³ George M. Wrong, ed., *Louisbourg in 1745: The Anonymous Lettre d'un Habitant de Louisbourg* (Toronto, 1897), 15.

⁴ Ibid., 15-16.

Canada, his time at Louisbourg was not as destructive. Bigot was in some respects a model administrator: His supervision of the king's stores, his innovative suggestions for further production of coal, and the imposition of a duty on salted beef to the West Indies, which he hoped would promote cod, were all useful administrative actions.⁵ Still his work for securing the economy of Cape Breton was a distant second to his desire for personal gain.

The command of Louisbourg and its forces in the early days of King George's War was entrusted to du Quesnel and his commissaire-ordonnateur. Even though these flawed leaders were somewhat trapped by the political and economic climate surrounding Louisbourg, they were still instrumental in sealing the fortified town's fate. The combination of scarce resources, poor leadership, and unrealistic goals by the minister of marine was a sure recipe for failure.

To understand the weaknesses of Louisbourg and why this seemingly impregnable fort fell to amateur soldiers, one must first look at its failure as an offensive threat. The same mismanagement of political, economic, and military issues that plagued the attack on Annapolis Royal manifested itself at the siege of Louisbourg.⁶ While a realistic view of Louisbourg's capabilities may have averted the town's downfall, Maurepas did not see those limitations and fueled the erroneous belief that the fortress could not be taken. Only after Louisbourg's fall in two sieges could those in the marine bureaucracy begin to understand that Ile Royale was not the key to America.⁷

⁵ McLennan, *Louisbourg from Its Foundation to Its Fall*, 97.

⁶ Wrong, ed., *Louisbourg in 1745*, 13-15.

⁷ John Robert McNeill, *Atlantic Empires of France and Spain: Louisbourg and Havana, 1700-1763* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1985), 83.

With the decision to create Louisbourg in 1713, French officials expected the town to establish a fishery, become a nursery for seamen, and provide a base for privateers'.⁸ These goals were important and obtainable for the French government.⁹ But with Maurepas' advancement to minister of marine, he began to assign both defensive and offensive missions that Louisbourg was incapable of fulfilling. First, the minister worked hard to convince Canadian officials that Louisbourg protected them from a naval attack.¹⁰ Whereas this false belief of Louisbourg's ability to defend Quebec was largely accepted in France, many Canadians were rightly skeptical.¹¹ François de Beauharnois, the governor of New France, wrote to Maurepas in 1727 to try to convince him that "The entire English army could come to Quebec without Ile Royale knowing of it, and even if it was known, what could they do?"¹² In reality, the only way that France could control the St. Lawrence River was with a permanent naval squadron patrolling between Newfoundland and Ile Royale—an expense the home government could not afford.¹³ The second misconception that the marine bureaucracy held was Ile Royale's offensive capability to regain Nova Scotia if war broke out.¹⁴ Louisbourg's location was within relatively quick striking distance of Nova Scotia and Newfoundland, and the French certainly could have achieved success in this area if the colony had been better supplied with victuals, arms, and men.¹⁵ But this goal could not be attained by a colony

⁸ Wrong, ed., *Louisbourg in 1745*, 25-28.

⁹ McNeill, *Atlantic Empires*, 82.

¹⁰ Ibid., 83; Wrong, ed., *Louisbourg in 1745*, 26.

¹¹ McNeill, *Atlantic Empires*, 83.

¹² Beauharnois to Maurepas, 13 Oct. 1727, quoted in McNeill, *Atlantic Empires*, 83-84.

¹³ Ibid., 84.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Wrong, ed., *Louisbourg I 1745*, 11-12.

often in danger of famine and frequently dependent on its English neighbor for staples.¹⁶ With the coming of King George's War, the city of Louisbourg and its inhabitants were in the precarious situation of depending on officials who did not understand the limitations of their colony.

While the two men charged with Louisbourg's survival were not the most effective administrators, they were certainly not completely negligent of their duties. As the governor and the financial commissary examined the recently delivered packet of letters from the minister of marine, the officials soon understood the role French politicians envisioned for Louisbourg. Du Quesnel and Bigot were instructed to harass British commerce and New England's cod fishery.¹⁷ Along with these expansive military directives, Bigot learned that he was to supply the *Compagnie des Indes* treasure fleet with fresh foods for its passage back to France.¹⁸ Both officials experienced a trying time executing their orders, because Louisbourg was in a weakened state.¹⁹

The threat of war undermined Cape Breton's ability to feed its inhabitants. The Basque fishing entrepreneurs whose ancestors first fished the Grand Banks in the early sixteenth century remained in Europe during the first months of 1744. Many of Cape Breton's poorer residents depended on the Basque fishermen for food and fishing supplies that were exchanged for dried cod at the end of the fishing season.²⁰ The dearth

¹⁶ William Shirley to the duke of Newcastle, 7 July 1744, in Lincoln, ed., *Correspondence of William Shirley*, 1:131-133.

¹⁷ Rawlyk, *Yankees at Louisbourg*, 2.

¹⁸ Ibid.; William Shirley to William Greene, 19 Sept. 1744, in Gertrude S. Kimball, ed., *The Correspondence of The Colonial Governors of Rhode Island, 1723-1775* (Freeport, NY, 1969), 1: 271-272.

¹⁹ William Shirley to the duke of Newcastle, 7 July 1744, in Lincoln, ed., *Correspondence of William Shirley*, 1: 131-133.

²⁰ Rawlyk, *Yankees at Louisbourg*, 1.

of available food for the average fishermen eventually caused the poor from the nearby settlements of Baleine and Lorambecs to rise up and demand provisions.²¹ In response, the governor called out the garrison and opened the king's stores, which quelled the situation for the time being, but the shortage of food was a reoccurring theme in Louisbourg's history.²² As Bigot sought to find provisions for the *Compagnie des Indes* treasure fleet in a famished land, the island's poorer inhabitants subsisted off shellfish and were close to revolt.²³

Cape Breton's officials could never depend on the colony to produce enough foodstuffs to be self-sufficient. The deficiency of fresh goods in the wintertime led to outbreaks of scurvy throughout Louisbourg on an almost annual basis.²⁴ The colony's weak agriculture could be blamed on three things: poor climate, rocky soil, and a more lucrative fishery. Cape Breton's climate only gave the populace about 100 frost-free days for growing.²⁵ Coupled with the cold climate, farmers found the rock-strewn landscape a major hindrance to cultivation.²⁶ It was apparent to Bigot that he would have to look outside the colony for the needed supplies.

France, Canada, New England, and Acadia were all suppliers to Cape Breton. In the spring of 1744, all four of these areas were unreliable. The French products were the most expensive and unattainable for many of the poorer citizens.²⁷ While Canadian goods were less expensive than the mother country's, Quebec was never a reliable source

21

Ibid.

22

McLennan, *Louisbourg from Its Foundation to Its Fall*, 109.

23

Rawlyk, *Yankees at Louisbourg*, 2.

24

McNeill, *Atlantic Empires*, 22.

25

Ibid., 14.

26

Ibid., 16.

27

McLennan, *Louisbourg from Its Foundation to Its Fall*, 44.

for Louisbourg.²⁸ Even though Quebec was relatively close to Cape Breton, its local regulations on shipping added to the near famine conditions of the island in 1733.²⁹ Only a year before du Quesnel received news of King George's War, Quebec requested that Cape Breton attain flour for the Canadian capital through New England contacts because of an infestation scare.³⁰

New England merchants were much more reliable than their Canadian neighbors and often supplied Cape Breton with goods in time of scarcity. Some of the principal merchants in New England conducted illicit trade with the French of Cape Breton.³¹ It is interesting to note that both the leader of the colonial contingent and the commodore of the British naval force in the 1745 expedition were participants in the New England-Louisbourg trade.³² Business can make strange bedfellows, and the commodore and his business partner—a notorious French privateer—proved just that.³³ By the beginning of 1744, the supply line for Cape Breton's inhabitants was suddenly shut when Massachusetts Governor William Shirley called on the General Court to stop "any

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid., 83.

³⁰ Ibid., 106.

³¹ Donald F. Chard, "The Price and Profits of Accommodation: Massachusetts-Louisbourg Trade, 1713-1744," in Eric Krause, Carol Corbin, and William O'Shea, eds., *Aspects of Louisbourg* (Sydney, NS, 1995), 221.

³² Hughes Grangent to William Pepperrell and Benjamin Clark, 2 Oct. 1729, in New England Historic Genealogical Society, *Pepperrell Family Papers, 1689-1764* (Boston, 1968); Peter Faneuil to Peter Warren, 19 Sept. 1737, in Julian Gwyn, ed., *The Royal Navy and North America: The Warren Papers, 1736-1752* (London, 1973), 8.

³³ Chard, "The Price and Profits of Accommodation," in Eric Krause, Carol Corbin, and William O'Shea, eds., *Aspects of Louisbourg*, 224.

Ammunition, Stores, provisions or Merchandize of any kind from being carried to any of the French settlements or Territories.”³⁴

Although Acadia became an English possession with the signing of the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713, many of its French inhabitants remained and traded with their northern neighbors.³⁵ The annual illegal shipment of “6 or 700 Head of Cattle, and about 2000 Sheep” caused the frustrated British officials to place a guard sloop at Canso.³⁶ Bigot’s options were limited in finding supplies for the treasure fleet, and the Acadians seemed the most likely and closest source. While the British guard sloop was stationed at the northern tip of Nova Scotia, however, trade with the Acadians would be difficult, if not impossible.³⁷

Though the governor and financial commissary grappled with food shortages, they nevertheless had to deal with military issues. Louisbourg’s military stores were as deficient as its dismal food stores.³⁸ The fortress’ magazines were low on powder, its walls defended with an inadequate number of cannon, and its garrison and privateer crews short on men.³⁹ With shortages across the board, du Quesnel did what he could by writing to his superiors in France and sending requests to Canada for more material.⁴⁰ French neglect of Cape Breton’s military provisions and victuals during the opening phases of King George’s War was surprising considering that Maurepas thought the

³⁴ William Shirley to the duke of Newcastle, 2 June 1744, in Lincoln, ed., *Correspondence of William Shirley*, 1: 126.

³⁵ Rawlyk, *Yankees at Louisbourg*, 3.

³⁶ Hibbert Newton, Collector of the Customs at Canso, to Capt. Robert Young, 1 Sept. 1743, cited in Rawlyk, *Yankees at Louisbourg*, 3.

³⁷ William Shirley to the Lords of Trade, 25 July, 1744, in Lincoln, ed., *Correspondence of William Shirley*, 1: 137.

³⁸ William Shirley to the duke of Newcastle, 14 Jan. 1744/5, *ibid.*, 164-165.

³⁹ Rawlyk, *Yankees at Louisbourg*, 3.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 3.

colony was Canada's bulwark. Because French officials did not adequately supply the town, Louisbourg lacked the necessities of war, and its inhabitants lived under siege-like conditions. The situation within Louisbourg during the spring and summer of 1744 was not much different from the subsequent siege of 1745, except that in 1744 an inept French administration caused the suffering, not the enemy.

Du Quesnel and Bigot both understood that the beginning of war was an excellent time for privateers because many ships were still unaware of the conflict. Louisbourg's close proximity to sea-lanes greatly aided French privateers in their quest for mercantile prey. Trade winds and the North Equatorial Current dictated these sea-lanes, which prevented a simple voyage to Europe at latitudes south of the westerlies; this meant that ships traveling to Europe from North America and the Caribbean had to reach the latitude of about Cape Breton before turning east.⁴¹ Following the minister of marine's orders that included blank commissions to encourage privateering, two vessels were soon outfitted to prey on British shipping.⁴² The small number of privateers early on resulted more from the lack of cannon and men than desire.⁴³ Even with the diminished supply of "small cannon with their ammunition, pistols, swords, and axes for these expeditions," the French privateers retained the element of surprise.⁴⁴ At the same time that "several stout [New England] privateers . . . [were] fitting out . . . to cruise upon the French," Bostonians sadly acknowledged that their enemy "have so far got the start of us."⁴⁵ Although New England privateers ultimately inflicted greater losses than their French

⁴¹ McNeill, *Atlantic Empires*, 10.

⁴² *Boston Evening-Post*, 9 July 1744; McLennan, *Louisbourg from Its Foundation to Its Fall*, 110.

⁴³ *Boston Evening-Post*, 9 July 1744.

⁴⁴ Du Quesnel and Bigot to Maurepas, 9 May 1744, cited in Rawlyk, *Yankees at Louisbourg*, 2.

⁴⁵ *Boston Evening-Post*, 11 June 1744.

counterparts, the opening weeks of war along the Atlantic seaboard belonged to the French.⁴⁶

Despite the fact that privateers were actively harassing New England's fisheries and commerce, Du Quesnel and Bigot looked for other ways to fulfill the ministry's wishes.⁴⁷ The governor was well aware that French politicians hoped to see Nova Scotia once again under French control. In a letter that the governor received soon after his first arrival in Louisbourg, the minister of marine instructed du Quesnel to investigate the possibility of attacking Acadia.⁴⁸ Both the French and English understood the economic bounty of the fisheries and the military advantages that Nova Scotia provided. Du Quesnel's English counterpart, Massachusetts Governor William Shirley, understood that the loss of Nova Scotia would cause irreversible harm to his colony's own commerce, and also leave the border of Maine vulnerable.⁴⁹ While Shirley called on the Massachusetts General Court to protect "the Country of Nova Scotia, [which] has been always thought by this government . . . to be a Point of the greatest Importance to the Welfare and Safety of this Province," Du Quesnel envisioned Nova Scotia's fishing banks once again firmly in French hands.⁵⁰

In some respects, the governors of Cape Breton and Massachusetts were similar in how they viewed the coming of war. Both du Quesnel and Shirley believed that their offensive enterprises would benefit their colonies and themselves. These governors were

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 25 June 1744.

⁴⁸ Rawlyk, *Yankees at Louisbourg*, 2.

⁴⁹ William Shirley to the General Court of Massachusetts, 31 May 1744. in Lincoln, ed., *Correspondence of William Shirley*, 1: 122-124.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

preoccupied with the possibility of acquiring a larger portion of the cod fishery at their enemy's expense.⁵¹ As du Quesnel hoped to divert the interest of poor fishermen upset over food shortages with the chance of capturing booty, Shirley only one year later used the same ploy to draw many English colonists away from their farms and fishing vessels and toward Cape Breton's shore.⁵² Privateering was another economic and to a lesser degree patriotic stimulant that both Du Quesnel and Shirley fostered. Though the governors were strong proponents of privateering, neither of them came close to François Bigot's zeal for that private form of warfare. The commissaire-ordonnateur enjoyed success by his selling "to the great advantage of himself and partners, the prizes which he sent to France . . ."⁵³ While Shirley was ultimately more successful in his military venture than du Quesnel, both men saw the impending war as a chance to improve their colony's faltering economies and as a way to please their superiors in Europe. From the very start of King George's War, economic issues were closely tied to war and were often an impetus for the leaders as well as the colonies' common soldiers and sailors.

Whether eager "to distinguish himself against the English" or simply following Maurepas's many letters, du Quesnel was ready to strike.⁵⁴ On May 12, 1744, Captain Joseph Dupont du Vivier received orders from the military governor to sail from

⁵¹ Shirley to the duke of Newcastle, 14 Jan. 1744/45. in *ibid.*, 161-165.

⁵² Louis Effingham De Forest, ed., *Louisbourg Journals 1745* (New York, 1932), 92; Council of War, 17 Sept. 1745, in Massachusetts Historical Society, *Louisbourg Papers* (Boston, 1968), 2. The *Louisbourg Papers* were on microfilm and have no page numbers. All subsequent notes will have vol. number, but no page number.

⁵³ McLennan, *Louisbourg from Its Foundation to Its Fall*, 119.

⁵⁴ Wrong, ed., *Louisbourg in 1745*, 17.

Louisbourg with 351 men and seize the English village of Canso.⁵⁵ Although the author of the *Habitant de Louisbourg* thought the attack “a foolish enterprise” that pushed New England into an offensive posture, the governor’s actions were not as rash as they first appeared.⁵⁶ The recovery of Canso would have lessened both the economic and political pressure du Quesnel felt. By acquiring the small fishing settlement, the French would accomplish three significant objectives. First, and most importantly to the governor, Canso would provide a starting point for the recovery of Nova Scotia from the British, which his superiors desired.⁵⁷ The idea of regaining these lost territories was something that Maurepas had often stressed to du Quesnel.⁵⁸ Second, by removing the guard sloop from Canso, the Acadians would be able to sell their livestock; in turn, this would allow Bigot to relieve the town of its dwindling food supply and provide for the soon-to-arrive treasure fleet.⁵⁹ Finally, the governor hoped the capture of Canso might win over the neutral French Acadians and local Indian tribes who could lend valuable assistance toward toppling Annapolis Royal.⁶⁰ Even though Cape Breton’s offensive actions ultimately sealed its fate, there were very tangible rewards for capturing Canso, and du Quesnel was willing to gamble that his colony would benefit from the war.

The village of Canso was a small English fishing station south of the strait that separated Cape Breton from Nova Scotia. The town had been New England’s cod capital

⁵⁵ McLennan, *Louisbourg from Its Foundation to Its Fall*, 111.

⁵⁶ Wrong, ed., *Louisbourg in 1745*, 15-16.

⁵⁷ Rawlyk, *Yankees at Louisbourg*, 4.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 2.

⁵⁹ William Shirley to the Lords of Trade, 25 July 1744. in Lincoln, *Correspondence of William Shirley*, 1: 137.

⁶⁰ Wrong, ed., *Louisbourg in 1745*, 18-19.

in the 1720s but by 1744 it had slipped into obscurity.⁶¹ Canso was somewhat of a border settlement after the Treaty of Utrecht, with both French and English colonists living in close proximity to one another.⁶² Competition over the fishery eventually led to French expulsion from the small hamlet, therefore causing Indian raids and the need for military forces.⁶³ Though the English considered the station somewhat of a backwater, it was still home to four companies of Richard Philipp's 40th regiment and a guard sloop.⁶⁴ In 1743 the decision was made to have a ship permanently stationed at Canso. The rationale for the ship's wintering was that the Acadians would conduct most of their trade with the French before or after the British warship's summer duty on the island.⁶⁵ Local fishermen provided the supplies for a wooden redoubt that was the only defensive structure to speak of in the village.⁶⁶ The garrison of eighty-seven was as inadequate and poorly equipped as the wooden blockhouse they defended.⁶⁷ With a third of the men sick at any one time, they still partially curtailed the illicit trade. While the soldiers stationed at Canso were used to dealing with crafty farmers and their smuggled cows and sheep, they were ill-prepared and unaware of the force assembling north of the strait.

As the morning sun cast its first rays on the dilapidated blockhouse and fishing huts that made up Canso, a sudden barrage of iron shot broke the tranquility. It was May 13, 1744, and an untested French officer named Joseph Dupont du Vivier had just

⁶¹ Peter Warren to Josiah Burchett, 9 July 1739, in Gwyn, ed., *The Warren Papers*, 10-13.

⁶² Chard, "The Price and Profits of Accommodation," in Eric Krause, Carol Corbin, and William O'Shea, eds., *Aspects of Louisbourg*, 214.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Rawlyk, *Yankees at Louisbourg*, 5.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Francis Parkman, *A Half-Century of Conflict* (Boston, 1892), 2: 79.

⁶⁷ Peter Warren to Josiah Burchett, 9 July 1739, in Gwyn, ed., *The Warren Papers*, 10-13; Rawlyk, *Yankees at Louisbourg*, 5.

ordered two of his privateers to fire at the unimpressive blockhouse that represented the British crown in this far-flung outpost.⁶⁸ Traveling with the two privateers were a supply sloop and fourteen fishing vessels intended to carry the assault force.⁶⁹ Those on board the *Succes* were greeted with a welcome sight after smoke from the first volley thinned: the British flag had been quickly lowered in surrender.⁷⁰ The British guard sloop lasted longer than the fort and only struck its colors after "having one man kill'd and three or four wounded."⁷¹ Upon learning of Canso's capitulation, Governor Shirley explained the value and loss of this small English outpost to the duke of Newcastle in hopes of encouraging its recapture. "The Preservation of Canso, besides the necessity of it for carrying on the New England Fishery, would be of great service to his Majesty as a most convenient harbour for any Ship that should be Station'd thereabouts to intercept all Trade and Provisions coming into Louisbourg, which would in a short time inevitably reduce that place to great Distress."⁷² Though Shirley saw the strategic importance of retaining Canso, few in Whitehall grasped this concept, and the home government's neglect sealed the fishing station's fate. Only five years prior to Canso's fall, the Admiralty directed Captain Peter Warren to assess Canso's garrison and defenses, which he found "in a most miserable condition . . . [that] . . . would not be supportable a week in its present situation."⁷³ Those in London privy to Warren's report failed to correct Canso's glaring inadequacies before the rupture with France. Louisbourg suffered next

⁶⁸ Rawlyk, *Yankees at Louisbourg*, 5.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 4; McLennan, *Louisbourg from Its Foundation to Its Fall*, 111.

⁷⁰ *Boston Weekly-Post Boy*, 25 June 1744.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Shirley to the duke of Newcastle, 7 July 1744, in Lincoln, ed., *Correspondence of William Shirley*, 1: 132.

⁷³ Peter Warren to Josiah Burchett, 9 July 1739, in Gwyn, ed., *The Warren Papers*, 10-13.

spring because of the French bureaucracy's neglect, which was similar to the British officials' inept management of Canso.

While the attack on Canso was a complete surprise, since those living in the village knew nothing of the war, it was still unlikely that the defenders could have held out even with such knowledge when their blockhouse and a third of their force needed attention. Captain Heron commanded the British soldiers and sought the best terms he could get, securing the quick return of women and children to Boston, while the men were ordered to stay as prisoners in Cape Breton until May 1745.⁷⁴ Canso's conquerors torched the defenses and every fishing shack, cod drying stand, and cabin that made up the tiny fishing station.⁷⁵ A year after the town's destruction, New England soldiers walked amongst the debris preparing for their own expedition and feeling "Indignation against the people of Cape Breton."⁷⁶ To du Vivier, the attack on Canso was in some ways personal retribution for his family's removal from Acadia after the surrender of Port Royal in 1710.⁷⁷ As quickly as the French had appeared they were gone, carrying in their holds the captured booty of cod, and leaving only ashes where Canso once stood.

While the attack on Canso provided the French with a start to what they hoped would be the reclamation of Acadia, it also brought the knowledge of Louisbourg's weakness to Boston. Many historians view the transfer of prisoners to Ile Royale as a critical mistake, which precipitated its capture.⁷⁸ During this time of loose confinement,

⁷⁴ William Shirley to the duke of Newcastle, 7 July 1744, in Lincoln, ed., *Correspondence of William Shirley*, 1: 131-133; William Shirley to the Lords of Trade, 25 July 1744, in *ibid.*

⁷⁵ Wrong, ed., *Louisbourg in 1745*, 18.

⁷⁶ De Forest, ed., *Louisbourg Journals*, 5.

⁷⁷ Parkman, *A Half-Century of Conflict*, 2: 80.

⁷⁸ Rawlyk, *Yankees at Louisbourg*, 30; McLennan, *Louisbourg from Its Foundation to Its Fall*, 131.

several British prisoners took note of the fortress, its garrison, and their deficiencies.⁷⁹ Louisbourg's garrison was especially rife with dissent over the dispersal of Canso's captured booty promised to the soldiers by du Quesnel. Most of the booty was cod, which was taken by the officers at low cost on long credit for them to sell at their leisure, instead of allowing the soldiers their just reward.⁸⁰ This act was one of several that pushed the garrison to mutiny during the winter of 1744.⁸¹ While the swift victory at Canso brought its share of rewards, the troubles that arose from its capture were more of a curse than the small fishing station was ultimately worth.

Nevertheless, du Vivier carried the jubilant news of success back to the governor who quickly drew up an even grander scheme of conquest. This time, du Quesnel envisioned the capture of Annapolis Royal and the return of Nova Scotia to his majesty the king of France. It seems strange that the French did not attack Annapolis Royal first while they retained the element of surprise, because Canso could not have survived if Nova Scotia's capital fell. Even so, Annapolis Royal, like Canso, was ill-prepared for an attack, with degraded defenses and an ailing garrison.⁸² Major John Paul Mascarene, a French Protestant, commanded the five companies that defended Annapolis Royal's sand and dirt constructed fortifications.⁸³ Mascarene's defense of Annapolis proved he was an excellent officer who worked well under the usual colonial conditions of scarce supplies

⁷⁹ Parkman, *A Half-Century of Conflict*, 2: 87.

⁸⁰ Wrong, ed., *Louisbourg in 1745*, 34. Since Canso was primarily a fishing outpost, there was little for the French soldiers to plunder other than cod and fishing implements.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² John Paul Mascarene to William Shirley, 21 May 1744, in Kimball, ed., *Correspondence of The Colonial Governors of Rhode Island*, 1: 265-266. This letter largely substantiates the view that Canso was attacked to remove the British guard-ship from the strait.

⁸³ Parkman, *A Half-Century of Conflict*, 2: 80.

and insufficient soldiers.⁸⁴ Having lived in Nova Scotia and New England for some time, the major considered Annapolis an essential defense against French encroachment.⁸⁵ On June 4, Mascarene received the disheartening news of the capture of Canso's residents and the burning of their homes.⁸⁶ Upon receiving this intelligence, Nova Scotia's commanding officer ordered a quickening to the repairs of the earthen fort, which had been going on since late 1743.⁸⁷ Mascarene was under no delusion that the French would be content with Canso and expected that, "they will come and pay us a visit."⁸⁸

On June 30, the defenders of Annapolis were justified in their hastening repairs to the once dilapidated ramparts, as 300 Indians lurked only two leagues away.⁸⁹ This force of Micmacs led by their French missionary Abbe le Loutre was the land contingent of du Quesnel's combined land-sea plan for Annapolis Royal's capitulation.⁹⁰ One day after the discovery of le Loutre and his followers, the fort was surrounded and two straggling British soldiers lay dead in one of the town's gardens, as the besiegers quickly set fire to the town's lower portions.⁹¹ There was a less than spirited attack on the fort's defenses, because most invaders were content to wait for the reinforcements that du Quesnel had promised.⁹² Without suitable equipment and trained soldiers to conduct a proper siege, le Loutre was content to keep the garrison of Annapolis penned up in their fort.

⁸⁴ McLennan, *Louisbourg from Its Foundation to Its Fall*, 112-114.

⁸⁵ Rawlyk, *Yankees at Louisbourg*, 8.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 9.

⁸⁷ William Shirley to the duke of Newcastle, 7 July 1744, in Lincoln, ed., *Correspondence of William Shirley*, 1:131-133.

⁸⁸ Mascarene to King Gould, 4 June 1744, cited in Rawlyk, *Yankees at Louisbourg*, 9.

⁸⁹ Rawlyk, *Yankees at Louisbourg*, 9.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 8.

⁹¹ Parkman, *A Half-Century of Conflict*, 2: 80.

⁹² Rawlyk, *Yankees at Louisbourg*, 9.

On July 4, the French-incited Indians who had been impatiently scanning the horizon for signs of their reinforcements suddenly spotted a vessel off the coast.⁹³ The Micmacs' excitement quickly turned to fear when they realized that this vessel was not *Le Caribou* or *L' Ardent* announcing the arrival of du Quesnel's second prong of attack; instead, it was the *Prince of Orange*, a Massachusetts provincial snow carrying reinforcements for those besieged at Annapolis.⁹⁴ The seventy unarmed reinforcements that Shirley sent were more valuable for the rise in spirit they gave to the British than their fighting ability, considering that there were not enough firearms in the fort for the new men.⁹⁵ It was at this point that the priest-turned-military-leader realized his untenable situation. Upon learning of the delay of the *L' Ardent* until at least the end of July and the strengthened garrison of Annapolis, le Loutre gave up the siege and led the Micmacs back to Minas.⁹⁶ One contemporary account by the English said that the retreat was "So hasty . . . that their Priest left his crucifix and other religious Trinkets behind him."⁹⁷ Captain Edward Tyng, whose ship brought about the Indians' precipitous flight, gave and subsequently received a thirteen gun salute and three Huzza's from Annapolis Royal's defenders.⁹⁸

Du Quesnel's poorly designed attack had negative effects on the French ability to generate support for future operations against the English. Nova Scotia's Indians were

⁹³ *Boston Evening-Post*, 16 July 1744.

⁹⁴ Ibid. A snow was a two-masted vessel which resembled a brig but had a small trysail abaft the mainmast.

⁹⁵ John A. Schutz, *William Shirley: King's Governor of Massachusetts* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1961), 86; McLennan, *Louisbourg from Its Foundation to Its Fall*, 112-113.

⁹⁶ *Boston Evening-Post*, 16 July 1744; *ibid.*, 13 Aug. 1744; Rawlyk, *Yankees at Louisbourg*, 10.

⁹⁷ *Boston Evening-Post*, 16 July 1744.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

upset at du Quesnel's inability to provide the reinforcements he promised, and the Acadians were unimpressed by Cape Breton's ineffective show of force. This weak attack on Annapolis only invigorated the garrison to resist future assaults. While the idea of using their Indian allies was certainly intelligent, considering the lack of man power at Cape Breton, the management and communication from du Quesnel to his subordinates were poorly handled. Louisbourg's feeble show of force coupled with Mascarene's conciliatory policy to the Acadians had a resounding effect on a much larger expedition against Annapolis Royal in the waning summer of 1744.

Cape Breton's governor once again chose du Vivier, the commanding officer of the Canso expedition, to attempt another joint land-sea assault on Annapolis Royal.⁹⁹ Du Vivier's force left on July 18 and spent most of the next month trying to harvest recruits from the Acadian and Indian populations.¹⁰⁰ Neither group showed much enthusiasm for the French expedition. Acadia's large agricultural population was unwilling to risk deportation and the loss of its thriving farms for such an uncertain affair. Le Loutre's failure the previous month was certainly fresh in everyone's mind, causing some inhabitants to even refuse selling the French supplies.¹⁰¹ Du Vivier tried to stimulate the local population's support of the expedition with little effect through threats of delivering "into the hands of the savages" all those who refused to pledge fidelity.¹⁰² Time and lenience on the part of British officials had extinguished much of the Acadians' fiery animosity. As Alex Bourg, a notary at Mines succinctly explained to the French, "We

⁹⁹ Wrong, ed., *Louisbourg in 1745*, 19.

¹⁰⁰ Rawlyk, *Yankees at Louisbourg*, 10-11.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 11.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

live under a mild and tranquil government, and we have all good reason to be faithful to it.”¹⁰³

The Micmacs showed little more enthusiasm than the Acadians for du Quesnel's second attempt. The combination of le Loutre's non-participation in this attack and the broken promise of French reinforcements during the first siege had the debilitating effect of only gaining 160 warriors compared to the 300 who followed the priest a month earlier.¹⁰⁴ The abortive initial campaign curtailed the strength of du Vivier's force.

While du Vivier struggled to raise an adequate force, his adversary in Annapolis Royal was on the receiving end of 53 more soldiers from Shirley, which strengthened the fort's garrison to over 250.¹⁰⁵ There would be no element of surprise since Annapolis knew what was coming and was prepared to answer any threat with cold steel, cannon fire, and a few tricks the fort's engineer had arranged for any unwelcome visitors.¹⁰⁶

Even with the recruiting setbacks, du Vivier was in high spirits by August 25 with the arrival of a letter from du Quesnel stating that the two French warships he promised were to reach Annapolis on August 28.¹⁰⁷ Ready to act on this news, the French commanding officer initiated several creative schemes to speed up what he hoped would be the British garrison's surrender. First, he marched his small contingent in a much larger formation at a distance from the fort to deceive Mascarene of his true numbers, which were only 280. Second, during a parley, du Vivier formally asked for the fort's

¹⁰³ Acadian Petition to De Gannes, 10 Oct. 1744, cited in McLennan, *Louisbourg from Its Foundation to Its Fall*, 126.

¹⁰⁴ Rawlyk, *Yankees at Louisbourg*, 12.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

surrender on the assertion that “he expected a Seventy, a Sixty and a Fourty guns Shippes, mann’d one third above their compliment, with a Transport with two hundred and fifty men more of regular Troops with Cannon, mortars and other implements of war.”¹⁰⁸ Upon hearing this news, “All of the officers, except three or four, [were] very ready to accept the proposal” while favorable terms were still being offered.¹⁰⁹ The crafty Frenchman suggested a truce until the French vessels arrived, at which point a surrender could be arranged.¹¹⁰ The British agreed to a truce, and both sides began a vigil of the horizon for the expected sails.¹¹¹

Du Vivier was on the verge of conquering Nova Scotia in an almost bloodless fashion. All that was needed was for *Le Caribou* and *L’ Ardent* to arrive in a timely manner. As the days passed with no sign of the long overdue warships, the French commanding officer felt victory slipping through his fingers. In desperation, he sent a message to du Quesnel requesting some privateers to arrive and possibly trick those in the fort into surrendering.¹¹² As the British strengthened their defenses during the truce, the invaders realized that the truce only lessened their chances and resumed the siege shortly before September 12.¹¹³ History quickly repeated itself as du Vivier waited for his promised support, which was reminiscent of le Loutre before him.

As du Vivier watched the tide rise and fall, he might have thought back to William Shakespeare’s play about King Richard III and the famous line “A horse! A

¹⁰⁸ Mascarene to Shirley, Dec. 1744, cited in Rawlyk, *Yankees at Louisbourg*, 13.

¹⁰⁹ McLennan, *Louisbourg from Its Foundation to Its Fall*, 114; Wrong, ed., *Louisbourg in 1745*, 20.

¹¹⁰ William Shirley to the Lords of Trade, 16 Oct. 1744, in Lincoln, *Correspondence of William Shirley*, 1: 150-151.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Rawlyk, *Yankees at Louisbourg*, 13.

¹¹³ Ibid.

horse! My Kingdom for a horse!” While the French officer was in no need of a horse, the two belated warships must have consumed his thoughts. Not only was du Vivier unaware of the status of *Le Caribou* and *L' Ardent*, he was also equally ignorant of the dissolving support Bigot and the merchant community were now giving the expedition. While the French enveloped Annapolis Royal, another theater of war was heating up off the coast. It was at this time that New England privateers were inflicting a heavy toll on French commerce.¹¹⁴ Of the forty-eight prize actions in 1744 fought by British colonial privateers in North American waters, thirty-nine occurred in the vicinity of Louisbourg and Newfoundland.¹¹⁵ The commissaire-ordonnateur and his cronies begged the governor to keep the two French vessels near Cape Breton to protect the fishery and commerce. The governor now pushed aside his plans for the siege of Annapolis, and concentrated instead on protecting the valuable fisheries.

On September 15, two vessels finally arrived, and all eyes were transfixed on ascertaining their identity.¹¹⁶ If the vessels were French, the fort might change hands that very day. For both sides, everything depended on whether the Union Jack or France's basic white ensign flew from the two ships' masts. As the vessels neared, the French knew their siege was over when the fort suddenly erupted in cheers. Once again, Governor Shirley and Massachusetts answered Annapolis Royal's call for aid, this time in the form of an armed brigantine and sloop carrying supplies and fifty Pigwacket

¹¹⁴ *Boston Evening-Post*, 15 Oct. 1744.

¹¹⁵ Carl E. Swanson, *Predators and Prizes: American Privateering and Imperial Warfare, 1739-1748* (Columbia, SC, 1991), 137.

¹¹⁶ Rawlyk, *Yankees at Louisbourg*, 13.

Indians.¹¹⁷ Du Quesnel's military plans were ruined. The governor had counted on the quick arrival of *L'Ardent* from Rochelle, which was ultimately not to be. The ship's original departure was delayed by three months and then it lost its bowsprit in a storm.¹¹⁸ Even with all these delays, *L'Ardent* and *Le Caribou* could have aided du Vivier if the ministry of marine and those in Louisbourg had not given into the merchant's call for greater protection of the fishing banks. On September 21, du Vivier received orders to lift the siege and return to Louisbourg in defeat.¹¹⁹ This left the British soldiers in Annapolis Royal time to drink to Shirley's health several times over.¹²⁰

As word of the expedition's failure reached Louisbourg, no one toasted to their aging governor's health. Du Quesnel could certainly have used a few toasts because he suddenly died on September 28, leaving Louis du Chambon, the former commanding officer of Isle St. Jean, in charge.¹²¹ While the former governor was far from a strong military tactician or even an adequate organizer, the failure of both expeditions could not be placed solely on his shoulders.

The reasons for Louisbourg's impotent offensive capabilities had to do more with its faltering communications with France and New France, its dependence on outside sources for food, its misunderstood military capabilities, and the ministry's refusal to permanently station naval vessels at the port. Louisbourg could not pose a substantial threat to New England while it lacked these four components.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 14; *Boston Evening-Post*, 8 Oct. 1744.

¹¹⁸ McLennan, *Louisbourg from Its Foundation to Its Fall*, 117.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 115; Wrong, ed., *Louisbourg in 1745*, 21.

¹²⁰ Schutz, *William Shirley*, 86.

¹²¹ *Boston Evening-Post*, 10 Dec. 1744; Rawlyk, *Yankees at Louisbourg*, 15.

With the attacks on Canso and Annapolis Royal, King's George's War became a reality in the north. The French had gambled with several half-hearted attempts at reclaiming Nova Scotia and had failed. By the end of 1744, Louisbourg was filled with strife and unrest from its mutinous soldiers and little else, as food and military stores dwindled. The coming of spring found the fortress of Louisbourg and its inhabitants as ill-prepared for its defense, as it had been as a base for its governor's offensive dreams.

Chapter 4

Buying Loyalty: William Shirley and the Politics of War in Colonial Massachusetts

On Wednesday, July 3, 1745, as the first rays of the morning sun began to penetrate the shop windows, back alleys, and wharves of Boston, the city residents were suddenly stirred from their beds by sounds of small arms fire in the distance.¹ Three crisp volleys broke the new day's silence, as the military watch unloaded its muskets in a brisk and well-choreographed manner. Church bells across the city soon erupted with a distinct metal clang that only hastened the citizens out of their dwellings and into streets that were vacant barely minutes before.² A summons had been made of Bostonians, but the purpose was yet unknown.

The summer of 1745 was a time of vigilance for Britain and its colonies as they found themselves embroiled in the War of Austrian Succession. Still fresh in the minds of New Englanders were the previous summer and fall French attacks on Canso and Annapolis Royal, which resulted in Canso being burnt to the ground and the diminutive capital of Annapolis Royal only surviving because of timely aid from Massachusetts.³ Both attacks originated from Louisbourg, a French fortress that many New Englanders viewed as a haven for privateers and popery that threatened British colonial shipping,

¹ *Boston Gazette, or Weekly Journal*, 9 July 1745.

² *Ibid.*

³ William Shirley to the Lords of Trade, 25 July 1744, in Charles Henry Lincoln, ed., *Correspondence of William Shirley: Governor of Massachusetts and Military Commander in America, 1731-1760* (New York, 1912), 1:134-137.

fisheries, and overall safety.⁴ In late March, New England had launched an expedition against Louisbourg, but the operation's success or failure was unknown to Boston residents assembling early on July 3rd.⁵

A sudden silence fell over the whole rank and file of Boston observers just before the announcement was to be read.⁶ Then pockets of jubilant cheers could be heard throughout the city over the still ringing church bells, as the message was read across Boston. News quickly spread among the port city's residents that the mighty fortress of Louisbourg now belonged to George II.⁷

The impossible had become a reality. A contingent of loosely disciplined New England farmers and fishermen, with the help of the Royal Navy, captured a fortress believed to be one of the strongest in North America. The *Boston Gazette* noted: "[Louisbourg] must be of as much consequence to the trade and fishery of these northern colonies, as Gibraltar is to the trade of the Mediterranean."⁸

Bostonians were swept up in a sea of triumph that lasted all day and continued into the night. The ships in Boston harbor displayed their colors as the north and south batteries of Castle William sounded. Wine flowed freely under a tent, and at least one Bostonian commented at the "surprizing decency and good order."⁹ Toward nightfall, large bonfires illuminated the city's streets and alleyways, and many toasts and fireworks were raised into the darkening sky.

⁴ William Shirley to the duke of Newcastle, 14 Jan. 1744/5, *ibid.*, 161-165.

⁵ *Boston Gazette, or Weekly Journal*, 9 July 1745.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ *Boston Weekly News-Letter*, 4 July 1745.

⁸ *Boston Gazette, or Weekly Journal*, 9 July 1745.

⁹ *Boston Weekly News-Letter*, 4 July 1745.

Some of those toasts surely went to the health of Massachusetts Governor William Shirley. Crowds desiring to see and congratulate the man who had orchestrated such an impressive victory for king and country surrounded the governor's dwelling at the Province House.¹⁰ Throughout British North America, the colonists subsequently sang the Massachusetts governor's praises. Across the Atlantic, the king of England rewarded the governor with a colonelcy.¹¹ Shirley's determination in stimulating interest for the expedition and the organizational and logistical skills he displayed in amassing land and sea forces certainly warranted the acknowledgment of his countrymen.

Yet many of New England's citizens missed an only slightly less Herculean accomplishment that stemmed from the expedition against Louisbourg. Shirley used King George's War to his advantage by building support for his office. His advocacy of defensive measures enabled him to draw important political and economic figures to his fledgling administration.¹²

This chapter will demonstrate that Shirley, who entered a government that was greatly divided over currency issues and other economic points of contention, built valuable support by his effective use of patronage.¹³ When hostilities erupted with France in March 1744,¹⁴ Shirley awarded military contracts to politicians who supported

¹⁰ John A. Schutz, *William Shirley: King's Governor of Massachusetts* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1961), 100.

¹¹ William Shirley to Benning Wentworth, 30 Jan. 1746/7, in Lincoln, *Correspondence of William Shirley*, 1: 306-307.

¹² William Shirley to the duke of Newcastle, 15 Sept. 1742, in *ibid.*, 89-92; Schutz, *William Shirley*, 84.

¹³ William Shirley to the duke of Newcastle, 23 Aug. 1741, in Lincoln, *Correspondence of William Shirley*, 1: 39-42; Schutz, *William Shirley*, 85.

¹⁴ French King's Declaration of War, 15 March 1744, in Lincoln, *Correspondence of William Shirley*, 1: 112-114.

him.¹⁵ As an active participant to the political undoing of former Governor Jonathan Belcher, Shirley realized the importance of building his own patronage system within Old and New England, and King George's War provided him the opportunity.¹⁶ Early battles over trade and forestry laws plagued Shirley's administration. The cure came in the form of military contracts. Shirley's stimulation of war contracts during the Louisbourg expedition granted him a victory with merchants and solidified his political control of Massachusetts before the fleet left Boston Harbor.

In August 1741, the forty-seven-year-old Shirley was inaugurated to the position of the king's supreme representative within Massachusetts.¹⁷ As the new governor listened to toasts being proclaimed that night in Withered's Tavern, it is quite possible that he might have reminisced on the political exertions he and his wife had endured to bring him to this position of authority he so recently gained.¹⁸

It was almost ten years since Shirley and his family had arrived in Boston, and that decade was one of constant correspondence in trying to seek a position within the government through the patronage of Thomas Pelham-Holles, duke of Newcastle.¹⁹ The duke was certainly a valuable patron for Shirley to have since he was secretary of state for the Home Department, which included the responsibility for the colonies.²⁰ Shirley

¹⁵ William Shirley-Proclamation, 13 Feb. 1744/5, in *ibid.*, 182; William Shirley to William Pepperrell, 7 Oct. 1745, in *ibid.*, 272.; Robert Zensky, *Merchants, Farmers, and River Gods: An Essay on Eighteenth-Century American Politics* (Boston, 1971), 141-144.

¹⁶ William Shirley to Samuel Waldo, 15 Apr. 1739, in Amelia C. Ford, ed., "William Shirley to Samuel Waldo," *American Historical Review*, No. 2., 36 (Jan., 1931): 350-355.

¹⁷ William Shirley to the duke of Newcastle, 23 Aug. 1741, in Lincoln, *Correspondence of William Shirley*, 1: 39.

¹⁸ Duke of Newcastle to Frances Shirley, 23 July 1738, *ibid.*, 12; Schutz, *William Shirley*, 45.

¹⁹ Duke of Newcastle to Frances Shirley, 23 July 1738, in Lincoln, *Correspondence of William Shirley*, 1: 12.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

had a long association with the influential duke dating back to childhood when the two were neighbors in Sussex. Even with this seemingly strong connection, the duke was sluggish toward Shirley's petitions for a lucrative colonial office. Shirley's wife Frances largely assumed the challenging task of politicking and prodding the duke into action; she even emigrated back to England to facilitate her husband's ambitions.²¹ Mrs. Shirley understood the patronage system well and often stressed to Newcastle that "whatever Employment you bestow on him, from his own capacity and the General Esteem the people have for him, he may be of great Service to the Crown, and I am sure will Employ his utmost Ability and Industry in return for any Favours bestow'd on him"²²

While the Shirleys diligently pushed on in their quest to attain an influential colonial administrative position, William's time spent in lesser offices was certainly not wasted. When Shirley became the advocate general of the admiralty court, a position he attained by a trade with Robert Auchmuty, he furthered his career in several ways.²³ This trade of positions between Auchmuty and Shirley allowed Auchmuty to rise to the position of judge, which Shirley did not desire because of his lack of technical knowledge in admiralty law.²⁴ Shirley also gained Auchmuty's favor, and the position allowed the future governor to assist merchant cronies in London.²⁵ After only two years in Boston, Shirley was already accruing political and economic allies on both sides of the Atlantic.

²¹ Frances Shirley to the duke of Newcastle, 2 March 1736/7, in Lincoln, *Correspondence of William Shirley*, 1: 8-10.

²² Ibid.

²³ George A. Wood, *William Shirley: Governor of Massachusetts, 1741-1756* (New York, 1920), 47.

²⁴ Schutz, *William Shirley*, 12.

²⁵ Ibid., 13.

Such political dexterity was not the strong suit of then Governor Belcher, who Shirley had sought as a patron upon his arrival in Boston. While Shirley served a stint as advocate general, he was wary of amassing enemies within Boston's merchant community. He tried to avoid confrontations with most merchants, prosecuting only the most flagrant smugglers.²⁶ On the other hand, Belcher had a propensity to make enemies throughout New England and especially with the surveyor general of the king's woods.²⁷ By ignoring and subverting laws intended to stop merchant and timber smugglers, Belcher created strong ammunition for his adversaries to use against him in London. His cavalier attitude toward dealing with people came back to haunt him.

Governor Belcher's precipitous fall from favor in Massachusetts and Britain educated Shirley on the pitfalls of governing a royal colony. Shirley often experienced the governor's vicious tongue lashings as the relationship between them soured. The volatile governor's tirades against former allies made reconciliation between Belcher and his opponents impossible. The governor's threats and blackmail pushed his political antagonists, including Samuel Waldo, a timber merchant, into action.²⁸ Belcher's mistakes became lessons in the importance of tact and restraint for the younger Shirley. With the birth of a new administration, Shirley's conciliatory tone replaced Belcher's bullying. In Shirley's inaugural address, the underlying message to the often quick-tempered legislators emphasized compromise.²⁹ Even with the advantage of being the

²⁶ Ibid., 15.

²⁷ William Shirley to the duke of Newcastle, 22 Dec. 1736, in Lincoln, *Correspondence of William Shirley*, 1: 6-8.

²⁸ William Shirley to Samuel Waldo, 9 May 1739, in Ford, "William Shirley to Samuel Waldo," *American Historical Review*, No. 2., 36: 356-359.

²⁹ Zensky, *Merchants, Farmers, and River Gods*, 132.

new governor and temporarily immune from removal, Shirley did not dispose of possible political rivals in his first year; instead, he only filled four vacancies created by death and retirement.³⁰ This was a far cry from the impetuous appointment of fifty-one new persons to local commissions during Belcher's first year.³¹ If Shirley was to make mistakes, they would clearly be his own and not those of the former governor.

While Belcher's less than sunny disposition hurt his political career, his real downfall stemmed from an inability to compromise and work with the legislature on issues the imperial government deemed of the utmost importance.³² In other words, Belcher's staunch attitude within New England's political circle caused a backlash among legislators who disrupted policy initiatives coming from Whitehall. His vehement personal attacks on rivals forced many to journey to England to seek his removal, thus creating scant support or possible political maneuvering when his London patron Lord Townshend died.³³ When the Land Bank crisis arrived, the governor had few political friends. Added to this difficulty, Belcher's enemies in London accused him of ignoring directives from the mother country. Compromise was out of the question for the governor, who needed to follow the Lords of Trade's instructions or risk substantiating his critics' charges.³⁴ Without strong support in the General Court and his inability to compromise, Belcher was in a no-win situation. He had created his own prison, becoming politically impotent and losing support within both America and Britain.

³⁰ Ibid., 132-133.

³¹ Ibid., 105.

³² Duke of Newcastle to William Shirley, 5 Apr. 1740, in Lincoln, *Correspondence of William Shirley*, 1: 17-20.

³³ William Shirley to Samuel Waldo, 9 May 1739, in Ford, "William Shirley to Samuel Waldo," *American Historical Review*, No. 2., 36: 356-359.

³⁴ Zemsky, *Merchants, Farmers, and River Gods*, 110.

Belcher had fallen from the tight rope because of his failure to balance the interests of both New England and the British Empire.

Before Shirley succeeded Belcher, he certainly was aware of the importance that Newcastle and others across the Atlantic placed on the governor being able to control the legislators or at least persuade them, especially during a time of war.³⁵ The duke of Newcastle stressed his frustration with Belcher's incapability in pushing home directives in a letter to Shirley: "Mr. Belcher's Conduct has rendered Him so disagreeable to the People of Both³⁶ the Provinces, under his Government, That He will find great Difficulty, in Executing His Majesty's Orders"³⁷

The most pressing issue within the Massachusetts government was over credit and the liquidation of two banks that were formed to solve that colony's lack of currency.³⁸ A perpetual problem for Massachusetts was the lack of a hard currency because of a chronic trade deficit; this gap caused specie to flow back to Britain, leaving New England with a shortage.³⁹ The Massachusetts General Court exacerbated currency problems by "issuing bills of credit for 8 or 10 years annually for charges of government, and . . . [then] put[ing] off the redemption of the bills as far as they could."⁴⁰ Frustration in London over New England's large annual emission of bills and the rapid depreciation of those bills finally brought royal instructions against "any further emissions of bills until

³⁵ Duke of Newcastle to William Shirley, 5 April 1740, in Lincoln, *Correspondence of William Shirley*, 1: 17-20.

³⁶ Belcher served as governor of Massachusetts and New Hampshire at the same time.

³⁷ Duke of Newcastle to William Shirley, 5 April 1740, in Lincoln, *Correspondence of William Shirley*, 1: 17-20.

³⁸ William Shirley to the duke of Newcastle, 17 Oct. 1741, *ibid.*, 79.

³⁹ Richard Partridge to Messrs. Sandys and Campbell, 2 May 1740, in Gertrude S. Kimball, ed., *The Correspondence of The Colonial Governors of Rhode Island* (Freeport, NY, 1902), 1: 155-158.

⁴⁰ Thomas Hutchinson, *The History of the Colony and Province of Massachusetts Bay* (London, 1765), ed. L.S. Mayo, (Cambridge, MA, 1936), 2: 299.

all that were then extant should be redeemed."⁴¹ These instructions distressed many colonials who worried that Massachusetts would be without any other medium of trade to replace the paper money needed for taxes. Since the General Court was barred from emitting new currency, private citizens began founding banks.

The Land Bank Scheme was designed to release £150,000 in the form of bills of credit that were secured by the property of subscribers.⁴² New Englanders hoped that by establishing the bank, they could more easily obtain provincial bills to pay taxes and that the Land Bank notes would stimulate trade within Massachusetts and abroad.⁴³ The economic proposal was supported by "some of . . . the most leading Members in the [Massachusetts] House of Representatives."⁴⁴ Legislators such as Robert Hale and John Choate were committed to inflation and paper money.⁴⁵ Choate, like some of his fellow directors in the Land Bank, hoped to benefit by converting acreage into liquid assets.⁴⁶ Though some of the directors maintained substantial holdings, the majority of those involved in the Land Bank scheme "were Persons of but mean Circumstances."⁴⁷ The General Court widely supported the bank, which encouraged over 800 of Massachusetts' citizens to become subscribers, despite the fact that there was no security against the bills

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² *An Account of the Rise, Progress and Consequences of the Two Late Schemes Commonly call'd the Land-Bank or Manufactory Scheme, and the Silver Scheme, In the Province of the Massachusetts-Bay*, 9 Apr. 1744, in Andrew McFarland Davis, ed., *Colonial Currency Reprints, 1628-1751* (Boston, 1911), 4: 237-349.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ William Shirley to the duke of Newcastle, 17 Oct. 1741, in Lincoln, *Correspondence of William Shirley*, 1: 79.

⁴⁵ Zemsky, *Merchants, Farmers, and River Gods*, 161-163.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 161.

⁴⁷ Anonymous, 9 Apr. 1744, in Davis, ed., *Colonial Currency Reprints*, 4: 237-349.

depreciating.⁴⁸ Burgeoning popularity for the Land Bank across Massachusetts pushed its opponents into action.

The Silver Bank was established in response to what many in the merchant community believed to be the Land Bank's weakness in dealing with retirement of bills and circulation problems.⁴⁹ Led by successful merchants such as Edward Hutchinson, James Bowdoin, and Andrew Oliver, the Silver Bank planned to offer £120,000 in notes, which could be used for the exchange of goods and for business dealings, with the bills backed by specie.⁵⁰ In stark contrast to the meager estates of many of the Land Bankers, "the Partners of the Silver Scheme were many of them Persons of good Estates; and the Directors in particular were some of them principal Merchants in Boston."⁵¹ While the Land Bank represented inflationist ideals, the Silver Bank pushed for specie-backed currency that was far less prone to depreciation.

Instead of mediating between the two banks, Belcher sided with the majority of the merchants and supported the Silver Bank. He sought to destroy the Land Bank by turning out of public posts many of that bank's supporters.⁵² By embroiling himself in the fight over hard currency in Massachusetts, Belcher alienated many powerful men who expressed their displeasure with him in the form of letters to the mother country.⁵³

Belcher soon received news from Parliament that both banks were outlawed under the

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Herbert L. Osgood, *The American Colonies in the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1907), 3: 353-356.

⁵⁰ Anonymous, 9 Apr. 1744, in Davis, ed., *Colonial Currency Reprints*, 4: 237-349; Schutz, *William Shirley*, 38.

⁵¹ Anonymous, 9 Apr. 1744, in Davis, ed., *Colonial Currency Reprints*, 4: 237-349.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ William Shirley to Samuel Waldo, 9 May 1739, in Ford, "William Shirley to Samuel Waldo," *American Historical Review*, No. 2., 36: 356-359.

Bubble Act.⁵⁴ The prominent men who had established the banks, many of whom were members of government, faced the difficult task of liquidation.⁵⁵ The failure of the two banks marked an end to the hope of finding a solution for the credit crisis as well as the governorship of Belcher.

As Shirley began his residence at Province House, a large brick building close in proximity to the Old South Church, he had much to contemplate and correct if his service to the crown was to be successful. With Parliament's action, the controversy over the two banks ended with neither side prevailing.⁵⁶ Shirley diligently worked and met with members of both banks to lessen the losses of supporters and force delinquent partners to redeem outstanding bills.⁵⁷ Shirley's connections to Robert Auchmuty were valuable during the monetary crisis. Auchmuty was a prominent investor in the Land Bank and kept Shirley informed of how the accounts were being settled.⁵⁸ Trying to foster support for his fledgling administration, the new governor sought the reinstatement of those expelled by Belcher.⁵⁹ Though Shirley was a strong supporter of hard currency, he tried to mend fences between the two banks.⁶⁰ This was an essential duty for two reasons. First, it was imperative for the government of Massachusetts. Animosity and division over the bank schemes would only deter the passing of a supply bill needed to

⁵⁴ Zemsky, *Merchants, Farmers, and River Gods*, 129. The Bubble Act was passed by the British Parliament and outlawed the formation of joint-stock companies that did not have a royal charter.

⁵⁵ Hutchinson, *The History of the Colony and Province of Massachusetts Bay*, 2: 301.

⁵⁶ William Shirley to duke of Newcastle, 15 Sept. 1742, in Lincoln, *Correspondence of William Shirley*, 1: 89-92.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Osgood, *American Colonies*, 3: 356; Schutz, *William Shirley*, 52.

⁵⁹ William Shirley to the duke of Newcastle, 17 Oct. 1741, in Lincoln, *Correspondence of William Shirley*, 1: 76-79.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

strengthen the colony's defenses. Second, Shirley needed more supporters in the Massachusetts assembly to press London's initiatives.

Though Shirley was not a popular choice to replace the governor within New England's merchant circles, he drew support from over twenty of Belcher adversaries who resided in London. Shirley was not New England's overwhelming choice for governor, but he benefited from a desire by many to see Belcher removed. He also had Newcastle's support, which was of the utmost necessity.⁶¹ Some of Belcher's most determined and industrious enemies like Samuel Waldo, Christopher Kilby, Benning Wentworth, and John Thomlinson pushed for Belcher's removal in London.⁶² Of these men, Samuel Waldo was the sharpest thorn in Belcher's side, constantly accusing the governor of ignoring timber laws.⁶³ Benning Wentworth's grievance with Belcher stemmed from being denied a higher position within the New Hampshire government.⁶⁴ Wentworth enlisted the services of John Thomlinson, an affluent London merchant, by helping him gain mast contracts as well as become New Hampshire's colonial agent.⁶⁵ Like Thomlinson, Kilby desired to become a colonial agent. He had been sent abroad as a special agent by the Massachusetts assembly to counter Francis Wilks, Massachusetts's colonial agent and a Belcher ally.⁶⁶ Upon their success, most of Belcher's antagonists returned to New England to reap rewards for supporting Shirley's ascension.

⁶¹ William Shirley to the duke of Newcastle, 23 Aug. 1741, *ibid.*, 39-42.

⁶² Schutz, *William Shirley*, 42.

⁶³ William Shirley to Samuel Waldo, 15 Apr. 1739, in Ford, "William Shirley to Samuel Waldo," *American Historical Review*, No. 2., 36: 352.

⁶⁴ Wood, *William Shirley: Governor of Massachusetts*, 71.

⁶⁵ Jere R. Daniell, "Politics in New Hampshire under Governor Benning Wentworth, 1741-1767," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd Ser., 23, No. 1 (1966): 78.

⁶⁶ Wood, *William Shirley: Governor of Massachusetts*, 72.

Most General Court members refrained from openly supporting the new administration, and instead adopted a wait-and-see policy. The Land Bank/Silver Bank fiasco was Shirley's first test, and he succeeded in bandaging the gaping wounds his predecessor had left. As the healing process of the colony's economy slowly moved forward, assistance began to appear. In 1741, support for Shirley largely came from London merchants who hoped he could alleviate Massachusetts' failing financial condition.⁶⁷ This support from the home country caused some Massachusetts legislators to follow suit with assistance.

The banking fiasco was only one part of a larger currency problem Massachusetts faced. Following the desires of Whitehall and English merchants, Shirley pushed legislation guaranteeing the value of currency and protecting creditors by joining debt agreements to sterling money.⁶⁸ Safeguarding the value of colonial currency was certainly in the best interest of English merchants, and Shirley worked to satisfy his supporters across the Atlantic. This was a lofty goal for the new administration but one that was only partially brought into fruition. Compromise became Shirley's only way to get at least some security for the colony's currency. Negotiations produced some guarantees against inflation of the paper currency, but having sterling money values for all debts was taken out of the bill. The governor had to work out compromises on both sides of the Atlantic. First, he had to agree to some inflation to appease a House controlled by former Land Bank supporters.⁶⁹ Second and equally important, the new

⁶⁷ Schutz, *William Shirley*, 62.

⁶⁸ William Shirley to the Lords of Trade, 19 Mar. 1742/3, in Lincoln, *Correspondence of William Shirley*, 1: 101-107.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

governor convinced London to relax the instructions concerning suspending clauses for old bills by suggesting that Massachusetts would not be able to aid future military initiatives if conditions on the supply bill were non-negotiable.⁷⁰ Shirley also used economic pressure by suggesting that a "total Suppression of Bills [would] thereby lessen the Vent of British Woollen and other British Commodities and perhaps put the Inhabitants upon attempting to supply themselves with Manufactures of their own."⁷¹ In the end, the bill allowed for an expansion in the amount of currency released into the colony, which satisfied a number of Massachusetts legislators, while some guarantees against inflation of the paper currency encouraged merchants on both sides of the Atlantic.⁷² Neither side was completely victorious, but unlike the past administration, steps toward economic health were taken. Shirley's ability to negotiate was essential in maintaining England's espousal and at the same time not ostracizing his administration from future Massachusetts support.

During the early 1740s, Massachusetts still contained numerous politicians loyal to Belcher.⁷³ These men hoped that the former governor's visit to England might resurrect the previous administration.⁷⁴ Besides holdovers from the past government, there were various politicians who viewed Shirley's rise with skepticism if not outright frustration. Despite the fact that Belcher's removal ended the bank controversy, Shirley's ascension troubled Boston merchants and those with timber interests. These two groups

⁷⁰ William Shirley to the Lords of Trade, 30 Apr. 1742, *ibid.*, 83-85.

⁷¹ William Shirley to the Lords of Trade, 19 Mar. 1742/3, *ibid.*, 101-107.

⁷² Schutz, *William Shirley*, 55.

⁷³ James Allen to William Pepperrell, cited in Usher Parsons, *Life of Sir William Pepperrell, Bart.* (London, 1856), 37-38.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

had good reason to be hesitant about the new governor's more stringent trade enforcement policy. Merchants feared a lightening of their purses. Before becoming governor, Shirley was known for two things: opposing Belcher's policies and enforcing trade laws. The second of the two worried many Boston merchants during the summer of 1741.⁷⁵

In most aspects of Shirley's early administration, there was a marked understanding of balancing colonial interests with England's desires. Trade matters were not part of this balance, however. Shirley was a stringent enforcer of trade laws in the beginning of his governorship. There were several reasons why he aggressively pursued smugglers, even though such actions threatened his career and connections with mercantile interests.

As the king's representative in Massachusetts, Shirley felt that his income and lifestyle should be consistent with his elevated rank. The governor skillfully used his English birth and wealthy appearance to influence colonial politicians.⁷⁶ Even a young George Washington penned that "Mr. Shirley['s] . . . character and appearance has perfectly charmed me."⁷⁷ Nevertheless, since Shirley lacked "a fixed and Honourable Salary for the Support of the Dignity of the Governor," he may have viewed seizure of smuggled goods as a way to maintain his distinguished air.⁷⁸ Consequently, the first and most obvious reason for the governor's crackdown stemmed from the monetary gains he

⁷⁵ Schutz, *William Shirley*, 44.

⁷⁶ Zemsky, *Merchants, Farmers, and River Gods*, 157.

⁷⁷ George Washington to Fairfax, 23 Apr. 1755, in John C. Fitzpatrick, ed., *The Writings of George Washington* (Washington, DC, 1931-1944), 1: 116.

⁷⁸ Lords Justice to William Shirley, 10 Sept. 1741, in Lincoln, *Correspondence of William Shirley*, 1: 52.

was privy to from confiscation of illegal cargos. Like many English gentlemen in the eighteenth century, the governor and his family maintained an opulent lifestyle with equally lavish costs. The direct benefit to Shirley was one-third of the value on all seizures, and securing such legal rewards under the Navigation Acts must have been tempting.⁷⁹ The profits from seizures certainly increased his income dramatically, especially since illicit trade was rampant during war. It is interesting to note that while Shirley held the position of advocate general, he was cautious about whom he prosecuted and even appealed to Belcher for a fixed salary.⁸⁰

Another contributing factor toward the governor's lapse in his usually sound politicking was the marriage of Shirley's advocate general, William Bollan, to his eldest daughter, Frances.⁸¹ If Shirley restrained Bollan, this would certainly hurt the financial standing of a devoted staff member and his daughter's living standards. Shirley would have been hypocritical in asking Bollan to curtail his seizures considering that Belcher asked the same of Shirley years ago.⁸² To restrain a man of Bollan's zeal would have been difficult to say the least, considering that the advocate general strutted around Boston's streets in a suit made out of confiscated cloth as a warning to smugglers.⁸³

While keeping close staff members like Bollan content was significant to Shirley's administration, satisfying his patrons in England, especially Newcastle, was of greater importance. Upon being appointed to serve as His Majesty's Captain General and Governor in Chief of Massachusetts, Shirley received specific instructions from the Lords

⁷⁹ Schutz, *William Shirley*, 73.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 15.

⁸¹ *Boston Weekly News-Letter*, 15 Sept. 1743.

⁸² Schutz, *William Shirley*, 29.

⁸³ Ibid., 68.

Justice on how to supervise "several Laws relating to the Trade and Navigation of the Kingdom of Great Britain and His Majesty's Colonies and Plantations in America."⁸⁴

This meticulous letter contained instructions for over twenty regulating acts that the Lords wanted observed.⁸⁵ An in-depth letter from the Lords Justice to Shirley conveyed the idea of stringent enforcement and duty: "All which Laws you will herewith receive, and you shall take a solemn Oath to do your utmost, that all the Clauses, Matters and Things contained in the before recited Acts, and in all other Acts of Parliament now in force, or that hereafter shall be made relating to His Majesty's Colonies or Plantations"⁸⁶

Shirley remained loyal to his oath, but his aggressive nature toward the enforcement of trade laws was insufficient to satisfy the duke of Newcastle or London's business community. While Shirley no doubt expected that relations between Boston merchants and himself would sour because of stringent enforcement, the lack of support from London was unexpected. Newcastle certainly wanted the trade laws enforced, but not as strictly as Shirley and Bollan were executing them. The duke became troubled by colonial antagonism to certain seizures and even suggested to Shirley that he adopt a more relaxed attitude toward misdemeanor transgressions.⁸⁷

If those in London were unenthusiastic about Shirley's hard line approach to the trade laws, Boston residents were openly hostile. Shirley faced serious opposition in his attempts to control the admiralty court by appointing those of proven loyalty. Politicians

⁸⁴ Lords Justice to William Shirley, 10 Sept. 1741, in Lincoln, *Correspondence of William Shirley*, 1: 73-76.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Schutz, *William Shirley*, 69.

still faithful to former Governor Belcher protested against Shirley's removal of Andrew Belcher as register of the admiralty in favor of Samuel Auchmuty. Confronted with a petition from forty-three merchants, and the possibility of losing support for future legislation, the governor wisely reinstated Andrew Belcher.⁸⁸ Conversely, Shirley was successful in several other appointments, namely Christopher Kilby's ascension as Massachusetts agent in England.⁸⁹ Although Kilby was a Boston merchant, he still faced strong resistance from fellow merchants who feared his loyalty to Shirley would hinder their protests against trade policies.⁹⁰ Shirley had to rally former Land Bankers from both houses to secure Kilby's election over Eliakim Palmer, who was backed by the majority of the merchants. Along with Kilby, there were several other merchants who strongly supported the new administration. Both Waldo and Thomlinson found themselves in political opposition with most of Boston's businessmen. Unlike the majority of merchants who were angered by Shirley's stringency, Waldo and Thomlinson's business in mast timbers was now being protected.⁹¹ During Shirley's first years in office, Boston's mercantile community must have longed for a return to the previous administration where illicit trade was largely overlooked.

The governor's stalwart continuance of harsh trade policies to the detriment of colonial and English political support was uncharacteristic of a normally astute politician. The battles between Shirley and Boston's merchants showed that he could depend on

⁸⁸ Ibid., 70.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 70-72.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ W.T. Baxter, *The House of Hancock: Business in Boston 1724-1775* (Cambridge, MA, 1945), 65.

other political groups such as the former Land Bankers to support him in both houses.⁹² While he was building support in some areas, the governor's enemies were quickly increasing within the merchant community. With opposition rising, Shirley even considered seeking another form of patronage from his friends back in London. In a letter from John Thomlinson, a supporter in England, the answer was to simply lessen the number of prosecutions against smugglers.⁹³ Eventually, the governor relaxed his enforcement of trade policies. Nevertheless, during the early years of Shirley's administration the sound of the court house bell signaling the seizure of illegal goods was a common and painful note for Boston merchants.⁹⁴

If the governor was thwarted in his attempts to solidify support amongst merchants, he had greater success in legislation against timber smugglers. Much of Belcher's trouble resulted from his refusal to support and protect the surveyor general and legitimate naval contractors; Shirley took the opposite approach.⁹⁵ Instead of subverting or ignoring the vague timber laws in favor of timber smugglers, the governor sought clarification of the laws and a better way to enforce them.⁹⁶ While this stance was politically infallible in England, it was politically dangerous within the Massachusetts government, where many legislators owned substantial timber property.⁹⁷ Shirley's support of crown officials was exactly what Newcastle expected; yet enforcing unpopular royal policies was often difficult on the western side of the Atlantic.

⁹² William Shirley to the duke of Newcastle, 17 Oct. 1741, in Lincoln, *Correspondence of William Shirley*, 1: 79.

⁹³ Schutz, *William Shirley*, 72.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 68.

⁹⁵ Ibid., 16-20.

⁹⁶ Wood, *William Shirley: Governor of Massachusetts*, 153-154.

⁹⁷ Parsons, *Life of Sir William Pepperrell*, 23.

The timber situation could easily have created a rift within the legislature and weakened Shirley's administration. As with the trade issues, Shirley had taken a precarious stance, but in this instance one that would eventually yield rewards. Shirley was already committed to strict protection of the king's woods by the time he succeeded Belcher. Many who had traveled to England to protest Belcher were there primarily over timber issues.

Upon Shirley's appointment as governor, political allies quickly pressed him to protect their timber interests, especially Samuel Waldo and Benning Wentworth. Waldo was a contractor for the Royal Navy, and Wentworth had recently become the new governor of New Hampshire and surveyor general.⁹⁸ Both men expected Shirley's support and protection of their right to claim timber for the Royal Navy on private land. In this they happily received proclamations requiring "all his Majesty's officers within this Province . . . to give all necessary assistance to the said Benning Wentworth & his Deputy or Deputies in the due Execution of their office."⁹⁹ Even with government proclamations, the wilderness was still a dangerous place for loyal timber agents.

While proclamations lessened violence and riots, they did not quell arguments over the timber laws' ambiguous language. Shirley's administration viewed the clarification of laws as an urgent matter of defense in 1743.¹⁰⁰ The governor pushed a bill through both houses that attacked the two main obstacles against proper collection of timber for masts and yards. First, it clarified the general British laws and their

⁹⁸ William Shirley-Proclamation, 14 Jan. 1744, in Lincoln, *Correspondence of William Shirley*, 1:

166.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Wood, *William Shirley: Governor of Massachusetts*, 153-154.

perpetuation for the preservation of white pine. Second, it addressed "vexatious" lawsuits against timber agents.¹⁰¹ Groundless lawsuits by timber smugglers against royal agents often tied the king's representatives up in civil court under multiple suits. This bill stipulated triple fines for those who tried to disrupt government collection of naval stores with groundless suits.¹⁰² The ease of this bill's passing is somewhat amazing considering Governor Belcher's removal had much to do with his inability to negotiate between royal and private timber interests.

The marriage of William Pepperrell's daughter, Elizabeth, to Nathaniel Sparhawk, a step brother of Samuel Waldo, largely defused the controversial issue of timber, which should have mired the bill in debate.¹⁰³ Pepperrell, a wealthy land owner and Maine merchant, used his daughter's wedding to switch his political allegiance from the dethroned Belcher to Shirley.¹⁰⁴ Pepperrell was quite an astute assessor of the changing winds of colonial politics, being able to retain his seat on the Council for thirty-two consecutive terms under five different administrations.¹⁰⁵ Shirley obtained the influential Maine merchant's loyalty through a business agreement that granted Pepperrell naval contracts in exchange for sharing his merchant business with the firm of Sparhawk and Colman.¹⁰⁶ Besides the economic incentives of changing allegiance, Pepperrell agreed with Shirley's call for improved military defenses.¹⁰⁷ With Waldo and Pepperrell behind

¹⁰¹ Massachusetts House Journals, 20:, 290, quoted in Schutz, *William Shirley*, 66-67.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Byron Fairchild, *Messrs. William Pepperrell: Merchants at Piscataqua* (Ithaca, NY, 1954), 140-

141.

¹⁰⁴ Parsons, *Life of Sir William Pepperrell*, 40.

¹⁰⁵ Fairchild, *Messrs. William Pepperrell*, 168.

¹⁰⁶ Schutz, *William Shirley*, 67.

¹⁰⁷ Fairchild, *Messrs. William Pepperrell*, 171.

the timber bill, there was no opposition. The betrothal of Elizabeth, a young "heiress of rare accomplishments . . . and the only daughter of a distinguished merchant," dissolved the timber argument in a way Shirley's politicking never could.¹⁰⁸

One issue that Waldo and Pepperrell did not need a wedding to agree upon was the poor state of defenses within New England. These men had extensive interests along the wilderness that separated New England from New France, its irrepressible enemy.¹⁰⁹ Both welcomed Governor Shirley's preoccupation with security. The chance of escalation of the War of Jenkins's Ear in Europe and the eventual inclusion of France into the conflict was an ever-growing threat during the governor's early years of office.

While Shirley was overwhelmingly successful in calming the escalating timber concern and made significant steps toward ending the division over the bank schemes, Boston's influential merchants still opposed the new governor. Shirley viewed the colony's economic crisis and ailing military as connected problems. This approach helped him to bridge rifts caused by his administration's aggressive prosecution of smugglers. By ending the division of the bank schemes and lessening the financial crisis he was able to seek more funds for border protection. An increased defense budget was the key to his consolidation of power within Massachusetts.¹¹⁰

New England border towns perpetually feared Jesuit-inspired Indian raids.¹¹¹ With dilapidated military works and vigilance as their only means of protection,

¹⁰⁸ Parsons, *Life of Sir William Pepperrell*, 40.

¹⁰⁹ William Shirley to Samuel Waldo, 15 Apr. 1739, in Ford, "William Shirley to Samuel Waldo," *American Historical Review*, No. 2., 36: 355; Fairchild, *Messrs. William Pepperrell*, 171.

¹¹⁰ Schutz, *William Shirley*, 80.

¹¹¹ Shirley to Pepperrell, 10 Oct. 1743, cited in Parsons, *Life of Sir William Pepperrell*, 4-5; William Shirley to Lords of Trade, 10 Aug. 1744, in Lincoln, *Correspondence of William Shirley*, 1: 138-141.

frontiersmen engaged influential persons who possessed the governor's ear for greater security.¹¹² The realization of Massachusetts' precarious position if a war broke out with France was on Shirley's mind as he assessed the colony's health in a letter to Newcastle in October of 1741. Shirley showed Newcastle how Massachusetts' military and financial strains were connected: "As to the State of the Province the Treasury is empty; Castle William the Chief Fortress and Key of the Province and all its other Garrisons Forts and Fortifications are out of Repair and in a defenceless Condition and in Danger of being deserted by the Officers and Soldiers to whom Arrears of Wages are due as there is to all the Civil Offices of the Government."¹¹³

As the governor had done with the land schemes and the timber and trade situations, he also reacted quickly to the colony's defense. At Shirley's initiative, a legislative group of twenty-five men that included Waldo, Pepperrell, and the governor set out to view the defenses of Maine and Massachusetts as well as to meet with local Indian tribes.¹¹⁴ This junket allowed some of the more important legislators to understand the vital need for increased defense expenditures that the administration now advocated. Soon after the party's return to Boston, £700 were voted toward improvements at Saco, St. Georges, Pemaquid, and Castle William. Later in 1744, the legislature voted to construct three new forts in western Massachusetts along with fifteen

¹¹² Wood, *William Shirley: Governor of Massachusetts*, 181, 185-187.

¹¹³ William Shirley to duke of Newcastle, 17 Oct. 1741, in Lincoln, *Correspondence of William Shirley*, 1: 76.

¹¹⁴ *Boston Weekly News-Letter*, 19 Aug. 1742; Schutz, *William Shirley*, 81.

block houses as a second line of defense. Shirley conferred the job of overseeing construction to John Stoddard, an influential man in that part of the colony.¹¹⁵

By the summer of 1744, with the assault on Canso and the French declaration of war against Britain, military matters became the leading topic of conversation in the General Court and on Boston streets. With the intensification of King George's War, Cape Breton and its "nursery of seamen" threatened vital fishing banks. This led to an unprecedented amount of patronage in 1744 and 1745 that provided the governor with a solidified administration.

Thomas Hancock, originally a small bookseller in Boston, had by the late 1730s become one of the city's leading merchants as well as an obstinate opponent of Bollen and Shirley's aggressive prosecution of smugglers. Hancock was ardently hostile to increased trade enforcement for the simple reason that he often engaged in smuggling.¹¹⁶ Like other merchants during the late 1730s and early 1740s Hancock used illicit means to offset a trade depression induced by stricter enforcement of the Molasses Act and New England's currency quagmire.¹¹⁷ This outspoken businessman was a good friend of Christopher Kilby, Massachusetts' agent in England and a strong supporter of the administration.¹¹⁸ This close relationship allowed Shirley to bring the frustrated merchant into the administration's flock by a series of business deals. Kilby used his position as an agent to award his firm of Sedgwick, Barnard, and Kilby a contract to supply arms to Massachusetts. Hancock became the firm's Boston representative by

¹¹⁵ William Shirley to Lords of Trade, 10 Aug. 1744, in Lincoln, *Correspondence of William Shirley*, 1: 138-141.

¹¹⁶ Thomas Hancock to Captain Gross, 20 Dec. 1743, in Baxter, *House of Hancock*, 86-87.

¹¹⁷ Baxter, *House of Hancock*, 65-66.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 95-97.

agreeing to work with Shirley.¹¹⁹ Like Pepperrell, Hancock's loyalty was secured through preferential business agreements.

Throughout this period of increased wartime expenditures, the governor created a chain of patronage that started with him and quickly branched out to lesser men. The key to this system was that Shirley enticed some of the most prominent merchants, contractors, and land speculators. These prominent men then drew lesser contractors to them, creating a long ladder of favors. Shirley carefully ran the patronage through his office. Moreover, by the eve of the Louisbourg expedition, many men within Massachusetts government such as Bollan, Waldo, Watts, and Dudley owed their positions to the governor.¹²⁰

With the commencement of hostilities, Shirley quickly heaped contracts on his trusted friends and those whose support he still sought. During this time of conflict, former Governor Belcher left for England, causing many who still supported him to seek patronage elsewhere.¹²¹ Merchants such as Aphthrop and Hancock were among the first to receive commissions to outfit soldiers sent to relieve the garrison of Annapolis Royal.¹²² The governor repaid loyalty with contracts and commissions. It was soon obvious that attaching oneself to the administration was financially lucrative. Gone were the days of early 1741 when Shirley chiefly depended on London merchants, Newcastle, and those ostracized by the Belcher administration.

¹¹⁹ Schutz, *William Shirley*, 71-72.

¹²⁰ Ibid., 60.

¹²¹ Ibid., 84.

¹²² Baxter, *House of Hancock*, 97-100; William Shirley to the Lords of Trade, 16 Oct. 1744, in Lincoln, *Correspondence of William Shirley*, 1: 150-151.

Shirley's quick reinforcement of Annapolis Royal gave him the opportunity to reward his military contractors and prove his faithfulness to the crown. Besides merchant approval, Shirley enjoyed praise from his superiors in London: "[Shirley] hath prevailed with the Assembly . . . to the raising of three Companys of Sixty Men each exclusive of Officers but as an encouragement for the speedy raising of the same to give a bounty of near Four Guineas to each Man as likewise to victual them for three months and to be at the further Expense of Transporting . . . to make good the engagement he hath entred into for the pay of the said forces but also to Signify your Royal approbation of his conduct in this affair."¹²³ Shirley's wartime actions in New England thus strengthened his political position among London officials.

Encouraged and emboldened by his success with Annapolis Royal, the governor embarked upon selling the conquest of Louisbourg to the General Court.¹²⁴ While building support for this venture, the administration promised to give the provisioning contracts to local men.¹²⁵ This certainly prompted Massachusetts' merchants and fishermen to push for the expedition.¹²⁶ Two petitions, one from over 100 Marblehead fishermen and another from Boston's leading merchants "praying that [an] Expedition . . . may be undertaken" emphasized eastern Massachusetts' willingness to support such a daring and economically lucrative scheme.¹²⁷ Upon the legislature's approval, Shirley

¹²³ Royal order approving conduct of William Shirley, 6 Sept. 1744, in Lincoln, *Correspondence of William Shirley*, 1: 142-144.

¹²⁴ William Shirley to the General Court of Massachusetts, 23 Jan. 1744/5, *ibid.*, 167-169.

¹²⁵ Schutz, *William Shirley*, 90.

¹²⁶ William Vaughan to William Shirley, 14 Jan. 1744/5, in J.S. McLennan, *Louisbourg: from Its Foundation to Its Fall: 1713-1758* (Sydney, NS, 1918), 360.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*; Court records for Massachusetts, 19 Jan. 1744/5, in G.A. Rawlyk, *Yankees at Louisbourg* (Orono, ME, 1967), 39.

received the authority to raise 3,000 volunteers and to supply and house them in Boston.¹²⁸ He approached the organization, leadership, and provisioning of troops as a politician familiar with patronage and eager to provide commissions and contracts to friends and equally willing to ignore enemies. As John Adams once remarked, Governor Shirley "never promoted any man for merit alone."¹²⁹

Shirley divided leadership of the expedition among his most loyal supporters. Pepperrell received the honor of being commander-in-chief; Roger Wolcott of Connecticut was second in command.¹³⁰ Waldo was appointed as a brigadier general, with various other influential land holders, including Joseph Dwight.¹³¹ Robert Hale and John Choate, both supporters of Shirley since the Land Bank scheme, became colonels.¹³² The colonelcies that Choate and Hale received were coveted because of the economic advantages they provided. Colonels were allowed deductions in the purchase of clothes, managing the soldiers' wages, as well as the ability to sell luxury goods to soldiers and the authority to take spoils of war.¹³³ Shirley explained to Hale that he had received the commission to help him meet financial duties.¹³⁴ Patronage also extended to the sons of influential New Englanders. Waldo's son was made a commissary; Pepperrell's son-in-law, Nathaniel Sparhawk, received a contracting commission; Auchmuty's son was

¹²⁸ Massachusetts General Court, 25 Jan. 1744/5, in Lincoln, *Correspondence of William Shirley*, 1: 169-170.

¹²⁹ Lyman H. Butterfield et al., eds., *Diary and Autobiography of John Adams* (Cambridge, MA, 1961) 1: 109.

¹³⁰ William Shirley to Roger Wolcott, 8 Mar. 1744/5, in Lincoln, *Correspondence of William Shirley*, 1: 193-194; William Shirley to William Pepperrell, 19 Mar. 1744/5, *ibid.*, 194-195.

¹³¹ Francis Parkman, *A Half-Century of Conflict* (Boston, 1892), 2: 100.

¹³² Osgood, *American Colonies*, 3: 353.

¹³³ Schutz, *William Shirley*, 92.

¹³⁴ Shirley to Hale, 23 June 1744, quoted in Schutz, *William Shirley*, 92.

commissioned a lieutenant; and Shirley's own sons-in-law were engaged in recruitment and supplying victuals for men raised.¹³⁵

Though the support structure for Shirley's administration had grown with each passing year, the lucrative commissions and war contracts ended the large scale opposition from merchants. Without the growing defense expenditures of an escalating war, Massachusetts would still have been mired in contention over trade policies. Without King George's War, it is possible that growing opposition from colonial merchants could have toppled Shirley in the same way that his predecessor had fallen from favor.

Shirley's adept balancing of British and colonial interests along with his understanding of patronage allowed him to take advantage of the awarding of military contracts on both sides of the Atlantic. He was an astute politician who understood and thrived in the intricate and often confusing three ring circus that was eighteenth-century British imperial government. Like other successful contemporary politicians, he understood the game of patronage and played it well. Above all, he was a man who found himself in the right place at the right time and knew how to exploit it.

¹³⁵

Ibid., 92.

Chapter 5

A Blanket, Ginger, and Twenty-Five Shillings: The Common Soldier's Reward

In the days and weeks prior to March 24, 1745, the city of Boston was struggling to handle an invasion of sorts. It was not the infamous French privateer Morpain who invaded the port city, but Massachusetts' own sons.¹ Merchants, farmers, and fishermen flooded the city's wharves, taverns, and narrow cobblestone streets. New England's principal port quickly became the rallying point for recruits from all parts of the royal colony.² Not since the ill-fated 1711 expedition to seize Quebec had so many men been assembled to partake in an invasion of New France.³

From New England's populous coastal towns to its western frontier villages, citizens quickly stirred into action. Over 4,000 men answered the call to enlist in the audacious plan to capture the French fortress of Louisbourg on Cape Breton Island. The relatively quick mobilization of such a large force by the colonies of Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Connecticut, and Rhode Island was quite impressive. This enlistment of New England colonists was even more extraordinary when one looks back to the summer of 1744.

¹ Paul Mascarene to William Shirley, Dec. 1744, cited in G.A. Rawlyk, *Yankees at Louisbourg* (Orono, ME., 1967), 165. Many people in Nova Scotia and New England feared an attack by the French. "Upon enquiry I found a rumor had spread that one Morpain...was up the River with five hundred French and Indians...tho' We were assur'd the next day that this piece of news was false, the impression it had made would not however be taken off from most peoples minds."

² Louis Effingham DeForest, ed., *Louisbourg Journals 1745* (New York, 1932), 2.

³ Julian Gwyn, *Frigates and Foremasts: The North American Squadron in Nova Scotia Waters, 1745-1815* (Vancouver, 2003), 5.

It was during this time that Governor William Shirley called on able-bodied Americans to strengthen Annapolis Royal against a besieging force of French inspired Indians. The need for reinforcements and succors for Annapolis was imperative if Nova Scotia's capital was to remain under George II's control. Nevertheless, the Massachusetts government found little enthusiasm among its inhabitants to aid their northern neighbor. The Massachusetts House of Representatives raised the already large bounty for enlistment from £20 to £25 in an attempt to stimulate recruitment.⁴ Even with this increase, the governor was still unable to fill all the openings and sent only seventy men north.⁵ Since Massachusetts' sons were loath to go, Shirley appealed to the Pigwacket Indians to complete the quota of 180 men. While the ill-equipped and incomplete Massachusetts companies were pivotal in boosting the morale of those besieged at Annapolis Royal, it was obvious that the American province had little enthusiasm for such military endeavors in 1744.

Whereas Massachusetts struggled to fill a quota of less than 200 men for Nova Scotia in the summer of 1744, the Louisbourg expedition attracted over 4,000 men only eight months later. The contrasting nature of Massachusetts's recruitment in 1744 and 1745 can be linked to the tantalizing lure of possible booty. The idea of capturing French goods was vastly more enticing than a bounty, however large. Even though the enlistment bounty for Annapolis was over six times larger, New Englanders

⁴ Rawlyk, *Yankees at Louisbourg*, 23-25.

⁵ Shirley to the Lords of Trade, 25 July 1744, in Charles Henry Lincoln, ed., *Correspondence of William Shirley: Governor of Massachusetts and Military Commander in America, 1731-1760* (New York, 1912), 1:134.

overwhelmingly preferred the chance of plunder to guaranteed income.⁶ Unlike Annapolis Royal, Louisbourg offered the soldiers a chance at the spoils of war. Many colonial ministers preached to their congregations in a crusade fashion against Roman Catholic France, but religion did not provide the impetus for the expedition. Most men enlisted not for God but for loot.

During the campaign, many common soldiers were consumed with finding goods to confiscate from the French colonists. As was true of Governor Shirley and the merchants who supported him, the average New England recruit looked at the expedition against Cape Breton in personal finance terms. While the governor sought greater political support through his control of patronage and the merchants accrued lucrative government supply contracts, the typical soldier also wanted his reward. Since economic motives permeated every level of the expedition, the actual siege highlights the struggles of these common soldiers and why they traveled to Cape Breton's foreboding shore.

Robust recruitment for the expedition against Louisbourg prompted a sudden influx of newly enlisted soldiers traveling to Massachusetts' capital. A whirl of excitement, planning, and chaos soon engulfed most Bostonians. Even though the governor tried to insure some secrecy, the anticipated invasion was preeminent in the minds of all and on the tongues of most.⁷ Boston's copious tavern patrons were eager to express their own view of the impending operation, some with fiery toasts to the guaranteed success of the upcoming invasion. Others, more hesitant and suspicious about

⁶ Rawlyk, *Yankees at Louisbourg*, 23.

⁷ John A. Schutz, *William Shirley: King's Governor of Massachusetts* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1961), 91.

the possibility for victory, agreed with Massachusetts legislator Thomas Hutchinson when he compared the strategy for taking Louisbourg and its cannons to "selling the skin of a bear before catching him."⁸

No matter what colonists thought of the impending expedition, they could not walk Boston's streets without witnessing scenes of intense preparation. As recruits entered Boston, they were inspected along with their weapons and then sent to the commissary general for equipment.⁹ Many new soldiers found themselves hastily "Exercised & Fitted for Service" by their equally inexperienced officers.¹⁰ Shirley worked feverishly with his cronies to establish housing for recruits and obtain provisions and military stores. While the logistics of raising and adequately supplying such a force were daunting, Shirley managed the affair with the skill of a seasoned politician. Drawing on his experience from the Cartagena expedition, the governor met Massachusetts' enlistment quota, while securing his own political power through the distribution of lucrative commissions and contracts.¹¹ Government contracts, privateering, and high wages for sailors helped to relieve New England's shipping and fishing communities, which had been decimated since the beginning of war.¹²

The most critical decision still facing the governor was who should lead the expedition. While several men vied for the honor, Shirley chose William Pepperrell, a commander of the Maine militia, wealthy merchant, and president of the Governor's

⁸ Ibid., 90.

⁹ DeForest, ed., *Louisbourg Journals*, 2.

¹⁰ Shirley-Proclamation, 13 Feb. 1744/5, in Lincoln, ed., *Correspondence of William Shirley*, 1: 182.

¹¹ Shirley to the duke of Newcastle, 4 Aug. 1740, in *ibid.*, 25. Shirley was asked by the duke of Newcastle to raise troops for the Cartagena expedition.

¹² Francis Parkman, *A Half-Century of Conflict* (Boston, 1892), 2: 103.

Council.¹³ Pepperrell chaired a joint committee that strongly pushed the legislature to adopt the governor's bold plan against Louisbourg. At first, the merchant from Kittery, Maine, balked at accepting the important command because of his lack of military experience. George Whitefield, one of the most famous evangelical religious leaders of his time and Pepperrell's close friend, wrote the colonel and discussed some of the disadvantages of accepting the position. "[He] did not think the scheme very promising; that the eyes of all would be upon him,-that if it should not succeed, the widows and orphans of the slain would reproach him,-and if it should succeed, many would regard him with envy, and endeavor to eclipse his glory."¹⁴ Even with Whitefield's warning, Pepperrell still hesitantly accepted the appointment. The governor and speaker of the lower house's statements that there would be no invasion without Pepperrell ultimately convinced the hesitant merchant to lead the expedition.¹⁵

Though the second generation merchant lacked military experience, he possessed a rather important quality for a leader during colonial wars. This essential characteristic was his popularity. Pepperrell's well-known name certainly helped convince most of those wrestling with the enlistment decision. Shirley's judgment to give Pepperrell the command paid off handsomely in terms of recruitment, as over 1,000 men joined from Maine alone.¹⁶

With the expedition's leadership finally secured, focus was now directed toward preparing the troops and vessels. Those recruits raised from Maine and other parts of

¹³ Byron Fairchild, *Messrs. William Pepperrell: Merchants at Piscataqua* (Ithaca, NY, 1954), 173.

¹⁴ Usher Parsons, *The Life of Sir William Pepperrell, Bart.* (London, 1856), 51.

¹⁵ William Pepperrell to Captain Henry Stafford, 4 Nov. 1745, in Rawlyk, *Yankees at Louisbourg*, 173.

¹⁶ Parkman, *A Half-Century of Conflict*, 2: 99.

Massachusetts were in Governor Shirley's words "disciplined a little," and then sent to their assigned vessel.¹⁷ The waterfront hastily became the epicenter of the mobilization effort. Over fifty fishing vessels bobbed up and down in the cold waters of Boston Harbor, waiting their turn to be loaded with supplies and troops.¹⁸ In the days before the fleet's departure, Boston acquired the characteristics of a giant ant hill with streams of people working throughout the city toward a common goal. All along the wharves soldiers filed up and down the gang planks with supplies in tow.¹⁹ Few soldiers were lucky enough to have extra clothing let alone another pair of shoes for the expedition. Only the officers and chaplains like the Reverend Adonijah Bidwell were allowed to bring chests of extra clothing and supplies.²⁰ Massachusetts soldiers received wages of only 25 s. per month along with a blanket and ginger.²¹ Merchants and contractors charged with supplying the fledgling army scurried around the wharves haggling over the price of supplies, often at cross purposes because of duplicate commissions.²² Adding to the frustration and confusion of organizing and supplying the new army, rumors spread of a small pox outbreak. Inspectors swiftly assessed the validity of these reports, and to the relief of the city and those commanding the expedition, no cases of small pox were found.²³

¹⁷ Shirley to Pepperrell, 17 Feb. 1744/5, in Lincoln, ed., *Correspondence of William Shirley*, 1: 185.

¹⁸ H.M. Chapin, "New England Vessels in the Expedition Against Louisbourg 1745," *New England Historic Genealogical Register*, 77 (1923), 6. Chignecto Project Electronic Edition, May 1998. <http://fortress.uccb.ns.ca/search/Chapin.html>. Page numbers between 1923 version and online edition do not correspond. Page numbers follow online format. All Chapin's subsequent references follow online format.

¹⁹ DeForest, ed., *Louisbourg Journals*, 2.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 225.

²¹ J.S. McLennan, *Louisbourg: from Its Foundation to Its Fall: 1713-1758* (Sydney, NS, 1918), 136.

²² Schutz, *William Shirley*, 94.

²³ *Boston Weekly News-Letter*, 20 Feb. 1744/5.

Obtaining an adequate number of sailors was one of the most crucial issues among the myriad of logistical problems with which the leadership had to contend.²⁴ Unscrupulous merchants and fishermen hid seamen in hopes of sailing before the governor's embargo ended to reap the rewards of empty fishing banks.²⁵ Shirley and the Massachusetts legislature took several vigorous steps to help alleviate the dearth of able seamen. First, naval recruits were offered higher pay than the land contingent.²⁶ Second, the governor warned would-be embargo breakers that they would be "prosecuted for their offense with the utmost severity of Law."²⁷ Third, and in some respects most important, the Massachusetts assembly passed an act "to prevent seamen removing into distant parts to avoid their being impressed into His Majesty's service."²⁸ Finally, the Council issued impressments for a small number of mariners with little hostility. It is quite surprising that the impressments were carried out with relative ease since a similar effort sparked bloody riots in Boston only two years later.²⁹ Even with the inevitable setbacks from the hasty organization, Shirley dispatched "three good ships of 20 Guns each, Two Snows of 16 Guns each, and a Brigantine of near the same force" to cruise off Cape Breton before March 24, the departure date for the expedition's main force.³⁰ The fifty or so transports

²⁴ Rawlyk, *Yankees at Louisbourg*, 48-49.

²⁵ *Boston Weekly News-Letter*, 21 Feb. 1744/5.

²⁶ Rawlyk, *Yankees at Louisbourg*, 48-49.

²⁷ *Boston Weekly News-Letter*, 21 Feb. 1744/5.

²⁸ Carl E. Swanson, *Predators and Prizes: American Privateering and Imperial warfare, 1739-1748* (Columbia, SC, 1991), 84.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 86; Schutz, *William Shirley*, 94.

³⁰ Shirley to Newcastle, 27 Mar. 1745, in Lincoln, ed., *Shirley Correspondence*, 1: 196.

remaining in Boston Harbor under the protection of Castle William's guns soon weighed anchor and began their voyage toward Cape Breton and the unknown.³¹

March 24, 1745, was like most Sundays in "the city on the hill." People flocked to their local churches to keep the Sabbath.³² Governor Shirley and his family were no exception. Each Sunday, a carriage containing the Shirley family traversed Boston's streets to King's Chapel, where the fourth pew was reserved for them.³³ Like most churches on this Sunday, King's Chapel was filled with new faces. Those recruited for the expedition against Louisbourg attended service in Boston or Nantasket, free to enjoy the morning off from their duties.³⁴ Throughout the city, Bostonians lowered their heads in fervent prayer for the operation's success and a blow against Catholicism.

As the momentum of the recent Great Awakening subsided, many New England ministers sought a new way to revive their flock's dwindling religious spirit. George Whitefield, the leading voice of the Great Awakening, provided the motto *Nil desperandum Christo duce*³⁵ for the flag, causing the expedition to take on the pomp and circumstance of a crusade.³⁶ As one minister succinctly put it, "from fighting the devil they must turn to fighting the French."³⁷

About the time the sun had reached its zenith, morning service finished, and those taking part in the expedition hurried back to their assigned ships. With a "fine gale of

³¹ Rawlyk, *Yankees at Louisbourg*, 57.

³² DeForest, ed., *Louisbourg Journals*, 80.

³³ Schutz, *William Shirley*, 47.

³⁴ DeForest, ed., *Louisbourg Journals*, 2.

³⁵ Despair not when Christ leads.

³⁶ Parkman, *A Half Century of Conflict*, 2: 95-96; Robert Leckie, *The Wars of America* (New York, 1992), 33.

³⁷ Thomas Prince, in Parkman, *A Half Century of Conflict*, 2: 95.

wind" from the southwest, the fleet set sail around 3:30 p.m. from Nantasket under the command of Commodore John Rouse, a seasoned privateer captain who knew the cost of battle.³⁸ Pepperrell, the novice general, joined Rouse on the colony's aptly named snow *Shirley* for the first leg of the voyage.³⁹ As Pepperrell lumbered up the gang plank, he kept a close hold of his detailed instructions from the Massachusetts General Court. These directives from Shirley and the General Court were quite meticulous and included plans for a commando style assault on the French port and its adjacent fishing settlements. Even though the governor tended to micro-manage, he understood the need for flexibility and left the merchant-turned general with instructions "to act upon unforeseen emergencies, according to your best discretion."⁴⁰ Massachusetts and the rest of its English neighbors wondered if the discretion of a merchant with little military experience would lead to victory or disaster.

As Shirley watched the sails of Rouse's fleet sink into the darkening horizon, he might have taken a moment to ponder the many challenges he overcame to make this expedition a reality. The astute governor may have enjoyed the momentary view he worked hard to create, but knew that the successful mobilization was only the first step. The farmers, fishermen, and merchants crammed into the tiny holds of the transports would determine whether the Union Jack or France's white flag would billow above Louisbourg.

³⁸ DeForest, ed., *Louisbourg Journals*, 80-81, 182; Swanson, *Predators and Prizes*, 198. While Rouse was acting Commodore of the provincial fleet, Edward Tyng was senior provincial naval officer.

³⁹ Chapin, "New England Vessels", 3.

⁴⁰ Shirley to Pepperrell, 22 Mar. 1745, in Massachusetts Historical Society, *Collections*, 1st Ser., 1: 11.

While Shirley was relieved to see the fleet finally weigh anchor, New England's weak naval force was still a concern to the governor. Several months before the expedition left Nantasket, Shirley had written to Commodore Peter Warren, the newly appointed commander of naval operations in America, for much needed support.⁴¹ Governor Shirley had envisioned the expedition's fleet to include two of His Majesty's 40 or 50 gun ships.⁴² Shirley believed these vessels would be needed to repel the 54 and 60 gun French ships intended to re-supply Louisbourg in the spring.⁴³ Without naval vessels, any French ship of the line could not only break through a colonial blockade but also destroy the provincial fleet and leave the ground contingent without a means of escape. What the governor considered "most essential for securing the success of this expedition [was] to have a sufficient naval force," and Commodore Warren controlled the Royal Navy's warships.

Shirley could not have found a more willing British officer. Unlike many of his contemporary naval officers, the commodore was quite sympathetic to the northern colonies and especially New York, where he owned land, married, and desired the governorship.⁴⁴ Warren was also well acquainted with Louisbourg, having been involved in private trade with the French colony in 1737.⁴⁵ The forty-year-old British officer had

⁴¹ Shirley to Peter Warren, 29 Jan. 1744/5, in Julian Gwyn, ed., *The Royal Navy and North America: The Warren Papers, 1736-1752* (London, 1975), 48-50.

⁴² Shirley to Warren, 29 Jan. 1744/5, in *ibid.*, 48-50.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ Warren to George Anson, 2 Apr. 1745, *ibid.*, 68-70. Anson was a member of the Admiralty Board.

⁴⁵ Donald F. Chard, "The Price and Profits of Accommodation: Massachusetts-Louisbourg Trade, 1713-1744," in Eric Krause, Carol Corbin, and William O'Shea, eds., *Aspects of Louisbourg* (Sydney, NS, 1995), 221.

even written to the Admiralty in 1743 and 1744 suggesting an attack on Louisbourg.⁴⁶

Through his commercial ventures and marriage, Warren was associated with many New England policy makers and merchants, sharing their mindset on numerous issues.

Because of Warren's assimilation into the northern colonies, his desire for advancement, and his belief that "nothing could be a greater acquisition to Great Britain and its dominions, than the dispossessing the French of Cape Breton," it came as quite a shock to Shirley that the commodore not only declined to command the expedition but even refused to supply the colonial force with any vessels.⁴⁷

Shirley did not receive Warren's disheartening response until March and could do little more than keep the demoralizing information between himself and General Pepperrell, so as not to affect the soldiers. The governor wrote to the duke of Newcastle, who was secretary of state for the Home Department, dejected and uncertain of "what turn it [Warren's negative reply] may give to the Event of the Expedition" and hoping that "Providence will favour the small Naval Force."⁴⁸

Shirley wasted little time speculating why the Royal Navy had denied his appeal for aid and instead continued to press those in England who still might provide the needed assistance. While the governor felt that one or two naval vessels could secure Cape Breton's capitulation, Warren had good grounds to deny the colonies such support.

⁴⁶ Warren to Thomas Corbett, 8 Sept. 1744, in Gwyn, ed., *The Warren Papers*, 37-39. Corbett was secretary to the Admiralty Board.

⁴⁷ Warren to Anson, 2 Apr. 1745, *Ibid.*, 70-75.

⁴⁸ Shirley to duke of Newcastle, 27 Mar. 1744/5, in Lincoln, ed., *Correspondence of William Shirley*, 1: 198.

First and most important, London had not approved the operation.⁴⁹ Second, the accidental loss of his HMS *Weymouth* on Sand Key weakened Warren's force considerably.⁵⁰ Third, the commodore and his captains were hesitant to weaken their forces in the Leeward Islands while rumors circulated of a French force sailing for Martinique. Finally, Warren had doubts about the New England militia's fighting capabilities. Warren had been part of the failed 1740 St. Augustine expedition, and though he escaped blame, he witnessed the failure of a joint American-British land and sea operation.⁵¹ Warren's own plan for Cape Breton's seizure called for British regulars and an extensive artillery train, which Shirley's forces lacked.⁵² Without the requisite men and materiel, Warren frankly stated to his superiors that he felt Shirley's plan "was concerted too hastily and with too little force for a place of such strength and consequence."⁵³ Even though Warren and his captains agreed that he should not leave for New England, they still sent "Gov. Shirley's letters and schemes" to London for review on the *Mercury*.⁵⁴ While the newly appointed commander of naval operations in America awaited the Admiralty's response, the colonial vessels operating off Nova Scotia were on their own.

Warren was not alone in his doubts of Pepperrell's army succeeding. In a letter to his brother in Massachusetts, Benjamin Franklin expressed his skepticism of the New

⁴⁹ Consultation of Captains: Commodore Warren, Capts. Knowles, Holburne, Lisle, Douglass, Tyrrell, 23 Feb. 1744/5, in Gwyn, ed., *The Warren Papers*, 55-56.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Julian Gwyn, *The Enterprising Admiral: The Personal Fortune of Admiral Sir Peter Warren* (Montreal, 1974), 11-12.

⁵² Warren to Anson, 2 Apr. 1745, in Gwyn, ed., *The Warren Papers*, 70-75.

⁵³ Warren to Corbett, 10 Mar. 1744/5, *ibid.*, 62.

⁵⁴ Warren to Anson, 2 Apr. 1745, *ibid.*, 70-75.

Englanders' ability to accomplish such a feat. He was especially incredulous about the effectiveness of prayer against fortified positions.

You have a fast and prayer day for that purpose [fall of Louisbourg]; in which I compute five hundred thousand petitions were offered up to the same effect in New England, which added to the petitions of every family morning and evening, multiplied by the number of days since January 25th make forty-five millions of prayers; which, set against the prayers of a few priests in the Garrison, to the Virgin Mary, give a vast balance in your favor . . . in attacking strong towns I should have more dependence on *works*, than on *faith*; for, like the kingdom of heaven, they are to be taken by force and violence; and in a French garrison I suppose there are devils of that kind, that they are not to be cast out by prayers and fasting, unless it be by their own fasting for want of provisions.⁵⁵

While Franklin expressed doubts of the expedition against Louisbourg with his customary wit, neither the young inventor nor his brother knew what the outcome would be. New England had now taken the offensive in a war that raged on both sides of the Atlantic. Louisbourg and its inhabitants would soon be under siege.

As the first Massachusetts contingent fought against rough seas on its way to Canso, the average soldier had time to think back on why he decided to join this amateur army.⁵⁶ For many, the French attacks on Canso and Annapolis Royal the previous summer showed Louisbourg's real threat and the need for its reduction. While most of the New England contingent understood the hazard Cape Breton posed to its shipping and fisheries, few colonists could comprehend the complex political alliances that ultimately brought gunfire and bloodshed to the North American continent.

⁵⁵ Benjamin Franklin to John Franklin, Mar. 1745, in Leonard W. Labaree, ed., *The Papers of Benjamin Franklin* (New Haven, Conn, 1961), 3: 26-27.

⁵⁶ DeForest, ed., *Louisbourg Journals*, 2-3.

The attack on Louisbourg was part of the War of Austrian Succession, which was known as King George's War in America.⁵⁷ Like most eighteenth-century European conflicts, there was a confusing alliance system that stemmed from trying to keep a balance of power in Europe.⁵⁸ Arguments over Habsburg possessions were the kindling that set Europe on fire. Emperor Charles VI, who had no male heir, wanted his daughter, Maria Theresa, to inherit all Habsburg possessions upon his death.⁵⁹ Charles VI's desire for his daughter's accession led to the creation of the "Pragmatic Sanction."⁶⁰ Austrian diplomats made several appeals to most of the European powers, including France, to recognize the transfer of the Habsburg possessions to Maria Theresa. When Charles VI died in 1740, the French court initiated a concerted effort to weaken the Habsburg monarchy, even though this meant abrogating the "Pragmatic Sanction." Although France did not attack Austria, it supported rulers who sought the Habsburg crown, including Charles of Bavaria, Charles Emmanuel III of Savoy, and Augustus III of Saxony.⁶¹ France also supported those who used Charles VI's death to seize Habsburg territories.⁶²

The War of Austrian Succession is a comprehensive term that includes many small wars. The conflict included two Austro-Prussian wars: the First Silesian War 1740-1742 and the Second Silesian War 1744-1745, an Austro-Saxon War of 1741, an Austro-

⁵⁷ Leckie, *The Wars of America*, 31.

⁵⁸ His Majesty's Declaration of War Against the French King, 29 Mar. 1744, in Lincoln, ed., *Correspondence of William Shirley*, 1: 117-118.

⁵⁹ Leckie, *The Wars of America*, 30-31.

⁶⁰ His Majesty's Declaration of War Against the French King, 29 Mar. 1744, in Lincoln, ed., *Correspondence of William Shirley*, 1:117-118.

⁶¹ Howard H. Peckham, *The Colonial Wars 1689-1762* (Chicago, 1964), 92.

⁶² Douglas Edward Leach, *Arms for Empire: A Military history of the British Colonies in North America, 1607-1763* (New York, 1973), 206-210.

Bavarian War 1741-1745, and a Franco-Austrian War of 1744-1748. Austria also defended its Italian possessions against attacks from Spain in the Austro-Spanish War of 1742-1748. French diplomacy encouraged Sweden's attack on Russia, a possible Austrian ally, which led to the Swedish-Russian War of 1741-1743.⁶³

The siege and capture of Louisbourg were part of the Franco-Austrian War of 1744-1748. During this conflict, the British and Dutch were allied with Austria against the Bourbon kings of France and Spain. While France and Britain did not officially go to war until 1744, tensions between the two nations had been building throughout the late 1730s and early 1740s. The British king's first minister, Robert Walpole, and Cardinal Fluery of France restrained more bellicose factions in their countries.⁶⁴ The departure of Walpole and Fluery in the early 1740s ended the policy of peaceful accommodation. George II, Britain's Hanoverian monarch, subsidized the forces of Hanover and Hesse allies of Austria and enemies of France.⁶⁵ In 1743, the British sent soldiers into the Austrian Netherlands, even though Britain was officially only at war with Spain.⁶⁶ Later that same year, Spain and France signed the Treaty of Fontainebleau.⁶⁷ France promised to aid Spain in the recovery of Minorca and Gibraltar as well as the destruction of the colony of Georgia.⁶⁸ Overseas possessions were clearly a growing concern for European countries. France had respected the neutrality of the Austrian Netherlands until 1744,

⁶³ Ibid., 224.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Peckham, *The Colonial Wars*, 92.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Leach, *Arms for Empire*, 224.

⁶⁸ Peckham, *The Colonial Wars*, 92.

because it wanted to keep England and the Dutch Republic out of the war. With the invasion of the Austrian Netherlands in 1744, Britain and France went to war again.⁶⁹

The confusing train of events that led to King George's War mattered little to the French and British colonists residing in North America. What was important to them was receiving news of war as swiftly as possible. In an age where ship and horse were the quickest means of carrying a message, it was not uncommon for colonies to receive news of war months after it was declared in Europe. So much of a colony's defensive preparations rested on the kindness or vengeance of the wind and waves to the courier ship. Exposed frontier settlements needed to be alerted as soon as possible.⁷⁰ When the news finally arrived, Governor Shirley acted quickly by directing militia officers to "send [a copy of the Majesty's declaration of war] to all your Frontier Towns & Settlements in your County to Advertise them hereof and to put them upon all Possible Care not to Expose themselves to be Surprised by the Enemy."⁷¹ While Shirley tried to lessen the chance of sudden attack in the wilderness of his colony, he could not stifle fears among Massachusetts merchants who worried about losing their investments to privateers. Although some women and children evacuated New England's border towns to the relative safety of Boston, and transient European fishermen stayed at home. The likelihood of avoiding the coming war was remote.⁷²

France declared war first on March 4, 1744. England responded with a counter declaration of war on March 29. These important announcements took about two months

⁶⁹ Leach, *Arms for Empire*, 224.

⁷⁰ Shirley to John Stoddard, 2 June 1744, in Lincoln, ed., *Correspondence of William Shirley*, 1: 127. Stoddard was a legislator in the Massachusetts General Court.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Rawlyk, *Yankees at Louisbourg*, 1.

to reach North America. Boston received the news late in May 1744, but Cape Breton received the urgent information in a speedier fashion. By the end of 1744, the French had reduced the Canso fishing station to ashes and launched two unsuccessful operations against Nova Scotia's capital. On land, New Englanders largely played a defensive role in the early phases of King George's War. Conversely, at sea 1744 marked the height of prize actions by British colonial privateers in North American waters.⁷³ Privateers originating from Rhode Island were so numerous and effective that Shirley warned that colony's governor: "resentment of the Enemy against it [RI.], on account of the activeness of your privateers make it particularly probable that you may have a sudden Visit from the French this summer."⁷⁴ Rhode Island and the rest of the New England colonies so disrupted French commerce that Cape Breton's governor was forced to keep his warships close to Louisbourg. Governor Shirley quickly relayed news to London of the "40 Sail of French Vessells" that Massachusetts' privateers had taken by September.⁷⁵ Only on the high seas did New Englanders provide a glimpse of the offensive thrust they would take in 1745.

It seems only appropriate that the *Fame* and *Caesar*, two Rhode Island privateers responsible for frustrating so many French merchants in the summer and fall of 1744, were now chartered by Massachusetts for the expedition against Louisbourg.⁷⁶ While the two former privateers patrolled the often foggy and ice laden waters off Louisbourg, the

⁷³ Swanson, *Predators and Prizes*, 135.

⁷⁴ Shirley to Rhode Island Governor William Greene, 29 Jan. 1744/5, in Gertrude Selwyn Kimball, ed., *The Correspondence of The Colonial Governors of Rhode Island 1723-1775* (Freeport, NY, 1969), 1: 298-299.

⁷⁵ Shirley to the duke of Newcastle, 22 Sept. 1744, in Lincoln, ed., *Correspondence of William Shirley*, 1:145-148.

⁷⁶ Chapin, *New England Vessels*, 2.

first Massachusetts contingent battled a growing storm on their voyage to Canso.⁷⁷

Commodore Rouse's fleet had only been at sea three days before "the weather Grew, Thicker and more Stormy."⁷⁸ Soon after, the fleet was dispersed, and the entire venture lay in doubt.⁷⁹ The seas grew so large that most of the contingent was unable to catch sight of the top mast of the twenty-four gun *Shirley*.⁸⁰ For troops in the transport holds, conditions could not have been worse. One soldier described his vessel as a "Very Hospital" with the hold "Much Crouded, even So as to Lay, one on Anouther. Sick etc."⁸¹ Certainly luck and plentiful harbors averted what could have been a disaster. The same soldier who described the general sickness and overcrowding of his transport was elated five days later upon "Seeing Many of our fleet Come out of the Harbours, Between Liscombs And Canso."⁸² Rouse's fleet weathered the gale and emerged almost unscathed with only one sloop receiving slight damage from a sudden encounter with rocks.⁸³ The unpredictable and often tempestuous Atlantic, which had ended British designs against Quebec in 1711 and would subsequently decimate a French fleet of sixty-five vessels in 1746, allowed the British colonial force to reach its destination with little more than sea sickness.⁸⁴

⁷⁷ DeForest, ed., *Louisbourg Journals*, 2-3.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 3.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 73.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 81.

⁸¹ Ibid., 3.

⁸² Ibid., 4.

⁸³ Ibid., 81.

⁸⁴ Parkman, *A Half Century of Conflict*, 2: 174.

Massachusetts's vessels arrived in piece-meal fashion at Canso as early as April 1.⁸⁵ The sight of twelve New Hampshire vessels quietly resting in the harbor invigorated the weather beaten sailors and soldiers from Massachusetts.⁸⁶ This New Hampshire contingent of 350 men had left Newcastle on March 21 and reached Canso on the last day of that month.⁸⁷

By April 4, Pepperrell reached the rendezvous along with most of his colonial army.⁸⁸ Connecticut's five hundred men, who were still preparing for their journey from New London, were conspicuously missing from the New England force.⁸⁹ New Hampshire and Massachusetts soldiers landed and were soon busy exploring the ruins of Canso and setting up shelters on the island because of the overcrowded vessels.⁹⁰

On April 5, General Pepperrell's first council of war decided unanimously that even though "the Train of Artillery and some part of the Troops are not yet arrived at Canso; Those -now there, proceed with the first favorable Wind and Weather to Chapeaurouge Bay, and endeavour to take possession of the Field."⁹¹ Foul conditions surrounding the proposed landing area quickly dissuaded the commander and council from taking such swift action. Instead of French vessels, large ice flows protected Louisbourg from invasion during the month of April.

⁸⁵ Chapin, *New England Vessels*, 3.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Ibid.; Shirley to the duke of Newcastle, 27 Mar. 1745, in Lincoln, ed., *Correspondence of William Shirley*, 1: 196-199.

⁸⁸ DeForest, ed., *Louisbourg Journals*, 110.

⁸⁹ Chapin, *New England Vessels*, 7.

⁹⁰ DeForest, ed., *Louisbourg Journals*, 5.

⁹¹ Council of War, 5 Apr. 1745, in Massachusetts Historical Society, *Louisbourg Papers*, 2.

While the leading officers had hoped to start the siege as quickly as possible, the delay provided time to organize and train the shabby horde of recruits. The lack of discipline and inexperience of the New England soldiers was apparent from their first landing on Canso, as many began yelling, firing guns, and playing trumpets and drums.⁹² Officers quickly banned such noises for fear that the local Indians would discover the army's presence and warn Louisbourg.⁹³ The amateur army sadly lived up to its name, because discipline was lax throughout much of the campaign. Pepperrell's presence did little to help matters. Soldiers still wandered off, fired their guns freely causing several accidents, and one soldier even "Killed himself with Drink."⁹⁴ While the officers continued to train the men and establish order throughout the camp, the weather worsened. Many soldiers suffered through frequent torrents of wind, rain, and snow.⁹⁵ The foul weather and lack of shelter tormented the inexperienced soldiers at Canso while the "Ice of Cape Breton was So Drove up that a Vessel Cou,d not git into ye harbor."⁹⁶

As Pepperrell's forces waited for the ice to clear from the proposed landing area of Gabarus Bay, the officers busied themselves forming detachments in accordance with the General Court's directives.⁹⁷ Pepperrell understood that Canso would be of great importance not only as the rendezvous but also as a storage depot and a port for packets carrying communications from Boston.⁹⁸ The added time allowed the lieutenant general

⁹² DeForest, ed., *Louisbourg Journals*, 5.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 6-7.

⁹⁵ Louis Effingham DeForest, ed., *The Journals and Papers of Seth Pomeroy: Sometime General in the Colonial Service* (New Haven, CT, 1926), 16.

⁹⁶ Ibid., 17.

⁹⁷ DeForest, ed., *Louisbourg Journals*, 110.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

to secure Canso against future attacks. By mid April, a new blockhouse was constructed on Canso Hill "picquetted without, and defended by Eight Cannon of 9 nine Pound, and to be garrisoned by two Companies of Soldiers of Forty men each besides officers."⁹⁹ Instructions from Shirley to Pepperrell even suggested leaving a carpenter and mason "to build a Chimney and other Conveniencies."¹⁰⁰ Cumberland was the name given to the recently constructed fortification¹⁰¹ after the Duke of Cumberland, who commanded the royal army in Europe. On April 15, Pepperrell ordered a flag raised above the blockhouse in honor of the duke's birthday.¹⁰² Preparations continued throughout April, with men often "Be[ing] View'd Concerning . . . Arms and Amunition" and hearing sermons on Sunday.¹⁰³ Although the New England contingent had several encounters with the local Indians and French, most of the action during April occurred offshore.

On April 21, Major Seth Pomeroy of Colonel Willard's Massachusetts regiment witnessed "ye Sixth Vessel yt has ben Taken & Brought into this harbor Since we Came into it."¹⁰⁴ The major, like many soldiers, watched these naval engagements "From the Tops of ye masts & ye high hill at Canso."¹⁰⁵ As Major Pomeroy observed the retaking of a vessel by a "Pascataway Sloop" on the 21st, Joseph Emerson, a chaplain on the 24 gun *Molineaux*, witnessed the same event from his ship's deck.¹⁰⁶ "We saw a sail, gave chase, came up about 11 o'clock, found her to be a sloop who just before we came up

⁹⁹ Ibid., 111.

¹⁰⁰ Shirley to Pepperrell, 19 Mar. 1744/5, in Massachusetts Historical Society, *Louisbourg Papers*, 1.

¹⁰¹ In a letter to Shirley, Pepperrell referred to the fort as Prince William. Prince William Augustus, duke of Cumberland, was his full name and may account for the fort being referred to with different names in several journals. Pepperrell to Shirley, 28 Apr. 1745, in *Louisbourg Papers*, 3.

¹⁰² DeForest, ed., *Louisbourg Journals*, 111.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 6.

¹⁰⁴ DeForest, ed., *Seth Pomeroy*, 18.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 17.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.; Chapin, *New England Vessels*, 6.

retook a schooner which the brig took sometime ago from Boston with stores for the army and wine for the General.”¹⁰⁷ Almost daily, the provincial fleet cruising off Louisbourg brought prizes back to Canso.

These prize actions were important for two reasons. First, the confiscated goods augmented the troops’ sparse supplies; second, the fleet’s success invigorated the morale of the men on Canso Island.¹⁰⁸ The colonial forces requisitioned all captured cargo for immediate use.¹⁰⁹ Conditions among the sailors and soldiers grew so deplorable that one officer described his “men [as] almost Naked” and in desperate need of clothes.¹¹⁰ The success of those patrolling the waters off Louisbourg became more imperative after complaints surfaced that some supplies brought to Canso were spoiled.¹¹¹

The soldiers on-shore certainly admired the New England vessels’ effectiveness. One of the strongest compliments the fleet received came from Colonel John Bradstreet, a person used to boasting of himself rather than others. Bradstreet praised the naval captains, saying, “they all kept their Stations as well as if it had been in one of the best Climates and Navigations in the world . . . and . . . for the greatest part of the time they crus’d of the Harbour Excessive thick Fogs, Strong and unconstant Currents, and some Gales of Wind.”¹¹² Bradstreet and the land contingent realized the small fleet off Cape Breton not only prevented provisions from reaching Louisbourg but helped support the army during its trying time on the island.

¹⁰⁷ Chapin, *New England Vessels*, 6.

¹⁰⁸ Council of War, 18 Apr. 1745, in Massachusetts Historical Society, *Louisbourg Papers*, 2.

¹⁰⁹ Council of War, 19 Apr. 1745, *ibid.*

¹¹⁰ Warren to Pepperrell, 25 Apr. 1745, in DeForest, ed., *Louisbourg Journals*, 186.

¹¹¹ Council of War, 18 Apr. 1745, in Massachusetts Historical Society, *Louisbourg Papers*, 2.

¹¹² DeForest, ed., *Louisbourg Journals*, 174.

Those waiting on Canso's inhospitable shore looked seaward not only in hopes of spotting possible prizes but also of seeing the expected Connecticut fleet. Before the small fleet of seven transports escorted by that colony's guard sloop *Defence* and the Rhode Island colony sloop *Tartar* arrived, however, a most surprising caller appeared on the horizon.¹¹³

On April 23, three Royal Navy warships waited off the island that Governor Shirley had selected for a rendezvous. Commodore Warren arrived on the *Superbe* of 60 guns accompanied by the *Launceston* and *Mermaid*, both of 44 guns.¹¹⁴ Only one month earlier, the governor had received a negative answer to his request for the commodore's support. Yet by April 23, Warren brought three vessels to engage in the expedition with a fourth vessel, the 40 gun *Eltham*, already cruising off Louisbourg.¹¹⁵ The *Eltham* had just returned from convoying supplies of new masts under Captain Philip Durell.¹¹⁶ New orders from the Admiralty convinced Warren to leave the Leeward Islands and make the 2,000 mile voyage up the Atlantic seaboard to participate in the expedition.

The Admiralty Board's new directives appointed Warren "commander in chief of his Majesty's ships and vessels on the coast of North America to the northward of Carolina."¹¹⁷ Warren's orders were somewhat ambiguous and called for the protection of the Newfoundland fishery, which the board referred to as "so considerable a branch of

¹¹³ Chapin, *New England Vessels*, 7.

¹¹⁴ DeForest, ed., *Louisbourg Journals*, 111.; Gwyn, ed., *The Warren Papers*, xix.

¹¹⁵ DeForest, ed., *Louisbourg Journals*, 111.

¹¹⁶ Philip Durell returned to Louisbourg in 1758, where he held the rank of rear admiral at the second siege. DeForest, ed., *Seth Pomeroy*, 19.

¹¹⁷ Admiralty Board to Warren, 8 Apr. 1745, in Gwyn, ed., *The Warren Papers*, 76.

our trade.”¹¹⁸ Commodore Warren interpreted these “instructions for employing the ships . . . against the enemy” as allowing him to join New England’s contingent.¹¹⁹ The Royal Navy now greatly strengthened the colonial naval force, allowing a tighter envelopment of Ile Royale. New England was no longer alone in its struggle with Louisbourg.

While Warren’s involvement greatly increased the possibility for success against the “Gibraltar of the West,” it also posed several command issues. Shirley wrote Pepperrell on April 22, stating: “I should have insisted upon my command given you over the sea forces . . . but [am] only acting in obedience to his Majesty’s orders.”¹²⁰ Shirley hoped this letter would ease any possible tension over supreme command that Pepperrell might harbor. The governor sent a similar letter to Warren, saying that he wished he could have placed him in absolute control. Shirley’s method of trying to placate Warren and Pepperrell could have backfired but seems to have had the desired effect on both.

Pandering to the egos of New England’s wealthy and influential was nothing new to the governor. Ever the politician, Shirley had played a similar game only months before when he offered the supreme command to Warren, Pepperrell, and Benning Wentworth.¹²¹ Though Shirley’s first priority was the expedition, he was always careful to assess the political and business ramifications of his decisions during the Louisbourg

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Shirley to Pepperrell, 10 Apr. 1745, cited in Schutz, *William Shirley*, 97.

¹²¹ Wentworth was the governor of New Hampshire, and Shirley only offered him the general command because he assumed Wentworth would decline because of his severe case of gout. McLennan, *Louisbourg from Its Foundation to Its Fall*, 135-136.

campaign. Shirley might have thought his letters secured a peace between the land and sea commanders; in reality, Pepperrell's conciliatory nature maintained harmony when Warren became frustrated on several occasions.¹²² The lieutenant general's career as a merchant had prepared him well for dealing with strong personalities.

To those defending the walls of Louisbourg, the British joint command was outlandish. One of the besieged Frenchmen at Louisbourg commented at how "striking was the mutual independence of the land army and the fleet that they were always represented to us as of different nations."¹²³ The perplexed Frenchman ended his description of the interaction between the British forces with the question, "What other monarchy was ever governed in such a way?" Though strange to the enemy, Pepperrell and Warren's joint command never suffered from the internal bickering that could become so cancerous to the expedition. With the possibility for conflicts between land and sea commands largely squelched, both Pepperrell and Warren focused on breaching Louisbourg's defenses.

The recently arrived commodore wasted little time at Canso.¹²⁴ After exchanging letters with Pepperrell, he quickly set off to strengthen the blockade around Cape Breton. April 23 and 24 were, as one soldier described, "fair day[s]" for the expedition; first, Warren's warships appeared, and then only one day later, the Connecticut vessels arrived "in high Spirits & good helth."¹²⁵ Major General Roger Wolcott, deputy governor of

¹²² Gwyn, ed., *The Warren Papers*, xxi.

¹²³ George M. Wrong, ed., *Louisbourg in 1745: The Anonymous Lettre d'un Habitant de Louisbourg* (Toronto, 1897), 37-38.

¹²⁴ Warren was so apprehensive of French forces arriving off Cape Breton that he did not even sail into Canso's harbor.

¹²⁵ DeForest, ed., *Seth Pomeroy*, 19.

Connecticut and the expedition's second in command, arrived with his colony's contingent.¹²⁶

News that not all of the convoy was accounted for quickly tempered the New England camp's jovial attitude over the successful rendezvous. Rhode Island's sloop *Tartar*, part of the Connecticut force, had become separated from the rest of the convoy when the superior French frigate *Renommée* engaged the *Tartar* off Cape Sables. Writing to Rhode Island's Governor William Greene, Captain Daniel Fones, commander of the *Tartar*, related how the smaller colonial vessel received "four Broad Sides to the Number of at Least 60 Cannon" and was only able to lose its enemy after a spirited eight hour chase.¹²⁷ The Connecticut contingent reported to Pepperrell that the French had probably captured the Rhode Island sloop. Therefore, the New England forces were rather surprised when the *Tartar* announced its arrival to Canso on the 25th with an energetic firing of five cannons.¹²⁸ Only one day after the *Tartar* reached Canso, it was ordered back to sea, along with the *Shirley* in an effort to capture the *Renommée*.¹²⁹ The French frigate ultimately eluded the British ships but never delivered its dispatches to Louisbourg and sailed back to France, arriving at Brest on June 19.¹³⁰

By the end of April, Pepperrell had received "all the help now that wee Expect" and wrote to Shirley stating: "We impatiently wait for a fair Wind to drive the Ice out of Chappeaurouge Bay, and if we don't Suffer for want of provisions, make no Doubt but

¹²⁶ Shirley to Roger Wolcott, 8 Mar. 1744/5, in Lincoln, ed., *Correspondence of William Shirley*, 1: 193-194.

¹²⁷ Fones to Greene, 26 Apr. 1745, in Kimball, ed., *Colonial Governors of R. I.*, 1: 329-330.

¹²⁸ Chapin, *New England Vessels*, 7.

¹²⁹ Pepperrell to Shirley, 28 Apr. 1745, in Massachusetts Historical Society, *Louisbourg Papers*, 3.

¹³⁰ DeForest, ed., *Seth Pomeroy*, 17.

we shall (by Gods favour) be able soon to drive out what else we please from Cape Breton.”¹³¹ Shortly after this letter, the lieutenant general received the agreeable news he had waited for throughout April: Conditions were now appropriate for a landing.

On April 29, the troops finally loaded onto transports for Gabarus Bay.¹³² “One armed Snow, and two armed Sloops” protected the four divisions of transports.¹³³ Pepperrell ordered the fleet to depart early in the morning so that it would reach the landing area slightly before nightfall.¹³⁴ He had hoped to follow Shirley’s instructions for a commando style night attack, but light winds throughout the voyage thwarted this scheme.¹³⁵ The New England contingent was greeted with “A view of the Citty” and its “Steeple” as it sailed into Gabarus Bay the next morning.¹³⁶ The picturesque town of Louisbourg with its commanding defenses must have been a welcome sight to sailors during more peaceful times; but to Major Pomeroy, who was on one of the many transports amassed offshore, the fortress seemed “impregnable” and only “providence [could] deliver it into our hands.”¹³⁷

Louisbourg had gained the nickname “Gibraltar of the New World” because of its thirty-foot high stone walls and the ability of its ramparts to hold two hundred and fifty cannon.¹³⁸ Jean-Francois de Verville, a military engineer and disciple of Vauban,

¹³¹ DeForest, ed., *Louisbourg Journals*, 9.; Pepperrell to Shirley, 28 Apr. 1745, in Massachusetts Historical Society, *Louisbourg Papers*, 3.

¹³² DeForest, ed., *Louisbourg Journals*, 111.

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ McLennan, *Louisbourg from Its Foundation to Its Fall*, 147.

¹³⁵ Shirley to Pepperrell, 19 Mar. 1744/5, in Massachusetts Historical Society, *Louisbourg Papers*, 1; Chapin, *New England Vessels*, 7.

¹³⁶ DeForest, ed., *Louisbourg Journals*, 10.

¹³⁷ DeForest, ed., *Seth Pomeroy*, 61.

¹³⁸ A.J.B. Johnston, *Control and Order: In French Colonial Louisbourg, 1713-1758* (East Lansing, MI, 2001), 68-76.

designed Louisbourg.¹³⁹ Verville designed a series of bastions connected by ramparts that completely enclosed the town on the land side. Two batteries defended the harbor: One was located on an island near the entrance to the harbor, and the other, named Grand or Royal Battery, was located on the north shore of the harbor. Verville's harbor defenses were designed so that if the enemy took the Island battery, the attacking force would find itself under fire from the Royal Battery and the fortress.¹⁴⁰ Louisbourg's engineers and military tacticians considered the harbor as the only viable point of attack for possible invaders since the fortress rested on an isthmus with a marshy area to the north. This focus on naval defenses left the land fortifications somewhat ignored. While the land defenses were still significant, the frequent frosts and thaws coupled with weak concrete caused the walls to deteriorate quickly.¹⁴¹ The fort's engineers found that plank revetting the outer surface of the walls helped to keep crumbling to a minimum.¹⁴²

The construction of Louisbourg started in 1720 and continued for twenty years until it became a fully enclosed *ville fortifiée*. When it was attacked in 1745, a British officer counted 215 embrasures, 150 cannons, 7 mortars, and 64 swivel guns.¹⁴³ Verville received much criticism for his location of the fort on the low-lying peninsula where it was susceptible to cannon and musket fire from higher positions. The captured prisoners from Canso noticed some of the fort's weaknesses during their stay and informed Shirley of a "Hill on the back of Town, and at about a quarter of a mile's Distance from it, from

¹³⁹ Christopher Moore, *Louisbourg Portraits: Life in an Eighteenth-Century Garrison Town* (Toronto, 1982), 244.

¹⁴⁰ Johnston, *Control and Order*, 68-76.

¹⁴¹ Bruce W. Fry, "An appearance of strength" *The Fortifications of Louisbourg* (Ottawa, 1984), 1:

142.

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ Johnston, *Control and Order*, 68-76.

whence it may be extremely annoy'd with Safety to the Besiegers."¹⁴⁴ Merchants influenced Verville's decision to build on the low-lying peninsula because the wharves and buildings were located near the peninsula.¹⁴⁵ This design demonstrates how the army sometimes bent to economic concerns, ignoring sound military judgment. Though the Fortress of Louisbourg was an immense defensive position, especially for the New World, Warren, and Pepperrell were now prepared to test its staunchness.

While most of the forces were anchoring in Gabarus Bay, a small detachment of a few hundred men convoyed by a New Hampshire sloop headed for the southern end of Cape Breton.¹⁴⁶ Their destination was St. Peter's, a small French settlement of "about Two hundred Inhabitants, and a number of Indians all in stragling Houses."¹⁴⁷ Shirley's original directives had stipulated action against St. Peter's since the town was "but six Leagues from Canso," and the governor feared its inhabitants might warn Louisbourg.¹⁴⁸ Equally important to the governor was the idea that Cape Breton's fishing communities should be ruined even if Louisbourg could not be taken.

Shirley clearly stated to his political colleagues in the General Court that just "destroying their [French] Out Settlements and Works, must greatly overpay the expence" of the siege.¹⁴⁹ Even small settlements such as St. Peter's on the periphery of Ile Royale were related to the cod fishery, which New Englanders desired to control. In a

¹⁴⁴ Shirley to the duke of Newcastle, 14 Jan. 1744/5, in Lincoln, ed., *Correspondence of William Shirley*, 1: 165.

¹⁴⁵ Johnston, *Control and Order*, 68-76.

¹⁴⁶ DeForest, ed., *Louisbourg Journals*, 112.

¹⁴⁷ Shirley to Pepperrell, 19 Mar. 1744/5, in Massachusetts Historical Society, *Louisbourg Papers*, 1.

¹⁴⁸ Shirley to the Lords of the Admiralty, 29 Jan. 1744/5, in Lincoln, ed., *Correspondence of William Shirley*, 1: 176.

¹⁴⁹ Shirley to the Massachusetts General Court, 9 Jan. 1744/5, *ibid.*, 1: 159-160.

letter to the Lords of Admiralty, Shirley stressed that "Booty taken there [St. Peter's] will pay the Expence & more in taking it."¹⁵⁰ In the same letter, Shirley continued his focus on the French fisheries of Cape Breton and how the attacking force could "Destroy all their Fishery on the Island as well as the north side of the Harbour which would ruin [it]... for four or five years."¹⁵¹ Following Pepperrell's orders, Colonel Jeremiah Moulton and his 270 men "burnt the Town and demolished the Fort."¹⁵² Like Canso before it, St. Peter's was burned to ashes. Both towns were now casualties in a battle for control of the cod fisheries.

While Moulton's men carried torches into the largely deserted town of St. Peter's, most of Pepperrell's forces prepared for a landing a few miles south of Louisbourg at Flat Point Cove. At approximately ten in the morning on April 30, as the New England forces sailed into Gabarus Bay, there was an eruption of noise from within Louisbourg.¹⁵³ An observant French sentry had spotted the convoy and quickly alerted his superiors. Soon church bells clanged throughout the city, and cannon fire bellowed from the fortress walls.¹⁵⁴ The eyes of the 590 soldiers and 900 civilians, which made up Louisbourg's population, were transfixed on the recently spotted fleet.¹⁵⁵ Startled French inhabitants living outside the city's defenses almost immediately headed toward the fortress.

Although Louisbourg's suburban residents took quick action, the recently appointed governor of Ile Royale, Louis du Chambon, was indecisive. Du Chambon had

¹⁵⁰ Shirley to the Lords of the Admiralty, 29 Jan. 1744/5, *ibid.*, 1: 176.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁵² DeForest, ed., *Louisbourg Journals*, 75.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, 112.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.* 30.

always imagined an attack against Louisbourg by warships attempting to breach the harbor defenses, not by the army landing soldiers to the south for a formal siege.¹⁵⁶ The irresolute governor wrestled with whether or not to send troops to intercept the landing forces. Some of du Chambon's hesitation certainly stemmed from his soldiers' attempted mutiny over the past winter. Unsure of the fidelity of Louisbourg's garrison, the governor did nothing. Inaction during this critical juncture was just one of many mistakes the defenders made during the siege.

While French officials desperately tried to persuade the governor to attack when the enemy was most vulnerable, Pepperrell ordered his first detachment into whale boats. Although it "was a Fair Pleasent morning," those manning the landing boats still had to negotiate the increasingly choppy waters of Gabarus Bay.¹⁵⁷ As the New Englanders neared their desired landing on Flat Point Cove, they sighted a small detachment of French soldiers prepared to greet them with gun fire. These twenty Frenchmen had been ordered to the Flat Point Cove area only two days before.¹⁵⁸ The first detachment of New Englanders realized the French superior position and swiftly rowed back to their ships. One anonymous New England soldier certainly agreed with the decision not to land and further speculated that "had wee A Landed where they Expected, and where wee at first made an Attempt wee should Amoust Certainly Susstain'd the Loss of A great Many men."¹⁵⁹ Though the French may have taunted their retreating adversaries, the small group of defenders clearly understood their precarious situation. If the French decided to

¹⁵⁶ Rawlyk, *Yankees at Louisbourg*, 83.

¹⁵⁷ DeForest, ed., *Seth Pomeroy*, 21.

¹⁵⁸ Rawlyk, *Yankees at Louisbourg*, 84.

¹⁵⁹ DeForest, ed., *Louisbourg Journals*, 10.

reinforce Flat Point Cove, the New Englanders would face a difficult and perilous landing as the "Seas [were] Run[ing] high."¹⁶⁰

While the French momentarily delayed the first landings, their numbers were still inadequate for any real defense of the shoreline. Governor du Chambon's indecision cost the French an excellent opportunity to end the siege before it even started. Both Pierre Morpain, Ile Royale's port captain, and Poupet de la Boularderie, a retired officer from the Regiment de Richelieu, argued with the governor until he finally conceded to their request to attack the landing New Englanders.¹⁶¹ Unbeknownst to the undersized combined civilian and regular forces that set out under Morpain, de la Boularderie, and the governor's youngest son Mesillac du Chambon, the British were about to establish a beachhead.

Pepperrell worked quickly to remedy the set back at Flat Point Cove. Following detailed directives from Shirley, the novice general was prepared for this situation. The Massachusetts governor suggested, "if you should meet with opposition, and the landing be disputed, or difficult, you must then make a false descent, in order to draw off the enemy from the spot, designed for landing, or at least to divide their force."¹⁶²

The dories and whale boats from the first attempt were joined by more landing craft, and under the cover of some colonial cruisers, they swiftly rowed farther up the bay to Kennington Cove.¹⁶³ Morpain, de la Boularderie, and about eighty to one hundred men rushed across the shoreline in a desperate attempt to beat the English to their desired

¹⁶⁰ DeForest, ed., *Seth Pomeroy*, 21.

¹⁶¹ McLennan, *Louisbourg from Its Foundation to Its Fall*, 334; Rawlyk, *Yankees at Louisbourg*, 82.

¹⁶² Shirley to Pepperrell, 19 Mar. 1744/5, in Massachusetts Historical Society, *Louisbourg Papers*, 1.

¹⁶³ DeForest, ed., *Louisbourg Journals*, 74; Rawlyk, *Yankees at Louisbourg*, 84.

landing.¹⁶⁴ This hurried march by the French was ultimately futile, considering the fishing backgrounds of many of the New England soldiers and their skills with an oar. One combatant from the first Massachusetts contingent stated that the French “appeared to oppose our Landing but—[100] of our men being landed and immediately attacking them after the first fire they fled precipitantly away.”¹⁶⁵ The same Massachusetts soldier continued his account of the skirmish by affirming “We killed six men and took an officer and five men prisoners [;] we has only three men wounded.”¹⁶⁶ The officer taken prisoner was de la Boularderie, one of the few men in Louisbourg with any real military experience.¹⁶⁷ Many years after his experience at Louisbourg, the retired officer of the Regiment de Richelieu lamented “that he was embarrassed for not attacking these invaders as they disembarked, that it was necessary to use one half of the garrison for this purpose . . . all the advantages were on our side, there is always confusion during an assault landing, in addition it was cold and these men were poorly dressed, and very wet, most of all they were badly armed and were frightened.”¹⁶⁸

While de la Boularderie regretted the missed opportunity, it really ought to have been du Chambon who should have been burdened with embarrassment for not acting swiftly. As the defenders retreated into Louisbourg, they “burned many of there own howsen: & Sunk there vessels many of them.”¹⁶⁹ With the French only supplying their

¹⁶⁴ DeForest, ed., *Louisbourg Journals*, 74. The English journals give varying numbers, and even the French records do not agree on an exact number.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., 112.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ De la Boularderie to Michel Lecomtois de Surlaville, 1 Sept. 1755, cited in Rawlyk, *Yankees at Louisbourg*, 82. De Surlaville was major of Louisbourg's garrison in 1751.

¹⁶⁹ DeForest, ed., *Seth Pomeroy*, 21-22.

enemy with "a Small Schurmidge," the British were free to continue landing men. By the end of the day, over 2,000 soldiers were Ile Royale's newest inhabitants.¹⁷⁰

Although the landing at Kennington Cove was made under fire, the similarities between the first day at Canso and Louisbourg are striking. "Singing and Great Rejoicing" marked both arrivals.¹⁷¹ To the consternation of many officers, much of the army was in chaos, like Canso only a month before. With discipline lax or ignored, the acquisition of plunder became the priority. As one soldier bluntly put it, "Everyone Did what was Right in his own Eyes."¹⁷² Clearly, large groups of New Englanders disregarded the possibility of a sortie from Louisbourg. Many surviving New England soldier journals and letters describe the first days of the siege like a nineteenth century gold rush rather than a military operation. This reckless and disorganized behavior was prevalent throughout the siege.

One unlikely benefit arising from the lawless nature of the first days came by accident and unquestionably bolstered the British colonists' chance for success. A plunderer's description shows how the evening's recklessness helped capture one of Louisbourg's key defenses.

[As] Many of the Army Went Up towards the Grand Battrry¹⁷³ to Plunder (and Indeed! Wee fill'd the Country for as Yet, wee had no Particular Orders... There was also a Number went Up, A Little North of the Grand Battrry and fired Several houses (16). Some of which were Store-houses fill'd with Sails Cables and other Ship, Tackling, Many that were there Suppos'd what Was Burnt was worth *li* 100000. they was Much Blamed for Destroying So Much of what wee had got in Possession and I think very Justly...wee Generally Thou't Afterwards it was A

¹⁷⁰ DeForest, ed., *Louisbourg Journals*, 68, 84.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 10.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, 11.

¹⁷³ The Grand Battery's actual name is the Royal Battery, though the British often refer to it as the "Grand battery."

Means of the French's Deeserting the Grand Battrey and if So, the Loss. Was to us gain.¹⁷⁴

During the fall of 1744, remodeling of the Royal Battery began under former Governor du Quesnel in hopes of strengthening its defensive capabilities. By the time of the siege, some repairs were complete, but the left flank was still partially dismantled.¹⁷⁵ Shirley was quite aware of the weakened condition of the battery and informed Pepperrell that the "low part of the Wall...is unfinished."¹⁷⁶ The smoke created by the burning of tar and other nautical supplies frightened the French into thinking the Royal Battery was going to be assaulted. The commandant of this important harbor defense unwisely decided to abandon the fortification without disabling the structure or properly spiking the cannon.¹⁷⁷

Early on the morning of May 2, a small detachment under Lieutenant Colonel William Vaughan, "Perceiving no Smoke Come out of the Chimneys" and the absence of a flag, recognized the Royal Battery's abandonment.¹⁷⁸ Vaughan, an established fishing entrepreneur, had been "very instrumental in promoting [the expedition]" and was among several who claimed originating the idea to attack Louisbourg.¹⁷⁹ Shortly after entering the Royal Battery, one of Vaughan's dozen men climbed up the flag post and "hung an old Red Coat for Coullars."¹⁸⁰ This red coat caught the attention of the French who

¹⁷⁴ DeForest, ed., *Louisbourg Journals*, 11.

¹⁷⁵ Fry, "An appearance of strength", 1: 143.

¹⁷⁶ Shirley to Pepperrell, 19 Mar. 1744/5, in Massachusetts Historical Society, *Louisbourg Papers*, 1.

¹⁷⁷ Fry, "An appearance of strength", 1: 147.

¹⁷⁸ DeForest, ed., *Louisbourg Journals*, 11.

¹⁷⁹ Shirley to Pepperrell, 23 Mar. 1744/5, in Lincoln, ed., *Correspondence of William Shirley*, 1: 194-

195.

¹⁸⁰ DeForest, ed., *Louisbourg Journals*, 11.

quickly sent out "A Considerable Number....Across the water in Shalloways [Shallops]."¹⁸¹ Vaughan's men met this French detachment "with Design...to have entirely spoilt the Cannons, burnt the Barracks" along the shore and then forced them back into Louisbourg.¹⁸² In frustration, the besieged city directed "above 100 guns . . . fired at ye Royal Battre & many Boums," but the barrage was ineffective and resulted in no New England casualties.¹⁸³

Although the French had removed provisions and gunpowder the day before, they still left "twenty eight 42 lb Cannon and two of Eighteen Pounds, three hundred and fifty Shells of 13 Inches and thirty Shells of ten inches, and a large Quantity of Shot."¹⁸⁴ The besieging forces desperately needed the cannon and shell; subsequently, Pepperrell put twenty smiths in charge of boring out the cannon and making them serviceable against their former owners.¹⁸⁵ By the next day, three of the cannon "began to play upon the Town damaged their Houses and made the Women cry."¹⁸⁶ Through another disastrous miscue, the French not only gave up control of the inner harbor, but more importantly supplied their enemy with the necessary cannon to inflict breaches against the town's walls. One of the many frustrated and worried citizens of Louisbourg sadly commented "the enemy greeted us with our own cannon, and kept up a tremendous fire against us."¹⁸⁷

181

Ibid.

182

Ibid., 69.

183

DeForest, ed., *Seth Pomeroy*, 22.

184

DeForest, ed., *Louisbourg Journals*, 113.

185

Seth Pomeroy to Mary Pomeroy, 8 May 1745, cited in DeForest, ed., *Seth Pomeroy*, 61. Mary Pomeroy was Seth Pomeroy's wife.

186

Ibid., 22; DeForest, ed., *Louisbourg Journals*, 75.

187

Wrong, ed., *Louisbourg in 1745*, 41.

With the bloodless capture of the Royal Battery, the invaders' morale soared. This boost was essential while the amateur army spent the next several days unloading supplies and deployed the preliminary siege batteries. During this time the New Englanders proved their resolve to capture Louisbourg. An anonymous journal kept by one of the besiegers describes some of the hardships endured during those first days.

The landing of Provisions Ammunition and heavy Artillery was attended with extreme difficulty and fatigue, there being no Harbour there, the Surf almost continually running very high...the Men were obliged to wade high into the Water, to save everything that would have been damaged by being wet, they has no Cloaths to shift themselves with, but poor defence from the Weather, at the same time the nights were very cold and generally attended with thick heavy fogs. By means whereof, it was near a fortnight before they could get all their Stores on shoar¹⁸⁸

Unloading supplies was just one of countless demanding tasks the New England soldiers had to accomplish if the city was to capitulate. Pepperrell also needed to establish batteries along Louisbourg's walls, but the logistics of moving cannon and shell were exceedingly difficult. French engineers had assumed that the land outside of Louisbourg was too much of a wilderness to allow artillery to be moved against its fortifications. Early on, the English were frustrated by "all the roads over which . . . [the cannon] . . . were drawn . . . was a deep Morass, in which whilst the Cannon were upon Wheels, they several times sunk, so as to bury not only the Carriages, but the whole Body of the Cannon likewise." Because of the swampy terrain, the New Englanders could not use horses or oxen and instead had to rely on their own strength. With men laboring "up to the[ir] knees in Mud" throughout the cold nights, it was not long before over 1,500

¹⁸⁸

DeForest, ed., *Louisbourg Journals*, 113.

soldiers were incapable of duty.¹⁸⁹ Many colonial soldiers suffered from fevers and dysentery during the siege, as “ye ground here is Cold & weet ye water much of it is in low marshe ground of a Redish Coaller & Stagnated & ye People no Beds.”¹⁹⁰ With the number of sick rapidly increasing and the artillery still out of position, the British finally adapted to the conditions. Using enormous wooden sleds, the cannon were more effectively hauled over the inhospitable terrain.¹⁹¹ Though “the French had always thought [it] impassable,” British colonial ingenuity proved otherwise.

By May 4, a battery consisting of “one thirteen Inch Mortar one of eleven Inches and one of nine Inches, two Cannon nine Pounders and two Falconets” was established on Green Hill.¹⁹² This was the same hill that the former Louisbourg prisoners had described to Shirley as an ideal place for a battery.¹⁹³ After mortars were deemed ineffective from Green Hill, another gun emplacement was established about 900 yards from the citadel.¹⁹⁴ To counter the attackers’ designs, the French garrison raised the lower wall on the southeast side of the town with planks and pickets, added swivel guns to the wall nearest the harbor, and “raised a little Battery of three small Guns upon the Parapet of the lower South Bastion fronting Cape Noir, a small Hill which very much commands the Town.”¹⁹⁵ Both the French and English were now preparing for the dangerous and laborious nature of siege warfare.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., 115.

¹⁹⁰ DeForest, ed., *Seth Pomeroy*, 25.

¹⁹¹ DeForest, ed., *Louisbourg Journals*, 115.

¹⁹² Ibid., 114.

¹⁹³ Shirley to the duke of Newcastle, 14 Jan. 1744/5, in Lincoln, ed., *Correspondence of William Shirley*, 1: 165.

¹⁹⁴ DeForest, ed., *Louisbourg Journals*, 114.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid., 114.

On May 7, under a flag of truce, Pepperrell and Warren called for the surrender of Louisbourg.¹⁹⁶ Although the French had made several poor decisions, the fortress was far from vanquished. Governor du Chambon responded to this premature call for capitulation with tact and determination, saying "In as Much as the King Our Master Has Betrusted Us with the defence of Sd Island Wee Cannot hearken to any Such Proposals till after the Most Vigorous Attack. nor have wee any Other answer to make to this Demand but by the Mouth's of Our Cannon."¹⁹⁷

As the French answered with their artillery, the British busied themselves with a tighter envelopment of the fortress. This meant the construction of more batteries and the forward repositioning of those already established. Individuals still healthy enough for service either hauled the dwindling supply of gunpowder, shells, and replacement cannon, or conducted scouting missions. Rumors of enemy forces amassing behind the New England lines extremely troubled Pepperrell. News reached the lieutenant general that French and Indians who had previously surrounded Annapolis Royal were now heading toward Louisbourg.¹⁹⁸ Scouts continually patrolled the wilderness and outer settlements to disrupt any sudden French attacks.¹⁹⁹ One of British fascine batteries quickly repulsed a sally from the fortress on the night following the French refusal to surrender.²⁰⁰ Several other French sallies proved equally "fruitless."²⁰¹

196

Ibid., 75.

197

Ibid., 115.

198

Warren to Pepperrell, 5 June 1745, in Gwyn, ed., *The Warren Papers*, 105.

199

DeForest, ed., *Louisbourg Journals*, 71.

200

Ibid., 76.

201

Ibid.

While the land forces engaged Louisbourg's defenders, the British continued their offensive thrust against the French cod fishery using "Scouts and Cruizers at different times" taking and burning "most of their small settlements . . . and . . . [seizing] about 300 Prisoners."²⁰² A three-day strike against settlements north of Louisbourg netted the plundering New England contingent "all Sorts of goods," including over forty shallops, one sloop, and a schooner from North East Harbor.²⁰³

Small skirmishes like that of North East Harbor were lucrative to the plunders but did not contribute to the reduction of Louisbourg's defenses. The merchant-turned-general understood that the city could not be stormed until two key objectives were met. First, the fascine batteries needed to create a substantial breach along one of the walls. The invading army could utilize such a breach during an assault. Second, the Island Battery had to be silenced before Warren could safely bring his squadron's cannon against the town. In establishing batteries, Pepperrell and his men showed immense dedication. Yet, the manning of these batteries was less than stellar, chiefly because of inexperience. In their zeal to bring Louisbourg to its knees, many gunners overloaded cannons, causing serious accidents.²⁰⁴ Numerous New England fatalities resulted from their own artillery and powder exploding.²⁰⁵ Pepperrell regrettably informed Shirley that "the want of a Sufficient number of experienced Gunners occasions great difficulty."²⁰⁶

²⁰² Ibid., 116.

²⁰³ Ibid., 85.

²⁰⁴ DeForest, ed., *Seth Pomeroy*, 25.

²⁰⁵ Ibid., 26.

²⁰⁶ Pepperrell to Shirley, 20 May 1745, in Massachusetts Historical Society, *Louisbourg Papers*, 3.

Only with the aid of several of Warren's gunners did the batteries become less accident prone.²⁰⁷

While the forward artillery positions wore down Louisbourg's walls, the French still firmly controlled the Island Battery and the harbor entrance. Though Warren had professed to Shirley that "I have the success of this expedition so much at heart that nothing shall break that harmony that now subsists between me and the general and troops," he was frustrated by what he believed was the army's lack of initiative.²⁰⁸

Coming ashore for several war councils, Warren laid numerous plans before the army's highest officers for attacking Louisbourg, all of which were turned down or later abandoned.²⁰⁹ Warren had even suggested storming the fortress before the walls were even breached.²¹⁰ The methodical siege warfare that the colonists were now absorbed in was too unhurried in both Warren's and his subordinate's view. A letter from the Admiralty Board to Warren concerning the strengthening of French vessels in the Leeward Islands, along with his unrealistic orders to protect much of the North American coastline, only fuelled his desire for quick action.²¹¹

The New Englanders' lack of military order only exacerbated the already sluggish pace of the siege. The informality and unwillingness of the majority to follow unpopular orders weakened the officers' control of the expedition. One of the most glaring instances of the weak command structure took place on May 9. The council, which was composed of the general officers, regimental commanders, and Commodore Warren,

²⁰⁷ Pepperrell to Warren, 13 May 1745, in Gwyn, ed., *The Warren Papers*, 92.

²⁰⁸ Warren to Shirley, 12 May 1745, *ibid.*, 91.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 90.

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹¹ Admiralty Board to Warren, 18 May 1745, in Gwyn, ed., *The Warren Papers*, 94-95.

unanimously agreed during the morning meeting that an attack should be launched against Louisbourg that very night.²¹² As the soldiers assembled that afternoon, one man in the Fourth Massachusetts regiment described the unsettling scene which developed.

The Whole Army Was Gathered together, for the Design before Mentioned. But there was a Great Uneasiness Appear'd Thro out the army (and that for the Reason I Mentioned that we had'ent tried Enough With Our Artillarie having taken a great Deal of Pains to get it Ashore and Draw it Up to our Battries and then Might'ent Use it) Which Commodore Warren Perceived as he Walk'd Back and forth in the front of the army. (Note: he had a Capt with A 100 of his Granideers going with Us) and Said (to a Number of Offisers as they Stood talking together) Gentleman; what is your Communication? To which, Leut. Mun Made this Reply. I Suppose your Honor's Acquainted with our Design Against the Town this Night. And I Always tho't Actions of this Nature Should be Done with the Greatest Vigour and Resolution. (to Be Sure, Replied the Commodore) But Seeing Such a General Uneasiness, --Makes me fear what the Consequences of This Night Will Be. The Commodore then Left'em and went and walk'd A while with the General-and Soon after, there Came word for all the Captains to go in to the Council and speak their Minds. And I was told there was'nt So Much as one Vote in favour of it.²¹³

This weak military control not only dissuaded the war council from attempting the night attack, but also any other large offensive thrust for some time.²¹⁴ After this shocking display by Pepperrell's troops, most of the fighting was relegated to brisk musketry and cannon fire between the French parapets and the English batteries.

While many of the New England volunteers felt that the assault had been "mercifully Prevented," Commodore Warren continued to push for action.²¹⁵ Writing to Pepperrell, Warren dejectedly remarked, "I am very sorry that a blockade should be the only prospect of reducing the garrison of Louisbourg, for it may hold out in that shape

²¹² Council of War, 8 May 1745, in Massachusetts Historical Society, *Louisbourg Papers*, 2.

²¹³ DeForest, ed., *Louisbourg Journals*, 15.

²¹⁴ Council of War, 9 May 1745, in Massachusetts Historical Society, *Louisbourg Papers*, 2.

²¹⁵ DeForest, ed., *Seth Pomeroy*, 49.

longer than either you or we can possibly stay.”²¹⁶ Unable to convince Pepperrell to attack Louisbourg, Warren had to be content manning the blockade.

This blockade by a combined force of Royal Navy and colonial vessels proved to be almost impenetrable against French attempts at breaching it. The only vessel to elude the blockade was “a ship of 14 guns laden with wine and brandy. Capt. Tying engaged her . . . [but] She escaped him by favor of the fog and night.”²¹⁷ The naval contingent’s largest and most important capture occurred on May 19. On this day, six British vessels ensnared the *Vigilant*, a sixty-four gun French man-of-war.²¹⁸ This fierce naval engagement lasted from one in the afternoon to nine at night with several of the vessels positioned “alongside . . . yard arm and yard arm” firing “briskly, with great guns and small arms” until the French captain “cried for quarters.”²¹⁹ The *Vigilant* had been sent from Brest with a crew of 500 and great quantities of powder and cannon for the relief of Louisbourg.²²⁰ These captured stores certainly lessened the shortage of powder within the New England army.²²¹ Following the *Vigilant*’s capture, the commodore received favorable news from the recently arrived *HMS Chester* that *Sunderland* and *Canterbury*, two 60-gun ships, along with the *Lark* could be expected shortly.²²² Fear of a French rescue fleet breaking through the blockade was slightly lessened with these three strong additions from Britain. The blockade of Louisbourg was imperative to the success of the

²¹⁶ Warren to Pepperrell, 5 June 1745, in Gwyn, ed., *The Warren Papers*, 104-105.

²¹⁷ Warren to Shirley, 12 May 1745. *ibid.*, 90-91.

²¹⁸ Edward Tyng, 23 May 1745, in Samuel G. Drake, *A Particular History of the Five Years French and Indian War* (Albany, NY, 1870), 209. Tyng was the senior provincial naval officer.

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 210.

²²⁰ McLennan, *Louisbourg from Its Foundation to Its Fall*, 136-137.

²²¹ DeForest, ed., *Louisbourg Journals*, 19.

²²² Rawlyk, *Yankees at Louisbourg*, 140; DeForest, ed., *Louisbourg Journals*, 78.

mission, and Warren's ships blocked supplies that could have sustained the French garrison. Without Warren's fleet, New Englanders would have been ill-equipped to stop the *Vigilant*, and Louisbourg's re-supply would have ended any hope of capturing the city.

Spurred on by the recent naval victory and substantial breaches in the western gate, the New England council of war finally decided to push forward against the Island Battery. On multiple occasions, high seas, excessive moon light, drunkenness and unrest over leadership canceled planned night assaults.²²³ To motivate and encourage volunteers for the offensive, Pepperrell made several concessions allowing the men "to choose their own officers, and be entitled to the plunder found there."²²⁴

On the night of May 26, 400 men set out in whale boats against the Island Battery, which boasted thirty-nine cannon and a garrison of 200.²²⁵ A drunken soldier's call for three cheers to celebrate landing on the island quickly cost the New Englanders the element of surprise.²²⁶ With the French alerted to their enemy's presence, the invading force was decimated. Chaos filled the night as the inexperienced soldiers tried to flee the island. The next morning, Pepperrell faced a downtrodden army that doubted its chances for success. The once high morale had sunk even lower as the men collected their dead, "some with their Leggs of[f] arms and heads of[f]."²²⁷ It was sometime before the New England officers calculated their losses, which were around sixty dead and over a

²²³ Council of War, 22 May 1745, in Massachusetts Historical Society, *Louisbourg Papers*, 2.
²²⁴ Ibid.
²²⁵ DeForest, ed., *Louisbourg Journals*, 22.
²²⁶ Ibid.
²²⁷ Ibid., 88.

hundred captured.²²⁸ Adding to the frustration over the bungled raid, news quickly spread that many of the whaleboats were destroyed by musket fire. Pepperrell was in a precarious situation; he needed to take the Island Battery so the navy could enter the harbor, but he could not suffer another disastrous attack and the further plummeting of morale within his ill-disciplined army. The Island Battery needed to be silenced, but how?

As the New Englanders had overcome the marshy terrain by the adaptation of sleds, they likewise modified their scheme against the enemy's harbor defense. Engineers successfully exploited the elevated terrain to their advantage by establishing a battery on the same cliffs where the lighthouse stood. The Lighthouse Battery began firing on June 10 after much difficulty in landing the artillery.²²⁹ From this elevated position across from the Island Battery, cannon fire forced many French defenders to seek shelter. One soldier in the Second Massachusetts noted how the "Lite house Plays Smartly att the Iland Battere which Damnifies them Very much."²³⁰ This same soldier recognized how the outer harbor defense was no longer tenable once the British brought a 14 inch mortar to the Lighthouse Battery that "tore them [French] to Peases Very Fast."²³¹ The invading force's resourcefulness had finally rendered the Island Battery impotent.

With the last obstacle opposing Warren's entry into the harbor largely suppressed, the British could now launch their combined assault on the city. By early June, both the

228

Ibid., 22.

229

DeForest, ed., *Seth Pomeroy*, 33.

230

DeForest, ed., *Louisbourg Journals*, 90.

231

Ibid., 91.

besieging and besieged forces redoubled their efforts. The British spent June 11 celebrating the anniversary of their king's ascension to the throne by "Fir[ing] Smartly att ye Citty."²³² While those manning the British batteries were consumed in their dangerous work, the rest of the army enjoyed the day's festivities with "Violin flut & Vocal Musick."²³³ The next day Pepperrell ordered fagots cut for filling the enemy's trenches and moss collected for barricading the netting of the ships preparing to enter the harbor.²³⁴ Governor du Chambon noticed the New Englanders' preparations for storming the fortress and subsequently ordered his batteries to increase their fire.²³⁵

On June 15, with preparations complete for the combined assault against Louisbourg, Warren came on shore. With the whole army neatly lined up in regimental formation, the commodore and lieutenant general walked briskly through the ranks.²³⁶ Warren then addressed the soldiers with a most "Excellent Speech" which confirmed that the navy only waited for a fair wind to attack the Island Battery and the *ville fortifiée*.²³⁷ Bolstered by the commodore's stirring vow to lead the army into the city if need be and his desire to "rather Leave his body at Louisbourg, than not take the city," the army only waited for the signal to attack.²³⁸

Pepperrell and Warren's joint assault depended on critical timing between the land and sea forces. Upon the commodore's signal, British vessels would enter the harbor with cannons blazing. Simultaneously, small boats would launch from the Grand

²³² DeForest, ed., *Seth Pomeroy*, 33

²³³ Ibid.

²³⁴ Ibid.

²³⁵ DeForest, ed., *Louisbourg Journals*, 26.

²³⁶ DeForest, ed., *Seth Pomeroy*, 35.

²³⁷ DeForest, ed., *Louisbourg Journals*, 26.

²³⁸ Ibid.

Battery carrying soldiers prepared to scale Louisbourg's walls.²³⁹ "The Marines and what Seamen Comm. Warren thinks proper" would join the five hundred men attacking from the Grand battery.²⁴⁰ Another 500 soldiers from the New England rank and file would begin their assault on the "South East part of the Town."²⁴¹ The general also thought it appropriate to send 500 men through the breach at the West Gate and capture the circular battery that was almost completely demolished.²⁴² In addition to Pepperrell's assaulting force, he wanted a 500 man reserve "to sustain the party attacking at the West Gate."²⁴³

On the evening of the fifteenth, a message asking for a "Cessation of arms" was rushed from the city's walls as the British and colonial forces waited for a favorable wind.²⁴⁴ With the impending assault and no real prospect of a successful defense of Louisbourg, du Chambon surrendered the fort on June 17 to the joint force of the New England militia and the Royal Navy. An anonymous Massachusetts soldier proudly stated that it was "the greatest Conquest, that Ever was Gain'd by New England."²⁴⁵

The British granted their conquered foes generous terms that allowed French "troops to march . . . with the honours of war."²⁴⁶ Louisbourg's former inhabitants were guaranteed passage back to France at "his Britannic Majesty's expense."²⁴⁷ The joint commanders also "agreed that the goods and movable Effects belonging to the French

²³⁹ Council of War, 25 May 1745, in Massachusetts Historical Society, *Louisbourg Papers*, 2.

²⁴⁰ Ibid.

²⁴¹ Ibid.

²⁴² Ibid.

²⁴³ Ibid.

²⁴⁴ DeForest, ed., *Louisbourg Journals*, 26.

²⁴⁵ Ibid., 27.

²⁴⁶ Warren to Corbett, 18 June 1745, in Gwyn, ed., *The Warren Papers*, 120-121.

²⁴⁷ Ibid.

should be preserved to them . . . [and] have Liberty to Transport . . . their Effects to any part of the French Kings Dominion in Europe."²⁴⁸ This article prevented the New England force from plundering Louisbourg. In a letter from Warren to the lords of Admiralty, the commodore stated two reasons for his and Pepperrell's decision to acquiesce to some of the French demands. First, "The French and Indians before Annapolis, having had a messenger sent to them to come to raise the siege of this place . . . marched off in a great hurry to come here. [This] was one reason that we thought it of the greatest consequence to get possession of the town, and of our giving the enemy the terms we have done."²⁴⁹ Second, intelligence reports stated that a "strong squadron of the enemy's ships" with 3,000 regular troops were headed for Cape Breton.²⁵⁰ While Warren's rationale was quite sound, New Englanders could not help but feel their recompense evaporating like a vessel into the fog.

The liberal terms upset many militia men, who had hoped to plunder Louisbourg. These troops felt that they had been robbed of their just reward, while the naval force was permitted to retain its prizes. The land contingent's animosity grew with each vessel the British fleet captured. Warren's clever instructions to leave the French flag above Louisbourg, netted three valuable East Indiamen and a fourth vessel carrying 100,200 pieces of eight.²⁵¹ The commodore's one-eighth share of the prize money for the captures became the basis for his subsequent fortune. The somewhat jealous Shirley

²⁴⁸ "Answer to the foregoing Memorial of the Commissary Seigneur at Bruselles," in Massachusetts Historical Society, *Louisbourg Papers*, 1.

²⁴⁹ Warren to Corbett, 18 June 1745, in Gwyn, ed., *The Warren Papers*, 122-123.

²⁵⁰ Ibid.

²⁵¹ Julian Gwyn, *Frigates and Foremasts: The North American Squadron in Nova Scotia Waters, 1745-1815* (Vancouver, 2003), 13.

estimated Warren's gains from the captures at "near Seventy thousand Pound Sterling."²⁵²

While Warren's ruse filled his pockets and those of his seamen, it only inflamed the army's jealousy. Numerous soldiers openly complained of the "Poore Termes."²⁵³ Throughout the British camp there was "great Noys and hubbub a mungst the Soldiers a bout the Plonder Som will go out and Take it again Som one way Som a Nother."²⁵⁴ The tension finally boiled over in an urgent letter from Warren to Pepperrell. "For God's sake give strict orders to your troops to comply with the capitulation, as the consequence of a breach of it on our side may occasion one on theirs, by which means it is not improbable but they may sieze in France upon his Majesty's ship *Launceston* and the other transports by way of reprisals."²⁵⁵ While some plundering occurred, Pepperrell controlled most of his army through rum and promises.²⁵⁶ Pepperrell and Warren appeased their men by paying them to rebuild the fortress. Warren in particular wrote letters to the home government suggesting the king show some preferment to the soldiers.²⁵⁷ Governor Shirley even suggested that the "Troops . . . disappointed of the Plunder of Louisbourg" should receive part of the "conquer'd Lands."²⁵⁸ While the increased ration of rum quelled the soldier's outrage over lost plunder, it did not suppress demands for pay increases and a speedy return to New England. Eventually, the uneasiness subsided when

²⁵² Shirley to the duke of Newcastle, 27 Sept. 1745, quoted in Gwyn, *The Enterprising Admiral*, 20.

²⁵³ DeForest, ed., *Louisbourg Journals*, 92.

²⁵⁴ Ibid.

²⁵⁵ Warren to Pepperrell, 1 July 1745, in Gwyn, ed., *The Warren Papers*, 131.

²⁵⁶ Council of War, 29 June 1745, in Massachusetts Historical Society, *Louisbourg Papers*, 2; Council of War, 1 July 1745, in *ibid.*

²⁵⁷ Warren to Corbett, 4 July 1745, in Gwyn, ed., *The Warren Papers*, 134.

²⁵⁸ Shirley to the Lords of Trade, 10 July 1745, in Lincoln, ed., *Correspondence of William Shirley*, Vol. 1: 244-245.

Governor Shirley raised the Massachusetts's troops pay and agreed to give the small arms confiscated from the French to each soldier.²⁵⁹ Sadly, the New England troops' restlessness and frustration shortly after the siege was just the beginning of a long and disastrous occupation of Louisbourg.

While the merchants and politicians supported the campaign for the economic and political windfalls they would accrue, most common soldiers came to Louisbourg simply for plunder. With the expedition's departure on March 24, 1745, Shirley had gained political strength through his patronage system. Warren had gained a sizable fortune during his service at Louisbourg. Merchants also benefited from the expedition as their purses grew hefty with each shipment of victuals to the besieging army. Yet when the fortress finally capitulated on June 17, 1745, the soldiers who had risked everything gained nothing. The siege of Louisbourg, clearly reveals that strong economic forces motivated the greatest British colonial success of the War of Austrian Succession.

²⁵⁹Council of War, 17 Sept. 1745, in Massachusetts Historical Society, *Louisbourg Papers*, Vol. 2.

Chapter 6

Epilogue

On Sunday morning, August 25, 1745, a torrent of rain enveloped Louisbourg, pelting the town's battle-scarred dwellings.¹ Mixing with the persistent precipitation was a light south wind that meandered through several rubble-strewn alleys, and then tickled a cluster of resilient strawberry leaves before finally applying its full force to the doorway of the royal hospital. Within the hospital, sheltered from the inclement weather, scores of New England's conquering soldiers listened above the creaky doors to Reverend Stephen Williams' discourse.² Commodore Peter Warren, Lieutenant General William Pepperrell, Governor William Shirley and his family, and various politicians from the Massachusetts House of Representatives and Council attended.³ Since many dignitaries wanted to tout their part in the expedition, Williams' decision to preach on the virtues of humbling rather than exalting one's self seemed quite appropriate.

Two months passed since the French fortress had fallen, and high ranking military officers and politicians quickly gained the favors of a delighted monarch. Yet the men who had manned the batteries so faithfully under intense fire were being snubbed. To the numerous common soldiers relegated to the back of the hospital chapel, victory's harvest was meager. Consequently, like the weather outside, a preponderance of the congregation's temperament was stormy.

¹ Louis Effingham DeForest, ed., *Louisbourg Journals 1745* (New York, 1932), 39.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

Even though the New England forces lost only 131 men during the entire siege, their spirits rapidly plummeted after the French capitulation.⁴ This sudden drop in morale stemmed from the terms of surrender, which barred them from plunder.⁵ The men shared other grievances as well. They lacked many necessities, they had been kept beyond their enlistment period, and they had not been paid. In addition, Massachusetts troops earned wages that were much less than those of Rhode Island and Connecticut.⁶ The gross inequity of the Royal Navy's huge gains from prize money only exacerbated the problem. On August 24, Shirley, with an entourage of dignitaries, "Made an Excellent Speech Both to Officers and Soldiers But all Insufficient to make 'em Really willing and Contented to tarry all Winter."⁷ While the promise of higher wages and increased supplies eventually coaxed the soldiers from a general mutiny, the subsequent winter at Louisbourg offered only disease and death.⁸ Inadequate housing, excessive drinking, and sub-par sanitation brought epidemic levels of death to the garrison that winter.⁹ In January 1746, the situation became so dire that Pepperrell and Warren sadly penned to Shirley "the sickness . . . has continued to rage to such a degree that . . . we have buried 561 men, and have . . . 1100 sick."¹⁰ By the time regular British forces arrived in the spring of 1746, over 1,200 men had perished.¹¹ The colonials who were

⁴ Ibid., 120.

⁵ Council of War, 17 Sept. 1745, in Massachusetts Historical Society, *Louisbourg Papers*, 2.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ DeForest, *Louisbourg Journals*, 38.

⁸ Council of War, 17 Sept. 1745, in Massachusetts Historical Society, *Louisbourg Papers*, 2.

⁹ G.A. Rawlyk, *Yankees at Louisbourg* (Orono, ME, 1967), 157.

¹⁰ William Pepperrell and Peter Warren to William Shirley, 28 Jan. 1745/6, in Charles Henry Lincoln, ed., *Correspondence of William Shirley: Governor of Massachusetts and Military Commander in America, 1731-1760* (New York, 1912), 1: 303-306.

¹¹ Rawlyk, *Yankees at Louisbourg*, 157.

fortunate enough to survive the pestilence left Louisbourg with little more than their meager wages and disdain for future military service.

Although most New England soldiers gained nothing from the expedition, its leaders received handsome rewards for their service. Commodore Warren was not only promoted to rear-admiral, but he also became Louisbourg's first British governor.¹² In addition to this elevated political status, Warren gained a financial windfall for his time at Louisbourg. The commodore's ships captured numerous prizes during and after the siege. While there are no exact figures for Warren's gains, historian Julian Gwyn has estimated the commodore's take was at least £53,500.¹³

Merchant-turned-general William Pepperrell was granted a baronetcy, becoming the first American colonial to receive such an honor.¹⁴ Like his naval counterpart, Pepperrell received a lucrative honor for his time at the former French colony. The king arranged for a colonelcy in the British army for Pepperrell, which provided multi-faceted gains worth over a thousand pounds, as well as patronage to bestow upon political and economic allies.¹⁵

The home government also bestowed favors upon Governor Shirley, but not as generously as Warren and Pepperrell were treated. Even though the governor had orchestrated this grand affair, London was slow to compensate the Massachusetts chief executive. Louisbourg's acquisition caused political implications for Shirley's patrons

¹² Newcastle to Warren, 10 Aug. 1745, in Julian Gwyn, ed., *The Royal Navy and North America: The Warren Papers, 1736-1752* (London, 1975), 150-153.

¹³ Julian Gwyn, *The Enterprising Admiral: The Personal Fortune of Admiral Sir Peter Warren* (London, 1974), 20.

¹⁴ Newcastle to Warren, 10 Aug. 1745, in Gwyn, ed., *The Warren Papers*, 150-153.

¹⁵ John A. Schutz, *William Shirley: King's Governor of Massachusetts* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1961), 106.

who were pressing for peace with France.¹⁶ In February 1746, political winds blew in Shirley's favor, and he subsequently received a regiment of his own.¹⁷

Along with this new appointment, the governor's administration had gained stability and strength through the expedition. Lucrative commissions and war contracts had ended large scale opposition from mercantile interests. Without the growing defense expenditures of an escalating war, Massachusetts would still have been mired in contentious trade issues. Increased patronage from the Louisbourg expedition drastically enlarged Shirley's political support from former Land Bankers and Belcher's enemies to include the more powerful and influential Boston merchants.¹⁸

Mercantile and fishing interests also benefited from the 1745 campaign. Their foresight in pressing for the attack garnered them contracts and commissions to supply the army and navy during a time when other commercial avenues were shrinking. Fishing entrepreneurs profited from the expulsion of their northern competitors from the cod fishery. Merchants also received sterling from the home government, which was vital since New England paper currency continued to depreciate.¹⁹ Thomas Hancock exemplified how financially rewarding government contracts were during King George's War. At the start of 1744, a trade embargo and zealous customs officials curtailed Hancock's commercial ventures. Through his relentless pursuit of military contracts, however, his business subsequently flourished. Commerce was so brisk that in 1748

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ William Shirley to the duke of Newcastle, 14 Dec. 1745, in Lincoln, ed., *Correspondence of William Shirley*, 1: 293-296.

¹⁸ Schutz, *William Shirley*, 92, 96.

¹⁹ Shirley to Benning Wentworth, 3 Feb. 1744/5, in Lincoln, ed., *Correspondence of William Shirley*, 1: 178-179.

Hancock complained that only two men "in all the Colonys pay a higher Tax."²⁰ Those two men were also involved in supplying New England forces with stores. Even after Ile Royale fell, merchants received fat contracts to supply the British regulars who took possession of the fortress in 1746.

The expedition's economic returns did not end with colonial merchants and fishermen. Governor Shirley's audacious plan also drastically altered New England's faltering inflationist economy. With the success of the military operation, London agreed to reimburse the colonies for debts they accrued in capturing Louisbourg. New England, and particularly Massachusetts desperately needed this repayment. Between 1744 and 1748, Massachusetts issued paper bills nineteen times to meet its mounting war expenditures.²¹ Though Britain decided to repay its colonies, the home government was exceedingly slow in fulfilling its promise. Arguments over verifying accounts and exchange rates protracted Parliament's decision on how much New England would receive. London did not settle on the actual sums to be distributed until 1748. The parliamentary grant awarded £183,649/2/7 to Massachusetts, £16,355/13/4 to New Hampshire, £28,863/19/1 to Connecticut, and £6,332/12/10 to Rhode Island.²² Massachusetts wisely used its financial windfall to retire its old currency and put an end to the "wicked Mony."²³

²⁰ Thomas Hancock to Christopher Kilby, 17 Jan. 1748/9, quoted in W.T. Baxter, *The House of Hancock: Business in Boston 1724-1775* (Cambridge, MA, 1945), 107.

²¹ Malcolm Freiberg, "Thomas Hutchinson: The First Fifty Years (1711-1761)," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d Ser., 15 (1958): 48.

²² J. S. McLennan, *Louisbourg from Its Foundation to Its Fall, 1713-1758* (London, 1918), 167.

²³ Thomas Hutchinson to the Mass. Governor, Council, and House, 3 Feb. 1748, quoted in Freiberg, "Thomas Hutchinson," *WMQ*, 3d Ser., 15 (1958): 48.

Clearly, political and economic motivations permeated the Louisbourg expedition. By analyzing the hardships that New Englanders faced at the beginning of King George's War, the grounds for such an expedition are abundant and obvious. Louisbourg's subjugation could solve so many problems. It would resolve Governor Shirley's political instability. It would assist the mercantile community facing commercial restrictions on trade and experiencing a specie shortage. Capturing Louisbourg would also end French encroachments and hostility to British fishing interests. To the common soldier, Ile Royale was filled with French goods waiting to be liberated from their popish foes. Lenient terms of surrender thwarted the rank and file, while the governor, merchants, and fishing interests attained their political and financial goals. The betrayal many soldiers felt after the expedition would be felt by all of New England in 1748. In October of that year, the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle returned "the greatest Conquest, that Ever was Gain'[d] by New England" to the French.²⁴

Vanquish'd by Peace, that Heros like withstood,
 Loud thund'ring Cannons, mix'd with Streams of Blood.
 The Gallics triumph—their Recess so short
 Joyful return, to that late conquer'd Fort,
 Where Monuments of English Arms will shew,
 When Time may serve, ye shall our Claims renew,
 New England's Fate insult! The Day is yours,
 Constrain'd we yield the Conquest that was ours.²⁵

 24

The treaty stated that France would regain Louisbourg, while Britain regained Madras.

25

Boston Weekly News-Letter, 11 May 1749.

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Appendix A

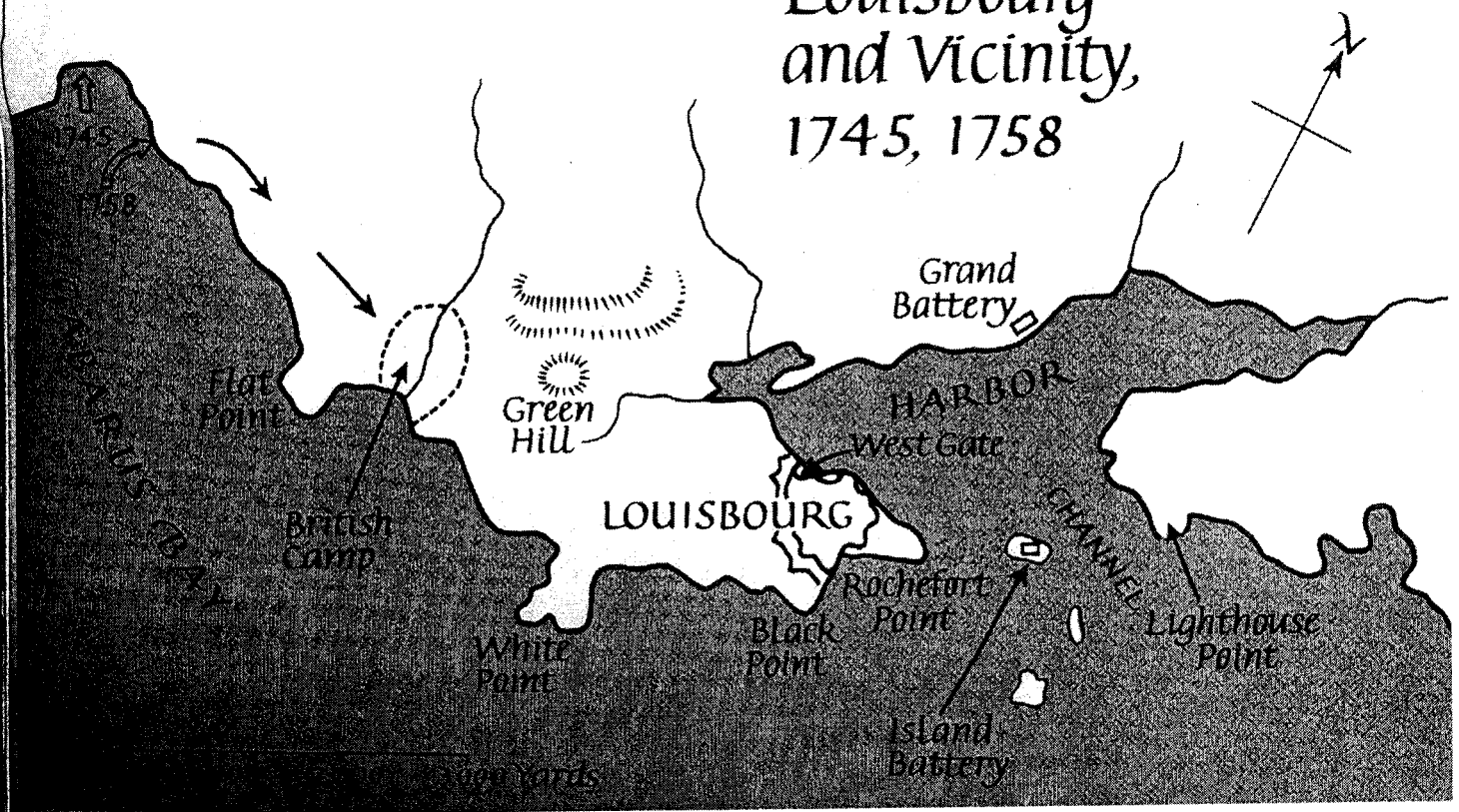
Time Line

- 1689—William and Mary of Orange become King and Queen of England
- 1689-1697—King Williams War, the first of the French and Indian Wars; Part of the War of the League of Augsburg
- 1702—Queen Anne ascends the English throne
- 1702-1713—Queen Anne's War, French and Spanish fought British in North America, the second of the French and Indian Wars; Part of the War of Spanish Succession
- 1713—Founding of Louisbourg
- 1714—King George I ascends to the English throne
- 1727—King George II ascends to the English throne
- 1733—Molasses Act passed
- 1734—Great Awakening religious movement begins in Massachusetts
- August 14, 1741—William Shirley sworn in as Governor of Massachusetts
- 1739-1748—War of Jenkins' Ear between Britain and Spain; part of the War of Austrian Succession after 1742
- 1744-1748—King George's War between Britain and France; the third of the French and Indian Wars; Part of the War of Austrian Succession
- March 24, 1745—First contingent of the Louisbourg expedition leaves Nantasket
- April 30, 1745—New England forces land near Louisbourg
- May 2, 1745—New England forces capture the Royal Battery
- May 19, 1745—British blockade captures the French vessel *Vigilant*
- May 26, 1745—New England forces are repulsed during night attack on Island Battery
- June 17, 1745—Louisbourg surrenders
- October 18, 1748—Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle ends War of Austrian Succession and returns Louisbourg to France

Appendix B

Louisbourg Map

Louisbourg
and Vicinity,
1745, 1758



Map of New England and Nova Scotia

