INFORMATION TO USERS

This manuscript has been reproduced from the microfilm master. UMI films the text directly from the original or copy submitted. Thus, some thesis and dissertation copies are in typewriter face, while others may be from any type of computer printer.

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleedthrough, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send UMI a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

Oversize materials (e.g., maps, drawings, charts) are reproduced by sectioning the original, beginning at the upper left-hand corner and continuing from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps. Each original is also photographed in one exposure and is included in reduced form at the back of the book.

Photographs included in the original manuscript have been reproduced xerographically in this copy. Higher quality 6" x 9" black and white photographic prints are available for any photographs or illustrations appearing in this copy for an additional charge. Contact UMI directly to order.

UMI
A Bell & Howell Information Company
300 North Zeeb Road. Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346 USA
313/761-4700 800/521-0600
RICE UNIVERSITY

THE RISE OF EVANGELICAL RELIGION
IN SOUTH CAROLINA DURING THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

by

THOMAS J. LITTLE

A THESIS SUBMITTED
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

APPROVED, THESIS COMMITTEE

John B. Boles, Allyn R. and Gladys
M. Cline Professor of History and
Managing Editor, Journal of
Southern History, Director.

Edward L. Cox, Associate Professor
of History

Gerald P. McKenny, Assistant
Professor of Religious Studies

Houston, Texas
May, 1995
ABSTRACT

The Rise of Evangelical Religion in South Carolina

During the Eighteenth Century

by

Thomas J. Little

Using a developmental model as a heuristic tool for understanding the main contours of socioeconomic and cultural development in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century South Carolina, and following Samuel S. Hill's advice that southern religious historians "must consider how religion is related to developments in other aspects of southern life...as time passes," this work brings into serious question the widely held, and in no small way reductionist conviction among most historians that religious concerns did not assume the importance in colonial South Carolina and the South in general as they did in New England and the Middle colonies. According to conventional wisdom, there was--for a variety of reasons--an almost complete breakdown of institutional religion and a concomitant rise in secularism in the southern colonies, and, although there were occasional, isolated religious revivals after the 1740s, there was no significant reversal in this trend until the so-called second Great Awakening at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

If, in emphasizing the discontinuities between the
intensely religious early national period and the spiritually flabby colonial period, historians have--to one degree or another--tended to belittle the importance of religion in the pre-Revolutionary South, so too have they prevented us from understanding the general thrust and character of religious developments and the rise of evangelicalism. For far from simply being awash in a static sea of religious apathy, as this work shows was the case for South Carolina, southerners developed a vital, dynamic religious culture during the eighteenth century; and, the influence of evangelicalism began to manifest itself very early on. As the number of evangelical churches and ministers increased in the half century or so before 1800, a unique and profoundly subjective religious belief system emerged and became ever more widespread. This belief system was partly a cause and partly a result of the process of sublimating the pursuit of self and developing an alternative morality that more accurately reflected prevailing modes of behavior.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many individuals and institutions have contributed to this present undertaking. Among institutions, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Rice University for providing resources and financial support. The Scottish Heritage Foundation, through a generous Sam Houston Fellowship in 1991, and the Paul Carrington Chapter of the Texas Sons of the American Revolution, through a George Brandau Award in 1993, helped underwrite research expenses at various libraries and archives.

The staffs of the Fondren Library at Rice, South Caroliniana Library and Thomas Cooper Library at the University of South Carolina, South Carolina State Department of Archives and History, South Carolina Historical Society, James Buchanan Duke Library at Furman University, Wofford College Library, and Department of History (Montreat) of the Presbyterian Church have extended many courtesies to me, making my research at once both fruitful and hospitable. Special thanks are due to Dr. Alan Stokes, Director of the South Caroliniana Library, for his kindness and help during my stay in Columbia.

That stay was made possible by my soul mate, James Hill, who literally transformed his living room into a bed-and-breakfast while I was doing research. His personal kindness and warm friendship mean a great deal to me.

My friends and fellow graduate students at Rice,
especially including A.J. Hood, Jeff Hooten, Anya Jabour, Lynn Lyerly, Matt Moten, Osaak Olumwullah, and Sam Watson, afforded me a lively critical forum for the development of my ideas. Jeff Hooten in particular proved to be a tireless intellectual sounding board as well as a true blue Texas dude. Jeff’s wife, Paula, and his daughter, Jennifer, were also extremely supportive. Thanks ya’ll!

From the time I arrived at Rice, Nancy Parker and the departmental secretaries were always willing to help. Without them, I could not have made it through. I am also indebted, deeply and in different ways, to Evelyn Thomas Nolen, Patricia Burgess, and the other staff members of the Journal of Southern History. I hope each one of them will know how much I value their individual support and counsel.

I owe a special debt of gratitude to Professors John B. Boles, Edward L. Cox, and Ira D. Gruber, for they have had a profound influence on the unfolding of my academic career. Dr. Boles supervised this work from its inception and has been a constant source of advice and encouragement. He has inspired me in innumerable ways. So too has Dr. Cox. Since my undergraduate days at the University of South Carolina in the mid-1980s, he has been a central part of my life. I simply do not know how to thank him. Dr. Gruber taught me much about early American history and has made abundantly clear by his own example the critical importance of disciplined study. I am extraordinarily grateful to this
triumvirate for their personalized attention and support.

It was my good fortune to have Dr. Gerald P. McKenny in the Department of Religious Studies serve on my dissertation committee. He offered up a host of invaluable suggestions.

Above all, I would like to thank my family. I am deeply indebted to them. I would especially like to thank my parents, Mr. and Mrs. Robert F. Little, who have supported me and my work from the very beginning and have always been there for me; my sister, Teri J. Little; my mother and father-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Dewey Bullman; and my uncle, Billy E. Calhoun.

My wife Lisa is my best friend. And, she read and edited the entire manuscript with a critical eye. She also washed the clothes, went grocery shopping, and cooked while putting up with me, working full time, and attending the University of Houston at night! Stated simply, this work is as much hers as it is mine, for we are as one.
CONTENTS

Abstract...........................................................................................................ii
Acknowledgements.......................................................................................iv
Figures and Tables.........................................................................................viii
Introduction..................................................................................................1

Chapter One - Working it Out in South Carolina: Socio-
Economic and Cultural Configurations, 1670-1720......................5

Chapter Two - Growth and Maturation: South Carolina,
1720-1770..................................................................................................58

Chapter Three - Family, Identity, and Religious Life in
the Mid Eighteenth Century.................................................................137

Chapter Four - "Adding to the Church Such as Shall Be
Saved": The Rise of Evangelical Churches in Colonial
South Carolina, 1740-1772..............................................................233

Chapter Five - Evangelicalism, Authority, and Socio-
cultural Developments during the Era of the American
Revolution..............................................................................................308

Chapter Six - Acceleration, Retreat, and the Post
Revolutionary Evangelical Revival in South Carolina.....378

Bibliography..............................................................................................428
FIGURES AND TABLES

Figures

Figure 1.1 - A Plan of Charles Town from a Survey of Edward Crisp in 1704.................................................................41

Figure 2.1 - Townships and Settlements, c. 1760.............61

Figure 2.2 - "Mr. Peter Manigault and his Friends," c.1750.................................................................80

Figure 2.3 - Electoral Histogram, 1696-1775...............119

Figure 3.1 - Church Building in Colonial South Carolina, 1681-1780.........................................................156

Figure 3.2 - Estimated Percentage of Anglicans in Nine South Carolina Parishes, 1710-1730......................165

Tables

Table 1.1 - Estimated Population of South Carolina, 1675-1720.................................................................18

Table 2.1 - Estimated Population of South Carolina, 1720-1770.................................................................59

Table 2.2 - Legislative Turnover in Colonial South Carolina, 1696-1775.........................................................118

Table 3.1 - Church Building in Colonial South Carolina, 1681-1780.........................................................157

Table 3.2 - South Carolina Responses to the Bishop of London's 1724 Survey................................................162

Table 3.3 - Anglican Church Adherence in Nine South Carolina Parishes, 1724................................................167

Table 4.1 - Membership Statistics of the Stoney Creek Independent Presbyterian Church, 1743-1751........243

Table 4.2 - Statistics of Congaree Baptist Association Churches, 1772..................................................282

Table 4.3 - Race, Sex, and Kinship in Constituent Lists of Six Separate Baptist Churches, 1762-1772.......284
Tables

(Continued)

Table 4.4 - Statistics of Charleston Baptist Association Churches, 1772.................................292

Table 4.5 - Race, Sex, and Kinship in Constituent Lists of Four Regular Baptist Churches, 1752-1759........294

Table 6.1 - Statistics of the Charleston Baptist Association, 1785-1800..................................409

Table 6.2 - Statistics of the Bethel Baptist Association, 1789-1800....................................409

Table 6.3 - Statistics of the Methodist Episcopal Church in South Carolina, 1786-1800.................413

Table 6.4 - Regional Trends of the Methodist Episcopal Church in South Carolina, 1786-1800........414
INTRODUCTION

This dissertation has two complementary goals: first, it attempts to suggest both how and why evangelicalism emerged in South Carolina during the eighteenth century; and, second, it seeks to identify some of the ways evangelical values affected society and culture. The work is based upon a wide variety of sources, including the papers of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, diaries, letters, travel accounts, plantation records, newspapers, probate inventories, wills, census data, and Baptist, Methodist, and Presbyterian church records; its effectiveness relies upon a blending of illustrations from the surviving literary, pictorial, and material record and upon the presentation and analysis of existing quantitative data.

Partly for structural reasons but primarily because it represents an attempt to understand the complex interrelationships between belief, behavior, and sociocultural change, the work is divided into two sections. Part I examines the process of social development in South Carolina in the century following the first successful settlement of the colony in 1670. Chapter 1 provides a brief explanation of the ways participants in the project to settle Carolina initially conceived of the undertaking, examines early social and cultural configurations, and
analyses the structural transformations precipitated by the rapid spread of rice culture. The second and third chapters focus on the middle decades of the eighteenth century. Chapter 2 looks at demographic and economic growth, increasing social differentiation and complexity, and relations among the various ranks of society, while Chapter 3 details the private world of the family, the process of transculturation, religious life, and George Whitefield's barnstorming tour of Charleston in 1740, an event that in historian Samuel Hill's words signalled the emergence of "a culturally feasible pattern of religion."¹

Part II discusses the rise of evangelicalism in South Carolina during the second half of the eighteenth century. Chapter 4 traces a process that gradually expanded the number of "gospel" churches and evangelical ministers who added to evangelical congregations "such as shall be saved." This process introduced, and subsequently set in place in the years just prior to the American Revolution, a belief system that had profound sociocultural implications. The fifth chapter provides a general framework that puts into clear focus the central theological motifs of evangelicalism as it emerged in South Carolina and attempts to explain how evangelical values became associated with a variety of other values that emphasized the integrity of the individual character. Chapter 6 examines the resounding series of religious revivals in the post Revolutionary Era that
precipitated the so-called second Great Awakening.

In contrast to many recent scholars who have tended to view the late eighteenth-century religious awakenings through the lens of subsequent American history, I have tried throughout this work to understand how they were informed by the colonial experience. This colonial perspective carries considerable explanatory power and places the rise of evangelicalism into less anachronistic focus. For example, rather than seeing the successful challenges to religious establishments in the southern colonies as evidence of increasing social disorder, I have endeavored to look at emergence of experiential religion in South Carolina within the context of ever greater social coherence and complexity. This alternative frame of reference points up the adaptive capacities of societies and of the individuals who compose them, and makes it much easier to understand how and why evangelicalism emerged.

From my colonial vantage point, I have attempted in the pages that follow to offer up a series of fresh insights on a number of persistent questions in historiography of southern religion.² And, in several important respects, my findings strongly suggest that the emerging picture of the rise of evangelicalism in the South requires significant modification.
END NOTES


CHAPTER ONE

Working It Out in South Carolina:
Socio-Economic and Cultural Configurations, 1670-1720

I

Sir John Colleton, an enterprising Royalist soldier who had gone to Barbados after the execution of Charles I in 1649, was the principal motivating force behind the project to settle Carolina. Following the restoration of Charles II to the English throne in 1660, Colleton returned to London as both courtier and promoter. After being knighted for his support and loyalty to the House of Stewart during the English Civil War, he began lobbying for a plan to colonize the southeastern mainland.¹ Colleton knew that thousands of land-hungry younger sons of established families, along with small farmers, poor whites, and servants "out of their time," were being displaced by the sugar revolution in Barbados. He also knew, like his fellow Barbadians, that island planters were "so intent upon planting sugar that they had rather buy foode at very deare rates than produce it by labour."²

As opportunity for many appeared closed off in Barbados, the prospects on the mainland seemed unlimited.
Realizing the possibilities inherent in these concurrent developments, Colleton solicited the support of seven of the most wealthy and influential men in England to secure the rights to settle Carolina. Colleton's associates, who were all experienced in colonial affairs, included his well-placed kinsman, the Duke of Albemarle; the Earl of Clarendon, chief minister to Charles II; John Lord Berkeley, a close associate of the king's brother; William Berkeley, Lord John's brother and governor of Virginia; William Craven, Earl of Craven, a powerful English noble and staunch loyalist; Sir George Carteret, treasurer of the Navy and vice-chamberlain of the royal household; and Sir Anthony Ashley Cooper, later Earl of Shaftesbury. All of these men were political heavyweights who played an influential role in formulating colonial policy during the Restoration. Indeed, as Wesley Frank Craven has written, "had the Duke of York, his cousin Prince Rupert, and William Penn been numbered among the Carolina proprietors, the modern student could find in one place a remarkably complete list of those who during the reign of Charles II held the leadership in efforts to expand English interests in the Atlantic basin."  

Together, the eight "True and Absolute Lords Proprietors of Carolina" were granted the land between Virginia and northern Florida with full rights to govern. They hoped to relocate experienced, rent-paying settlers
from New England, the Chesapeake, and especially Barbados to
their colony without incurring a great deal of expense.
Carolina seemed to be a promising site for the production of
staple commodities. If nothing else, their colony could
serve as an adjunct to the rapidly expanding Barbadian
economy by supplying provisions to feed the island's growing
population; wood for fuel, buildings, fences, and windmills;
and tar, pitch, rosin, and staves to build barrels in which
to ship the sugarcane.⁵

Initially, it seemed as though the proprietors' plans
would come off without a hitch. Already by 1660 Virginians
were in the process of spreading the tobacco and mixed
farming culture of the Chesapeake into the Albemarle region
of Carolina, and in 1664 the proprietors instructed Governor
Berkeley to organize a government there. In addition, a
group of Massachusetts Bay colonists attempted to establish
a settlement near Cape Fear in 1663, but the project was
quickly abandoned. Nevertheless, the proprietors still had
high hopes for the Carolina venture because they had learned
from a group calling themselves "The Adventures of Barbados"
that there were "many hundreds of noble families" on the
island who "were willing and ready to remove speedily
thither to begin a settlement."⁶ In August 1663 the
"adventurers" employed William Hilton to explore the coast
around Port Royal; and shortly after he returned with a
favorable report, a small group of them migrated to the
Carolina coast. The Barbadians managed to hang on for over two years but dissention, lack of provisions, and problems with the Indians forced them to pull out in October 1667.⁷

In 1663 the prospect of peopling Carolina without putting forth much time, money, or effort had seemed promising. Five years later, however, the proprietors were beginning to have their doubts. Although the Albemarle settlement persisted, two serious efforts to colonize the southeastern mainland had failed miserably. Moreover, Sir John Colleton, the spirited leader of the group, died in 1666, setting adrift proprietary leadership and direction. By 1669 the entire Carolina enterprize was on the verge of extinction when Anthony Ashley Cooper suddenly took it over and rescued it from failure. Ashley persuaded the proprietors to outfit three ships, and shortly thereafter he sent out from England about one hundred colonists, fully armed and provisioned. Although the fleet suffered misfortunes of every kind, the colonists managed to make it to the Carolina coast in 1670.⁸

II

Before the three ships departed from England, Lord Ashley wrote the Fundamental Constitutions for the Government of South Carolina. Modeled on other proprietary systems, the document created a blueprint for the
colonization of Carolina. Ashley's underlying goal was the establishment of what was called an improved society. In early modern Britain an improved society meant an ordered, settled, and coherent world with a hierarchical social structure, stable socio-cultural institutions, a political system that balanced monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy, and a vigorous market economy based on capital, credit, commercial agriculture, and overseas trade.

How Ashley expected to create an improved society in Carolina can only be explained by a brief description of several provisions in the Fundamental Constitutions, which in its revised form included 120 separate articles. Land allotments were central to the project. Carolina was to be divided into a series of counties, each consisting of 480,000 square acres; in turn, each county was to be subdivided into forty 12,000-acre plots. Eight of those plots were to be reserved for the proprietors and eight more were to be reserved for the nobility (composed of landgraves and caciques), while the remaining twenty-four plots were to be granted to freeholders. Every county was to have one landgrave, who would receive 48,000 acres, and two caciques, who were entitled to 24,000 acres each. All adult men over 16 years of age who arrived in the colony before March 25, 1670, were to be granted 150-acre headrights. Additional allotments were to be made for transporting dependents: 150 acres for adults and 100 acres for those dependents under
16. After that date, headrights were fixed at 100 acres for each adult and 70 acres for minors. Under the Constitutions, the proprietors retained the right to determine the pattern of settlement and designate towns and ports.\textsuperscript{11}

Political precedence and legal authority flowed from the ownership of land. The eight proprietors were to make up the palatine court, and the eldest proprietor was to assume the position of Palatine of Carolina. All the proprietors were to be represented in the colony by a deputy, and the Palatine's representative was to be the governor. Broad administrative, legislative, and judicial powers were given to a Grand Council, composed of the proprietary deputies and members of the Carolina nobility, which would recommend laws to a legislative body for its consideration. The legislature could only accept or reject measures proposed by the Council; it could not amend or initiate legislation. Parliament was to be a unicameral body, made up of proprietors, or their deputies, the nobility--landgraves, caciques--and representatives elected by the freeholders. Although election to the parliament required ownership of at least 500 acres, every free male who possessed 50 acres could vote.\textsuperscript{12}

The Fundamental Constitutions attempted to create a balanced constitution that promoted political harmony and stability by counterbalancing the few and the many.
Authority to govern rested on class prerogative, elite privilege, and habits of deference and subordination. However, the system was not so rigid as to prevent social and political mobility. Indeed, the Fundamental Constitutions laid out a multichanneled system whereby exceptionally ambitious individuals could rise to positions of power and authority. If a freeman accumulated an estate of 3,000 acres, for example, he was to be given manorial rights and could petition to be elevated to a noble rank. Like the proposed society itself, social and political movement was to take place in a very orderly, settled, and coherent manner.¹³

Several articles in the Fundamental Constitutions suggest that the document was, in part, a shrewdly conceived promotional devise, written to attract thousands of would-be settlers from all social classes to the colony. Land was offered on generous terms, titles were offered to men of rank, and every effort was made to set in place a social and political system that would guarantee stability at the same time that it allowed for social mobility. Moreover, special provisions were added to induce the possessing classes to migrate to the colony because they had the capital and labor necessary to develop and improve the colony. In a direct appeal to Barbadian planters, for example, one article granted every freeman "absolute Power and Authority over his Negro Slaves, of what opinion or Religion soever."¹⁴
Religious toleration also figured into the recruiting effort. Under the Fundamental Constitutions every individual colonist had only "to acknowledge a God, and that God is publicly and Solemnly to be worshipped." This included "heathens, Jews, and other dissenters." Any seven individuals could form themselves into a church, and the use of "any reproachful, reviling, or abusive Language against the religion of any Church or Profession" was strictly forbidden. No test oath was required for holding a public office or giving testimony in a trial. The only stipulation was that the individual must "bear Witness to Truth." Quakers would have found this provision to be especially appealing.\textsuperscript{15}

However attractive the promise of religious freedom was to dissenters, many Barbadian Anglicans found Ashley's policy to be simply too liberal to accept. Apparently, some of the other Lords Proprietors agreed, because in 1670 an additional clause was added to the Fundamental Constitutions that empowered the colonial parliament to levy taxes to support the Church of England, the "National Religion" of Carolina. Nevertheless, as Eugene Sirmans has written, "Carolina still offered a greater degree of religious freedom than England or any other American colony, with the single exception of Rhode Island."\textsuperscript{16}

The Fundamental Constitutions were never successfully implemented in South Carolina; in fact, they were rejected
several times by the colonists. This has led many historians to dismiss the document as an unrealistic dream, an impractical attempt to create a utopian world in a far distant periphery of the British world. Of course, Carolina never turned into the rent-paying colony that Ashley envisioned, and only a few landgraves and caciques were ever created. Similarly, the political system that developed quickly came to resemble that of other proprietary colonies and, although Charleston was laid out in the planned manner, the pattern of land settlement was scattered. But the question is not whether the Fundamental Constitutions succeeded or failed. Indeed, we may never understand the rich subtleties underlying the document until we stop emphasizing its eventual shortcomings and recognize that the ideas driving its creation emerged from a coherent early modern world view.

No less so than the proprietors, the colonists who were in the Carolina wilderness also aspired to create an improved society. Using England, New England, the Chesapeake, and especially Barbados as their model, they sought to develop a hierarchical social structure, a market economy based on commercial agriculture, social and cultural institutions, and a political system that would facilitate their socio-economic and cultural development. This quest for improvement was deeply interwoven with the corollary drive for personal independence, which Jack Greene has
called "the most powerful drive in the British-American colonizing process from the seventeenth century through much of the nineteenth century, and from the eastern to the western coasts of North America." Independence, Greene says, "meant freedom from the will of others" and "implied a sovereignty of self in all public and public relations." It entitled individuals to a certain degree of respect from others, enabled them to enjoy a comfortable subsistence, and in many ways defined their sense of self worth. Although the pursuit of personal independence necessarily involved economic gain, it should not be associated with crass materialism. Rather, it should be viewed as part of a dynamic, all-encompassing early modern British worldview.17

Paradoxically, one of the main components of this ideology of personal independence was the existence of a large number of dependents, a codified group that included women, children, servants, tenants, and slaves. Indeed, the division between independents and dependents was the main organizing principle around which the contemporary understanding of society revolved. Of course, there were a whole range of possibilities on either side of that fault line, but it served as a clear, if somewhat fragile, divide that separated the few from the many.

In the New World societies of colonial British America, the possibility of acquiring land, enjoying a comfortable existence, and assuming an independent status seemed to be
much more real than in Europe, where for a variety of reasons, including land enclosures and a legally privileged social order, the number of males who actually achieved independence remained small. Although America still remained a wild, disorderly, and violent borderland during the second half of the seventeenth century, it offered unlimited opportunities for achieving personal independence to those who were willing to gamble on their future. In part, that future rested on the creation of an improved society based on the early modern British socio-economic and cultural paradigm. From this angle, the Fundamental Constitutions can be seen as a conceptual portrait, an azimuthal projection of the ideal society that would enable free men to enjoy "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."  

The fatal flaw of the Fundamental Constitutions was obvious: Ashley failed to conceive of the project in developmental terms. Although he never expected his "Grand Model" to be anything more than a "compasse to steere by," he seriously underestimated the enormity of the Carolina venture and the extent to which conditions in the colonies would affect the charter of social development. An incredible amount of time, money, and energy had to be poured into the colony before it would become an "improved society." The colonists had to secure the necessary capital to buy land, laborers, equipment, and supplies. Thousands
of people from all social classes had to migrate, forests
had to be cleared, and roads, bridges, ferries, and
habitations had to be constructed. This took time—a long
time. Moreover, life on the far distant periphery of the
British borderland during the seventeenth century proved to
be vastly different from that of contemporary England.

Nevertheless, the Fundamental Constitutions of Carolina
had a profound influence on the course of South Carolina
history. The policy of religious toleration encouraged
thousands of dissenters to emigrate, contributing to the
development of a pluralistic religious atmosphere
uncharacteristic of the older colonies in New England, the
Chesapeake, and the West Indies. Moreover, the system of
land distribution ensured that two-fifths of the acreage in
each "county" would be granted in large estates which
facilitated the growth and elaboration of large-scale
speculative commercial operations after the first generation
of settlement. Further, throughout most of the colonial
period, most of the land in the colony continued to be
obtained by the headright system outlined in the Fundamental
Constitutions. Finally, many of the legal and political
provisions in the document, such as the system of selecting
juries and the secret ballot, took hold in the colony and
remained a fundamental part of the distinctive political
culture that developed.¹⁹
An explanation of the ways participants in the project to settle Carolina initially conceived of the undertaking is a necessary first step to understanding the colony's early socio-economic development. During the formative years of settlement, the colonists attempted to find ways to manipulate their environment for their own sustenance and enrichment while endeavoring to impose upon that environment traditions, cultural imperatives, and conceptions of the proper social order that they had been accustomed to. Working from within an ideology of personal independence, they attempted to construct a settled, cultivated, commercial, urban, stable, and differentiated society.

Only a handful of colonists migrated to the colony during the 1670s, but in subsequent decades the population grew at an astonishing rate. Between 1680 and 1700 it increased more than fivefold, from about 1,000 to over 5,000. During the next twenty years, it rose by more than a factor of four, reaching 21,000 by 1720. This burgeoning population included people from a host of different races, ethnic and religious groups, and social classes, which contributed to a diversity that manifested itself in both religious and secular life.
Table 1.1
Estimated Population of South Carolina, 1675-1720

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1675</td>
<td>375 to 450</td>
<td>125 to 150</td>
<td>500 to 600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1680</td>
<td>750 to 900</td>
<td>250 to 300</td>
<td>1,000 to 1,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1685</td>
<td>1,875 to 2,025</td>
<td>625 to 675</td>
<td>2,500 to 2,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1690</td>
<td>2,500 to 3,000</td>
<td>1,100 to 3,000</td>
<td>3,600 to 6,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1703</td>
<td>3,800 to 4,080</td>
<td>3,000 to 4,100</td>
<td>6,800 to 8,180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1710</td>
<td>4,500 to 5,000</td>
<td>5,500</td>
<td>10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1720</td>
<td>9,000</td>
<td>12,000</td>
<td>21,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Already by the end of the seventeenth century the white population of South Carolina had already become so complex that it seems to defy any attempt at a brief description. In addition to settlers from New England, New York, and Virginia, a substantial number of English Baptists, English and Scottish Presbyterians, and Quakers immigrated to the colony. South Carolina was also the destination of a considerable number of French Huguenots, especially after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685. These groups included people from a variety of social classes. A few of the English and Scottish immigrants were members of the gentry. Others were members of the yeomen, husbandmen, and tradesmen classes. The large majority, however, were landless cottagers, unskilled workers, and agricultural laborers who came to South Carolina as indentured servants. For most of the individuals in these various groups,
whatever their social status, the proprietors' policy of religious toleration was an important factor in their decision to settle in the colony. But the opportunity to acquire land, assume an independent status, and transform the wilderness into an improved society was probably the primary animating force in their decision to settle in Carolina.22

All of these various groups played an important role in the early history of South Carolina, but from the beginning the single most influential group of settlers came from the West Indies. As a number of scholars have shown, about one half of the whites who immigrated to the colony between 1670 and 1690 came from Barbados.23 The majority of these whites were from the small planter and freemen classes—a small planter being classified as one owning at least ten acres of land but less than twenty slaves and a freeman as one owning less than ten acres. However, recent work has suggested that a significant number of whites from the big and middling planter classes immigrated to the colony—a big planter being classified as one owning sixty or more slaves and a middling planter being classified as one owning between twenty and fifty-nine slaves.24 Richard Dunn has shown, for example, that representatives of at least eighteen big planter families from Barbados obtained land in Carolina between 1670 and 1692.25 Similarly, Richard Waterhouse has identified representatives of at least
thirty-three middling Barbadian planter families who immigrated to the colony during the first two decades of settlement. These Barbadians were rugged, experienced settlers who brought a highly materialistic and exploitative socio-cultural ethos to South Carolina. They had a strong preference for African slave labor and were instrumental in introducing the institution of slavery in the colony.

Most of the slaves who came to South Carolina during the initial phase of settlement also came from the West Indies, especially from Barbados. In fact, Barbados was South Carolina's chief source of black labor during the seventeenth century. While no reliable population statistics are available before 1700, Peter Wood has suggested that "even in the earliest years, between one fourth and one third of the colony's newcomers were Negroes." This distribution seems to have lasted for the first two decades of settlement.

IV

The settlement of South Carolina brought thousands of people together, people of different races, ethnic groups, and backgrounds. Not only did blacks and whites have to learn how to live together, but men and women from West Country in England had to come to terms with Barbadian immigrants, and Mandingos were forced to deal with Ibos.
Most of the newcomers were cultural conservatives, trying desperately to preserve familiar customs and practices, but the necessity of adjusting to the new environment and to each other brought about wholesale cultural changes. As a result, an entirely new cultural construct emerged, a construct that was neither wholly African nor wholly European.

The slaves who were brought to South Carolina came originally from all different parts of Africa, from numerous ethnic and linguistic groups, and from different cultural backgrounds. Most slaves were strangers to one another. They spoke different languages, exhibited different behavioral patterns, and held different beliefs. Sometimes, they were even mortal enemies. Yet, after extensive cultural bargaining and negotiation they were able to reformulate and adapt tiny pieces of their former experience to create a wholly new African-American culture. Of course, the institution of slavery severely limited the extent to which blacks could shape cultural conversations, but slaves were far from being simply passive victims. They were able to carve out an incredibly intricate cultural niche in the face of great personal deprivation by working with whatever cultural materials they had.28

The Europeans who immigrated to South Carolina during the first-half century settlement were also a mixed group. Like West Africans, they came from a host of different
geographical locations, ethnic and cultural backgrounds, and regionalized subcultures. Moreover, they brought a mixed and changing value system with them; what one group took for granted was often alien to others. Barbadian immigrants, for example, held a decided preference for the use of African slave labor, and they brought a significant number of slaves to the colony. Many of the immigrants from England, however, had never even seen an African slave before they moved to South Carolina. Notwithstanding these differences, European immigrants possessed a greater awareness of shared a culture, especially language, than did Africans. Indeed, whether a colonist came from Kent, London, Boston, or Barbados, they quickly came to recognize a common bond in their Englishness.

Not only were blacks and whites forced to deal with different peoples of the same race, but they also had to come to cultural terms with each other. Of course, whites were in a much better position to shape the character of specific interracial conversations; but during the initial phase of settlement, cultural boundaries were incredibly fluid because the rules governing race relations were not yet rigidly defined. Interracial encounters were omnipresent. Blacks and whites worked together, lived together, and even fought together; they shared similar joys and concerns. These continuous, direct, and often informal encounters, together with the commonality of everyday life
experience, facilitated a unique, intricate process of cultural borrowing. 29

This process was made more palpable by the cultures that Africans and European brought to South Carolina. As Mechel Sobel has demonstrated, "both peoples brought preindustrial cultures to the New World in which there were far greater similarities with respect to modal attitudes and values than has generally been recognized." These similarities, she argues, made it "possible for many values and practices to meld or to reinforce one another," especially attitudes toward time and work, toward space and the natural world, and toward causality and purpose. Although the interpenetration of traditional African and European values was uneven, it was pervasive. Indeed, the cultural fusion was so powerful that it became the chief cultural determinate in colonial South Carolina, profoundly affecting the participants' world and how and why they went about doing things. 30

Because the seventeenth century was a time of intense cultural sorting out, the first settlers--black and white--played a determinative role in shaping cultural patterns. Not only did they negotiate rules for interaction and determine which customs and traditions would be preserved, but they decided how later arrivals would be incorporated into their society. Country born slaves (meaning those born in the colony), for example, established an intricate
set of cultural rules for the incorporation of African-born slaves. Similarly, Barbadian immigrants exercised considerable influence over subsequent generations because of their early dominance.\textsuperscript{31}

V

Barbadian immigrants spearheaded the effort to establish a viable market economy in South Carolina and assisted the colony through the typical "staving times" during the early years. Almost immediately the Carolina Barbadians began shipping lumber and provisions to the West Indies in return for sugar, slaves, bills of exchange, and European goods. The market for foodstuffs and other supplies in Barbados seemed to offer unlimited possibilities. Indeed, many settlers believed that the island trade would make South Carolina "far more considerable than...those other places to the North."\textsuperscript{32}

The provisioning of privateers and pirates who visited Charleston quickly developed into another lucrative economic activity during the seventeenth century. Not surprisingly, experienced Barbadians dominated the business. Buccaneers who operated in the Caribbean were welcomed in the colony because they paid for their goods with gold and silver. Hard currency, of course, was always scarce in the colonies. Equally important, the pirate trade proved to be an
important source of black labor. On one occasion, for example, South Carolinians obtained some two hundred slaves from pirates shortly after they had plundered Vera Cruz in 1683.33

In addition to shipping foodstuffs and other supplies to the West Indies and the provisioning of pirates, the colonists in Carolina developed a vigorous trade with the Indians. Deerskins quickly became a valuable export commodity. Already by 1700 South Carolinians were exporting an average of over 45,000 skins annually, valued at about £20,000 sterling. By that time Indian traders were operating as far west as the Mississippi River, over a thousand miles inland. Indian slaves were also a much-sought-after commodity from the beginning. Most of the captives were exported to other colonies, especially in the West Indies, but a substantial number were retained in South Carolina. In 1708, for instance, it was reported that there were 1,400 Indian slaves in the colony.34

Despite the success of these various economic endeavors, South Carolinians remained committed to finding a marketable staple. Tobacco and indigo were the early hopefuls, but during the 1690s the colonists increasingly turned their attention to rice. Small amounts of rice had been grown in South Carolina during the 1670s and 1680s; however, successful cultivation came only after African slaves from the Upper Guinea Coast provided the
technological know-how required to cultivate the crop. Rice production grew steadily, and by 1720 the husky staple had become the colony's most important export crop.\textsuperscript{35}

The expansion of rice culture had a profound impact on South Carolina. It transformed the colony into a incredibly harsh, competitive, and materialistic boom society in which the drive for individual gain became the organizing principle for many of the free inhabitants. Increased wealth and income contributed to ever greater social differentiation and promoted inequalities among whites. Indeed, as more and more land was brought under cultivation and as rice production intensified, there was a steady concentration of wealth and property by those individuals who were able to command the available capital needed to purchase the labor, equipment, and supplies necessary to operate on a competitive scale. A substantial number of these individuals were descendants of the most wealthy and influential families who had arrived in the colony before 1690. With significant amounts of investment capital, they were in the best position to take advantage of South Carolina's rapidly expanding market economy.\textsuperscript{36}

VI

The expansion of rice culture also worked an incredible demographic transformation in the colony. It greatly
increased the demand for labor and facilitated the massive importation of African slaves. From less than 3,000 in 1700, the black population rose sharply to 6,000 in 1710, and to just over 12,000 in 1720. Already by 1708, blacks outnumbered whites in the colony. Interestingly, South Carolina’s black population was able to generate a natural increase before 1720. In fact, as Peter H. Wood has pointed out, South Carolina’s black population "added over 4,000 by natural increase" in addition to the 3,600 slaves imported into the colony between 1708 and 1721. That put the annual growth rate for blacks at a healthy 5.6 percent.\textsuperscript{37}

In contrast to the black population, South Carolina’s white inhabitants were unable to generate a natural increase during the first half-century of settlement. Although the number of whites rose from about 3,500 in 1700 to just under 7,000 in 1720, most of this increase was the result of immigration. No one was more aware of the precarious disparity between black and white population growth rates than the members of the South Carolina Commons House of Assembly. In 1714 they noted that "the number of negroes do extremely increase in this Province, and through the afflicting providence of God, the white persons do not proportionably multiply." \textsuperscript{38}

Numerous factors affected the rate of natural increase among blacks and whites in the colony. Early on, the most important variable for whites seems to have been a markedly
unequal sex ratio and the late age of marriage. During the 1670s, for example, only 200 of the 683 white colonists who can be identified as being in the colony were women, a male-to-female ratio of well over 3 to 1. The sex ratio seems to have become more equal in subsequent decades, but according to a detailed gubernatorial census report conducted in 1708, free men still outnumbered free women by more than 1.5 to 1. This imbalance between the sexes clearly made it incredibly difficult for the white population to sustain itself in an age of high mortality and short lifespans, much less to produce a natural increase. Moreover, there is some evidence that suggests that custom may have delayed the age of marriage among white women, which reduced the childbearing period of free white women.39

Unfortunately, there is not sufficient data to determine the proportion of males to females among the black population during the seventeenth century. Later estimates, however, seem to suggest that there were no obvious differences in the sex ratio between whites and blacks for the first fifty years of settlement. During the 1710s, for example, the ratio of men to women among blacks remained roughly at 2 to 1. However, there may have been a higher percentage of creole-born women among Afro-Carolinians by 1710. As a number of recent studies have suggested, native-born women tended to have children at a much earlier age than immigrant women. Not only would this have greatly
expanded the childbearing period of black women, it also may help account for the contrast between black and white growth rates, despite roughly equal sex ratios among both groups during the first two and a half generations.\textsuperscript{40}

The age and sex structure of the population were certainly important factors in determining the rate of natural increase for both whites and blacks in the colony, but mortality and morbidity rates appear to have been by far and away the two most important variables. South Carolina had a virulent disease environment in which a whole range of maladies flourished: malaria, yellow fever, smallpox, tuberculosis, influenza, pneumonia, dysentery, hookworm, yaws, venereal disease—too name just a few. Mortality and morbidity rates were frightfully high for both whites and blacks; however, there is some evidence to suggest that blacks were less susceptible to certain diseases than whites, especially malaria and yellow fever, the two most prevalent diseases in the colony.\textsuperscript{41}

Malaria, a mosquito-born illness often described by contemporaries as the "fever and ague," was the most persistent and widespread major disease in South Carolina. In most cases malaria is not fatal, but it tends to lower a person's resistance to other bacterial, viral, and parasitic infections—not to mention a whole host of gastronomic, nutritional, and hygienic disorders. Recent epidemiological evidence suggests that because of the genetic "sickle-cell
trait," blacks were better able to fight off malarial infection than whites, making it seem likely that this inherited polymorphistic advantage, more than any other single variable, accounted for the disparity between black and white population growth rates during the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. 42

Yellow fever, another parasitic disease transmitted by mosquitoes and sometimes referred to by contemporaries as the "Barbados distemper" or the bleeding fever, was somewhat less persistent in colonial South Carolina, but it had a marked proclivity to occur in epidemic proportions, especially in Charleston where both the number of transients and the population density was much greater than elsewhere in the province. The first serious yellow fever epidemic rocked South Carolina in 1699, killing over 175 people. Seven years later a second major outbreak carried off another 140 settlers. Many colonists must have puzzled over the feral nature of the disease. One contemporary wrote that it was "hard to describe" this "terrible Tempest of Mortality." 43

Unlike malaria, immunity to yellow fever is acquired, not inherited. In other words, individuals who contract the disease build up antibodies that make them much less susceptible to future infectious attacks. Because resistance depends on exposure, people from regions of the world where the disease is most prevalent are not as prone
to suffer from periodic yellow fever epidemics. In early colonial South Carolina, that meant that West African and West Indian-born immigrants had a decided epidemiological advantage over newcomers from Europe or the northern colonies who had had no exposure to the disease. Almost as if to underscore the point, one Anglican minister working in the mosquito-infested lowcountry wrote that yellow fever was "very mortal especially to fresh Europeans."

In all probability, partial immunity to malaria and yellow fever reduced mortality and morbidity rates among blacks in colonial South Carolina and enabled them to generate a natural increase during the first half-century of settlement. However, the intensification of plantation system and the importation of large numbers of slaves directly from Africa tended to offset any immunogenic advantages among blacks. In the race for profits, planters increasingly became more coldhearted, exploitative, and downright brutal. They began to look at their slaves as expendable commodities rather than human beings, and they paid less and less attention to conditions of life and work among the labor force. Needless to say, this callous posture reduced the average life expectancy among blacks in the colony and made it increasingly difficult for them to reproduce their own population. Even more devastating to population growth was the nature of the colonial slave trade. Slave ships normally carried a disproportionate
number of males— at least two men for every woman. As Africans poured into the colony during the middle decades of the eighteenth century, this sex imbalance, together with the traumatic experience of the Middle Passage and increasing planter insensitivity, prevented the black population from becoming self-sustaining.\footnote{44}

In contrast to the black population, the sex ratio among whites seems to have improved between 1670 and 1720, but disease-related deaths remained extraordinarily high. In fact, a number of recent studies have suggested that mortality and morbidity rates among whites in South Carolina far exceeded that of any other colony on the British North American mainland. The death rate for children was especially high. In Christ Church Parish, for example, H. Roy Merrens and George D. Terry have shown that "86 percent of all those whose births and deaths are recorded in the parish register died before the age of twenty." For those individuals who lived beyond their twentieth birthday, the chances of survival improved significantly, but average life expectancy in the colony remained frightfully low, especially during the first half-century of settlement. Less than 7 percent of the adult males in Christ Church Parish who were born before 1720, for example, lived beyond age sixty. In fact, almost three-quarters of the males living in this parish died before age fifty. Life expectancy for adult males residing in nearby St. John’s
Parish improved only slightly. Only 21 percent of the adult males who were born between 1680 and 1720 ever saw their sixtieth birthday; well over one-third were dead before forty. Although the mortality rate for females was also high, women in St. John's could expect to live a little longer. Among those females who were born before 1720 and who reached adulthood, almost 40 percent lived beyond age sixty; more than 5 percent survived into their seventies.\textsuperscript{45}

VII

High mortality had a profound effect on family life among whites in South Carolina. Marriages were characteristically broken by the premature death of one of the partners (usually the husband), and most children could expect to lose one or both of their parents. In Christ Church Parish, for example, more than one half of the marriages were broken by death within seven years, and almost three-quarters of the children between 1680 and 1720 lost at least one parent by age 13.\textsuperscript{46} Because the average life expectancy for women was greater than for men, wives probably acquired more autonomy and authority than was customary during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, especially in the areas of household management and child rearing.

Early and widespread death also weakened parental
authority among whites. In an environment where few children survived to adulthood, parents sought to encourage self-assertiveness, versatility, and autonomy in their offspring. They often ignored the practice of primogeniture, for instance, and divided property more equally among their surviving children, both male and female. In addition, parents attempted to influence but did not or could not dictate their offsprings' choice of mates. Indeed, marriage seems to have become more a matter of free choice than a predetermined parental decision. The combined result of these various developments was a more open, loose, and permissive family structure that was better suited to the precariousness of everyday life in the colony.47

Mortality also affected patterns of family life among blacks, but slave sales seem to have been by far the chief cause of broken "marriages" and divided families among those bondspersons who were able to form families. For the most part, masters did not deliberately separate couples or tear children away from their parents; in fact, they often encouraged sexual unions and family formation among slaves. More often than not, slave sales resulted from debt, bankruptcy, and especially the death of the owner. Indeed, high mortality among whites made slave sales and bequests common in colonial South Carolina.48

If, however, forced separation created instability in black marriage and family life, the development of
elaborately structured kinship and friendship networks among South Carolina slaves alleviated some of the pain and suffering caused by the separation of families and loved ones. As a number of recent studies have suggested, African custom provided the foundation for the creation of these networks. In most West African societies, every individual, whatever their status, belonged to an incredibly complex kinship network that extended beyond the household and oftentimes even crossed ethnic lines. These kinship networks formed the basis of all social organization and gave West Africans their individual and collective identity. Of course, it was impossible for slaves in colonial South Carolina simply to recreate familiar West African kinship systems because the black population was drawn from such a wide variety of backgrounds. However, a belief in the fundamental importance of kinship persisted in the colony, and from the earliest years of settlement slaves began creating fictive kin and friendship networks that became vitally important to the institution of marriage and family life.49

The development of cross-plantation kinship and friendship networks was facilitated by the customary practice of permitting each slave to grow provisions on small plots of land and allowing one to one and one-half days per week to cultivate them. The size of the plot depended on a number of variables, including the
availability of land and the number of slaves per unit-holding, but usually each slave worked from one-half to one and one-half acres of land, growing corn, peas, beans, potatoes, and yams. In addition, slaves sometimes owned, or co-owned, cows, goats, chickens, and cord wood.

For slaveholders, the provision ground system had a number of advantages in the land-intensive Carolina wilderness. First, slaves could grow almost all of their own food, which was by far the most costly "maintenance" expenditure in an infant economy. Second, masters could purchase any excesses grown by their slaves at a much reduced rate; in turn, they could profit by reselling these goods on the open market. Finally, the provision grounds acted as a method of social control. They gave slaves a vested interest in the land, making them less likely to run away.5c

Early on, the provision ground system seems to have functioned as its slaveowning proponents originally intended; however, it quickly got out of hand when slaves began selling their produce without their masters' permission and asserting their right to trade freely in local Sunday markets. Already by the 1680s the planters were attempting to bring the trade under tighter control. In 1687, for example, the legislature passed "An Act Inhibiting the Trading between Servants and Slaves," which forbade "any freeman or free woman, servant or slave to buy,
sell, barter, contract, bargain, or exchange any manner of goods or commodities whatsoever, of, for, to, or with any servant or slave in this Province...without the consent of their masters." Four years later an "Act for the Better Ordering of Slaves" attempted to regulate further the economic activities of slaves by prohibiting masters from dismissing their slaves from work on Saturday afternoon "as hath been accustomed formerly."\(^{51}\)

Despite the severity of the early laws, slaves established themselves as independent producers and traders in South Carolina, and during the first half-century of settlement they developed an incredibly complex internal marketing system. In some areas slaves virtually controlled domestic food production and had the ability to put a chokehold on the local economy. Although the exact size and extent of the trade are poorly understood, a few pieces of evidence suggest that the most enterprising slaves managed to accumulate impressive amounts of wealth.\(^{52}\)

Participation in the weekly Sunday market was vitally important to the development of kinship and friendship networks among blacks in South Carolina. The market connected slaves to the world outside their particular farm or plantation; it established linkages between families, friends, relatives, and associates; and it facilitated an interchange of news and ideas. These connections helped slaves to cope with the pain of forced separation from loved
ones and enabled the black family to endure despite the repressiveness of slavery.

VIII

Like family relationships, religious life in colonial South Carolina remained fragile and unsettled during the early years. Ministers and other religious leaders were in short supply, transportation and communication was difficult, and the settlers worshiped in a variety of different ways. In addition, the colony had a decidedly materialistic orientation from the beginning, mortality was high, and there was a disproportionate number of young males in the population. Yet, as the colony became more heavily settled and more socially and culturally complex, the colonists began establishing regular worship services and constructing permanent houses of worship.

The first Anglican church, St. Phillip's, was built in Charleston in 1681 or 1682. It was constructed of black cypress upon a brick foundation, a clear indication that it was built to last. Located near the center of town, the church was both the largest and most elaborate structure in South Carolina for the first half-century of settlement, and it stood as a visible symbol of colonial "improvement." It was usually referred to as the "English Church" or simply
"St. Philip." Reverend Atkinson Williamson, who arrived in the colony during the first decade of settlement, officiated at church during the 1680s and 1690s.\(^53\)

The Presbyterians also moved to organize a church during the early years. By the mid 1680s they had established regular worship services under the Reverend Thomas Barret, and sometime before 1690 they erected a permanent meeting house. Because Congregationalists from New England regularly attended worship services at the church, it was commonly referred to by a host of different names: the Presbyterian church, the White or New England Meeting House, the Independent church, the Circular church.\(^54\) Apparently, a number of French Calvinists, who were strictly Presbyterian in their form of government, also occasionally attended the worship services at the church. However, by the early 1690s they had constructed their own meeting house in Charleston. Elias Prioleau, a leader among the Huguenots, was the first pastor of the French Church.

In addition to the church at Charleston, the French Huguenots established at least three other churches in South Carolina before the end of the century. The first was founded in 1686 on the eastern branch of the Cooper River in an area that became known as the Orange Quarter. The second was organized one year later on the western branch of the Cooper River. The third was established sometime before
1690 on the Santee River. All of the French Huguenot churches were supplied with a regular minister.  

Baptists and Quakers also successfully established a foothold in South Carolina during the seventeenth century. The Baptists began holding regular meetings in Charleston during the late 1680s, and by 1700 they had erected a permanent meeting house. Under the leadership of William Screven, a Calvinistic (Particular) Baptist preacher from New England, the Charleston church flourished. By 1708 there were reportedly over ninety communicants. The Quakers enjoyed similar success. Although they had far fewer adherents than any other religious group in the colony, they constructed a permanent meeting house in 1696 and in subsequent years continued to grow and expand.  

The proliferation of these various groups during the seventeenth century made South Carolina one of the most religiously diverse colonies in British America. In 1700, when the white population numbered about 4,000, one contemporary estimated that there were roughly 1,700 Anglicans, 1,300 Presbyterians, 500 French Calvinists, 400 Baptists, and 100 Quakers in the colony. This general distribution seems to have lasted for at least the next twenty years. Anglicans did win over a number of adherents, but they continued to be in the minority until about 1730.
Despite incredible heterogeneity, South Carolinians of competing religious persuasions managed to coexist peacefully during the first two generations of settlement. Indeed, whatever general feelings Anglicans and dissenters may have had for one another, several pieces of evidence suggest that religious factionalism was virtually nonexistent. Not only did political office remained open to all dissenters, including Quakers, but as Governor Archdale noted, "religious differences did not... peculiarly distinguish the parties." In 1697 the South Carolina Commons House of Assembly even enacted a law confirming toleration for all but Roman Catholics in the colony. Two years later, Anglicans and dissenters joined forces to push through another act that provided for the public support of an Anglican rector in Charleston.\textsuperscript{58}

A variety of closely related factors contributed to this period of religious tranquility. First, although most South Carolinians were at least nominally Protestant, few seem to have been intensely religious. Therefore, there was never any serious attempt to enforce religious uniformity during the seventeenth century. Second, a large number of settlers had an ambivalent relationship with institutional Christianity. Jon Butler has shown, for example, that magic or occult practices, such as astrology, divination, and witchcraft, persisted in all regions of early America, especially in the southern colonies. Similarly, most
settlers "proved surprisingly ignorant of elemental Christian beliefs and practices." As a result, denominational loyalties were weak and tenuous. Third, there were very few trained ministers in the colony and lay control over religious affairs was extensive. This tended to reinforce already unorthodox religious behavior. Finally, the intermingling of people of various religious persuasions pushed the colonists toward an acceptance of diversity as part of everyday life.

During the first decade of the eighteenth century, political factionalism temporarily fractured the harmonious relationship between men and women of different faiths. It all started shortly before the outbreak of Queen Anne's War (1702-1713) when Governor James Moore, a prominent Anglican, asked the dissenter-controlled Commons House of Assembly to appropriate funds for a preemptive strike against the Spanish forces at St. Augustine. Feeling that Moore was less interested in the welfare of the colony than the profits to be made by such an offensive, the dissenters, many of whom lived on the exposed southwestern frontier, politely refused to support the governor's request. Responding to this recalcitrance, Moore dissolved the assembly and called for a new election.

Although Moore gained a number of new supporters in the election, he still did not command a majority; when the assembly reconvened in the spring of 1702, it refused even
to consider the governor's plan for a military offensive. Instead, the Commons House launched an investigation into alleged election fraud in Berkeley County, claiming that Moore had "so Influenc'd the Sheriff, that Strangers, Servants, Aliens, nay Malatoes and Negroes were Polled." Needless to say, the governor was a bit miffed—so he prorogued the assembly. During this political stalemate, official news reached the colony that England had formally declared war on both France and Spain. Therefore, when the assembly was reconvened in August, it finally decided to fund the St. Augustine expedition.

Under Moore's command, 500 white and 300 Indian soldiers sailed from Port Royal in October. Landing just north of St. Augustine, the Carolinians managed to take possession of the city without much trouble, but they failed to dislodge the Spaniards who retreated into the Castillio de San Marcos. After a six-week-long siege, the invading force returned home to somewhat mixed reviews. Most of the dissenters in the assembly believed that Moore had botched the operation (one dissenter even accused the governor of having been drunk during the invasion!); accordingly, they began an investigation. Most Anglican assemblymen, on the other hand, were much more sympathetic to the governor and felt that the dissenters were being unduly harsh in their criticism of the expedition. Needless to say, tempers began to flare. In fact, the situation became so heated that many
of the leading dissenters received death threats from some of Moore's supporters.⁶⁰

At the same time that religious antagonisms in the colony were beginning to turn red-hot, a missionary impulse was bestirring the Church of England abroad, an impulse that eventually led to the establishment of two new voluntary agencies. The first of these organizations, the Society for the Promoting of Christian Knowledge, was founded in 1699 and had as its main goal the provision of parish libraries to assist clergymen and the distribution of books, sermons, and other religious tracts among the laity. The second organization, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, was established in 1701 to fund missionary activity in the colonies.⁶¹

Despite this Anglican resurgence, all was not well within the church. The Glorious Revolution had deepened the division between High Churchmen, who followed Archbishop Laud's policy of demanding a rigid adherence to Anglican doctrine and ceremony, and Low Churchmen or Latitudinarians, who scorned the pettiness of elaborate theology and were more willing to accommodate dissenters. These differences were manifest in English politics during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, especially during Queen Anne's reign (1702-1714) when High Church Tories made repeated attempts to exclude dissenters from public office by passing a bill against "occasional
conformity."

One of those Tories was Lord Granville, the Carolina palatine. Described by his contemporaries as one who "distinguished himself as an inflexible bigot for the High-church," Granville began to press for the establishment of the Church of England in South Carolina and the exclusion of dissenters from political office. In 1702 he appointed Sir Nathaniel Johnson, a staunch Anglican, as governor. Johnson was a shrewd political operator. He had been a member of parliament and governor of the Leeward Islands. After the Glorious Revolution, he refused to swear allegiance to William and Mary, preferring instead to resign his post in the Caribbean. According to Eugene Sirmans, the only reason he accepted Granville's offer was "his desire to exclude dissenters from political office and to secure the establishment of the Church of England." 62

Although Johnson assumed the governorship in March 1703, he did not take any immediate action against the dissenters. Instead, he concentrated on military affairs and waited patiently for the right moment to strike. That moment came in the spring of 1704 when the assembly stood in adjournment. After notifying his supporters, Johnson suddenly called an emergency meeting of the legislature and before the dissenters could reach Charles Town, the Anglican assemblymen hastily passed an exclusion act which prevented non-Anglicans from sitting in the Commons House of Assembly.
Having made an end-run around their opponents, the legislators then proceeded to enact a law establishing the Church of England as the official state-supported church of South Carolina.

The Church Act of 1704 was based on a similar statute promulgated in Barbados, the point of departure of over half the colony’s white inhabitants during the early years. Dividing the colony into seven parishes, it provided for use of public funds to underwrite the construction of churches and to pay for ministerial salaries. Laypersons were given extensive power in church matters. The establishment was to be supervised by a twenty-man lay commission with extensive power over the clergy and the Anglican freeholders in each parish had the right to select a rector. In addition, the act empowered parishioners to elect vestrymen who would control the appointment of a parish register, a clerk, and a sexton.  

While the assembly was busy putting the finishing touches on the Church Act, the dissenters, hoping to secure repeal, sent Joseph Boone to argue their case in London. But nonconformists were not the only opponents of the act. In fact, one of the most outspoken critics of the Anglican-controlled legislature was the Reverend Edward Marston, rector of St. Philip’s and a died-in-the-wool High Churchman. In the summer of 1704 Marston launched a vociferous attack on the proceedings of the Commons House,
believing "that some of the Members of the Assembly were endeavouring to wrest the Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction of the Province out of the Hands of the Bishop of London." In order to silence "the pest Marston," the assembly charged him with setting his spiritual authority above their temporal power and deprived him of his salary. When the attacks continued, the lay commission simply removed him from office.⁶⁴

In the meantime, Joseph Boone, the dissenters' special agent, was busy lobbying against both the Exclusion Act and the Church Act in London. He hired several pamphleteers to present his argument, including the famous English writer and polemicist Daniel Defoe. Not only did Boone win support from the Anglican hierarchy, which viewed the lay commission as a challenge to their authority, but he also managed to get some help from several Whig nobles in the House of Lords, who had recently defeated a bill against occasional conformity. The Lords presented an address to Queen Anne, asking her to "deliver the said Province from the arbitrary Oppressions under which it now lies," and, as a result, the crown instructed the proprietors to disallow both acts.⁶⁵

In 1706 the South Carolina assembly passed another Church Act that contained only slight modifications. Under this statute, the lay commission no longer had the authority to discipline clerics; however, it still retained far-reaching supervisory powers over the establishment. In
addition, the law provided for the creation of ten new parishes instead of seven. Two of the parishes were to be set up specifically for the French settlers in Berkeley and Craven counties who were slowly gravitating toward Anglicanism. The Church Act of 1706, together with some minor adjustments added two years later, remained in effect throughout the rest of the colonial period.

In the years following the establishment of the Church of England, religious passions cooled and the conciliatory spirit of the seventeenth century was quickly restored. Although the Anglican Church enjoyed official support and became increasingly entrenched, it remained a decidedly latitudarian institution. Not only did lay persons exercise wideranging control over religious affairs, but they often ignored the Anglican liturgy and procedure. Moreover, the ecclesiastical machinery of the Church of England was underdeveloped, the number of trained ministers in the colony was grossly inadequate, and parishes were incredibly large. As a result, clerical attempts to enforce religious uniformity met with very limited success.

Until the second half of the eighteenth century, the large majority of blacks in South Carolina remained outside the Christian church. However, as whites set about the task of establishing regular worship services and building churches, the impulse to try to convert slaves increased, especially following the arrival of the SPG missionaries
after 1700. One of the earliest missionaries sent by the Society, the Reverend Francis Le Jau, spearheaded the effort to spread the Christian message among slaves. Early in 1707 he began to devise a system for teaching on the plantations. "I design with God's blessing," he wrote, "to have a day in the week for the Instruction of poor Indians and Negroes."68 A few months later he reported to the Society's secretary that he aimed to devote a large measure of his energy to instructing slaves, but that it had to be with caution. "The Negroes are generally very bad men," he claimed, "chiefly those that are Scholars. I will baptize noe but such as had a Christian life and of whom I have a good testimony."69

Le Jau's early efforts met with little success, but his commitment to slave conversion did not flag. In 1709 he set aside "a day in the week for public Catechizing; I am much concerned at remissness of the parents and Masters, but I am not discouraged, I will continue with the help of God..."70 Intermittent ill health affected Le Jau's ability to complete his work among the blacks, but he received help from other SPG missionaries. Ebenezer Taylor came to St. Andrew Parish south of Charleston on the Ashley River in 1712 and almost immediately took up the work of instructing the blacks in his district. He wrote to the SPG his first summer in South Carolina saying that he believed "it my indispensable and Special Duty to Doe all that in me lies to
promote the Conversion and Salvation of the Poor Heathens here, and more Especially of the Negroe Slaves in my parish."

Taylor’s cause met with an open reception from one of the parish’s major planters, Alexander Skeene, who had migrated to the colony from Barbados. The pattern of instruction established by Taylor persisted on the Skeene estate after he departed the colony. One of his successors, Francis Varnod, found the plantation a ready object for his advocacy of slave evangelization.

The missionaries in colonial South Carolina faced a number of major obstacles in their attempt to convert slaves, including language and cultural differences, too few ministers for an overwhelming population, planter hostility to missionary efforts, and a reluctance on the part of the slaves to give up traditional beliefs and practices. Therefore, they failed to win over large numbers of slaves during the early years. However, this does not necessarily mean that blacks remained untouched by Christianity. Indeed, as will become more clear in subsequent chapters, blacks increasingly took the religion whites preached to them, interpreted it, seized upon some of its inherent messages, and reshaped its meanings and implications. The result altered the course of history for both black and white South Carolinians.
END NOTES


7. Craven, Southern Colonies, 324-32.

8. Ibid., 342-44.

9. In composing the Fundamental Constitutions, Ashley not only had the assistance of the other proprietors, but also of his personal secretary, physician, and friend, John Locke. For the relationship between Ashley and Locke and the extent to which Locke’s views are reflected in the Fundamental Constitutions see Maurice Cranston, John Locke: A Biography (New York, 1957), 105-120; Peter Laslett, ed., John Locke’s


15. Ibid., 181-183; Craven, The Colonies in Transition, 102.


19. Weir, Colonial South Carolina, 54-58, 71-73, 333; Sirmans, Colonial South Carolina, 7-16.

the Stono Rebellion (New York, 1974), 21-24, 144.


25.Dunn, "The English Sugar Islands and the Founding of South Carolina," 84.


27.Wood, Black Majority, 14-62 (the quotation is on p. 25).


29.Wood, Black Majority, 95-130.


32.Quoted in Wood, Black Majority, 32.

34. Verner W. Crane, The Southern Frontier, 1670-1732 (Durham, N.C., 1928), 110-112; Clowse, Economic Beginnings, 121; McCusker and Menard, The Economy of British America, 173-75.


37. Wood, Black Majority, 142-55 (the quotation is on p. 145).


41. Wood, Black Majority, 63-91. See also Julien Ravenel Childs, Malaria and Colonization in the Carolina Low Country, 1526-1696 (Baltimore, 1940).

42. Wood, Black Majority, 88-90.

43. Quoted in Ibid., 81.

44. Boles, Black Southerners, 33.

46. These figures are based Mabel L. Webber, "The Register of Christ Church Parish, South Carolina Historical Magazine, XVII (January, 1917), 50-53; (April, 1917), 70-77; (July, 1917), 124-30; (October, 1917), 168-78.


50. The provision ground system in South Carolina is currently under investigation. See Philip D. Morgan, "Work and Culture: The Task System and the World of Low Country Blacks, 1700-1880," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd Ser., XXXIX (October, 1982), 563-97. It has received more attention in the West Indies. This is especially true of Jamaica where there was a comparative abundance of land. See, for example, Orlando Patterson, *The Sociology of Slavery*, (London, 1967), 219-34; Sidney W. Mintz and Douglass Hall, "The Origins of the Jamaican Internal Marketing System," in Sidney W. Mintz, comp., *Papers in Caribbean Anthropology* (New Haven, Conn., 1960); Sheridan, *Sugar and Slavery*, 95, 259-60.


60. Sirmans, *Colonial South Carolina*, 75-86.


64. Quoted in Dalcho, *An Historical Account of the Protestant Episcopal Church*, 97.


71. Ebenezer Taylor to Secretary, July 28, 1713, in Frank J. Klingberg, *An Appraisal of the Negro In Colonial South Carolina: A Study in Americanization* (Washington, D.C., 1941),
CHAPTER TWO

Growth and Elaboration:

South Carolina, 1720-1770

I

After 1720, as before, population growth in South Carolina was impressive. The white population of the colony increased more than threefold between 1720 and 1750, from around 7,000 to just under 25,000. During the next twenty years it nearly doubled again, reaching 49,000 by 1770. South Carolina's black population also increased very rapidly. Already numbering about 12,000 in 1720, the black population jumped to approximately 42,000 in 1750 and 75,000 in 1770. This phenomenal population growth had a profound effect on virtually every aspect of eighteenth-century South Carolina history. Yet, despite the recent surge in interest in colonial British American demography, our understanding of the pace and pattern of immigration, the changing composition of migrant groups, and the rate of natural increase remains clouded. Nevertheless, some broad generalizations--however rough--can be made.
Table 2.1
Estimated Population of South Carolina, 1720-1770

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1720</td>
<td>7,000</td>
<td>12,000</td>
<td>19,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1730</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>30,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1740</td>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>40,000</td>
<td>55,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1750</td>
<td>25,000</td>
<td>42,000</td>
<td>67,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1760</td>
<td>37,000</td>
<td>60,000</td>
<td>97,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1770</td>
<td>49,000</td>
<td>75,000</td>
<td>124,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Because of the business aspects of the Atlantic slave trade, the most extensive run of detailed information about any large group of immigrants in the colonial period concerns slaves. Therefore, we know much more about the arrival of Africans in South Carolina than we do about the coming of Europeans. Except for the decade of the 1740s, when a prohibitive duty was levied on the importation of new slaves in the wake of the Stono Rebellion, slave imports remained extraordinarily high in South Carolina throughout the half-century immediately preceding the American Revolution. Charleston slave imports averaged almost 1,500 a year between 1720 and 1740 and over 1,800 a year between 1750 and 1770. Overall, about 67,500 slaves were brought into the colony from 1720 to 1770. Bondspersons arriving during this period came from a variety of different regions in sub-Saharan Africa. Roughly 40 percent came from the Congo-Angola hinterland, almost 20 percent from Senegambia, 16 percent from the Windward Coast, and 13 percent from the
Gold Cost.³

The slave trade had a devastating effect on population growth among blacks in South Carolina during the middle decades of the eighteenth century. Immigrant slaves were predominantly male and suffered extremely high levels of morbidity and mortality when first introduced to the colony. Moreover, the women who were imported usually had few children. Consequently, as large numbers of new slaves were imported directly from Africa after 1720, South Carolina’s black population began to experience a net natural decline (i.e., more deaths than births). The black population increased solely because of the massive import rates from Africa. Although the surplus of deaths over births apparently diminished considerably after 1760, it was probably not until the early 1770s that the black population was able once again to generate a vigorous natural increase.⁴

As with the black population, immigration continued to be the largest source of growth among South Carolina’s white population during the middle decades of the eighteenth century. Even though it appears that the white population became self-sustaining in the late 1720s or early 1730s, mortality levels in the mosquito-infested lowcountry remained extraordinarily high, especially among infants and children. Accordingly, lowcountry whites never managed to produce a high rate of natural increase until the end of the
colonial period, and only new flows of immigrants kept the white population growing at the high levels exhibited by the population statistics.\(^5\)

South Carolina attracted large numbers of European immigrants in the half-century preceding the American Revolution. The influx of newcomers came in two waves. The first wave began in the 1730s and crested in the early 1740s and the second began shortly after midcentury and climaxed during the Revolutionary era. Together, the two waves of immigration helped swell the number of whites living in South Carolina.

**Figure 2.1**

Townships and Settlements, c.1760
The first wave of immigrants arrived in response to the so-called "township scheme" that was adopted by colonial officials in 1730 to induce white Protestants to settle on the frontier. Under the township plan, several strategically located twenty-thousand-acre tracts were surveyed and made available for settlement. Individuals who colonized these outlying townships received 50 acres of land for each family member and a ten-year quitrent exemption; in addition, the South Carolina Commons House agreed to assist newcomers with tools, food, and transportation. The townships drew a number of ethnically diverse groups to the colony, including immigrants from Germany, Holland, Switzerland, England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales. Most came directly from Europe and entered the colony through the port of Charleston. Settling primarily in the middle country, or the region between the tidewater and the fall line, they added greatly to the already heterogeneous cultural milieu of the colony.6

For a number of reasons, including the temporary depletion of the official settlement fund designed to assist newcomers, immigration to South Carolina fell off sharply during the late 1740s. However, after midcentury an even larger influx of settlers began to pour into the colony. This second wave of newcomers came mostly from colonies to the north. Travelling down the Great Philadelphia Wagon Road to Camden, they fanned out over the entire Piedmont
region above the fall line. As one contemporary observer wrote, the newcomers were "a mixed Medley from all Countries," but Scotch-Irish and German settlers predominated.⁷

In contrast to their lowcountry predecessors, the inhabitants of the backcountry began to grow quickly through natural increase. This increase appears to have been facilitated by much more favorable health conditions. Indeed, outside the coastal rice-producing plantation district, where malaria and other diseases killed many, mortality and morbidity rates were considerably lower. As a result, fertility among backcountry persons was almost certainly higher, not because of marital fertility within marriage, but because marriages lasted longer and were less prone to be broken by premature death. Lower mortality and increased marital fertility, in turn, meant that more children were born in each family, and consequently more survived, with the result that backcountry parents generally produced larger families.⁸

South Carolina's burgeoning population led to the pressure for the rapid expansion of settlement and intensified an already powerful demand for land. During the first three decades of the eighteenth century, the colonists were still clustered in a small, crude triangular configuration close to Charleston. After 1730, however, the area of settlement spread out in all possible directions.
Indeed, by the early 1770s the settled areas formed an almost unbroken line along the coast from the upper reaches of the Waccamaw River to the Savannah and stretched over one hundred and fifty miles into the interior. Only the powerful Cherokee Indians stood between the land-hungry colonists and the Appalachian Mountains (see Figure 2.1).

II

Demographic and territorial growth in South Carolina coincided with spectacular economic growth. Rice exports grew steadily throughout the eighteenth century, from just under 7 million pounds in 1720 to about 90 million pounds in 1770. On the eve of the American Revolution, rice was the fourth most valuable export from colonial British America, behind sugar, tobacco, and wheat. Although the wholesale price of rice seems to have levelled off between 1720 and 1770, productivity improved significantly. There were also important improvements in packaging, shipping, and marketing techniques. Rice cultivation thus remained exceedingly profitable throughout most of the colonial period.9

Indigo production also contributed substantially to the growth of South Carolina’s economy during the third quarter of the eighteenth century. Small amounts of indigo were grown in the colony during the early years, but it was not until the middle of the 1740s that successful commercial
cultivation was achieved. At that time King George’s War seriously disrupted the French West Indian supply of indigo to the British textile industry. This caused prices to rise, giving fresh incentives to South Carolina planters to experiment with different varieties of the asparagus-like dye. Eliza Lucas Pickney, the young Antiguan who managed her father’s Wapoo plantation in the lowcountry, played a central role during this experimental period. With the help of an expert from Monserrat, Lucas adapted a strain of indigo known as Guatemala or true Bahama to South Carolina conditions in 1744. Shortly thereafter, she distributed the hearty seeds to neighboring planters. Indigo production quickly flourished. To encourage the infant industry, Parliament offered a substantial 6 pence per pound bounty on processed colonial indigo in 1748. Although the indigo market was somewhat erratic and exports varied widely from year to year, indigo production expanded tremendously after midcentury. By the early 1770s the colony was exporting in excess of a half-million pounds of indigo per year, and the dye had become South Carolina’s second most valuable export.10

In addition to the production of rice and indigo, the trade with the native Americans continued to be an integral part of the South Carolina economy. After the Yamasse War (1715-1716) brought the trade to a temporary standstill, exports of deerskins grew steadily, despite increasingly
fierce competition (not only with the French and Spanish, but with traders from other southern colonies). Between 1720 and 1750, 600 hogshead of skins, valued at almost £30,000 sterling, were exported annually. During the next twenty years, average annual exports increased to 800 hogsheads, worth roughly £55,000 sterling. In any given year during this period, deerskins produced in excess of ten percent of South Carolina's export earnings.\textsuperscript{11}

In contrast to the trade in deerskins and the production of rice and indigo, the naval stores industry in South Carolina underwent rapid decline during the middle decades of the eighteenth century. The inferior quality of colonial tar was the primary cause of this decline. The Royal Navy and English merchants complained that South Carolina tar was "hotter and more burning" than tar produced in Sweden. That is, colonial tar tended to scorch or weaken the fiber of ropes. This "hot" quality was attributed to the way in which the tar was made. In South Carolina tar was extracted from the highly resinous heartwood and stumps of dead pine trees that had been downed by storms. Dead wood, of course, could be gathered with a minimum of effort. Swedish tar, on the other hand, was made from live or standing trees that had been recently cut. The resulting product, known as "green tar," had superior qualities sought by English shipbuilders, refitters, and ropemakers.

For land- and resource-rich but labor poor South
Carolinians, the Swedish method had two major disadvantages: first, it required much more labor in felling trees; and second, green trees yielded less than one-third as much tar as the same quantity of dry timber. As a result, South Carolinians continued to employ crude laborsaving techniques in the naval store industry, claiming that green tar production was too costly for their situation. Although British officials repeatedly urged the colonists to produce "tar manufactured by the Swedish method," South Carolinians preferred not to divert scarce resources from rice and indigo production.

Continuing negative assessments of colonial tar prompted the Board of Trade to reduce the bounty on naval stores in 1729 and shortly thereafter, the South Carolina industry collapsed. In 1731 the price of Carolina tar in London was so low that the planters, according to one contemporary, were "generally resolved to make no more." Judging from the export statistics this was probably not too far for the truth. Between 1720 and 1750, annual exports of naval stores decreased by more than a factor of three, from just under 60,000 barrels to less than 20,000 barrels. By the early 1770s, the colony was only producing a modest 14,000 barrels annually. Despite the rapid decline of tar, pitch, and turpentine exports, however, naval stores, together with other forest products such as planks, shingles, and staves, continued to play an important role in
the South Carolina economy. They provided planters with productive work for their labor force during slack periods and served as a mainstay of agriculture outside the rice-producing areas, providing small farmers with an opportunity to produce commodities for the market.¹²

In addition to rice, indigo, deerskins, and naval stores, meat and grain products figured prominently into South Carolina's economic milieu. Sizable quantities of beef, pork, corn, peas, flour, and leather continued to be exported. Although the exports of these products did not grow substantially after 1720, the trade appears to have remained fairly steady during the second and third quarters of the eighteenth century, accounting for roughly 5 to 7 percent of the value of all exports in any given year. Jamaica, Barbados, and the Leeward Islands were the leading importers of South Carolina foodstuffs and wood products.¹³

By almost any measure the South Carolina economy was diverse. Although rice and indigo were the dominant staples, the economy remained throughout the colonial period remarkably flexible and varied. That South Carolina never approached becoming monocultural is evidenced by Robert M. Weir's observation that "the record rice crop of the colonial period--that of 1770 when approximately 137,400 barrels totaling about 36,000 tons was shipped from South Carolina--was doubtless grown on no more than 110,000 acres
by less than 37,000 slaves, or slightly under 50 percent of the black population and 3 percent of the land in private hands." Similarly, the largest harvest of indigo in 1774 was "cultivated by less than 10,000 slaves or about 13 percent of the blacks" on slightly under one half of one percent of privately owned land.\textsuperscript{14}

If, during the half century following 1720, the South Carolina economy was strong, expansive, and diverse, it also brought to the colony increasing wealth that by far and away exceeded that of any other colony in British North America. Only Jamaica, Britain's most valuable overseas possession during the late eighteenth century, surpassed South Carolina in terms of its total wealth. Alice Hanson Jones has recently calculated that in 1774 per capita wealth in the Charleston District of South Carolina was an astounding £2,337.7. To be sure, there were significant regional variations within the colony, but Jones' figures point up the fact that by the time of the Revolution vigorous economic growth had produced for the vast majority of the free population in South Carolina not only the highest per capita wealth and income of any of the thirteen mainland colonies, but also one of the highest standards of living anywhere in the world. Indeed, as David Ramsay, the colony's most famous contemporary historian, remarked, "few countries have at any time exhibited so striking an instance of public and private prosperity as appeared in South-
Carolina between the years 1725 and 1775.\(^{15}\)

The rising volume of imports into South Carolina provides further evidence that vividly underscores South Carolina's growing wealth and purchasing power during the eighteenth century. The annual average value of imports into the colony increased from just under £50,000 in the 1720s, to over £125,000 in the late 1740s, and to almost £325,000 in the early 1770s.\(^{16}\) On a per capita basis, imports into the colony, as John J. McCusker and Russell R. Menard have noted, "increased at an annual compound rate of 1.2 percent between 1720 and 1770, from £0.6 to £1.1 sterling." Because these per capita figures are based on the colony's total population, and because the black population increased more rapidly than the white population in many years during the eighteenth century, "the consumption of imports by whites" McCusker and Menard add, "increased at an even greater rate than 1.2 percent."\(^{17}\)

To say that a few South Carolinians with superior resources managed to accumulate a disproportionate share of the colony's wealth seems almost axiomatic, but it should be remembered that economic expansion during the eighteenth century and the increasing wealth that accompanied it contributed to a higher standard of living for the majority of the free population, who lived in better and larger housing units, and owned greater quantities and a wider range of consumer goods. What contemporaries considered to
be "luxuries" in the seventeenth century were increasingly considered to be "necessities" during the years immediately preceding the American Revolution. Evidence from probate records, Charleston's naval lists, archaeology, and the South Carolina Gazette suggest that utensils, ceramics, citrus fruits, coffee, tea, cocoa, spices, and other luxury items had by the middle of the eighteenth century become commonplace in a large majority of households. Increased wealth and prosperity also made possible the construction of elegant public buildings, forts, lighthouses, elaborate churches, and an improving network of roads, bridges, and ferries.18

III

South Carolina remained predominantly rural during the eighteenth century, but increasing urbanization accompanied demographic, territorial, and economic growth in the colony. Charleston, the seat of government and the loci of trade, continued to be the most important urban center. Despite the city's reputation as the "great charnelhouse" and mortality levels that were, according to Peter A. Coclanis, "even by preindustrial standards, very high indeed," continuing heavy immigration drove the Charleston's population constantly upward. Numbering well over 3,000 in 1720, the population of Charleston rose to approximately
7,000 in 1750 and almost 11,000 in 1770. Containing an average of somewhere around 10 percent of the colony's total population throughout the eighteenth century, Charleston was the fourth most populous urban center in British America on the eve of the American Revolution, behind Philadelphia, New York, and Boston. As one contemporary observer noted, Charleston "ranked with the first cities of British America and yearly advances in size, riches and population."

During the middle decades of the eighteenth century the expansion of Charleston was a function of the seaport's increasing integration into the Atlantic World economy, of consumer demands of the free immigrants who arrived at the port, and of the growing volume of overseas trade, especially the trade in rice and slaves. The enormity of the rice trade in particular made Charleston, as measured by the total tonnage of ships entering and clearing the port, a busier port than both Boston and New York and almost as bustling as Philadelphia. Moreover, as Peter Wood has suggested, Charleston was the "Ellis Island of black Americans." Indeed, more than 40 percent of all the slaves who came to North America during the first three quarters of the eighteenth century came through the port of Charleston.

Relative to this impressive volume of trade, Charleston was somewhat small, even by colonial standards. In addition, it failed to develop a large, financially robust
indigenous business community before 1750. Apparently, as Jacob Price has recently suggested, this was caused by the "'colonial' character of Charleston's commercial life." That is, because British merchants dominated South Carolina overseas trade, Charleston was much more of a "shipping point" than a genuine "commercial center" or a "general entrepôt" before the middle of the eighteenth century.\textsuperscript{21} Whatever its sources, Charleston's so-called "colonial" status did not last. Indeed, by the 1760s, according to Carville Earle and Ronald Hoffman, an "enterprising, aggressive, and seasoned" mercantile community emerged. Capitalizing on the increasingly lively trade in meat, grain, and forest products produced in the backcountry, this group of resident local merchants seized control of South Carolina's export economy. On the eve of the American Revolution, they may have handled as much as three-fourths of the region's overseas trade.\textsuperscript{22}

In addition to the growth of Charleston, the emergence of Georgetown, Beaufort, and Savannah as important seaport towns provides further evidence of the accelerating pace of urbanization during the middle decades of the eighteenth century. By the early 1770s Savannah had population of approximately 3,200, and, after Charleston, was easily the second largest urban center in the Lower South, whereas Georgetown and Beaufort both had populations somewhere between 800 and 1200. Though somewhat modest compared to
Charleston, these seaports experienced genuinely impressive commercial growth. With connecting arteries stretching far into the backcountry, they served as collection, distribution, and shipping points and provided an increasingly wide range of urban services to the surrounding hinterlands.\textsuperscript{23}

Urban development was not limited to the coast. During the 1740s and 1750s a number of inland towns emerged, including Charlotte, Camden, Granby, Orangeburg, Ninety Six, and Augusta. Linked to the surrounding communities and to the seaports by rivers, streams, and a proliferating network of roads, bridges, paths, and ferries, these inland centers grew in both size and functional complexity. Although our knowledge of the emergence of these inland towns is limited, recent work on one of them, Camden, illuminates the process of urbanization in the South Carolina backcountry during the eighteenth century.\textsuperscript{24}

Located in the sand-hills roughly 125 miles northwest of Charleston, Camden grew up within the geographical bounds of Fredericksburg Township (see Figure 2.1). The few English colonists who had settled the region in the 1730s were joined in 1750 or 1751 by a group of Irish Quakers. Shortly thereafter, Robert Millhouse, one of the Quaker leaders, erected a gristmill and a sawmill. Wheat farming and the production of forest products had been expanding rapidly in the area; and Millhouse obviously recognized that
Camden, which was situated on a road leading to Charleston, offered tremendous opportunities as a collection, processing, and distribution center.\textsuperscript{25} Camden presented other commercial possibilities as well. Because it sat on the Great Philadelphia Wagon Road, Camden enabled merchants like Samuel Wyly, another member of the Quaker group, and Moses Kirkland, a recent immigrant from the North, to set up small stores and sell dry and manufactured goods to the thousands of settlers who were beginning to pour into the backcountry.\textsuperscript{26}

In 1758 the commercial growth of Camden was given a further boost when the Charleston mercantile firm of Ancrum, Lance, and Loocock sent Joseph Kershaw there in an attempt to enlarge its operations. Kershaw, who had recently become a partner in the firm, bought out Millhouse, established additional saw- and gristmills, and set up a store. Kershaw quickly prospered, and, together with his brother Eli and another associate by the name of John Chesnut, soon began diversifying and expanding his commercial activities, setting up an indigo works and a distillery in Camden and establishing stores at Cheraw Hill on the Pedee River and at Granby, just below the forks of the Congaree River.\textsuperscript{27}

If population growth and the commercialization of the backcountry enabled individuals such as Kershaw to get on in the race of life, it also stimulated the growth of inland towns such as Camden. By the early 1770s this tiny urban
center was an integral component in the socio-economic structure of the region. It was the site of numerous processing operations, five stores, and two warehouses; it was also home to a wide variety of mechanics and even a few professionals.\textsuperscript{28} When one contemporary traveler, John F. D. Smyth, visited Camden on the eve of the American Revolution, he noted that it was "a very distinguished place of trade...and considerable commerce" which was "improving very fast." What is more, the town sported a number of large homes, a courthouse, a jail, at least three taverns, and four churches.\textsuperscript{29}

IV

Social stratification attended demographic, territorial, economic, and urban growth in South Carolina. During the half-century following 1720, colonial society increasingly became more and more traditional--that is, more differentiated, complex, and unequal--and the relatively simple social conditions that had characterized the first half-century of settlement were gradually replaced by more articulate ones. Yet, even on the eve of the American Revolution, South Carolina society--at root--still consisted of the two basic social categories outlined in the previous chapter, independents and dependents.

Comparatively speaking, the number of independent
individuals in South Carolina's free male population was extraordinarily large. In 1749, for example, when the total number of whites in the colony was roughly 25,000, Governor James Glen estimated that there were about five thousand whites "who have plenty of the good things of Life," another five thousand "who have the some of the Conveniencys of Life," ten thousand "who have the Necessarys of Life," and five to six thousand "who have a bare subsistance." According to Glen, in other words, something on the order of 80 percent of the free whites in the colony were independent at midcentury. Women and children, of course, were together the largest group of dependent individuals in South Carolina, but as Mary Beth Norton has shown, if they were members of a family whose male household head was independent, they usually assumed his independent status. This is precisely why Glen included women and children in his socioeconomic classifications.

Standing at the apex of the independent proportion of the population were the large planters, big merchants, and top professional men and their families, the 20 percent that Glen referred to as having "plenty of the good things of Life." When contemporaries referred to this group by name, they usually called it the gentry, and because of South Carolina's enormous wealth, an unusually large number of people could claim membership in that group. Contemporaries were well aware of this fact. Dr. George Milligen, for
instance, wrote in 1753 that "the Men and Women who have a Right to the Class of Gentry...are more numerous here than in any other Colony in North America."\textsuperscript{32}

During the half century following 1720, members of the elite, profiting disproportionately from South Carolina's rapidly expanding, increasingly complex slave-powered plantation economy, accumulated impressive fortunes. Economic growth seems to have accelerated the pace of economic differentiation, especially in the older settled areas. Indeed, in such areas, wealth appears to have become less and less equitably distributed during the middle decades of the eighteenth century than it had been earlier. Accordingly, only those individuals with substantial resources could afford to operate by the second half of the eighteenth century. Others who had little money, influence, or connections and hoped to acquire an even modest estate had to move to newer areas.\textsuperscript{33}

Not only were South Carolina elites amassing more and more wealth during the half century following 1720, but they were also consolidating their socioeconomic position through marriage. The South Carolina Gazette contains numerous references to marriage "treaties" and carefully planned family "alliances" among the members of the South Carolina gentry, including such well-known families as the Bulls, Draytons, Fenwicks, Gibbes, Izards, Laurens, Manigaulds, Middleton, Pinkneys, Rutledges, and Wraggs. Indeed, in
South Carolina the increasingly prominent, highly visible, interrelated, and intermarried elite became during the eighteenth century a seemingly inextricable cousinry, a cousinry that has been the bane of genealogists.34

As South Carolina elites amassed more and more wealth and consolidated their position through intermarriage during the eighteenth century, they pursued lifestyles similar to that of the English gentry. They wore expensive clothes; they purchased elaborate carriages; they built grand, commodious homes and filled them with luxury possessions, including imported carpets, silver plate, china, domestic and imported furniture, books, and other items of "comfort and convenience"; they employed an increasing number of their slaves in domestic service; they provided their sons with classical educations; and they made charitable bequests and created a host of voluntary associations. Some of the wealthiest South Carolina families even began to summer in the northern colonies. As Carl Bridenbaugh has shown, Newport, Rhode Island, became "the favorite summer resort of...South Carolinians."35

This annual exodus to the North by members of the South Carolina gentry, like their wealth, opulence, and magnificent display, attracted widespread attention, exciting remarks from several contemporaries. Dr. Johann D. Schoepf, a visitor from Europe, wrote in 1773 that "the people of Charleston live rapidly, not willingly letting go
untasted any of the pleasures of life." In fact, Schoepf believed, "luxury in Carolina has made the greatest advance, and their manner of life, dress, equipages, furniture, everything, denotes a higher degree of taste and love of show, and less frugality than in the northern provinces." In the same year, Josiah Quincy, a Bostonian compiling a survey of the colonies, found that "state, magnificence, and ostentation, the natural attendants of riches, are conspicuous among this people."36

Figure 2.2

"Mr. Peter Manigault and his Friends," c.1750
Conspicuous social display attended various formal occasions--court and election days, church services, official holidays, weddings, funerals, militia musters, and parades--and popular diversions--entertaining, horse racing, hunting, cock fighting, gambling, dancing, and theatergoing (see Figure 2.2). Like their contemporaries in England, the Carolina elites wanted to see and be seen and these activities afforded them opportunities to actualize those desires. Turning out on race days, entertaining friends, neighbors, and travellers, or attending church services enabled members of the gentry to confirm their own self-conceptions and to demonstrate to others that they were individuals of status and wealth.

Rank was not defined simply by wealth, however, especially as social arrangements became ever more diversified and complex during the eighteenth century. To be sure, there was a direct connection between social standing and the ownership of property, but, as a number of historians have emphasized, to achieve an actual genteel status one had to possess a number of closely related attributes, manners, and qualities, such as disinterestedness, politeness, sociability, stewardship, and, perhaps most important of all, liberality. In contemporary usage, disinterestedness meant freedom from purely selfish motives or interests while politeness was a synonym for consideration, tact, deference, and courtesy.
Sociability implied friendliness and sometimes connoted being inclined to seek out and enjoy companionship. *Liberality*, perhaps the single most important characteristic of gentility referred to, according to Rhys Isaac, "a certain disposition in the soul...to undertake important responsibilities in the community at large."\(^{38}\)

Stressing the extent to which the South Carolina gentry cultivated certain manners, qualities, and traits, including liberality, sociability, politeness, and disinterestedness, does not necessarily imply that they abandoned their devotion to personal independence. Nor does it mean that they completely turned their attention away from their private material interests. In fact, South Carolina elites continued to be extremely acquisitive, market-oriented, pragmatic, and capitalistic. That they were not insensitive to the shifting potentialities of the market, as Joyce Chaplin has recently shown, is evident in their numerous activities during the eighteenth century. Not only did elites make a concerted effort to spread plantation agriculture into new areas, but they were always searching for technological innovations in rice cultivation and processing, and experimenting with and attempting to adapt new crops to South Carolina conditions.\(^{39}\) What is more, many elites, acquiring western land not for its use but for its resale value as a commodity in the rising market, were astute speculators. Stated briefly, the members of the
elite were well attuned "men on the make," always on the lookout for and eager to take advantage of new opportunities.40

Although the South Carolina gentry has attracted the attention of contemporaries and modern historians alike, perhaps the chief distinguishing feature of the colony's free population during the eighteenth century was the extraordinarily large number of families of independent middling status, families that Governor Glen believed possessed either "some of the Convieniencys of Life" or at least "the necessarys of life." Situated immediately below the gentry, the former group, which made up roughly 20 percent of the free families, included middling planters who owned from ten to nineteen slaves; retail tradesmen; urban and rural storekeepers; lesser professionals, such as clergymen, physicians, estate managers, and lawyers whose business was primarily local; top artisans like cabinetmakers and builders who often, according to one contemporary, "bear nothing more of their Trade than the name"; and several royal officials and bureaucrats, whose numbers were steadily increasing throughout the eighteenth century, especially after the crown sought to reorganize the British empire after 1748. Among the 40 percent of the free population which Glen believed possessed "the necessarys of life" were small planters and yeoman farmers who owned less than ten slaves or were nonslaveholders; petty traders and
shopkeepers; plantation overseers; and a wide variety of skilled craftsmen and artisans, including millers, candelmakers, silversmiths, blacksmiths, butchers, shipwrights, coopers, tanners, bricklayers, coachmakers, cobblers, saddlers, seamstresses, and tailors.\textsuperscript{41}

Despite the steadily increasing trend toward inequality in the distribution of wealth in South Carolina during the eighteenth century—a trend that accentuated the contrasts between slave and free, rich and poor—the middling sorts became ever more prosperous as the economy expanded. The broad diffusion of slavery throughout the social structure, the dramatic increase in and value of imports, and the rising value of estates at their owner’s death, are all clear indications of the growing weal of the middle rank after 1720.\textsuperscript{42}

The increasingly prosperous middle rank, which included the large majority of independent families in the colony, shared, in many ways, the values and orientations of the elites. Dedicated to industry, success, and making money, they endeavored, just like those above them, to "improve" the society in which they lived. These "improvements" would guarantee and enhance their independent status, enabling them to enjoy securely the fruits of their labor.

Not only did the middling sort envision and aspire to create the same improved society as the gentry, they also aspired to achieve a genteel status. The life of a
gentlemen served not as a counterpoint or as a negative image. Rather, it represented, as Harold J. Perkin has shown in the case of contemporary Britain, a positive image, an "ideal which the whole [white] society aimed [toward]...and by which it measured its happiness and ambitions." Indeed, for the large majority of South Carolinians, gentility and genuine affluence--the epitome of an independent status--represented their ultimate goal. That goal, of course, was increasingly difficult to realize as the eighteenth century progressed, but it remained within the reach of large numbers of the middling sort.

By contrast, only a small fraction of the vast number of dependent individuals living and working in the colony ever held out any real hope of achieving a genteel status. Dependents, or those who were subject to the control of others, probably constituted somewhere near 70 percent of the total population of the colony in any given year between 1720 and 1770. Their large numbers provide a vivid reminder of just how fundamentally exploitative South Carolina society was and the extent to which economic growth, increasing prosperity, and the comparatively high incidence of independent individuals in the free population resulted from their presence.

Although black slaves obviously formed the largest single group of the dependents, there were a significant number of whites in this group. Nearly all of the five
thousand people that Governor Glen thought possessed only "a bare subsistence," for example, were considered to be dependents. However, a close examination of their ranks reveals important, though subtle, distinctions. Most white dependents really fell within one of two broad categories: first, there were what may be called "circumstantial dependents," a somewhat enigmatic intermediate group that included indentured servants, apprentices, free laborers, agricultural tenants, and a number of individuals with only minimal property; and second, there were "residual dependents," a numerous and ever present body that consisted of widows, the aged, the sick, and the mentally and physically disadvantaged.\(^5\)

It is as yet unclear, but it appears that circumstantial dependents probably represented a majority of those who sat on the bottom of white society during the half century preceding the American Revolution. Unlike residual or congenital dependents, their social situation was usually temporary and--more often than not--very largely a function of age. Indentured servants, for example, lived only "a bare subsistence" and were considered to be dependents. Yet, servants "out of their time" usually became landowners and thus achieved and independent status. The same held true for apprentices, agricultural tenants, and other circumstantial dependents.\(^6\) Accordingly, circumstantial dependency was less of a dead-end path than a stage in the
life cycle or a way station on the road to property ownership or prosperous nonagricultural employment.

Black slaves constituted the largest single category of dependents. Although the ratio of blacks to whites for South Carolina as a whole remained roughly at 2 to 2.5 to 1 during most years in the half century preceding the Revolution, in some of the longer settled plantation districts spread along the tidewater the black share of the population approached 90 percent by 1740, roughly the proportion in the sugar islands in the West Indies. In the parish of St. John's Berkeley, for example, slaves outnumbered whites by as much as 9 to 1 in 1762. Given this racial distribution, it is perhaps unsurprising that one contemporary observer, Samuel Dyssli, wrote that "Carolina looks more like a negro country than like a country settled by white people."47

Not only were a majority of South Carolina slaves clustered in the rice-producing regions of the lowcountry, but many worked in large scale units of more than 20 slaves. Of course, most South Carolina whites owned only a handful of slaves, which meant that thousands of blacks worked on small farms and plantations with less than 10 slaves or on middling plantations with between 10 and 19 slaves. However, the majority of blacks were owned by large slaveowners; accordingly, they labored on large plantations. In fact, although the evidence is somewhat sparse and
certainly not conclusive, it suggests that, from the 1720s on, well more than half the slaves in South Carolina were owned by large planters who owned at least 20 slaves. In St. George's Parish in 1726, for instance, two-thirds of the bondspersons worked on plantations with more than 20 slaves and over one-fifth belonged to households of more than 50 slaves. Similarly, a 1745 tax return from the neighboring parish of St. James Goose Creek shows that more than four-fifths of the blacks were owned by planters with more than 20 slaves and over two-thirds belonged to slaveholders who possessed 50 or more bondspersons. Although not quite so dramatic as St. James Goose Creek, a similar distribution can be found a few years later in the parish of St. John's Berkeley. In 1762 over three-quarters of the slaves were owned by householders with more than 20 slaves and just over one-third belonged to planters who possessed more than 50 slaves.\(^4\)

The concentration of slaves on large units resulted from the rapid expansion of rice culture during the eighteenth century. In the South Carolina lowcountry large, specialized plantations increasingly became the rule rather than the exception. This development precipitated significant changes in the work routines of many slaves. Peter Wood has shown how the occupations and status of slaves changed as the South Carolina economy became ever more intimately engaged with rice production. In the early
frontier days slaves worked at a variety of occupations and were relatively unsupervised. But after the successful introduction of rice in the 1690s, "pioneer life" gave way to "plantation life as the dominant mode of existence," characterized not only by the rapid increase in the African population but also by the allocation of slaves to plantation labor, particularly as field hands.\(^{49}\)

As plantation production became more complex it generated a greater division of labor and, ultimately, created a hierarchy among the slaves. Over the generations, occupational status became intrinsically connected to social status. Among plantation slaves, there were generally three broad occupational categories: domestics, skilled slaves, and field slaves. Domestic slaves--cooks, housecleaners, valets, maids, butlers, seamstresses, washerwomen, horseboys, coachmen, watchmen, governesses--were perhaps the most privileged group. Oftentimes, they were better dressed, better fed, and received more comfortable quarters than field hands. The quantity and quality of food, clothing, and shelter, of course, like the number and variety of domestics in any given household, depended upon the size of the plantation and the wealth of the slaveholder. Skilled slaves possessed a standard of living comparable to that of domestics. Bondspeople in this select group, which included coopers, carpenters, smiths, wheelwrights, and weavers, were often among the most highly
valued on a plantation.\textsuperscript{50}

Field slaves, however, were by far the most numerous. Constituting the very backbone of the plantation labor force, they occupied the bottom of the social hierarchy and were considered by many whites to be "the least honorable, crude, and mean."\textsuperscript{51} By the late eighteenth century, field slaves were organized according to a task system, a unique mode of labor organization whereby slaves were given a specific daily work assignment. Upon completion of the task for which they were responsible, slaves were given "free time" to do things on their own. As Philip Morgan has shown, "the planting and weeding stages of the rice cycle provided the initial rationale for the task system [but] once tasking became firmly established, it was extended to a whole host of plantation operations," including reaping, threshing, pounding, winnowing, splitting fence rails, sawing lumber, and harvesting indigo.\textsuperscript{52}

The degree of labor specialization, occupational complexity, and managerial infrastructure depended on---among other things---the size of the individual slaveholding unit and the crops produced. On middling plantations containing from ten to nineteen slaves there was usually no clear division between household servants, artisans, and field hands. Labor was less standardized, and slaves had to divide their time between carpentry or cooking and field labor. Although middling planters certainly encountered
problems of organization and supervision, they usually handled them without the help of an overseer. Commonly, the slaveowner worked with his slaves and supervised them directly or with the assistance of a "headman."

Specialization of labor on small plantations and farms containing fewer than ten slaves was virtually nonexistent. Blacks were expected to be "jacks of all trades," planting, cultivating, and harvesting crops, tending to livestock, cooking, cleaning, chopping wood, and splitting fence rails.53

Beyond the plantations and farms, slaves were employed in South Carolina's two major extractive industries, the Indian trade and the production of naval stores and lumber products. In procuring deerskins, slaves performed work of every kind, such as trimming, weighing, and packing pelts, acting as interpreters, and tending to pack trains. Similarly, in the naval stores industry, slaves girdled pine trees to extract turpentine, constructed and operated earthen kilns that cooked out tar from the resinous heartwoods, and distilled tar to make pitch. In addition, they cut and fashioned masts, spars, shingles, staves, planks, pickets, posts, and rails.

Although most slaves worked on land, a significant number spent much of their time in and around the water. South Carolina is traversed by a dozen considerable rivers, which are fed by a labyrinth of streams and creeks, and its
190-mile-long coastline features countless inlets, estuaries, sounds, and bays. Waterborne vessels were a central means of transportation, especially during the first half of the eighteenth century when roads and bridges were few and far between, and blacks poled, paddled, rowed, and sailed boats of various shapes and sizes all over the colony. South Carolina waters also provided the colonists with an abundance of fish, shrimp, oysters, green and loggerhead turtles, and a variety of mollusks and crustaceans; South Carolina slaveholders employed hundreds of their bondspersons in securing the water's bountiful harvest. Although few slaves were employed in trans-Atlantic ventures, South Carolina slaves also served as seamen both in the vigorous coastal trade and in the trade with the West Indies. Vessels carried slave sailors far away, to places where they had an opportunity to see and hear much that they later brought back to South Carolina and transmitted to other slaves. This clearly was one of the ways in which information of interest to slaves was disseminated.\textsuperscript{54}

That blacks were employed in such a wide variety of occupations throughout the eighteenth century and beyond provides ample evidence that slavery remained remarkably flexible, adaptable, and diverse, despite the fact that the institution increasingly revolved around plantation life. Indeed, slavery in colonial South Carolina was emphatically
not monolithic. Rather, it was a dynamic institution that varied from place to place and over time. The growth and elaboration of urban slavery serves to underscore this point. Between 1720 and 1770 somewhere between 8 and 10 percent of the slave population worked in towns. Upwards of 90 percent of urban slaves lived in Charleston, but their were significant numbers in Beaufort, Georgetown, Camden, Orangeburg, and Augusta.\textsuperscript{55}

In contrast to rural areas, slave ownership in South Carolina towns was widely diffused. Typically, urban bondspersons were distributed in small numbers of one, two, or three among owners for whom they performed a variety of tasks. Slave domestics probably made up the largest percentage of the urban slave population, but many artisans, merchants, and shopkeepers purchased slaves. On the eve of the American Revolution, for example, about 80 percent of the artisans in Charleston were slaveholders. Large numbers of domestic and artisinal urban slaves were purchased and trained for hiring out by their owners. Some urban slaves also were acquired for speculative purposes. Oftentimes, white artisans would purchase slaves, train them (thereby enhancing their value), and then sell them for profit.\textsuperscript{56}

Compared to their plantation counterparts, urban slaves--like those employed in the naval stores industry, the Indian trade, or as boatsmen and seamen--were more mobile and less restricted. Many worked independently and
had considerable privacy and individual autonomy, particularly slaves who were hired out. In the streets, alleys, and marketplaces of Charleston and increasingly in such towns as Beaufort, Georgetown, Camden, Orangeburg, and Augusta, controls were, for the most part, loose. Slaves consequently moved relatively freely, having numerous opportunities to make contacts, cut deals, and socialize with friends and relatives. Of course, as the multiplicity of town ordinances and laws aimed at controlling the urban slave population attest, there was much concern over the independent activities of slaves, especially in times of crisis; yet, as several recent historians have shown, legal restrictions were usually nothing more than dead letters. Only occasionally were they enforced and even then whites lacked sufficient policing powers.⁵⁷

If the place and character of work served as important factors in determining the status of slaves in eighteenth-century South Carolina, so too did the much larger and more general (though closely related) distinction between "creole" or American-born slaves and African-born slaves. Creole slaves were generally accorded a higher social status than African born slaves, primarily because they seemed less foreign to many whites. Creole slaves were acculturated. English, or in some cases French, Portuguese, and Spanish, was their first language. In contrast, African slaves seemed alien. They spoke in strange tongues and worshiped
"heathen Gods." Many filed their teeth, had tribal marks on their face and body, and wore their hair and clothing in traditional styles. This was especially true of recent arrivals who were often referred to as either "outlandish Negroes," "salt-water Negroes," or "Guineybirds." Seasoned African born slaves, or those who had lived in the colony for a significant amount of time, say ten years or more, were viewed more favorably by whites than "outlanders" because they had become assimilated to some extent, but they normally stood below creoles in the social hierarchy. Slaveowners generally elevated creole slaves or African-born slaves who had lived in South Carolina for many years to positions of higher social and occupational status in the unfree hierarchy. Creoles and seasoned African-born slaves, for example, often served as domestics or artisans, while most new arrivals worked in the fields.

It is difficult to determine precisely the percentage of Africans in the slave population during the eighteenth century, but the extant data clearly indicate that there were far more blacks of African birth in South Carolina between 1720 and 1770 than ever before or afterwards. During the first half-century of settlement, probably less than two-fifths of the black population was African born. Most of those who were either had lived in South Carolina for over ten years or had been "seasoned" in one or more of the New World colonies. As slave imports skyrocketed after
1720, however, the number of African-born blacks rose dramatically. By 1730 roughly four-fifths of all South Carolina slaves were African born and slightly less than half were "outlandlers" who had lived in the colony for less than ten years. Over the next decade, the ratio of African-born slaves to country born slaves rose even higher. In 1740 approximately four-fifths of the slaves were probably African born and over one-half were recent arrivals. The twenty year trend towards Africanization of South Carolina's labor force, however, slowed considerably during the 1740s as mounting anxiety among whites prompted South Carolina officials to enact a prohibitive duty on new imports aimed at redressing the colony's precarious racial imbalance. Between 1741 and 1750 only 1,562 slaves appear to have been imported directly from Africa. Accordingly, although African-born slaves still constituted a large majority of the black population, newly imported slaves accounted for less than 5 percent of the more than 42,000 slaves in the colony. After midcentury, slave imports increased dramatically once again, averaging almost 1,900 a year between 1751 and 1770, but the almost total cessation of the African slave trade during the 1740s, together with the beginnings of natural population increase in the 1760s, meant not only that newly imported slaves would never again constitute so high a proportion of the colony's total population as they had in the two decades following 1720,
but also that an increasing percentage of South Carolina blacks were country born. Indeed, despite the continuing presence of large numbers of African-born slaves throughout the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, by the end of the American Revolution, South Carolina’s black population had become an essentially American-born one.58

An increasing number of those American-born slaves were of mixed ancestry. In fact, South Carolina had a higher incidence of interracial sexual unions than any other territory in British North America. Although the colony lacked specific soicolegal positions for individuals based on their phenotype, a rank order based on skin color apparently existed. The contemporary use of terms such as "mulatto," "mustee," "pickaninny," and "Negro" when describing individuals or groups within the black community suggests not only that contemporaries placed some social value on these distinctions, but also that whites believed in their own racial superiority, reasoning that the further removed a person was from being white, the less was the individual’s worth in society. Generally speaking, whites assigned lighter-skinned blacks to high-ranking occupations such as domestic or artisinal work and accorded them a privileged social status.59

That lightskinned individuals constituted a majority of the small, struggling free black community in colonial South Carolina also suggests that phenotypical distinctions
played an important role in determining the social status of nonwhites. Of all the slaves manumitted between 1670 and 1770 for whom the color can be identified, 62 percent were of mixed ancestry, while only 38 per cent were black.\textsuperscript{60} Typical of those bondspersons who obtained their freedom were James Gilberson's mulatto slave woman and her children. In his will of 1720, Gilbertson, a prosperous Colleton County planter who had migrated to South Carolina from Barbados in the late 1680s, provided "that my mulatto woman Ruth shall be free immediately after my Decease, & also...that her three female children Betty, Molly, and Keatty shall be free at the age of one and Twenty years." Although Gilbertson, like most other whites, did not explicitly acknowledge an intimate relationship with Ruth, who in addition to her freedom was to receive "the feather bed W:ch the Indians did Cutt up,...a pot and her maintenance upon [his] plantation during her natural life," the will is suggestive nevertheless.\textsuperscript{61}

Not only was the free black community in colonial South Carolina considerably more lightskinned than the slave population, but it contained far more women than men. In fact, over 80 percent of all the recorded colonial manumissions were females. Among the children who were granted their freedom, most of whom appear to have been of mixed ancestry, the ratio of males to females was roughly
even; however, three-fourths of all adult manumissions were women, suggesting that a high proportion of those few individuals who obtained their freedom did so as a result of miscegenational affairs with whites. For some who were increasingly anxious over the disproportion of blacks in the colony, like a Charleston Grand Jury in 1737, "THE TOO COMMON PRACTICE of CRIMINAL CONVERSATION with NEGRO and other SLAVE WENCHES" was "an Enormity and Evil of general Ill-Consequence." Yet, despite occasional remonstrances against what one contemporary referred to as the "scandalous Intimacy, which too much subsists between the Sexes of different Colours," interracial affairs continued--so much so that Josiah Quincy remarked on the eve of the American Revolution that "the enjoyment of a negro or mulatto woman is spoken of as quite a common thing [and] no reluctance, delicacy or shame is made about the matter." 

Although miscegenational relationships ostensibly precipitated a majority of the manumissions in colonial South Carolina, the path to freedom for some slaves lay elsewhere. In a few cases, slaves purchased their freedom. Much more common, however, were instances where they were emancipated for performing some "loyal" or "heroic" act. In 1750, for example, a slave named Caesar was liberated and given a whopping £100 pounds per year for life from the Assembly for revealing his antidote to a poisonous plant
apparently used by some slaves to "put their masters out of this world." As a number of recent historians have shown, poisoning was a common method of resistance and the legislators, judging from the maintenance they were willing to provide, were obviously grateful to Caesar for assisting whites in curbing "the hellish practice." The herbal antidote, or "Caesar's cure" as it was often called, was circulated throughout the Lower South in various newspapers and almanacs and was still being used during the antebellum period.  

However interesting, Caesar's story was clearly exceptional. Indeed, manumissions for whatever reason--meritorious service, self-purchase, love, honor, family connections, humanitarian concern--were relatively few. Accordingly, the free black community remained small throughout the colonial period, probably never constituting more than about 1 to 2 percent of the total free population in any given year. Most free blacks resided in Charleston, and their material circumstance were usually very modest at best. In a colony that relied so heavily on black slave labor and race to define unfree status, the presence of free blacks proved to be troubling at best. Many whites looked at them as a threat to the established order, but as long as their numbers remained small, they were normally tolerated.
The existence of free blacks, the diversity of rank within the slave population, the presence of residual and circumstantial dependents, and the differences of privilege, wealth, and status among independent whites are all very clear indications that the social order in South Carolina was becoming ever more differentiated, complex, and unequal in the decades following 1720. At the same time, social relations became increasingly settled, coherent, and stable. This process of social elaboration accompanied, was profoundly influenced by, and in turn helped to sustain—among other things—population, territorial, economic, and urban growth. Yet, as this and the following sections will argue, South Carolina society never became rigid, inflexible, or brittle. In fact, the much celebrated social peace, harmony, and stability that prevailed after midcentury was, and this cannot be stated too forcefully, a dynamic stability, resting not on suppression, hegemony, or even—in most cases—tight control, but on openness, mobility, fluidity, and permissiveness.⁶⁶

One of the most important structural characteristics of South Carolina society during the colonial period that defused potential hostilities and thus contributed to social harmony and stability was social mobility at all levels. The increasing tendency toward property concentration and
economic inequality and the social polarization that accompanied it notwithstanding, there were always sufficient opportunities for advancement. That is precisely why so many immigrants came to the colony during the eighteenth century. South Carolina was, in the words of one Philadelphia physician writing immediately after the American Revolution, "the land of opportunity." Even the gentry was remarkably open. Robert Wells, a Charleston printer, writing to a friend in 1765, marveled at "the rapid ascendancy of families which in less than ten years have risen from the lowest rank, have acquired upward of £100,000, and have, moreover, gained this wealth in a simple and easy manner." Perhaps Wells was given to overstatement, but he pointed up the fact that the achievement of genuine affluence and, as governor Glen put it, "plenty of the good things in life," lay within the grasp of a comparatively large number of free men, whatever their background.67

Numerous examples can be cited to support this claim. For instance, Anthony Mathewes had come to South Carolina as an indentured servant sometime before 1720. After serving out his term, he apparently incurred some difficulties in securing land because he appeared before the Royal Council in 1727 and swore that "he had a wife and three children and had never had any land granted to him." Shortly thereafter, Mathewes received a 250 acre grant near the Edisto River in St. Bartholomew's Parish. With the help of his wife and
children, Mathewes began planting provisions and small amounts of rice. Already by the early 1730s he was expanding his holdings and purchasing slaves. At the time of his death in 1743, he had amassed well over a thousand acres and owned 13 slaves. His estate was valued at over £6,500.  

In considering social mobility, the case of Joseph Allston is far more dramatic. While visiting Allston’s estate in All Saint’s Parish on Winyah Bay in 1773, Josiah Quincy learned how this "gentleman of immense income" built his fortune "of his own acquisition" almost overnight. According to Quincy, it was "but a few years ago" that a young Allston "with only five negroes" started planting rice in the rich alluvial soils of tidewater. From these small beginnings, Allston managed to parlay his resources, acquiring by the eve of the American Revolution five plantations and over 500 slaves. Scattered along the Waccamaw River, these estates reportedly brought in between £5,000 and £6,000 sterling per annum, which helped to make Allston one of the wealthiest men in all of British America.  

The story of Henry Laurens, who was born in 1724 the son of a Charleston saddler, is similar. After an apprenticeship in London (1744-1747), the young Laurens returned to South Carolina and used his inheritance to establish himself as a merchant. Capitalizing on the
colony's increasingly valuable export economy and, as he
liked to call it, the "Guinea trade," Laurens manipulated a
very large and lucrative business from a small office on
East Bay Street. He quickly emerged as the colony's leading
merchant. After accumulating some capital, Laurens began
investing in land and slaves. By 1770 he owned some 20,000
acres and over 500 hundred slaves. Like Allston, he was one
of the wealthiest men in America.70

The case of Thomas Elfe provides another example of the
surprising degree of social mobility in colonial South
Carolina. Elfe established himself as a cabinetmaker in
Charleston shortly after midcentury. Soon he took in a
partner, John Fisher, to enlarge his operation, add skill to
his business, and, perhaps most importantly, to try to rid
himself of ruinous competition. By the mid-1760s, Elfe
emerged as the city's leading cabinetmaker. According to
his account book, his "shop" produced over 1,500 pieces of
furniture between 1768 and 1776, including bedsteads,
chests, desks, clothes presses, card tables, tea tables,
sofas, clock cases, book cases, and chairs of all sorts.
With the profits from his business, Elfe began investing in
slaves. In 1768 he owned at least six slaves, variously
trained as painters, cabinetmakers, and sawyers, who were
valued at £2,250. Income from hiring them out averaged over
£438 per year. Elfe's increasing wealth enabled him to enjoy
"plenty of the good things in life," including a beautiful
townhouse in Charleston, fine clothes, an elegant coach, and even a summer vacation at Newport, Rhode Island. When he died in 1775, he left a personal estate worth over £17,176, which included three city properties and a small plantation on Daniel's Island.  

To the extent that the various experiences of Allston, Laurens, and Elfe are revelatory of broader trends, they may be used, together with the material presented in previous sections, to make several important general suggestions concerning the socioeconomic prospects in South Carolina during the eighteenth century. At least until the end of the 1720s, as the story of Anthony Mathewes demonstrates, South Carolina society was open enough to allow a man who started at the bottom without special advantages to acquire a substantial estate and a responsible social position. Those that had more than the shirt on their back could expect to do much better. From about 1730 to the mid-1740s, prospects were not quite so bright; nevertheless, any person who, like Joseph Allston, could command even modest amounts of labor additional to his own from either family members, servants, or slaves could confidently expect to do well economically and ascend fairly rapidly up the social scale. By midcentury, however, most of the land suitable for rice cultivation in South Carolina (there was still land available in North Carolina, Georgia, and eventually, Florida) had passed over into private hands. One
contemporary frankly admitted in 1752, for example, that "the valuable land is chiefly engrossed by the wealthy." Accordingly, there were few occasions for those with little money or influence to set themselves up as rice growers. Only established planter families, or individuals with money derived from some other source, such as Laurens and Elfe, could afford to purchase land and slaves and operate competitively in the lowcountry.

If, however, opportunities for acquiring land and upward social mobility were steadily diminishing in the lowcountry, there were still tremendous prospects in other areas, both for those who were squeezed out of the rice-belt and those who came from outside the colony. The story of Moses Kirkland serves as a case in point. Kirland migrated to the South Carolina backcountry in 1752 from the northern colonies. After securing 350 strategically located acres of land near the mouth of Wateree River where a well established Indian path crossed the stream, he opened a small store in Camden, selling to "Customers and Travelers as they pass...from the Northward to the Congarees &c."

With the proceeds from his mercantile establishment Kirkland began purchasing land and by 1765 he was operating a gristmill, a sawmill, a brewery, and a ferry near the confluence of the Saluda and Broad Rivers. Eventually, Kirkland became the owner of over 10,000 acres of land, including a 950-acre indigo plantation worked by 60 slaves
in the Ninety Six District. Not everyone in the backcountry, of course, experienced the extraordinary success of Kirkland, but his life provides a clear example of the tremendous opportunities in the colony even after midcentury.\textsuperscript{73}

Just as there were prospects for upward mobility for whites in South Carolina, there were avenues for advancement for many blacks. The occupational hierarchy the took shape during the course of the eighteenth century created promotional opportunities for industrious and talented slaves. Ordinary field slaves could aspire to become headmen, drivers, overseers, and domestics, skilled artisans could sometimes hire themselves out, and seamen could hold out hope that they might even pilot or captain a vessel. Obviously, the possibilities for upward mobility were severely limited for slaves, but that they existed at all not only added some flexibility to the institution of slavery but also brought a certain degree of stability to society as a whole.\textsuperscript{74}

Not only were there prospects for South Carolina’s black majority occasionally to move up the occupational ladder, but there were for many slaves substantial opportunities to move from place to place. Indeed, as several recent historians have shown, at least some measure of geographical mobility was generally the rule rather than the exception throughout the colonial period, despite
numerous legal restrictions that attempted to control the various comings and goings of the slave population. Similarly, most slaves seem to have enjoyed considerable freedom of association and assembly. With few coercive resources at their disposal, masters were unable to exert very tight control over their slaves. What is more, few slaveowners seem to have been willing to engage in close surveillance of the slave population except in times of alarm. Governor William Bull conceded this fact when in 1770 he reported that "human prudence has provided...Salutary [Negro Patrol] Laws, yet, through human frailty, they are neglected in...times of general tranquility." 75

In addition to occupational and geographical mobility, South Carolina slaves also enjoyed a certain degree of autonomy in their work routines. By the second half of the eighteenth century the task system had become firmly established in the lowcountry. Assigned tasks were certainly not easily completed, but, as one contemporary observer pointed out, "after their required day's work Negroes are given as much land as they can handle to plant something for themselves." 76 By enabling the more industrious slaves to grow their own produce and raise their own animals for sale, the task system fostered the development by slaves of a vigorous internal marketing system that became essential to the domestic economy of
South Carolina. This system established bondspersons as independent producers and traders within the slaves system, enabling them to earn money. How much slaves benefited economically from marketing depended on how much land they had, how much time they were allowed to work it, how industrious and skillful in bargaining they were, and the location of their provision grounds. But the process by which slaves made their earnings was, perhaps, more important than the money itself. The market connected slaves with the world outside their plantations; it created contacts with neighboring plantation, established linkages between the coast and the interior, and spread news and ideas.

Slavery in colonial South Carolina was far from being a benevolent institution. Yet, as the preceding paragraphs suggest, neither was it an all embracing "total" system, resting simply on coercion, unbridled repressive force, or even tight control by the master class. Indeed, to a surprising extent, South Carolina’s peculiar institution was remarkably diverse, flexible, and permissive and most bondspersons enjoyed a considerable degree of autonomy and mobility. For a variety of reasons, masters usually preferred neither to apply their full power, nor engage in close surveillance of the activities of their slaves. More often than not, they tread softly, realizing the realities of a slave society.
The flexibility, mobility, and permissiveness that seems to have characterized slavery in colonial South Carolina may provide at least a partial explanation as to why the slave system was not given to more frequent slave revolts. Despite exhibiting throughout much of the eighteenth century many of the factors that encouraged revolts in other New World slave societies--a significant black majority, a high percentage of young, unattached African-born males in the slave population, large individual slaveholding units, high slave mortality, and relatively high levels of absenteeism--between 1670 and 1770 there was only one major armed uprising in South Carolina, the Stono Rebellion of 1739. Even that revolt, when compared to insurrections in other colonies of the Western Hemisphere, was small, localized, and short-lived.77

That slaves in colonial South Carolina did not revolt with more frequency does not mean, of course, that they had been coopted by the system or that they had lost their capacity to resist; the historical record is chock-full with numerous examples of noncooperation, sabotage, and defiance, ranging from simple malingering to poisoning to running away.78 Nor does it mean that there was not a pervasive fear among whites of a large-scale slave rebellion. Although there was only one major slave uprising during the colonial period, alleged plots and conspiracies of all sorts were ubiquitous; and every white South Carolinian was well
aware that such a disproportionately black and slave
population in the South Carolina lowcountry gave the colony
a potentially powerful domestic enemy.

The fear of servile insurrection was one of the many
important forces that bound the white community together.
Quite as much as social mobility, which throughout the
colonial period enabled men from the lower and middle strata
to aspire to and achieve positions of wealth and influence,
apathy about slave rebellion muted potential class
conflicts among whites and contributed to increasing social
stability. With a large black majority, divisions within
white society could spell disaster. Large slaveholders seem
to have been especially fond of pointing this out. Henry
Laurens, for example, argued in 1764 that internal divisions
among whites were "more awful and more distressing than Fire
Pestilence or Foreign Wars." Moreover, as Robert Weir has
shown, it was not coincidental that "panics over
insurrection often coincided with political turmoil in the
white community, notably in the Stamp Act crisis and the
outbreak of the Revolution."^9

No less than the common, easily activated fear of slave
rebellion and the existence of social mobility, economic
relationships facilitated community solidarity among South
Carolina whites. As the colonial economy expanded and
became ever more complex, large planters and small farmers,
slaveholders and nonslaveholders, upcountrymen and
lowcountrymen, urban dwellers and country folk, increasingly relied upon each other for essential goods and services. For instance, leading men, such as Moses Kirkland, operated sawmills, grist mills, and ferries that provided essential services to the surrounding community. In addition, the need for extra labor commonly involved whites in a variety of cooperative endeavors, including planting, harvesting, and construction projects. Moreover, merchants provided marketing and transportation services. Put simply, economic relations fostered the development of very intricate and deeply rooted networks of interdependence that created a community of interest and mitigated class conflict within the white community.

Like economic relationships, a host of personal, social, and familial ties united the white community and contributed to increasing social stability. Though many people continued to live on dispersed farms and plantations in the decades following 1720, growing population density in the longer settled areas created more compact settlements that were knit together by an increasingly complex transportational infrastructure. As a result, families, neighbors, friends, and associates interacted ever more frequently at a growing number of churches, stores, taverns, courthouses, and homes. At the same time, kinship and friendship networks became more firmly rooted and community identification more pronounced.
In addition to social mobility, the pervasive fear of slave uprising, shared economic interests, and family, neighborhood, and social connections, the rise of the South Carolina gentry in the decades after 1720 contributed to social stability and coherence. Increasingly distinguished from the rest of society by their substantial wealth, their affluent lifestyles, and their education and deportment, members of this self-conscious and cohesive group assumed control of virtually every provincial and local office and eagerly sought to "improve" the colony with a public spiritedness and sense of commitment second to none. Indeed, far from exhibiting what Carl Bridenbaugh has referred to as "a callous irresponsibility," the South Carolina gentry generally displayed a degree of local patriotism that deviates sharply from the old slothful and negligent stereotypes of elites. They actively performed the duties of public office and endowed the colony's political institutions, especially the South Carolina Commons House of Assembly, with an incredible amount of energy and dynamism, providing political stability in a period of tremendous demographic, economic, and territorial expansion.  

Gentry dominance did not, however, rely on massive military or police power, the exclusion of the great majority from political participation, or even, as Ronald Hoffman asserted, "class prerogative or rightful privilege."
Police powers were generally weak at best, and as John Shy has shown, South Carolina authorities, like their counterparts elsewhere in British America, had difficulties even sending the militia to places or on missions to which its members did not want to go. Moreover, although participatory politics was limited to white, independent, adult males, the political system was remarkably inclusive, especially from an early modern historical perspective. Finally, Hoffman to the contrary notwithstanding, few elites claimed political office on the basis of superior rank and social position. In society with such a high proportion of independent men among the free population, that might prove to be a serious mistake.  

Consider the case of William Henry Drayton. Born in 1742, William Henry was the son of John Drayton, a member of the royal Council, and Charlotte Bull, a sister of William Bull II, the periodic governor of the colony. After being educated in England, first at Westminster School, London, and then at Balliol College, Oxford, Drayton returned to South Carolina in 1763, married a rich heiress, Dorothy Golightly, and became a lowcountry planter. In November 1765 he was elected to the South Carolina Commons House, but he did not fare well in public life, primarily because he was a young, arrogant, and haughty individual who was obviously not well attuned to the subtleties of South Carolina's unique political culture. Not surprisingly, he
was not reelected.  

That Drayton was something of an inexperienced political dandy who did not fully understand all the rules of South Carolina politics is evidenced by his conduct during the nonimportation crisis. Addressing himself to the general committee that was in charge of overseeing the embargo on British goods, which included an equal number of planters, merchants, and mechanics, Drayton wrote "the profanum vulgus is a species of mankind which I respect as I ought--it is humani generis--But, I see no reason, why I should allow my opinion to be controlled by theirs." A genteel and well educated man, he reasoned, "should make a proper use of his advantages, and not consult in matters of statecraft with men who never were in a way to study, or to advise upon any points, but rules how to cut up a beast in the market to the best advantage, to cobble an old shoe in the neatest manner, or to build a necessary house." "Nature never intended," he added, "that such men should be profound politicians."  

Drayton’s remarks were attacked from all sides. Selected excerpts from the mechanic’s response are worth quoting at length.

WILLIAM-Henry Drayton having, for some time past, taken great pains to decipher the characters of several respectable persons, and in stile peculiar to himself; the MECHANICS little expected, that he would have stooped so low, as to confer any of his favours on them, who, in his opinion, are every way so much his inferiors. But as he has deigned to bestow some compliments
on them, in point of good manners, they ought not fail paying their respects to him, in their own plain and homely language, for it cannot be expected they should know how, to convey their thoughts, in the polite and courtly manner of such a well bred gentleman.

The gracious Giver of all good things, has been pleased to bestow a certain principle on mankind, which properly may be called common sense: But, though every man hath a natural right to a determined portion of this ineffable ray of the Divinity, yet, to the misfortune of society, many persons fall short of this most necessary gift of God; the want of which cannot be compensated by all the learning of the schools.

The Mechanics pretend to nothing more, than having a claim from nature, to their share in this inestimable favour, in common with Emperors and Kings, and, were it safe to carry the comparison still higher, they would say with William-Henry Drayton himself; who, in his great condescension, has been pleased to allow us a place amongst human beings: But whether it might have happened from an ill construction of his sensory, or his upper works being damaged by some rough treatment of the person who conducted his birth, we know not; however, so it is, that to us, he seems highly defective in this point, whatever exalted notions he may entertain of his own abilities.

By attending to the dictates of common sense, the Mechanics have been able to distinguish between RIGHT and WRONG; in doing which indeed no great merit is claimed.

Mr. Drayton may value himself as much as he pleases, on his having had a liberal education bestowed on him, tho' the good fruits thereof have not hitherto been conspicuous either in his public or private life: He ought however to know, that this is not so absolutely necessary to these, who move in the low sphere of mechanical employments. But still, though he pretends to view them with so contemptuous and oblique an eye, these men hope, that they are in some degree useful to society, without presuming to make any comparisons between themselves and him, except with regard to love for their country.

Surely, no parish in this province, will ever think it prudent, to trust their interests in such hands, for the time to come? Besides, who can say he ever shewed any capacity for business, when he was honoured with a seat in the House of Assembly?

Mr. Drayton may be assured, that so far from
being ashamed of our trades, we are in the highest degree thankful to our friend, who put us in the way of being instructed in them; and that we bless God for giving us strength and judgement to pursue them, in order to maintain our families, with a decency suitable to their stations in life. Every man is not so lucky as to have a fortune ready provided to his hand, either by his own or his wife’s parents, as has been his lot; nor ought it to be so with all men; and Providence accordingly hath wisely ordained otherwise, by appointing the greatest part of mankind, to provide for their support by manual labour; and we will be bold to say, that such are the most useful people in a community.  

No less than the mechanics, other members of the South Carolina jumped all over Drayton for his arrogance, maintaining that the artisans were "the bones and sinews of society; and in any general plan, are as much to be regarded, where their liberties and properties are equally at stake, as any others whatever." Eventually, Drayton became so unpopular that he was ostracized by the white community; therefore he temporarily sought refuge in England.  

If, as the story of William Henry Drayton suggests, few elites dared to claim political office on the basis of superior rank and social position, then how do we explain gentry dominance in the colony? Ironically, John Drayton, William Henry’s eldest son and one of South Carolina’s earliest social analysts, provides us with perhaps the best, and certainly the most succinct, answer to the question. During the twenty years before the Revolution, Drayton observed in his View of South Carolina, published in 1802,
"all governmental power was a delegation of authority by ordinary property owners." Government, in other words, was, according to Drayton, consensual. This suggests that gentry predominance remained secure only so long as the mass of white, independent, adult males supported it.\textsuperscript{86}

One body of evidence in particular serves both to underscore and give added meaning to Drayton's "view": turnover rates among elected representatives to the South Carolina Commons House of Assembly. The table and graph that follow present the results for South Carolina of a recent quantitative study conducted by Jack P. Greene on colonial legislative turnover rates. In Table 2.2, column I lists the number of elections in each decade from 1696 to 1775, while columns II and III indicate respectively the median and mean rates of turnover. Column IV presents decennial deviations from the mean for all elections.

Table 2.2

Legislative Turnover in Colonial South Carolina, 1696-1775\textsuperscript{87}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>II</th>
<th>III</th>
<th>IV</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1696-1705</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>58.4</td>
<td>53.0</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1706-1715</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>69.1</td>
<td>69.8</td>
<td>13.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1716-1725</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>61.0</td>
<td>58.0</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1726-1735</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>46.1</td>
<td>44.0</td>
<td>-9.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1736-1745</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>69.7</td>
<td>66.5</td>
<td>14.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1746-1755</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>62.4</td>
<td>68.0</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1756-1765</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>43.5</td>
<td>46.0</td>
<td>-12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1766-1775</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>34.7</td>
<td>25.5</td>
<td>-20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Elections</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>55.5</td>
<td>54.0</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 2.3 illustrates graphically the actual turnover rate for each election based on extant data; the smooth line provides a far more general barometer of the direction of temporal change.

Figure 2.3
Electoral Histogram, 1696-1775

It must be remembered that the figures in Table 2.2 and the graphic illustration in Figure 2.3 seriously underestimate the extent to which continuity increased over time because a substantial proportion of replacements were not wholly "new" members without previous stints in the legislature. In fact, independent analysis suggests that over one-third of the replacements after 1750 had previously
served in the same body. 89

What does this data tell us? A complete answer would probably require a full-blown electoral history of the colony, but three general--albeit highly conjectural and speculative--observations can be made. First, the general pattern of legislative turnover seems to confirm what Eugene Sirmans has said about the overall character of South Carolina politics during the colonial era, namely that the mid-1740s "marked the end of an old era in the colony's political history and the beginning of a new one."

"Provincial politics," Sirmans tells us, "had followed a roughly rhythmical pattern of chaotic disputes and compromise settlements" through the third decade of the eighteenth century. Afterwards, however, as the gentry-dominated Commons House of Assembly began its steady accent to power, "the old cycle of conflict and compromise disappeared and was replaced by an enduring internal harmony [and] a lasting political peace." Legislative turnover rates followed much the same course. Prior to the mid-1740s, decennial mean turnover was unstable and remained relatively high, generally fluctuating between 50 and 70 percent, but thereafter it began to decline steadily. In the decade immediately preceding the American Revolution, it had dipped to 34.7 percent, a figure similar to the incredibly stable late eighteenth-century British House of Commons. 90
Second, the pattern of legislative turnover suggests that, especially after midcentury, the Commons House probably became increasingly expert. As members were reelected with more frequency, they presumably gained more and more experience, skill, knowledge, and political savvy. Legislative continuity, in other words, more than likely produced legislative competence. If this were indeed true, and there are few indications to indicate otherwise, then the Commons House would have been better able to cope with various problems that arose in the colony that demanded their attention.

Third, the decline in turnover rates after the mid-1740s seems to imply very strongly that, as Robert Weir has pointed out, the vast majority of the free population was not "generally unhappy with the conduct and performance of its leading men," particularly as the gentry became more politically expert, as they developed more extensive and deeply rooted personal, social, and economic ties among themselves and with the general populace, as a common devotion to personal independence forged a powerful consensus among the white community, and--perhaps most important of all--as an omnipotent racism emerged in the colony which not only made an independent status available to the vast majority of whites but also gave added meaning to that status. Indeed, with no major vertical or horizontal social fissures among free whites, it is hardly
surprising to find that levels of dissatisfaction on the part of the electorate, manifest in rates of turnover, steadily declined, and that the gentry-dominated Commons House increasingly enjoyed broad, consensual public support.

In addition to a decline in legislative turnover rates, analysis of election returns indicates that there was a contemporaneous decline in voter participation, suggesting that the electorate, which consisted of a vast majority of the free white adults males in the colony, became more and more depoliticized after midcentury. By no means, however, were the lower and middling sorts simply becoming truckling jackstraws who deferred to men of rank in "matters of statecraft." Indeed, far from being caught up in some oppressive hegemonic relationship with an all-powerful, aristocratic "political class," most members of the electorate seem to have been, for the most part, increasingly indifferent to politics and government. Accordingly, the broad, consensual relationship that was developing between voters and their representatives rested not on obsequious deference, but on passive endorsement.

At root, the relative lack of public concern with politics and government during the colonial period was a direct consequence of the profoundly private orientation of the electorate in South Carolina. For the mass of the independent population, egocentric and familial concerns assumed precedence over all else. Preoccupied with yearly
subsistence, the long term security and well-being of their family, and dedicated to improvement, most South Carolinians were, in ordinary times, indifferent to governmental institutions, provided that those institutions maintained peace and guaranteed the security of property. Indeed, like individuals elsewhere in the early modern British world, citizens in South Carolina expected very little from their government. Perhaps more than anything else, they just wanted to be let alone so that they could pursue individual goals and enjoy the fruits of their independent status. The failure of the public to take a more active role in the electoral process was thus much more a consequence of the private, extremely individualistic inclination of the electorate rather than well conditioned "habits of deference," a great metaphor, subtly packed with layers of meaning, that has been used by modern historians to describe eighteenth-century social relations.94

Although most South Carolinians expected very little from their government, sometimes they demanded more government than they had. The Regulator movement of the late 1760s serves as a case in point. As thousands of migrants poured into the backcounty after midcentury, they quickly found that existing governmental institutions were not sufficiently providing what few services they expected, services essential to their private pursuit of egotistic and familial goals. There were no sheriffs, county courts, land
officers, and other sinews of local government. Outlaws looted and pillaged property, raped women, and tortured householders "with hot irons." Accordingly, as the South Carolina Gazette noted in October 1767, "the peaceable inhabitants...in a kind of desperation...formed associations, to expel the villains from wherever they can get at them, and to do justice themselves in a summary way." While doing "justice," these "associations" or vigilante groups of independent, landowning free whites, which were organized by some of the backcountry's leading inhabitants such as Moses Kirkland, attempted to gain effective expansion of government institutions. Their demands did not fall on deaf ears. The South Carolina Commons House, dominated by an increasingly coherent, knowledgeable, and committed political elite, moved quickly to satisfy "the peaceable inhabitants" by passing the Circuit Court Act of 1768, authorizing the establishment of ranger patrols to pursue outlaw gangs, and extending representation to the backcountry. By early 1769, in the words of one contemporary, "the Country was purged of all Villains,...Tranquility reigned, [and] Industry was restor'd," enabling the inhabitants of the backcountry to focus their attention on their own individual and family concerns.95
END NOTES





18. See, for example, "Wills, Inventories, and Miscellaneous Records" (Charleston County, 1672-1779), Works Progress Administration typescript, South Carolina Department of Archives and History, Columbia, S.C.; Clowse, Measuring Charleston’s Overseas Commerce, 34-48; Carl Stein, "The Intercolonial Trade of Domestic Pottery: An Analysis of the Findings on Two South Carolina Tidewater Plantations," (M.A. thesis, University of South Carolina, 1987); South Carolina Gazette (1732-1768).


24. No less than the seaports of Georgetown, Beaufort, and Savannah, studies of the growth and development of inland towns are few and far between. Meriwether's, Expansion of South Carolina, provides some useful details, but it should be supplemented with M. G. Cumming, Two Centuries of Augusta (Atlanta, Ga., 1926); Alexander S. Salley, Jr., History of Orangeburg County (Columbia, S.C., 1898); D. A. Tompkins, History of Mecklenburg County, 2 vols. (Charlotte, N.C., 1903), I. The early history of Camden may be followed in Thomas J. Kirkland and Robert M. Kennedy, Historic Camden, Part I: Colonial and Revolutionary (Columbia, S.C., 1905); Judith J. Schulz, "The Rise and Decline of Camden as South Carolina's Major Inland Trading Center, 1751-1829: A Historical Geographic Study" (M.A. thesis, University of South Carolina, 1972), 1-56; Kenneth E. Lewis, Camden: A frontier Town in Eighteenth Century South Carolina (Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of South Carolina, 1976); Bridenbaugh, Myths and Realities, 150-51. The most informative study is Joseph A. Ernst and H. Roy Merrens, "'Camden's turrets pierce the skies!': The Urban Process in the Southern Colonies during the Eighteenth Century," William and Mary Quarterly, XXX (October 1973), 549-74, which provides a compelling organizing framework for process of urbanization in the southern backcountry, a framework that compliments, the one put forth by Earle and Hoffman in Urban Development in the
South.

25. Millhouse's name appears on a 1752 petition to the Commons House of Assembly calling for internal improvements. Believing the growth of Camden to be a win-win situation, the petitioners argued that the construction of roads and bridges would enable Camden to capitalize on the increasing commercialization of the region and contribute to the overall improvement of the backcountry and the colony as a whole. The Commons House passed an act containing the specified improvements the following year. See, The Journals of the Commons House of Assembly, May 29, 1752, South Carolina Department of Archives and History, Columbia, S.C., hereafter cited as SCCHJ; Cooper and McCard, eds., Statutes At Large of South Carolina, VII, 504-06. Millhouse also might have set up an indigo works. An inventory of his estate made in 1753 lists "three sets of indigo vats" among his possessions. Meriwether, Expansion of South Carolina, 105.

26. Meriwether, Expansion of South Carolina, 104, 136-37. The story of Moses Kirkland is discussed in more detail in the pages that follow.


28. Although the precise number of mechanics is difficult to determine, there are various references to or archaeological evidence of potters, carpenters, blacksmiths, millers, butchers, tailors, candlemakers, and weavers. Among professionals, there is one mention of an attorney, a doctor, a teacher, and several preachers. See, Meriwether, Expansion of South Carolina, 99-109, 136-46; Kirkland and Kennedy, Historic Camden, 375-383; Lewis, Camden: A Frontier Town, 16-55; Hooker, ed., Journal and other Writings of Charles Woodmason, 20.


34.


42. See pp. 11-13 above.


44. The total number of dependents in South Carolina was calculated decennially for the years 1720-1770 according to the following formula using the population statistics listed in Table 2:

Percentage Dependents = 

\[
\frac{(20\% \text{ of total number of whites}) + (\text{total number of blacks})}{\text{(total population)}}
\]

The resulting percentages are: 71 percent for 1720; 73 percent for 1730; 78 percent for 1740; 70 percent for 1750; 69 percent for 1760; and 68 percent for 1770. The decennial average (1720 to 1770) is 72 percent.


49. Wood, Black Majority, 95-238, 97 (first quotation), 229 (second quotation).


51. Quoted in Wood, Black Majority, 287.


54. Wood, Black Majority, 95-130.

55. This estimate is based on the population statistics given in Table 2. and the sources listed in footnotes 19, 23, and 24.

56. Walsh, Charleston's Sons of Liberty, 24, 57-58, 109-11, 124.


58.


63. *South Carolina Gazette*, May 21, 1737 (first quotation), August 27, 1772 (second quotation); Howe, ed., *Journal of Josiah Quincy*, 463.


65. Ibid., 103.

66. On increasing order and stability, see Robert M. Weir, "'The Harmony We Were Famous For': An Interpretation of Pre-Revolutionary South Carolina Politics," *William and Mary Quarterly*, XXXVI (October 1969), 473-501.

67. Ibid., 480-81. The quotations are drawn from Bridenbaugh, *Myths and Realities*, 57 (first quotation), 76 (second quotation).


76. Quoted in Morgan, "Work and Culture," 566.


79. Weir, "'The Harmony We Were Famous For,'" 483.


84. Ibid., 11-14.

85. Ibid., 39 (quotation); Dabney and Dargan, *William Henry Drayton*, 45-47.


88. Ibid., 453.

89. My analysis is based on Edgar, *et al.*, eds., *Biographical Directory of the House*.


92. My analysis is based on the returns listed the SCCHJ.


94. See, for example, Isaac, The Transformation of Virginia.

CHAPTER THREE

Family, Identity, and Religious Life
in the mid Eighteenth Century

I

If South Carolina society was at once becoming more complex and settled in the decades following 1720, so too were family relations among whites. As the previous sections have shown in some detail, unfavorable health conditions in the lowcountry kept white mortality rates extraordinarily high throughout much of the colonial period.¹ Continuing high mortality, in turn, had a profound effect on patterns of family life. Frequent, early, and widespread death seems to have weakened parental authority to a significant degree and, especially in an environment where few children survived to adulthood, fathers and mothers apparently sought to encourage self-assertiveness, versatility, and autonomy in their offspring. In addition, because the average life expectancy for women was greater than for men, wives probably acquired more autonomy and authority than was customary during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Further, because white inhabitants lived such short lives and because
many lived on farms and plantations scattered across the landscape, they were unable to form extensive kinship networks; accordingly, whites, through an incredibly creative process of reformulation and adaption, developed a very broad conception of the family. Households remained open and personal interaction with quasi-kin and non-kin was ubiquitous. Overall then, families in South Carolina were, comparatively speaking, more egalitarian, permissive, and open during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries than they were to become after 1750 or so.²

With a considerable improvement in life expectancy in the lowcountry, especially after midcentury, and with the settlement of the healthier regions outside the tidewater, however, the improvisational character of the family diminished somewhat. Parental authority seems to have increased, family relations appear to have become more and more patriarchal, and extensive kinship networks developed, particularly as population density increased and an ever greater number of roads, bridges, and ferries were constructed. Accordingly, as the eighteenth century progressed, family life in South Carolina became ever more traditional.³

But by no means did white families in colonial South Carolina ever assume the sort of strong, extended, highly patriarchal character of those in the late eighteenth-century Chesapeake, much less New England. Although South
Carolina families seem to have been moving in that direction, old patterns exhibited a remarkable resiliency. Indeed, despite the fact that families were apparently becoming increasingly traditional, family ties seem to have remained unusually loose, and family government continued to be relatively permissive. Several pieces of evidence tend to support this claim. John E. Crowley, for example, has found that even though "South Carolina widows' benefits from inheritance had declined by the middle of the eighteenth century, testators...gave their wives a much more valuable and independent share of their estates than was usual in northern colonies" throughout the colonial period. What is more, Crowley says, there was a persistent tendency to convey property to children at earlier ages, to discriminate against female heirs with less frequency, and to emphasize "the commercial rather than the patrimonial character of wealth." Stated differently, in South Carolina "the overall inheritance pattern was more liberal than that usually found in the British mainland colonies," and few fathers and husbands seem to have attempted to use an ironclad control of property to establish a tight patriarchal family regimen or to control marriage and occupational choices. ¹

Patterns of childrearing appear to have been equally liberal and permissive. Far from trying to instill deference and obedience in their children, parents in South
Carolina seemed to have adopted something of a *laissez faire* approach. This peculiar childbearing ethos was emphatically not, however, a result of low emotional investment in children, parental neglect, or even the fact that, as Michael Zuckerman has supposed, "mothers and fathers...did not wish to be bothered." Rather, it was a consequence of the pragmatic understanding on the part of parents that they and their children lived in a highly individualistic, competitive, dog-eat-dog world; thus, the best way to prepare children for the future was to cultivate in them a certain willfulness and self-reliance. In fact, it appears that more than anything else, parents attempted to instill independence and autonomy in their children from a very early age. To achieve that end, the usual approach of parents to their children was characterized by indulgence, tolerance, and noninterference, especially with individual freedom of choice or action. Patriarchal despotism or even a hectoring or domineering parental posture, many mothers and fathers manifestly believed, could produce negative results.  

South Carolina blacks also developed their own unique family configurations. As the previous chapters have shown, it was extremely difficult for bondspersons to form families during the early years of settlement because their numbers were few; most lived on small, widely scattered farms and plantations with no more than a handful of other slaves;
mortality and morbidity rates were high (despite the fact that blacks probably had certain epidemiological advantages over whites); forced separations were not uncommon; and there was a disproportionate male-to-female ratio of well over 2 to 1. Yet, by the early 1700s South Carolina slaves began to enjoy a more coherent and stable family life. Two developments affected more meaningful households and families. First, at some point shortly after the turn of the century, blacks were able to generate a vigorous natural increase, the probable result of a high proportion of either creole born or seasoned slaves in the Afro-Carolinian population, partial immunity to malaria and yellow fever, and a plentiful food supply deriving from the local custom of allowing each slave to cultivate a small plot of land for his or her maintenance. And, second, bondspersons quickly created elaborately structured kinship and friendship networks. A number of factors, including population growth, an increase in both population density and the size of unit holdings in the longer settled regions, South Carolina's unique method of labor organization, and the participation of slaves in the colony's vigorous internal marketing system, facilitated the growth of these networks.

The intensification of the staple-based plantation system and the subsequent importation of thousands of African bondspersons during the middle decades of the eighteenth century placed innumerable stresses and strains
on black family life in colonial South Carolina. In contrast to the twenty or so years before 1720, slave mortality rose dramatically, sex ratios became increasing unequal, and the black population as a whole began to experience a net annual decrease, a trend that was to last until the mid-1760s. Indeed, South Carolina, like the West Indian colonies during the same period, was something of a demographic disaster area for blacks. Nevertheless, the slave family persisted in the face of adversity, for the early and widespread development of kinship and friendship networks alleviated some of the pain and suffering caused by unfavorable demographic conditions and the forced separation of loved ones.⁶

II

A discussion of family life in South Carolina during the middle decades of the eighteenth century serves as an appropriate introduction to an analysis of cultural developments, for the ebb and flow of family relations once again exposes the coexistence of two dynamic cultural impulses operating within the inhabitants' world, impulses that shaped their normative value system and powerfully affected prevailing perceptions, institutions, social forms, and modes of behavior. As Chapter 1 has shown in more detail, the first of these impulses involved a powerful
mimetic tendency, a not unnatural desire to recreate familiar patterns of life in the colony based on Old World values, beliefs, traditions, and ways of doing things. The second impulse, on the other hand, was driven by the necessity of adapting to the unique demographic, social, economic, and environmental configurations in the colony; it was both pragmatic and richly creative. Together, these two cultural impulses provided the fabric with which South Carolinians spun complex webs of meaning, webs that were the ultimate foundation of all social behavior.

During the first half century of settlement, South Carolinians of different races and diverse backgrounds had to learn how to live together. Most tried desperately to preserve received customs and traditions, but the necessity of adjusting to the new environment and to each other led to the emergence of an entirely new cultural construct in the colony. Forged only after intense, sometimes heated bargaining and negotiation, dealings that transcended race, ethnicity, gender, and social status, this new construct was neither African nor European. Rather, it was uniquely and distinctively Carolinian.⁷

Importantly, this process of cultural reformulation and adaption or "creolization" was nurtured by the relative openness of seventeenth- and eighteenth century race relations. It was also facilitated by the remarkable similarities between traditional African and lingering pre-
Reformation European world views that the inhabitants brought with them. There was a deep symbiotic relatedness, for example, among attitudes towards time and work, towards space and the natural world, and towards causality and purpose that helped to make much of each people's culture intelligible to the other from the beginning.⁸

Emphasizing the extent to which an entirely new cultural construct was emerging in South Carolina during the first half century of settlement does not necessarily imply that this construct achieved full intellectual legitimation, that the colonists had developed, as Daniel J. Boorstin has phrased it, "a new sense of their own identity" and a new set of values that rendered socially and morally valid prevailing modes of behavior.⁹ To be sure, Boorstin and other historians who have been particularly concerned with the question of the development of a American identity are correct in pointing up the transforming effects of rapid demographic, economic, and territorial growth in the colonies. However, these scholars seem to have considerably exaggerated the extent to which colonial British-Americans had created during the middle decades of the eighteenth century new identity models and new standards of personal conduct. In fact, there is abundant evidence from South Carolina to suggest that the process of cultural reformulation and adaption was not accompanied by the creation of new and more appropriately American values prior
to the Revolution and that the colonists in this important respect were heavily burdened by the weight of the past.¹⁰

Perhaps the clearest indication that an alternative value system did not attend the cultural transformation occurring in South Carolina is the self-consciously effort--first by the gentry and then by those situated below them--to Anglicize colonial life during the middle decades of the eighteenth century. As the colony grew older and became more heavily settled, as the economy expanded, and as the social order became ever more differentiated and complex, there was among many inhabitants a revulsion against creole forms and institutions and, simultaneously, a systematic attempt to refashion the sociocultural system more and more in the vernacular of idealized British values.¹¹

The forces bringing about the Anglicanization of South Carolina during the middle decades of the eighteenth century were numerous and varied, but a few developments are especially noteworthy. First, commerce between the colony and Great Britain expanded tremendously, especially in the three decades immediately preceding 1770. This ever greater and steady flow of goods back and forth facilitated an interchange of news and ideas and drew South Carolinians increasingly into the cultural sphere of the metropolis. Second, because its overseas possessions were becoming more and more vital to the economic well being of the country, the crown sought at the conclusion of King George's War in
1748 to reorganize the notoriously corrupt and inefficient imperial structure and expand royal authority over the American colonies. One result was that South Carolinians were pulled, somewhat inadvertently, into closer contact with English culture. Third, the long imperial wars against France and Spain provided South Carolinians with a common enemy, a foil that reinforced their Englishness. What is more, war--or the threat of invasion--often brought British regulars to the colony.\textsuperscript{12}

A fourth factor that stimulated the effort to Anglicize South Carolina--the shifting population ratio of blacks and whites--was clearly far more important than the others in effecting cultural change. For the first two generations of settlement flexibility characterized race relations and, despite prejudice, contacts between free and slave were massive, intimate, and organic. Under these conditions, transculturation was pervasive. As the black population grew and became more and more Africanized during the middle decades of the eighteenth century, however, whites became increasingly fearful and anxious. According to Peter Wood, "the apprehensions felt by white colonists gradually deepened...[and] spread out to encompass a variety of ambiguities concerning the identity of the colony and the tenuous position of the Europeans who were ostensibly its masters." Whites began to draw racial boundaries more rigidly and consciously sought to differentiate themselves
from their bondspersons, both by emphasizing black
inferiority on the one hand and by cultivating idealized
British values on the other.\textsuperscript{13}

The intensity with which South Carolinians set out to
Anglicize their society in the middle decade of the
eighteenth century was perhaps unmatched by any of their
counterparts in North America. After carefully considering
the matter, for example, David Ramsay, a prominent
physician, historian, and politician who was intensely
interested in the origins and development of an American
national culture, wrote in his \textit{History of the Revolution in
South Carolina} (1785) that the white inhabitants were "more
attached to the Mother Country than residents of the
northern provinces." Similarly, John Drayton, who was
elected governor of the state in 1800, observed in his \textit{View
of South Carolina} (1802) that "the colonists were fond
almost to excess of British manners and customs."\textsuperscript{14}

Not only was the white adherence to English values and
institutions intense, but, as several historians have
suggested, it was pervasive. In assessing a wide range of
social aspirations and achievements in the colony, for
instance, Robert Weir has concluded that "in almost every
area of life...English standards governed the behavior of
Carolinians."\textsuperscript{15} Indeed, the effort to make the province
more recognizably English was manifest--among other things--in manners, speech, and deportment; in clothing and
consumption patterns; in education and intellectual endeavors; in popular leisure activities and public social events, including horse racing, cock fighting, hunting, dances, and concerts; in the founding and development of a host of benevolent organizations, fraternal groups, and social clubs; and in the architectural style and form of both public and private buildings.

Ironically, despite the intensity and pervasiveness of the effort to cultivate idealized English values and institutions, the Anglicanization of South Carolina could never completely succeed because the conditions of life in the colony meant that the inhabitants there were, and would continue to be—as Henry Laurens put it—"differently circumstanced." 16 In other words, South Carolina had sociocultural and demographic configurations that differed in many important respects from traditional England, configurations that prevented the colonists from successfully reproducing a society that was unequivocally British. To be sure, South Carolina was demonstrably more like England itself on the eve of the American Revolution than it had been at any time before, but even then it bore little more than crude resemblance to the metropolis.

The differences were obvious. In contrast to England, South Carolina had masses of black slaves, a precarious racial balance, and a racial caste system. Its economy was far less diversified and heavily oriented toward the
production of staple commodities. Also, its physical environment was substantially different. In the hot, damp, mosquito-infested South Carolina lowcountry mortality was extremely high and English dietary patterns, clothes, and architectural preferences were grossly unsuited for the semitropical climate. What is more, the colony's free population had a higher proportion of independent property owners of middling rank and, correspondingly, fewer servants, agricultural tenants, and others of dependent status. There was less poverty and social inequality and more ethnic and religious diversity. Additionally, South Carolina society was more open and fluid, traditions of subordination in the colony were weak, and the authority of the provincial elites seems to have been less secure and based more on public opinion and less on patronage than the English gentry. Finally, the institutional infrastructure in the colony (courts, schools, churches, etc.) was obviously much less well developed. In sum, despite the intense and pervasive effort to Anglicize South Carolina during the middle decades of the eighteenth century, the colony was far from simply being, as one hopeful observer offhandedly boasted, "Great Britain itself in Miniature."  

Contemporaries were well aware of the significant differences between South Carolina and England. Although many of them, such as Robert Pringle, took much pride in the fact that they had "by their great industry, improved and
cultivated the colony to so great maturity," and gloried that theirs was the most "polite...opulent and flourishing colony on the British Continent of America," it was painfully obvious that, despite their most persistent efforts to Anglicize local institutions and ways of life, South Carolina remained unmistakably provincial. The differences between South Carolina and England served as an unwelcome reminder of how far away they were from a full improved sociocultural existence. As a result, there was something resembling a colonial anxiety attack, a condition that seems to have greatly intensified during the middle decades of the eighteenth century and was manifest in the growing volume of complaints about virtually all areas of colonial life.\textsuperscript{19}

What was so disturbing about colonial life? At first glance, it seems like almost everything, ranging from "THE TOO COMMON PRACTICE of CRIMINAL CONVERSATION with NEGRO and other SLAVE WENCHES," to the noticeable tendency of whites to "talk like Negroes," to the rise of "slothful Indolence" among the inhabitants, to the seeming "absence in Carolina of all ideas and habits of subordination and dependence."\textsuperscript{20}

However, upon closer examination it is clear that what the chorus of complaints implicitly and explicitly focused on was the powerful, dynamic cultural impulse that was at work to a very large extent from the very beginning, an impulse that has been subsumed within the context of this study
under the general rubric of creolization. For many South Carolinians this impulse represented a malignant force, an "Epidemical disease," that, if left unchecked, threatened to reduce them to a condition that approximated philosopher Thomas Hobbes' state of nature. This fear only intensified the desire to cultivate British values and institutions.

If, however, the Anglicanization of South Carolina helped to mitigate deep cultural insecurities, it also trapped the colony in a pervasive cultural dichotomy and prevented the inhabitants from coming to terms with who they were and what they had become. For not only were many treasured British values, institutions, and modes of behavior noticeably infelicitous to a people who were "differently circumstanced," but the continuing reliance on the metropolis for normative value references inhibited the colonists from spinning entirely new webs of significance, webs that would more accurately correspond with the conditions of life in South Carolina. As a result, there was an ever greater disparity between values and behavior.21

III

The brief examination, in sections I and II of this chapter, of familial and cultural developments, together with the material presented in the Chapters 1 and 2, is not
intended to provide a *histoire totale* of colonial South Carolina. Rather, it is intended to provide the necessary foundations and context for understanding the thrust and character of religion in the colony during the half century or so immediately preceding the American Revolution. For, as Samuel S. Hill, one of the most influential historians of southern religion, has recently noted, "any serious treatment of southern religious history must consider how religion is related to developments in other aspects of southern life...as time passes."²²

The history of religion in colonial South Carolina has been a neglected subject. This neglect testifies to the widely held conviction among most historians that religious concerns did not assume the importance in South Carolina and the South in general as they did in New England and the Middle Colonies. According to conventional wisdom, there was--for a variety of reasons--an almost complete breakdown of institutional religion and a concomitant rise in secularism in southern colonies, and, although there were occasional, isolated religious revivals after the 1740s, there was no significant reversal in this trend until the so-called second Great Awakening at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Hence, in emphasizing the discontinuities between the intensely religious early national period and the spiritually flabby, if not profoundly secular, colonial period, historians have--to one
degree or another--tended to belittle the importance of
religion in the pre-Revolutionary Era. Indeed, even Samuel
Hill confessed that "the history of religion in the South
before it was the South--rather only a geographical
territory of colonies and people until the Revolutionary
era--is, in all candor, not very impressive." 23

The assumption that South Carolinians were awash in a
sea of religious apathy is based on a wide range of
evidence--estimates of church adherence, contemporary
observations, and the paucity of trained ministers, for
example--and, on the surface at least, there might seem to
be little reason to challenge the conventional wisdom.
However, there are many problems with the traditional view,
not the least of which is that historians, insofar as they
have shown any explicit concern with the subject, have far
too often confined their investigations of religion to the
role of a particular denomination, especially to the Church
of England, to the experience of a single racial or ethnic
group, or to the life and work of a single individual;
moreover, in all but a very few cases, they have made very
little effort to relate their findings to the larger picture
of religion during the colonial period. While these studies
have added greatly, if somewhat unevenly, to our knowledge,
the narrow focus of past work has contributed to a lack of
overall coherence, for the varied lines of investigation
have produced such an plethora of special cases that it is
difficult to make meaningful generalizations about the whole.

The failure of historians to provide a wholistic view notwithstanding, the most serious problem with the traditional interpretation of religion in colonial South Carolina is by far conceptual. Most historians, using the gemeinschaft-gesellschaft model to explain the general contours of early modern historical development, have argued that the story of religion in early America is primarily one of "declension," a pervasive and steady transition from religious to secular ideologies. Although this conceptual framework may help to explain much of the history of the Puritan settlers in New England and, to a considerably lesser extent, some of the other utopian religious groups scattered throughout the colonies, particularly the Quakers in Pennsylvania, it fundamentally distorts the general picture of religion in early America. Indeed, as Patricia C. Bonomi has recently shown, there is very little evidence to support the idea of religious declension outside New England.24

Despite this fundamental conceptual misunderstanding and the inherent problems with the secondary scholarship now available on the subject, it is still entirely possible that the conventional wisdom concerning religion in colonial South Carolina is essentially correct. Therefore, it is necessary to examine closely the surviving literary and
material evidence to test further some of the traditional assumptions concerning the thrust and character of religion in the colony. This task will be undertaken in the pages that follow.

In attempting to understand the nature of religion in colonial South Carolina, the overall rate of church building is instructive, for it provides a reasonably sound quantitative base for evaluating the assumption that the inhabitants paid but scant attention to religion. Table 3.1 provides for every denomination represented in South Carolina a general, decennial overview of the number of churches established in the century following the construction of the colony’s first church, St. Philip’s, in 1681. Figure 3.1 illustrates the data graphically. In general it must be kept in mind that there are qualitative differences in these church statistics. For example, 10 Anglican churches is not the equivalent of 10 Baptist churches because one Anglican church normally served many more people than one Baptist church. Accordingly, one must be careful when making comparisons among the various denominations represented in South Carolina concerning the relative strength and weakness based solely on the number of churches constructed.
### Table 3.1

Church Building in Colonial South Carolina, 1681-1780

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Denomination</th>
<th>1681-1690</th>
<th>1691-1700</th>
<th>1701-1710</th>
<th>1711-1720</th>
<th>1721-1730</th>
<th>1730 To</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anglican</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baptist</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congregational</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French Reformed</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewish</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German Reformed</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lutheran</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moravian</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presbyterian</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quaker</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unitarian</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>7</strong></td>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td><strong>10</strong></td>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td><strong>34</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 3.1 (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Denomination</th>
<th>1731-1740</th>
<th>1741-1750</th>
<th>1751-1760</th>
<th>1761-1770</th>
<th>1771-1780</th>
<th>All Years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anglican</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baptist</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congregational</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French Reformed</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewish</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German Reformed</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lutheran</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moravian</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presbyterian</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quaker</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unitarian</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>12</strong></td>
<td><strong>15</strong></td>
<td><strong>31</strong></td>
<td><strong>31</strong></td>
<td><strong>40</strong></td>
<td><strong>161</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In the table and graph, the word "church" is used in a very strict, under-representative sense. It refers only to a permanent house of worship; chapels of ease, preaching stations, rooms set aside in private residences, and temporary meeting places are not included in the computations. This is the definition that was used by many contemporaries. For example, David Humphreys remarked in 1730 that "tho' there was scarce any Face of the Church of England in this Province, when this Society was first established [1701], there have been 13 Churches, and 4
Chapels of Ease since built..." Twenty five years latter, a Presbyterian minister noted that "at Waxhaws there is but one Church of logs, but there are pretty large congregations of Presbyterian people...who gather at Thomas Farrel's about three miles distant and cross the Catawba river under the trees." 

Perhaps the most striking fact to emerge from this data, a fact most dramatically illustrated by Figure 3.1, is the steady long-term increase in church building in South Carolina throughout the colonial period. Only in the 1710s was there a significant departure from the overall trend. During this time, war, economic instability, and political chaos--among other things--held expansion in check. The Yamasse War (1715-1718) in particular had a devastating impact on church growth, especially in the region below Charleston. The two organized Anglican parishes of St. Helena and St. Bartholomew, both located south of the Edisto River, were, for instance, totally abandoned during the fighting; buildings were burned, livestock was butchered or driven off, and the cultivation of crops was halted for years. Indeed, so devastating was the war's impact that one contemporary remarked in 1730 that the colony's southern border had "not yet recovered from the ravages of the Yamasse War." 

Even with the short term deviation from the larger pattern during the second decade of the eighteenth century,
the most vivid impression to emerge from inspection of the table and graph above remains the gradual, steady increase in church building in colonial South Carolina. Between 1690 and 1740 the number of churches rose by more than a factor of six, increasing from seven to 44. Over the next forty years, the number of churches grew nearly fourfold, reaching 161 by 1780. The most pronounced increases occurred in the decades 1701-1710, 1731-1740, 1750-1760, and 1771-1780.

Not surprisingly, church building in colonial South Carolina followed closely the pattern of settlement. Before 1750 there were no permanent houses of worship above the fall line. After midcentury, however, approximately 67 of the 102 churches constructed (66%) were situated in the upcountry. In both regions, upcountry and lowcountry, the vast majority of churches were located in rural areas and, because many of the first permanent houses of worship were built in Charleston, a declining proportion of churches were located in towns between 1690 and 1780. Nevertheless, a substantial number of churches were situated in urban centers. On the eve of the American Revolution, for example, 18 of the 161 churches in the colony (11%) were located in towns. Charleston had 10 permanent houses of worship; Georgetown had three; Beaufort and Camden both had two; and Orangeburg had one. In sum, churches were visibly present in every section of the colony, except the far frontier.
In view of the pattern of church building, it is somewhat puzzling that historians have supposed that no more than five percent of colonial South Carolinians were church adherents during the eighteenth century.\textsuperscript{31} Could it be that all these churches were empty? The answer, quite simply, is no. Conventional estimates as to the proportion of the population that was "churched" are not only highly conjectural but fundamentally misleading. Part of the problem stems from the fact that only formal members (i.e. those who participated in a formal right of admission) are considered by scholars to be "churched" or "church adherents." However, eighteenth-century religious bodies, no less than their modern counterparts, defined membership very differently. Some churches--the Church of England, for example--counted as formal members only those individuals who communed, others, such as the Particular Baptists, counted only baptized adults, while others counted all who attended church on a regular basis, as did most Quakers. To complicate matters even further, many churches modified their definition of membership during the colonial period so that the relationship between formal church members and nonmembers at any given point in time is largely a matter of conjecture. Thus, formal church membership is an inadequate measure of the churched population. A much more meaningful index of church adherence, as Patricia U. Bonomi and Peter R. Eisenstadt have shown, is regular church attendance.\textsuperscript{32}
While it is by no means a totally accurate predicator, regular church adherence is inclusive rather than exclusive, balancing out some of the variables described above. Moreover, attendance was increasingly used by colonial clergymen as the single most important criteria when determining church strength as the eighteenth century progressed.

By far the most valuable source of data on church adherence in colonial South Carolina is the Bishop of London’s 1724 survey of the Anglican church in British America. Endeavoring to better understand the "present State of Religion" abroad, the bishop, who was responsible for supervising the Church of England in America, sent to every parish priest in the colonies a written questionnaire which asked the following questions:

(1) "Of what Extent is your Parish, and how many Families are there in it?"

(2) "How often is divine Service performed in your Church? And what Proportion of the Parishioners attend it?"

(3) "How often is the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper administered? And what is the usual Number of Communicants?"

Nine responses were received from South Carolina and, although the nature and usefulness of the accompanying insights varied, every one of the ministers answered all of the bishop’s questions. 33 Answers to three of the questions—the total number of white families in the parish, the total number of churchgoers or regular church
attendants, and the total number of communicants—are of particular importance in attempting to measure church adherence. Thus, Table 3.2 provides a general overview of those responses.\textsuperscript{34}

Table 3.2

South Carolina Responses to Bishop of London’s 1724 Survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parish Name</th>
<th>Total # of White Families</th>
<th>Total # of Attendants</th>
<th>Total # of Communicants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Christ Church</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>&quot;70 persons come constantly&quot;</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Andrew’s</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>&quot;60 or 70 families do attend&quot;</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Dennis</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>&quot;commonly between 50 and 60&quot;</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. George’s</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>&quot;40 or 50&quot; whites &amp; &quot;25 or 30 Negroes&quot;</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. James, Goose Creek</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>&quot;150 parishioners constantly attend&quot;</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. James, Santee</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>&quot;ordinarily&quot; 100 to 120 &quot;and more&quot;</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. John’s</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>&quot;seldom less than 50 or 60&quot;</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Philip’s</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>&quot;on Sundays seldom less than 400&quot;</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Thomas</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>&quot;120 ordinarily attend&quot;</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Before hazarding an analysis of church adherence, a few mild caveats concerning the information in Table 3.2 are in order. First, when estimating the "total" number of families in their parish, some ministers apparently derived
their figures from jury lists which recorded only the number of taxpayers (a resident had to pay twenty shillings or more in taxes to qualify as a juror), while others seem to have based their estimate on the total number of householders, a small percentage of whom obviously paid no tax. Unfortunately, extant data do not permit us to rectify this discrepancy; accordingly, the number of families reported in each parish should be viewed, like the total number of church adherents, as rough estimates. Second, a close examination of the responses reveals that only adult churchgoers, age 16 or older, were reported. Finally, while almost every minister painstakingly told of his trials and triumphs in attempting to catechize and convert slaves, only one minister, Francis Varnard of St. George’s Parish, included detailed figures as to the number of black church attendants and communicants in his report. This is particularly frustrating, for even though the vast majority of bondspersons in South Carolina remained outside the Christian church before the second half of the eighteenth century, scattered bits of evidence suggest that many attended church regularly during this time, albeit few were formal members.\(^{35}\)

Clearly, there are certain problems with the ministerial responses to the Bishop of London’s 1724 questionnaire concerning colonial Anglicanism, but the nine reports contain information that permit us to reconstruct
the general pattern of church adherence at time when South Carolina was experiencing a profound social transformation, a transformation that was precipitated by the rapid spread of rice culture and, as the previous sections have shown, was manifest in virtually all areas of colonial life. Since the ministers provide us with the approximate number of white families in their respective parishes, it is possible to estimate the total number of white inhabitants in each parish by using the standard multiplier of five. Assuming that roughly one half of the population was under age 16, then the total number of white adults in each parish can be calculated by multiplying the total number inhabitants in each parish by 2.5.\textsuperscript{36} The resulting total checks remarkably well with contemporary estimates. For example, Charles Woodmason, an Anglican minister working in South Carolina during the second half of the eighteenth century, wrote "not above 2 or 3 out of any family...attend Divine Service at one Time."\textsuperscript{37}

Of course, not all white adults in South Carolina were potential adherents of the Church of England. In fact, although the Anglican church was established as the official state church by the Church Act of 1706, dissenters were proportionally more numerous throughout most of the colonial period. Therefore, in order to estimate the number of would-be Anglicans in each parish, it is necessary to make adjustments for the sizable percentage of dissenters.
Figure 3.2

Estimated Percentage of Anglicans
in Nine South Caroliana Parishes, 1710-1730

The most precise data concerning the ratio of Anglicans to dissenters is the correspondence of the S.P.G. As Figure 3.2 indicates, letters received by the Society from South Carolina between 1710 and 1730 suggest that the proportion of Anglicans in the nine parishes from which reports were filed ranged between 50 and 100 percent.38 The accuracy of
these figures is open to question, for there is some indication that they might be overly optimistic. Nevertheless, the percentages do give us a general idea of the overall pattern. Moreover, if these figures understate the presence of dissenters in each parish, then the following estimates of Anglican church adherence would be correspondingly higher.

Within the context established by the abovementioned data, which provides the basis for the table below, it is possible to estimate Anglican church adherence in 1724. In Table 3.3, column I indicates the number of potential white Anglican churchgoers in each parish, column II the number of regular church attendants, column III the percentage of potential Anglicans regularly attending church, and column IV the percentage of Anglican communicants. As the table clearly shows, there was wide variation among the parishes in the percentage of regular attendants, ranging from a high of 96 percent in St. Thomas to a low of 34 percent in Christ Church, and the percentage of communicants, St. James, Santee, with 33 percent, having the greatest and St. James, Goose Creek, with 7 percent, the smallest. However, the mean for all nine parishes was 63 percent and 20 percent respectively, with a median of 42 percent of the regular church attendants communicating.
Table 3.3
Anglican Church Adherence in
Nine South Carolina Parishes, 1724

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parish</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>II</th>
<th>III</th>
<th>IV</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Christ Church</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Andrew’s</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Dennis</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. George’s</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. James, Goose Creek</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. James, Santee</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. John’s</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Philip’s</td>
<td>656</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Thomas</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mean</strong></td>
<td>222</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Two important observations can be made on the basis of Table 3.3. First, to include as churched only those persons who were communicants would obviously understate Anglican church adherence in 1724, for most faithful adherents were not formal members. Even so, roughly one fifth of the eligible white population communicated regularly, a figure that is remarkably similar to those characteristic of English parishes during the first half of the eighteenth century. Second, and far more important, if these figures are a reasonably accurate indicator of the normative
pattern of church adherence in colonial South Carolina, then conventional estimates as to the proportion of the white population that was churched--however defined--are far too low and need to be revised upward.

Unfortunately data comparable to those offered in the table above do not exist for earlier or latter periods or for other religious groups, making it difficult to measure interdenominational change throughout the colonial era. However, contemporary comments seem to indicate that a substantial proportion of the population attended church regularly during the eighteenth century. Moreover, the number of churches rose in a very close ratio to population growth in the century following 1680, suggesting that rates of church adherence as measured by attendance remained fairly steady.

To be sure, reports of religious "indifference" were ubiquitous throughout the colonial period. However, in contemporary usage indifference was a synonym for latitudinarianism; it connoted unorthodox behavior or a lack of denominational loyalty--not unconcern, disinterest, or apathy as many historians have previously supposed. For example, after observing that some Anglican ministers did not use the Book of Common Prayer during services but followed their own form "after the dissenting manner," Gideon Johnston, the bishop of London's official representative in the colony, warned his Anglican colleagues
in 1711 that they could not "legally pretend to any latitude or indifference in things which are legally established and are an Essential part of...the Church of England."  
Almost twenty years later, Mr. Hunt, rector of St. John's Parish, noted that while people in his charge were "true blue Protestants of the modern Stamp," many were "Latitudinarian in Protestantism...and do not imagine much real difference in Principle' twixt Churchmen & and Dissenters of all Denominations."  

Thus, while many contemporaries noted that South Carolinians were "indifferent in matters of religion" it does not necessarily follow that the inhabitants were irreligious or apathetic. In fact, some colonists seem to have been both religious and indifferent. Ann Manigault, for instance, was known to have been a pious Anglican, rigorous in her religious commitment, and a regular churchgoers. Yet, in 1755, she not only "went to hear a Quaker preacher [Sohpia Hume]" but also "went to hear Mr. [George] Whitefield preach."  

Similarly, Henry Laurens, who was an Anglican vestryman and "a strict and exemplary" churchgoer, wrote that he would be willing to "take communion in the Congregational meeting" if no Anglican minister were present to administer the sacraments.  

In addition to the comments of Manigault and Laurens, many features of religious life in colonial South Carolina reveal a growing capacity for accommodation among an
increasingly differentiated and complex population. Indeed, in several important respects, the intermingling of peoples of diverse cultural backgrounds seems to have slowly edged South Carolinians toward a habit of compromise and an enhanced capacity for toleration and acceptance of religious diversity. However, religious pluralism did not cripple religious development or lead to increasing secularism as many historians have suggested. In fact, there is some evidence that suggests that religious diversity actually promoted competition among the various denominations in South Carolina, giving the colony's religious institutions a vitality that would have been absent under an ecclesiastical monopoly.

Pluralism was, of course, only one of many factors that gave organized religion in colonial South Carolina an improvisational character. To one degree or another, as Chapter 1 has emphasized, all churches in the colony were forced to adapt themselves to the new environment. One of the most important developments that resulted from this complicated process of adaption was the tendency in all transplanted churches to gravitate toward congregationalism or local church autonomy. The Church of England serves as the most obvious case in point. Although Anglicanism was established as the state church by the Church Act of 1706, its ecclesiastical hierarchy remained underdeveloped throughout the colonial period; thus, lay control over
religious matters was extensive and a de facto congregational form emerged. Anglican vestries, for instance, not only administered the property of the church but assumed the power to hire and dismiss parish ministers. In addition, a closed corporation of commissioners supervised ministerial elections and had other supervisory powers over the establishment.45

No less than the Church of England, the Presbyterian church also moved in the direction of ever greater congregational control. As Leonard J. Trinterud has shown, colonial Presbyterians very quickly "began to assert themselves within the Church in the form of a demand for a greater participation by laymen in the life of the Church." In addition to seeking "the right to choose their elders rather than have them nominated by the minister and elected by the session...congregations became more and more assertive in their rights regarding the calling and the retention of their ministers." Although Presbyterians never secured as much local control as Anglican parishioners, lay "power in the Church at large" was, according to Trinterud, "very great" nonetheless.46

Similar developments occurred in the other denominations in colonial South Carolina, despite the fact that most were already congregationally organized. Indeed, lay control over religious affairs seems everywhere to have been extensive. As a consequence, religious institutions
exerted only weak authority, and relations between ministers and their congregations were sometimes strained.\textsuperscript{47}

Although scholars have long appreciated the fact that the laity were in a position to wield decisive power in every denomination, the social sources of this persistent localism have never been explore in depth. However, from the perspective supplied by the detailed characterization of the colony’s social schema presented in Chapter 2, it seems entirely plausible to suggest that local rule by laypersons was a direct outgrowth of the militantly independent, profoundly privatistic orientation of the vast majority of the free population in South Carolina. Indeed, it might be argued that lay control over religious affairs was just one more manifestation of the intense desire to preserve personal independence. For many contemporaries manifestly believed, like the Scottish philosopher David Hume, that "the doctrine of a blind obedience, in what religion soever it be found...is the destruction of the liberty and consequently of all the happiness of any nation."\textsuperscript{48} The Reverend Andrew Leslie reported in 1736, for instance, that the notion had "been zealously propagated throughout the province" that "the Clergy are a tyrannical sort of men, who study nothing so much as to enslave the Laity; that therefore they ought to be kept depending, for it is better one man should depend upon a Parish than that a whole Parish should depend upon one Man." \textsuperscript{49}
Whatever the precise sources of lay control in colonial South Carolina, the weakness of institutional authority in general and of clerical authority in particular meant that ministers, regardless of their particular denomination, were in no way independent, as Leslie's observation so powerfully suggests. In other words, their authority, no less than members of the South Carolina Commons House of Assembly, rested on a popular base; consequently, they had to be very sensitive to the wishes of their congregations, following, as one perceptive cleric put it, "the humor and prejudices of the people." 50

This was a lesson that Gideon Johnston, the bishop of London's Commissary in South Carolina from 1708 to 1716 and a staunch defender of episcopal authority, clerical privilege, and church doctrine and forms, learned the hard way. Shortly after arriving in the colony, Johnston discovered that "Episcopal Authority and Jurisdiction" in the province was "Extremely deprest if not almost quite sunk"; moreover, the laity acted "as if it were their undoubted right to command the Clerk, nay & the Minister too in matters relating to the Divine Service in the Church." Accordingly, he attempted to have, as he put it, "the old Brittanick Episcopal way of Institution &c settled here as it is at home" and made a determined effort to enforce conformity to Anglican liturgy and procedures, boldly declaring that no minister should be "a mere nose of wax, a
vile worthless thing, who was to be instructed every moment by his People what he should do and how he should behave himself in the performance of his Duty." 51

Not surprisingly, Commissary Johnston met with opposition from the laity at every turn and, ultimately, he never succeeded in reforming the "senseless and ridiculous Church Government" of South Carolina. Johnston was similarly unsuccessful in enjoining South Carolina Anglicans to abandon their low church tendencies; indeed, laypersons, accustomed to makeshift spiritual arrangements and influenced by their dissenting neighbors, resented practices and procedures that seemed to them senseless or unsuited to local conditions. 52 For example, one parishioner, Charles Burnham, warned Johnston in no uncertain terms that "in case I cannot have you to Cresend my Children at my hows I can have them Cresend by a dissenter Minister which I don't Dout but they will git as sone to Heaven that way as the other which is all from him that is a lover of all Christians whilst I am." 53

IV

At the same time that lay influence burgeoned in colonial South Carolina, the spiritual and ideological conception of Christianity was rapidly being transformed by a movement known as Pietism. Originating first in the
Lutheran churches of Germany in the late seventeenth century, and then spreading rapidly throughout the established churches of Western Europe and America, Pietism was basically a reaction to the scholasticism and formalism that had come to characterize Protestantism. The author of the movement was Philipp Jakob Spener (1635-1705), a Lutheran clergyman in Frankfurt who began in 1670 to hold private conferences in his house with devoutly inclined people, in which the Scriptures were explained with a view solely to the promotion of inward piety instead of the inculcation of dogmatic beliefs. In a book entitled *Pia Desideria* (1675), Spener sought to bring the Lutheran Church back to its original principle. That church, the foundation principle of which was, for Luther, Christian faith in the heart and acceptance of the Scriptures as the supreme rule of life and belief, had become, according to the author, a creed-bound institution with an inflexible system. In the pulpits, he argued, the dogmas of the creeds were continually expounded and defended, while the Bible was made of no account by preachers and pastors, in the theological schools or in the family. To Spener and other friends of the new movement, the true pastoral work of the Christian ministry, that of forwarding the moral and spiritual welfare of the people, was in desuetude. To remedy these evils, Spener proposed in his work: cultivation of devout study of the Scriptures in private meetings; recognition of the
Christian priesthood of all the faithful by giving to the laity a share in the government of the church; insistence, in pulpit discourse, upon the necessity of vital personal piety; "kindly persuasion" instead of polemic bitterness in dealing with "heretics and unbelievers"; making theological seminaries schools of personal piety no less than of doctrine; and banishing from the pulpit the "tricks of rhetoric" and substituting heart-to-heart hortation to Christian faith and love.  

Spener's book made an immediate and deep impression throughout Germany among the laity; however, it furrowed the brows of many orthodox Lutheran theologians. At the University of Leipzig some of the religiously inspired students and docents of the theological school formed themselves into a society for study of the Scriptures. Soon members of the society began to conduct courses of practical exposition and application of the sacred text, to which students and some of the townspeople eagerly resorted. Church authorities became alarmed and the lectures were quickly suppressed by the government. Accordingly, the young theologians left and, together with Spener, founded the University of Halle in 1694. Thereafter, Halle became the epicenter of Pietism, a movement that quickly reverberated throughout the Protestant Atlantic world.

Conceived and projected as a movement within churches aimed at the revitalization of the personal religious life
of the members, Pietism tended to develop its own patterns of doctrine and polity over time. However, the striking thing about the whole pietistic movement, as A.N. Whitehead has pointed out, was that it was "singularly devoid of new ideas." Pietists, wanting to recapture the dynamic quality of life which was thought to have motivated the ancient church, aspired to a reprivitiation of the apostolic ways. Re-creation, not innovation, was their aim. They stressed that religion should be a matter between God and the individual without overly burdensome institutional mediation. While assuring the validity and continuance of traditional church standards and practices, Pietists tended to make personal religious experience more important than assent to correctly formulated belief, adherence to creedal statements, and proper observance of traditional forms. The essence of the true church, pietists manifestly believed, was the voluntary association of like-minded and like-hearted individuals who had experienced a "new birth."

Of course, to defenders of traditional Protestant patterns of doctrine and polity, Pietism, just as any departure from established norms, seemed to be the seed-bed for the dreaded religious "enthusiasm," conjuring up visions of an imminent upsurge of familism, antinomianism, mysticism, and anabaptism. In many important respects, their concerns were justified, for clearly the movement was capable of setting individuals adrift by breaking their
sense of continuity with the Christian past while scattering the content of the faith. However, Pietists were not simply social radicals intent on disrupting the class structure. In fact, they were usually more than content to leave the external trappings of the social order as they stood. At best, therefore, Pietism was ambiguously "radical."

Accordingly, the impact of the movement varied widely from region to region according to a number of variables.

Pietism, of course, was the motivating force behind the evangelical revivals that swept so many congregations in colonial British America during the middle decades of the eighteenth century. Although, as Jon Butler has persuasively argued, these revivals were probably far too heterogeneous, too disconnected in time and space, and insufficiently general to constitute a continent wide "Great" Awakening of the sort invented by modern historians, they marked the beginning of a process which eventually gave the colonial religious landscape an entirely new stamp.57

The first evangelical revivals in the American colonies occurred during the second decade of the eighteenth century among the Dutch Reformed churches in New Jersey’s Raritan valley under the dynamic leadership of Reverend Theodore Jacobus Frelinghuysen, a German pietist who, like his counterparts in Europe, emphasized the individual’s personal relationship with God, a devotional life, and the necessity of being converted, or "born again" in Christ.
Freylinghuysen befriended and had a profound influence on a remarkable family of Presbyterian clerics, the Tennents. William Tennent, Sr., born in Ireland in 1673 and educated at the University of Edinburgh, had served as an Anglican minister in his native country before migrating to New York, where he became a Presbyterian minister in 1718. In 1724 he moved to Neshaminy, Pennsylvania. Of his four sons, all of whom became ministers, Gilbert, the eldest, became the most eminent.

Together, William and Gilbert Tennent, inspired by Freylinghuysen's success and sharing his pietistic zeal, fostered evangelical revivals among Presbyterians in New Jersey and Pennsylvania during the late 1720s and 1730s. In 1735 William opened a seminary at Neshaminy for the training of American Presbyterian ministers, in which emphasis was placed on revivalistic techniques and informal means of persuasion. This "log college," as it was dubbed by scornful critics, and the zealousness of the Tennents and their friends attracted the hostility of many Scotch-Irish clergy who valued and old-world education as a guarantee of orthodoxy as well as of learning and believed that novel practices might easily split the colonial church from its Scottish roots. Eventually, these disagreements resulted in open schism. Nevertheless, from the "log college" of Reverend William Tennent, Sr., there came a group of young ministers, including the three younger sons of the elder
Tennent and such leading evangelists as Samuel Blair and Samuel Finley who were vitally concerned about personal piety and experiential religious faith.\textsuperscript{58}

Shortly after outbursts of intense religious excitement began to occur among Presbyterian congregations in the Middle Colonies, Jonathan Edwards—who in 1729 succeeded his grandfather, Solomon Stoddard, as minister of the Congregational Church in Northampton, Massachusetts—instigated a revival in western New England during the mid-1730s. Presaged by earlier and more provincial "harvests" precipitated by Stoddard, and indirectly influenced by the awakenings in New Jersey and Pennsylvania, the revival first broke out in 1734 after Edwards delivered a series of five fiery sermons on justification by faith alone. Within six months, there were more than 300 conversions and, according to Edwards, "scarcely a single person in the whole town [of Northampton] was left unconcerned about the great things of the eternal world." By the spring of 1735 the revival had spread throughout the Connecticut Valley.\textsuperscript{59}

The revival in Massachusetts and Connecticut, however, no less than the earlier awakenings in the Middle Colonies, proved to be but a precursor to the incredible interdenominational religious conflagration that erupted during the spectacular preaching tour in 1739 and 1740 of George Whitefield (1714-1770), a young English evangelist. While attending Pembroke College, Oxford, where he
matriculated in 1732, Whitefield had experienced a poignant conversion in 1735 while reading German pietistic tracts; shortly thereafter he joined the Methodist Society founded by John and Charles Wesley, was ordained a deacon in the Anglican church, and began preaching the doctrine of justification by faith alone, which he considered to be "the good old faith of the Church of England." In early 1736 the "boy parson" as Whitefield was often called, preached a sermon in the city of Bristol in the west of England. His audience was amazingly large an varied and, according to his own account, "many of all denominations were obliged to return from the churches where I preached for want of room." A few months later he preached again in the same city; in one church "people hung upon the rails of the organ loft, climbed upon the leads of the church and made the church itself so hot with their breath, that the steam would fall from the pillars like drops of rain." In London "the tide of popularity now began to run very high." Indeed, Whitefield claimed that he "could no longer walk on foot as usual, but was constrained to go in a coach from place to place to avoid the hosannas of the multitude." 60

Whitefield preached a simple message: no individual could have assurance of salvation unless he or she was "born again" through a profound, disturbing realization of man’s sinfulness and God’s redemptive mercy. Mere formal churchgoing, mere formal faith, good words, or a moral life
could not bring salvation. The churches and ministers of his own day, Whitefield implied or stated, had become easygoing and conventional, neglecting the fundamental truth that to guide each member of their congregations to a personal experience of God’s grace was their essential function. To do this the clergy themselves had to have had their own conversion experience of salvation. In other words, the blind could not lead the blind. These beliefs Whitefield expressed magnificently and with great force, impressing on his audience that they had sinned and must seek salvation. In contrast to conventional ministers, he did not read his sermons but spoke from memory, as if inspired, raising his voice for dramatic effect, gesturing eloquently, and making striking use of biblical metaphors.

Early in May 1738, Whitefield sailed for Georgia, where he preached, organized schools, and planned for the construction of an orphanage. Later in the same year he returned to England to solicit funds for it. However, Whitefield's "enthusiasm" was disapproved by the establishment, and his extempore, dramatic preaching caused him to be excluded from several pulpits. He then began to preach at open air meetings, often to audiences of 20,000 or more. However, on August 1, 1739, Whitefield was denounced by the bishop of London and, shortly thereafter, he struck out for America once again.61

For fifteen months Whitefield toured the colonies,
preaching indoors and out, on Sundays and weekdays, and in many areas his visits were followed by a great outburst of evangelical activity. In Philadelphia, for example, where Whitefield's famous preaching tour began, the young evangelist was preaching "in the evening, from the Court house stairs" to about "six thousand people" within six days of arriving, a figure he believed had risen to 8,000 the next evening. One contemporary noted that "numbers of almost all denominations and many who had no connection with any denomination, were brought to enquire, with utmost earnestness, what they should do to be saved. Such was the engagedness of multitudes to listen to spiritual instruction, that there was public worship, regularly, twice a day, for a year." Indeed, "so great was the enthusiasm to hear Mr. Whitefield preach," that upon leaving the city "many followed him on foot to Chester, to Abingdon, to Neshaminy, and some even to New Brunswick, in New Jersey, the distance of sixty miles."\(^{62}\) Similarly, in Boston, according to one minister "multitudes were greatly affected, and many awakened by his lively ministry. Though he preached every day, the houses were exceedingly crowded. Upon his leaving us, great numbers were concerned about their souls and made to cry out, "what shall we do to be saved?; so that our assemblies were surprisingly increased, and the people wanted to hear us oftener than ever."\(^{63}\)
In contrast to New England and portions of the Middle Colonies, the effect of revivalism in the southern colonies was, for a variety of reasons—including the sparse pattern of settlement, the comparatively slow pace of urbanization, planter hostility to missionary work among slaves—far less pronounced. Whitefield spent relatively little time in the region and did not make detailed reports of great triumphs there as he did of his visits to the northern colonies of Massachusetts, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey. South Carolina, however, proved an exception to the general pattern of southern religious somnolence.64

Whitefield arrived in Charleston on January 5, 1740 and, after being refused access to the pulpit of the Anglican church, St. Philip's, he accepted invitations to preach from Josiah Smith, an Independent minister, and Timothy Millechamp, curate of the French Huguenot church. To hammer home his central message, justification by faith alone, Whitefield spoke of a series of "Divine judgements lately sent amongst" the inhabitants of the colony: a prolonged drought, a smallpox epidemic in 1738, a severe outbreak of yellow fever in 1739, and the Stono Rebellion. "God first generally corrects us with Whips," Whitefield stormed, "but if that will not do, he must chastize us with Scorpions."65
Those who listened must have been shocked. Could it be that disease and slave insurrection were tokens of God's displeasure, not-so-subtle messages for South Carolinians to reform their evil ways? Moreover, was it possible that worse judgments--a successful colony-wide slave rebellion, perhaps--were yet in store? Was the colony's future at stake?

After disquieting their thoughts and obviously producing a great deal of mental anguish, Whitefield posed what became perhaps the most profound question of the evangelical movement, Are you saved? This question became more salient when people were forcefully reminded of the fragility of their existence, that they were helpless creatures completely dependent on God. Should I die tomorrow, many contemporaries must have wondered, would I enjoy, as Whitefield often put it, "the Eternal fruits of Heaven," or would I be condemned to endure the "very certain torments that wait those who fall into the eternal flames."66

After preaching one of three fiery sermons in Charleston, Whitefield noted in his journal that he "saw a glorious alteration in the audience, which was so great that many stood without the door." "A visible concern was in most of their faces," he added, "and many were melted into tears." Convinced of the "prospect of good work having begun" in Charleston, Whitefield set sail for Savannah on
January 8. He spent the next two months in the infant colony preaching, establishing the Bethesda orphanage, and composing a series of religious tracts that were subsequently published collectively in Philadelphia as *Three Letters From the Reverend Mr. G. Whitefield*.

The first two of Whitefield's *Three Letters* amounted to frontal assault on the Anglican ministry and the doctrine, discipline, and worship of the Church of England. Whitefield argued that Archbishop John Tillotson (1630-1694), an influential and highly revered seventeenth-century prelate who in many ways symbolized everything the Anglican clergy stood for, "knew of no other than a bare Historical Faith; And as to the Method of our Acceptance with God through Jesus Christ, and our Justification by faith alone, which is the Doctrine of the Scripture and the Church of England, he certainly was as ignorant of it as Mahomet himself." What is more, Whitefield wrote:

I have frequently thought, that next to the falling away of the Clergy from the Principles of the Reformation, the Books, which are in our Church founded on the Arminian Scheme, have been the Chief Cause why so many of our own Communion in particular have built their Hopes of Salvation on a false Bottom. The Authors not only led the People Captive in their own Life Time, but also after their Death, like Simon Magus for a long season have bewitched the People with their Sorceries, I mean their seemingly devout, but at the Bottom Anti-Christian Compositions.

Focusing his sights on *The Whole Duty of Man*, the standard Anglican handbook of popular piety, Whitefield argued that "the Book in general is calculated to civilize, but I am
persuaded it never was the means of converting one single Soul." In fact, he "could not find the Word Regeneration so much as once mentioned" after "looking over the Index and general Titles at the end of it." Thus, he concluded that "the whole Treatise is built on such a false foundation as not only proves the Author to be no real Christian at Heart; but also, that he had not so much as a Head-knowledge of the true Gospel of Jesus Christ."69

In the third of his Three Letters, a tract entitled "Letter to the Inhabitants of Maryland, Virginia, North and South Carolina, concerning their Negroes," Whitefield urged southerners to ameliorate the institution of slavery. He asked:

Is it not the highest ingratitude, as well as cruelty, not to let your poor slaves enjoy some of their labour? My blood has frequently almost run cold within me to consider how many of your slaves had neither convenient food to eat, nor proper raiment to put on, notwithstanding [that] most of the comforts you enjoy, were solely owing to their indefatigable labors. The scripture says, "Thou shalt not muzzle the oxen that treadeth out the corn."

Forcefully reprimanding slaveholders' for their "abuse of and Cruelty to the poor Negroes," Whitefield wondered why bondspersons, "considering what usage they commonly meet with, ...have not more frequently risen up against their owners." "Should such a thing be permitted by providence," he added, "all good men must acknowledge that the judgement would be just."

For Whitefield, however, the real problem with slavery
was not insufficient food and clothing, nor the brutality of
the institution, but the slaveholders' refusal to attempt to
convert their bondspeople to Christianity. He argued that
"enslaving or misusing their bodies, comparatively speaking,
would be an inconsiderable evil was proper care taken of
their souls." In other words, however damnable the physical
mistreatment of blacks was, the denial of access to
Christianity was far worse. He warned that God would surely
punish the slaveholders for their sins because "He does not
reject the Prayer of the Poor and destitute, nor disregard
the cry of the meanest negroes." "The Blood of them spilt
for these many years in your respective Provinces," he
added, "will ascend up into Heaven against you." 70

After Whitefield's brief visit to Charleston in January
1740, a heated controversy over the young evangelist erupted
in the South Carolina Gazette, a newspaper that enjoyed
increasingly wide circulation. Josiah Smith, minister of
the Independent church in the city, touched off the debate
when he wrote an editorial piece praising Whitefield, noting
that he was "not displeas'd to hear a Gentleman of the
Establishment delivering some of the same Tenets, which [he]
had so long before adopted into [his] won Creed and System,
especially when he could support them so well from
Scripture, Experience, and the Articles of his own Church."
Smith continued:

I must confess, his composure seemed not so much
calculated to acquire the Reputation of a Man of
Letters: The Beauties and Ornaments of Language were not so much considered in them; but the Decencies of Action in his Deportment and Gesture, the Modulations of his Voice, of which he is a great Master, the regular Exertations and Cadencies of it, joined with Zeal, Pathos and Fire of his Expressions, would embellish any Sermon of the lowest Rate.

Smith went on to say, "When he turned himself to the secure Sinner, we seemed to hear the last Thunders of the tremendous Day, he described; the Pulpit seemed almost to be a Tribunal, and the Preacher himself, if the Comparison may be pardoned, the Great Judge, cloathed in Flames, and adjudging a guilty World to penal Fire."\textsuperscript{71}

Using a pseudonym, "Arminius"—significant because arminianism had been one of the charges the evangelist leveled against the Church of England—Alexander Garden, the rector of St. Philip's and the bishop of London's commissary in South Carolina, quickly responded, accusing Whitefield of proclaiming "the old and exploded Doctrines of Calvinism," including the doctrine of original sin. Garden condemned Whitefield's "enthusiasm," which he thought was the result of "human Weakness, Ignorance, & Rashness," and his uncharitable, "censorious," "unwarrantable" judging of the clergy and "Want of Love." What is more, the commissary charged Whthiefield with misinterpreting Scripture to prove his position.\textsuperscript{72}

After the opening salvos in the debate, others soon joined the fray and before long the controversy became incredibly intense. Whitefield's supporters heaped praise
on the young evangelist, portraying him as a "crying Voice, to bid the World repent," a John the Baptist who was a "wond'rous good man." On the other hand, Whitefield's opponents labeled him an "unexperienc'd Youth," a Slanderer of the Brethren," who promoted "a distempered and Feverish kind of Religion, which left "a Deadness to all true Religion behind it." One critic likened Whitefield to "a disorderly kind of a Star...that crosses and interferes with the Paths & Motions of...Heavenly Bodies but doth vanish like a Vapour."

Just as the polemical battle was heating up, Whitefield returned to South Carolina, arriving in Charleston on March 14, 1740. Aware that he was the center of a heated newspaper controversy, he went to visit Alexander Garden at St. Philip's rectory, where he met "with a cool reception." Garden asked Whitefield what proof he had to support his charges against the Anglican ministry. Whitefield simply responded by saying that he condemned them because "they did not preach justification by faith alone," adding that Garden was "as ignorant as the rest." The commissary then charged Whitefield with violating "the Canons and Ordination vow" and ordered him not to preach in any "public church" in South Carolina. Defiantly, Whitefield declared that he would regard Gardens dictate with no more respect than "a Pope's bull." As the exchange grew more intense, Garden, obviously incensed, ordered Whitefield to leave.
After his confrontation with the commissary, Whitefield preached in the afternoon at the Independent meetinghouse and then twice each day until he left on March 20. He delivered discourses on original sin, the divinity of Christ, and justification by faith alone. Large crowds gathered to hear the fiery evangelist. Indeed, on at least three occasions, he was forced to preach "out of doors" in the churchyard. Of his second visit to Charleston, Whitefield wrote:

Many wept, and my own heart yearned much towards them; for I believe a good work is begun in many. Generally, ever day several came to me, telling me how God had been pleased to convince them by the Word preached, and how desirous they were of laying hold on and having an interest in the complete and everlasting righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. Numbers desired privately to converse with me. Many sent me little presents, as tokens of their love, and earnestly entreated that I would come amongst them again. Invitations were given me from some of the adjacent villages; and people daily came to town more and more from their plantations to hear the Word. The congregations grew larger on week days, and many things concurred to induce us to think that God intended to visit some in Charleston with His salvation."

From Charleston, Whitefield proceeded again to Georgia, where he laid the cornerstone of the Bethesda orphanage. He then departed for the Middle Colonies on April 2. In Philadelphia Whitefield, together with Gilbert Tennent, Samuel Blair, and other Presbyterian ministers joined to lead great meetings. Tennent, Whitefield wrote, "convinced me more and more that we can preach the gospel of Christ no further than we have experienced the power of it in our own hearts. Being deeply convicted of sin, by God’s Holy
spirit, at his first conversion, Mr. Tennent has learned experimentally to dissect the heart of the natural man. Hypocrites must either soon be converted or enraged at his preaching." Whitefield's successes continued in New York and in New Jersey, which he visited in May and June 1740, before travelling south again.78

Whitefield returned to South Carolina in July just as news reached the colony that James Oglethorpe's expedition against the Spanish in St. Augustine had ended in failure. Shortly after he arrived in Charleston, Whitefield went to hear Alexander Garden preach. According to Whitefield, the commissary "poured forth so many bitter words" against him, that many members of the church left before the sacrament was administered. "Never," Whitefield commented, "was such a preparation sermon preached before."79 Whitefield returned the following Sunday, but Garden was still "full of choler and resentment." Indeed, Whitefield noted:

Had some infernal spirit been sent to draw my picture, I think it scarcely possible that he could have painted me in more horrid colours. I think, if ever, then was the time that all manner of evil was spoken against me falsely for Christ's sake. The Commissary seemed to ransack church history for instances of enthusiasm and abused grace. He drew a parallel between me and all the Oliverians, Ranters, Quakers, French Prophets, till he came down to a family of the Dutarts, who lived, not many years ago in South Carolina, and were guilty of the most notorious incests and murders.80

Garden's strategy was clear. He was attempting to discredit Whitefield by raising the specter of radicalism. During those terrible "Oliverian Days," Garden argued, "Ruing and
Desolation...were brought upon the Kingdom" of England. Organized religion, he added, was split into "1000 Sects, Sorts, and Divisions, 'till nothing but Confusion as a Cloud covered the whole Face of the Land."

Likening the enthusiastic young evangelical to "radical" groups that emerged during the English Revolution was one thing; however, as David T. Morgan has commented, "Garden's attempt to liken Whitefield to the Dutartres clearly demonstrated that he was out to draw blood." The Dutartres were a family of French Huguenots who had migrated to the Orange Quarter section of St. Thomas' Parish sometime after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685. They were people of modest means but were well respected by their neighbors for their industrious, upstanding character. In the early 1720s, the Dutartres came under the sway of Christian George, an itinerant Moravian preacher who proclaimed to be a disciple of Jacob Boehme (1575-1624), a German reformer who sought to revive the mystic approach to religion and life. The Moravians' preaching struck to the hearts of the Dutartre family, and they promptly withdrew from the community of their fellow Huguenots; in fact, they announced that they were the only family in the entire world with the true knowledge of God. This knowledge came to them, they argued, through a series of personal and vital signs and revelations. Their divine inspiration led the Dutartres to the belief that God was to offer to them a
true prophet; they almost immediately seized upon the husband of the eldest daughter, Peter Rombert, thrusting him forward as their spokesperson and seer. Consonant with his new calling and in accordance with the Boehemian ideology, Rombert announced that the evil of the world had become so great that its destruction was at hand. Only one family, the Dutartres, had be chosen to survive "for raising up a godly seed upon earth." After another vision, Rombert claimed that he was to divorce his wife—a former widow whose first husband would be resurrected—and marry her younger sister, a virgin. Although reluctant to do so, the father eventually offered his youngest child to the prophet.82

Bigamy, however, was not the Dutartres ultimate undoing. Rather, it was their refusal to obey the "laws and ordinances of men." The Dutartres claimed that God prohibited them from any public duties, such as militia service and road repair. When the constable attempted to serve a warrant for their arrest, he was met by a hail of musketfire. After returning with reinforcements, a pitched battle ensued. John Simmons, a militia Captain, was "shot dead on the spot" and several of the men in his company were wounded.

Three members of the Dutartre clan were brought to trial, found guilty, and condemned in September 1724. According to one account:
they never were convinced of their delusion, but persisted in it until their last breath. During their trial they appeared altogether unconcerned and secure, affirming that God was on their side, and therefore they feared not what man could do unto them. They freely told the incestuous story in open court in all its circumstances and aggravations, with a good countenance, and very readily confessed the facts respecting their rebellion and murder, with which they stood charged, but plead their authority from God in vindication of themselves, and insisted they had done nothing in either case but by his express command.

Apparently, they believed that God "would either work a deliverance for them, or raise them up from the dead on the third day." Even after the trial, however, South Carolinians had not heard the last from the Dutartres, for before long one of the sons, who had been pardoned after becoming "sensible of his error and delusion," had a vision and "relapsed into the same snare, and murdered an innocent person, without either provocation or previous quarrel, and for no other reason, as he confessed, but that God had commanded him so to do." Accordingly, he was tried, found guilty, and sent to the gallows.83

Alexander Garden, however, knew that rhetorical challenges to Whitefield's growing popularity were not enough. Accordingly, he instituted an ecclesiastical court to try the young evangelist for his errant behavior. Garden cited Whitefield to appear on July 15, 1740, and charged him with a violation of cannon law and his vows by preaching in disserter churches without the Book of Common Prayer or its liturgical form. At the beginning of the trial, Whitefield, together with his attorney, Andrew Rutledge, worked to
obstruct the proceedings by challenging the authority of the court. On the advice of Rutledge, Whitefield rejected the commissary's jurisdiction, arguing that because his ordination was not settled in South Carolina, Garden had no official power over him. Garden then produced his commission from the bishop of London, claiming that the proceedings were just. The court was then adjourned. On the next day, Whitefield accepted the court's jurisdiction, but questioned the commissary's impartiality. He asked that six "impartial" arbitrators be appointed to rule on Garden's qualifications to judge the case. Garden rejected this request and asserted his own impartiality; accordingly, on the third day of the trial, Whitefield called for an appeal to the crown in the Court of Chancery. To this, Garden capitulated, requiring the evangelist to swear he would plead his case inside a year. He never did. The commissary then acted independently to suspend Whitefield from his ministerial duties in South Carolina; however, Garden never attempted to enforce the suspension. Garden's proceedings against Whitefield, as William Howland Kenney has observed, "provided an accurate reflection of the ambiguous position and authority of the Church establishment in South Carolina and the colonies in general." 84

Despite the Commissary's opposition, Whitefield continued to preach, according to the South Carolina Gazette, with "Flame and power" and "very general Acceptance
"in Charleston and the surrounding lowcountry." Scattered bits of evidence suggest that people of all classes attended his fiery sermons. Indeed, Whitefield was winning converts even among the gentry. The evangelist reported that one woman on James Island invited him to her estate and in conversation told him she had once been against him "insomuch that she thought it dangerous" to attend his preaching; but reading his sermons had convinced her otherwise. On another "beautiful estate," a planter provided a barn where Whitefield held services for people on the islands and from the city. In Dorchester, "a New England colony" twenty miles northwest of Charleston, Whitefield noted that "many moral, good sort of men, who before were settled on their lees, have been awakened to seek Jesus Christ." Back in Charleston, Garden inveighed against him, but Whitefield still gained support. "Glory be to God on high," the evangelist wrote, "The fields here as elsewhere, are now white, ready to harvest." "Numbers are seeking after Jesus," he continued, and "two or three Dissenting ministers, by my advice, agreed to set up weekly lecture." 

Although Whitefield apparently drew most of his support from dissenters, especially Baptists, Huguenots, and Independents in Charleston, a large number of Anglicans attended his sermons. Whitefield preached in establishment churches in Christ Church Parish and St. John's Church in
Colleton County. Moreover, SPG missionaries from St. Andrew's and St. George's Parishes reported that the "wild visionary youth" was causing defection from their congregations and religious divisions among the people. Whitefield also noted in his journal that he preached in St. Bartholomew's Parish at the church of Thomas Thompson, who Whitefield referred to as "a church of England missionary who refused to preach or sit in judgement against me."87

Like Thompson, the Reverend Lewis Jones, rector of Saint Helena's parish in Port Royal, seems to have taken a benevolent stance toward Whitefield, although he disagreed with the evangelist's position on justification. On January 1, 1740, Jones entertained Whitefield in his home, allowing him to preach in his church the following day. Later in the year, Whitefield preached two sermons in Saint Helena's Parish. Not surprisingly, Garden was not at all pleased with his counterpart. Interestingly, however, Jones claimed that if he would have refused Whitfield the use of his church, "I should have incurred the displeasure of most of my Parishioners, and put it out of my power of being any further useful here."88 Jones' remarks speak not only to the nature and extent of Whitfield's support, but also to the power of the laity in South Carolina. Indeed, the parishioners, not the clergy, were the ultimate fountain of all authority.

After his successful preaching tour of South Carolina
in July, Whitefield returned to Georgia, but he visited Charleston again in late August as he passed through the colony on his way to New England. He claimed that 4,000 people listened to his sermons between August 22 and September 1.\(^9\) Meanwhile, Alexander Garden stepped up his rhetorical attack on the young "enthusiastic" evangelist. In August Garden published *Six Letters from the Rev. Mr. Garden to the Rev. Mr. Whitfield* and, shortly thereafter, a collection of sermons, *Regeneration and the Testimony of the Spirit*. These tracts were widely circulated throughout the colonies. Both passed through two editions.\(^9\)

Together, the abovementioned publications represent Garden’s attempt to singlehandedly refute Whitfield’s position on a number of theological issues, including original sin, assurance, justification, and especially the nature of regeneration. On this last point, Garden wrote:

They conceive and insist upon *Regeneration*, to be an immediate, *instantaneous* Work of the Holy Spirit, wrought inwardly on the Hearts or Souls of Men; critically at some certain Time, in some certain Place, and on some certain Occasion; and by which the whole Interior is at once, in a moment, illuminated and reformed; the Understanding opened, the Will overruled, and all the Inclinations, Appetites and Passions, quite altered and turned from Evil to God, from being corrupt and vicious, to being pure, virtuous and holy. Moreover they farther insist, that before we feel this great Work wrought within us, our Faith and good Works shall avail us nothing. We may ever so firmly believe the Gospel, and *practise* all the Religious and Moral Duties it enjoins;--we may carefully attend the *outward Ordinances*, of public Worship, Preaching, and Sacraments, nor ever neglect our *Family and Closet Devotions*; we may fast, and pray, and give Alms, both in public and private; and touching the *moral* Duties of Justice and Honesty, Temperance and Chastity, or any
other, behave ourselves blameless; and yet alas, all to no Purpose! Except we feel this specific Work of Grace wrought in us, we are still in the very Gall of Bitterness and Bond of Iniquity.  

After denouncing the doctrine of instantaneous conversion, Garden constructed an incredibly complex argument on what he perceived to be the essence of regeneration. He concluded:

Thus, my Brethren, the work of Regeneration is not the Work of a Moment, a sudden instantaneous Work, like the miraculous Conversion of St. Paul, or the Thief on the Cross; but a gradual and co-operative Work of the Holy Spirit, joining in with our Understandings, and leading us on by Reason and Persuasion, from one Degree to another, of Faith, good Dispositions, Acts, and Habits of Piety.

For Garden, God "doth not work upon us as a Mechanic upon dead Materials, but as on living and free Agents, that can and must co-operate with him." Instantaneous conversion, he believed, "can serve only to scare and hurry you into frantick and convulsive Fits of Religion, which must terminate either in Bedlam, or Deism, or Popery, or at least in such a Manner as to prove hurtful to true Religion."  

While Garden was attempting to prove that Whitefield was out to "confound weak Minds," the young evangelist was having extraordinary success in New England in the fall of 1740. When he returned to South Carolina in late December, he found that a horribly destructive fire had all but destroyed Charleston on November 18. This was the last in a series of events that put South Carolinians on edge; indeed, plague, slave revolt, a failed expedition against the Spanish in St. Augustine, and now fire must have made the
apocalypse seem like an imminent reality to many colonists. Behind this came the electric preaching of Whitefield, reminding the people that God's judgment awaited them, a judgment that would be complete and merciless. The inhabitants were ripe for the evangelist's message as he preached some twenty-two times to "great Companies of People."  But along with the crowds, Whitefield gathered further controversy.

On January 15, 1741, the *South Carolina Gazette* published as a postscript a letter from one of Whitefield's most ardent followers, the prominent St. Helena planter Hugh Bryan. Bryan's letter began by regretting the recent Charleston fire, but concluded, "Surely God's just Judgments are upon us." He then enumerated the line of disasters that had plagued the province:

> We have been harden'd under the Sun-shine, the bounteous Dispensations of his Providence; and tho' for some Years past, he hath at divers Times been Scourging of us, by Drought; by repeated Diseases on Man and Beast; by Insurrections of our Slaves, and lately by Bashing shamefully our Enterprize against our Enemy, so as to make us a By-Word and an Hissing among the heathen that are round about us; yet we have not laid it to Heart to turn to Him.

According to Bryan, the refusal to submit to God had caused the disasters:

> As a People, so are the Priests: Every one seeking after Gain; nourishing their Hearts as in a Day of Slaughter; and few, very few, say within themselves, wherefore hath the Lord done these Things? or turn to seek unto the Hand that hath smitten us. O! that this fiery Dispensation may now lead us to Repentance, and truly humble us before God, that the Fury of his Anger may turn away from us, and that we Be not utterly
confused.

For Bryan, God was showing his power to the recalcitrant souls of the colony. He only hoped that the people and, more importantly, their ministers, would see the truth and change their hearts to prevent further judgment through disaster. "O how great will their Judgment be," he wrote, "who do the Work of the Lord negligently, and speak leasingly, and cry Peace, Peace, when there is no Peace, deceiving precious Souls and causing them to sleep in their Sins to Damnation."

The real responsibility for past and impending judgments, then, lay at the feet of an unregenerate clergy who failed to see the truth and who led their people into the punishments that had recently beset the colony. Because of such false leadership, Bryan charged, Carolinians had "delighted themselves in the foolish and vain Enjoyment of worldly Goods and Pleasures..." The ministers had led their people away from true religion: "Thus do they pretendly take upon them a Commission from the Lord and Master with pretended Kisses of Friendship." This was certainly potent rhetoric, for in calling them "betrayers of their charge" Bryan was in effect questioning the authority of the clergy. "O! how sore will the Punishment of the negligent Watchmen be!" he exclaimed. "How many poor careless souls," he asked, have we in every Parish that stand in Need of being informed of their Danger, and of the absolute Necessity
of being born again of God, and having Christ' personal Righteousness imputed to them, before they can have any well-grounded Hope of being finally saved! How many within a few Miles of their Teachers die in their Sins, without being warned or exhorted to come to CHRIST by Faith! The Blood of such will be required at their Teacher's Hands.

The only hope, Bryan argued, lay in a new birth. Drought, disease, war with St. Augustine, slave insurrection, and fire were proof positive "and if we regard not his to lay it to the Heart, humble ourselves, and repent truly of our Sins; the just GOD will yet pour out upon us more terrible Vials of his Wrath."

With this proclamation, Bryan drew direct connections between recent events and predictions in the Revelation of St. John. Only submission to God through new birth could save the people, for all authority derived precisely from this direct knowledge. Bryan asserted:

for God regardeth not Princes, except their Thrones are established in Righteousness. O! that all in Authority under him, in the Civil Powers amongst us throughout his Dominions, would humble themselves, and duly consider that the great GOD, by whom they enjoy any Power, will strictly require at their Hands a due conscientious Improvement of the Talents committed to their Trust. And O! that all who stile themselves Ambassadors of Jesus Christ, would humble themselves, and consider well their Mission, who finally called for the regeneration of population as the only way to gain true Joy, the full Assurance of his Favour here, and of external Blessedness when Time shall be no more.95

With this letter, Hugh Bryan extended and elaborated the charges already leveled by Whitefield, and he did so in a very public manner. South Carolina was a wicked place, he said, full of unrepentant souls ripe for divine judgment.
But more importantly, the most corrupt of all were the clergy. They allowed the people their worldly behaviors--indeed they encouraged them--and knew nothing of the only true way to salvation through new birth. Because they were so corrupt, he argued, they had no authority; the only authority they could hope for would come through a personal knowledge of God.

This is a major point and deserves further emphasis. Whitefield, and now Bryan, claimed that there was no authority except God and this authority was transferred directly--not through some canonical or ecclesiastical medium--to those who experienced salvation. All who had not experienced the new birth, they contended, were as hopelessly illegitimate as the most shameful sinner.

What had once been restricted to religious discourse had spilled over into the secular realm with the publication of Bryan's letter. Bryan and the periodical's printer were arrested and brought before the Chief Justice. Whitefield was also included in the warrant, charged with correcting the letter for publication. According to the South Carolina Gazette, Whitefield "confessed the charge, was admitted to Bail, and is to appear by his Attorney at the next General Sessions..." However, before the next quarterly court met, Whitefield sailed back to England.

Bryan and Whitefield had allies who did not consider their attack on an unregenerate clergy an attack upon
themselves. Whitefield preached regularly at the Independent, Baptist, and Huguenot Churches of Charleston, the Baptist Church at Ashley Ferry, and at numerous other churches in the lowcountry. Of all his clerical converts, none was so ardent as Josiah Smith, the Harvard-educated minister of Charleston's Independent Church. Smith, it will be remembered, was one of the first to come to the evangelist's defense in 1740, entering a long, lofty theological debate with Garden in the pages of the *South Carolina Gazette*. Like Whitefield, Smith rejected power rooted solely in institutions, looking through them to the legitimation of all religious authority—the individual's experience of a new birth. Also like Whitefield—and Hugh Bryan—Smith found the Charleston fire to be the seminal event in fixing the vision of South Carolina's fate. In a sermon inspired by the disastrous fire, *The Burning of Sodom with its Moral Causes, Improv'd in a Sermon Preached at Charles Town South-Carolina, after a most Terrible Fire*, which was subsequently published in Boston, Smith asserted in no uncertain terms that the fire represented God's judgment against the vices of the people of Charleston. After the fire, Smith claimed, speaking of himself, "All the Flame of divine Passion seized the Soul and Pen of the Preacher, while the Eye on the Burning Town struck his Heart with an unavoidable Remembrance of the Sins, which He and the zealous Whitefield, had boldly, but in vain, rebuk'd and
threatened from the sacred Desk." Now they may know," he added, "that a Prophet has been among them." Searching the past for examples to compare with Charleston, Smith went on to say, "nor can we help making this Remark, Jerusalem was burnt the First Time, for misusing the Messengers of the Lord; and the second Time for laying Hands on the Disciples of Christ, and persecuting them..." The analogy was clear. The persecution of Whitefield and irreverence for his message had brought the fire on the city. To fire, Smith added brimstone. "Pride has risen up to a prodigious Height amongst us," he preached, "and it was high time to expect GOD would lay our Honour in the Dust; and it becomes us now to put on Sack-Cloth," and receive regeneration through the new birth.97

VI

In addition to their attacks on an unregenerate clergy and their eschatological analysis of disasters, Whitefield and his followers reached out to include slaves in the emergent culture of evangelicalism. The young evangelist found blacks attending his services when he first started preaching in South Carolina. He usually reserved a portion of the sermon to address their concerns specifically. Unlike many SPG missionaries, Whitefield held out the assurance that conversion meant regeneration of the spirit
and that all who had the new birth were equal in the eyes of God—and indeed superior to those who had not felt God's work in their souls. In one sermon preached on the text Jeremiah 23:6, "The Lord of our Righteousness," Whitefield closed by saying:

Here then I could conclude—but I must not forget the poor negroes. No, I must not. Jesus Christ has died for them as well as others. Nor do I mention you last because I despise your souls, but because I would wish what I have to say, to make a deeper impression upon your hearts. Oh that you would seek the Lord to be your righteousness! Who knows but he may be fond of you.

Whitefield next made a point that the slaves listening had probably never heard from an Anglican minister. He told them that:

in Jesus Christ there is neither male nor female, bond nor free; even you may be children of God, if you believe in Jesus. Did you ever read of the Eunuch belonging to the Queen of Candace?—a negro like yourselves. He believed—The Lord was his righteousness, he was baptized. Do you also believe, and you shall be saved. Christ Jesus is the same now, as he was yesterday, and will wash you in his own blood. Go home then, turn the words of the text into a prayer, and entreat the Lord to be your righteousness. Even so, come Lord Jesus, come quickly, into all our souls!" 98

To suggest that "in Jesus Christ there is neither...bond nor free" was truly a radically new message. Indeed, many slaves must have been particularly moved by Whitefield's message of equality.

Whitefield not only spoke to blacks about their condition but also reminded whites of their duties as masters in bringing their slaves to true religion. To be
sure, the SPG missionaries and the bishop of London had also argued for Christianizing blacks. Whitefield, however, portrayed a graphic fate in apocalyptic terms for those who failed their responsibilities. In a stirring sermon called "The Great Duty of Family Religion," Whitefield spoke directly to the slaveholders' obligations. He claimed that whites were bound to give their slaves spiritual sustenance as well as food and clothes. Negligent masters will learn, he asserted, that "a time will come when they know they ought to have given them some spiritual as well as temporal wages; and the cry of those that have moved down their fields, will enter into the ears of the Lord of Saboth." But Whitefield did not stop here. He went on to describe the role of slaves would have in the judgment of masters who failed in their duties. At that final judgment, he argued, all will be called before Christ to testify to their conduct with their slaves. "How will you endure," he asked, "to see your children and servants (who ought to by your joy and crown of rejoicing in the day of the Lord Jesus Christ,) coming out as so many swift witnesses against you; cursing the father that begot them, the womb that bore them, the paps which they have sucked, and the day they ever entered into your houses?" "Think you not" he added, "the damnation which men must endure for their own sins will be sufficient, that they need load themselves with the additional guilt of being accessory to the damnation of others also."99 The
SPG had admonished masters to instruct their slaves because it was their duty. Now Whitefield told whites that they were in peril of their souls if they failed in this duty, that they would be called to account for it at their judgment, and remarkably, that their slaves would testify about their actions. This was indeed making the last first.

Alexander Garden was never one to avoid a debate, and one of his *Six Letters to Rev. George Whitfield* took up the issue of the treatment of the slaves. He maintained that the "Generality of Owners use their slaves with all due Humanity, whether in respect of work, of Food or Raiment," and claimed that South Carolina slaves were better off than three-fourths of the hired laborers in England. Even though he did acknowledge that too little was done to convert the slaves, he nevertheless argued that Whitefield had come dangerously close to slander in his *Three Letters*. Garden also warned that in many places the evangelist would be indicted "for meddling, as you have done in this matter which may endanger the Peace and Safety of the community."100

As with his critique of the clergy and the apocalyptic analysis of South Carolina's disasters, the evangelist's zealous disciple, Hugh Bryan, took up his teacher's cause and pressed it further. Before he fell under the spell of Whitefield's evangelism, Bryan had become interested in the religious well-being of his slaves. Dr. Bray's Associates
noted in their records that they had received a letter from him dated March 4, 1735, "acknowledging the Rect. of the Books sent him for Converting his Negroes." The Associates also noted that they had shipped "three Parcels of Books containing in each 3 Bibles, 30 Primers, 30 small Spelling Books, 30 Horn Books, 20 Testaments and 30 Psalters" to Bryan, Mrs. Drayton, and Mrs. Hague, the sister of Alexander Skeene and an activist in slave conversion. Several years later, Lewis Jones, the SPG missionary to St. Helena’s Parish, reported that "one considerable Planter, a man of good Christian disposition, expressed an inclination of having the Young Negroes born in his family, instructed in the Principles of Christianity, had he the opportunity of a School in his Neighbourhood." While there is no conclusive evidence, the "considerable Planter" was most likely Bryan carrying forward the work he had begun in 1735. Thus when Whitefield began traveling between Savannah and Charleston in 1740, he found along the way a ready ally to his cause of black conversion.

In late July 1740 the evangelist made his first stop at the Bryan plantation on his return form Charleston where he had just been prosecuted in Alexander Garden’s ecclesiastical court. While visiting with Bryan, Whitefield wrote that "my dear friend and companion was in tears, and seemed willing to take his flight with me into the arms of our beloved Jesus." According to Whitefield, Bryan’s slaves
"crowded round the windows, and expressed a great concern for me." "Their master had acquainted them," he said "that I was their friend."

After Whitefield's visit during the summer of 1740, Bryan committed himself to bringing the new evangelical Christianity to his and other slaves in St. Helena Parish. Lewis Jones was aware of the evangelist's efforts in this regard. He reported to the SPG in August that the Bryans were two of three families in his parish "who have lately been prevailed upon to have their negroes Instructed in the Principles of the Christian faith by the Earnest Persuasions of Mr. Whitfield." About a month later Whitefield wrote that the Bryan brothers had "By my advice...resolved to begin a negro school."

In the fall of 1740, Bryan wrote that he was convinced of his sins in "overlooking... that justice which was due to my poor Negroes, who were spending their strength and lives for me, and were left in their ignorance of the common salvation thro' Jesus Christ." Over the course of the next year, the Bryans worked ardently to convert their slaves to their new-found brand of Christianity. In mid-1741, Jonathan Bryan reported to Whitefield that there had been a revival among the blacks on his and surrounding plantations.

While the Bryans became deeply involved in acquainting their slaves with Whitefield's message, Hugh grew more and
more visionary and apocalyptic in his Christianity. As we have seen, he took the great Charleston fire to be the final in a series of signs that foretold the imminent judgment. As he became more visionary he also grew more convinced that all authority except that deriving directly from God to the individual was hopelessly corrupt. Bryan believed like other evangelicals that God's message was for all who experienced salvation without regard for race, class or gender; accordingly, it was only natural that he would share his increasing understanding of truth with black as well as white men and women as his personal convictions became more elaborate and intense. Furthermore, because there was only one truth for all of God's saved, Bryan surely carried the same message to all he met. Of course, to preach the corruption of authority and communion of equals among the saved before God in Charleston was one thing, but to proclaim it to multitudes of black slaves in a district where they were the overwhelming majority was another.

A little more than a year after he published his letter condemning the South Carolina clergy, Hugh Bryan again overstepped the boundaries of socially acceptable behavior, but this time his actions had potentially much more serious consequences. On February 16, 1742, the South Carolina Commons House of Assembly reported that they had been "informed that there had of late been frequent and great Assemblies of Negroes in the Parish of St. Helena." 106 The
Commons House then voted to create a committee to investigate the allegations. Within a day, the committee offered its report to the Assembly. They had found that "great Numbers of Negroes and other Slaves have several Times Assembled together, to the Terror of some, and to the Disturbance of many of the Inhabitants" of St. Helena. They further claimed that the assemblies were "so public and notorious, and the Meetings of the Slaves so frequent and numerous" that the committee believed concrete evidence unnecessary. They also dismissed the need for "and particular Enquiry upon what Account and Pretense these Slaves so often assemble; since it is also public and notorious that they are encouraged and countenanced by several white persons residing in those parts." The committee then concluded that:

however commendable it may be for any Master, or other Person having Care of Slaves, to instruct them in the Principle of Religion or Morality, in their own Plantations; it may prove of the most dangerous Consequence to the Peace and Safety of this Province, if great Numbers of Negroes should be encouraged to meet together from different Plantations, on any Pretense whatsoever and that any white Person whomsoever, who shall be so important as to excite, encourage or countenance them to meet and assemble, in manner aforesaid, may be justly deemed guilty of a public Nuisance.¹⁰⁷

A week after the committee's report, the Speaker of the Commons House informed the Lieutenant Governor, William Bull, Sr., that "in Answer to your Honour's Message...concerning the unlawful and dangerous Assemblies of Negro Slaves in Granville County; we take leave to lay
before Your Honour a Book or Paper signed by Hugh Bryan, in which (we apprehend) are contained several Passages that deserve the Notice of the Civil Magistrate and which, being published amongst the People, may prove of the most dangerous consequence to the Peace and Safety of this Province." The Commons House ordered that Bryan, "the acknowledged Author of these Papers," and his "Abettors and Accomplices (when discovered)" be arrested and brought to Charleston. The Magistrates were then authorized "to pursue all such other legal and necessary Steps as your Honour shall judge will prove most effectual to prevent the great Danger that is apprehended from these Practices."^{108}

At this point, then, it was clear that Bryan had done two things. First, he had gathered large numbers of blacks together from throughout St. Helena's Parish to preach Christianity and conversion of Whitefield's kind; and second, he had written and disseminated a book or paper that the members of the Commons House believed threatened the peace of South Carolina. Presumably the book related to both Bryan's religion and his instruction of slaves, but there was as of yet no clear indication of its content. Soon, however, the substance of Bryan's writing became known. Shortly after the Assembly's investigation, the Grand Jury issued a presentment against "a certain book or Journal signed by Hugh Bryan." According to the Jury, Bryan had returned to his apocalyptic visions of twelve months
before, but this time his predictions were much more dangerous. The book contained "sundry enthusiastic Prophecys of the destruction of Charles Town and the deliverance of the Negroes from their Servitude." The Jury further called for the arrest of the Bryans, William Gilbert, and Robert Ogle for "propagating the foresaid notions or Assembling of Negroes and preaching to them, at private houses without authority for so doing."¹⁰⁹

On March 1, 1742, Bryan addressed a letter to the Commons House of Assembly. He took a humble posture, speaking of his "Shame, intermixed with Joy." He claimed that his zeal had exceeded the bounds of God's design and that as punishment, "he has suffered me to fall into a Delusion of Satan." Bryan then recanted his prophecies and begged forgiveness for his actions. He denied any violent intentions and promised that he hoped only the best for Carolina. The authorities must have deemed Bryans's recantation and public humiliation sufficient punishment because he was never brought to trial.¹¹⁰

The controversy caused by Bryan's actions festered on after his confession. In April dissenting ministers James Parker and Josiah Smith wrote to the South Carolina Gazette in support of converting blacks; however, they consciously sought to underscore the orthodoxy of their position.¹¹¹ Parker and Smith drew hot criticism. One respondent, while not totally rejecting the need for missionary efforts,
called on the ministers to be specific in their plans. Loosely conceived efforts only fomented trouble, the writer argued. Too often, the colony ran the risk of a "teacher" gathering "cabals of negroes about him...at unreasonable times, and to the disturbance of a Neighborhood; and instead of teaching them the Principles of Christianity, filling their heads with a Parcel of Cant-Phrases, Trances, Dreams, Visions, and Revelations, and something still worse, and which Prudence forbids to Name."112 The "teacher" that this writer was referring to, however, was not Hugh Bryan. Rather, it was another one of Whitefield's disciples, Joseph Moody, who had taken up the cause of preaching evangelicalism to the slaves. Moody, a prominent citizen of Charleston, was indicted for preaching to blacks assembled in large numbers. When Moody was arrested and brought before the South Carolina Council, they endeavored to convince him of "how much the lives of his Majesty's subjects might be endangered if great Body's Negroes, were encouraged, or permitted to assemble together."113 Moody, however, refused to cooperate with authorities. Rather than post a surety for his good behavior, he chose to go to jail, a martyr to his cause. When Moody died nearly twenty-five years later, another Whitefieldian, Josiah Smith, preached on his commitment to the cause of bringing blacks to evangelical Christianity.114

The rising ferment of the evangelical revival in South
Carolina, together with the continuing Anglican failure in winning blacks to Christianity, spurred Alexander Garden to propose his own devices for conversion. In May 1740, shortly after Whitefield had penned his "Letter to the Inhabitants of Maryland, Virginia, North and South Carolina," Garden composed a long letter to the SPG proposing "the most effectual Method, for Instructing the Negro and Indian Slaves, in the principles of our holy Religion." Garden asserted that "this good Work must not be attempted in the Gross, or inclusive of the whole Body of Slaves, of so many various Ages, nations, Languages, etc."
"For in this View," he added, "it allways has, and ever will appear insuperable." Garden then made the remarkable point that evangelization "must commence, and be carried on among such of them only, as are Home-Born, and under the Age of Ten years." He maintained that as long as the efforts were conducted by masters and mistresses of the plantations or, worse yet, by white teachers from England, advocates of conversion would accomplish little. With all of these conditions in mind, Garden asserted that the "most effectual Method of Proceeding in the Work as above Submitted, must be by Negro Schoolmasters, Home born, and equally Property as other Slaves, but educated for this Service, and employed in it during their Lives, as the others are in any other Services whatsoever."^115

To make the system work Garden believed that large
slaveowners would have to take responsibility for employing teachers. He wrote:

every owner of Eighty or a Hundred Slaves, ('mong whom there are seldom fewer than Ten or Twelve Children from Ten years old and under) should be at charge of sending to School one or other of the Males, as should appear most capable and best disposed, 'till he be Taught to read the Bible, to say the Church Catechism by heart, and to use the Common Prayer; and who from thenceforth should be employed by the Said Owner, as a Schoolmaster, and in that Service only during his life, to instruct in the same manner all the Slave children not only of that Plantation, but of the smaller Plantations, that may be in the Neighbourhood.

Not surprisingly, the commissary found few masters willing to cooperate. Moreover, the South Carolina Commons House refused to make any such proposal mandatory; accordingly, Garden turned to the SPG for assistance.¹¹⁶

Garden called on the Society to purchase "Three, Four or Five (more or fewer, as present Circumstances may allow, and to be added to from Time to Time as Occasion may require, and future Circumstances enable) Home Born Male Slave, not under the Age of Twelve, not exceeding that of Sixteen years, and who shall appear to be of Sober docile Dispositions." These SPG owned slaves would then be fully instructed in the principles of Anglican Christianity and then sent out to the plantations to teach slave children. "As among Religious Instruction usually descends from Parents to Children," Garden contended, "so among them it must at first ascend from Children to Parents, or from Young to Old." ¹¹⁷

The Society acted quickly. In October of 1740 they
authorized the appropriation of 1500 pounds for the instruction of two blacks. Garden accepted their offer, indicating that he would begin immediately to find two appropriate boys and that he would be responsible for their care and maintenance, absolving the Society of any additional responsibility. Garden also stated that once the two slaves had gained sufficient knowledge, he would retain one for "the Instruction of the Negroes or Slave Children of Charles Town" who would operate under the clergy’s supervision in a schoolhouse that the commissary hoped to provide. The other teacher would have the same duties, but would work in one of "the best settled Country Parishes." Here, too, a building would be constructed such that "the greatest number of children for 2 Miles round may attend." Garden hoped his plan would not stop there but would grow "till the Several Parishes be all supplied."\textsuperscript{118}

Garden wasted no time. Soon after receiving permission he reported that he had purchased two adolescent boys, Harry and Andrew, aged fourteen and fifteen respectively. Interestingly enough, the two slaves had belonged to the estate of Alexander Skeene, the St. George's Parish planter who had long been an advocate of slave conversion. Garden told the Society that the boys had both been baptized as infants and could recite the catechism, though they were both illiterate. They lived with Garden and were "sent daily to School." He supposed that they would qualify for
their new roles in "18 or 20 Months Time." The project must have proceeded well because in September 1742 Garden could write that Harry "proves an excellent Genius, and now (in the Space of 8 months) reads the N. Testament exceeding well." He believed that in another six months the young boy should have met all the requirements Garden had designed and would then be ready to begin teaching. By then the commissary hoped that the Charleston school would be finished. The other student, Andrew, was not as quick in learning but, according to Garden, had "a Milder and better Temper, and to the best of my Judgement will require less Authority and Inspection over him, when he comes to the intended Service." One year later the commissary could report favorably on his project. Harry had finished his instruction and was teaching in the newly constructed Charles Town Negro School. Andrew, however, had not finished his instruction, although he had gained enough mastery in Garden's eyes to act as an assistant.119

Together, Harry and Andrew daily taught thirty or more black children from Charleston and the surrounding area and in the years that followed the student body continued to grow. By April 1744 there were nearly sixty children attending; a year later, the number had grown to fifty five children and fifteen adults who received evening instruction. In 1747 Garden reported that over forty children had "graduated" with sufficient knowledge. Two
years later, he noted that 32 more children had been "qualified" and believed that many black parents in the city were desirous of having their children instructed.


4. Crowley, "Family Relations and Inheritance in Early South Carolina," 44 (first quotation), 37 (second quotation), 47 (third quotation).


15. Weir, Colonial South Carolina, 238.


20. South Carolina Gazette, May 21, 1737 (first quotation); June 23, 1766 (fourth quotation); St. George Tucker as quoted in Bridenbaugh Myths and Realities, 73 (second quotation); Whitaker, Chief Justice's Charge, 10 (third quotation).


29. This is a rough estimate. I am currently working on an map to pinpoint specific locations.


31. See, for example, Clinton Rossiter, *Seedtime of the Republic: The Origin of the American Tradition of Political Liberty* (New York, 1953), 36-43; Richard Hofstadter, *America at
1750: A Social Portrait (New York, 1971), xv-xvi, 181-82; and
Jon Butler, "Magic, Astrology, and the Early American
Religious Heritage, 1600-1760," American Historical Review,
LXXXIV, (December 1979), 317-18.

32. Patricia U. Bonomi and Peter R. Eisenstadt, "Church
Adherence in the Eighteenth-Century British American
Colonies," William and Mary Quarterly, XXXIX (April 1982),
245-86.

33. Reports from three parishes, St. Bartholomew, St. Helena,
and St. Paul's, all profoundly affected by the Yamasee War and
all dissenter strongholds, were apparently not filed.

34. A summary of the bishop of London's of "Queries" as well as
the nine responses from South Carolina can be found in Bonomi
and Eisenstadt, "Church Adherence in the Eighteenth-Century
British American Colonies," 245-76.

35. Ibid., 254-59; Wood, Black Majority, 142-66; Philip D.
Morgan, "A Profile of a Mid-Eighteenth Century South Carolina
Parish: The Tax Return of Saint James," Goose Creek," South
The trials and triumphs of Anglican missionaries can be
followed in Frank J. Klingberg, An Appraisal of the Negro in
Colonial South Carolina: A Study in Americanization
(Washington, D.C, 1941).

36. Wood, Black Majority, 146-47; Merrens and Terry, "Dying in
Paradise," 542.

of the Revolution: The Journal and Other Writings of Charles

38. Bonomi and Eisenstadt, "Church Adherence in the Eighteenth-
Century British American Colonies," 256n.

39. Robert Currie, et al., Churches and Churchgoers: Patterns
of Church Growth in the British Isles Since 1700 (Oxford,
1977), 22.

40. Bonomi and Eisenstadt, "Church Adherence in the Eighteenth-
Century British American Colonies," 247.

41. Commissary Johnston to the Society, Charleston, January 27,
1711 in Frank J. Klingberg, ed., Carolina Chronicle: The
Papers of Commissary Gideon Johnston, 1707-1716, University of
California Publications in History, Vol. 35 (Berkeley and Los
Angeles, 1946), 66.

42. Quoted in Klingberg, An Appraisal of the Negro, 72.

44. Quoted in David Duncan Wallace, Henry Laurens (New York, 1915), 33.

45. Dalcho, The Protestant Episcopal Church in South Carolina, 26-388; Bolton, Southern Anglicanism, 140-53.


47. Townshend, South Carolina Baptists, 1-175; Corwin, Manual of the Reformed Church, 232-279; Hirsch, Huguenots of Colonial South Carolina, 46-65.


50. Francis Le Jau to Secretary, March 18, 1717, South Carolina Parish of St. James near Goose Creek, in Frank J. Klingberg, ed., The Carolina Chronicle of Dr. Francis Le Jau, 1706-1717 (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1956), 199.


53. Mr. Burnham to Mr. Johnston enclosed in Mr. Johnston’s Letter of the 4th April, 1716 in Klingberg, Carolina Chronicle: The Papers of Commissary Gideon Johnston, 164.


56. A.N. Whitehead, Adventures of Ideas (New York, 1933), 158.

58. For the evangelical revivals in the Middle Colonies, see C.H. Maxson, The Great Awakening in the Middle Colonies (Chicago, 1920); Bonomi, Under the Cope of Heaven, 131-60; Martin E. Lodge, "The Crisis of the Churches in the Middle Colonies, 1720-1750," Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography, XLV (1971), 195-220.


61. Ibid.


63. Gaustad, The Great Awakening, 43.


66. Whitefield's Journals, 90.

67. Ibid., 383.

Virginia, North and South-Carolina, concerning their Negroses (Philadelphia, 1740).


70. Ibid., Letter III, 13-16.

71. South Carolina Gazette, January 12, 1740.

72. Ibid., January 19, 1740.

73. Ibid., August 23, 1740.

74. Ibid., July 12, 1740.

75. Ibid., July 25, 1740.

76. Bolton, Southern Anglicanism, 51; Whitefield's Journals, 397-400.

77. Whitefield's Journals, 400.

78. Ibid., 354; Maxson, The Great Awakening, 92-96.


80. Ibid., 442.


82. Howe, History of the Presbyterian Church in South Carolina, I, 195.

83. Ibid., 195-96.


85. South Carolina Gazette, July 25, 1740.

86. Whitefield's Journals, 339-43.

87. Bolton, Southern Anglicanism, 187n; Whitefield's Journals, 446.
88. Lewis Jones to Commissary Garden, St. Helena's, South Carolina, August 15, 1740, in Klingberg, *An Appraisal of the Negro in Colonial South Carolina*, 77.


95. *South Carolina Gazette*, January 15, 1741.


97. Josiah Smith, *The Burning of Sodom with its Moral Causes, Improv'd in a Sermon Preached at Charles Town South-Carolina, after a most Terrible Fire* (Charleston, 1741).


100. Garden, *Six Letters...The Sixth, containing Remarks on Mr. Whitfield's...Letter concerning the Negroes*, 11-14.

Correspondence of the Associates of Dr. Bray, 1717-1777 (Urbana and Chicago, 1985), 72.

102. Lewis Jones to [David Humphreys], St. Helena's, South Carolina, May 1, 1739, in Klingberg, An Appraisal of the Negro in Colonial South Carolina, 68.

103. Lewis Jones to [Secretary], St. Helena's, South Carolina, August 15, 1740, in Klingberg, An Appraisal of the Negro in Colonial South Carolina, 71.


107. Ibid., 381-82.

108. Ibid., February 23, 1742, 393.

109. South Carolina Council Journals, April 8, 1742, 13; South Carolina Gazette, March 27, 1742.


111. South Carolina Gazette, April 17, 1742.

112. Ibid., April 24, 1742.

113. South Carolina Council Journals, April 27, 1742.

114. Josiah Smith, A Funeral Discourse, Sacred to the Memory of Mr. Joseph Moody (Charleston, 1767).

115. Alexander Garden to [Philip Bearcroft], Charles Town, South Carolina, May 6, 1740, in Klingberg, An Appraisal of the Negro in Colonial South Carolina, 104-05.

116. Ibid., 105.

117. Ibid., 106.

118. Ibid., 108-09.

119. Ibid., 112-113.
VOLUME II

THE RISE OF EVANGELICAL RELIGION

IN SOUTH CAROLINA DURING THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

by

THOMAS J. LITTLE
CHAPTER FOUR

"Adding to the Church Such as Shall Be Saved":
The Rise of Evangelical Churches in Colonial South Carolina,
1740-1772

I

Although the high-profile religious controversy between George Whitefield and Alexander Garden has received much attention from historians, the impact of the Son of Thunder's famous American preaching tour in colonial South Carolina has never been explored in any detail. Indeed, except for the valuable study of Alan Gallay, modern scholars have almost totally neglected the topic. In large measure, this is due to some of the deeply rooted historiographical assumptions concerning the general contours of religion in the South discussed in the previous chapter. No less important, however, is the strong reaction that has been mounting against the stereotypical view of the First Great Awakening.

Among the recent literature, Jon Butler's work more fully typifies this reaction than any other. "Historians usually focus on the 'Great Awakening' of the 1740s as the principal religious occurrence of prerevolutionary American
society," Butler has boldly declared, but "this emphasis...may say more about subsequent times than about its own." Why? For Butler the answer is clear. "Internal descriptive and analytical inconsistencies belie the event's importance and even its existence; it is difficult to date, for example, [and] it missed most of the colonies." Moreover, he says, "even in New England its longterm effects have been greatly exaggerated." Therefore, the Great Awakening, Butler concluded, "might better be thought of as an interpretive fiction and as an American equivalent of the Roman Empire's Donation of Constantine, the medieval forgery that the papacy used to justify its subsequent claims to political authority."  

By pushing to the fore the issue of present-mindedness, Butler has done much to point up the limitations and inadequacies of First Great Awakening as a heuristic tool. Indeed, he and other historians who have followed his lead in arguing against an expansive definition of the event have provided a useful corrective. The evangelical revivals that occurred in various regions during the eighteenth century were far too diffuse, spread over too long a time, and left too many congregations untouched to constitute anything like a "Great Awakening." Most certainly, they should not be seen as the pivotal, unifying event in the history of British North America.

My contention is that we are in danger of pushing this
line of argument to the extreme. Stressing the extent to which the interpretive significance of the First Great Awakening has been greatly exaggerated should not obscure the importance of those evangelical revivals that did occur—however localized, spatially and temporally bestrewn, and seemingly transient—for those revivals, as the following pages will show was the case for South Carolina, set in motion a process that gradually expanded the number of evangelical ministers and churches and introduced, and subsequently set in place, a religious belief system that had profound sociocultural implications. For that reason, it is tremendously important to take stock of what has previously been learned (and supposed), add to it the useful corrective that has been provided by recent work, and attempt to extrapolate from the two a new approximation of the emergence of the powerful evangelical tradition, a tradition that in the antebellum era prompted Alexis de Tocqueville to write: "There is no country in the whole world in which the Christian religion retains a greater influence over the souls of men than in America."

II

With an overblown interpretation of the First Great Awakening no longer in the way and with an explicit recognition that specific local revivals did have
significant long-term effects, it is possible to examine carefully the emergence of evangelical churches in colonial South Carolina in the years prior to the American Revolution. This task will be undertaken in the pages that follow. However, before proceeding it might be well to underscore one important dimension of the larger process that has often been overlooked by historians, namely that the rise of evangelicalism was, for the most part, undramatic. To be sure, there were some brief periods of excitement, but in most instances the process of growth was gradual, almost halting in nature.

For many South Carolina ministers promoting vital religious experience, the interdenominational revival in Charleston and the surrounding area that was precipitated by George Whitefield’s ministry in the early 1740s seemed to portend a new age for the Christian church. Josiah Smith, pastor of the Independent church in Charleston, for example, wrote:

And now behold! God seems to have revived the ancient Spirit and Doctrines. He is raising up of our young men with zeal and courage to stem the Torrent. They have been in labours more abundant. They have preached with such Fire, Assiduity, and success; such a solemn awe have they struck upon their hearers; so unaccountably have they conquered the prejudices of many persons; such deep convictions ave their sermons produced; so much have they roused and kindled the zeal of ministers and people; so intrepidly do they push through all opposition, that my soul overflows with Joy, and my heart is too full to express my Hopes. It looks as if some happy period were opening, to bless the world with another Reformation.6

Unfortunately for Smith and others who shared his
sentiments, however, there was no new Reformation in South Carolina--at least not immediately--because the thunder of revivalism, and the religious fervor that accompanied it, soon subsided after Whitefield departed in 1741. Nevertheless, a number of warmhearted evangelicals sought, as Smith put it, to "clinch the nails" that Whitefield had "already fastened."

Many Independents and Presbyterians, both with long histories in the colony, profoundly influenced by Whitefield, and closely related--indeed, inextricably linked--to one another, were at the forefront of the effort to carry on the spirit of revivalism. In contrast to the situation in many congregations in the northern colonies, however, there was not an easily discernable split between "Old Light" and "New Light" Congregationalists and "Old Side" and "New Side" Presbyterians in South Carolina, making it rather difficult to fetter out those who stood aloof from the revivalist impulse from those who embraced it. Notwithstanding this fact, the extant data makes it possible to clearly identify some individuals who kept evangelicalism pulsating in the colony. It is to those individuals, therefore, that we must turn our attention.

Judging from his background, it would seem--on the surface at least--that Josiah Smith, close friend, supporter, and staunch defender of George Whitefield, would be the last one to carry on the evangelical impulse in South
Carolina; yet, he proved to be a talented leader of the fledgling evangelical community. Born in Charleston in 1704, Smith was the son of one of the most wealthy and influential families in the colony. After matriculating at Harvard, he was ordained in the Congregational ministry in 1726. Subsequently, he set out for Bermuda, but after spending only two years on the island, he accepted a pastoral invitation from the members of a Presbyterian church, Cainhoy, located on the Wando River. Four years later, Smith became minister of the "White Meeting-house" or Independent Church in Charleston.9

For reasons that are not altogether clear--but certainly including his "generous" and widely noted "catholick and Christian Spirit," a metaphor used by contemporaries to connote a capacity for the toleration and acceptance of religious diversity--Smith welcomed Whitefield with open arms and became one of the key players in the South Carolina revival of the early 1740s.10 As the previous chapter has shown, he was the first to write in defense of Whitefield in the heated newspaper controversy, travelled with him during his tour of the colony, and was an outspoken advocate of slave proselytization. What is more, in the years following the revival Smith played an active role in organizing congregations that had been awakened and was himself responsible for several conversions. John Newton (1725-1807), author of the hymn "Amazing Grace,"
attributed his conversion to the preaching of Smith. Newton was impressed into the British Navy in 1742, but he deserted two years later and became involved in the African slave trade. It was on one of these voyages that he came into contact with Smith. Landing in Charleston in 1748, he noted:

In this place there are many serious people, but I knew not where to find them out; indeed, I was not aware of a difference, but supposed that all who attended public worship were good Christians. I was as much in the dark about preaching, not doubting but whatever came from the pulpit must be very good. I had two or three opportunities of hearing a dissenting minister, named Smith, who...[was]...an excellent and powerful preacher of the gospel; and there was something in his manner that struck me, but I did not rightly understand him. The best words that men can speak are ineffectual till explained and applied by the Spirit of God, who alone can open the heart. It pleased the Lord for some time, that I should learn no more than what he enabled me to collect from my own experience and reflection. My conduct was now very inconsistent. Almost every day, when business would permit, I used to retire into the woods and fields (for these, when at hand, have always been my favorite oratories, and I trust I began to taste the sweets of communion."

It was this private religious experience in the woods of South Carolina, an experience precipitated by the preaching of Smith, that inspired Newton to write such popular hymns as "Glorious things of Thee are Spoken," "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds," and "One there is above all others.""

Newton was among the last to actually hear the "excellent and powerful" preaching of Josiah Smith, however, for in 1749 Smith suffered a severe stroke that left him partially paralyzed. Although the affliction prevented him from carrying out his ministerial responsibilities, Smith
continued to do what he could to facilitate the spread of experiential religion. With the help of an assistant, for instance, he wrote and published numerous "gospel sermons." In addition, after seeking the advice of George Whitefield, who was visiting Charleston in 1751, Smith helped to install an evangelical Presbyterian, James Edmonds, as his successor at the Independent Church in Charleston.

Apparently, Edmonds had some initial reservations about ministering to a congregation that was composed mainly of Congregationalists, but Whitefield, after having "some close talk with Mr. [Thomas] Lamboll and several of Mr. S[mith]'s congregation," assured him that "all seemed unanimous to give you a call." "I need only observe," Whitefield added, "in the congregation there are many dear children of God....[a]nd...I hope you will be an happy instrument of...adding to the church such as shall be saved." Equally attractive, in Whitefield's mind, was the fact that there were "several pious minister of other denominations, who will be glad to keep up a Christian correspondence with you, and strengthen your hands." Ultimately, Edmonds, at the urging of Whitefield, Smith, and the members of the congregation, accepted the call to minister at the Independent Church. And, as it turned out, his initial reservations proved to be unwarranted, for he was extraordinarily successful. Indeed, "the congregation
increased so considerably" during the first five years of his ministry that church had to be enlarged.15

Other Independent and Presbyterian ministers, such as John Hutson, were equally successful. Hutson, it will be remembered, was "the first teacher of Mr. Bryan's negroes." He was converted by Whitefield in 1740 and afterwards was employed as a tutor by the Bryan family. It was evidently on the Bryan estate that Hutson first began to preach. In 1742 the zealous youth moved to Georgia, where he became a licentiate at the Bethesda orphanage; however, he did not remain there very long, for in the following year he accepted a call from members of the soon-to-be formed Stoney Creek Independent Presbyterian Church to become their pastor.16 Located on a tributary of the Pocataligo River in an area of Prince Williams Parish referred to by contemporaries as "The Indian Land," the Stoney Creek Church was founded in June 1743 by Hutson, the Bryans, and other disaffected Anglicans who had been profoundly influenced by Whitefield's evangelical message. After Huston was ordained by Josiah Smith and John Osgood, another evangelical Independent minister operating in the South Carolina lowcountry, "a day was set apart by the church for fasting and prayer, to settle matters about and to organize the church." A covenant was drawn up, signed by the members--Hutson, Hugh, Jonathan, and Joseph Bryan, Stephen Bull, Jr., William Gillbart, Robert Ogle, James Rowlain, and William
Kennady—and certain articles of faith were adopted.17

By signing the covenant, members of the Stony Creek church agreed—among other things—to "openly without reserve resign ourselves...[to] Christ the complete Savior of Sinners in Church Fellowship & Communion, Resolving & Promising in his Strength, to Believe his Promises, Live by Faith on him, in whome they are all yea & amen." They also committed themselves to "taking the written word for our Rule, aiming in all at the Glory of Christ," and adhering to the "Special Direction & Assistance of the spirit of the Lord." In general, the articles of faith bound members to the doctrines and creeds of the Westminster Confession. However, there was one important distinction with regard to church government. Article 24 of the Stoney Creek Confession stated that:

no one church hath any priority or superintendency above or over another, and that every church ought to be organical; that an elder or elders, a deacon or deacons, ought to be elected in every congregation, according to those holy qualifications laid down in the word of God, and that the said elders and deacons so chosen ought solemnly to be ordained with prayer and laying on the hand of the eldership. That such churches as have not officers so ordained are disorderly; there being something yet wanting.

This stemmed from a belief that "a true church is not national or parochial" and is precisely why the members of the church considered themselves to be "Independent" Presbyterians.18

Formal membership in the Stoney Creek Church, which required "Consent to this Covenant and Confession of Faith,"
grew in fits and spurts between 1743 and 1751, as Table 4.1 demonstrates. During the first year of the church’s existence, membership rose sharply from 9 to 19; however, over the next seven years only 18 new members joined, bringing the total number to 37. Thus, after an initial burst, growth occurred slowly and somewhat unevenly.

Table 4.1

Membership Statistics of the Stoney Creek Independent Presbyterian Church, 1743-1751

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June 8, 1743</td>
<td>William Hutson</td>
<td>Pastor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hugh Bryan</td>
<td>Deacon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jonathan Bryan</td>
<td>Deacon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stephen Bull, Jr.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Joseph Bryan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>James Rowlain</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>William Kennedy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>William Gillbart</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Robert Ogle</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 22, 1743</td>
<td>Mary Bryan</td>
<td>Wife of Joseph Bryan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Elizabeth Jervey</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>....McPerson</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Margaret Kennady</td>
<td>Wife of William Kennady</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sarah Peter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mary Hutson</td>
<td>[Wife of William Hutson]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 28, 1744</td>
<td>Benjamin Tobias</td>
<td>Wife of Benjamin Jones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sarah Jones</td>
<td>Wife of Jonathan Bryan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mary Bryan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 3, 1744</td>
<td>Benjamin Jones</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Susanna Hazelton</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>....1745</td>
<td>George</td>
<td>a Negro &amp;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sarah</td>
<td>his Wife</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 9, 1745</td>
<td>Mary Bryan</td>
<td>Wife of Hugh Bryan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 9, 1745</td>
<td>Sabina Willson</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 16, 1746</td>
<td>William Scott</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.1
(Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nd.</td>
<td>William Parker</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mrs. Parker</td>
<td>Wife of William Parker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>John Smith</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr. Robinson</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nd.</td>
<td>John Hayden</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 1751</td>
<td>Barnabas Gilbert</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hannah Wennell</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lissey</td>
<td>a Negro Woman</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interestingly, far more men than women became formal members of the Stoney Creek Church between 1743 and 1751. Of the 36 members whose sex can be identified, 21 (58 percent) were male, while only 15 (42 percent) were female. Although most members were white, three nonwhites (8 percent)—George, Sarah, and Lissey—joined the church. Additionally, almost one half of the members (43 percent) were related. To what extent this pattern of growth and these sexual, racial, and familial dimensions were characteristic of early evangelical churches in South Carolina in the years prior to the American Revolution is a question that will be explored in more detail in following pages.

William Hutson remained at the Stoney Creek Church until 1756. Subsequently, he removed to Charleston, where he died five years later. Before his death, however, Hutson did much to advance experiential religion in the South
Carolina lowcountry. Following the example of Whitefield, he visited and preached at numerous Independent and Presbyterian churches south of Charleston, including Wando Neck, Dorchester, Pon Pon, Beaufort, James Island, and Beech Hill. What is more, he frequented many Baptist congregations in the region.²⁰

Hutson's successor at Stoney Creek, Archibald Simpson, also did much to spread the evangelical ethos in the colony. Simpson was born in Glasgow, Scotland, in 1734. At the age of fourteen, he began to write down in a journal an account of his "religious impressions" and the important events of his life, an activity that he continued to engage in for the rest of his life. Simpson's journal, which extends from 1748 to 1784 with only minor interruptions and numbers almost 2,500 pages in manuscript form, provides a wealth of information on a wide range of subjects of interest to historians. His comments concerning religion are of particular importance to this study.²¹

Shortly before Simpson began keeping a journal, his brother, John, died at sea. This event seems to have had a profound influence on the young Scot, for not long after his "religious impressions deepened." Accordingly, he travelled around Glasgow in search of "relief," but the sermons he heard and the services he attended were, in his words, "Christless." It was during this time that Simpson first came into contact with George Whitefield, who preached "a
most beautiful gospel sermon" that produced "great concern, weeping and groaning in the congregation." Afterwards, Simpson spent several days "in the field, in prayer, praise, and reading God's word." During this spiritual journey, according to Simpson, the Holy Spirit descended upon him, filling his heart with "love and joy."²²

Following this experience, Simpson was admitted to Glasgow College. Upon graduating in 1752, he accepted an invitation from Whitefield to manage the Bethesda Orphanage; thus, he sailed for America the following year. Simpson did not remain in Georgia very long, however, for in 1754, less than a six months after his arrival in the colony, he moved to South Carolina and was employed as a probationer at the Wilton Presbyterian Church in Colleton County. While here, Whitefield came to see him and demanded to know why he had not fulfilled the terms of their contract. Simpson replied that there were many "hungry souls" in South Carolina and that his "labours" would go far in providing them with spiritual food. Apparently, the explanation did not satisfy Whitefield, because he demanded that Simpson refund the money he had advanced him for his passage, which Simpson did.²³

This headbutting weighed heavily on Simpson's mind, but it did not dampen his enthusiasm for spreading "gospel religion." Nor did it permanently fracture his relationship with the Whitefield. Indeed, ten years after the incident,
during Whitefield's next visit to South Carolina, Simpson noted that he "spent [an] evening and part of the night with Rev. Mr. Whitefield in a very friendly way." "Blessed be God," he added, "who has lifted me up from the very humbling circumstances I was in the first time [read 1754] Mr. Whitefield was in this country." On another occasion shortly thereafter, Simpson noted that Whitefield preached "a good sermon on the very vitals of Christianity" in his church. "After [the] sermon," Simpson remarked, "he dined at my house, renewed his professions of friendship, and went for Charleston on his way to Philadelphia. The more I compare times past with the present, the more my soul is humbled in the dust, praising, blessing, and adoring the Lord for all his great and wonderful goodness."

While the two evangelicals had smoothed over any differences that might have existed between them, Simpson still felt the need to comment on Whitfield's "manner and deportment" during the visit, qualities that obviously struck him as being peculiar when compared with the past.

Mr. Whitefield stopped [by]...in a coach and four [horses] with several servants. He is prodigiously corpulent, but has for two years been in a bad state of health, and not able to preach as much as he used to do. Seemed still holy; his conversation not so much in the clouds nor so flighty, but more solid and weighty, and more like an inhabitant of this world.

Regarding Whitefield's "equipage," Simpson could not "forbear saying, how unlike he was to his Master in this respect!"
If, however, Simpson thought that Whitefield's success had undermined his commitment to apostolic simplicity, Simpson still defended the Whitefield, his method of preaching, and his evangelical thrust. While visiting with three Presbyterian ministers in Charleston, all of whom had recently arrived in the colony from abroad, for example, Simpson wrote in 1768 that he was "not greatly pleased nor edified with this night's conversation, it being mostly against Mr. Whitefield and ministers of his stamp." "As I felt myself pointed at," he continued, "I thought it my duty to speak freely, and stand up for the preaching warmly and zealously the doctrines of grace, the necessity of regeneration, the Catholic practice of preaching in all pulpits, employing pious ministers of every denomination, and holding occasional communion with all sound Protestants, with all Christians who held of the glorious Head, and both lay and ministerial communion."27 Attacks on Whitefield, in other words, were attacks on Simpson and other evangelicals.

By the time Simpson penned these remarks, he, like many other ministers of Whitefield's "stamp," had become a fixture in the South Carolina landscape. Originally licensed as a probationer at the Wilton Church in 1753, he was ordained two years later as a Presbyterian minister of the Stoney Creek Independent Church where he remained until his departure from the colony in 1772. Judging from the
references in his journal—he converted eight people during his first year, for example—and by the number of families said to have been connected with the church in 1768, Simpson had considerable success.\textsuperscript{28}

In addition to his work at the Stoney Creek Church, Simpson travelled throughout the colony to preach. Indeed, between 1753 and 1772 he delivered at least one sermon in every formally organized Presbyterian and Congregational church in the South Carolina lowcountry; he also preached in Georgia and to some backcountry congregations. What is more, Simpson mentioned visiting Baptist, Lutheran, and Anglican churches on several occasions. The following journal entry is suggestive of his activities.

July 23, 1756: Rode 35 miles to James Island, as there is not [regular] preaching there; was lost in the woods, but got over the next day. Prevented from preaching by violent rain in the forenoon. At 12 o’clock, preached to about thirty people. Admitted two young women, converted by my labors; admitted their father, a wonderful conversion!\textsuperscript{29}

For the most part, as was the case in the James Island Presbyterian Church, Simpson seems to have focused his efforts on organized churches that were "vacant" (i.e. without a regular minister), but he also helped to organize a number of incipient congregations. In 1765 and 1766, for instance, he made several trips to Salt Ketcher Creek in Colleton County. "The people of the neighborhood," he wrote, "were originally of the church of England, and had no desire for the preaching of the gospel till two families of
the name of Dunham, from the Bethel [Presbyterian] church, Pon Pon, and another from the same, by the name of Hamilton, moved among them." Afterwards, "they...resolved on establishing gospel worship among them, and I commenced to assist them." 30

Of course, vacancies in the Independent and Presbyterian churches, like other churches during the colonial period, were not uncommon in South Carolina. In the lowcountry, where the population was more settled and far less scattered by 1750, the malignant disease environment made the situation particularly incongruous. Indeed, frequent, early, and widespread death among ministers seems to have been the rule rather than the exception. Commenting on the death of one Presbyterian minister, for instance, Simpson noted that "Rev. [Samuel] Hunter hath been in the province about twenty years, which is very extraordinary, few ministers living half that time in this country, which is so sickly and fatal to people in our way." 31

Even the seemingly tireless Simpson, whose "heart lay with the people and province of South Carolina," contemplated "removing on the score of health," especially after the death of his wife--"who had been taken desperately ill with fever" in 1765. Only the "solicitation of many poor negroes not to leave" and the possibility of armed resistance to the British government "for laying a stamp
duty on the colonies, which... is contrary to our liberties, and very oppressive in nature," prevented him from doing so. 32

In contrast to the lowcountry, vacancies in the South Carolina backcountry were primarily the result of the rapid spread and disparate pattern of settlement in the second half of the eighteenth century. Early on, though, the problem also seemed to lay—at least in part—in the consuming nature of the mosquito-infested lowcountry; for oftentimes when a minister was sent into the backcountry, he ended up accepting a call from a vacant church in the lowcountry. For example, in 1755 the Synod of Philadelphia appointed William Donaldson, who "felt much indebted to Whitefield," to "supply the vacancies of Carolina, between the Atkin [Yadkin] and Catoba [Catawba] rivers, for ten weeks or longer." 33 Archibald Simpson, who heard the young minister, applauded the decision and was "refreshed with the heavenly discourse of this very worthy Presbyterian minister, who had...been sent out...to preach through the back parts." Less than a year later, however, Donaldson "accepted a call to Waccama." Similarly, the South Carolina Presbytery decided in 1756 to employ "an itinerant minister in the back settlements," and subsequently they "sent to Scotland for one." But shortly after arriving in the colony, the minister, Charles Gordon, "was installed over the church and congregation at Pon Pon." 34
Why were ministers more prone to settle in the lowcountry rather than the upcountry even though contemporaries were well aware of the unhealthfullness of the former region? The reasons seem to have been numerous and varied, but one consideration appears to have been especially important, namely congregations in the lowcountry were settled, "improved," and usually had more to offer. In other words, they tended to have "large" and "handsome" brick churches with "elaborate" pulpits and pews, "very commodious" parsonages, and significant numbers of "slaves...who were hired out, and the proceeds of their labor or hire applied to the payment of the pastor's salary." Put simply, many ministers "considered the temporals better" in lowcountry churches.35

Nevertheless, ministerial activity was increasing in the backcountry in the second half of the eighteenth century, and more than a few Presbyterian ministers, such as William Richardson, eventually decided to locate there. Richardson was born in Egremont, England, in 1729, the youngest son of a comfortable middling family. After attending the University of Glasgow, where he met and became a close associate of Archibald Simpson, Richardson emigrated to Philadelphia in 1750. Travelling south, he was befriended and taken in by the fabled Samuel Davies, a New Light Presbyterian who, according to Donald G. Mathews, "brought the first impulse of Evangelicalism to maturity" in
Although little is known about his activities, it is clear that Richardson was a product of that maturation process. In 1758 he informed Simpson that he had been ordained by the Hanover Presbytery as "a missionary to the Cherokee Upper Towns," but quickly found out that "no good could be done among them, as they were inclined to join the French." Thus, "he...laid down his mission and accepted an invitation from a people at the Waxhaws, about two hundred miles beyond Charlestown." "The support is indeed less," Simpson remarked, "but the opportunity of usefulness in greater." 37

Indeed, there were great opportunities in the rapidly expanding South Carolina backcountry, especially in the Waxhaw region below Pinetree Hill, where Richardson settled in 1759. By that time, as Robert L. Meriwether has shown, "over a hundred and fifty South Carolina warrants and surveys amounting to thirty thousand acres had been recorded in the Wateree-Catawba valley." Roughly 60 percent of the land had been secured by settlers who identified themselves as coming from Virginia, while about 30 percent had been granted to colonists who said they came from Pennsylvania. The remaining 10 percent was occupied by petitioners from Maryland, the Jerseys, North Carolina, and the South Carolina lowcountry. The large majority of the 1,200 whites in the region were Scotch-Irish Presbyterians: most blacks,
numbering from 200 to 250 in 1760, were country born or creole slaves who had travelled to the backcountry with their masters down the Great Wagon Road.\textsuperscript{38}

When Richardson arrived on the scene, therefore, there was a ready field of action, and it did not take him long to get down to the business at hand. Shortly after settling at the recently formed Waxhaw Church, he began to itinerate within a 70 mile radius, preaching regularly at and helping to organize at least five other Presbyterian churches before 1763--Fairforest, Fishing Creek, Catholic, Purity, Union. Soon Richardson extended his efforts to the southwest, and by the end of the decade he was laboring as far away as Long Canes, which was located in present-day Abbeville County. Of course, Richardson did not labor alone. Other Presbyterian ministers from the lowcountry frequented the backcountry, and Presbyteries to the north continued to send representatives to "labor among the vacancies in the back parts." Following Richardson's lead, a few even located in churches above the fall line, perhaps in part because many of those congregations were becoming more affluent and could offer more attractive "temporals."\textsuperscript{39}

As a result of the efforts Richardson, Simpson, and other ministers operating in South Carolina, the number Presbyterian churches rose steadily in the colony in between 1740 and 1770, increasing from four to twenty-eight. Elam Potter, a New Englander who visited South Carolina in 1767
and compiled a report on each Presbyterian congregation in the colony, estimated that there were 1,940 families connected with those churches. How many Independents there were in the colony at this time is not clear, but the number of Congregational churches did not increase after 1740. However, it seems that all the Congregational and a majority of the Presbyterian churches in South Carolina had, as Archibald Simpson put it, "gospel religion among them."40

III

Many German colonists who settled in Amelia, Orangeburg, Saxe Gotha, and near the confluence of the Saluda and Broad Rivers during the middle decades of the eighteenth century also had, in the words of one contemporary, "seligmachenden Bibel Glauben unter uns" ("living Bible faith among us").41 About one-quarter to one-third of South Carolina's German settlers, who numbered more than 3,500 in 1760 and constituted roughly 10 percent of the colony's white population, were Reformed (Calvinists). Two-thirds to three-quarters were Lutherans, most of whom were evangelical Pietists rather than rechtglaubig (orthodox). Considerably more than one half of the Germans who immigrated to the colony came either from the Rhineland, Baden, or Wurtemberg.42

There were, of course, important theological
differences, such as predestination, between the Reformed and Lutheran churches and in all but a very few cases they remained separate. This was true even in the case of the short-lived administrative union of Lutheran and Reformed churches known as Union Ecclesiastica (1787-1794) in the post-revolutionary era. Nevertheless, differences between the two denominations tended to fade under the Carolina sunshine and, as a rule, relations between them were cordial. Many of the German Reformed and Lutheran colonists had come from the same parts of Germany, crossed the Atlantic on the same ships, and settled side by side in the interior of South Carolina. When they established churches, they sometimes shared in the construction and maintenance of common facilities, necessity supplying the impulse and the Simultankirchen of southwestern Germany providing the model for the "union churches" in their new home. What is more, many German Lutheran and Reformed communicants intermarried and had close economic ties and interests. Both also lived in the shadow of the Cherokee Nation and relied on one another for defense. Thus, a welter of conditions mitigated denominational differences. What divided them, in other words, was far less important than what united them—nationality, language, kinship, friendship, and socioeconomic and cultural ties.\(^3\)

Though clearly evangelical in their emphasis on Erleuchtung ("illumination" or "enlightenment" of the Holy
Spirit), Empfindung ("feeling" or "sensation" of faith), Gnaden durchbruch ("piercing through of grace"), Wiedergeburt ("new birth"), and Frommigkeit ("piety"), Lutheran and Reformed settlers considered themselves to be "church people." Therefore, they viewed German "sect people," such as Mennonites, Dunkers, Quakers, Seventh-day Baptists, and Radical Pietists (i.e. mystics, spiritualists, and chiliasts), with suspicion—if not open hostility—despite the fact that they had a common cultural heritage. The infamous "Weber Heresy," as it was called, serves as a case in point.

In 1756 Jacob Weber, a young Swiss immigrant, had a profound mystical experience, an experience in which he felt his soul had been absorbed by God. Afterwards, he endeavored to share this experience with others near Saxe Gotha, convinced that "Leicht doch die ganze Bibel in mir" ("the entire Bible lies in me"). A few, including his wife, believed Weber and, together, they began holding regular meetings. Two members of the tiny sect, John George Smithpeter and Dauber, "a godless, colored preacher," were subsequently anointed the Son and the Holy Spirit respectively.

Very little is known about the activities of the Weberites, for their numbers were small and they left no records of their own, but in 1760 the group self-destructed. Weber and Smithpeter charged Dauber, who was probably
Weber's bondsperson, with being "lukewarm" in his sentiments. Thus, they and their followers buried him alive in the woods in a strange, but ceremonial fashion. Shortly thereafter, Weber came to believe that Smithpeter was the devil--not the Son as he had previously supposed. Another murder ensued. The cult chained Smithpeter to a tree, and "struck him with their fists, and beat him and trampled upon his throat until he was dead." 46

When news of these activities reached authorities, those involved in the killings, Jacob and Hannah Weber, John Geiger, and Jacob Burghart, were tried, convicted, and sentenced to death. However, Lieutenant Governor Bull pardoned all but Weber, who was summarily executed in April 1761 by the usual means--public hanging. No less than members of other denominations, Lutheran and Reformed groups denounced the Weberites and applauded the provincial government's swift action. In the years that followed, they continually cited the "Weber Heresy" as an example of the abhorrent excesses to which "sect people" were prone, excesses that truly pious "church people" would not commit.47

The major problem that confronted Reformed and Lutheran settlers in colonial South Carolina, however, involved not the appearance of tiny lunatic fringe groups among their ranks but rather their continued use of the German language. This prevented them from becoming a major evangelizing
force. It also made it extraordinarily difficult to sustain the churches they established, for it was all but impossible to secure a regular supply of German-speaking ministers. But these churches did grow, however slowly, primarily because of lay participation and the establishment of conventicles--what evangelical Lutherans called *collegia pietatis*--for Bible study and prayer.  

IV

In contrast to the Lutheran and Reformed denominations in colonial South Carolina, most Baptists had no language barrier. However, they shared with those groups and with a growing number of Presbyterians a commitment to experiential faith. In fact, as Charles Woodmason, the colorful Anglican backcountry itinerant, correctly observed, the Baptists were the "most zealous among the [evangelical] Sects, to propagate their Notions" in the colony. Why this was so can only be explained by an examination of their history in the middle decades of the eighteenth century.

As the previous chapters have shown, there were a significant number of Baptists in the colony from the beginning. Most were Particular (Calvinistic) Baptists who held to the idea of election and closed communion, but in the late 1720s and early 1730s a Arminian or free will General Baptist faction, which rejected unconditional
election and reprobation, emerged. Over the next few years many Particulars gravitated toward General Baptist sentiments. Yet, in the words of one contemporary, "Mr. Whitefield’s coming caused a revival, and many soon joined [the Particulars]." Isaac Chandler, minister of the Ashley River Baptist Church, was the leader of this group and a strong supporter of the Whitefield. Chandler worked diligently to kept the revival spirit alive in and around Charleston.50

Chandler also did much to spread the evangelical ethos among a group of Welsh Baptists from Newcastle County, Pennsylvania who had recently secured and settled a large tract in Queensborough Township on the Big Pee Dee River. In 1743, after several visits to the so-called Welsh Neck settlement, Chandler ordained Philip James, a member of the group and a man of "great spirituality," after preaching a sermon on the "Qualifications of a Gospel Minister for and Duty in studying rightly to divide the Word of Truth...represented in 2 Tim., 2:15." As a result of Chandler’s efforts and the subsequent preaching of James, there was a mini-awakening among the Welsh Neck Baptists in the mid-1740s. This revival furrowed the brow of John Fordyce, an Anglican in Prince Frederick’s Parish, prompting him to write to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts in 1745 "there are an ignorant set of Anabaptists...in the Cheraws...who are so possessed of
the spirit of enthusiasm that there are about as many ignorant preachers as there were in Oliver's Camp." Much of this religious excitement quickly died down, but the PeeDee area in general and the Welsh Neck Church in particular became an important center of Baptist activity in the colony.\textsuperscript{51}

Meanwhile, Chandler was continuing to labor in and around Charleston, and gradually he was able to bring many of the General Baptists back into the Particular fold, primarily by itinerating and holding at the suggestion of Whitefield a series of weekly devotional meetings. But like so many of his contemporaries, he became ill and died in 1749. Many evangelical Baptists believed that after the death of this "worthy gospel minister," a man certainly "abundant in labors," there would be a "famine of hearing the word of the Lord." On the same day Chandler was buried, however, Oliver Hart, who proved to be one of the most successful Baptist minister in the colony, arrived in Charleston to assume the pastorate of that city's First Baptist Church, an event that "was believed to have been directed by a special providence in their favour."\textsuperscript{52}

Hart (1723-1795), a native of Pennsylvania, had been reborn in the Baptist faith in 1741 shortly after hearing Whitefield and the Tennents preach. Five years later, Hart was "called by the [Southampton, Pennsylvania] Church to the Exercise of my Gifts," and "put on trial for the work of the
ministry at meetings of preparation or in private meetings that might for that purpose be appointed." After hearing of the "great work to be done in South Carolina," he desired "to go and visit this field." Thus, he was ordained by the Southampton church and sailed south, endeavoring to promote the "salvation of sinners."\(^{53}\)

With this goal in mind, Hart established the Charleston Baptist Association in 1751, the second such organization in British America. Initially, three churches--Charleston, Ashley River, and Welsh Neck--joined the association with an expressed desire to help bring about "an understanding and fellowship among the members," "consultation," and "harmony and peaceful progress." It was clearly understood, however, that the "said [Charleston] Baptist Association arrogates no higher title than that of advisory council," and that membership in the organization would by no means undermine the "independence of the constituent congregations."\(^{54}\)

Delegates--either ministers or lay messengers--to the association met annually on the Saturday before the second Sunday in November. The first two days were reserved for public worship, and, after a sermon on the following Monday, representatives gathered "to proceed to business," which included ordaining ministerial candidates, appointing preachers to fill vacancies, issuing replies to queries received from congregations on various doctrinal, procedural, and social matters, and forming committees to
aid in settling difficulties within or friction between churches. The association also provided funds for ministerial training—they raised 133 pounds almost immediately for assisting "pious young men," for instance—and assumed responsibility for missionary activity. In 1755, to take but one example, John Gano was employed to itinerate in the backcountry. Gano, a minister in the Philadelphia Association, wrote in his journal that he endeavored to "proclaim free grace wherever I went." On one occasion, he preached a sermon in Charleston after travelling in the Yadkin settlements: "When I arose to speak, the sight of so brilliant an audience, among whom were twelve ministers, and one of whom was Mr. Whitefield, for a moment brought the fear of man upon me: but, blessed be the Lord, I was soon relieved from this embarrassment; the thought passed my mind, I had none to fear and obey but the Lord." Not surprisingly, Gano's sermon met with an enthusiastic reception.

After its founding in 1751, the Charleston Baptist Association increased in both size and influence. And in general the organization achieved in the years preceding the American Revolution the goals laid down by the founders, namely "fellowship" and "peaceful progress." In several important respects, the success of the association was due to the leadership of Oliver Hart, the motivating force behind the its organization. Indeed, Hart gave direction to
the association and set an example that others sought to emulate. As the various entries in his diary make clear, he worked tirelessly to advance evangelicalism in South Carolina, establishing conventicles in Charleston to supplement regular services, travelling throughout the colony to preach, and assisting in the constitution of a number of new churches. Ministers of various persuasions often preached at the First Baptist Church of Charleston—including Whitefield, Independents William Hutson and John Zubly, Presbyterians Archibald Simpson and James Edmonds as well as a host of Baptists such as John Gano—and Hart frequently spoke to Anglican, Presbyterian, and Independent congregations. In 1754, for instance, Richard Clarke, who succeeded Alexander Garden as the rector of St. Philip's, gave him "free Liberty to speak in my Own way; which Discovered an Cathlick Spirit." This and similar gestures filled him with hope: "Oh that all Bigotry was rooted out of the Earth; then would there subsist a greater harmony between persons of all persuasions, than what does." "It is Indeed a pity," Hart noted of the contemporary situation, "that our little outward Differences Should cause Such a Shyness between us." In same year that Hart was first given "free Liberty" to preach at St. Philip's, there was a brief religious revival in Charleston and the surrounding area. Very little is known about this sudden flurry of enthusiasm, but
scattered evidence suggests that adolescents were among those most noticeably affected. On one visit to James Island in October, for example, Hart recorded in his journal that he baptized ten individuals:

according to the primitive mode, In the name of the Father or Lord, they have now made a good profession before many Witnesses; Oh may they always Act Consistent thereto. Remember them under their particular Circumstances; many of them are very Young, and will be Expos’d to many Temptations; most are of the female Sex; and therefore their Case is perhaps more Dangerous; take them O Lord; take them into thy peculiar Care and keep them as ye Apple of thine Eye.

Similarly, Hart noticed that "several young people" in Charleston "cried out under a sense of sin." Many, he said, "came to consult me with regard to their spiritual state."\(^{59}\)

One of the apparently numerous "young people" converted during the localized but effusive 1754 revival was the celebrated Samuel Stillman (1738-1807), who later became the pastor of the First Baptist Church, Boston. After hearing Hart preach a sermon based on Matthew 1:21, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins," the sixteen-year-old Philadelphian felt the physical presence of grace, testified to that experience, and was baptized. With the assistance of "a few serious, and well disposed persons...with a sincere view to promote the interest of vital Religion in their own souls, and, as far as their influence might extend, amongst their fellow creatures in general," Stillman received ministerial
training and, in 1758, was licensed preach to the recently awakened on James Island. A year later he was ordained and organized a church there, but before long he afflicted "pulmonary disorder" and was forced to leave the lowcountry, an area notorious for its appallingly unhealthful conditions and high mortality.\(^6\)

Although Stillman--like a number of his counterparts--abandoned the malignant disease environment of the colony, an increasing number of other evangelicals who were finding their calling in the Baptist ministry during the middle decades of the eighteenth century remained; and they were fanning out in all directions, gradually helping to create a network of churches. Before 1760, most of those churches were located in a broad arch stretching from the upper reaches of the Pee dee River through the lowcountry to Savannah, primarily because Charleston and the Welsh Neck were the two primarily centers of Baptist activity. Afterwards, however, new nuclei were building in the backcountry; thus Baptist churches started springing up all over the colony.\(^6\)

V

In contrast to most of the churches below the fall line, all but a few of those that were established in the backcountry during the colonial era were Separate Baptist
churches. Originally, the Separate Baptist movement erupted out of a rift within the Congregational Church during the First Great Awakening in New England. After George Whitefield's barnstorming tour through Massachusetts and Connecticut in the fall of 1740, Congregationalists splintered into "Old Lights"—traditional clerics and their followers who opposed the emotional excesses of revivalism and defended the state church order—and "New Lights"—fervent evangelicals who embraced the idea of the regenerate church. Some of the New Lights worked to reform the establishment from within, while others, who were unwilling to compromise on their ideal of a pure church, withdrew to form "separate" churches. Calling themselves "strict Congregationalists," the separatists adopted closed communion in their societies and perceived themselves to be the bearers of a new reformation. For a time, the Separate churches flourished, especially in eastern Connecticut, but the logic of the pure church ideal eventually led many adherents to gravitate toward Baptist sentiments. Believer's baptism, they manifestly believed, was the surest safeguard of the pure or regenerate church.\footnote{62}

The conversion of the Separates to Baptist sentiments first began in 1749, and in less than a decade a fairly well-defined Separate Baptist movement emerged. That movement was emphatically not, however, simply a "class-specific" phenomenon as some recent historians have
suggested. Rather, as C.C. Goen has correctly pointed out, the Separate Baptists drew converts from "a fair cross section" of society and their churches "included socially prominent members...and many others of lower status." Of course, in certain areas of the rapidly expanding New England frontier, where a certain equality of social condition may very well have been a fact of life, many Separate Baptist churches were formed by individuals of relatively modest means. However, the Separate Baptist movement as a whole should not be seen as a uprising of "the rabble" or the "disinherited."

Separate Baptists were rigidly biblicistic, insisting on complete adherence to the plainest sense of the Word of God, and they held to a wide range of symbolic acts that were believed to be truly scriptural, including love feasts, the laying on of hands, foot washing, anointing the sick, the right hand of fellowship, the kiss of charity, and devoting Children to Christ. The Separates were also spiritual individualists, believing, as one contemporary put it, that it was "an absolute Necessity for every Person to act singly, as in the Sight of God only: and this is the Way, under God, to bring the Saints all to worship God sociably, and yet have no Dependence upon on another." This egocentric type of individualism made even the church itself of secondary importance.

In addition to their strict biblicism and their
insistence that religion was fundamentally a personal relationship God, Separate Baptists felt that all true Christians were responsible for spreading the Word. It was this evangelical zeal that motivated two ardent Separate Baptist brothers-in-law, Shubal Stearns and Daniel Marshall, to carry the Separate Baptist message to the southern colonies. Stearns was born in Boston in 1706. After he moved to Connecticut with his parents in his youth, he joined the Congregational church in Tolland, but he was converted to New Light views by the preaching of George Whitefield. Stearns met separately with a number of his New Light brothers and sisters of the church, and in 1745 he led them to withdraw to form a strict Congregational church. Under Stearns’ leadership, the Separate church flourished; however, it was not long before the question of mixed communion led to a bitter internal struggle. During the controversy, Stearns became convinced after much soul-searching and biblical study that believers baptism was the surest safeguard of the pure church. Accordingly, he declared himself a Baptist. After his dramatic, highly emotional "new birth," he was baptized by Wait Palmer, the New Light pastor of the Baptist church in North Stonington, Connecticut.

In 1751 Stearns and ten or eleven other spiritually charged individuals, probably all members of his lineal family, entered into covenant with one another and formed
the Tolland Separate Baptist Church. The congregation grew slowly, but gradually the congregation laid on hands and extended the right hand of fellowship to one new brother or sister after another. In July 1754 Stearns left the Separate Baptists at Tolland in the care of Noah Alden of Stafford, whom he had recently baptized, and followed an inner voice directing him to the South.

Three or four years before Stearns and a handful of his followers headed to the southern frontier, his brother-in-law, Daniel Marshall, had devoted his life to missionary work among the Mohawk Indians. Born in 1706, Marshall was a native of Windsor, Connecticut. Like Stearns, he was converted to New Light sentiments by George Whitefield and shortly thereafter separated from the standing church in which he had served twenty years as deacon. In 1747 Marshall married Martha Stearns, Shubal's sister, and five years later the couple, together with their three children, stuck out for the forests of east-central New York. Marshall labored diligently among the Mohawks at the head of the Susquehanna River, but after a period of only eighteen months strife among the Indians disrupted his work. As a result, he too went south, joining his brother-in-law at Opequon Creek in Berkeley County, Virginia. From here Shubal Stearns and Daniel Marshall undertook the tremendous task of evangelizing the rapidly expanding southern colonial frontier.
At Opequon, Stearns and Marshall came upon a group of Particular Baptists who were in connection with the Philadelphia Association. Although Calvinistic, some of the Particulars viewed the emotionalism of the Separates with a great deal of suspicion. They soon began calling themselves Regular Baptists as a rebuke to the Separate group, which they deemed "irregular" if not entirely strange and disorderly. Not all of the Particulars were aloof, however. In fact, a nearby church at Mill Creek under the leadership of Samuel Heaton encouraged Stearns and Marshall to visit regularly.

Dismayed by the success of the fiery Separates, some of the Regular Baptists appealed to the Philadelphia Association to investigate reported irregularities at Mill Creek. The Association in 1755 sent Benjamin Miller to explore the matter. Much to the chagrin of the Regulars, however, Miller could find nothing disorderly with the Mill Creek flock. Indeed, he was so impressed by the congregation's zeal that he noted in his report to the association that "if I had such warm-hearted Christians in my own church I would not take gold for them."66

In 1755, just as the Separate Baptist movement was beginning to take root, Indian warfare broke out in the Virginia backcountry after a British expeditionary force under General Edward Braddock was almost annihilated by a small French and Indian force a few miles from Ft. Duquesne.
Faced with the possibility of attack, many settlers in Berkeley and other frontier counties were forced to retreat eastward across the Blue Ridge. Stearns and his party decided to head further south after learning that the Carolina backcountry offered seemingly unlimited opportunities for missionary work. On June 13, 1755, some New Englanders residing in North Carolina reported to Sterns "that the work of God was great in preaching to an ignorant people, who had little or no preaching for a hundred miles, and no established churches. But now the people were so eager to hear, that they would come forty miles each way, when they could have opportunity to hear a sermon."67

Travelling south, the Separate Baptists established themselves at Sandy Creek in Orange County, North Carolina, and immediately formed a church in November 1755. From here Stearns and Marshall undertook once again the difficult task of evangelizing the rapidly expanding southern colonial frontier. The Sandy Creek area was an ideal location for their efforts because it was situated at the confluence of three of the most heavily travelled roads in the backcountry: one road, called the Settler Road, ran from north to south all the way from Pennsylvania to Georgia; another, later called Boones Trail, went from Wilmington, North Carolina, westward to the Yadkin River settlements; and a third, known as the Trading Path, ran from Norfolk, Virginia, to the Waxhaw region on the Catawba River in South
Carolina. By situating their church in this strategic position, the Separate Baptists were able to tap into the flow of people who were pouring into the southern frontier.

Stearns' "zealous, animating manner" of preaching at Sandy Creek quickly attracted attention, and before long word of the Separate Baptist meetings reached neighboring settlements. In 1756 Stearns, Marshall, and a host of itinerants, known collectively as "the strolling preachers lately imported from New England," embarked on an incredibly ambitious preaching tour from Sandy Creek all the way to the coast. In their wake, one contemporary noted, "there was no little enthusiasm among their converts." Many soon-to-be prominent Separate Baptist preachers were converted during or as a result of this tour, including John Newton, Ezekiel Hunter, Joseph and William Murphy, James Reed, and Philip Mulkey. 68

Within three years of the Separates' settlement at Sandy Creek at least six churches had been established--Sandy Creek, Abbott's Creek, Deep River, Grassy Creek, New River, and Black River. Reportedly, they had a combined membership of over 900. In 1758 these six churches, despite a jealous regard for local church autonomy and a thinly veiled suspicion of "ecclesiasticism" in denominational organization, entered into a voluntary association with each other known as the Sandy Creek Baptist Association. This organization was very similar to its counterpart in
Charleston and it had similar objectives.

The first meeting of the Sandy Creek Baptist Association was accompanied by preaching, exhorting, and singing. James Reed, the minister of the Grassy Creek Separate Baptist church noted:

At our first Association we continued together three or four days; great crowds of people attended, mostly through curiosity. The power of God was among us; the preaching every day seemed to be attended with God's blessing. We carried on our Association with sweet decorum and fellowship to the end. Then we took our leave of one another with many solemn charges from our reverend old father, Shubal Sterns, to stand fast unto the end.69

Many of those who attended "through curiosity" eventually found their way into the Baptist Church.

Ministerial representatives present at the Sandy Creek Association meeting devised a plan to spread the revivalistic impulse to surrounding regions in which each preacher was given designated areas of responsibility. Although the precise details of the plan are unknown, it appears that Stearns was to continue to labor in and around Sandy Creek and to the west while William Murphy, James Reed, John Newton, Ezekiel Hunter, Joseph Murphy, Philip Mulkey, and Daniel Marshal, were to be deployed to the northwest, north, northeast, east, southeast, south, southwest, and west respectively. Whatever the particulars, the strategy worked, for in the late 1750s and early 1760s Separate preachers spilled out in all directions. In the process, they established a far-ranging network of
regionwide Baptist churches throughout North Carolina, Virginia, South Carolina, and Georgia in the years prior to the American Revolution.\textsuperscript{70}

VI

Philip Mulkey (1732-1795) was the first Separate Baptist minister to settle in South Carolina. A native of Halifax County, North Carolina, Mulkey had an transforming religious experience in 1756 that "turned [his] thoughts to Christ, and salvation by him." Subsequently, he was baptized by Stearns and was ordained as a minister to the Deep River Separate Baptist Church. According to one contemporary who heard him preach, Mulkey had "a very sweet voice and a smiling aspect; that voice he manages in such a manner as to make soft impressions on the heart and fetch down tears from the eyes in a mechanical way.\textsuperscript{71}"

Shortly after the first meeting of the Sandy Creek Association, Mulkey and thirteen other members of the Deep River congregation moved to South Carolina and in 1760 established a church on the Little River, a tributary of the Broad. Membership soon increased, but for reasons that are not altogether clear, but probably including the availability of good land, Mulkey, the thirteen original constituents, and a handful of others relocated in 1762 to the area situated about 35 miles northwest, just below the
Tyger River. Here the Separates founded the Fairforest Baptist Church, the first of four important Separate nuclei or, as contemporaries referred to them, "mother churches" in the South Carolina backcountry. The often scanty evidence pertaining to the growth of these four nuclei may be analyzed profitably to explore the organizational means by which the Separate Baptist message was conveyed to surrounding areas as well as the sex, race, social status, and family groupings of the people who constituted churches.

According to J. Stephen Kroll-Smith, a sociologist who has looked closely at the organizational dynamic of the Separate Baptist movement in Virginia, "a mother church can be understood as an organized group whose collective energy was not only directed inward to meet the needs of its own constituency but also outward in an effort to transmit the revival culture." Despite the antiseptic social scientese of Kroll-Smith's definition, he is correct in pointing up the psychology of expansiveness associated with the so-called "mother churches." Soon after the Fairforest Church had been established, for example, Mulkey and a number of licentiates, including Joseph Burson, Thacker Vivian, Richard Kelly, William Wood, and Joseph Breed, who accompanied Daniel Marshall on his mission to the Mohawks, spilled out in all possible directions so that within ten years the influence of the original nucleus covered a wide area. In addition to the central congregation, Fairforest
had branches at Lawsons Fork, Thickety, Enoree, and Catawba, North Carolina. Morgan Edwards, a representative of the Philadelphia association who visited the Lower South in 1772, estimated that 300 families were in connection with the mother church and its four branches, whereof 167 individuals were baptized members who had made a profession of faith (see Table 4.2 below). Edwards also noted that "Thickety and Enoree will soon be constituted and Kelly and Wood ordained, the other two branches are about ripe for the same."74

Less than a year after Philip Mulkey and his group left Deep River, Daniel Marshall and some members of the Abbot’s Creek Church moved into western South Carolina. Eventually, they settled in 1762 near Stephen’s Creek, a small river running into the Savannah, about ten miles above Augusta, Georgia, establishing a second nucleus or "mother church." With the help of his son, Abraham, and several associates—Benjamin Harry, Saunders Walker, and John Herndon—Marshall spread the Separate Baptist ethos far and wide. As a result, at least six new congregations sprang up: three, Bush River, Raeburns Creek, and Horn’s Creek, in South Carolina; and three, Kiokee, Little River, and Beaver Creek, in Georgia. Two of these branches, Bush River and Raeburns Creek, were formally constituted into churches in 1771. A year later, Morgan Edwards estimated that 50 families were connected to the former, with 58 baptized communicants, and
30 families to the latter, with 15 baptized communicants. Meanwhile, Stephens Creek, the "mother church," and its four remaining satellites still had about 150 families in connection, 130 of whom were "baptized and in communion."\textsuperscript{75}

In addition to the those at Fairforest and Stephen's Creek, a third Separate Baptist nucleus was established in the fork between the Congaree and Wateree Rivers. Both Mulkey and Marshall preached in the region with good results, but it was Joseph Murphy, working out of Anson County, North Carolina, who actually constituted the Congaree Church in 1766. Among the early converts and constituent members of the church, most of whom owned land between Toms and Raifords Creeks, were Joseph Reese, John Newton, Thomas Norris, and Timothy Dargan. All eventually became Baptist ministers. Reese, "whose natural eloquence, and command of the passions of his hearers was extraordinary," was ordained in 1768 as minister of the Congaree Church by Oliver Hart and Evan Pugh, lowcountry Regulars who, as we have seen, were quite active proselytizers, just as the Separates.\textsuperscript{76}

No less than their counterparts, Reese and his licentiates were not only responsive to the interests and needs of their constituents but also sought to extend the revivalistic impulse to the inhabitants of the surrounding countryside. By 1772 they had succeeded in establishing
five branches: Wateree Creek, Twenty-five Mile Creek, Amelia, Four Holes, and High Hills of Santee. One of those five, High Hills of Santee, became a formally constituted "daughter church" in 1772. Edwards figured that the Santee Church had 70 families in connection, with 71 persons communicating, while some 110 families were connected to Congaree, which still included for branches, whereof 120 were formal members. The branches, Edwards wrote in gendered language typical of the eighteenth century, "are yet little sisters which have no breasts, but ripening fast toward churches." 77

Of course, there was a strong tendency over time for "daughter churches" to become "mother churches," establishing branches of their own. But during the period under consideration, it appears that only one, High Hills of Santee, did so, primarily because of spacial and temporal phenomena and the sheer force of one individual personality—Richard Furman (1755-1825). Joseph Reese and one of his associates first began preaching in the region in 1769. As a result, about 70 people were converted and baptized. Among the converts was Furman, who soon began exhorting and was ordained as minister of High Hills by Joseph Reese and Evan Pugh. As the next chapter will demonstrate in more detail, Furman quickly emerged as the most prominent Baptist leader in the South. Largely through his efforts, High Hills became an important center of activity. Within five
years of its constitution, the church had established branches at Ebenezer, Second Lynches Creek, Black River, and Swift Creek. In contrast to Fairforest, Stephens Creek, and to a considerably lesser extent, Congaree, however, the region in and around High Hills of Santee was more settled and had better transportation facilities. What is more, many of the inhabitants had been influenced by the Regular Baptists of the Pee Dee. These factors certainly contributed to Furman's success and, in several important respects, help explain to why High Hills was transformed from a daughter to a mother church in such short order.  

Three other Baptist churches in the backcountry were organized under the aegis of the Separates but had no clear relationship to the four abovementioned nuclei. The first, Little River of Broad Church, was established where Mulkey and his Deep River followers originally settled. Jacob Gibson, who in 1757 had been converted and baptized by Henry Ledbetter, a Particular Baptist minister at Lynches Creek in the Pee Dee, exhorted among those who remained. In 1770 he and twelve others were formally constituted into a church. The second, Little River of Saluda, and third, Mine Creek, were established by immigrants from the Upper South, many of whom had apparently been converted by Colonel Samuel Harris, the so-called "Apostle of Virginia." Morgan Edwards estimated in 1772 that together these three churches had 100 families in connection, with 76 communicants.
Like the four nuclei and most of their daughter churches, Little River of Broad, Little River of Saluda, and Mine Creek shortly after they were formally constituted joined the Sandy Creek Separate Baptist Association. In 1771, however, the South Carolina congregations withdrew and formed the Congaree Association. According to Morgan Edwards, who played an active role in forming the new organization, the reasons for separating from Sandy Creek were twofold:

partly, convenience; but chiefly, a mistake which this association fell into relative to their power and jurisdiction; they had carried matters so high as to leave hardly any power in particular churches, unfellowshipping ordinations, ministers and churches that acted independent of them; and pleading 'That though complete power be in every church yet every church can transfer it to an association'; which is as much as to say that a man may take out his eyes, ears, etc. and give them to another to see, hear etc. for him; for if power be fixed by Christ in a particular church they cannot transfer it; nay should they formally give it away yet is it not gone away.68

In other words, the association had grown too large and too officious, expanding itself beyond legitimate boundaries.

In addition to providing a typically succinct yet stunning answer to the question of why South Carolina Separate Baptists withdrew from Sandy Creek and formed their own association, Edwards, as the preceding pages suggest, compiled fairly detailed information on these churches. His findings form the basis of Table 4.2. If we posit a mean family size of five, as Edwards did, and assume about one half of the family members were minors, then roughly 2,250
adults were Separate Baptist adherents, 627 (28 percent) of whom were formal members.\textsuperscript{81}

Table 4.2

Statistics of Congaree Association Churches, 1772

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Church/Branch</th>
<th>Minister/Assistant</th>
<th>Members</th>
<th>Families</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fairforest (1762)</td>
<td>Philip Mulkey</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Joseph Burson</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Richard Kelly</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>William Wood</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thacker Vivian</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawsons Fork</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thickety</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enoree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catawba</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stephen’s Creek (1766)</td>
<td>Daniel Marshall</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Saunders Walker</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Abraham Marshall</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Benjamin Harry</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>John Herndon</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horns Creek</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiokee</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little River</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beaver Creek</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congaree (1766)</td>
<td>Joseph Reese</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wateree Creek</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twenty-Five Mile Creek</td>
<td>Ralph Jones</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amelia</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four Holes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bush River (1770)</td>
<td>Thomas Norris</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coleman Brown</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>John Monk</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little River Broad (1770)</td>
<td>Jacob Gibson</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little River Saluda (1770)</td>
<td>Aaron Pincent</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mine Creek (1770)</td>
<td>John Tanner</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raeburns Creek (1771)</td>
<td>Vacant</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Hills Santee (1772)</td>
<td>Richard Furman</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ebenezer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Lynches</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black River</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swift Creek</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lewis Collins</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Joseph Coats</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>9/17</td>
<td>6/18</td>
<td>627</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>900</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Who were these Separate Baptists? Quantifiable evidence pertaining to this question is slender. However, it is possible to extract meaningful data from one important surviving source: lists of constituent members. As the following table demonstrates, these lists are available for seven of the nine churches that were members of the Congaree Association, and although they present a static view—a snapshot of sorts—and do not show change over time, they contain important information concerning the racial, gender, and familial contours of early Separate Baptist congregations. In Table 4.3, columns I and II indicate the total number of white and black constituents respectively; columns III and IV, the number of male and female constituents respectively; column V, the number of constituents whose gender is indeterminable; column VI, the number of constituents who were related to at least one other member of the church; column VII, the number of married couples among the constituent members; columns VIII and IX, the number of males and females respectively who were single or whose spouse was not listed but had at least one family member in the congregation; and columns X and XI, the number of males and females respectively who were single or whose spouse was not listed and who can not be identified as having a direct familial relationship to other constituents.

These statistics point up several important facts.
First, and most surprisingly, none of the 141 constituents of these seven churches was black. This does not mean that no blacks joined Separate Baptist churches before the Revolution or that Separate preaching only affected whites. But the absence of African-Americans among constituents does suggest that these early congregations were overwhelmingly white, primarily because there were so few blacks—roughly 300 in 1760 out of a total population of about 7,000, for example—in the backcountry where these churches took root.

Table 4.3

Race, Sex, and Kinship in Constituents Lists of Six Separate Baptist Churches, 1762-1772.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Church</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>II</th>
<th>III</th>
<th>IV</th>
<th>V</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fairforest (1762)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congaree (1766)</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bush River (1770)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little River of Broad (1770)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mine Creek (1770)</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raeburns Creek (1771)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Hills of Santee (1772)</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>141</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.3
(Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Church</th>
<th>VI</th>
<th>VII</th>
<th>VIII</th>
<th>IX</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>XI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fairforest (1762)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congaree (1766)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bush River (1770)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little River of Broad (1770)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mine Creek (1770)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raeburns Creek (1771)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Hills of Santee (1772)</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>78</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Second, as the table clearly shows, there was a disproportionate number of men among the constituents. Of the 141 individuals listed, the gender of all but one can be identified; 80 (57 percent) were men and 60 (43 percent) were women, a male-to-female ratio of almost 3 to 2. Third, a majority of the constituents, regardless of gender, were kin. Indeed, 78 (55 percent) individuals were related to at least one other member of the congregation. Among them were 32 married couples (82 percent) and fourteen (18 percent) who had some other relationship. The male-to-female ratio
for those constituents who were single or whose spouse was not listed mirrored the larger pattern: nine (64 percent) to five (36 percent) respectively for those who had kinship connections, and 39 (63 percent) to 23 (37 percent) respectively for the 63 persons (45 percent) who did not.

No less than other immigrants, most Separate Baptists, including the clergy, had economic reasons for being in the South Carolina backcountry. The opportunity to acquire land was so widespread as to make the achievement of an independent status and yearly subsistence comparatively easy—at least among free white men and their families. As Chapter 2 has shown, the economy of the backcountry seems to have been reasonably prosperous and even to have enjoyed considerable growth during the years preceding the American Revolution. Very soon after settlement, this emerging commercial world even brought some people more than ordinary returns. But most settlers had no alternative source of income other than provisional agriculture and animal husbandry, which yielded only modest profits. Therefore, before the successful introduction of cotton culture into the area in the late 1780s and 1790s, the social structure of the backcountry remained, in all but the most exceptional of cases, less differentiated and relatively equitable. For this reason, it is perhaps unsurprising to find that the large majority of Separate Baptist church constituents were yeoman farmers and their families.
A brief examination of the pattern of landholding among the male constituents serves to underscore this point. At least 69 of the 80 males listed (86 percent) are known to have secured land—either by grant or purchase—in South Carolina before 1772. Together, they had 186 surveys totaling 23,255 acres, a mean rate of 337. Moreover, 14 of the 69 (20 percent) purchased roughly 3,850 improved acres collectively, an average of 275.\textsuperscript{83} The surveys and purchases of William Trapp, a constituent of the Little River of Broad Baptist Church, are typical. He obtained grants in 1765 and 1772 of 100 and 200 acres respectively. Both tracts were located on Cedar Creek, a tributary of the Broad located about 15 miles from the church. Trapp also purchased 50 acres of improved land in 1770. The latter plot, which bordered land owned by Jacob Gibson, the minister, included a house and appears to have been partially cleared.\textsuperscript{84}

Although most of the Separate Baptist constituents were independent landowners with only modest capital resources at their disposal, there were a few prominent backcountrymen—storeowners, millers, magistrates, and militia officers, for example—whose names appear on the lists. John Pearson, a constituent of the Congaree Church in 1766, serves as a case in point. He was a justice of the peace, deputy surveyor, and a captain of the militia who owned several tracts, ranging from 100 to 550 acres, in the fork of the Broad and
Saluda Rivers.

Although he ran into some financial difficulties, many contemporaries continued to refer to Pearson as a "man of influence" throughout the Revolutionary era.85

Pearson’s socioeconomic status seems to have been the exception rather than the rule among Separate Baptist constituents, but like most of his counterparts he was a fervent evangelical. After hearing Philip Mulkey preach in 1764, Pearson urged his son to visit the Congarees:

as we shall have a great meeting on Friday Saturday and Sunday next I desire youl come up and I hope Your Grand mother will be permitted to come Also Together with some of your Uncles and Aunts Pray Call on Your Uncle Mosses as you come up and press him and Your Aunt Patience to come itt may be for there Eternal Wellfare for itt is Good to be where Jesus is passing by as poor blind Baritemus found to his Eternal Happiness for as wee Are Blind by Nature and cannot see the things that belong to our Eternal peace so God may make Use of some of our Ministers as a little Clay to Open there Eyes that they may Desire Spiritual Things for without the Spirit of God wee are none of his.86

In several important respects, Pearson’s comments—despite the spelling—skillfully illustrate the emerging picture of the Separate Baptist movement (read evangelicalism) in South Carolina as the following pages will demonstrate.

VII

While the Separate Baptists were busy establishing themselves in the backcountry, the Regulars were proceeding apace in the lowcountry. Indeed, both the number of
formally constituted Regular churches and the number of arms or branches in the Charleston Association rose steadily between 1750 and 1772. The number of churches more than doubled, increasing from four to ten, and the number of branches jumped from two to sixteen. Of course, as the number of churches and branches increased, the number of families connected to and membership in them rose proportionally.

Oliver Hart, pastor of the First Baptist Church of Charleston, continued to play an important role in the history of the Regulars during the years preceding the American Revolution. After the 1754 revival, Hart surrounded himself with a host of zealous young licentiates and with their help won scores of converts; as a result, a number of new churches and branches were established throughout the tidewater (see table below).

One branch at Euhaw, located about fifty miles south of the mother church on the road from Charleston to Savannah, emerged as an important center of Regular Baptist activity during the late 1750s and early 1760s under the leadership of Francis Pelot. Originally a licentiate of Isaac Chandler, Pelot was ordained by Hart and John Stephens, minister of the gradually expanding Ashley River Baptist Church, in 1752. Although the Euhaw church was technically constituted six years earlier, it was not dismissed from the First Baptist Church of Charleston until Pelot was ordained.
At that time a church was constructed and, according to one contemporary, "it so happened that as soon as the place of worship was finished, Mr. Whitefield came this way, and, as it were, consecrated it by celebrating divine service in it for the first time, Mar. 5, 1751-2."  

As the frequent references to his activities in Oliver Hart's diary make clear, Pelot was "a serious, lively Baptist minister and a pious and useful man." Soon after the Euhaw Church was established, he set about exhorting in the surrounding area. With the help of Edmund Matthews, who had been converted by Philip Mulkey, Pelot had considerable success, eventually establishing three "daughter churches," Hilton Head, Edisto, and Port Royal. In 1772 Morgan Edwards estimated that forty families--"black and white"--were connected to Euhaw and its branches; forty-one individuals were formal members.

Just as Euhaw's influence was spreading, a group of Baptists migrated en masse from Lynches Creek in the Peedee to Coosawhatchie, the region just North of Pelot's church. Several of these Peedee Regulars, together with some members of the Euhaw congregation, began holding bi-weekly meetings. In 1759 a formal church was constituted by Hart, Pelot, and James Smart, a Virginian who had only recently arrived in the colony. Under the leadership of Smart, the Coosawhatchie Church grew steadily. Only four or five years after its initial founding, a daughter congregation emerged.
on Pipe Creek. In 1772 Edwards believed that mother church and its branch had some fifty families in connection, seventy of whom were communicants.90

Like High Hills on the Santee, the Separate nucleus discussed above, Coosawhatchie's establishment testifies to the powerful influence exerted by the Welsh Neck Church and its numerous branches in the PeeDee River Basin. Originally founded by Welsh Baptists from Pennsylvania in 1738, the mother church grew steadily during the middle decades of the eighteenth century, establishing at least six daughter congregations: one, Cape Fear, in North Carolina; and five, Catfish, First Church on Lynches Creek, Cashaway, Mars Bluff, and Cheraw Hill, in South Carolina. Three of these branches became important nuclei: the first, Cashaway, was formally constituted in 1752; the second, First Church on Lynches Creek, was formally constituted in 1755; and the third, Cashaway, was formally constituted in 1756. All three of these churches established branches. However, only two of Catfish's progenitors, Beauty Spot and Dog Bluff, became independent daughters before 1772.91

As Table 4.4 clearly shows, the growth of these PeeDee congregations added greatly to the strength of Regular Baptists in colonial South Carolina. In 1772 Morgan Edwards estimated that together churches in the Charleston Association had some 581 families in connection; thus about 1,453 adults were Regular adherents.92 Almost one third
(423 or 29 percent) of these adults were communicants.

Table 4.4
Statistics of Charleston Association Churches, 1772

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Church/Branch</th>
<th>Minister/Assistant</th>
<th>Members</th>
<th>Families</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Charleston (1696)</td>
<td>Oliver Hart</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Island</td>
<td>Edmund Botsford</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgetown</td>
<td>William Cuttino</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashley River (1736)</td>
<td>Vacant</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welsh Neck (1738)</td>
<td>Nicholas Bedegood</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mars Bluff</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheraw Hill</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Euhaw (1752)</td>
<td>Francis Pelot</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hilton Head</td>
<td>Edmund Matthews</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edisto</td>
<td>Elijah Patchet</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Port Royal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catfish (1752)</td>
<td>Joshua Edwards</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terrells Bay</td>
<td>Jeremiah Rhame</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gapway</td>
<td>Thomas Grice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buck Swamp</td>
<td>David Owens</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little Peebee</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Lynches (1755)</td>
<td>Jeptha Vining</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buffalo</td>
<td>Nathaniel Walker</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper Lynches</td>
<td>John Cowan</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat Creek</td>
<td>Charles Cook</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Lynches</td>
<td>Joshua Palmer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cashaway (1756)</td>
<td>Evan Pugh</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muddy Creek</td>
<td>John Brown</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Creek</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coosawhatchie (1759)</td>
<td>James Smart</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pipe Creek</td>
<td>Joshua Lewis</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beauty Spot (1768)</td>
<td>Charles Pate</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dog Bluff (1768)</td>
<td>Thomas Blount</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td></td>
<td>10/18</td>
<td>13/9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>423</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>581</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Of those churches in the Charleston Association established after 1750, four constituent lists have been preserved from which analysis of the race, gender, family connections, and social status of the Regular congregations may proceed. In Table 4.5, columns I through XI represent the same categories as those developed above (see Table 4.3).\textsuperscript{93}

In contrast to the Separate Baptists group discussed earlier, at least two (3 percent) of the seventy-eight Regular constituents were black. Although this is a small percentage, it is suggestive nevertheless, for all available evidence--church minutes, contemporary observations, and the patterns of slaveholding discussed below, for example--suggests that more blacks were members and adherents of Regular Baptist churches than Separate Baptist churches during the period under consideration, albeit their numbers were still comparatively few. In large measure, this was due to one simple fact: the region below the fall line was far more heavily slave and black than the backcountry. Even in the Pee Dee, where three of the four churches listed in Table 4.5 were constituted, slaves made up a significant proportion of the population. The militia returns of 1757, for example, listed seven Welsh Tract companies numbering 865 officers and men and 117 male slaves sixteen to sixty years of age, suggesting a total population of roughly 4,300 whites and 500 blacks. Moreover, as Robert L. Meriwether
has shown, slave ownership was spread among a broad proportion of the white population in the region; thus, most blacks labored individually or in small groups.\textsuperscript{94}

Table 4.5

Race, Sex, and Kinship in Constituents Lists of Four Regular Baptist Churches, 1752-1759.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Church</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>II</th>
<th>III</th>
<th>IV</th>
<th>V</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Catfish (1752)</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Lynches (1755)</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cashaway (1756)</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coosawhatchie (1759)</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>76</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.5 (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Church</th>
<th>VI</th>
<th>VII</th>
<th>VIII</th>
<th>IX</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>XI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Catfish (1752)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Lynches (1755)</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cashaway (1756)</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coosawhatchie (1759)</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>72</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
While Regular churches almost certainly included more blacks than Separate churches early on, male constituents still outnumbered female constituents, as demonstrated in Table 4.5. Of the 78 persons listed, 42 (54 percent) were men and 36 (46 percent) were women. Most were kin. In fact, 72 (92 percent) individuals were related to at least one other member of the congregation. There were 32 married couples (64 people or 82 percent of the constituency) and 8 others who had some other relationship. All of the latter were men. For those 6 constituents who were either single or whose spouse was not listed and who could not be identified as having a direct familial relationship to their counterparts, the male-to-female ratio was two (4 or 67%) to one (2 or 33%).

Because Regular Baptist churches were located in the South Carolina lowcountry, a region that was more improved, more populous and densely settled, more urban, more commercial, more affluent, more heterogeneous and differentiated, and more internally complex than the region above the fall line, they included people from a much wider range of social classes--from the genteel on down--than the Separate churches in the backcountry. However, judging from pattern of landholding among male constituents, a random sampling of wills and inventories, as well as contemporary remarks, the large majority seem to have been of independent middling status, individuals that Governor Glen believed
possessed either "some of the Convieniencys of Life" or at least "the necessarys of life."\textsuperscript{95}

Of course, for a variety of reasons considered previously, a greater number of Regular families than Separate families were members of Glen's former category. Indeed, more than a handful were elites. Therefore ministerial salaries and what Morgan Edwards referred to as church "temporalities" were correspondingly higher. In 1772, for example, the Stephens Creek Separate Baptist Church near Augusta had "no estate" and Daniel Marshall received only "about 70 pounds," whereas the First Baptist Church of Charleston possessed:

(1) 400 pounds (sterling), the gift of Providence Hutchinson; (2) 500 pounds the gift of James Fowler; (3) 500 pounds the gift of Martha de Harriette; (4) 500 pounds the gift of Benj. de Harriette, Esq.; (5) 1000 pounds the gift of Elizabeth Gibbes; (6) 1896 pounds the gift of William Tilly, son of minister Tilly, but this gift yields no interest till after his death; (7) a lot in town, the gift of Patrick Hinds...

According to Edwards, "these helps, perquisites, presents etc." were "worth 1430 pounds a year to the present minister, Rev. Oliver Hart."\textsuperscript{96} Hart and other Particular minister also frequently received personal bequests. For instance, in 1758 Martha de Harriette, who left 500 pounds to the First Baptist Church of Charleston, gave "Mr. Oliver Hart my Negro Boy Slave Named Sampson the two pictures of the Revd. Mr. George Whitefield and of the said Mr. Whitefield's wife and the Sum of One Hundred pounds Current money of this Province."\textsuperscript{97}
Although Regular congregations were somewhat more affluent than Separate congregations and included a wider range of social classes in the years immediately preceding the Revolution, these differences, as the following chapter makes clear, did not persist over time. Indeed, as the backcountry became more settled and less equal, as it moved from subsistence to a more specialized and commercial agriculture, and as its social structure became more sharply differentiated and complex, Separate Baptists congregations increasingly looked very much like those below the fall line.

As Rachel N. Klein has emphasized, this same sort of assimilative process was also partly responsible for hastening the disappearance of the terms "Regular" and "Separate" Baptist from the historical record during the Revolutionary era. It would be a mistake, however, to place too much emphasis on the differences between the two groups during the colonial period. To be sure, tensions were apparent from the very beginning; according to one contemporary, for example, Nicholas Bedegood, a Regular Baptist minister in the Pee Dee, "sternly refused" in 1756 to assist Shubal Sterns in the ordination of Daniel Marshall, "declaring that he believed [the Separate Baptists] to be a disorderly set, suffering women to pray in public, and permitting every ignorant man to preach that chose, and that they encouraged noise & and confusion in their meetings."
But we may never fully understand the nature of the larger process that was taking place in South Carolina and the South in general until we stop emphasizing these episodic moments of tension and the dissimilarities between Regulars and Separates. A much more promising approach, as the final chapter demonstrates, would seem to be to look at the total picture and start emphasizing the similarities of the two groups, for despite the liturgical "peculiarities" of some of the Separates, they had much more in common with the large majority of their Regular counterparts than most historians are willing to admit. Indeed, Separates and Regulars alike, no less than the Presbyterians and Lutherans discussed above, did much to establish a network of evangelical churches in the colony, "adding to them," as George Whitefield put it, "such as shall be saved." And in the process of spreading "gospel religion" they helped to put in place a belief system that had a profound impact on the subsequent history of South Carolina.


4. This is, of course, how John B. Boles interprets what Wesley M. Gewehr called the Great Awakening in Virginia. See, for example, Boles' article, "Evangelical Protestantism in the Old South: From Religious Dissent to Cultural Dominance," in Charles Reagan Wilson, ed., Religion in the South (Jackson, Miss., 1985), 13-34.


7. Ibid., 2.


9. Howe, History of the Presbyterian Church, 1, 185.


13. Several of these sermons were advertised in the South Carolina Gazette-April, 7 1759, July 15, 1763, May 16, 1767, for example—but thus far my search for them has turned up empty.


15. William Hutson as quoted in Howe, History of the Presbyterian Church, I, 265.

16. Ibid., 248.

17. Gallay, Formation of a Planter Elite, 8-9, 47; "Register Kept by the Rev. Wm. Hutson, of Stoney Creek Independent Congregational Church and (Circular) Congregational Church in Charles Town S.C. 1743-1760," contributed by Mrs. R.W. Hutson, South Carolina Historical and Genealogical Magazine, XXXVIII (October 1937), 21 (quotation) (hereafter cited as Hutson, "Register").

18. Hutson, "Register," 21-22 (first three quotations); Howe, History of the Presbyterian Church, I, 249-250 (remaining quotations).


20. Howe, History of the Presbyterian Church, I, 310.

22. White, Southern Presbyterian Leaders, 86; Simpson, Journal, fiche number 1 (1748), frames 4-7, 9 quotations).


25. Ibid., frame 39.

26. Ibid., frame 31.

27. Ibid., fiche number 36 (1768-1769), frame 17.

28. Ibid., fiche number 28 (1754-1756), frame 7; fiche number 36 (1768-1769), frame 43.

29. Ibid., fiche number 29 (1754-1756), frame 11.

30. Ibid., fiche number 33 (1765-1766), frame 52 (first quotation); fiche number 34 (1765-1766), frame 20 (second quotation).

31. Ibid., fiche number 27 (1754-1756), 43; Howe, History of the Presbyterian Church, I, 78-363.


33. Quoted in Howe, History of the Presbyterian Church, 289.

34. Simpson, Journal, fiche number 28 (1754-1756), frame 29 (first quotation); fiche number 29 (1754-1756), frame 5-6 (second and third quotations); fiche number 30 (1757-1759) frame 50 (fourth quotation).

35. Ibid., frame 55.


40. Howe, *History of the Presbyterian Church*, I, 363; Simpson, *Journal*, fiche number 37 (1768-1769), frame 34. Also see Table 3.1 in Chapter 3.

41. Samuel Urlsperger, ed., *Amerikanisches Ackerwerk Gottes, oder zuverlässige Nachrichten...,* 4 vols., (Frankfurt am Main, 1754-1767), II, 212. I would like to thank Margret Eifler, Professor of German and Slavic Studies at Rice University, for helping me to translate this and the following quotations.


45. Urlsperger, ed., *Amerikanisches Ackerwerk Gottes*, II, 323 (first quotation); Muhlenberg, *Journal*, II, 577 (second quotation); Bernheim, *History of the German Settlements*, 195-
46. Muhlenberg, Journals, II, 579.

47. Bernheim, History of the German Settlements, 205.

48. Ibid., 288-311.


51. Edwards, Materials, II, 126-28; Townsend, South Carolina Baptists, 61-77, 63-64n (quotations).

52. Edwards, Materials, II, 125-26; Townsend, South Carolina Baptists, 20; Basil Manly, "History of the First Baptist Church from 1683 to 1825," in H.A. Tupper, ed., Two Centuries of the First Baptist Church of South Carolina, 1683-1883 (Baltimore, 1889), 101-02 (quotations).


54. Wood Furman, A History of the Charleston Association of Baptist Churches in the State of South-Carolina, with an Appendix containing the Principal Circular Letters to the Churches (Charleston, 1811), 8-9 (quotations).

55. Ibid., 10-13.


57. Townsend, South Carolina Baptists, 21-23; Hart, Diary, 378-401.

58. These quotations are from six unpagedinated sheets dated 1754 located at Furman University. Apparently they are fragments of Hart's original diary (hereafter cited as Hart, Fragments). For information on Richard Clarke, see Bolton Southern Anglicanism, 76-77, 95, 118.

59. Hart, Fragments (October 1754).
60. Manly, "History of First Baptist Church," 105-06.
61. See Chapter 3.
62. These developments may be followed in Goen, Revivalism and Separatism in New England, 1-207.
63. Ibid., 191.
64. Ebenezer Frothingham as quoted by Alan Heimert, Religion and the American Mind from the Great Awakening to the Revolution (Cambridge, Mass., 1966), 129.
66. Quoted in Robert B. Semple, A History of the Rise and Progress of the Baptists of Virginia, revised and extended by G.W. Beale (Richmond, 1894), 370.
67. Ibid., 374 (quotation); Lumpkin, Baptist Foundations in the South, 24-32.
68. Lumpkin, Baptist Foundations in the South, 33-45, 40 (first quotation), 41 (second and third quotations).
69. James Reed as quoted in Ibid., 46.
70. Ibid., 46-59.
71. Edwards, Materials, II, 140-143 (quotations); J.D. Bailey, Reverends Philip Mulkey and James Fowler: The Story of the First Baptist Church Planted in Upper South Carolina (Cokpens, S.C., 1924), 1-16.
74. Ibid., 17-19; Townsend, South Carolina Baptists, 125-41; Edwards, Materials, II, 139-40 (quotations).

77. Ibid., 144 (quotation), 149; Townsend, South Carolina Baptists, 142-50.


81. Ibid., 119-61.

82. Ibid. The constituents listed are as follows: Fairforest (1762): Philip Mulkey and wife (Ann), Stephen Howard and wife, Obediah Howard and wife, Joseph Breed and wife, Benjamin Gist and wife, Charles Thompson, Thomas Thompson, and Rachel Collins. Congaree (1766): Benjamin Bell and wife (Mary), Jean Currie, Timothy Dargan, William Dargan, Nathan Ellis, Joseph Ferrill, Hannah Garrison, John Gill, Martha Goodwin, Elizabeth Hamilton, Mary Harvey, Grace Hiron, Simon Harris, Patience Kirkland, Agnes Martin, Thomas Norris and wife (Elizabeth), John Pearson, John Pitman and wife (Mary), George Powell, Lewis Powell and wife (Sarah), Isaac Raiford, Joseph Reese, Benjamin Rion, George Rolloson, Andrew Salisbury, Catherine Smith, William Tucker, Ebenezer Westcoat, John Newton. Bush River (1770): Samuel Newman and wife, William Crow and wife, Uriah Gary. Little River of Broad (1770): Ann Brunt, Henry Crumpto, Mary Currie, John Kennedy and wife, Elizabeth McGraw, Solomon McGraw, Alexander Rabb, Gabriel Rawls, Peter Sterns, William Trapp, John Yound, Jacob Gibson. Mine Creek (1770): Bailey Cheney, William Cheney and wife, Mrs. Coats, Durrell Fort and wife, Charles Harris and wife, Guttridge Hughes, Mrs. Jefcut, John Johnson and wife, Samuel Marsh, Jethro Norris, Pricilla Sayers, John Tanner. Raeburns Creek (1771): Aaron Pinson and wife, Joseph Pinson and wife, Ebenezer Sterne and wife, Enos Stinson and wife, Philip Sherrill, Nicholas Hill and wife. High Hills of Santee (1772): Thomas Avett and wife (Sarah), Joseph Howard, George Brown, Jesse Nettles, Peter Mathews, Frederick Jones, Ann Freeman, Edward Mathews, Thomas Neal, Mason Greeneing and wife, Zachariah Harrell, Nathaniel Dodd and wife, Sherwood James, Mary Pitts, Thomas Lenoir and wife, Lewis Collins and wife, James McCormick and wife, Peter Robertson, Tabitha Bates, James Mills, Martha Scott, Milly Hart and mother, Joseph and wife (Elizabeth), Richard Furman and mother (Rachel), Elizabeth Westbury, John Knighton, Anthony Lee and wife, Hope Ridgeway and wife, Mary Smith, Milly Span, John Roberts, Elias Ward and wife and two daughters Mary and Sarah, Amy Fletcher, Frederick Briggs,
Winfred Rogers, and Ann Rice.

83. These statistics have been compiled from the following sources: Office of the Secretary of State, Index to Plats, 1688-1787, 2 vols. South Carolina Department of Archives and History (hereafter cited as SCDAH); Plat Books, vols. I-XL, Ig-XXXXIIq. SCDAH; Records of the Auditor General, Memorials of Land Titles (Copies), 14 vols. SCDAH [Microcopy Number 12, Sc-Ar M-12]. The memorials were created to facilitate the collection of quitrents. Many contain a complete chain of title that runs from the originating documents--i.e., the plat (a scale drawing of the bounds of the property) and the land grant--to the name of the land owner at the time the memorial was recorded. See Alan D. Watson, "The Quitrent System in Royal South Carolina," William and Mary Quarterly, XXXIII (April 1976), 183-211.

84. Plat Books, VIII, 9; XX, 390; Memorials, II (Roll 1), 680.

85. Meriwether, Expansion of South Carolina, 52, 60, 65, 102, 157-58, 174-75.

86. John Pearson to "My dear Son," as quoted in Townsend, South Carolina Baptists, 124.


89. Ibid., 130; Hart, Diary, 380.


91. Townsend, South Carolina Baptists, 61-110.


93. Ibid., 134-39. The names of the constituents are listed as follows. Catfish (1752): William Collins and wife, Abraham Buckholt and sons (Abraham and Jacob), William Foxworth and wife, William Gainey and wife and his negro boy, Gideon Gibson, Mary Jackson, Thomas James and wife, John Jones and wife, William Jones, Tillman Kolb and wife, Lansford Owen, John Rogers and wife, Jacob Rowell and wife, David Williams and wife, Jacob Williams, William Williams and wife. First Church on Lynches (1756): Edward Boykin and wife, Henry Boykin and wife (More), George Cole and wife, William DeLoach and wife, Thomas Knight and wife, John Ledbetter and wife (Ede), James Smart and wife (Elizabeth), Thomas Walker and wife. Cashaway (1756): John Brown and wife, John Goodwin and wife,
Abel James and wife, Benjamin James, John Kolb and wife, Martin Kolb, Peter Kolb, Jeremiah Rowell and wife. Coosawhatchie (1759): Solomon Wood and wife, Joseph Johnston and wife, Mr. Johnston’s Jack, John Dade and wife, Thomas Collins and wife, Richard Bagley and wife, Henry Smart, Philip Hoggatt and wife, Mary Laracy, James Smart and wife, Thomas Walker and wife.

94.Meriwether, Expansion of South Carolina, 94.

95.At least 38 of the 42 male constituents (90%) were landowners; together, they had 68 surveys totaling 16, 641 acres, a mean of 438 (Index to Plats, 1688-1787, 2 vols. SCDAH). In addition, 16 of the 38 (42%) purchased roughly 5,790 acres collectively, an average of 362 (Memorials of Land Titles, 14 vols. SCDAH). Much of this land was improved. I am in the process of compiling a survey of wills and inventories. Only the records of Charleston District survive, but these cover a broad area (roughly half of that settled in the 1760s). Most of the wills and inventories were transcribed by the Works Progress Administration and are available at the SCDAH in Columbia. Preliminary results strongly suggest that Regular congregations were--as a whole--more affluent that their Separate counterparts.


97.Will of Martha de Harriette made May 27, 1758 and proved March 28, 1760 in Charleston County PC, Wills 1757-1760 [WPA typescript SCDAH] 270.


99. Quoted in Townsend, South Carolina Baptists, 125. Although Bedegood refused to ordain Marshall, Henry Ledbetter, another Pee Dee Regular and Stern’s brother-in-law, quickly obliged. See Lumpkin, Baptist Foundations in the South, 43. As the following chapter will point out, examples of tension such as this were few and far between; and overall they proved to be the exception rather than the rule.
CHAPTER FIVE

Evangelicalism, Authority, and Sociocultural Developments during the Era of the American Revolution

I

On the eve of the American Revolution, as the previous chapter has shown, evangelicalism had made significant inroads in South Carolina. While most historians agree that the world view associated with this form of religion had a profound influence on southern religion and helped to shape the historical experience of the South, few have attempted to define precisely what they mean when they use the term evangelicalism. After making a "few comments...about the generic marks of Evangelicalism which were in evidence throughout its history," for example, Donald Mathews, who published what is perhaps the most influential history of southern religion, has admitted that "the terms Evangelicals and Evangelicalism as employed here will have a frequently imprecise and abstract quality to them." This "deliberate" hit-or-miss approach, Mathews tells us, stems from his belief that "Evangelicalism was a social process as well as a religious perception, and as such can be understood only
in historical, as opposed to definitional, terms." To be sure, Mathews has done much to restore religion to its proper place in southern history and, in suggesting connections between the history of religion and the history of society, has lifted church history out of sectarian or denominational categories that had kept it isolated from the mainstream of interpretation for so long. But by not clearly setting boundaries for discussion he, together with others who have failed to define what they mean when they speak of evangelicalism, has also obscured a genuine understanding of the "predominant religious mood of the South," for it is difficult to determine what evangelicalism does without first determining what evangelicalism is.¹ Accordingly, the following pages will propose a general framework that may help us put into clearer focus the central theological motifs of evangelicalism as it emerged in South Carolina during the eighteenth century.

Underlying the entire evangelical movement was a desire for a new reformation of religion. Much like the Protestant sectarians of the sixteenth century, evangelicals implicitly sought to carry the Reformation to its logical conclusion. (Indeed, early evangelicals, whatever their specific connection, were often called "anabaptists" by their orthodox opponents.)² For evangelicals, reformation was defined in terms of restitutionism--restoring the pattern of the primitive church. What was possible then, evangelicals
manifestly believed, was not impossible in the eighteenth century.

It was in part because evangelicals regarded themselves to be of one mind with apostolic ways that they developed, as John B. Boles has shown, a new conception of the visible and invisible church.\(^3\) Evangelicals believed that the invisible church consisted of the multitude of all true children of God, a voluntary society of converted individuals, while the visible church, or particular denomination, was a part of the invisible church. As the number of evangelical converts grew in the decades following 1740, this stress on the invisible was, as Sydney E. Mead has pointed out, slowly transformed into a new definition of the visible that tended to diminish institutional identity and equated the true invisible church with a separate visible community.\(^4\) Members of this visible community, it was believed, could be identified by outward marks. In "A Sermon on the Constitution and Order of the Christian Church," for instance, Richard Furman, who became pastor of the First Baptist Church in Charleston during the Revolutionary Era, wrote:

The grace by which the true members of the church of Christ are distinguished from others, consists, principally, in unfeigned 'repentance toward God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ;' in supreme love to God; subjection to his authority and government; a zealous concern for the honor of the divine majesty; an open profession of his name; and an unshaken attachment to his cause, interest and people: But there are other graces and virtues, which are inseparable from these, and with them form a bright assemblage to ornament and
beatify the souls of the righteous. Whoever possesses these excellent qualities, in whatever connection or denomination he is found, has a right and title to the character and privileges of a member of the church of Christ; which others have not. Such are the visible saints. But we are to distinguish between what is discerned by the all-seeing eye of God, and what is apparent in the sight of men: Men, who know not of the heart, can only judge from the consistency of a rational profession and correspondent behavior.⁵

Evangelicalism’s stress on the invisible inevitably led to an increasing deemphasis of church doctrine. Of course, most evangelicals agreed on the necessity of fixed doctrinal forms and the insufficiency of good life without correct belief, and they vigorously denied repeated accusations from orthodox critics of dogmatic indifference. However, they normally viewed complex theologies with a jaundiced eye, believing that such detailed edifices were unimportant and even damaging. Thus, there was a tendency over time to reduce dogmas to essentials and not require conformity in nonessentials.⁶

Illustrative of these general attitudes to church dogma was George Whitefield’s scathing attack on the Whole Duty of Man and his blatant disregard for the Book of Common Prayer.

In contrast to his orthodox opponents, who seemed to him to elevate such formulations almost to the level of Scripture, Whitefield argued that the example of the apostolic church demonstrated that such creedal statements were not essential to faith. Although he did not go so far as to explicitly deny their efficacy, or to argue that the church did not have the power and the right to decide what to accept and
what to condemn as obligatory standards for its teachers and servants, he implicitly proclaimed that creedal statements possess authority only inasmuch as they met scriptural tests.¹

Not all evangelicals, of course, moved as boldly in this direction—the majority of Presbyterians were steadfast in their allegiance to the Westminster Creed, for example—and most attempted to walk the middle ground between dogmatic inflexibility and dogmatic indifference, but the overall attitude of evangelicals concerning church dogma and creeds tended to undermine faith in the verbal infallibility of formulations that were of human origin. And, perhaps more important, it produced a slow but powerful theological convergence that mitigated the variations distinguishing the various denominations represented in South Carolina from one another. This steady process of convergence, as the following chapter will show, helped to pave the way for a resounding series of revivals at beginning of the nineteenth century.²

Another closely related by-product of the desire for doctrinal simplicity was the impetus for a spirit of tolerance and religious freedom. Indeed, because they placed much less stress on correct belief, adherence to creedal statements, and proper observance of traditional forms, evangelicals generally held a more irenic attitude toward religious diversity. This attitude not only led to a
greater emphasis on Christian unity and the idea of the invisible church, but, ultimately, as Sidney E. Mead has shown in some detail, it combined with Enlightenment rationalism to lead to disestablishment and the separation of church and state.⁹

Separation, whether of church and state or simply of church, however, was emphatically not what originally motivated the evangelicalism. Rather, as previously stated, evangelicalism should be understood primarily as a reform movement. Implicit in any program of reformation, of course, is a thorough criticism of existing institutions, and early evangelicals felt compelled to criticize nearly everything about their respective churches. Although such an attitude, especially when encountered by opposition, frequently leads to despair and in some cases even separation, as in the case of the Separate Baptists, reformation--not separation--was the overall goal of the evangelical movement.¹⁰

Clerical reform was an integral part of the evangelical agenda, for evangelicals believed that it would be impossible to reform the church without first reforming the ministry. As Chapter 3 has shown, Whitefield and his associates, such as Gilbert Tennent, repeatedly railed against "ungodly ministers" who "are but little help to those who are seeking God...since they themselves know nothing of the struggle of soul through which earnest
seekers after God must go." Only regenerate ministers, they argued, could lead the unconverted to Christ.\textsuperscript{11}

By emphasizing the righteousness of the clergy, evangelicals modified the conception of the ministry. The pastor, they believed, should be a shepherd of souls, not simply an interpreter of the Word or a mere church official. To be an effective shepherd preachers had to live a pure and holy life and lead by example. Moreover, they had to adopt a plain and simple style of preaching and had to rely, as Sidney E. Mead has shown, on informal means of persuasion wholly separate from the coercive power of the state; thus, ministerial students, such as those who attended William Tennent's log college in Neshaminy, Pennsylvania, were to be trained accordingly.\textsuperscript{12}

In addition to a regenerate clergy, evangelicals hoped to rediscover the universal priesthood of believers. They felt that all true Christian brothers and sisters--not only ministers--were responsible for spreading the Word and consoling one another. While this evangelical emphasis certainly worked to eliminate the chasm that had historically separated clergy and laity, evangelicals avoided a Quaker stance and maintained a functional distinction between the minister and the general priesthood of all believers, a distinction that rested on a divine summons referred to as "the call." The evangelical conception of the call generally consisted of three aspects:
first, the internal call or heartfelt desire to preach the Word; second, the call of the members of the church who carefully examined, among other things, the authenticity of a desirous individual's conversion experience, their general reputation, moral character, preparation, scriptural knowledge, and leadership ability or potential; and third, the call of providence or the divine progression of events that preceded, and, by implication, would follow, the candidate's entering the office of ministry.13 Such a call, evangelicals held, did not hinder the exercise of the general spiritual priesthood.

As the emphasis on the priesthood of all believers implicitly indicates, evangelicalism contributed to a democratization of traditional church polity. Indeed, evangelicals believed that all warmhearted Christians, whatever their particular station, should assume responsibility in the affairs of the church, exhorting the weak, participating in the selection and dismissal of ministers, and edifying and disciplining the errant. Perhaps the clearest example of this democratizing impulse was the establishment of small devotional groups or conventicles that were led by laypersons. Intended to supplement regular church services, these small group meetings, which included prayer, Bible study, the reading of devotional literature, and brotherly and sisterly instruction, were unquestionably one of the most important
innovations of the evangelical movement, for not only did they involve and empower the laity, but they encouraged widespread, diligent study of the Holy Scriptures and a renewed reverence and interest in the Bible.\textsuperscript{14}

Of course, evangelicals placed the Bible at the center of Christian life. It was God's word--the means for the reformation of the church, the source of correct doctrine and belief, and the rule of true faith--and it was to be read devotionally and appropriated in terms of lifestyles. Such exaltation of the Bible demonstrates that, if nothing else, evangelicalism definitely represented, and this point cannot be emphasized to strongly, a back-to-the-Bible movement.\textsuperscript{15} This will become more readily apparent in the pages that follow.

As the their abovementioned general attitude toward church doctrines and creeds suggests, evangelicals exalted the supremacy of the Bible over all other external standards. Indeed, for them God's Word was authoritarian; accordingly, they argued that church symbols, rituals, ordinances, and confessions of faith, no less than the representatives of the church, commanded the obedience of people only insofar as they agreed with the Holy Scriptures. Whitefield, for instance, often advised laypersons to "search the Scriptures, so that you may test the teaching of your teacher." "If you perceive him to be erroneous," he stormed, "you should guard against such false teaching."\textsuperscript{16}
Although evangelicals felt that the external sense of the Bible could be apprehended in a natural way, they stressed the extent to which its deep internal meaning could only be understood through the workings of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit, evangelicals believed, enlightens the mind and unleashes the full truth and power of the Word. However, in contrast to Quakers, who tended to distinguish between the Bible and the Spirit, evangelicals brought them into a living relationship. They believed that the Word of God was the fundamental means of the Holy Spirit’s communication with people. In other words, the Holy Spirit worked in the Bible and through the Bible—not outside the Bible. But the Holy Spirit did not simply work automatically in the Scriptures, evangelicals reasoned, for the Spirit, which is the key to efficacy and understanding, enables the dead letter of the sacred writings to become a living power only to those who have faith; accordingly, the real prerequisite to understanding the Bible was faith.¹⁷

In addition to emphasizing the supreme authority of Scripture in matters of doctrine and polity and that faith was the necessary prerequisite to understanding the Bible, evangelicals placed stress on the practical purposes and goals of Bible study and the teleological application of the Scriptures in daily life. They believed that the Holy Scriptures had been communicated to mankind in order to edify, console, encourage, warn, reprimand, and help human
beings as well as to lead men and women to God by bringing about repentance and change. For evangelicals, the Bible was a devotional resource rather than simply a source of doctrine: it was a guide to "right living," not just the source of belief. \(^{18}\)

Right living, or Christian obedience, was a moral obligation, in the evangelical worldview, of the saved to live a life of holiness, to live, as George Whitefield and his followers usually put it, in "imitation of Christ." Archibald Simpson, a Presbyterian minister working in South Carolina during the middle decades of the eighteenth century, for example, advised each Christian to "eye continually the Example and Image of Christ, and know assuredly, that he cannot be happier in this World, than when he cometh up to the nearest Conformity with the Image of his Suffering and Crucified Lord." \(^{19}\) According to evangelicals, Christian obedience, like the efficacy and understanding of the Bible, was dependent upon faith and the power of the Holy Spirit working in and through converted souls. This becomes more apparent when examining the evangelical conception of faith and works and of regeneration and sanctification.

Although evangelicals did not believe that meritorious good works were a necessary prerequisite for salvation, they did often stress that faith is inclusive of good works. Whitefield, for instance, wrote that "we must be saved only
and alone through faith and our works or godly life contribute neither much nor little to our salvation, but as a fruit of our faith our works are connected with the gratitude which we owe to God, who has given us who believe the gift of righteousness and salvation." Inner good works—good motives and good virtues, for instance—and outward works, such as helping to care for the poor, in other words, were but marks of true faith. This stance is indicative of the evangelical desire to bring faith and works into an organic, cause and effect relationship. They were not to be confused, but hidden in one another in a unified and inseparable whole. Faith and works, according to one contemporary, were like the sun and its rays: "as the sun cannot exist without giving heat and light at noonday, neither can faith exist which does nothing good." Just as evangelicals believed faith and works to be manifest together in living unity, so too did they speak of justification, regeneration, and sanctification as bound together in perfect coordination. For evangelicals, justification, or the forgiveness of sins, was mysteriously connected to the momentary creation of a new person in which Jesus Christ acquires form in each believer, regeneration, and the progressive working out of the principle of life thereby established, sanctification. "As the faith, which alone justifies us and makes holy, is inseparable from good works," Whitefield wrote, "so no one will be justified other
than those who are intent upon sanctification."
Sanctification, in other words, was a continuing process of
Christian perfection, the formation of oneself in the
imitation of Christ, "in which the Christian must be
improving to the very End of his Life." 22

Interestingly, however, although evangelicals were
certain that some degree of perfection could be attained
through the Holy Spirit working in and through the faithful,
they believed that those who sought perfection were removed
from the illusion of ever obtaining it in this world, for as
one contemporary noted, "the farther a godly Christian
advances, the more he will see that he lacks, and so he will
never be farther removed from perfection than when he tries
hardest to reach it." 23 Nevertheless, evangelicals
believed that they were under an "obligation" to achieve
some degree of perfection on earth.

This emphasis on perfection, together with the
evangelical idea that the church consisted of the multitude
of all true children of God, had profound social
implications, for it increasingly restricted evangelical's
sense of social responsibility to individual
configurations. 24 Stated differently, evangelicalism
increasingly became a movement primarily concerned with
individual conversion and personal perfection rather than
with being and well-being of society in general. For
example, in 1816--when this idea had become more fully
developed--Methodist Bishop McKendree wrote that "God's design in raising up the preachers called Methodists in America was to reform the continent by spreading scriptural holiness over the land," for "if the man's soul was saved fundamental social change would inevitably follow." In other words, "conversions" and "the perfecting of the saints," McKendree reasoned, would lead to the "social betterment of the world." Accordingly, "to reform the nation" in the evangelical belief system had come to mean "to convert the nation." 25

Stressing the extent to which evangelicalism's social ethic became restricted to individual configurations does not by any means imply that the rise of evangelical religion had only limited secular implications. On the contrary, it simply points up the fact that the sociocultural effects of evangelicalism must be understood within the context of the almost exclusive preoccupation with conversion, inward devotion, and private morality. A brief analysis of the evangelical attitude toward the world will serve to underscore this point.

For evangelicals, the world was a paradox. It was both a fallen and sinful place and the object of God's love and redemption. Thus, the central problem was to define precisely how to be in but not of the world. In an attempt to resolve this dialectic, evangelicals adopted a position of self-denial of worldly pleasures--the theater, dancing,
playing cards, horse racing, cock-fighting, jewelry, fine apparel, and drinking, for example—in order to enhance creation. Self-denial, they believed, would eliminate whatever action did not serve the honor of God or enhance the spiritual welfare of the individual, resulting in greater this-worldly good. George Whitefield, for example, repeatedly railed against South Carolinian’s frivolous devotion to "finery, gaiety of dress, and...deportment" as well as the "polite Diversions of the Province," arguing that such worldly behavior was "ill-becoming persons who have such Divine judgements lately sent amongst them." Moreover, during his ministry in Charleston he gloried in the fact that "jewelers and dancing-masters began to cry out that their craft is in danger" and that "a vast alteration is discernible in ladies’ dresses." Stemming from a gospel that was essentially personal and an ethic that was individualistic, this emphasis on self-denial, as later sections will emphasize, was one of a number of factors that at once led to a reevaluation of a wide assortment of externally imposed values and provided new standards of personal conduct; thus, it had profound implications for the society at large.

Evangelical suspicions of worldly culture, of course, did not apply to worldly work. Evangelicals, much like the Max Weber’s Calvinists, associated piety with self-disciplined industriousness. The evangelical injunction to
glorify God through work, in turn, invested mundane tasks with spiritual significance; thus, mastery of the soil or a hog drove, no less than weaving a hunting shirt or fixing a tasty supper, became closely associated with doing the Lord's work.  

Concern for the reformation of religion, of everyday life, and the emphasis on the Bible notwithstanding, by far and away the most important central theological motif involves the evangelical conception of salvation, a conception with a profound subjective thrust. As used here, subjectivism refers to the shifting of focus from outside of self to one's self, and it connotes the creating of a god by the self. More specifically, as the following pages will emphasize, subjectivism implies an expansive sense of self-worth, a certain sovereignty of self with regard to religious beliefs, the apprehension of religion through feelings and experience, and the discovery of the individual's personal relationship to God, a relationship that was effected through the Holy Spirit during the conversion experience.

As a number of scholars have emphasized, faith was the central motif in evangelical soteriology. To evangelicals, man was endlessly sinful, helpless, and depraved—-the result of Adam's Fall in the Garden of Eden. But man could be pardoned of sin, or justified, by the grace of God, for God, evangelicals reasoned, was at once infinitely holy, just,
loving, and merciful. Faith that Jesus Christ died for the collective sins of mankind was all that was necessary for salvation. However, according to evangelicals, only God, through the mysterious, internal workings of the Holy Spirit, could effect faith. In other words, corrupt and sinful man did not have the ability to place trust in Christ; thus, man was absolutely dependent on God for saving faith.²⁸

While evangelicals were in total agreement that God had to activate saving faith, they also stressed that that faith, and this point is crucially important, could and should be experienced, for regenerating faith, in the evangelical view, was active, living, and even intoxicating; it was, as George Whitefield put it when he visited Charleston in 1740, "full of Pleasure and greatly desirable even for its own Sake."²⁹ What made it so, what gave saving faith this ecstatic quality, was the nature of God--His infinite holiness and goodness, and His love. In attempting to articulate this conception of faith, which to them was all that was necessary for salvation and the Lord's promise of everlasting life in heaven, evangelicals frequently spoke of and classified emotions--feelings of guilt, anxiety, sorrow, and, ultimately, "great pleasure," "love," and "joy"--in accounts of their conversion experiences. The following excerpts from two such accounts, together with the brief biographical sketches intended to
provide context for further analysis, serve to underscore the point while at the same time directing attention upon ordinary people shaping their lives in response to what John B. Boles has termed "a theology of individualism."

Edmund Botsford's twenty-first birthday was, as he put it, "a day never to be forgotten," for on that day he came to Christ. Botsford was born in Bedfordshire, England, in 1745, the second son of a wealthy wholesale grocer and ironmonger. Orphaned at the age of seven, he came under the care of a family friend, "the good Mrs. Barnes," who saw to it that he enjoyed "the advantages of school." However, in 1757 the young Botsford struck out on his own, travelling "on foot and alone" to London where he subsequently joined the army which was, at that time, making preparations to repel a seemingly imminent French invasion. After the army was disbanded at the conclusion of the Seven Years War, Botsford returned to his birthplace, but he soon decided to try his fortunes in America; thus, he sailed for Charleston. Shortly after his arrival in this bustling port city in 1766, Botsford became distraught.

Here I was in a strange land, and not a friend in the world to whom I could unbosom myself. Truly my case was deplorable.... At length... one of the boarders said to me, 'Botsford, what is the matter with you?' I replied, 'I cannot tell, but I am in great distress.' He said, 'you are under what they call conviction: I have been so myself, and would give the world if I felt just as you now do.' O what distress now seized my mind! I considered myself a monster, a reprobate; my distress was so
great that I cried out, 'I am damned, I am damned, justly damned.' There were several pieces of large cannon lying on a platform; and I had the dreadful wish to be blewed to hell by one of those great guns....I....continued all the week in great distress. However, I was spared till the next Sabbath; I then went to [a Baptist] meeting....[Rev. Oliver Hart] took his text from Acts xiii. 26; 'Men and brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you feareth God; to you is the word of this salvation sent.' To describe the exercises of my mind under this sermon would be impossible. However...I concluded it was possible there might be salvation for me, even for me....Before this, I wished to return to England; but now I was perfectly satisfied to remain....Now my mind soon became more enlightened; I read, I prayed, I heard preaching....I expected soon to get converted.  

In the fall Botsford had the transforming experience he sought--and expected--as the text below so powerfully demonstrates. Indeed, God revealed Himself to Botsford through a voice, a voice that struck his mind but penetrated his heart and, ultimately, precipitated the seminal event in his life, that day "never to be forgotten."

One day...as I was walking by myself, on a sudden the following words dropped into my mind; "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them!" I never before had such a view of the law of God. Suffice it to say, that....it cut me to the heart, that I had sinned against such a good, gracious God, and that I was such an unholy, deceitful creature. The first day of November, the day on which I was twenty-one years of age, was a day never to be forgotten. It was a day of light, a day of joy and peace. That day I had a clearer view than formerly, of sin, holiness, God and Christ, and different views from all I had ever before experienced. I...was enabled to devote my whole self to God as a reconciled God. I...so believed in Christ as to trust in him, and commit my all into his hands. At that time, and from that time, I considered myself as not my own, but his; his, and not the world's; his, and no longer
Satan's; his, for time, and his for eternity. This unspeakable happiness continued without any intermission...[and]...I almost constantly enjoyed the presence of God.  

After his conversion, Edmond Botsford was baptized—that is, he symbolically put on Christ—and joined the Baptist Church of Charleston. Subsequently, he set about, as he put it, "to do the Lord's work," becoming one of an increasing number of Baptist ministers in the Lower South during the second half of the eighteenth century.

In 1769, less than three years after Botsford placed his trust in Christ and devoted himself to God, John Marrant, a fourteen-year-old free black, had an similar existential experience in Charleston. Marrant was born in New York in 1755, but at the age of four he and his family moved south after John’s father died. The Marrant’s spent nearly two years in St. Augustine, Florida, before settling in Georgia, where John attended grammar school. Upon finishing, Mrs. Marrant sent John, now eleven, to live with his older sister in Charleston so that he might be apprenticed. Ultimately, he was—but not in an occupation that his mother was to happy about, for John had no desire to become a carpenter, or a silversmith; instead, he wanted "to learn to play upon music." Indeed, John was quickly "set upon it, and resolved to learn nothing else." Although his mother objected, and even "came to Charleston to prevent it," she acquiesced in the end. Thus, John was bound to a well-known Charleston musician for eighteen months during
which time he "became master both of the violin and of the French horn."

"This opened to me," the young player wrote, "a large door of vanity and vice, for I was invited to all the balls and assemblies that were held in the town, and met with the general applause of the inhabitants." "Every evening," he added, "I was sent to play on music, somewhere or another." On one occasion in 1769 John passed a meetinghouse on his way to play for some members of the Charleston elite.

I saw many lights in it, and crowds of people going in. I enquired what it meant, and was answered by my companion that a crazy man was hallooing there; this raised my curiosity to go in....[My companion] then said, "If you will do one thing I will go with you." I asked him what that was? he replied, "Blow the French horn among them." I liked the proposal...but expressed my fears of being beaten for disturbing them; but I...agreed. So we went in, and with much difficulty got within the doors. I was pushing the people to make room, to get the horn off my shoulder to blow it, just as Mr. [George] Whitefield was naming his text, and looking round, and as I thought, directly upon me, and pointing with his finger, he uttered these words, "Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel." The Lord accompanied the word with such power that I was struck to the ground, and lay both speechless and senseless near half an hour. When I was come a little to, I found two men attending me, and a woman throwing water in my face, and holding a smelling bottle to my nose; and when something more recovered, every word I heard from the minister was like a parcel of swords thrust into me, and what added to my distress, I thought I saw the devil on every side of me....When the people were dismissed Mr. Whitefield came...and the first word he said to me was, "Jesus Christ has got thee at last." Young John Marrant entered the church on a dare, a boldly courageous act, yet he left it flat on his back, frightened and distressed, "finding I could neither walk or stand."
This juxtaposition provided the framework for his conversion, an experience that was heartfelt.

In this distress of soul I continued for three days without any food, only a little water now and then. On the fourth day [Mr. Hall, a Baptist minister] Mr. Whitefield had desired to visit me and to see me....and after a few words desired to go to prayer. So he fell upon his knees, and pulled me down also; after...some time in prayer he rose up, and asked me now how I did; I answered much worse; he then said, "Come, we will have the old thing over again," and after he had prayed earnestly we got up, and he said again, "How do you do now?" I replied worse and worse, and asked him if he intended to kill me? "No, no," said he, "you are worth a thousand dead men, let us try the old thing over again," and so falling upon our knees, he continued in prayer a considerable time, and near the close of his prayer, the Lord was pleased to set my soul at perfect liberty, and being filled with joy I began to praise the Lord immediately; my sorrows were turned into peace, and joy, and love. The minister said, "How is it now?" I answered, all is well, all happy.35

Following his conversion, John Marrant no longer had any desire to "play upon music." Instead, he devoted himself to Bible study, prayer, and fasting in the "wilderness" where he felt an incredible "nearness to God." Some time after this spiritual journey, John travelled to Nova Scotia to preach.

Although John Marrant and Edmund Botsford were but two of an increasingly large number of individuals who were profoundly affected by evangelical religion during the years following 1740, their experiences can provide the basis for a further elaboration of the evangelical conception of saving faith, a conception that emphasized the centrality of
the individual in the new birth and so personalized religion
that converts were able to gain a new sense of themselves.
Of course both Marrant and Botsford, like most other
evangelicals who testified to the workings of God in their
lives, schematized the experience of faith into normative
steps--conviction, repentance, faith, conversion--but what
seems indisputably clear from their accounts, no less than
myriad others of the period, is that saving faith was to
them tangible, for it could be instantaneously felt. On
this point there was total agreement among evangelicals,
regardless of their particular denomination.

From this central premise on the nature of faith, there
followed a number of important conclusions. Two of those
conclusions are of particular importance here. First,
because saving faith could be felt, evangelicals reasoned,
then emotional experiences--loneliness, guilt, fear, sorrow,
joy, happiness, love--were partly a cause and partly a
result of faith. Thus, in the evangelical belief system,
feeling essentially meant or, at the very least, was
intimately associated with believing. Second, and closely
related, religion was for evangelicals primarily an affair
of the heart, since the heart was perceived to be the atrium
of human emotions and, consequently, the place in which
God's grace operates.

Admittedly, it is difficult to discern the precise
meaning of the word "heart" in evangelical texts. In
popular discourse, as the extracts from the writings of Botsford and Marrant demonstrate, evangelicals often substituted the term "soul" for "heart," and in more learned endeavors they sometimes employed the word "will" as a scholarly synonym. To complicate matters even further, all these usages seem to have carried with them various shades of connotation, making it difficult to make meaningful generalizations. All this notwithstanding, it is clear that these oftentimes interchangeable designations—heart, soul, will—represent an attempt on the part of evangelicals to sense the working of God through the inner self, an attempt that is suggestive of the intense subjective thrust, introspective nature, and empirical bias of the overall belief system.36

Taken together, that thrust, that nature, and that bias placed a new focus on the individual and provided the foundation for the development of an alternative—and for thousands of men and women—more emotionally satisfying understanding of the relationship between God and man, a relationship that, to use the language of the day, was characterized by informal "warmth," deep and "passionate love," uncommon "nearness," and obviously soothing "familiarity." Indeed, such a relationship, as the increasing accentuation on singular pronouns in the diaries, journals, and letters of evangelicals make clear, was exceedingly intimate, profoundly personal, and in no small
way private.

This novel understanding of the relationship between God and man and the subjectivism that ultimately lay behind it contributed to an expansive sense of self-esteem among evangelicals, for those who had experienced saving faith and placed their trust in Christ felt themselves to be of supreme worth in the eyes of God. He cared for them, watched over them, and promised them an everlasting life in heaven. They could be confident of this and of themselves because they felt His unmerited love—His benevolent grace; it had turned their sorrows into joy, set their souls at liberty, and filled their hearts with "unspeakable happiness." Indeed, those who had been touched by God and born anew enjoyed His presence in their lives; they knew Him personally, intimately. They also knew, as it was put to John Marrant in 1769, that in His eyes they were "worth a thousand [spiritually] dead men." The result was an elevated sense of personal worthiness, a new individuality, and a new self-identification. 37

II

While few scholars have seen fit to define precisely what they mean when they talk about evangelicalism, most recent historians who have studied the impact of revivalism on eighteenth-century southern society have emphasized the
great extent to which this particular religious mood was "countercultural" and represented a challenge to the authority and dominance of elites. Juxtaposing the "proud, assertive culture of the gentry and their adherents" with the "humbling, soul-searching culture of the New Lights," Rhys Isaac has, for instance, argued that evangelicalism in Virginia (an by implication elsewhere) was "a revolt against the traditional system," a system that was "elaborately structured" and characterized by authoritative institutions and "clearly defined hierarchies of power and personal authority" no less than strong "lines of patronage and preferment that flowed from the top down." Similarly, though usually somewhat less explicit, Donald Mathews, who covers much of the same ground but uses a longer time perspective and purports to include every southern colony and state in his discussion, asserts that evangelicalism in the South was a "volatile social movement" that "expressed dissatisfaction with authority" and gave converts--primarily "people at odds with [the] social system" and "in social and intellectual limbo by reason of their relatively low social standing"--"the moral courage to reject as authoritative for themselves the life-style and values of traditional elites."

While Mathews, Isaac, and other students who have echoed these same sentiments have contributed greatly to what John B. Boles has termed "the discovery of southern
religious history," there are many difficulties with this general depiction of the rise of evangelicalism in the southern colonies after 1740. Indeed, what I would like to suggest in the remainder of this chapter is that recent scholars have: considerably exaggerated the stability and rigidity of the seaboard societies in the South during the middle decades of the eighteenth century; placed far too much interpretive weight on the evangelical challenge; and, by emphasizing the community building nature of evangelicalism and mistakenly assuming that evangelical (read popular) and elite cultures were somehow intrinsically distinct, representing two conflicting--even irreconcilable-world views, obscured the extent to which experiential religion helped to bring values and behavior into closer conformity than ever before during the Revolutionary era.

Certainly, recent analyses of the emergence of evangelicalism in the South have been correct, as Chapters 1 and 2 and Robert M. Weir have made clear for South Carolina and as Edmund S. Morgan, Timothy H. Breen, Allan Kulikoff, Robert D. Mitchell, A. Roger Ekirch, and host of others have shown for the Chesapeake and newly settled portions of Virginia, the Carolinas, and Georgia, in pointing out the extent to which southern societies were becoming ever more hierarchical, settled, and complex during the eighteenth century.40 However, Isaac, Mathews, and not a few of those who have followed closely in their footsteps have
considerably overdrawn the strength, coherence, and rigidity of provincial and local establishments in the South at midcentury, not only in the newer-settled and less fully developed regions—Georgia and portions of North Carolina, for instance—but also in the oldest, most economically specialized and commercial, most heavily black, unequal, and differentiated, and most affluent areas, such as the tidewater corridor of Virginia and Maryland and the South Carolina lowcountry. In fact, some scholars have begun to question the extent to which we can use such present-minded—and heavily value laden—analytical concepts as *hierarchical society* and *deferential order* to accurately describe the character and nature of the emerging societies in the colonial South. It has become increasingly clear that authority structures in those societies were far more fragile than has conveniently been assumed by historians like Isaac who see in evangelical movement an "overturning of deference and respect" and a direct challenge to "the strength of the gentry’s hegemony and the rigidities of the social hierarchy that had slavery at its base."

That authority was tenuous in the southern colonies is evidenced by a wide range of tendencies, movements, and events. In South Carolina, for instance, previous chapters and such historians as Michael Zuckerman, John E. Crowley, Peter H. Wood, Daniel C. Littlefield, Philip D. Morgan, Michael Stephen Hindus, John Shy, Clyde R. Ferguson, Richard
Maxwell Brown, Rachel N. Klein, Robert M. Weir, and M. Eugene Sirmans have emphasized the extent to which all of the following developments can be seen as manifestations of the fragile nature of authority:

(1) the looseness and permissiveness of the family structure in the lowcountry, including especially childrearing practices;

(2) an inheritance system that was far less discriminatory than either its northern or British counterparts;

(3) considerable freedom of movement and association of African-Americans, especially within rice-district neighborhoods and urban areas;

(4) respect for the private property and customary rights of slaves and some degree of self-determination on the part of blacks with regard to their familial life and cultural heritage;

(5) black participation in and control of many sectors of the domestic economy and the ability of bondspersons to influence work routines;

(6) slave disobedience, resistance, and—in at least one case—open rebellion.

(7) weak coercive resources and relaxed patterns of law enforcement;

(8) insubordination of colonial militia units;

(9) an established church that was decidedly latitudarian in its orientation and was much less deeply rooted than it
may have appeared on the surface;

(10) the existence, and for much of the colonial era predominance, of diverse dissenting populations;

(11) a widespread, broadly based, and ultimately successful uprising in the backcountry against a government that was failing because of opposition from metropolitan authorities to provide order, security, and desired societal institutions and infrastructural improvements;

(12) a rough-and-tumble, bare-knuckled political system that was remarkably inclusive, and becoming ever more expert and responsive, providing political stability in a time of rapid demographic, economic, and territorial expansion.\textsuperscript{42}

These are hardly the marks of an authoritarian, hegemonic establishment that suddenly came under an aggressive challenge from evangelicals, a "disorderly and potentially dangerous" group that, according to Donald Mathews, was "contentious, emotional, and [perceived by the gentry as] presumptuous rabble."\textsuperscript{43} Rather they are but a few of the many examples that vividly underscore just how weak authority structures actually were in colonial South Carolina. During the century following 1670, of course, authority became increasingly less fragile with the slow improvement of health conditions, the gradual achievement of more balanced sex ratios and population growth by natural increase, the expansion of the economy, increasing differentiation of society and complexity of kinship
networks, the rise of self-conscious, committed creole elite, the resolution of a number of issues that had divided the inhabitants, and a host of other developments. But even on the eve of the American Revolution, that authority was still flimsy at best; thus, it would be a mistake to place too much stress, as Rhys Isaac has, on "the problems of authority that popular movements of religious dissent created."44

This is not to say that evangelicals did not furrow the brows of or annoy some South Carolinians, for evangelicals often spoke out against the special privileges enjoyed by the Church of England, railed against "ungodly ministers," were oftentimes perceived to be "enthusiastic" and overly emotional because of their new conception of the relationship between God and man, and, in attempting to rediscover the priesthood of all believers, sometimes appeared to be, as one minister put it, "a disorderly set, suffering women to pray in public, and permitting every ignorant man to preach that chose."45 However, there is very little evidence that suggests that the newly emergent elites felt deeply threatened by the rise of evangelicalism.

To be sure, scattered statements indicate that the presence of so many evangelicals in the colony was a bit disturbing. In 1766, for example, Lieutenant Governor Bull arranged to have an Anglican minister cross the Savannah River from Georgia to preach at New Windsor, "hoping... it
will effectually put a stop to the progress of those Baptist Vagrants, who continually endeavour to Subvert all order, and make the Minds of the people Giddy, with that which neither they nor their teachers understand." Four years later, Bull again complained of the influence of the evangelicals in the colony. "Our toleration comprehends every denomination of Christians but the Roman Catholic," he wrote, "and these are subdivided ad infinitum in the back parts, as illiterate enthusiasm or wild imagination can misinterpret the Scripture. Indeed, lately the overflowing of the Northern Colleges send apostles to enlighten the dark regions of our Western Settlements, where every circle of Christian knowledge grows fainter as more removed from the center." Bull was almost certainly not the only member of the South Carolina gentry to hold these sentiments, but his are the only expressions that support the Isaacian notion that elites found the rise of evangelicalism to be "a genuine challenge."47

What is more, it is difficult—if not impossible—to make a case that the gentry behaved with viciousness in attempting to win the "hearts and minds" of South Carolinians after enthusiastic dissenters appeared on the scene, for the simple fact is that there was only one instance of violent persecution of evangelicals reported in South Carolina during the entire colonial period. According to Morgan Edwards:
The...instance...happened lately near Charraws [Cheraw], on Pedee. One of the Baptist Preachers from North-carolina Joseph Cates held a meeting in that neighbourhood; his worship, Alexander Gorden [Garden], Esq. presently fetched him coram nobis, and got Messrs. Peasley Dunn and Little to assist him to form a spiritual court; the caitiff was asked "Who gave you authority to preach?" He replied, "The same that gave the apostle Paul authority!" upon which his worship angrily said, "He blasphemeth! What say you gentlemen?" The gentlemen were of his mind; and the Baptist preacher was severely whipt. The thing gave great offence in the neighbourhood; in so much that his worship found it requisite to propagate evil reports concerning the preacher's moral character in order to justify the action.48

In connection with the fragile nature of authority in the colony and the fact that few contemporaries, including especially members of the gentry, even felt the need to mention the gradual but steady expansion of evangelical ministers and churches after 1740 in their diaries, letterbooks, memoirs, or official correspondence, the almost total absence of examples of brutality such as the one reported by Edwards suggests that the emergence of experiential religion in South Carolina was far less challenging than many recent scholars have assumed. Indeed, for the large majority of the elites, evangelicalism seems to have been scarcely a source of major concern.

III

What clearly did concern many South Carolinians and what ultimately led to active challenges to constituted authority, widespread conflict, and violence was a series of
measures adopted by the British government in the aftermath of the French and Indian War. A brief examination of the colonists' reaction to those measures and the outbreak of war between Britain and thirteen of her North American colonies reveals how evangelical values coalesced around, reflected, and reinforced the republican ideals of the American Revolution. It also provides an opportunity to analyze the ways in which evangelicalism interacted with the two dynamic cultural impulses operating within the inhabitants' world discussed in Chapter 3.

An understanding of the political beliefs that kept fresh in the colonists' mind a genuine fear of malignant corruption, executive tyranny, and the idea of the legality--and necessity--of resistance to arbitrary power and attacks on liberty makes it much easier to comprehend American opposition to the new British policies after 1763. As is well known, most colonists accepted the British constitution as a simple model for their own political institutions. Believing that their happiness could be secured by achieving a full measure of English law and liberty in America, the colonists, like their contemporaries at home, saw the British constitution as a mature compromise formed by centuries of struggle and confirmed by the Glorious Revolution and the Hanoverian succession. In the British system of mixed government, the threats of a too powerful Crown or a too powerful popular order were checked by the
necessity that both should participate in governing and legislating. Together with this balanced authority, the great tradition of English law, accepted equally by King, Lords, and Commons, ensured the liberty of the subject and the protection of their property. That the structure of colonial governments in America to a very great extent conformed to or resembled this pattern is in itself testimony to the colonists' acceptance and commitment to the British constitution.49

Yet even the acceptance of the British constitution caused difficulties and tensions, for acceptance produced the argument that the powers of the colonial lower houses of assembly ought to be as full as those of the Commons House and, correspondingly, the formal powers of the colonial governors as limited as those of the English executive. However, as Bernard Bailyn and Jack P. Greene have shown, formal Crown powers in America were far greater than those in England in ways that directly affected the position of the assemblies. First, unlike the Crown in England, the colonial executive could veto assembly legislation, as could the British government itself. Second, most governors could summon, prorogue, and dissolve their assemblies at will, rights that the Crown had lost over Parliament in England. Third, judges could be dismissed and some types of courts established by the executive alone, without necessary reference to the assembly. These formal differences at
times combined with particular issues--defense spending, issuing paper money, salaries, and taxation, for instance--to create heated political controversies in several of the colonies. South Carolina, as M. Eugene Sirmans has made abundantly clear, was no exception.\footnote{50}

Given this situation, it is perhaps not surprising that members of the lower houses characteristically announced that the political power of colonial executives should be limited in order to protect society from oppression and arbitrary rule. The roots of this colonial emphasis on the danger of overpoweful governors lay in a political ideology that appeared in England after about 1675, an ideology which was to gain enormous strength in the colonies. This ideology, complex in its different strands, derived from earlier civil war political thinking, especially from the writings of James Harrington, and from a group of republican theorists who drew on historical experience. For these reasons it has been correctly described as "republican" or "commonwealth." Yet many of its creators and those elaborating on it were not republicans but men alarmed by the advances of absolute and arbitrary monarch in Europe since the fifteenth century, who feared its establishment in England. They therefore drew from the classical-renaissance-republican tradition and from other sources a battery of arguments for limitations on rather than the abolition of monarchical-government power. They
characteristically stressed the existence of an ancient English constitution that at all costs had to be protected from the attacks of state power. Because such arguments usually identified the Court, that is, the administration—the King's ministers, officials, and their allies among the moneyed interests of London—as the powerhouse of expanding absolutism, and because they were often proclaimed by men claiming to represent the independent freeholders of Britain, especially the country gentlemen, the label of "Country" philosophy has been given to them.\(^{51}\)

By the 1690s an identifiable circle of writers and pamphleteers were developing extensive, interlocking arguments against William III's Whig court which, according to J.G.A. Pocock, "they denounced for governing through influence and standing armies and for boosting the expenses of government in the form of high taxation, national debts, and influence and corruption." The Country philosophers, Pocock points out, saw "society [as] made up of court and country; government, of court and Parliament; Parliament, of court and country members. The court is the administration. The country consists of the men of independent property; all others are servants."\(^{52}\) Parliament, Country writers felt, ought to supervise rather than support government since governments by nature seek too much power. In England, they argued, the executive seduced members of Parliament from their proper supervisory function by the offer of places and
pensions and other methods to support administrative measure that increased executive control—schemes for standing armies, national debts, and excise—and gradually whittled away at independence and liberty. To check this process demanded constant vigilance, the expulsion of placemen, and frequent election of members of Parliament by an uncorrupted electorate according to Country philosophers.

Theses lines of attack had become fully developed by the time of Sir Robert Walpole's administration (1721-1742). Walpole's government, his many critics argued, consisted of a great conspiracy of ministers, moneyed men, and corrupt officeholders; it manipulated public affairs and it milked the state for private profit. Such a system threatened absolute tyranny since it made the executive irremovable by normal political means, sapping the energies of the political vigorous with a shower of bribes and privileges. Henry St. John, Viscount Bolingbroke, one of the leading opposition writers, believed, for instance, that "Sir Robert" controlled Parliament by his manipulations of "honors, titles, and preferments...with bribes, which are called pensions," with "the lean reward of hopes and promises," with the use of "a set of party names, without any meaning, or the vanity of appearing in favor at court."53

Everywhere, it seemed to Country writers, there was corruption in manipulation of Parliament by a power-hungry
ministry. As a result, England's "mixed government" of monarchy and parliament was losing its balance of power. Growing executive power and arbitrary privilege were gradually, covertly expanding beyond legitimate boundaries, feeding on the liberty of the people. The established Church of England, Country philosophers argued, was on the side of this grasping executive power, for they believed that a high-handed monarchy was supported by ecclesiastical privilege. Thus, opposition writers made no distinction between political and ecclesiastical tyranny and, consequently, began pushing for greater toleration and the total withdrawal of governmental control over the practice of religion.54

Although Country writers were incredibly vocal, adept, and prolific, their ideas appealed only to a small and relatively powerless minority in England, such as nonconformists, opposition politicians, and coffeehouse radicals, because of the official philosophy of the day that emphasized the perfection of the eighteenth-century British constitution and because of the harmony, stability, and prosperity of the country. However, in America, as Bernard Bailyn and others have convincingly demonstrated, "opposition thought...was devoured by the colonists," for "the threat of ministerial aggrandizement seemed particularly pressing and realistic" due to the fact that "executive branches of government...held, and used, powers
that in England had been stripped from the crown in the settlement that had followed the Glorious Revolution as inappropriate to the government of a free people." Indeed, two of the pamphleteers of early Hanoverian England, John Trenchard and Thomas Gordon, authors of the Independent Whig and Cato's Letters, "were republished entire or in part again and again, 'quoted in every colonial newspaper from Boston to Savannah,' and referred to repeatedly in the pamphlet literature" of the Revolution.55

These writings, together with those by Benjamin Hoadly, Robert Viscount Molesworth, Lord Bolingbroke, and a host of other lesser-known polemicists, were not only read widely but they also provided the organizing framework that brought other powerfully influential intellectual traditions—Enlightenment rationalism, English common law, and Puritan covenant theology, for example—into a comprehensive whole, creating a language of politics that spoke directly and, especially after 1763, immediately to many Americans. This language has been summed up by most historians under the concept of republicanism.56

It was a language that defined liberty in no uncertain terms. Liberty, the hallmark of an independent status, simply meant in contemporary usage the opposite of slavery, which connoted dependence or subjection to the will of others. Therefore, it had to be jealously defended at all costs from power, a term that in the early modern worldview
implied force or compulsion and was associated with aggressiveness. In British America, as a number of recent historians have made clear, regard for liberty was deep-rooted and widespread—not only because of the comparatively large number of independent landholders, but also because of the presence of masses of black slaves who collectively provided an object lesson in what it meant to be subjected to the will of others. This was especially true in the southern colonies, for there slaveholding was ubiquitous and exposure to the conditions of bondspersons constant. As a result, colonial Southerners were particularly fearful of unchecked power.57

The political record of individual colonies, together with a study of Revolutionary-era pamphlets and newspaper articles, reveals an almost obsessive concern with liberty and slavery and the always latent and frequently overt attractions of an opposition attitude of mind. Against this background, the logic and the necessity of immediate resistance, including the articulation of a reasoned ideological position by colonial leaders to the novel measures of the British government in the years after French and Indian War, are comprehensible. Indeed, as Bailyn has written, "to minds steeped in the literature of eighteenth-century history and political theory, these events, charged with ideology, were the final realization of tendencies and possibilities that had been seen and spoke of, with concern
and foreboding, since the turn of the seventeenth century.\textsuperscript{58}

Without itself involving any direct political program, evangelicalism served to intensify this reading of and justify resistance to the Parliamentary and administrative measures aimed at tightening up imperial control and raising American revenue that led directly to the Revolution. As the previous chapter and a number of other scholars have made clear, the mid eighteenth-century awakenings swelled the number of evangelical churches and ministers in the colonies just prior to the Revolution. Thus, by 1776 British North America was overwhelmingly a land of dissenters, many of whom had been profoundly influenced by experientialism. In South Carolina, for example, dissenters outnumbered Anglicans in 1770 by more than 3 to 1; and an increasing number of those who stood outside—and, especially after 1773 when the first Methodist minister arrived in the colony, even some of those who stood within—the Church of England were new light evangelicals who had experienced a "new birth."\textsuperscript{59} What is significant about the strength of dissent in general and of evangelicalism in particular in the story of resistance is twofold; first, it predisposed many Americans—viewing the English effort to reorganize her newly expanded empire through the lens of opposition thought—to associate tyranny with the marriage
of ecclesiastical and royal power; and, second, it infused the defense of liberty with great moral and cosmic significance.

As most historians familiar with the history of colonial British America are well aware, the many spiritual awakenings that occurred in various regions during the eighteenth century produced a revival of eschatological speculations. Although most evangelicals did not become involved in setting dates, believing such activity to be, as one South Carolina minister put it, "an encroachment on the secret counsels of God," some new light preachers successfully popularized the notion that the earth was near the dawn of a new era.60 The Bible, which, as has already been noted, was widely regarded as an absolute authority on all subjects, spoke of a "millennial" age, or a thousand year reign of Christ. By 1750 the most common interpretation of this prophecy by American revivalists, emboldened by the perceived religious resurgence, was that current events portended the final preparatory stage to the beginning of the millennium, the culminating era in history. In order for the millennium to come, according to Scripture, Christ had to defeat the Anti-Christ, which was most often associated with the Pope and Roman Catholicism. This view seems to have been further enhanced in British America by the perception that the colonies were fragile Protestant enclaves in a largely Catholic hemisphere.61
Though much more common in the New England and the Middle Colonies than in the South until the so-called Second Great Awakening at the end of the century, such prophecies increasingly took on political connotations in the years immediately preceding the American Revolution. For some evangelicals, the Seven Years' War signalled the first step toward the dawning of the millennium. Samuel Davies, the famed New Light Presbyterian, for instance, described the British efforts against France as "the commencement of this grand decisive conflict between the Lamb and the beast." A British victory, together with the ongoing revivals, he believed, would help bring "a new heaven and a new earth." When the conclusion of the Great War for Empire brought a decisive end to salutary neglect and not a grand new age, however, many colonists began to view resistance as a divine mission. To be sure, it took some intellectual and rhetorical gymnastics to portray the metropolis as Babel, the finial roadblock to the spread of the Kingdom of God. But a series of measures between 1763 and 1776, together with expectations of the Second Coming of Christ and an opposition ideology that triggered colonial emotions and aroused colonial fears, provided more than enough fuel to kindle the idea that God had intended for Americans to carry a holy flame of cosmic historical significance, an idea that raised the defense of liberty to sacred status.

Far and away the single most important religious issue
that brought into question British motives and suggested to some colonists that perhaps the downfall of Albion itself—rather than papal Rome—might bring about the millennium was what Carl Bridenbaugh has variously termed the "bishop question" or "the Great Fear"—constant rumors that circulated throughout the colonies concerning "plots" to install one or more Anglican bishops in British America. Although such rumors probably reflected more the wishful thinking of the outnumbered Anglican clergymen who believed that having a resident bishop would solve many of their problems—Independent and uncooperative vestries, seemingly insufficient salaries, questions of jurisdiction, lack of official confirmation, for instance—than the actual truth about English intentions or support for such a move abroad, many dissenters believed that any attempt to strengthen the ecclesiastical machinery in America would be followed by incursions against their religious liberties.  

Actually, these fears of an effort to appoint an American bishop were never very far below the surface of the colonial consciousness throughout the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; therefore they could be easily activated. However, in the 1760s "the Great Fear" reached a fever pitch after the Church of England purchased a large building in Cambridge, Massachusetts, which dissenters believed would serve as the "bishop’s palace."

Simultaneously, Anglican missionaries appeared to be even
more active in attacking dissenters and seeking converts, especially in portions of New England, the Middle Colonies, and the southern backcountry. In the South Carolina, for example, Charles Woodmason, an Anglican itinerant, attempted to maintain the established church in the rapidly expanding colonial frontier. A staunch defender of the Church of England and aware that the backcountry had by the become "infested" with Presbyterians, Baptists, Lutherans, and other dissenters during the years after 1750, he assailed with not a few derisive superlatives the "Sectaries" that had settled in every "Hole and Corner where they could raise Congregations" and was determined "to disperse these Wretches" and their "Religious Foppery." 64

Dissenters were not the only ones who were concerned with the bishop question. In fact, as a number of scholars have pointed out, there was very little support among colonial Anglican lay persons, who were decidedly latitudian in their orientation, for an American bishop because they feared a loss of congregational autonomy. Accordingly, "the Great fear" was not limited to those outside of the Church of England. Rather, it was generalized and widespread in the colonies, feeding in the years following 1763 the larger apprehension of a "ministerial plot" designed to enslave both dissenters and Anglicans alike. Opposition to an American bishop eventually culminated in vigorous protests against the Quebec Act of
1774, which gave legal recognition to Catholic church in recently conquered French territories in Canada and allowed for the continued spread of Catholicism in the trans-Appalachian west. The measure was widely cited by republican Americans as another instance of instance of British corruption and perceived many, including large numbers of Anglicans, as a major step toward imposing bishops on the American colonies.\(^6\)

Given this perception of British measures, it is perhaps not surprising that some colonial preachers began to discern in America's firm stand against encroaching British tyranny the seeds of the millennium. America, thought many clergy after the of the Declaration of Independence, now stood at the beginning of a new era of Christian liberty and unity. Israel was to be released from the Egyptian bondage. Right was to triumph over evil. King George III and the sinful English ministers and officials who surrounded him were to fall, victims of their corruption. America would become or, according to some of the more hopeful, had become the leader of a great religious movement to restore primitive Christianity.

IV

This mood of excitement during the Revolutionary Era stood in deep contrast to the earlier volume of complaints
about the process of cultural reformulation that was taking place in British American society and culture throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, a process that was precipitated by the necessity of adapting to the unique configurations in the colonies and was producing new and--to a large segment of the population at least--seemingly deviant modes of behavior. Indeed, scarcely more than a decade before the final decision was made to revolt against the metropolis, there had been a prevailing sense of colonial inferiority, an intellectual funk caused by the crudeness and peculiarity of American institutions and ways of doing things. Already by the 1770s, however, colonials were beginning to formulate a new set of ideas and create a literature of optimism.

To understand why and how this change came about, it is important to remember that throughout most of the colonial era, as Chapter 3 has shown was the case for South Carolina, there was for a complex of reasons--including especially a greater degree of direct involvement with Britain, the rate and character of population growth, increasing socioeconomic differentiation, and a fear of creolian degeneracy--a powerful predisposition and self conscious, systematic effort to Anglicize colonial life. Although the intensity with which the colonists set out to make their societies more recognizably English varied from region to region according to a number of complex variables, and although
some colonies clearly wound up approximating the metropolis more closely than others during the eighteenth century, this tendency was pervasive, encompassing a wide range of what scholars writing under the banner of "ethnohistory" refer to as action statements. 66

This desire and self-conscious effort to recreate British society and culture in America initially emanated from elites. However, as the eighteenth century progressed and as colonial societies became more and more complex, settled, coherent, and more heavily creole, the impulse was gradually diffused downward in society through the process of social emulation, a process which European historians have long recognized "acted as a powerful solvent of the customs, prejudices, and modes of action." 67 Therefore, the urge to make colonies more recognizably English was not limited to a small minority of well placed elites. Rather, it was becoming increasing deep-rooted among an ever greater segment of the colonial population.

Not all members of society, of course, shared the desire to Anglicize colonial life so fully. But enough people were caught up in it to prevent the development and legitimation of alternative intellectual framework that would more accurately correspond to the kind of societies that the colonists had fashioned. Accordingly, it was incredibly difficult for Americans to discern precisely who they were and what they had become, especially when they
looked across the Atlantic and were reminded of just how provincial the maturing colonies were in comparison to the metropolis.

These unfavorable comparisons of American with English society and the Anglicanization impulse that lay behind them, however, began to diminish rapidly after 1763 as the colonists came to identify the new acts of the British government with tyrannical attacks on liberty. Suddenly it became more and more obvious that the mother country was becoming decayed and corrupted, that it had strayed from its virtuous past, and was on the verge of cultural bankruptcy. Indeed, to concerned colonials viewing the British imperial reform attempt through the a kaleidoscope of Country opposition ideas, vice, luxury, and extravagance, no less than overarching ambition, oppression, and craft, were thought to be not only very much in evidence throughout contemporary English society and culture, but increasing at a dramatic rate. These suspicions and criticisms were the necessary first steps to the development of alternative set of values, for as Clifford Geertz has made explicit, value formation occurs precisely when a society begins "to free itself from the immediate governance of received tradition." 68

Republicanism, of course, was central to this reorganization of sensibilities. Forged from the Country philosophy discussed above, and inextricably entwined with
Enlightenment rationalism as well as other dominant Western intellectual traditions, republican ideology provided Americans with a telescopic view of classical antiquity, a view which became the basis of an imaginative representation of a uniquely American identity and new ideals of behavior. The classical image that Americans came to focus on was the ordered simplicity and arcadian virtue of the Roman Republic. It was in this world, a world vividly described by such writers as Plutarch, Livy, Cicero, Sallust, and Tacitus, that Americans found their ideal selves. Here rustic, independent landowners--masterless men--lived at ease, devoted to the preservation of their liberty, duty, and country.69

Given the pervasive sense of colonial inferiority and the anxiety caused by what one South Carolinian referred to as "the crudity and meanness" of life in the far off "Woods of America" throughout most of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the widespread fascination with this classical image is perhaps unsurprising, especially since it seemed to many hitherto provincials to provide a uniquely suited system of images and symbols by which they could convey significance on their own experience.70 But what made the conception of the ancient Republic so attractive, what gave it teleological meaning in the American mind, was the perceived nature of this antiquarian society. Indeed, looking back upon this golden era from an early modern
perspective set within a framework of opposition thought and Enlightenment abstractions, it seemed that the citizens of Rome had created prior to the last third of the second century B.C. a utopian society in which relations were based on natural merit and the equality of independent citizens who were linked to one another in affection and harmony.\textsuperscript{71} In other words, they had, according to many Americans, a cohesive and coherent social order that was remarkably stable, susceptible neither to faction nor internal discord; widespread ownership of property, a source of independence and permanent attachment to community; distinctions based upon achievement rather than upon ascription or law; the means and opportunity to command dependents, including servants and slaves; individual values of thrift, diligence, industry, temperance, moderation, and deference; representative political institutions presided over by disinterested elites, believed to be, as one Charleston writer put it in 1776, "the best men of the country"; and, perhaps most important, a universal concern for and unselfish devotion to the public welfare.\textsuperscript{72}

To be sure, this image was nostalgic, trumped-up by a jaundiced Latin literati convinced that luxury and corruption had led to internal decay and the downfall of the Republic, revived and embellished by Renaissance philosophers, and colored almost beyond recognition by disaffected Europeans thinkers during the so-called Age of
Absolutism. Nevertheless, far more than just a few of those who supported the American Revolution in 1776 felt that this ancient social model could be replicated in the New World. Encouraged initially by what appeared to be nothing less than a flush of public spiritedness, self-sacrifice, and patriotism following the Declaration of Independence, emboldened by the absence of legally privileged orders in their societies and the fact that "the people of America, as one Carolinian wrote, were "a people of property: almost every [white] man being a freeholder," and armed with a new, though by no means precisely defined, conception of themselves--a conception that celebrated the classical simplicity of life on the periphery and soothed former feelings of inferiority--Revolutionaries went about the business of establishing republics with extraordinarily visionary hopes."

With the exception of Massachusetts, New York, and Georgia, every colony had adopted a new state constitutions by the end of 1776. (South Carolina was the first colony in the South and only the second in the nation to draft a new state constitution). In the writing of these constitutions many of the now common political principles of the age discovered themselves. All the constitutions, for example, rejected aristocracy as a hereditary or formal order, all imposed the severest limits on, indeed some almost annihilated, executive power, placing it firmly in the grasp
of the legislatures, and all put a new emphasis on actual representation and explicit consent by creating—among other things—more equal electoral districts, requiring annual elections, enlarging the suffrage, imposing residence requirements on both electors and the persons elected, and granting constituents the right to instruct their representatives.  

There were, of course, important differences in the new state constitutions, yet all facilitated the creation of republics, reflecting the idealism of many Americans and their commitment to republican virtue, an enlightened quest for the public interest. "The word republic," wrote Thomas Paine, "means the public good, or the good of the whole, in contradistinction to the despotic form, which makes the good of the sovereign, or of one man, the only object of government." This collectivist vision, shaped by intellectual traditions that stretched back to antiquity and widely shared by Revolutionaries, lay at the very heart of the republican impulse. As Gordon S. Wood has written, "the sacrifice of individual interests to the greater good of the whole formed the essence of republicanism and comprehended for Americans the idealistic goal of their Revolution."  

If, however, this republican ideology with its corporate ideal "presumed and helped shape the American's conception of the way their society and politics should be structured and operated," Wood is certainly correct to emphasize that
this vision was completely "divorced from the realities of American society" and fundamentally "contrary to the previous century of American experience." He is also right to stress both the extent to which "there was really nothing new about these republican principles" and the fact that "republicanism as the Americans expressed it in 1776 possessed a decidedly reactionary tone" because "it embodied the ideal of the good society" and was based on a "traditional conception of the organic community." Indeed, it was precisely "the persistence of social incoherence and change throughout the eighteenth century," the continuing fragility of authority structures, and, above all, increasing individualism and autonomous behavior that "accentuated [the] desirability in American eyes" of republicanism."

From this perspective, it is clear that republicanism contained a fundamental and ultimately fatal flaw, for it was an ideology based upon assumptions that society was an organic unit that was distinct from and greater than the sum of the individuals who composed it and that individual considerations always had to give way before the interest of the society as a whole. Such assumptions set republicanism on a collision course with the highly egotistic and individual modes of behavior that prevailed in varying degrees throughout America, from the Lower South to New England. Evident to some extent almost from the beginning
of settlement, these modes of behavior were encouraged by a complex of factors, including, as a number of scholars and previous chapters have shown, rapid population increase, remarkable economic and commercial expansion, an abundance of natural resources, territorial growth, geographic and social mobility, the opportunity to acquire land, the development of a relative truncated social structure, the comparative weakness and fragile nature of traditional social institutions--family, church and community--and, perhaps most important, at least within the context of this study, the emergence of evangelical religion.78

By stimulating a high degree of autonomous behavior, these developments facilitated what J.R. Pole has called "the very rapid advance of the more egocentric type of individualism," a type that emphasized "respect for the integrity of the individual character"; "hearty confidence in the individual's ability to manage his own affairs"; the authority of self rather than the authority of community; individual achievement and success rather than ascriptive criteria for both political leadership and social status; and a greater concern for private interests and the fulfillment of family obligations.79 The result was nothing short of a behavioral revolution, a revolution that existed in a state of tension with the traditional imperatives of communal dependence and self-denial in favor of the common good.
This is precisely why, as Gordon S. Wood has written, "no phrase except 'liberty' was invoked more often by Revolutionaries than 'the public good.'" It is also why the American Revolution represented in several important respects "a final attempt...by many Americans to realize the traditional Commonwealth ideal," for theoretically "republicanism obliterated the individual." But the communal impulse that lay behind republicanism was clearly a retrograde impulse that could not in the long run be sustained in a society so strongly oriented toward private ends. This became increasingly clear during the Revolutionary War, an event that actually accelerated rather than mitigated individualistic modes of behavior by opening up new opportunities for economic prosperity, altering commercial patterns, increasing the number of participants in the market, stimulating already high levels of geographic mobility, creating intense rivalries among local elites that served to undermine their already weak influence, precipitating disestablishment and the uncoupling of church and state, bringing about significant changes for women, and producing a powerful contagion of liberty that made it seem to many as though the new nation, as Benjamin Guerard, the governor of South Carolina, said in 1784, had gone "Society mad." In fact, it has been argued that the Constitution was--at root--an effort to restrain or neutralize the rapid spread of autonomous behavior that seemed to some to portend
social and political chaos. \textsuperscript{82} Such efforts, however, were clearly inappropriate, for what was needed was a new set of values that would more accurately reflect prevailing modes of behavior.

In an important sense, evangelicalism provided just such a set of values. And, over time, it was this religious mood that would eventually help to persuade many Americans that in a society with so much space and so many opportunities individual autonomy was not necessarily incompatible with social stability. Recently, historians studying southern evangelicalism, following the lead of cultural anthropologists in affirming Clifford Geertz’s contention that man is basically "an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun" and discovering that an examination of the means of expression open to a society is the key to a real understanding, have become increasingly aware of this fact. \textsuperscript{83}

As is the case in so many other aspects of eighteenth-century southern society and culture, Rhys Isaac provided the most stunning, though certainly not the original, insight into the connection between evangelicalism and the pursuit of self. And he did it with typical succinctness: "Increasing ‘individualism’ in the social and cultural system of England and America may well constitute an underlying ‘cause’ of the rise of evangelicalism." Perhaps in part because "this principle of individual autonomy,"
which was "only just establishing ascendancy" and "reorganizing late eighteenth-century Anglo-Virginians' [read Americans'] perceptions of their world and the expectations they had of it," constituted "the principle interpretive revision" of his earlier work, Isaac did not discuss in any detail the origins of individualism or make explicit the connections between this revolutionary behavior and the rise of experiential religion. Moreover, he continued to stress "the ambivalence between communitarianism and individualism" and the fact that "the [evangelical] movement--combining experiences of isolation and of communality--could be read as both involvement in and reaction against profound shifts in values and patterns of life."84

Isaac's insistence that evangelicals were alternatively individualistic and communal in their social ethos stems, in large measure, from his earlier emphasis on the community-building nature of evangelicalism, an emphasis derived from Donald G. Mathews' interpretation of religion in the South--"not the last word, but a first word, and invitation to further discussion of the character, functions, and significance of religion in shaping and defining the South as a distinct part of the new American nation." While recognizing the "individualistic implications of evangelical thought" and consistently using such terms as personal, voluntary, introspective, inwardness, heart,
internalization, experience, feeling, emotion, and private throughout his work, Mathews argued that
"Evangelicals...redefined social relationships in terms of social intimacy, mutual respect, and communal discipline." Thus, he saw the individualism engendered by evangelicalism as a by-product of an even stronger communalistic impulse. Mathews was certainly correct in pointing up the ritualistic fraternal and sororal implications of evangelicalism and the extent to which experiential religion necessitated internal restraint, for these expressions are essential preconditions in the process of sublimating the pursuit of self and developing an alternative morality needed to sanction new modes of behavior. However, by placing far too much emphasis on "the communal character of Evangelicalism" and failing to give equal time to the behavioral revolution (and the resulting transition from pre-modern to modern sociocultural arrangements) that was occurring throughout the Anglophone American world during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, he has obscured from view the overall subjective thrust of evangelicalism. As John B. Boles, an acknowledged authority on southern religion who has written extensively on this "theology of individualism," pointed out in a recent historiographical essay on southern religion, evangelicalism helped to precipitate "a turning away from the larger society--with the courthouse and the idea of one official
religious community, the established church, that theoretically included everyone under the umbrella of the state—and a new concern with individuals drawn together by conversion into local fellowships that were voluntary and in a way private." This new conception, Boles correctly emphasizes, represented "a real break from the earlier colonial conception of the corporateness of society."  

It was in the direction of this latter point that Isaac seems to have been groping in his widely acclaimed attempt to gain "access to the alien mentalities of a past people," but he may have become too caught up in the circularity of "the individualizing trends of contemporary Anglo-American culture and the appeal of the surviving communalism." What is more, by failing to think in terms of transculturation—a process of exchange—he incorrectly assumed that "elite" and "popular" cultures were intrinsically distinct and therefore saw evangelicals and members of the gentry as continuously at odds, representatives of two irreconcilable value systems. This is precisely why he portrays evangelicals, and especially the Separate Baptists, as great exemplars of a process in which the "common people" rose up against and challenged the authority and culture of "their betters." It is also why he suggests that a society integrated around gentry leadership in 1740 was split asunder by 1790, "polarized," as it were, by "conflicting value systems" and cultures. However, as the previous chapter has suggested
was the case in South Carolina and as a number of historians have shown for other regions, American society in general and southern society in particular was not coming apart at the seams. Rather, it was moving toward ever greater coherence, albeit slowly and with some considerable turbulence. To be sure, there were persistent fears among some Americans that society was, as one Charlestonian put it, going to "tail [off] into a State of Anarchy and Confusion," but the fear that individualistic behavior portended sociocultural chaos gradually subsided as an alternative morality that more accurately reflected prevailing modes of behavior became more conscious and generalized and as Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterian won adherents among middling and lesser planters, slaves, and more than just a sprinkling of the gentry. The next chapter will serve to underscore this point.90
END NOTES


2. See, for instance, Alexander Garden's comments in the previous chapter.


10. See, for example, C.C Goen, Revivalism and Separatism in New England, 1740-1800 (New Haven, Conn., 1962).


12. Sidney E. Mead, "The Rise of the Evangelical Conception of the Ministry in America (1607-1850)," in H. Richard Niebuhr and Daniel D. Williams, eds., The Ministry in Historical
Perspectives (New York, 1956), 207-249.

13. Ibid., 231-33.

14. Ibid., 212-30. Evangelicals began to establish conventicles early on. In addition to the material presented in Chapter 4, see George Howe, History of the Presbyterian Church in South Carolina, 2 vols. (Columbia, S.C., 1870), 201-364; Leah Townsend, South Carolina Baptists, 1670-1805 (Florence, S.C., 1935), 18-175; George D. Bernheim, History of the German Settlements and of the Lutheran Church in North and South Carolina (Philadelphia, 1872), 111-249.


18. Ibid., 286-88.


21. South Carolina Gazette, April 17, 1742.


32. Ibid., 31-32.

33. John Marrant, *A Narrative of the Lord's Wonderful Dealings with John Marrant, a Black...Taken Down from His Own Relation, Arranged, Corrected, and Published by the late Rev. Mr. Aldridge* in Dorothy Porter, *Early Negro Writing, 1760-1837* (Boston, 1971), 727-47.

34. Ibid., 430-31.

35. Ibid., 431-32.

36. It is possible that evangelicals may have been striving to place intellect and will into a more organic relationship to resolve the seeming dichotomy between religion of the heart and religion of the head.

37. The preceding paragraphs are based ideas set forth in Boles, *The Great Revival*.


1966).

43. Mathews, Religion in the Old South, 10.

44. Isaac, The Transformation of Virginia, 140.

45. Nicholas Bedeggood as quoted in Townsend, South Carolina Baptists, 125.

46. Lieutenant-Governor William Bull as quoted in ibid., 122, 124.

47. Isaac, The Transformation of Virginia, 173.


55. Ibid., 43 (first quotation), 52 (second and third quotations), 36 (remaining quotations).

(October 1973), 549-74.


60. William Hutson as quoted by Howe, History of the Presbyterian Church, II, 310. For millennialism, see Ruth Bloch, Visionary Republic: Millennial Themes in American Thought (Cambridge, Mass., 1985).


71. Wood, Creation of the American Republic, 50–53.

72. Charleston South Carolina and American Standard Gazette, August 14–17, 1776.

73. Ibid.; Wood, The Creation of the American Republic, 413–25;


76. Ibid., 53.

77. Ibid., 54 (first three quotations), 59 (remaining quotations).


79. Ibid., 6 (first quotation), 8 (second quotation), 12–13 (third quotation).


Women, 1750-1800 (Boston, 1980). The quotation is drawn from Nadelhaft, The Disorders of War, 116.


83. Clifford Geertz, "The Thick Description: Toward and Interpretive Theory of Culture," in Interpretation of Cultures, 5.

84. Isaac, The Transformation of Virginia, 171 (first, third, fourth, and fifth quotations), 311 (second quotation).

85. Mathews, Religion in the Old South, xiii (first quotation), 40 (second quotation), 42 (third quotation).

86. On this point, see Fred Weinstein and Gerald M. Pratt, The Wish to Be Free: Society, Psyche, and Value Change (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1969), 31-36, 200-03.

87. Mathews, Religion in the Old South, 40.


89. Isaac, The Transformation of Virginia, 323 (first quotation), 316 (second quotation), 322 (remaining quotations).

CHAPTER SIX

Acceleration, Retreat, and the Post Revolutionary Evangelical Revival in South Carolina

I

In the years just prior to the signing of the Declaration of Independence, the appeal of evangelical religion—a new and more emotionally satisfying form of religious belief that emphasized, as the previous chapter has shown, experiential faith, the centrality of the individual in conversion, and the primacy of religious beliefs in daily life—was becoming increasingly widespread in South Carolina, despite the preoccupation of many inhabitants with the political struggle. New churches were being constructed at a prolific pace, while old ones were being improved and enlarged with equal, if not greater, rapidity, to accommodate the ever larger number of individuals who experienced a new birth. And a growing cadre of "gospel ministers" were finding their calling in the midst of this burgeoning "heart religion," to employ the language of the day. This expansion of churches, ministers, and individuals associated with evangelical congregations opened up the prospects of ever greater religious prosperity
in the years ahead and led some contemporaries irresistibly
to the conclusion that the future held out, as one
optimistic Presbyterian laboring in the backcountry put it,
"the hopeful conversion of many souls." ¹

Even outside observers were impressed with the mounting
spiritual energy in the province. Joseph Philmoor, a
Wesleyan Methodist, for instance, wrote during his visit to
the colony in 1773 that "the Lord is opening my way before
me, and will, I trust, give me his blessing." In his
journal he mentioned meeting numerous "pious" individuals
who were "friendly to the people of God and spiritual
religion" as well as zealous preachers, such as "the Rev.
Mr. Hart, the Baptist minister, who is not only sensible,
but truly evangelical, and very devout." The churches in
the colony were "wonderfully crowded," teeming with people
who were ready "to receive the word with gladness." On one
occasion, Philmoor preached in Charleston "to the largest
congregation I have seen since I left Virginia." Indeed,
"the house was so full it was with the utmost difficulty I
could get to the pulpit, and there were hundreds at the
outside that could not get in at all." "Greatly comforted
by the work of the Lord" and the prevailing "catholik
spirit" among all denominations, the young clergyman felt
"such freedom of mind in preaching...free salvation to
sinners, and calling them to Christ just as they are, that
they might be saved by grace." His experience led him to
the same conclusion drawn by many Carolina commentators: that the "word of the Lord" was being "made effectual for the conversion of sinners and building up the children of Zion," a development that in no uncertain terms "bids fair for a revival of religion."

This perception was not inaccurate, for the picture that emerges from a reading of private correspondence, diaries, associational minutes, church records, and variety of other surviving data strongly suggests that evangelicalism was becoming pervasive and powerful in South Carolina on the eve of the Revolution. Although an overall, but steadily decreasing, shortage of ministers meant that many congregations continued to be under served, more and more inhabitants were being brought into formed congregations. Also, lay persons were becoming increasingly active in church affairs, assuming responsibility for spreading God's Word, participating in devotional meetings, and engaging in brotherly and sisterly instruction and edification.

It is possible to see how these general developments were refracted through the experience of one congregation by examining briefly the history of Catholic Presbyterian Church. Originally founded by Scotch-Irish emigrants from Virginia and Pennsylvania in the mid 1760s, the church, which was located in what later became Chester County, took its name from the spirit of tolerance that prevailed among
the constituent members who, according to one contemporary, "earnestly sought" to embrace the "church universal," claiming historical continuity with the "ancient church Undivid'd." William Richardson, a New Light disciple of Samuel Davies, frequented the congregation until his death in 1771, but they continued "as sheep without a vigilant shepherd" until after the Revolution. Nevertheless, "gospel religion" was sustained through bi-weekly "society meetings" under the direction of two elders, Abram Miller and Thomas Garret. The latter, Garrett, had been converted by Richardson and was considered to be "a man of many virtues and great influence." Oftentimes, he was referred to by contemporary observers as "the head of Catholic [Presbyterian Church]." With the help of repeated visits by missionaries from the Synod of New York and Philadelphia "some such as should be saved were added to the church," and membership continued to grow, despite the fact that there was no regular minister. In 1775 one itinerant, William Martin, wrote concerning the congregation: "there is good reason to believe that this is a time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord." A year later one of Martin's counterparts noted that "there hath been a considerable stir among them of late," a stir that resulted in "the conversion of many souls."³

The record of Catholic Presbyterian Church is by no means unique. On the contrary, it is revelatory of broader
trends: one variation of a more general pattern in South Carolina. These trends and this pattern were chiefly characterized by growth and vitality and, to one degree or another, involved the vast majority of churches in the colony, including the first independent, all black church in the colony, Silver Bluff, which was established in 1775 near Augusta, Georgia. In several important respects, the appearance of this church marked the beginning of black Christianity on a mass scale in South Carolina; thus, its origins and early development will be give extensive coverage here.

Why and how the Silver Bluff Baptist Church was established can perhaps best be explained by examining the life and work of George Liele, a man who was intimately associated with the history of the black church. Liele was born a slave in Virginia about 1750. At an early age he was forcibly separated from his immediate family, a casualty of that colony's increasingly voluminous domestic slave trade. Liele knew very little about his parents. Having only faint recollections of them, he wrote "my father's name was Liele, and my mother's name Nancy; I cannot ascertain much of them, as I went to several parts of America when young." Sometime prior to 1773 Liele was taken to St. George's Parish, Georgia, by his owner, Henry Sharpe. The parish, which later became Burke County, was sparsely settled and blacks accounted for only a small proportion of
the total population. Many, like Liele, were "country born" or creole slaves who were perceived by whites more as fellow workers and friends than as "outlandish" aliens. Moreover, in this comparatively open, mobile, and less differentiated region, rules governing racial interaction were not yet rigidly defined. Blacks and whites lived, worked, ate, and relaxed together; they shared similar joys and concerns.⁶

After Henry Sharpe moved to Georgia he was converted to the Baptist faith by Matthew Moore, a Regular Baptist minister living near Augusta. Profoundly influenced by the simple, soul-stirring evangelical message, he became a member of Moore's Buckhead Creek Baptist Church. While attending one of the revivalistic church services with his master, Liele was "convinced that I was not in the way to heaven, but in the way to hell." Feeling a great sense of personal unworthiness and guilt and perceiving his life to be hanging "by a slender thread," he labored under "this state [of conviction] for the space of five or six months" until he made "intercession with Christ, for the salvation of my poor immortal soul." After his conversion in 1773, Liele felt "such love and joy as my tongue was not able to express," and "declared before the congregation of believers the work which God had done for my soul." He was then baptized by Moore and admitted into the fellowship of the biracial Buckhead Creek Baptist Church in 1774.⁷

As a member of the church Liele was accorded a
semblance of equality. He participated along with whites in common rituals, such as communion and baptism, and the white church members addressed him as "brother," just as they did other white male members. In addition, Liele would have participated equally in matters of church discipline. The Buckhead Creek Church called on members to account for drunkenness, profanity, lying, adultery, inattendance at church, and quarreling. All members--black and white--were held to the same strict moral oversight and together they voluntarily submitted to the evangelical code of behavior. Lapses from prescribed moral conduct were punished by admonition and suspension, and if persisted in, by excommunication. Signs of repentance had to be very real to be considered adequate to restoration. As a member of the church, Liele would have been allowed to give testimony against whites at the monthly meetings--a radical departure from the situation in civil and criminal courts.

Liele was one of probably several black members of the Buckhead Creek Baptist Church. Living in an isolated area, Sunday services gave him a chance to interact meaningfully with other slaves. Indeed, participation in the church strengthened the slave community, especially in this newly settled outback where a heavy white population, together with small unit holding sizes, made the development of a slave community and slave culture difficult. Church services allowed slaves to visit with relatives, family, and
friends who resided on neighboring farms and plantations.

Participation in the church also afforded Liele the opportunity to assume a role of public leadership. Shortly after his new birth, he wanted "to prove...my obligations to God," and "endeavoured to instruct...my own color in the word of God." Realizing that Liele was a man of great ability and tremendous potential, the members of the Buckhead Creek Baptist Church gave him "a call at the quarterly meeting to preach before the congregation." It was their "unanimous opinion" that he "was possessed of ministerial gifts." Accordingly, he was "licensed as a probationer" and began preaching "on neighboring plantations, especially on those Lord's Day evenings when there was no service performed in the church to which he belonged." Henry Sharpe subsequently manumitted Liele, enabling him to exercise his "ministerial gifts" more freely.

Liele travelled through the surrounding region exhorting the word of God. On one occasion he visited George Galphin's thriving plantation and trading post at Silver Bluff, South Carolina, in 1775. David George, one of Galphin's slaves, has left an extraordinary account of Liele's activities. He wrote that:

I heard brother George Liele preach...His sermon was very suitable, on Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest [Matt. 11:28]. When it was ended, I went to him and told him I was so; That I was weary and heavy laden; and that the grace of God had given
me rest. Indeed his whole discourse seemed for me.  

Liele knew his audience. Preaching to an illiterate or barely literate group of slaves, he spoke, as did most evangelicals, in the vernacular and tailored his sermon to the specific emotional needs of his listeners. Indeed, many slaves must have felt, like George, that the "whole discourse" was particularly applicable to their situation.

Brother Palmer, an ordained minister operating in the recently settled southern backcountry, began to frequent Silver Bluff shortly after Liele. Very little is known about Palmer, but he was a "very powerful preacher" who could deliver a fiery sermon and elicit much emotion from his audience. Together, Palmer and Liele hit a responsive cord among the Silver Bluff slaves. David George noted that after hearing their discourses "more of my fellow creatures began to seek the Lord."

Hymnology also proved to be an effective method of popularizing and spreading the Baptist message. Like sermons, special attention was given to the vernacular. Reportedly, Liele instructed slaves "by reading hymns among them, encouraging them to sing, and sometimes by explaining the most striking parts to them." David George commented that "he learned to sing hymns" after Liele and Palmer visited Silver Bluff. The first one he learned "was a hymn of that great writing man, Watts, which begins with 'Thus
saith the wisdom of the Lord.'" Pleasing to the ear, these simple songs helped disseminate and explain evangelical values.\textsuperscript{13}

Brothers Palmer and Liele visited Silver Bluff a number of times during the mid-1770s and, as a result of their initial efforts, eight slaves "found the great blessing and mercy from the Lord" and were "baptized...in the Mill-stream." These slaves were formed into a church and administered the Lord's supper. David George became an elder in the church and "received instruction from Brother Palmer how to conduct myself." He "proceeded in this way till the American war was coming on, when the Ministers were not allowed to come amongst us lest they should furnish us with too much knowledge."\textsuperscript{14} Why George Galphin forbade Liele and Palmer to visit his estate during the Revolution is not entirely clear. Perhaps he felt that his slaves might learn of the November 1775 proclamation of Lord Dunmore, the royal governor of Virginia, which promised freedom to bondspersons who espoused the cause of England. It is also possible that such action was part of a general clamp down on all Christian activity, as pastors could conceivably interpret for and explain to slaves things they may have heard or learned otherwise.\textsuperscript{15}

Although Liele and Palmer were forbidden to visit Silver Bluff, church services continued under David George, who noted that "black people from all around attended with
us and I had the whole management, and used to preach among them myself." George continued preaching until "the church, constituted with eight, increased to thirty or more, and till the British came to the city of Savannah, and took it." The invading forces seized Galphin's trading post shortly after.¹⁶

It is unclear what happened to Palmer after Galphin forbade ministerial activity on his plantation, but Liele continued his evangelical mission in the Lower South. He began preaching at "Brunton Land," the estate of Jonathan Bryan, a wealthy lowcountry planter and New Light Presbyterian who supported missionary work among slaves, and in 1779 he founded a church at Yamacraw, a western suburb of Savannah just south of Bryan's plantation.¹⁷ Here Liele was joined by David George after the British siezed Galphin's estate at Silver Bluff.

II

All of these developments during the mid-1770s stimulated many South Carolinians, including especially members of the clergy, to articulate a broadly diffused sense of religious maturation. They also served to intensify the spread of evangelicalism among both black and white populations, an expansive process that was with increasing force altering the sociocultural and religious
landscape of the colony and enabling more and more people to place stock in their own inner selves. However, the Revolutionary War operated as a severely arresting, though temporary, brake on expansion and precipitated a brief—but profound—feeling of crisis.

Although there was sporadic fighting in South Carolina throughout the later 1770s, especially on the frontier, it was not until Sir Henry Clinton with some 12,000 British troops attacked Charleston in 1780 that the new state was plunged head first into all-out battle. After two months of intense fighting and unrelentless bombardment, Charleston, defended by an American army of 6,500 under the command of Benjamin Lincoln, fell into enemy hands on May 12. It was the greatest American loss of soldiers, and correspondingly, the greatest British victory of the Revolutionary War. Abandoning the previous strategy of pacification and what one Englishman termed a "sentimental manner of waging war" in favor of a more ruthless slash-and-burn policy, the British began conducting raids into the surrounding countryside in an attempt to disrupt all American activities in South Carolina following their stunning victory. In response, the Continental Congress ordered General Horatio Gates to advance with the remnants of the Southern Department of the American army on Camden, where a British fort had been established under the command of Lord Rawdon. As Gates approached the small, backcountry town, he was
unaware that the position had been reinforced with soldiers from Charleston under Lord Cornwallis, now in command of the British forces in the South; accordingly, he suffered a devastating defeat in August 1780.¹⁸

The fall of Charleston and the disaster at Camden sparked an incredibly uncivil civil war in South Carolina between loyalists and American patriots, a war that lasted for almost three years and involved not only a number of nasty pitched battles but countless guerilla skirmishes, retributive raids, and brutal massacres. Neighbors, friends, and, in some cases even families were pitted against one another in this vicious conflict. And marches and counter-marches of organized field armies only served to exacerbate the situation. As Ronald Hoffman has noted, "no more chaotic a situation can be imagined than that of the lower South in the years from 1780 to 1783."¹⁹

As might be expected, the Revolutionary War in South Carolina had a devastating effect on religious life. Churches were destroyed, congregations were dispersed, and many prominent patriot ministers (roughly four-fifths of the clergy supported American independence--whatever their denomination) and laypersons were captured or forced to flee. During the British occupation of Charleston, which lasted for the duration of the war, for instance, there was apparently an almost total cessation of religious activity. The Independent Church was seized for use as a hospital and
its minister, James Edmunds, a strong supporter of the American cause, was imprisoned and sent to Philadelphia. Similarly, both Baptist churches were confiscated and converted into warehouses. Oliver Hart, one of the most prominent and active ministers in South Carolina, managed somehow to escape during the siege, but his counterpart, Thomas Tew, was apprehended by the British and exiled to St. Augustine. The Anglican church, St. Michael's, remained pretty much intact throughout, but the rector, William Percy, was "ordered...to desist from all Clerical duty, on pain of confinement," for it was believed that he was "no real friend of the King."

In the lowcountry west and south of Charleston, the situation proved to be much worse. At Ashley River enemy soldiers, according to one contemporary patriot, "burned the [Baptist] House of worship and a valuable parsonage" after taking "the Church plate several negroes and some hundred pounds in fund." Nearby, at the Wappetaw Independent Church, it was reported by another observer that "Rev. Mr. Atkins...was murdered by his negroes...at the instigation of the British, who now occupy the church as barracks." The Saltketcher Presbyterian Church, founded by Archibald Simpson, was "almost wholly broken up" during the war. Similarly, the Euhaw Baptist Church, an important center of activity since the 1750s, was "singularly Plunder'd" by a raiding party, and Joseph Cook, who had been converted by
Richard Furman and was the minister of the church, reported that he "fled to the interior parts" because he feared that he would be "severely persecut'd by the British" for his outspoken views concerning "rights and liberties of the people."^23

Churches located in the area above Charleston and in the Pee Dee region do not seem to have been so profoundly affected, but they did not escape the ravages of war entirely. Several Baptist congregations were dispersed, for example, and, reportedly, many of their "meeting houses were looted and burned" after Banister Tarleton's Legion of British cavalry was dispatched to the Pee Dee River Basin in the spring of 1780.^24 What is more, Major James Wemyss led a sizable contingent of regulars in an attack on northeastern corner of the state in 1781. He burned over fifty houses and generally wrought havoc in what one contemporary referred to as "an immense tract of country along Black river, Lynch's Creek, and Pedee, seventy miles in length, and, in places fifteen miles wide," leaving "a complete picture of desolation and suffering" in his wake. It was "at the command of this officer" that the "[Presbyterian] church of Indiantown was burnt," for not unlike many of his comrades "he regarded all Presbyterian churches as 'sedition shops.'"^25

The South Carolina backcountry proved to be the scene of the most intense fighting because loyalist support there
was strongest; accordingly, churches in the region were ravaged by the Revolutionary War more than those located in any other section of the state. There is ample evidence to underscore the point. According to an early history of the Fishing Creek Presbyterian Church contained in the church records, for example, "a group of [British] soldiers moved upon the church on a bright Sabbath morning" in June 1780, "expecting to find Rev. [James] Simpson and the congregation there, but were disappointed." Thus, "the enemy burned the house of worship and left it in a heap of smouldering ruins." Shortly thereafter, "they marched a short distance to the dwelling of Rev. S...rifled the house of everything valuable, took out four feather-beds and ripped them open in the yard; and gathering up all the clothing and other articles that they fancied, they finally set fire to the house, which was soon burned down." 26

One year later William ("Bloody Bill") Cunningham, one of the most notorious—if not the most brutal—loyalist leaders, led a raid through the western part of the state. At Hayes Station on the Saluda River he and his men, the "most noted of the banditti who have so long infested the district of Ninety-Six," captured several whig militiamen, most of whom were members of the nearby Little River of Saluda Baptist Church, after setting their defensive position afire. Two of prisoners were "hung at once to the pole in a fodder stack," but before the rest of the "d--d
rebelsucklings" could be dispensed with, the hastily
prepared gallows gave way. Rather than wasting any more
time, Bloody Bill and his counterparts "hewed those who
remained" and "deliberately cut them to pieces." Then they
proceeded to lay waste to the immediate area. The Little
River Church in particular "felt the malice of the enemy,"
for it was known to be "a general meeting place for the
patriots." 27

Although the backcountry suffered the greatest
upheavals from the war, South Carolina, as one contemporary
noted, "had been so completely chequered by the different
parties, that not one part of it had been left unexplored."
Indeed, years of intense fighting had had "sad, desolating,
brutalizing, and demoralizing effects" on the entire
state. 28 Archibald Simpson, a Presbyterian minister whose
life and work have been discussed in considerable detail in
Chapter 4, has left one of the most detailed and moving
accounts of effects of this "uncommonly Cruel War." Upon
his return to the Stoney Creek Church at the end of 1783, he
wrote:

I rode around by my old parsonage or manse, which is
still standing; stopped on the road and viewed it for
some time, with a heart ready to burst at the
remembrance of the past. There my dear children were
born; there I had many a sweet, pleasant and
comfortable--many a sick, melancholy, and sorrowful
hour. Proceeded all alone to my old meeting-house at
Stoney Creek, which, to the surprise of many, is left
standing, while they burned the grand Episcopal church
at Sheldon, the most elegant country church in the
State. Lighted from my horse; viewed the tomb where
the bodies of my dear Jeany Muir, Sacheverel,
Archibald, and Jeany Simpson, the mother and the children, lie interred; was greatly affected, yet could not drop a tear, but heaved many a deep-fetched sigh from a troubled heart; went into my old study-house; sat some time in mournful silence; knelt down and offered up fervent prayers and praised to God--praised the Lord for his sparing mercy to me...for bringing me back again to this land; ...proceeded with a heart full of the most tender feelings past the Stoney Creek store. All was desolation, and indeed all the way there was a gloomy solitariness. Every field, every plantation, showed marks of ruin and devastation. Not a person was to be met with in the roads. All was gloomy.  

After revisiting Stoney Creek, Simpson travelled northwest to visit an old friend, James Gourlay:

He, like all other Presbyterian ministers, was prevented from preaching while the British army was in these parts. He is much altered, and old like, but very brisk and lively. Every person, every family in both parishes, and through all these districts of country, appears to be in the same situation. All society seems to be at an end. Every person keeps close on his own plantation. Robberies and murders are often committed on the public roads. The people that remain have been peeled, pillaged, and plundered. Poverty, want, and hardship appear in almost every countenance. A dark melancholy gloom appears everywhere, and the morals of the people are almost entirely extirpated. It is evident that the British army came here to plunder, and not to fight or conquer the people, far less to conciliate them to submit to the British government. The appearance of the whole country shows it here.

For Simpson, it was "impossible to put in words how much altered these once beautiful fields are." Indeed, he "could not have believed these distresses had been so great had I not seen them."
III

While no one could have anticipated the devastating effects of the Revolutionary War, many South Carolina supporters of the American cause clearly foresaw potential difficulties on the eve of the conflict with the allegiance and loyalty of many backcountry inhabitants. Lord William Campbell, a staunch supporter of the crown, for instance, gleefully wrote in 1775 that "the loyalty of those poor, honest, industrious people in the back part of this and neighboring provinces discontents [lowcountry rebels] greatly."\(^{31}\) This issue becomes more salient when it is realized that authority structures in the province were incredibly weak and, as Robert Olwell has reminded us, that significant number of South Carolinians, especially those who lived in the lowcountry where the ratio of blacks to whites was as high as nine to one in some places, were nearly paralyzed by the fear that if they carried resistance against Britain too far, a major slave revolt might follow. Without strong support from the backcountry, which contained roughly three-quarters of the colony's white population between 1760 and 1780, in other words, it is far from clear if South Carolina would have joined the other continental colonies in revolt.\(^{32}\)

Any effort to explain why South Carolina ultimately decided to declare independence must place considerable
emphasis on religious organizations, including especially the Baptists, Presbyterians, and Lutherans, and the ways in which they contributed to winning backcountry allegiances to the patriot cause. As the following pages will indicate and as John Drayton observed in his View of South Carolina (1802), it was only after lowcountry leaders were certain that a majority of whites above the fall line were committed to "collecting and preparing for a revolution" that they gathered enough nerve to fight Britain with all of her imperial military might.  

That the desire in South Carolina to build enough of a white majority consensus on the question of independence rested in large part on religious matters is evidenced by the actions of the Council of Safety, a executive body composed of thirteen members that was established by the Provincial Congress in the summer of 1775. Possessing wide-ranging powers, one of the councils' main obligations was to build support for "an association" pledging to "UNITE ourselves, under every tie of religion and honor" in order to defend the country and "to sacrifice our lives and fortunes to secure her freedom and safety." In an effort to fulfill this obligation, the Council of Safety commissioned and subsequently instructed in late July 1775 a committee to embark on a six-week tour through the backcountry to strengthen the commitment of those who were sympathetic to the patriot cause, win the allegiance of the
wavering, and "induce the tories there, to sign an
association, not to bear arms against, but for the
country."  

The very make up and unique character of this
consensus-building committee—which included two German
speakers, George Wagner and Felix Long, one Baptist
minister, Oliver Hart, one Presbyterian minister, William
Tennent, as well as William Henry Drayton, a leading
lowcountry whig—is revealing precisely because it
powerfully underscores the fact the Council of Safety, no
less than most other South Carolinians, recognized that the
backcountry was becoming deeply religious; that many of the
inhabitants there had strong attachments to that new,
specific form of religion discussed at length in the
previous chapter; and that this religious bias could—with
just a little prompting—be translated into popular
allegiance to "an association" once it was made clear that
"if they suffered the twins, liberty and religion, either to
be infringed or taken from them, they had nothing left them
whereby they might be called independent men."  

Very
little is known about Wagner and Long, but apparently they
were appointed to the committee because a suitable Lutheran
or Reformed minister could not be found. And, brief
biographical sketches were given of Hart and Drayton in
previous chapters.  However, no mention has been made of
William Tennant thus far; accordingly, attention will be
briefly focused on him.

William Tennent (1740-1777) was the son of Gilbert Tennent, one of the Presbyterian leaders who fostered evangelical revivals among Presbyterians in New Jersey and Pennsylvania during the middle decades of the eighteenth century. After graduating from the College of New Jersey (later Princeton University) and Harvard, he was licensed to preach by the presbytery of New Brunswick in 1761. Shortly thereafter, he was ordained by the same presbytery and began preaching in Hanover, Virginia. In 1764 he accepted a call from the members of the Congregational church at Norwalk, Connecticut, with the understanding that he would retain his connections to Presbyterian church. After a successful ministry that lasted over six years and convinced "many to seek Jesus," he was invited by and ultimately decided to settle at the Independent Church of Charleston, where in 1772 he was "received with great favor and soon wielded a commanding influence both in the pulpit and out."

According to one contemporary who knew him well, Tennent was "a man of fire and pungency, not a stranger to the art of addressing the passions." Although a "sound Calvinist," he "was much on the side of liberty and moderation, and loved good men of all persuasions who would contend for the primitive faith and purity." Indeed, the only doctrines that he "strongly defended" were "the guilt, pollution, and propagation of original sin--the divinity of
Christ—the redeeming efficacy of his blood—his full and proper atonement—the influences of his spirit—and the necessity of faith to a sinner’s justification before God."39 Tennent also took "a strong position in favor of independence" which made him "a favorite of the people" of Charleston. He was elected to the Commons House of Assembly and the First Provincial Congress. "In different hours of the same day," one observer noted, "his voice was occasionally heard both in his church and the house, addressing both audiences with equal animation, on their spiritual and temporal interests."40

Together with the others appointed by the Council of Safety to stump in the backcountry, Tennent set out from Charleston on August 2, 1775, keeping a detailed account of his activities. In the course of his journey, he travelled hundreds of miles, visited at least twelve Presbyterian churches, and delivered nearly thirty sermons. Thousands gathered to hear him. On one occasion, Tennent "travelled...to Rocky Creek Meeting House and met some hundreds of the inhabitants." He "preached on Mark 4 and 20 and after Sermon...Harranged at large...on the state of our country." On August 27, he met with the Rev. James Cresswell, Minister of Ninety-Six:

Met with...a large congregation at the Meeting House...[and] spoke two hours and a half upon the subject of my Mission to the most fixed People that I have ever seen. This is the centre of opposition. Therefore, finding that I had caught the attention of the sober and judicious, I spared no pains to convince...
them. I conjured them all that was sacred that they would not give themselves up to be the dupes of ministerial artifice, or the instruments of opposition and slavery, and by God's help so touched their minds, that the greater part of them clustered around me afterwards and wanted to hear more. Appointed a sermon for Mr. Hart near this place next Tuesday, which hope will fix the matter.\footnote{41}

Tennent chose his texts carefully. When he visited "one of Mr. Harris's preaching sheds" in Boonsborough, for example, he "preached extempore from Nehemiah, ii. 3--'Let the King live forever; why should not my countenance be sad, when the city, the place of my father's sepulchers, lieth waste, and the gates thereof are consumed with fire." Afterwards, "Mr. Drayton harrangued...the most crowded I have seen" and "the audience appeared fully convinced...of the extent of Lord William's conspiracy." \footnote{42}

Although the committee had to endure extremely rugged terrain, flooded rivers, numerous long, hot days, "where the sun almost melted" them, and many "a sleepless and wet Night" with "the fury of the Little Inhabitants of the Bed," Tennent left no doubt that their journey was a success. He believed that they had given backcountry settlers a "touch of the times" and that hundreds of "disaffected men...were converted to the cause of America." What is more, the committee "assisted honest but wavering minds to reach opinions in favour of the proceedings of the colony" and served to stimulate the "already very spirited."\footnote{43}

No less than Tennent and Hart, many other ministers did much to win support for American independence. In November
1775, for instance, Richard Furman, who was minister at the High Hills of Santee Baptist Church, penned an "address" to the "great body of non-subscribers" living near the confluence of the Saluda and Broad Rivers which urged them not to "take up arms for the king."44 Colonel Richard Richardson, commander of the Camden militia, found the appeal so "stirring and patriotic" that he had copies of it made and ordered that they be distributed among various other disaffected groups. This and other efforts in support of the patriot cause later brought Furman to the attention of Cornwallis, who is said to have placed a bounty on his head, forcing him to flee to Virginia.45

In addition to playing a key role in South Carolina's final decision to revolt, dissenting religious groups also spearheaded the effort to disestablish the Church of England. According to the minutes of the Welsh Neck Baptist Church, for instance, a meeting was held on March 8, 1776 in which it was proposed by request, that as the [Charleston] Association did not meet in Charleston this year on account of the troubles there; there might be a meeting of the Churches in this Province, at the High Hills of Santee on the Wednesday before the last Sunday in April next in order to chose delegates to attend the Continental Association, which [was] judged very expedient and necessary at this season, in order to obtain our liberties, and freedom from religious tyranny or ecclesiastical oppressions; which the Church unanimously agreed to; and chose two messengers vis brethren Able Wilds and Thomas Evans to the provincial Association at the time and place mentioned.

Elhanan Winchester, minister at Welsh Neck, was requested to
draw up "some thoughts on the Continental Association to be laid before the Churches at their meeting at the High Hills." Unfortunately, no record of that meeting has ever been found.

William Tennent was chosen to present the case of the dissenters to the House of Assembly while a new constitution was under consideration. In January 1777 he delivered an eloquent speech, advocating a petition for disestablishment signed by thousands. The following extracts from that speech point up the central arguments of all dissenters:

The rights of conscience are unalienable, and all laws binding it ought to be, ipso facto, null and void; neither those laws which lay heavy penalties on men for their religious opinions, nor those which make odious distinctions between subjects equally good, ought to be tolerated. The laws prevailing in Carolina acknowledge the society of the one as a Christian church--they do not know the others at all. It was not the three pence on the pound of tea that roused all the virtue of America. It is our birthright that we prize. To the proposal to establish all the denominations by law and pay them equally, we object that the establishment of all religions would in effect be no establishment at all. Religious establishments discourage the opulence and cramp the growth of a free state. That state in America which adopts the freest and most liberal plan will be most opulent and powerful, and will well deserve it. With the new constitution let the day of justice dawn upon every rank and order of men in this state. Let us bury what is past forever. We even consent that the estate which the Church of England has for a century past been drawing more or less from the purses of all denominations--an estate of no less value than three hundred and eighty thousand pounds--remain in her quiet possession and be fixed there. Let her only for the future cease to demand pre-eminence. We seek no restitution. Grant the prayer of this petition; grant it in substance if not in the very expression. Let it be a foundation article in your constitution, 'That there shall be no establishment of one religious denomination of Christians in preference to another. That none shall be obliged to pay to the
support of a worship in which they do not freely join.‘ Yield to the mighty current of American freedom and glory, and let our state be inferior to none on this wide continent in the liberality of its laws and in the happiness of its people.47

As a result of this and other efforts, the new constitution adopted in 1778 provided: that "all who believe in God" should be tolerated; that "the Christian Protestant religion shall be deemed, and is hereby constituted and declared to be the established religion of this State"; that all Protestant denominations should enjoy "equal religious and civil rights"; that "fifteen or more persons not under twenty years of age uniting in a Christian Protestant society for worship" might secure incorporation upon petition of the legislature after subscribing to certain articles. Those articles included:

1st. That there is one Eternal God, and a future state of rewards and punishments.

2d. That God is publicly to be worshipped.

3d. That the Christian Religion is the true religion.

4th. That the Holy Scriptures of the old and new Testaments are of divine inspiration, and are the rule of faith and practice.

5th. That it is lawful and the duty of every man being thereunto called by those that govern, to bear witness to the truth.48

The effects of disestablishment and the ravages of war on the Church of England were, of course, severe, but its influence in South Carolina did not end. After being reorganized as the Protestant Episcopal Church, former Anglican clergymen endeavored to pick up the few pieces that
were left and reform the orphaned institution. And, gradually, the church began to recover in the nineteenth century.

IV

Despite disestablishment and constitutional assurances of freedom of conscience, the American Revolution was not an unmixed blessing for evangelical religious groups in South Carolina, as the section II of this chapter makes abundantly clear. The intense fighting that occurred between 1780 and 1783 produced not only division and discord, but tremendous dislocations and widespread destruction, the effects of which were profound. However, recovery came quickly. By the late 1780s church organization and growth resumed prewar levels and soon surged forward with ever greater intensity as an increasing number of people—black and white—found in evangelicalism an emotionally satisfying form of religion that provided a system of values more accurately reflective of prevailing modes of behavior.

For many of the South Carolina faithful, the immediate end of hostilities brought dissolution and despair. One devout Presbyterian churchgoer, James O’Hear, for instance, wrote to a friend in 1784 that "methinks there is an awful dispensation of God’s visible displeasure with our land in general." To him God seemed "to be avenging upon us a
slighted gospel, for I believe no set of people about...showed more carelessness...about the word preached than we have done of late." "When the ordinances of God's house had been almost everywhere a long while suspended, by the calamities of the war and wickedness," he added, "nothing better could be looked for...since we have enjoyed peace and tranquility; yea, I fear we have gone into a state of profound supineness and sinful ease in matters of so great concern."49

According to O’Hear, there were a few hopeful signs, however. In Charleston "every church...now has a stated ministry;" and, "at the new Baptist church they have a Mr. Furman, at present only on a visit, but...there is a great probability of his being settled with them, and it is much to be wished that he may, for he is certainly a most excellent gospel minister--methinks never a better." But all things considered, O’Hear believed that South Carolinians were not "favored with the gospel sound" in the immediate aftermath of the Revolutionary War. This is precisely why he concluded his letter with a plea to his friend: "O, join with me, dear sir, in petitioning the Throne of Grace, that it may please the Lord of the Harvest that the word of the gospel may be accompanied with an abundant effusion of the Spirit, that many souls may be brought into Christ's vineyard."50

This same hope for a revival was duplicated, usually
less notably but no less importantly, elsewhere in South Carolina by laypersons and clergy alike, and, gradually, it seemed to many that God was beginning to effect a change as churches were rebuilt, ministers returned or were replaced, congregations reformed, and new individuals experienced conversion. In late January 1785, for instance, Richard Furman wrote that "there really appears to be a concern about Religion in the Minds of several, especially the Negroes."51 Two months later Edmund Botsford, who was visiting Charleston, noted in a letter to Oliver Hart:

I have been here six Lord’s days, and have to stay two more; have baptized two, and expect to baptize others before I leave town. There is a pretty good work begun. I have preached 41 sermons, go from house to house, and blessed be God, sweet times we have. I have time to write but a few lines; indeed I have hardly enjoyed an hour to myself since I have been in town. Numbers of blacks come to see me, and some whites; and many I must go and see. I doubt not that if there were a minister settled here, there would soon be a flourishing Church. Who would have thought that your poor son Botsford would have been owned as an instrument to bring souls to the Charleston Church? I find the heart is the same in Charleston, as in the country. Crowds attend public meetings, which are held three times on Lord’s days, and on Wednesday evenings; every other evening we have meetings at private houses, in which I have introduced praying for those poor distressed souls who ask.52

During the following year, Furman was again in Charleston and he described with enthusiasm "a considerable Effusion of the Holy Spirit" which resulted in "30 baptisms."53 Writing from the Pee Dee three years later, Botsford similarly noted:
A blessed work in begun...several are converted--a great number under conviction--children crying out what must we do to be save? Old grey-headed hardened sinners are bowed down....I have lately been from house to house praying, exhorting and preaching ten times a week....I baptized eleven on Lord's day the twenty-second [of August 1790]....Two other churches, the one above and the other below us on the river have also had additions, indeed the work spreads all around.54

This "blessed work," which continued throughout the late 1780s and most of the 1790s, represented a significant extension of the earlier pre-Revolutionary expansion of evangelicalism, a process that was set in motion during the middle decades of the eighteenth century and did much to establish an infrastructure for the growth of "gospel religion." And it mobilized unprecedented numbers of people who turned to an alternative and entirely personal form of religious belief that emphasized the centrality of the individual in the conversion experience and the authority of self in both public and private affairs.

Church statistics powerfully underscore the extent of the post-Revolutionary revival in South Carolina. Among the Baptists, growth was impressive. As table 6.1 makes clear, both the number of churches and ministers as well as the total number of formal members increased dramatically in the Charleston Association during the late eighteenth century.55 Between 1785 and 1800 the number of churches in the association more than doubled, rising from 13 to 31, while the number of ordained ministers increased by just over a factor of two, rising from nine to 19. Similarly,
formal membership jumped from 966 to 1,970.

Table 6.1

Statistics of the Charleston Baptist Association, 1785-1800

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Churches</th>
<th>Ministers</th>
<th>Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1785</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>966</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1786</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1,120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1787</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1,475</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1788</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1,563</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1789</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1,895</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1790</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1,904</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1791</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>2,008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1792</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1,985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1793</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1,987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1794</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1,987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1795</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>2,008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1796</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2,025</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1797</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2,014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1798</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>2,077</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1799</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1,982</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1800</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1,970</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.2

Statistics of the Bethel Baptist Association, 1789-1800

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Churches</th>
<th>Ministers</th>
<th>Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1789</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1,152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1790</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1,360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1791</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1,881</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1792</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>1,992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1793</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>2,093</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1794</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>2,437</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1795</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>2,408</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1796</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>2,596</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1797</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>2,554</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1798</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>2,726</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1799</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>2,722</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1800</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>2,805</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Statistics from the Bethel Baptist Association, an organization founded in 1789 and incorporating many of the
churches in the backcountry, are even more dramatic, as Table 6.2 demonstrates.\textsuperscript{56} Both the total number of churches and ordained ministers in the association rose sharply during the last 11 years of the eighteenth century, from 16 and 14 to 52 and 35 respectively, while the total number of formal members increased by roughly a factor of 2.5, reaching just over 2,800 by 1800. Several churches, of course, were not members of either the Charleston Baptist Association or the Bethel Baptist Association; therefore comparable data does not exist for them. However, John Asplund, a Baptist minister who travelled throughout the United States collecting statistics, estimated that in 1790 there were 67 churches, 31 ordained ministers, and 3,878 communicants in South Carolina.\textsuperscript{57} If we posit a mean family size of six, the figure used in the first Federal Census, and assume that about one half of the family members were under the age of 16, then some 11,634 adults were Baptist adherents, roughly 33 percent of whom were formal members. Ten years later these figures had increased significantly. In 1800 there were at least 96 organized churches, 63 ordained ministers, and 5,583 formal members in the state, representing approximately 16,749 adult adherents.\textsuperscript{58}

After the Revolutionary War, the large majority of Baptist churches in South Carolina were founded in the region above the fall line. Indeed, between 1785 and 1800,
about 70 percent of the congregations that petitioned for incorporation were located in the backcountry. What is more, as Leah Townsend has written, "of the 44 associated churches" in 1790, "27 were in the back country, 12 in the Pee dee, and only 5 can be properly classed as low-country churches; and practically all of the no-associated churches...were in the back country." Also, "of the 2,763 members of associated churches, 1,505 were members of backcountry churches, 751 of Pee dee churches, and 507 of low-country churches."²⁵⁹

Frustratingly, neither the Synod of the Carolinas, an association formed in 1788 which consisted of the presbyteries of Abingdon, Orange, and South Carolina, nor the Presbytery of South Carolina (founded in 1785), or the older Presbytery of Charleston, compiled membership statistics until well into the nineteenth century, making it almost impossible to determine with any degree of certainty the nature and extent of the post-revolutionary revival in that denomination. But contemporary comments seem to suggest that Presbyterian growth, while almost certainly less vigorous than that of the Baptist churches, was impressive, hampered only by a shortage of trained ministers. In addition, the number of Presbyterian churches in the South Carolina increased substantially between 1785 and 1800, rising from 47 to 63, suggesting a steady, long-term increase in church organization and membership."⁶⁰
In contrast to the Presbyterians, the Methodists, relative late-comers in Lower South, kept detailed records of church membership. And they contributed in no small way to the post Revolutionary revival. Although Joseph Pilmoor visited the colony in 1773, no Wesleyan Methodist minister was stationed in South Carolina until after the Methodist Episcopal Church of America was officially established on December 25, 1784 in Baltimore, Maryland. Following this famous "Christmas Conference," Francis Asbury, who like Thomas Coke was elected general superintendent of the new denomination, set out for Palmetto State with two committed evangelists, Jesse Lee and Henry Willis. Arriving in Charleston in late February, the Methodists secured the use and quickly set up shop "in an old meeting-house belonging to the General Baptists, in which they had ceased to preach." Asbury labored in the city for several days before departing with Lee. Willis remained behind and soon other ministers reached the state.  

From these small beginnings, Methodism literally exploded in South Carolina, as Table 6.3 demonstrates. Already by 1790, total membership had risen to almost 3,500. During the next decade, it rose by nearly a factor of two, reaching just over 6,300 by 1800. With the possible exception of the late 1780s, the ratio of blacks to whites in the Methodist church was also high, hovering between one fourth and one of the totals. Moreover, the number of
ordained ministers stationed in the state rose dramatically, levelling off at roughly 20 at the end of the eighteenth century.

Table 6.3
Statistics of the Methodist Episcopal Church in South Carolina, 1786-1800

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Ministers</th>
<th>Black Members</th>
<th>White Members</th>
<th>Total Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1786</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>595</td>
<td>638</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1787</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>1,645</td>
<td>1,786</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1788</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>224</td>
<td>2,246</td>
<td>2,470</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1789</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>267</td>
<td>3,087</td>
<td>3,377</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1790</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>496</td>
<td>2,962</td>
<td>3,458</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1791</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>699</td>
<td>3,830</td>
<td>4,529</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1792</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>742</td>
<td>3,655</td>
<td>4,397</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1793</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>826</td>
<td>3,371</td>
<td>4,197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1794</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1,220</td>
<td>5,192</td>
<td>6,412</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1795</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>1,116</td>
<td>4,428</td>
<td>5,544</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1796</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>971</td>
<td>3,862</td>
<td>4,833</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1797</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1,038</td>
<td>3,715</td>
<td>4,753</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1798</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1,381</td>
<td>4,457</td>
<td>5,838</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1799</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1,385</td>
<td>4,806</td>
<td>6,191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1800</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1,535</td>
<td>4,802</td>
<td>6,337</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unlike the Baptists, and to a somewhat lesser extent the Presbyterians, Methodists were far more numerous in the lowcountry than in the backcountry. Reports of membership from the Minutes of the Annual Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church indicate that by 1787 lowcountry Methodists were over three times as numerous as their counterparts above the fall line. During the remaining years of the eighteenth century, itinerant ministers made considerable gains in the interior, but by 1800, as can be seen in the table below, the ratio of lowcountry to upcountry Methodists
still remained at roughly 3 to 1, a ratio that seems to have
remained fairly constant at least until the Civil War. In
Table 6.3, column I indicates the number of blacks in each
region, column II the number of whites in each region,
column III the combined regional total, and column IV the
regional percentage of Methodist membership in the state.\textsuperscript{63}

Table 6.4
Regional Trends of the Methodist Episcopal Church
in South Carolina, 1786-1800

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>II</th>
<th>III</th>
<th>IV</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>II</th>
<th>III</th>
<th>IV</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1786</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>395</td>
<td>428</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1787</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>1,242</td>
<td>1,364</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>403</td>
<td>422</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1788</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>1,536</td>
<td>1,720</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>710</td>
<td>750</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1789</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>2,390</td>
<td>2,618</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>720</td>
<td>759</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1790</td>
<td>378</td>
<td>1,969</td>
<td>2,347</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>993</td>
<td>1,111</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1791</td>
<td>564</td>
<td>2,168</td>
<td>2,732</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>1,662</td>
<td>1,797</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1792</td>
<td>661</td>
<td>1,895</td>
<td>2,556</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>1,760</td>
<td>1,841</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1793</td>
<td>701</td>
<td>1,674</td>
<td>2,375</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>1,697</td>
<td>1,822</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1794</td>
<td>1,060</td>
<td>3,057</td>
<td>4,117</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>2,035</td>
<td>2,295</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1795</td>
<td>979</td>
<td>2,827</td>
<td>3,806</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>1,601</td>
<td>1,738</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1796</td>
<td>897</td>
<td>2,846</td>
<td>3,743</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>1,016</td>
<td>1,090</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1797</td>
<td>902</td>
<td>2,518</td>
<td>3,420</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>1,197</td>
<td>1,333</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1798</td>
<td>1,266</td>
<td>3,125</td>
<td>4,391</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>1,332</td>
<td>1,447</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1799</td>
<td>1,264</td>
<td>3,359</td>
<td>4,623</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>1,447</td>
<td>1,568</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1800</td>
<td>1,412</td>
<td>3,330</td>
<td>4,742</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>1,472</td>
<td>1,595</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The reasons why Methodism was so tremendously
successful in South Carolina, especially in the region below
the fall line, during the post Revolutionary era are
numerous, but a few are of particular importance. First, as
scholars have long recognized, the Methodist church had a
well-oiled organizational machine built around a permanent
itinerary based on circuits, certainty of services at
designated places and times, and "classes" led by zealous lay leaders, exhorters, and local preachers. Second, the Methodists were essentially Arminian in orientation and rejected the doctrines of election and predestination; accordingly, their theology was attractive to those who may have found the Calvinistic orientation of the Baptists and Presbyterians a bit too harsh, such as many Anglicans. Third, Methodist ministers seem to have concentrated their efforts in the state in the region where other evangelical denominations were weakest—the lowcountry. Fourth, the Methodists were beneficiaries of earlier evangelical revivals that had been slowly advancing "heart religion" in South Carolina ever since the 1740s. And, fifth, the Methodist church, no less than the Baptist church and even somewhat more than other churches in the state, including the Presbyterian church, "reached out into the black population," as Samuel S. Hill has written, "with a view to converting, instructing, and churching...in [a] concerted and aggressive way."64

V

As soon as Francis Asbury arrived in South Carolina he realized that the state's vast black population would ultimately prove to be a fertile field for evangelization and that his church would have a special mission "among the
poor slaves." After witnessing a conversion, he noted in his journal: "How great is the work of God--once a sinner, yesterday a seeker, and now his adopted child! Now we know that God has brought us here, and have a hope that there will be a glorious work among the people--at least among the Africans." To follow Asbury's ramblings through the lowcountry is in many important respects to follow the emergence of African American Methodism. On his many journeys to the state during the late eighteenth century, he regularly preached to congregations that were far more heavily slave and black than in other region of the country. Many were "hardly restrained from crying out aloud." On one occasion in Georgetown, for example, Asbury gathered an audience of nearly 400 and "spoke on the nature and necessity of repentance"; all but about 20 of his listeners were black, and several "who attended the meeting began to feel conviction."65

That many Methodist itinerants, like Asbury, concentrated much of their attention on South Carolina's black population is evidenced by the membership statistics discussed above. By 1800, African Americans represented roughly one-third of Methodists church members below the fall line and in some lowcountry congregations they constituted a clear, if not overwhelming, majority. In the backcountry, the Methodists were somewhat less successful in gaining black converts; at the end of the century African
Americans constituted less than 10 percent of total Methodist church membership. The factors contributing to this disparity were twofold: first, slaves were far less numerous in the region above the fall line; and second, the Baptist and other evangelical churches played a greater role in the interior. Accordingly, competition was much greater.

As the comments of Richard Furman and Edmund Botsford mentioned in the previous section suggest, black South Carolinians were also joining Baptists churches in increasing numbers during last two decades of the eighteenth century. Although the associational minutes do not list membership by race, individual church records and contemporary observations provide clear evidence that blacks contributed extensively to the post Revolutionary revival. In 1790, for example, Edmund Botsford, minister of the Welsh Neck Baptist Church from 1779 to 1796, reported to the editor of the Baptist Annual Register that:

there is in Georgia, a Baptist Church composed wholly of blacks, and a great number of negroes in other churches in that state, in this, and in North Carolina and Virginia. God hath done great things for them and their owners begin to discover that their slaves are of increasing value to them if they become religious. I am very fond of teaching them; have preached to 300 of them at a time, and not one white present but myself. They sing delightfully; and those who are truly religious, in general far exceed the whites in love to each other, and in most other duties. Many of them can read, and are remarkably fond of hymns. We have several in our church who go to the plantations, and preach to their own colour on Lord's-day evenings, and at other times when we have no services in the meeting-house.

At the time of his Botsford's departure, 64 of the 127
members of the Welsh Neck congregation were black.  

Most backcountry Baptist churches had significant numbers of black members as well. Bush River church, for example, received Lucy, "a woman of colour," by letter in September 1793, bringing to eleven the number of African Americans in the congregation of either thirty-three or thirty-four. One year later, the same church "took under consideration brother Moses' Gift (a man of colour)," but it was determined by members of the congregation that "he had no call to the work of preaching or exhortion." Therefore, it was "thought...best for him to be silent." At nearby Padgett's Creek Baptist Church, however, one of the thirty-two black members, "Birdsong's Tom," was permitted to "pray and exhort in public" just a few years later. Similarly, at Friendship Baptist church in 1796, "a Black Bro. Bill" was allowed to "exercise his gift and hold meetings within the bounds of the church" with the "other nine negroes" who were members.

Black Baptist membership was also increasing in the lowcountry, especially in the region south and west of Charleston. Almost 100 African Americans, for instance, joined the Euhaw Baptist Church between 1785 and 1800, most of whom lived "on and about Stony Creek." At Pipe Creek Baptist Church on the Savannah River, "upwards of forty Negroes" were baptized during the last decade on the eighteenth century. Meanwhile, Jesse Peter, one of
George Liele's close associates, resurrected the Silver Bluff Church in 1782 shortly after American forces recaptured the Galphin estate from the British. Ten years later Peter reported that he regularly preached to over 250 blacks in and around Augusta, where in 1793 he founded the First African Baptist Church of Augusta.73

Importantly, the efforts of Baptist, Methodist, and other evangelical churches to convert African Americans during the late eighteenth century were given more power and made more explicit by the emergence of recognizable, self-sustaining creole majority in the black population. As previous chapters have shown, the intensification of the staple-based plantation system and the subsequent importation of thousands of African bondspersons after 1720 had a devastating effect on South Carolina's black population. Immigrant slaves were predominantly male and suffered extremely high levels of morbidity and mortality when first introduced to the colony. What is more, most women who were imported had few children. Consequently, the black population, in contrast to previous years, began to experience a net natural decline and only massive imports from Africa kept it growing. Although the surplus of deaths over births apparently diminished considerably after 1760, it was not until the early 1770s that bondspersons were once again able to produce the same high rate of natural increase as they had in the years immediately preceding 1720. Net
natural population growth and the corresponding emergence of a creole majority led to formation of a more stable and meaningful family life and the maturation of that distinctive culture or way of life discussed previously, developments that together proved to be more conducive to black's receptivity to evangelical religion.
END NOTES


2. Extensive extracts from Philmoor's journal can be found in Albert M. Shipp, *The History of Methodism in South Carolina* (Nashville, Tenn, 1884), 125-35.


5. George Liele to John Rippon, 18 Dec., 1791 in John Rippon, ed. *The Baptist Annual Register* 4 vols. (London, 1793-1802), 1, 332 (hereafter cited as BAR). In September 1790, John Rippon, a prominent English Baptist, learned from Reverend Joseph Cook of South Carolina that "a poor negro, commonly called, among his own friends, Brother George, has been so highly favored by God, as to plant the first Baptist Church in Savannah and another in Jamaica." Obviously excited, Rippon felt "an earnest desire to know the circumstances of both these societies." Accordingly, he wrote letters "to the Rev. Mr. Cook at the Euhaw; to Mr. Jonathan Clarke, at Savannah; to Mr. Wesley's people at Kingston; with a view to obtain information, in which particular regard was had to the character of this poor but successful minister of Christ." By 1792 Rippon felt that he had obtained "satisfactory accounts...from each of these quarters," including "a letter from brother George himself, containing an answer to more than fifty questions proposed in a letter to him." Rippon began
publishing his findings in a series of "accounts" in the BAR. However, the letters he received from Liele are not reprinted in full. He noted that "Brother George's words are distinguished by inverted commas, and what is not so marked, is either matter compressed or information received from such persons to whom application has been made of it." In an attempt to winnow the second hand accounts, what is not marked by inverted commas I have attributed to Rippon, delineating it "Matter Compressed or Information Received." See Rippon, "An Account of several Baptist Churches, consisting chiefly of NEGRO SLAVES: particularly of one at Kingston, in JAMAICA; and another at Savannah in GEORG," ibid. Much of the information Rippon collected is reprinted in "Letters Showing the Rise of and Progress of the Early Negro Churches of Georgia and the West Indies," Journal of Negro History, I (January 1916), 119-27.


9. Liele to Rippon, 18 Dec., 1791, BAR, I, 333 (first, second, third, and fifth quotations); "Matter Compressed or Information Received," ibid. (fourth, sixth, and seventh quotations).

10. "An Account of the Life of Mr. David George, from Sierra Leon in Africa; given by himself in a Conversation with Brother Rippon of London, and Brother Pearce of Birmingham," BAR, I, 475. Interestingly, George wrote "I knew [George Liele] ever since he was a boy." This reference points up the fact that kinship and friendship connections may have played an important role in transmitting the revival culture.


25. James A. Wallace as quoted in Howe, History of the Presbyterian Church in South Carolina, II, 483.


30. Ibid., frames 24-27.

31. Quoted in Klein, Unification of a Slave State, 78-79.


33. John Drayton, View of South Carolina (Charleston, S.C., 1802), 103.


44.Open letter from Richard Furman, Nov. 1775, Richard Furman Papers, South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina, Columbia.


46.Minutes of the Welsh Neck Baptist Church (WPA typescript), Minutes, South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina, Columbia, March 8, 1776.


48.Thomas Cooper and David J. McCord, eds., *Statutes at Large of South Carolina*, 10 vols. (Columbia, S.C., 1837-1840), I, 191. Interestingly, these articles paralleled those listed in the Fundamental Constitutions of 1669 very closely and may have been copied deliberately.


51. Richard Furman to Oliver Hart, January 26, 1785, Richard Furman Correspondence, 1755-1825, Southern Baptist Historical Society Publications (Microfilm). (Hereafter cited as Furman, Correspondence). [1746].

52. Edmund Botsford to Oliver Hart, March 30, 1785, in Mallary, Memoirs of the Elder Edmund Botsford, 63-64.

53. Furman to Hart, February 17, 1786 in Furman, Correspondence.

54. Botsford to Rippon, August 27, 1790, BAR, I, 297.

55. Wood Furman, A History of the Charleston Association of Baptist Churches in the State of South-Carolina, with an Appendix containing the Principal Circular Letters to the Churches (Charleston, 1811), 14-15.

56. Minutes of the Bethel Baptist Association, Baptist Historical Collection, Furman University Library, Greenville, S.C.

57. John Asplund, The Annual Register of the Baptist Denomination, in North America; to the First of November, 1790. Containing an Account of the Churches and their Constitutions, Ministers, Members, Associations, their Plan and Sentiments, Rule and Order, Proceedings and Correspondence. Also Remarks Upon Practical Religion (Richmond, Va., 1792).

58. Townsend, South Carolina Baptists, 271-305.

59. Ibid., 273.

60. Howe, History of the Presbyterian Church, 450-701; Synod of the Carolinas, Minutes, 1788-1800, Historical Foundation of the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches, Montreat, N.C., 1-502.


62. Minutes of the Annual Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church, for the years 1773-1828 (New York, 1840), 24-95.


66. See Table 6.4 above.

67. Botsford to Rippon, August 27, 1790, BAR, I, 297.

68. Minutes of the Welsh Neck Baptist Church (WPA typescript), South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina, Columbia, 1796.

69. Minutes of the Bush River Baptist Church (WPA typescript), South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina, Columbia, September 1793, October 1794, October 1795.

70. Minutes of the Padgetts Creek Baptist Church (WPA typescript), South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina, Columbia, September 1798.

71. Minutes of the Friendship Baptist Church (WPA typescript), South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina, Columbia, July 1796.


CONTEMPORARY WRITING

Manuscripts, Memoirs, Biographies, and Journals


Gaffney, Michael. "Journal, 1797-1854." South Caroliniana Collection, University of South Carolina, Columbia, S.C.


Hart, Oliver. "Diary, August-September, 1754. South Carolina Baptist Historical Society, Furman University, Greenville, S.C.


Hammett, William. "Journal, 1787-1803." South Caroliniania Collection, University of South Carolina, Columbia, S.C.

Hamer, Philip M, George C. rogers, and David R. Chestnut. eds. The Papers of Henry Laurens. 10 vols. Columbia,


Church Records—Congregational

Ashley River Baptist Church, 1736-1769. Microfilm (#1090), Historical Commission, Southern Baptist Convention, Nashville, Tenn.

Bethabara Baptist Church Book, 1801-1881. 2 ms vols (typed) in South Caroliniana Collection, University of South Carolina, Columbia, S.C.

Bethel Baptist Church, 1787-1804. Microfilm (#5608), Historical Commission, Southern Baptist Convention, Nashville, Tenn.

Bethel Presbyterian Church, 1764-1967. Microfilm, Historical Foundation of the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches, Montreat, N.C.

Bethel Presbyterian Church, 1735-1964. Microfilm, Historical Foundation of the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches, Montreat, N.C.

Big Creek Baptist Church Book, 1801-1936. Ms vol. (typed) in South Caroliniana Collection, University of South Carolina, Columbia, S.C.

Big Stevens Creek Baptist Church, 1803-1901. Microfilm (#1665), Historical Commission, Southern Baptist Convention, Nashville, Tenn.

Black Creek Baptist Church, 1798-1896. Microfilm (#1361), Historical Commission, Southern Baptist Convention, Nashville, Tenn.

Brushy Creek Baptist Church Book, 11795-1969. Ms vol. (typed) in South Caroliniana Collection, University of South Carolina, Columbia, S.C.
Boiling Spring Baptist Church, 1794-1972. Microfilm (#3853), Historical Commission, Southern Baptist Convention, Nashville, Tenn.

Buffalo Baptist Church, 1805-1810. Microfilm (#3891), Historical Commission, Southern Baptist Convention, Nashville, Tenn.

Bush River Baptist Church, 1792-1923. Ms (typed) in South Caroliniana Collection, University of South Carolina, Columbia, S.C.

Cashaway Baptist Church Book, 1756-1772. Ms vol (typed) in South Caroliniana Collection, University of South Carolina, Columbia, S.C.

Catfish Creek Baptist Church, 1802-1971. Microfilm (#3607), Historical Commission, Southern Baptist Convention, Nashville, Tenn.

Ceder Spring Baptist Church, 1794-1972. Microfilm (#1550), Historical Commission, Southern Baptist Convention, Nashville, Tenn.

Ceder Springs Baptist Church, 1803-1953. Ms (typed) in South Caroliniana Collection, University of South Carolina, Columbia, S.C.

Charleston Incorporated Baptist Church Register, 1793-1800. South Carolina Baptist Historical Society, Furman University, Greenville, S.C.

Dorchester Independent Church, 1794-1856. 3 ms vols. Historical Foundation of the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches, Montreat, N.C.

Edisto Island Presbyterian Church, 1790-1975. Microfilm, Historical Foundation of the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches, Montreat, N.C.


Flint Hill Baptist Church Book, 1792-1899. 4 ms vols. (typed) in South Caroliniana Collection, University of South Carolina, Columbia, S.C.

Friendship Baptist Church, 1801-1933. Microfilm (#5003-59), Historical Commission, Southern Baptist Convention, Nashville, Tenn.
Green Pond Baptist Church, 1804-1971. Microfilm (#5611),
Historical Commission, Southern Baptist Convention,
Nashville, Tenn.

Gum Branch Baptist Church, 1796-1963. Ms (typed) in South
Caroliniana Collection, University of South Carolina,
Columbia, S.C.

Little River Baptist Church, 1794-1820. Microfilm (#3485),
Historical Commission, Southern Baptist Convention,
Nashville, Tenn.

Mechanicsville Baptist Church Book, 1803-1867. 2 ms vols.
(typed) in South Caroliniana Collection, University of
South Carolina, Columbia, S.C.

Mountain Creek Baptist Church, 1798-1956. Microfilm (#653),
Historical Commission, Southern Baptist Convention,
Nashville, Tenn.

Padgett's Creek Baptist Church, 1784-1955. 2 ms vols.
(typed) in South Caroliniana Collection, University of
South Carolina, Columbia, S.C.

Pacolet Baptist Church, 1797-1805. Microfilm (#856),
Historical Commission, Southern Baptist Convention,
Nashville, Tenn.

Philadelphia Baptist Church, 1803-1966. Microfilm (#1277),
Historical Commission, Southern Baptist Convention,
Nashville, Tenn.

Poplar Springs Baptist Church Book, 1794-1937. 3 ms vols.
(typed) in South Caroliniana Collection, University of
South Carolina, Columbia, S.C.

Reedy River Baptist Church, 1799-1914. Microfilm (#1171),
Historical Commission, Southern Baptist Convention,
Nashville, Tenn.

Salem Baptist Church, 1797-1930. 3 ms vols. (typed) in
South Caroliniana Collection, University of South
Carolina, Columbia, S.C.

Secona Baptist Church, 1795-1938. Microfilm (#1170),
Historical Commission, Southern Baptist Convention,
Nashville, Tenn.

Shoal Creek Baptist Church, 1796-1853. Microfilm (#900-18),
Historical Commission, Southern Baptist Convention,
Nashville, Tenn.
Siolam Baptist Church, 1799-1853. Microfilm (#900-19), Historical Commission, Southern Baptist Convention, Nashville, Tenn.

Stoney Creek Independent Congregational Church and (Circular) Congregational Church in Charles Town S.C., "Register Kept by the Rev. Wm. Hutson...1743-1760." In *South Carolina Historical Magazine* XXXVIII (October 1937).

Turkey Creek Baptist Church, 1785-1909. Microfilm (#2103), Historical Commission, Southern Baptist Convention, Nashville, Tenn.

Tyger River Baptist Church, 1801-1911. Microfilm (#385), Historical Commission, Southern Baptist Convention, Nashville, Tenn.

Union Baptist Church, 1801-1905. Ms (typed) in South Caroliniana Collection, University of South Carolina, Columbia, S.C.

Welsh Neck Baptist Church, 1737-1952. Ms (typed) in South Caroliniana Collection, University of South Carolina, Columbia, S.C.

Church Records--Associational


Hanover Presbytery. Proceedings, 1755-1786." Ms (typescript) in Historical Foundation of the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches, , Montreat, N.C.

[Methodist Episcopal Church]. Minutes of the Annual Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church, for the years 1773-1828. New York, 1840.

Synod of the Carolinas. Minutes, 1788-1800. Historical Foundation of the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches, Montreat, N.C.

Pamphlets and Printed Sermons


Smith, Josiah. *A Funeral Discourse, Sacred to the Memory of Mr. Joseph Melody*. Charleston, 1767.


Travel and Descriptive Accounts


Newspapers and Periodicals


**The Georgia Analytical Repository**, 1802-1803.

**The South Carolina Gazette.** Charleston, S.C.

Official Publications

Journals of the Commons House of Assembly, 1745-1766.

South Carolina Council Journals. SDAH

Miscellaneous


Dalcho, Frederick. *An Historical Account of the Protestant Episcopal Church in South Carolina from the First Settlement of the Province to the War of the Revolution.* Charleston, S.C., 1820.


Urspurger, Samuel. ed. Amerikanishches Ackerwere Gottes, oder zuverlassige Nachrichten... 4 vols. Frankfurt am Main, 1754-1767.


SECONDARY SOURCES

Books


Bernheim, George D. History of the German Settlements and of the Lutheran Church in North and South Carolina. Philadelphia, 1872.


---------. Myths and Realities: Societies of the Colonial South. Baton Rouge, La., 1952.

Bridwell, Ronald E. 'That We Should have a Port...': A History of the Port of Georgetown, South Carolina, 1732-1865. Georgetown, S.C., 1982.


Cumming, M. G. Two Centuries of Augusta. Atlanta, Ga., 1926.


Hayward, Duncan Clinch. **Seed from Madagascar.** Chapel Hill, N.C., 1937.


Index Publishing Company. **History of the Baptist Denomination in Georgia: With Biographical Compendium and Portrait Gallery of Baptist Ministers and Other Georgia Baptists.** Atlanta, Ga, 1881.


Marsden, George M.  *The Search for Christian America.* Westchester, Ill., 1983.


Meriwether, Robert L. The Expansion of South Carolina, 1729-1765. Kingsport, Tenn., 1940.


Qualben, Lars P. The Lutheran Church in Colonial America. New York, 1940.

Rogers, George C. *Charleston in the Age of the Pinkneys.* Norman, Oka., 1969.


Shipp, Albert M. *The History of Methodism in South Carolina.* Nashville, Tenn., 1884.


Voigt, Gilbert P. *German and German-Swiss Element in South Carolina, 1732-1752.* Columbia, S.C., 1922.


**Articles**


Watson, Alan D. "The Quitrent System in Royal South Carolina." *William and Mary Quarterly* XXXIII (April 1976): 183-211.


Weir, Robert M. "'The Harmony We Were Famous For': An Interpretation of Pre-Revolutionary South Carolina Politics." *William and Mary Quarterly* XXXVI (October 1969): 473-501.


Theses and Dissertations


